

UC Santa Barbara

UC Santa Barbara Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Title

Dual Enculturation: A Comparison of Five L2 Students Writing for One General Education Course

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/60018671>

Author

Otto, Kara

Publication Date

2016

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Santa Barbara

Dual Enculturation: A Comparison of Five L2 Students Writing for One General Education
Course

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree Doctor of
Philosophy in Education

by

Kara Elise Otto

Committee in charge:

Professor Charles Bazerman, Chair

Professor Linda Adler-Kassner

Professor Dorothy Chun

Professor Jin Sook Lee

June 2016

The dissertation of Kara Elise Otto is approved.

Professor Linda Adler-Kassner

Professor Dorothy Chun

Professor Jin Sook Lee

Professor Charles Bazerman, Committee Chair

March 2016

Dual Enculturation: A Comparison of Five L2 Students Writing for One General Education

Course

Copyright © 2016

By

Kara Elise Otto

DEDICATION

For my beloved grandparents: Boompa, my hero with the Cheshire cat grin who paved the way before me so I could boldly ascend, and Meema, who lit the flame of my imagination, reminding me that anything is possible when play is the foundation for vision. The magic of my childhood memories, my character, and the future ahead are dedicated to you both.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My dissertation is but one product of a multi-year journey facilitated by the graciousness of others. I am especially grateful for those of you who inspired me to set off on this journey, in addition to the multifaceted role others played during an immensely rewarding and challenging time. Because your help is immeasurable, individual listings are alphabetical. My *family* of parents, siblings, and extended others has provided constant support and enthusiasm that kept me going. My *friends* are spread near and far, and often provided relief through adventure. Thank you Emilie Chan, Dr. Tricia Gagne, Sabra Hahn, Dusty Hoesly, Carrie Klass, Dr. Anne Emerson-Leak Sara Oliver, Tiffany Myles-Rebassoo, Dr. Nida Rinthapol, Brandice Valentino-Rogers, Dr. Ellie Sciaky, the soon-to-be Dr. Tiesha Tallman, Michelle Torre, and Jennifer Kurland-Unger. My *colleagues* have also acted as dear friends. Thank you Dr. Ryan Dippre, Zack De Piero, and Dr. Paul Rogers. My *advisor* Dr. Charles Bazerman has consistently taken an interest in all of my ideas and helped me shape my own path. I am also grateful to the remainder of my *committee*, Drs. Chun, Lee, and Adler-Kassner. *Mentors* have provided me with transformative teaching and learning opportunities, particularly Drs. Ho, Lenaburg, Lunsford, Menicucci, Mullin, Pandya, and Sloan. I am quite grateful to Steve Dwelley and Michele Nichols, as they have generously supported me, while sharpening my connection to what matters most. Thank you to my *students* for their infectious brightness, which inspired me to teach well. *Other beings* made me laugh and kept me company, as with my four-legged friends, Lea the Lioness, Miso, Midnight, and Pumpkin, and my friends' four-legged friends, Angel, Bosco, Merci, Smokey, and Stetson. As for my *sunshine*, Taylor, thank you for shining brightly with me.

VITA OF KARA ELISE OTTO

EDUCATION

- Ph.D. Education: University of California, Santa Barbara** June 2016
Teaching and Learning: Language, Literacy, and Composition Santa Barbara, CA
Doctoral Emphases: Writing Studies, Applied Linguistics
Disciplinary and Other Enculturation: A Comparison of Five L2 Students Writing for One General Education Course
Charles Bazerman (Chair), Linda Adler-Kassner, Dorothy Chun, and Jin Sook Lee
- M.A. Education: University of California, Santa Barbara** 2012
Teaching and Learning: Language, Literacy, and Composition Santa Barbara, CA
Rationales for Academic English Literacy in Chilean Educational Contexts
Charles Bazerman (Thesis Advisor)
- B.S. Mass Communication: Florida State University** 2002
Summa cum laude Tallahassee, FL
- A.A. Tallahassee Community College** 2000
Tallahassee, FL
-

TEACHING

ACADEMIC WRITING

- Instructor, Transfer Level Composition** 2016: Spring
Santa Barbara City College
- Teaching Associate, Academic Writing (WRIT 2)** 2015: Summer
Writing Program, UC Santa Barbara
- (Graduate) Instructor, Academic Writing (WRIT 2)** 2015: Winter, Spring
Writing Program, UC Santa Barbara 2014: Spring
- Writing and Research Mentor, Theses of Pre-Service M. Ed. Teachers** 2010
Teacher Education Program, UC Santa Barbara

ACADEMIC WRITING FOR MULTILINGUAL SPEAKERS

- Instructor, Academic Writing** 2011-2012
University Prep Program, Education First (EF) International Education, Santa Barbara, CA

WRITING IN THE DISCIPLINES

- Teaching Assistant, Introduction to Communication (COMM 1)** 2016: Winter; 2014: Winter
Department of Communication, UC Santa Barbara 2012: Fall, Winter

2011: Fall, Winter; 2010: Fall

Graduate Student Mentor, Center for Science and Engineering Partnerships 2015-2016
Writing tutor for STEM undergraduate students via CSEP, UC Santa Barbara

Teaching Assistant, Introduction to Asian American Literature (AS AM 5) 2015: Fall
Department of Asian American Studies, UC Santa Barbara 2014: Fall

Teaching Assistant, Introduction to the Research University (ED 20) 2013: Fall
Department of Education, UC Santa Barbara

Teaching Assistant, Intercultural Communication (COMM 123) 2013: Fall
Department of Communication, UC Santa Barbara

Teaching Assistant, Introduction to Communication Theory (COMM 89) 2013: Winter, Spring
Department of Communication, UC Santa Barbara 2012: Spring; 2011: Spring

Teaching Assistant, Introduction to the Research University (INT 95) 2012: Summer
Summer Sessions, Freshmen Summer Start Program, UC Santa Barbara

WRITING IN THE DISCIPLINES FOR MULTILINGUAL SPEAKERS

Instructor, Research and Writing for Engineers (ENGR X420) 2015: Spring, Fall
Extension, UC Santa Barbara 2014: Fall

Instructor, Communication 2012: Winter, Spring
Education First (EF) International Education, Santa Barbara, CA

ENGLISH INTENSIVES

Instructor, English Oral Proficiency Workshop 2014: Summer
Office of International Students and Scholars, UC Santa Barbara 2013: Summer

Instructor, General English 2014: Summer
Education First (EF) International Education, Santa Barbara, CA 2010-2012

RESEARCH

Graduate Student Evaluator, STEEM 2015-2016
Center for Science and Engineering Partnerships, UC Santa Barbara

- Design methodology to analyze program outcomes for STEEM (Scholarships for Transfers to Engage and Excel in Mathematics), collect data, and evaluate findings.
- Write recommendation reports that address increasing academic and professional success of community college transfer students studying mathematics.

Graduate Student Evaluator, *Chemical Engineering Writing Assessment* 2015: Jan-July
Center for Science and Engineering Partnerships, UC Santa Barbara

- Devised research protocol, collected data, and analyzed findings for evaluation of technical writing instruction in Chemical Engineering Department.
- Wrote recommendation reports for faculty based upon student survey and focus group responses, in addition to compiling suggestions from longitudinal data.

Graduate Student Researcher, *The Impact of Student Teaching Abroad* 2014: March-October
Professors Tine Sloane & Hsiu-Zu Ho, Gevirtz Graduate School of Education, UC Santa Barbara

- Designed research protocol, collected and analyzed data, and wrote findings with a team of three researchers investigating the effects of international study on pre-service teachers.
- Conducted and transcribed interviews with both supervising faculty and pre-service teachers who studied in cooperating universities in Singapore, Denmark, and Switzerland.

Grant Co-Author, Revision of *Introduction to the Research University (ED 20)* 2014: Spring
Professor Hsiu-Zu Ho, Gevirtz Graduate School of Education, UC Santa Barbara

- Collected literature to justify increased funding for alternate ESL reading and writing course for incoming undergraduate international students.
- Co-wrote the grant proposal, inclusive of suggestions for online modules and collaborative projects targeted to international students' academic needs.
- Asked to revise curriculum as a Graduate Student Researcher and Lead Teaching Assistant.

Writing Consultant, *Intercultural Communication (COMM 123)* 2013: Fall
Department of Communication, UC Santa Barbara

- Revised writing assignments with professor collaboration, integrating best practices for disciplinary writing with genre instruction.

Graduate Student Researcher, *General Education Course Assessment* 2013: September
Writing Program, UC Santa Barbara

- Facilitated faculty focus group discussion of required and upper division writing courses, analyzing course outcomes and comparing assignments across instructors.

Graduate Student Researcher, *Writing Requirement Course Assessment* 2013: Winter
Writing Program, UC Santa Barbara

- Collaborated with faculty to assess student writing in writing requirement courses.
- Reviewed course outcomes, tested rubrics, calibrated scoring, and conducted formal analysis.

Research Assistant, *UCSB E-Portfolio Project* 2010
Professor Karen Lunsford, Writing Program, UC Santa Barbara

- Developed mock portfolios in competing platforms; interviewed faculty to assess impact.
- Collaboratively wrote and provided research for final recommendation report.

PUBLICATIONS

- Otto, K.**, Dippre, R., & De Piero, Z. (Under review). "I don't know how other TAs do it:" Structured commenting practices in a comparative grading context. (empirical study)
- Sloan, T.F., Ho, H-Z., Sciaky, E., & **Otto, K.** (In press). Shifting perspectives and pedagogies: The impact of student teaching abroad. In D. Sharpes (Ed.), *Handbook on comparative and international studies in education*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Blackwell.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS & INVITED TALKS

- Otto, K.**, De Piero, Z. (2015, October). *Practical implications for the professional development of teaching assistants as writing instructors in the disciplines*. Paper presented at the U.C. Council of Writing Programs Annual Conference, University of California, Riverside, CA.
- Sciaky, E., & **Otto, K.** (2015, April). *Shifting perspectives and pedagogies: The impact of student teaching abroad*. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association (AERA) Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL.
- Otto, K.**, Dippre, R., & De Piero, Z. (2014, May). Commenting: How do TAs respond to student writing in three pre-major courses? Presentation for faculty and graduate students in a Writing Studies colloquium, Santa Barbara, CA.
- Otto, K.** (2013, March). Chinese student writing and academic acculturation. Presentation for campus community at the University of California, Santa Barbara, CA.
- Otto, K.** (2013, March). Agenda setting theory. *Introduction to communication theory*. Lecture for undergraduate students at University of California, Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, CA.
- Otto, K.** (2012, October). Communication as a science. *Introduction to communication*. Lecture for undergraduate students at University of California, Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, CA.
- Otto, K.** (2012, April). *Rationales for academic English literacy in Chilean contexts*. Paper presented at the 6th UC Language Consortium Conference on SLA Theoretical and Pedagogical Perspectives, San Diego, CA.
- Tremain, L., **Otto, K.**, & Gonzalez, L. (2011, April). *(Re)creating the center: Theoretical approaches for involving campus stakeholders in the design of a writing center*. Paper presented at the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC), Atlanta, GA.

HONORS & AWARDS

Teaching

- Outstanding Teaching Assistant (nomination)**, UCSB Academic Senate 2013
- Excellence in Teaching (honorable mention)**, UCSB Graduate Student Association 2013

Academics

- Block Grant Award**, UC Santa Barbara, Department of Education 2009-2015
- Academic Senate Doctoral Student Grant**, UC Santa Barbara 2014
- Gevirtz Fellowship**, UC Santa Barbara, Department of Education 2014

SERVICE

University & Community

Representative , English Education and Writing Studies Faculty Search Committee	2014-2015
Representative , UC Systemwide Committee on International Education	2012
Proposal Reviewer , Writing Research Across Borders (WRAB) II	2011
Member , UCSB Education Abroad Program Director Search Committee	2011
Representative , UC Academic Senate Committee on Academic Freedom	2009-2010

Student Advocacy & Campus Climate

Organizer , Student Panels, Office of International Students and Scholars	2013-2014
Mentor , Friendship Program, Office of International Students and Scholars	2011-2012
Vice President , Communication and Records, Graduate Student Association	2010-2011
Representative , Graduate Student Association in Education	2009-2010

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Association for Applied Linguistics (AAAL)
California and Nevada Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (CATESOL)
College Composition and Communication (CCC)
Council of Writing Program Administrators (CWPA)
Modern Language Association (MLA)
National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)
Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)

OTHER PROFESSIONS

Technical Writer , <i>UC Santa Barbara College of Letters and Science</i>	2016
Substitute Yoga Teacher , <i>Ashtanga Yoga Shala</i> , Santa Barbara, CA	2009-present
Program Advisor , <i>Yoga Works Teacher Training</i> , UC Santa Barbara	Summer 2012
Regional Teacher Manager , <i>Yoga Works</i> , Los Angeles, CA	2007-2009
Yoga Teacher , <i>All levels</i> , Yoga Works and privately, Los Angeles, CA	2007-2009
Writer , <i>Infosearch Media</i> , Culver City, CA	2007
Writer , <i>Freelance</i> , Los Angeles, CA	2007
Product Specialist , <i>Gucci</i> , Neiman Marcus, Beverly Hills, CA	2005-2007
Clientele Specialist , <i>Neiman Marcus</i> , Beverly Hills, CA	2004-2007
Newsroom Assignment Editor and Planner , <i>CFN 13</i> , Orlando, FL	2003-2004
Writer and Events Manager , <i>Rowland Publishing</i> , Tallahassee, FL	2002-2003

ABSTRACT

Dual Enculturation: A Comparison of Five L2 Students Writing for One General Education
Course

by

Kara Elise Otto

This dissertation investigates five international undergraduate students writing two papers for a single disciplinary course. The course is dually classified as meeting a pre-major requirement and a general education writing requirement. Disciplinary contexts classified as general education often involve resistant students whom identify with other disciplines, but are forced into enrollment by institutional requirement. This means students must adopt sometimes-contrasting thinking and writing perspectives. In the case of large courses featuring competitive assessment, this may become especially problematic – particularly for non-native speakers of English – because rationales for disciplinary distinction may be even more obscured by other academic, institutional, linguistic, or cultural concerns. Courses of this type tend not to be researched in prior studies of second language writing.

This dissertation relies upon qualitative methods of data collection – particularly text-based interviewing - in asking: (1) How do L2 international students interpret and approach writing assignments in a general education, social science course? (2) What strategies and resources do they use in the writing process, and where do they come from? These questions are important because they lend heterogeneity to populations of international students increasing on U.S. college campuses, and because they may debunk tendencies to group students as more similar than they actually may be – particularly in disciplinary contexts where instructors lack expertise in both writing instruction and L2 student writing.

Furthermore, studies of L2 students engaged in disciplinary writing lag behind those investigating general composition classrooms, and studies that do investigate L2 students in disciplinary situations tend not to focus upon several writers in the same course. Researchers further tend to make use of their own subjects. Finally, the field of second language writing is new, developing theoretically, and still influenced by its parent fields. As such, studies tend to under-theorize and there is a need for theoretical development from within the field.

Findings from this study garner support for the use of sociohistoric theory as an emergent, analytical tool capable of explaining L2 writers' diverse practices in disciplinary contexts; however, in stemming from this analytical frame, this study provides a new theoretical explanation called *dual enculturation*. This term bridges key empirical priorities for two separate but related parent fields of second language writing: composition and applied linguistics. Importantly, this term derives from students' perspectives - whether accurate or not - that they somehow struggled additionally with assigned writing tasks because of their NNES status. Students' reports indicated that they managed additional writing difficulties, which they presumed were otherwise absent in the experiences of their NES peers enrolled in the same course. Dual enculturation represents writing tensions reported across the five international students. Students believed that their written texts could not focus exclusively upon competence in social science writing. Instead, students reported an additional and sometimes conflicting responsibility to demonstrate competence in academic writing as a separate but equally important discipline, and one they equated with knowledge of the L2 language and culture. Finally, additional findings point toward the nature of feedback absorption as systemically acquired, rather than within a local or immediate writing context teachers might assume.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction	1
<i>Problems Specific to Educating International Students in U.S. Contexts</i>	1
<i>Problems of Theory and Context</i>	2
<i>Problems with Disciplinary Writing Instruction</i>	3
<i>Problems with General Education Coursework</i>	5
<i>Important Terms</i>	7
<i>Research Motivation</i>	7
<i>Summary of Research and Chapters</i>	9
Chapter 2: Literature Review	10
<i>Introduction</i>	10
<i>A Review of Selected Empirical Studies</i>	12
Studies of One Writer in One Course.	15
Studies of One Writer Across Several Courses.	18
Studies of Several Writers in Several Courses.	22
Studies of Several Writers in One Course.	27
Overview of the Impacts of Selected Studies.	31
<i>Theories of Writing in Disciplinary Contexts</i>	33
Current Approaches to Conceptualizing Disciplinary Writing.	34
Early Theories of L2 Writing.	36
Influences from L1 Theories of Writing: Process and Context.	37
Students, Genre, and Broader Conceptualizations of Context.	39
Conceptual Debates Over the Nature of Disciplines.	43
Activity Theory.....	45

Theoretical Summary.....	47
Opportunities for further research.....	49
<i>Closing Summary</i>	53
Chapter 3: Methodology	54
<i>Introduction</i>	54
Confidentiality.....	55
<i>The Research Site</i>	55
Writing in the Course.....	55
A Compelling Site to Study.....	57
<i>Methodological Approach</i>	60
Interview Timing.....	61
Interview Structure and Analytic Memos.....	62
Cross-Cultural Interviewing.....	62
Interview Topics.....	64
Retrospective Accounts of Writing.....	66
Context and talk around texts.....	66
Text-Based Interviewing.....	67
Collecting Texts.....	69
<i>Recruitment</i>	70
Recruitment Meetings.....	70
Selecting Participants.....	71
Compensation.....	72
<i>Data Collection</i>	74
The Pre-Interview Survey.....	74
The First Interview.....	78
The Second Interview.....	79

The Third Interview	81
<i>Data Analysis</i>	82
Transcribing Interviews	82
Coding.....	83
<i>Replication and Limitations</i>	86
<i>Participants</i>	87
Cai.....	89
Yilin.....	91
Yuriko.....	93
Quinn.....	95
Vivien.....	97
<i>Closing</i>	99
Chapter 4: Findings.....	102
<i>Introduction</i>	102
<i>Narrative of Quinn</i>	103
History with English Academic Writing.....	103
English academic writing in China.....	103
Preparing for English academic writing at the university.....	104
Other English academic writing experiences at the university.....	104
Self-evaluation of writing ability.....	104
Writing in the Social Science Course.....	105
Assignment one expectations.....	107
Assignment one process.....	108
Self-evaluation of assignment one.....	112
Assignment one assessment.....	114
Assignment two expectations.....	115

Assignment two process.....	115
Self-evaluation of assignment two.....	118
Assignment two assessment.....	120
Quinn’s Evaluation of Resources and Strategies.....	120
Quinn’s Self-Evaluation at the Course’s End.....	124
<i>Narrative of Yuriko</i>	124
English Academic Writing in Japan.....	124
Other English Academic Writing Experiences at the University.....	125
Self-Evaluation of Writing Ability.....	130
Writing in the Social Science Course.....	131
Assignment one expectations.....	133
Assignment one process.....	134
Self-evaluation of assignment one.....	137
Assignment one assessment.....	140
Assignment two expectations.....	141
Assignment two process.....	143
Self-evaluation of assignment two.....	147
Assignment two assessment.....	149
Yuriko’s Evaluation of Resources and Strategies.....	149
Yuriko’s Self-Evaluation at the Course’s End.....	151
<i>Narrative of Vivien</i>	151
English Academic Writing in China.....	151
Other English Academic Writing Experiences at the University.....	155
Self-Evaluation of Writing Ability.....	159
Writing in the Social Science Course.....	160
Assignment one expectations.....	161
Assignment one process.....	163

Self-evaluation of assignment one	167
Assignment one assessment.....	168
Assignment two expectations.....	173
Assignment two process.....	175
Self-evaluation of assignment two.....	180
Assignment two assessment.....	184
Vivien’s Evaluation of Resources and Strategies.....	185
Vivien’s Self-Evaluation at the Course’s End.....	187
<i>Narrative of Yilin.....</i>	<i>189</i>
English Academic Writing in China.....	189
Other English Academic Writing Experiences at the University.....	191
Self-Evaluation of Writing Ability.....	195
Writing in the Social Science Course.....	196
Assignment one expectations.....	197
Assignment one process.....	198
Self-evaluation of assignment one.....	202
Assignment one assessment.....	204
Assignment two expectations.....	206
Assignment two process.....	208
Self-evaluation of assignment two.....	213
Assignment two assessment.....	217
Yilin Evaluation of Resources and Strategies.....	217
Yilin’s Self-Evaluation at the Course’s End.....	218
<i>Narrative of Cai</i>	<i>218</i>
English Academic Writing in China.....	218
Other English Academic Writing Experiences at the University.....	220
Self-Evaluation of Writing Ability.....	224

Writing in the Social Science Course.....	226
Assignment one expectations.....	227
Assignment one process.....	229
Self-evaluation of assignment one.....	232
Assignment one assessment.....	234
Assignment two expectations.....	238
Assignment two process.....	240
Self-evaluation of assignment two.....	245
Assignment two assessment.....	247
Cai’s Evaluation of Resources and Strategies.....	247
Cai’s Self-Evaluation at the Course’s End.....	248
Chapter 5: Analysis	249
<i>Quinn’s Processes Across Papers One and Two</i>	<i>250</i>
<i>Quinn’s Challenges Across Papers One and Two</i>	<i>252</i>
<i>Yuriko’s Processes Across Papers One and Two</i>	<i>255</i>
<i>Yuriko’s Challenges Across Papers One and Two</i>	<i>256</i>
<i>Vivien’s Processes Across Papers One and Two.....</i>	<i>258</i>
<i>Vivien’s Challenges Across Papers One and Two.....</i>	<i>260</i>
<i>Yilin’s Processes Across Papers One and Two.....</i>	<i>263</i>
<i>Yilin’s Challenges Across Papers One and Two.....</i>	<i>264</i>
<i>Cai’s Processes Across Papers One and Two</i>	<i>267</i>
<i>Cai’s Challenges Across Papers One and Two</i>	<i>269</i>
Chapter 6: Emergent Theory	274
<i>Introduction.....</i>	<i>276</i>
Participation, Processes, and Activity.....	277
Meaning, Motive, and Literate Activity.....	278

Exposures and L2 Writers in Disciplinary Contexts.	280
<i>Analysis of Key Themes</i>	282
Writing Tasks as Texts.	285
Students’ Representations of the Task.....	291
Negotiating the Task.....	297
Situating the Writing Tasks.	307
<i>Concluding Remarks</i>	319
Chapter 7: Conclusion	322
<i>Theoretical Implication: Navigating the Language and Culture</i>	322
<i>Practical Implication: The Systemic Nature of Feedback</i>	325
<i>Summary</i>	326
<i>Limitations</i>	327
<i>Future Inquiry</i>	328
References	331
Appendix A	339
Appendix B	346
Appendix C	348
Appendix D	351
Appendix E	353
Appendix F	355
Appendix G	357
Appendix H	359
Appendix I	363

Appendix J	364
Appendix K	366
Appendix L	368
Appendix M	373

Chapter 1: Introduction

This dissertation study investigates international student writers in a single disciplinary context that is institutionally classified as both pre-major and general education because it satisfies an undergraduate writing requirement. Increased recruitment and admission of international students on college campuses correlates with educational challenges these students face, one of which involves academic writing in English as a foreign and second language. For these students, academic writing is often challenging and that is particularly the case in disciplinary contexts. Meanwhile, there is a need for increased scholarship in second language writing within disciplinary settings, and for the development and articulation of theory in the field of second language writing. Because research tends toward composition, less is known about second language, or international student, writers in disciplinary contexts – particularly how students in the same course similarly or differently navigate assigned writing. Less is also known about their responses to writing in large courses that feature competitive assessment not typical of small composition classrooms. Yet, recruitment and enrollment continue to increase, leaving questions as to how – or if – international students understand, navigate, and seek help for writing in specific disciplinary contexts. This chapter overviews important terms and issues surrounding the context of this dissertation study, including issues surrounding the site of study and participants. It also discusses my background, as this provides an explanation for the motivation to conduct research in this domain. It ends with the general purposes of research and related questions.

Problems Specific to Educating International Students in U.S. Contexts

There are benefits to increased international student enrollment in U.S. universities, but there are also challenges for these students because they are from foreign cultural and

educational contexts. Financial incentives benefit institutions and intercultural contact benefits all students' educations. Numbers of international undergraduate students continue to rise, and many universities have long-term plans and strategies for increasing enrollment patterns. However, these benefits are not without implication (Andrade, 2006). Students often struggle to relate or interact with domestic peers, and social adjustment remains uncertain, given homesickness and contrasts between the L1 (first language) and L2 (second language) culture. While language issues are often cited as a primary struggle for international students, "some evidence suggests that 'language problems' may actually be culturally based ways of seeing the world (Andrade, 2006, p. 143). While culturally based ways of seeing the world are not homogeneous for a given group of students, language issues could be especially problematic with writing because professors may lack sensitivity to culturally based styles of communication, and development of campus support services may lag behind increases in international student enrollment.

Problems of Theory and Context

Compared to its parent fields (i.e. composition and applied ESL), the field of second language writing is far younger, interdisciplinary, and still developing theoretically. Thus, the field tends to borrow theoretically from its parent fields (Belcher & Hirvela, 2010). However, more diverse inquiries are needed to gain greater theoretical consensus when borrowing theories. At this stage of the field's development, identifying useful frameworks for theorizing second language writing is tantamount because of tendencies toward under-articulation.

Meanwhile, studies of L2 writing tend to focus within composition, rather than disciplinary, contexts (Hyland, 2013). Thus, more can be known about writing in highly

specialized disciplinary circumstances where less may be known of students' writing choices (Bazerman, 2013; Prior, 1998). As Prior (1998) describes this, "To make such practices visible, it is necessary to examine them in non-routine use, in development as relative newcomers are learning them" (p. xiii). Perspectival accounts can certainly contribute to what could be known about L2 writers in disciplinary settings, particularly because such contexts are "barely charted," (Bazerman, 2013, p. 198). Taken together, the need for theorization in L2 writing can further be supported by exploring students in less documented circumstances, and under conditions less typical of those critiqued in the forthcoming literature review chapter.

Problems with Disciplinary Writing Instruction

Students frequently struggle with disciplinary writing tasks for a variety of reasons. Instructors across the disciplines – herein referred to as disciplinary instructors across the disciplines - do not specialize in writing, yet they assign it in their courses alongside the content knowledge they do specialize in. Disciplinary instructors tend to favor field-specific conventions for writing (Hyland, 2013; Zawacki & Habib, 2010), yet expectations remain largely implicit (Atkinson & Ramanathan, 1995; Hyland, 2013; Zawacki & Habib, 2010), leaving students uncertain of what is expected of them and how to carry out related requirements in their writing. Although writing is also a discipline of study (Adler-Kassner & Wardle, 2015), teachers across other disciplines often assume writing is a natural skill; students either already possess this skill, or they will learn it through incidental exposure across varied disciplinary contexts such as their own. Direct instruction is often lacking because, "while teachers may expect students to mimic academic language and conventions, they typically do not explain that expectation to students because they have not reflected

themselves on the processes by which writers gain fluency in a field” (Zawacki & Habib, 2010, p. 65). Additionally, they do not see writing as a distinct discipline, although they frequently use writing in student instruction or assessment and through their own performance of discipline-specific practices. In the case of research universities, disciplinary teachers assign writing, but fail to teach it and avoid writing interactions with students because they instead see themselves as content specialists (Hyland, 2013), and thus do not identify with the writing components of tasks they assign. As one disciplinary faculty member participating in a study of student writing commented, “We shouldn’t fool ourselves. We need to understand that this is a research university where the expectations are quite clear. Research is at the top. Teaching is number two” (Hyland, 2013, p. 250). Thus, disciplinary writing instruction can be even more problematic in research universities where faculty perceive themselves at some distance from the tasks they assign.

Struggles may be more pronounced for international students as non-native speakers of English, particularly because instructors across the disciplines are accustomed to working with native English speakers (NES), meaning instructors lack training in working with diverse student writers (Ferris, Brown, Liu, & Stine, 2011). Teachers across the disciplines are known to find fault with L2 students’ ability and motivation (Atkinson & Ramanathan; Fishman & McCarthy, 2001; Hyland, 2013) or first language influences (Carson & Nelson, 1994; Fishman & McCarthy, 2001; Hyland, 2013; Zawacki & Habib, 2010), rather than questioning their own teaching practices. These faultfinding tendencies frequently result in referrals to campus support services, despite persistent faculty misconceptions about how such resources work with non-native English speaking (NNES) student writers (Ferris et al., 2011; Herrington & Curtis, 2000). Faculty misunderstanding of NNES students and campus

resources is correlated with perceptions of students as homogeneous (Ferris, Brown, Liu, & Stine, 2011). It is no wonder that NNES suffer from negative self-perceptions in disciplinary writing situations (Fishman & McCarthy, 2001; Herrington & Curtis, 2000), especially for those whom used to feel confident writing in their L1 (Zawacki & Habib, 2010).

L2 students respond to disciplinary writing struggles using resources and strategies that are both observable and tacit (Leki, 1992; Leki, 1995). They may rely upon institutionally sanctioned resources for writing, as with writing center use or attending office hours. Alternately, other strategies may be less observable, as with selecting majors to avoid writing (Cumming, 2006; Fishman & McCarthy, 2001; Johns, 1991; Leki, 1992; Spack, 2004), or less sanctioned, as with manipulating support systems (Leki, 1992; Leki, 1995; Spack, 2004), or passively accommodating to assignment demands (Leki, 1992; Leki, 1995). These behaviors frequently operate outside of instructor awareness, and issues of L2 student struggle and the means deployed to overcome such struggles are likely exacerbated in large enrollment courses assigned general education status.

Problems with General Education Coursework

Leki (2001) argued that writing may bear little, no, or great significance to L2 students' academic lives. Highly engaged students deploy writing strategies and resources as a means of advancing disciplinary identification (Cumming, 2006; McCarthy, 1987; Prior, 1998; Spack, 2004). These students often sense compatibility between their goals for writing and those of the instructor, assignment, or discipline (Cumming, 2006; Prior, 1998).

Disengaged students often lack motivation for engaging with writing assignments (Cumming, 2006; Fishman & McCarthy, 2001; Johns, 1991; Leki, 1992; McCarthy, 1987), often tolerating writing insofar as it fulfills institutional requirements (Fishman & McCarthy,

2001; Leki, 1992; Prior, 1998; McCarthy, 1987; Thaiss & Zawacki, 2006). For these less engaged students, their use of strategies and resources may facilitate academic survival, rather than the kind of intellectual engagement with disciplinary writing tasks instructors would hope for. Disciplinary teachers tend to focus writing goals within the context of their assignment, course, and discipline and assume students share this view. In reality, some L2 students see beyond the immediate writing situation and question how seemingly benign writing tasks interact with their linguistic, cultural, professional, and academic sense of self (Cumming, 2006). This departure results in misaligned goals for writing, often because students engage in various worlds more or less aligned with those of the immediate writing situation.

Russell and Yanez (2003) problematize student engagement with writing tasks in disciplinary contexts that also satisfy general education requirements. They argued that while teachers want students to appreciate their discipline's ways of writing and thinking – to essentially emulate specialist behavior – students are non-specialists enrolled for general education credit. Because teacher-student goals often contrast in general education writing courses, students often do not understand teachers' goals for writing, and instead write these off as arbitrary. As Russell and Yanez (2003) claimed, “They must not only learn new ways of writing but also learn when to ignore what they have learned about writing elsewhere—even when the terms used to discuss writing seem the 'same'” (p. 358). For some students, writing in general education courses is especially problematic because of overlapping commitments where students act as a member of one discipline, their major, but are forced to interact with other disciplines per institutional writing requirements. As Leki (2001) also pointed out, disciplines are often not personally significant for L2 students in the way that

they are for teachers. Thus, they are also not transparent for students in the way that they are for teachers, leading many students to a strong sense of alienation when engaging with disciplinary writing tasks for general education credit. Culture and nationality can further create divides for students engaging with general education writing tasks (Russell & Yanez, 2003).

Important Terms

This study investigates international student writers in a non-writing disciplinary context, but one that uses writing as a significant means of assessment. International students are “enrolled in institutions of higher education...on temporary student visas and are non-native English speakers (NNES)” (Andrade, 2006, p. 134). As these students are non-native speakers of English, herein they are similarly referred to as second language writers (a.k.a. L2 writers) specifically because all participants knew only two languages. As evidenced by the next chapter, literature deals with NNES subjects, sometimes classified as L2, NNES, multilingual, or international students. The reasons for these distinctions are political and beyond the interests of the present study; however, in short, recent trends indicate a move towards the term *multilingual*, because L2 implies not only a false sense of limited linguistic engagement, but also positions English as more important than other languages NNES students may know (Zawacki & Habib, 2010). Still, subjects in the present study knew only two languages; it thus seems more accurate to refer to my subjects as L2 because English is the second and only language they acquired after their native tongue.

Research Motivation

In happening upon a teaching opportunity with international students early in graduate school, I found their experiences resonated with me: the excitement of a new

adventure, the intimidation, the opportunity, and the desire to succeed academically, socially, and culturally. I became particularly interested in their writing, as I noticed these students exhibited a wide range of preparedness for university writing, and sensed campus resources could better support these students.

As a doctoral student studying writing studies and applied ESL, my research is informed by own life and teaching experiences. By the time I finished twelfth grade, I had attended three elementary schools in three different regional districts, two middle schools in two different states, and three high schools in three different states. I am not sure which came first –my sense of resourcefulness, or the constantly changing educational contexts that demanded this from me – but I relied heavily upon myself in navigating new district rules, teachers, classmates, subjects, and cultures. I attended schools in the Midwest, Deep South, and in areas that were a hybrid of Southern-Midwest. Schools were urban, incredibly diverse, and massive in size; others were suburban and welcoming, and still others seemed out of step with time. These varied experiences sensitized me to how schools support new students, as I was constantly new and readjusting to the educational and cultural contexts I entered.

This study is not only informed by my personal history, teaching background, and former professions, but it is also informed by my current program of study. I have former training and work experience in journalism and professional writing. As such, I am infinitely interested in the accounts people share with me. This also means I lean towards interviewing as a means of collecting the stories I tell. Of course, who I am and what I study shapes how I see the world. My interests in social interaction via teaching and communication of expectations guide the problems I articulate as a researcher and the solutions I draw from what I see. Inevitably, these stances blind me to certain alternatives.

Summary of Research and Chapters

This dissertation investigates L2 international student writers writing in a challenging disciplinary context. The dissertation both argues the usefulness of a theory from writing studies that acts as the analytic method for explaining observed phenomena, while also generating findings that provide a new theoretical insight. This new concept bridges concerns from composition with applied ESL, but from the genesis of a study within the younger field of second language writing. As such, it seeks to address issues of under-theorization, exploration of workable theory from other fields, and development of theory from within second language writing studies.

The dissertation involves several qualitative methods of data collection, of which interviewing (specifically text-based interviewing) is most central, given my intention to collect and compare diverse perspectival accounts of student writing in the same course. Theory is emergent, and I hope my theoretical contribution can be of further use in studies of second language writing. This dissertation is organized by first reviewing relevant studies and theories of L2 writing before detailing my methodology. From there, a more comprehensive findings chapter paves the way for a selected, focused analysis and discussion of emergent theory. Finally, I conclude my work by discussing future projects and implications of my work. Before proceeding further, the primary research aims of this project include:

- (1) How do L2 international students interpret and approach writing assignments in a general education, social science course?*
- (2) What strategies and resources do they use in the writing process, and where do they come from?*

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The proceeding literature review progresses by first detailing empirical work relevant to the issue of L2 student writers in non-writing disciplinary contexts that use writing as some means of assessment or assignment. Correspondingly, this literature review provides some brief insights gained from the inclusion of selected studies before next moving to important theoretical contributions. At the close of this section, suggestions are made for future research, based upon reviewed studies and theories. This chapter concludes by transitioning to the purpose of the present dissertation study.

Introduction

Included studies share a social approach in investigating factors beyond the immediate text, as with writers' histories, educations, or engagement in overlapping worlds, which these researchers believe are equally capable of impacting writing in an immediate context. Studies consider assignment interpretation, reliance upon resources of help, or other social factors influencing writing processes. The core idea in investigating writing as a social process is that the text is not the central point of explanation, although it may be significant in illustrating how other factors mediate text production. Thus, process is important - not just product - and process often includes aspects far beyond the immediate location, timeframe, and writing task. A social approach to studying writing can reveal fissures, incompatibilities, and similarities between past and present writing situations; furthermore, it is very useful in describing such phenomena from the perspective of participants. As such, this approach uncovers and explains diverse writing practices in seemingly similar writing situations (Woodard, 2015). This heterogeneity is crucial because it helps researchers from composition and second language writing better articulate why writers think and respond differently to

similar writing situations where one could assume understanding ought to be shared. However, many studies limit the richness of heterogeneous explanations by not sufficiently addressing multiple writers in one context for writing where shared understanding may be especially taken for granted. In the case of international students increasing on college campuses in the U.S., social approaches to studying writing are particularly important in establishing distinctions among groups of students too easily grouped as similar. Such misperceptions could be particularly likely in large, general education courses where students greatly outnumber their instructors, thus limiting social contact in a way that generates perceptions of homogeneous students. While included studies from L2 writing may share a social approach with those from composition, there is inconsistency in describing underlying theories and how they might be useful in future work.

Included studies (1) help to illustrate a need for comparative studies of L2 writers writing in the same disciplinary course; (2) illustrate the strengths of a social orientation to studying writing; (3) derive from both composition and second language writing, which represent the two fields guiding the present study; (4) sometimes lack direct theoretical explanation; and (5) reveal research tendencies that frame the present dissertation study. For example, researchers have not addressed high-stakes, disciplinary contexts like the one investigated in this dissertation, researchers may rely upon the convenience of their own students, and they often do not specify which kind of L2 or international student they are researching. When they do research international students, terms may be unclear or different than those bounding my own study, thereby creating an opportunity for explication and differentiation. In sum, these studies set the foundation for my own research.

A Review of Selected Empirical Studies

The literature review includes studies of disciplinary writing; however, while each study details writers in disciplinary settings, other factors differ. One difference is that some studies will consider student experiences writing across the disciplines in light of incompatibility with prior composition (Cumming, 2006; Fishman & McCarthy, 2001; Herrington & Curtis, 2000; Leki, 1995; McCarthy, 1987; Spack, 119; Spack, 2004) or ESL coursework (Cumming, 2006; Fishman & McCarthy, 2001; Leki, 2005; Spack, 1997; Spack, 2004). These studies are helpful because they attend to more than just one immediate course experience by taking some degree of interest – whether through direct inquiry, or through subjects’ feedback – in acknowledging the relationship between university writing courses and university disciplinary courses that also include a writing component. Therefore, these studies consider how learners’ prior writing experiences might impact their later writing for a disciplinary context.

Studies include primarily second language or multilingual subjects, but some also deal with first language subjects because the work is applicable to framing the present dissertation study, whether through use of similar methods (Hyland, 2000), or by generating findings that also implicate the L2 student’s experience (Thaiss & Zawacki, 2006). In some cases, an L1 study served as an important and very early starting point in considering the experiences of students writing across the curriculum (McCarthy, 1987), or, in the case of later studies, new theoretical contributions enriched explanations of L1 students’ disciplinary writing experiences (Russell & Yanez, 2003) in ways that could also be applicable for NNES learners. Despite these studies detailing the L1 student experience, they were still significant in generating new thinking about students writing for disciplinary contexts.

Beyond the inclusion of L1 subjects, other populations of study – such as research on graduate students or professionals writing in the disciplines – also carry relevance to the present dissertation. In some cases, these are also international students (Prior, 1998), whereby they may arguably share commonalities with other populations of international students – perhaps even those at the undergraduate level. Otherwise, there may be important departure points worthy of further investigation. For similar reasons, studies of experienced, disciplinary experts writing for contexts they are accustomed to (Hyland, 2000) can not only contribute methodologically, but these inquiries can also articulate instructor expectations for writing that have been noted elsewhere as lacking (Thaiss & Zawacki, 2006). In understanding how more advanced writers navigate disciplinary writing, two things are possible: (1) the entry-level undergraduate experience can be better understood, as advanced writers generally teach the disciplinary courses undergraduates take, and (2) there may be both interesting parallels and contradictions present in the comparative experiences of advanced writers and less experienced undergraduates.

Finally, included studies are narrower or broader in scope. This means that some studies are more singular in focus, as with being attentive to one student in a single course (Fishman & McCarthy, 2001; Prior, 1998) or one student's experiences across several courses (Herrington & Curtis, 2000; McCarthy, 1987; Spack, 1997; Spack, 2004). For studies broader in scope, consideration is given to multiple students across several courses (Cumming, 2006; Hyland, 2000; Leki, 1995; Thaiss & Zawacki, 2006), or multiple students within a single course (Prior, 1998; Russell & Yanez, 2003). These studies indicate research tendencies, as with teachers taking on the role of researcher (Fishman & McCarthy, 2001; Spack, 1997; Spack, 2004) or a stronger focus on linguistic and cultural factors in writing

(Cumming, 2006; Fishman & McCarthy, 2001; Herrington & Curtis, 2000; Leki, 1995; Spack, 1997; Spack, 2004; Thaiss & Zawacki, 2006). Researchers' foci generally reflect their ontological stances and beliefs about writing development.

In sum, it is important to include literature of writing in the disciplines as experienced by different subjects with different language and experience levels, and across types of courses. Doing so provides a picture of how studies of disciplinary writing have taken shape, how prior inquiries were framed, and what kinds of information was sought. These studies were chosen for their diversity and unique contributions to understanding disciplinary writing. At times, these studies also represent seminal work. The studies proceed as follows: (1) studies of one writer in one course; (2) studies of one writer across several courses; (3) studies of several writers in several courses; and (4) studies of several writers in one course. Given the range of factors considered with each study's investigation into disciplinary writing, this categorization provides order, but it also illustrates interesting tendencies for this selection of research. First, when considered as separate factors, most studies investigated several courses, followed closely by several writers. Second, studies of several writers in several courses were most popular, followed by one writer in several courses. Table 1 shows these trends.

Table 1

Summary of Selected Studies

<i>Study Type</i>	<i>Amount</i>
One Writer in One Course	2
One Writer Across Several Courses	4
Several Writers in Several Courses	6
Several Writers in One Course	3

Although this is a selected sample, as table 1 shows, studies of several writers in several courses were most common and studies of several writers in one course occurred half as frequently. This helps justify the need for greater attention to several writers in a single disciplinary course.

Studies of One Writer in One Course. Prior (1998) studied how professor feedback impacted one international graduate student's writing choices, resistance, and perceptions of the goals for writing in one disciplinary course. One aim was to study how the student's understanding of professor feedback impacted subsequent interpretation and performance of writing assignments. Because this was one of a series of related studies, Prior developed a comprehensive, and often unique, methodology. He used questionnaires to understand how the student's participation in various academic and disciplinary communities might influence her writing. He further collected the student's writing assignments and related course documents to verify the student's reports of how assignments were represented and undertaken. The student brought texts to each interview to facilitate retrospective accounts of her writing process using text-based interviewing. In these interviews, the student recalled her understanding of professor feedback and how it impacted later writing. Prior used a unique interviewing method that he coined parallel discourse-based interviewing, which involved asking the student to consider hypothetical text alternatives, and to then explain her choices. In one instance, the student resisted text alternatives she had previously adopted in an earlier draft. The alternative was directly suggested in the professor's written feedback, however the subject forgot – and also forgot the influential element of instructor authority – thus, she refused the text alternative when it was again presented in the interview instead of via the professor's comments. These methods helped him illuminate how the professor's

feedback had influenced the student's writing choices, while also interacting with other variables from the student's background. Feedback was noted as a social implication in the revisions the student had previously chosen to make, but only because it was socially desirable when coming from the professor. Her later resistance "suggested tensions in her enculturation, particularly around issues of social identity and affiliation" (Prior, 1998, p. 237). Prior's variation in combining text-based interviewing with parallel discourse based interviewing expands the perspective of social influences as they interact with writing choices. While his subject was a multilingual international student, linguistic and cultural variables were not central in his work, even though his findings did illustrate the student's struggle to negotiate identity in the face of authoritative instructors and influential feedback. Furthermore, his work looked at a graduate student with degrees of disciplinary familiarity likely beyond that of an undergraduate student. His work was certainly helpful in illuminating social influences on writing choice, but it focused predominantly on the interactive role of feedback between a professor and student, rather than other resources of help that might also intervene in the writing process.

Fishman and McCarthy (2001) provided one of the earliest inquiries of an ESL undergraduate student managing issues of resistance, cultural incompatibility, and comprehension in order to write for a disciplinary - rather than a composition - context. Prior to their work, literature gaps failed to address ESL students in disciplinary contexts; literature also did not capture the disciplinary instructor's perspective of ESL students. The case study included a single writer, Indian international student Neha Shah. The study followed Shah post-composition and forced into an introductory-level, writing intensive course per graduation requirements that was quite incompatible with not only her math major, but also

her culture. From the outset, the student expressed a strong dislike of writing, an overall lack of engagement, and inaccurate perceptions that the philosophy course and professor would function as forgivingly as the last composition course she had taken. The study relied upon the writing centers observation interviews, text collection, and talk around texts involving both the professor and her student. The student's initial feedback revealed her grade was in jeopardy: she struggled to comprehend and complete course readings, spent increasing amounts of time trying to master course content, and found course terms daunting when trying to apply them in writing assignments. Additionally, she reported she was unable to rely on her misperceptions of the course as compatible with first-year composition, and further found composition instruction inapplicable to the unfamiliar disciplinary context for writing. To save her grade, the student adjusted her use of resources, relying upon the writing center for weekly visits, in-the writing centers peer support, and changing the assumptions she had previously held about the course and professor. As a result of the student's actions, her writing and understanding of American culture improved. Findings indicated how her level of engagement progressed through changes in cognition, interaction, and behavior. Since the study also included the professor's point-of-view, it was significant in demonstrating how L2 students and teachers could hold different, competing perspectives of disciplinary writing. Fishman had little experience working with ESL students, yet held similar expectations of his NES students and Shah. His feedback indicated he was unprepared for working with an ESL writer, as he struggled in assessing her work and determining whether to forgive grave errors and pass her, or force her to learn by grading her more harshly. He often preferred referring her to the writing center for help.

Importantly, Fishman and McCarthy's (2001) study revealed struggles with comprehension, interpretation, time management, and the use of writing resources experienced by L2 students in disciplinary contexts, and it further showed how these challenges could inhibit student writing – even though such struggles were often overlooked as aspects of assigned writing tasks. Their work considered more than just the student's text in investigating how interpretation, interaction with others, and modified practices could not only stem from prior writing experiences, but also shift within a new disciplinary context. Their work was also significant because it accounted for an ESL student's experiences post-composition, and the student's perception of incompatibility between composition and disciplinary writing. It was an important early study, however it considered just one student's experience, limiting the heterogeneous comparison findings possible by comparing more than one L2 subject in the same course. Similarly, their student entered the course goals focused on satisfying graduate requirements, and she was thereby highly unmotivated, although she eventually engaged. This is a specific type of student, and one clearly motivated by grades, which affects the study's ability to apply elsewhere, as with situations where a L2 student may be engaged for reasons beyond institutional requirement. Finally, Shah's point of view was less central than Fishman's as her instructor.

Studies of One Writer Across Several Courses. Spack's (1997; 2004) longitudinal study considered one L2 undergraduate student's process of writing and related use of resources as her literacy development progressed across a series of courses. The student, Yuko, engaged with reading and writing tasks both in composition, where Spack was her instructor, and across various disciplines at the university. Spack used interviews with Yuko and faculty, analytic memos, and text analysis to emphasize the social and personal contexts

for the literacy decisions Yuko made over time, as influenced by her former education, background, and other writing experiences. Additionally, the subject brought her own texts to the discourse-based interviews, which helped to articulate her thought process during writing, her perceptions of instructor feedback, and how she strategized writing assignments. Acting as teacher-researcher, Spack was concerned with triangulating her impressions with Yuko's and those of the other instructors Yuko had.

While Yuko had initially struggled in her pre-major introductory course and dropped it to major in economics, she later returned to it because of learning how to navigate social and educational resources (Spack, 1997; Spack, 2004). Initially, Yuko had felt overwhelmed in trying to comprehend U.S. cultural knowledge and vocabulary embedded in the course, as well as not being able to keep up with the lecture pace, readings, or the longest paper assignment she had ever written. Furthermore, she was intimidated by her NES peers, disengaged in discussion section, and became avoidant of courses with heavy reading and writing. Over time, Yuko's ongoing university experiences with reading and writing informed her own perspective of literacy development and how she then went about modifying strategies to support it. She began using strategies learned in her ESL course with Spack and sought connections with professors, TAs, and NES and NNES peers. Yuko's rationales for her initial difficulty with writing changed as her perspective of writing and herself as a writer also changed. She also discussed how her increased awareness and ability to learn was directly facilitated by her involvement in the research project. Thus, she returned to the major she had once abandoned.

The study had both strengths and weaknesses. It emphasized multiple influences on Yuko's literacy development and highlighted resources of help as influential to students'

composing processes. It further demonstrated the importance of L2 students negotiating disciplinary discourse strategically and actively so that they avoid majors having “less to do with their interest and more to do with their inadequate preparation” (Spack, 2004, p. 35) in highlighting challenges these students face in pre-major courses. However, Spack’s work was also limiting. Spack was heavily involved – and possibly very influential – as one of Yuko’s immediate instructors. Spack’s findings are also limited to Yuko’s experience, as she was likely motivated to perform well in the eyes of her instructor, and admitted benefitting greatly from her ongoing and required reflections. The findings further do not account for the variability across L2 students enrolled in a single disciplinary course. Furthermore, Yuko had attended one year of U.S. high school prior to university, which comprises a different educational preparation than with students arriving to college directly from their home country, and she also had a high TOEFL score.

Other research has pointed out the psycho-emotional identity challenges of L2 writers composing in disciplinary contexts. Nam was one subject in Herrington and Curtis’ (2000) study. In interviews and through observations and text collection, Nam struggled greatly with a sense of incompatibility between his L1 linguistic and cultural values and those of the L2 disciplinary settings in which he wrote. In noting a disjuncture between his writing experiences in composition and those of the disciplines he wrote in, Nam was hyper-aware of his linguistic ability and made negative comparisons about his own ability to write versus that of his NES peers. Furthermore, Herrington and Curtis’ research revealed that Nam struggled to comprehend expectations for writing across courses, making him feel unintelligent, isolated among NES peers, and insecure. He also experienced struggles characteristic of many L2 writers in disciplinary settings: an inability to complete writing

assignments on time, comprehension issues with disciplinary vocabulary, and identity conflict. Initially, Nam's resisted writing tasks, as he felt they compromised his sense of self. However, over time, he came to appreciate the varied contexts for writing, understood writing as specialized within disciplines, and no longer saw himself as less capable than his NES peers. Herrington and Curtis' work illustrated how an L2 student's identity is infused with their personal history, values, and goals for writing, and that identity is renegotiated in disciplinary settings. Some students may initially resist, as Nam did, whereas others will integrate, especially when believing their identity is compatible with that of the discipline. Herrington and Curtis' work clarifies the non-neutral experience of disciplinary writing for L2 writers, and the psychological and emotional frustration faced when they observe incompatibility between composition courses and disciplinary writing. Their work also traced one L2 student's path from disengagement, or resistance, to engagement. While it accounted for Nam's own self-conceptualization as a writer in the disciplines, it was less direct in accounting for other social influences (such as peers, instructors, and tutors), and how these helped Nam navigate the various obstacles he faced.

McCarthy's (1987) seminal study was a first in examining a student writing across the curriculum, and arguing for attention to the social aspects of writing in order to better understand students' processes of engagement. The research followed an L1 student, Dave, as he wrote for mainstream composition, poetry, and a biology the writing centers for his major. Dave and his professors were interviewed in conjunction with text analysis, observation, and compose aloud protocols. Dave's experiences indicated how otherwise successful writing strategies might not translate across disciplines. Dave relied upon various strategies like deciphering implied expectations, making use of learning from other writing

experiences, and relying upon text models; however, he consistently avoided professor contact. As with L2 students, Dave's experiences in one course correlated with frustrated attempts to acquire a language he sensed as unique to that discipline. McCarthy further described Dave's better writing experiences as evolving from disciplinary conventions that were "mutually understood and valued by Dave and his teacher," making him "more successful in figuring out and producing the required discourse." (p. 255). McCarthy argued that writing contexts, socially constructed meanings, and interactions differ widely across classrooms, comparing students' experiences to that of individuals learning a new language in foreign countries. However, McCarthy's noted that Dave was actually in a privileged position in terms of his potential for success in this 'figuring out' process" (p. 262) because was an experienced NES writer who shared assumptions about education with his teachers and was of a similar ethnicity. Other students could have been less privileged in uncovering the strategies Dave used if they did not share similar backgrounds with their teachers. While McCarthy focused on an L1 student, the findings implicated issues for L2 students whom would likely share in some of Dave's frustrated experiences. McCarthy's focus on social interactions also helped to elevate disciplinary writing investigations beyond the point of text.

Studies of Several Writers in Several Courses. Discourse-based interviewing is able to provide detailed perspectival accounts of a writer's social interactions surrounding their writing. Hyland (2000) combined it with other methods and implemented DBI as the second stage in his interview process in order to explain the rationales subjects had for making writing choices at specific points in their texts. In studying established disciplinary writers composing in their first language, Hyland was interested in how rhetorical choice

reflected academic discipline. He asked subjects to consider the meanings and motivations behind choices they made, in addition to providing self-evaluations of the effectiveness of their writing. He argued that DBI moves analysis closer to the writer's perspective and that a writer's perspective is activated in writing tasks they complete. Furthermore, DBI is a strong method for understanding writing choices because it attends to the social and cultural influences guiding a writer's choices. Hyland's work is useful in illustrating how DBI can gather information about the social influences impacting a writer's choices. However, he worked with established, L1 writers whom were accustomed to the discipline they were writing for. Therefore, task comprehension was not a significant variable in the choices his writers made.

Cumming (2006) used activity theory in a series of studies with forty-five L2 students and fourteen teachers from eleven courses. His methodology included case studies, questionnaires, interviews, and retrospective think aloud protocols. Importantly, Cumming identified literature gaps in the transition of L2 students from freshman composition to disciplinary writing, as well as gaps between disciplinary writing and writing intensive courses. He noted that L2 writing research lacked attention to student engagement with writing tasks as students transitioned between ESL and disciplinary writing.

While Cumming (2006) studied a variety of courses, the most relevant differences were found between ESL and disciplinary courses pertinent to students' majors. In mainstream disciplinary courses, students were expected to be rhetorically and linguistically competent in writing. Unlike their ESL counterparts, disciplinary teachers did not see themselves as resources for student writing, offering less support and designing single-draft assignments. While disciplinary teachers saw themselves as resources for content, ESL

teachers saw themselves as resources for writing, scaffolding assignments, focusing on transferrable skills, and encouraging student-teacher interactions about writing. Cumming's work showed critical differences in the experiences L2 students had in ESL versus composition. Students' writing goals in ESL generally matched those of their professor and, across course type, students sought more help from ESL instructors than disciplinary instructors. Students also tended to rely upon ESL writing strategies. These differences helped to explain why many L2 students struggled to apply ESL learning in disciplinary writing contexts.

In one case study of two East Asian students with differing levels of engagement in the same disciplinary course, Cumming (2006) argued that L2 students participate in different activity systems, or discourse communities, which impact their goals for writing in specific contexts. From the outset, Kazuko exhibited a high level of engagement and wrote to both express her opinions and obtain grades, but disciplinary interaction deepened her sense of engagement and she re-focused her goals upon gaining membership to the disciplinary community, even going so far as to modify her own lexicon to that of the community. Kazuko was highly engaged because her chosen disciplinary community aligned with her goals. By contrast, Rihoko had a low level of engagement with writing, and was only motivated by grades. She switched majors upon encountering writing tasks. Cumming's findings show how students' goals reflexively respond to factors within activity systems. While this responsiveness in student behavior is helpful in explaining the writing choices students make, it has been argued elsewhere that discourse community is a false term implying consistency in practices, unification, and membership as a questionable concept. Still, Cumming's (2006) work did manage to examine L2 undergraduate students with

differing levels of engagement in the same course.

As with Prior's (1998) work on exposures, Cumming (2006) also observed interfering factors that led students to differently conceptualize writing assignments when compared with their instructors' perspectives. Students in one of his studies also assumed their goals for writing matched those of the course and professor. However, in Cumming's case, emphasis was placed on students' goals for writing in ESL and other university courses. Still, Cumming's work showed a mismatch of goals, assignment interpretation, and assessment purposes between L2 students and their teachers as reflected by engagement with different activity systems. Furthermore, Cumming's work attended to linguistic and cultural fixations, as he cited L1 interference in students' interpretation, organization, and thinking. While Cumming attended more directly to L2 students' linguistic and cultural challenges, these somewhat diminished his perspective of other social influences impacting their writing; his focus slanted toward discourse community participation. Findings more strongly implicated students' cognitive orientations from L1 interference and lessened the contribution of other factors perhaps equally or more salient.

Leki's (1995) landmark study of L2 students' writing strategies addressed a literature gap by focusing on four first-year international students writing across the curriculum, rather than in composition classes. Two students were undergraduates from Taiwan and France; the others were graduate students from China. Her qualitative methodology included interviews with the students and their professors, observations, text collection, and journals. Data indicated students relied upon strategies, which assisted their grasp of implied U.S. cultural knowledge: (1) interactions with peers and teachers, (2) rewriting prompts or rereading assignments, (3) relying on past writing experiences, (4) integrating current experiences or

feedback, (5) applying ESL writing training, (6) accommodating or resisting.

Accommodation and resistance reflected a lack of engagement, but resistance correlated with deliberately undermining the assignment's purpose. Leki showed that professors failed to realize that L2 students frequently misinterpret assignments, engage with writing tasks differently than intended, and that professors often rewarded resistance with high grades. Students fictionalized components of assignments, strategically attended office hours for help, sought classmate assistance, and relied upon L1 strategies to camouflage insecurities. Leki argued that ESL composition does not prepare international students for disciplinary writing challenges. L2 students have coping strategies for writing that are activated by engaging with unfamiliar genres and disciplines. Furthermore, students deployed and modified writing strategies in an intuitive manner, rather than receiving direct instructor guidance. Most importantly, Leki's (1995) research showed that professors lacked awareness of L2 students' strategies for writing, and that they did not realize how students' execution of writing tasks could contradict an assignment's goals. However, despite the new insights provided by Leki's work, it did not compare students' levels of engagement in a single course, as it spoke to more systemic issues of disciplinary writing.

Thaiss and Zawacki (2006) conducted a longitudinal study of engagement by studying undergraduate academic writing across the disciplines, and uncovering interesting findings about the use of non-standard conventions. They used individual and group interviews, surveys, and timed essays, and studied both students and instructors. Their work established stages of development for undergraduate disciplinary writers. Initially, students over-generalized academic writing conventions, assuming that, "the genres and conventions they [were] learning [would] apply from course to course and teacher to teacher within the

same discipline” (Thaiss & Zawacki, 2006, p. 123). Further, students did not readily see the distinction among disciplines and the genres they used. In encountering different writing goals and expectations across courses, students experience inconsistency, either blaming this on teacher idiosyncrasy, or realizing the distinctness of disciplines. Student reports reflected differing levels of engagement. Finally, their research also showed that writers could successfully employ non-standard writing if they had already acquired convention awareness. However, for L2 writers, this was less likely to be the case because linguistically and culturally different students would lack foundational understandings of academic writing and disciplinary conventions. Such cases tended to result in instructors discrediting L2 students’ work.

Studies of Several Writers in One Course. In a second study, Prior (1998) looked beyond cognition and ability in noting qualitative differences in the levels of engagement for two international graduate students writing in their degree-granting discipline. In studying their disciplinary enculturation, Prior’s sociohistoric framework used students’ texts and other social networks of activity to portray engagement and students’ related levels of disciplinary enculturation as quite heterogeneous. His study again included the professor’s perspective in further qualifying students’ various attitudes and behaviors that were indicative of engagement with disciplinary enculturation. Modes of participation varied: passing was the simple completion of required academic tasks; procedural display involved completing required academic tasks, but with greater engagement and attempts to learn or connect with significant and influential networks of activity, and; deep participation, whereby students acted as mature disciplinary community members. These modes were not mutually exclusive. Importantly, Prior found that one subject, Teresa, was deeply immersed

with senior community members, practices, and texts indicative of deep participation, whereas the other, Mai, had limited social networks and comprehension, which prohibited her from appearing as engaged. Furthermore, Mai's work was plagiaristic. Prior's findings indicated contrasts in how teachers and students interpret activities like writing as related to disciplinary enculturation, and it clearly described engagement as inclusive of social networks, rather than just focusing on cognition or ability. His study is relevant because it compares two students whom - while enrolled in the same course and for presumably the same purpose - exhibit heterogeneous engagement with required tasks. Furthermore, Prior accounted for the influences of social factors such as contact with peers or authoritative community members in showing how students rely upon these to navigate disciplinary writing tasks. While his study examined writers managing more than a single writing assignment, and it did account for cultural and linguistic challenges in comprehension and writing, it did not contain a variety of students enrolled for potentially different reasons. While his students' work and engagements differed, they still shared the same underlying purpose for enrolling in the course: they both sought disciplinary enculturation, and so were engaged from the start, even if his findings revealed barriers to engagement. This would likely contrast with the undergraduate disciplinary experience, especially those experiences specific to general education (Russel & Yanez, 2003).

A third study by Prior (1998) examined literate activity via multiple exposures, or the collection of various influences often tacitly mediating student writing. In showing the multiple interpretive aspects surrounding a single writing task, as with course documentation related to writing, students' and professors' competing interpretations of writing tasks, task negotiation, students' prior histories, feedback, and so on, Prior was able to again illustrate

important social variables influencing writing. Prior looked at several graduate students enrolled in the same course, and Prior also considered the professor's point of view through observation, interviews and text analysis. However, text-based interviews were only conducted with the professor. A key finding that ran through each student's experience was heterogeneity because the students were such a diverse group that it allowed for varying interpretations and beliefs about the purpose of assignments, genre expectations, and the importance of involving helpful others in their work. Student work often appeared to represent different output for the same assignment with some exhibiting degrees of resistance. Prior attributed this to the various exposures, which, when combined, created heterogeneous texts. The heterogeneity demonstrated in investigating multiple students enrolled in a single graduate-level course for apparently the same reason helped to provide an in-depth look at writing activity in one disciplinary situation. Prior's approach again called attention to the social activities surrounding writing, moving beyond text, cognition, and ability. The course materials arguably indicated writing was both important and that expectations ought to be transparent, yet different exposures explained why student work diverged. Still, some of the student experience was missing, particularly since text-based interviews focused only upon the professor. Furthermore, the students were again graduate students enrolled by way of their MA program, and already exhibiting engagement with the course and disciplinary enculturation. Finally, several of the course's students were international students, yet that was not a central point of analysis in the study.

While Russell and Yanez's (2003) work is theoretically important for its combined genre systems and activity theory approach, it also used these theories to investigate undergraduate student engagement (or a lack thereof) in general education courses requiring

writing. Even though they studied three L1 students and their Irish history professor, the findings are important because they illustrated how students' disengagement could transition to engagement. One student, Beth, was particularly of interest because she, like the other students, was only motivated by grades and passing an institutionally imposed requirement. While she did enjoy writing and research in her discipline of study, she did not share the history instructor's disciplinary orientation, nor did she see how the course's writing was all that different from writing elsewhere. Over time, she realized differences in the instructor's preferences for writing, but found these at odds with her own professional beliefs and personal experiences. Yet, Beth overcame disengagement from a discipline into which she was forced by institutional requirement by seeking collaboration with the instructor. This illustrated the potential power of students acquiring social contact as a means of navigating challenging and often contradictory writing experiences in general education. However, as Russell and Yanez (2003) cautioned, "Other students were not so research-competent, grade-driven, or career-motivated that they were willing to endure the double binds and alienation of the general education contradiction long enough to transform the activity from doing school to doing some new activity, one with use value" (p. 357). This warning clarifies that Beth may be unique in navigating the challenges of incompatible disciplinary writing. While she initially struggled, perhaps her interest in writing and research helped her motivation to succeed. Furthermore, Russell and Yanez's three subjects were all L1 students. There may be added challenge for students from linguistically and culturally different backgrounds. For such students, the language and culture of U.S. academic writing and other disciplines may be incompatible.

Overview of the Impacts of Selected Studies. Although more or less explicit given which study is at hand, an important function of these studies is their collective ability to speak to writing as a social activity. As a social activity, writing and writers are therefore inherently heterogeneous, as writers are actors engaged in processes of composing that are influenced by a multitude of factors quite beyond the immediate words before them. And, as agents in their own learning, writers are equally influencing the social factors that surround their writing. This perspective carries both explanation and understanding beyond the level of text, individual cognition, individual ability, or even the immediate writing situation in explaining examined phenomenon. While these studies collectively establish the merit of a social approach to investigating L2 writers in disciplinary writing situations, social factors are not exclusive to those included by these studies. These studies show the range and potential strength of social factors capable of influencing how writers engage with writing processes in such contexts. Studies investigated a range of influential social factors, as with: instructor feedback and perception of student writing; impacts of composition or ESL on post-composition writing; writers' deliberate use of writing strategies or resources of help; identity formation and reformation through the vessel of disciplinary enculturation, and; how writing tasks activate any of these social factors for writers. The potential social factors capable of influencing L2 writers in disciplinary writing contexts is expansive and still in development.

For example, these studies not only redefined viable sites of writing inquiry, which included non-writing disciplinary settings, but they also made it clear that many L2 students balance the demands of discipline with language and culture, often resulting in conflated – or even competing - goals for writing (Cumming, 2006; Fishman & McCarthy, 2001;

Herrington & Curtis, 2000; Leki, 1995; Spack, 1997; Spack, 2004; Thaiss & Zawacki, 2006). However, while these studies' findings addressed language and culture as additional social factors mediating L2 student writing in the disciplines, this often arose as a corollary to more immediate purposes for research, likely resulting in a lack of explicit theoretical premises for such findings (e.g. Fishman & McCarthy, 2001; Leki, 1995; Spack, 1997; Spack, 2004; Thaiss & Zawacki, 2006). In cases where such realizations appeared corollary, there may have been less interest in developing adequate theoretical accounts to explain observed social phenomenon, as with the interaction of writing, language, and culture. Therefore, these studies indicate an interesting pattern where writing in non-composition contexts is mediated by discipline, and language and culture, yet theoretical explanations do not address such outcomes.

Under-theorization is one issue in studies of L2 writing (Belcher & Hirvela, 2010) also demonstrated here; its companion issues conceivably include convenience sampling of one's own students (e.g. Fishman & McCarthy, 2001; Spack, 1997; Spack, 2004), unclear descriptions of L2 subject qualifications for study inclusion (e.g. Fishman & McCarthy, 2001; Leki, 1995; Spack, 1997; Spack, 2004), inattention to sites featuring competitive assessment, as with large, general education courses (which none of the studies investigated), tendencies toward composition classrooms, rather than disciplinary settings (Hyland, 2013), and a lack of comparison among several writers engaged in the same course's writing demands. Only Prior (1998) and Russell and Yanez (2003) compared writers' experiences in the same disciplinary course, but Prior did not directly address linguistic and cultural issues and worked with graduate students, whereas Russell and Yanez focused on first language students.

While calls for research on the social influences impacting student writing indicate that such studies are likely to improve understanding of writers as heterogeneous (Woodard, 2015), which is a facet of understanding particularly important with increasingly diverse populations of international students, these studies indicate additional needs to reconsider research context and participant selection, the role of theory in explaining unexpected outcomes, and the need to develop heterogeneous understandings of students by looking more immediately at several L2 students in one disciplinary course.

Because second language writing is informed by its parent fields (Belcher & Hirvela, 2010), there may be a tendency to take study design and theory for granted when borrowing implicitly from more established and highly influential fields. Beliefs that social factors mediate writing processes and products are clearly influential, but not singular. Other interpretations exist, and these alternate paradigms may help to explain knowledge that appears to be taken for granted in research. To understand the fuller picture of knowledge influencing studies of second language writing and perhaps relevant in explaining tendencies to under-theorize taken for granted knowledge, it is necessary to discuss contributions from contrasting paradigms. This also clarifies why social paradigms of writing are important and privileged in the present dissertation study because alternate perspectives have contributed to the development of social paradigms.

Theories of Writing in Disciplinary Contexts

Before delving into a more detailed picture of the objectives research could now address, the next section explores theoretical approaches to studying writers in disciplinary settings because this is important in establishing where knowledge – even when not clearly articulated – may derive from. Upon conclusion of this theoretical overview, I then provide a

direction for the present dissertation study of L2 writers in light of both the preceding studies I have discussed, and with reference to the theoretical orientations discussed. In this manner, my dissertation study is more clearly contextualized by first providing a picture of important prior empirical work and its drawbacks, then discussing theoretical explanations of writing and writing in the disciplines, which may be embedded elsewhere, and finally clearly framing my dissertation study by trying to overcome limitations observed. As with the studies presented, theoretical orientations include both L1 and L2 writing, as L1 composition functions as one parent discipline for second language writing.

Current Approaches to Conceptualizing Disciplinary Writing. Approaches to disciplinary writing tend to also resonate with specific theoretical orientations suggested by views of learners and academic disciplines; however, some approaches derive from L1 writing research, whereas other derive from L2 writing research. For example, ESP (English for Specific Purposes) is tied to the work of applied linguists interested in improving instruction for L2 students. This theoretical and pedagogical approach purports that the isolation of specialized rhetorical moves in discipline-specific genres can facilitate writing progress (Bazerman et al., 2005; Swales, 1990). English for Academic Purposes (EAP) can function similarly in teaching academic discourse to NNES students. Theories of L1 composing arise elsewhere in instructional approaches, as with Writing Intensive (WI), Writing in the Disciplines (WID), and Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) courses. WI courses are frequently found in the general education requirements of university undergraduate curriculum. Though interest in these course types originated within L1 composition, disciplinary faculty generally teaches them. In these courses, sustained writing is thought to encourage improved student engagement with writing and disciplinary content.

By contrast, courses aligned with WID are housed in university writing programs, and are generally taught by writing program specialized faculty because these began as a kind of reform movement in better understanding student writing in varied academic contexts. Therefore, WID courses target improved student writing through investigating and providing instruction in the various kinds of specialized writing students encounter in different disciplines. Both WI and WID courses are of interest to writing programs, however the former tends to exhibit less connectedness with writing program faculty and composition research.

Though theoretically unlike in some ways, WID and its L2 counterpart, ESP, are still considered as part of WAC, in addition to writing-to-learn. WAC also began as a response to claims about the inadequacy of student writing. Although it is often seen as a strictly pedagogical orientation, it has roots in British and expressive writing theory. As both a theory and pedagogical orientation, WAC involves the coordination of specialized university writing centers interested in improving student preparedness for diverse disciplinary writing experiences. Nonetheless, while it originated in issues of university diversification and under-preparedness, WAC does not view students from a deficiency perspective. Finally, writing-to-learn examines cognitive development through the lens of engagement with academic writing, disciplinary content, and language socialization (Bazerman et al., 2005).

While WAC aligns more with L1 composition research and is useful with L2 or multilingual populations, critics point out that it presumes students will have enough mastery of English to focus upon transforming disciplinary knowledge. Hirvela (2011) argued that writing to learn disciplinary content, as synonymous with WAC, gave L1 NES students an advantage because of shared cultural and linguistic knowledge with instructors, which then

enabled greater access to disciplinary knowledge. He argued that L2 students would access disciplinary knowledge at a comparatively slower rate because they would hold false assumptions about the potential for L1-L2 transfer in non-composition disciplinary writing situations. Still, WAC theorists do account for key divergences between teacher and student that become useful in L2 contexts. For example, WAC is very attuned to student engagement in citing goal mismatch as a reason for contrasting interpretations and motivations. Student agency, or engagement, is a key principle of WAC, and it is particularly important because of related arguments that knowledge can lead to transformation of practice (Bazerman et al, 2005).

Cumulatively, these approaches to conceptualizing disciplinary writing implicate theoretical perspectives that are sometimes different. Still, each approach invests considerable attention in student engagement with disciplinary writing tasks by questioning what learning looks like, and how disciplinary socialization is taught. Thus, despite their differences, these approaches share a basic assumption that students engaged with writing as a social process in disciplinary contexts.

Early Theories of L2 Writing. Silva and Matsuda's (2001) edited collection traced the genesis of second language writing as a field, including changes in theoretical orientation. It included seminal discussions and studies representative of key shifts in conceptualizing L2 writers. Their work informs the proceeding historical trajectory.

The dominant behaviorist paradigm of the 50s and 60s focused on error control in L2 writing (Silva & Matsuda, 2001). Subsequently, teachers played the central role in L2 students' writing development; by contrast, L1 ways of learning or writing were seen as interfering with, or obstructing, L2 writing progress. Structural linguists in this period

claimed progress would be made through error correction and mimicry of correct writing patterns. For L2 writers, this paradigm de-emphasized natural written expression and agency, instead suggesting students were dependent upon their L1 instructors for correction (Pincas, 2001).

The prescriptive implications of Pincas' work fell under criticism and thinking in the late 1960s instead shifted towards contextual factors in students' writing. Kaplan's contrastive rhetoric attended to culturally based patterns of logic and writing, and he argued that uncovering a foreign language's underlying logic could facilitate learning. While Kaplan (2001) agreed that students needed sentence and paragraph-level instruction and he also focused upon written products, his approach differed because he instead viewed students' L1 as a resource. Additionally, Kaplan did not believe English to be a qualitatively superior language and he did indicate that textual patterns could differ within a given culture (Kaplan, 2001; Silva & Matsuda, 2001). Still, his work was later criticized for ethnocentrism (Connor, 2003), given the ways he compared thinking patterns across cultural lines using English as the basis for his comparisons. Critics further claimed he essentialized cultures, despite Kaplan's argument to the contrary. Nonetheless, Kaplan's work set the foundation for contrastive rhetoric and it continues to be developed as an existing theory of L2 writing. His work also helped to draw attention to context in L2 writing research, as this had not received adequate attention prior to his work.

Influences from L1 Theories of Writing: Process and Context. Despite the contributions of these early theoretical orientations, they still positioned L2 learners as devoid of agency and they overlooked the potential of L1 composition research. In the 1970s, Zamel (2001) addressed both gaps in arguing that L1 process theories could be useful in

studying L2 writers. Whereas Pincas and Kaplan encouraged control of the L2 learner, controlled composition lacked empirical support in L1 research (Silva & Matsuda, 2001). Zamel instead countered that ideas from L1 process theories – as with communicative competence and learner agency - would be more useful to understanding L2 student writing. This perspective also lessened the gap in viewing L2 students as extremely different from their L1 peers. Zamel's work was not without criticism either, and later research showed the challenges of assuming L1 composition could seamlessly transfer to the L2 population (Raimes, 2001). Because later research also showed differences among L2 writers and further differences between L1 and L2 students, L2 writing formed as a separate field of inquiry (Silva & Matsuda, 2001).

Research on L2 writing had moved from a focus on the sentence-level product to an expanded contextual focus on composing processes, but subsequent work attempted to develop an ESL theory that addressed both (Connor, 2001; Raimes, 2001) while generating richer understandings of students' L1 literacies as relevant to L2 development (Silva & Matsuda, 2001). Carson (2001) examined how students' L1 cultures of schooling informed their perceptions of L2 writing tasks and related processes of literacy acquisition. This broadened the view of social factors influencing writing and called for further research in this area. In responding to schools as contextual influences in L2 student writing, Spack (2001) conducted important work investigating disciplinary faculty's perceptions of L2 student writers. Carson and Spack contributed to broader consideration of the social contexts impacting L2 student writing. Later perspectives would again take note of context and ways in which it could be theoretically expounded upon. These perspectives represented a distinct

turn towards context as a social environment involving many kinds of participants, motives, and outcomes.

Students, Genre, and Broader Conceptualizations of Context. Some of the studies mentioned earlier in the literature review described social influences on students' disciplinary writing experiences such as identity, or engaging with new genres or academic communities. Work in these areas has been vast, spanning much of the 1990s and 2000s to date. Though these researchers targeted a similar line of inquiry, their explanations differ in important ways that helped to explain the social relations of texts, students, and disciplines.

Early work examined how student writing acted as a process of disciplinary socialization whereby academic communities impacted student identity through membership. While systemic functional linguists had identified relationships between social motive, typified interaction, and socialization of students to specific writing situations, they had not adequately accounted for social elements beyond the level of text, and instructional approaches appeared prescriptive and prohibitive of student agency (Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010). Swales' (1990) claimed that the concept of genre could explain how writers identify with given communities, and that these ideas could create a bridge between L1 and L2 composition researchers. To begin with, Swales argued that divisions between WAC, as associated with L1 compositionists, and ESP, as attached to the work L2 applied linguists, were actually very similar in goals. In combining stronger ideas from each field, Swales defined written genres as goal-oriented forms of communication operating within – and beyond – the level of text. Genres spanned periods of time and became substantiated through repeated use in specific communities by engaged participants. As communicative purpose was a defining feature for Swales' conceptualization of genre, he further argued that such

purposes were shared by community members, noting that, “they may be only partly recognized by apprentice members; and they be either recognized or unrecognized by non-members” (Swales, 1990, p. 53). This assertion created a new line of inquiry for L2 writing researchers, though it did receive criticisms echoed elsewhere, as with emphasizing prescriptive competence over performance and reducing the student’s potential for agency. Opponents claimed it was adopted as an ESP approach and that genre analysis came to be synonymous with ESP. Furthermore, this conceptualization of genre attended to context in ways that always ended with the written text (Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010).

Consequently, some critiques informed Rhetorical Genre Studies (RGS, a.k.a. North American Genre Studies), which agreed that genres are situated in social contexts, but argued that they were not strictly communicative *tools*, or simple means of accomplishing tasks in a predictable fashion. Rather, genre use and understanding was diverse, and texts were not central, but the activities surrounding them often were central – albeit in a way that was sometimes less perceptibly immediate than the text itself. This perspective enriched social explanations of writing because context received far greater attention and linguistic accounts of text were instead deemphasized as one of many facets (Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010). Bazerman’s seminal work in RGS theory extended Swales’ ideas in adding that disciplinary socialization was confounded with students’ past experiences, learning, and beliefs. Disciplinary ways of thinking directly challenged students’ identities and sense of power in foreign situations or communities (Bazerman, 1993). While not situated in the field of L2 writing, his ideas had implications for L2 students in disciplinary writing situations. Bazerman viewed genres as stabilized by use, but, importantly, he indicated that repeated use did not guarantee their stability. Thus, he saw genres as sometimes constraining and sometimes

contestable (Bazerman, 1993). This helped to explain how genres shaped people, while also accounting for the ways in which people shaped genres (Russell & Yanez, 2003; Swales, 1990). To encourage student agency in new disciplinary terrain, Bazerman (1997) also argued for explicit writing instruction to better highlight disciplines as sites of engaged negotiation, which could further prevent a sense of insider-outsider duality. Because cognition is situated and distributed within communities, genres could be viewed as one form of cognitive apprenticeship, as with novices experiencing socialization into academic communities (Bazerman, 2007). This again showed that Bazerman's attention to the novice experience could easily be extended to include either L1 or L2 students.

In drawing upon broader accounts of disciplinary writing as a social activity, as with Swales and Bazerman, second language writing experts argued that identity would continue to take shape as an influential area of their own research (Leki, 2000). Arguments centered on the roles of context and ideology in accounting for learner agency in determining setting-specific identities that were both complex and variable. In some cases, this appeared as arguments linking L2 identity to past instruction and students' own theories of writing as developed elsewhere (Johns, 2001), which paralleled what Bazerman (1993) had noted for L1 writers. Others focused upon the tacit power structures surrounding L2 student writing, noting that writing in a second language was often mistaken as neutral when it actually required considerable investment on the part of learners charged with adjusting their identities to suit ever-changing academic circumstances (Casanave, 2002). Calls for research pointed to the need for thick descriptions of individuals writing across varied settings to account for additional social influences also shaping their writing processes and lending a sense of split L1/L2 identity (Leki, 2000).

Early perspectives of student identity negotiation in disciplinary settings continued to build in complexity within L2 research that emphasized a social orientation to explanations of student writing. Explanations of L2 writing also began to incorporate concepts of genre and conventional rhetorical response to explain how disciplines functioned as sites of activity (Bawarshi, 2003). By incorporating activity systems theory, researchers were able to demonstrate learner agency in seemingly authoritative settings whereby students were not only influenced by the writing they engaged with, but also capable of influencing the recurring composition practices they deployed. This interpretation demonstrated individuals as acting upon genres, while still holding the inverse to be true (Bawarshi, 2003; Bazerman, 1993). This was an important departure from prior research that had accounted for the non-neutrality of L2 students' identity negotiation in disciplinary contexts, but without an adequate explanation of the varied responses students crafted in writing. Rather, this extended social perspective of L2 writers finally helped to account for the multiple, simultaneous, and sometimes conflicting meanings L2 students deciphered in given writing situations; correspondingly, identity negotiation, or subject positioning, was equally as complex. Subject positioning described the conflicting relations between discipline and L2 student identities as "gendered, racial, class-based, [or] ethnic" (Bawarshi, 2003, p. 97) in nature. This view equated disciplinary writing with identity invention, or descriptive processes of writers positioning themselves in systems of social activity that potentially conflicted with their own subjectivities.

Later work examining L2 student writers' identities in disciplinary settings continued to exhibit undertones of contrastive rhetoric while also including social perspectives. Recent research has combined social perspectives of learning, such as Vygotsky's, with theories of

communication, as with symbolic interactionism, impression management, and intergroup communication. Combining theoretical approaches served to explain how Eastern and Western writers tended towards either an individualistic or a collectivistic voice in writing, and discussed resulting consequences. Hyland (2012) argued that L2 writers are deeply aware of how others view them. Consequently, they may construct identities that are responsive to social desirability, or determinations of which groups are comparatively better for academic membership. He claimed that disciplinary conventions for writing suggest correct academic discourse and legitimization of writers based upon institutional definition. This orientation again indicated the identity tradeoffs NNES students face in disciplinary writing, given their awareness that their L1 identity contrasts with expectations for an academic Western self.

Conceptual Debates Over the Nature of Disciplines. As work emphasizing the social aspects of L2 writing continued to develop in the 1990s and 2000s, arguments simultaneously addressed the notion of disciplines as forms of academic communities, particularly because of suggestions about community membership implied by research exploring identity and genre. Swales identified academic communities, or disciplines, as forms of discourse communities, or spaces defined by the genres that carried out shared communicative goals. Such spaces were comprised of both experts and apprentices, but recruitment was based upon, “persuasion, training or relevant qualification” (Swales, 1990, p. 24). While he acknowledged that discourse communities rely upon specific forms of sanctioned language to achieve common communicative objectives among new and experienced members alike, he was careful to specify that people belong to more than one

discourse community and that varied forms of genre engagement meant people could also exert change upon the genres they used.

Despite Swales' (1990) distinctions, others countered that more attention could be paid to the difficulty L2 learners face as novice members. Johns (1997) argued that modification of existing genre conventions and community practices was likely more difficult for novice members – as with L2 writers. She provided an early argument against the term discourse community, instead replacing it with communities of practice, which better reflected how encounters with sanctioned language, practices, and disciplinary values could cause conflict for L2 writers. Furthermore, she also felt that communities of practice embraced the multiple kinds of community involvement learners had over time, and that it was thus more inclusive of broader social influences as related to adjustments in membership and identification.

Others further disagreed in pointing out that the term discourse community suggested a smooth process unlikely for L2 novices. Some arguments highlighted the process aspect of membership, noting that discursal enculturation is ongoing and that it requires considerable learner investment (Casanave, 2002), or the acquisition of important linguistic or academic capital (Cumming, 2006) as important means for identifying oneself with other members. Affiliation not only reflected strategic adjustments to identity, but also to goals within community settings. Furthermore, this meant student identities initially project into the disciplines they engage with, but are then renegotiated (Cumming, 2006), often with texts at the center of this negotiation because texts act as sanctioned forms of knowledge and further exhibit community affiliation (Casanave, 2002). Finally, researchers explained that the rules

of repeated practice were more or less strict, thus affecting how L2 novices gain insider knowledge.

In further describing uneven social processes of students aligning themselves with disciplines, Prior (1998) instead referred to disciplinary enculturation and disciplinarity. Prior reviewed discourse community as a term, praising it as a means of countering the narrow cognitive focus of process-based theories of writing; however, he found disagreement with the parameters of the term and described its explanatory power as being only partial. Even though it did accomplish a more social view of writing, it confined the process of disciplinary enculturation and incorrectly suggested academic disciplines were unified locations of shared practice. Furthermore, it overlooked aberrations to the norm or internal conflicts students managed in the process of disciplinary enculturation, instead assuming one willingly enters practice as isolated from other social influences. He claimed the term relied too heavily upon the notion of shared conventions, thereby assuming a one-way process of initiation for new members and bypassing larger socializing processes as with attending to writers' histories or identities. Thus, disciplinarity attended to *active* processes and *active* participants at varying levels of membership, each engaging in ongoing production and reproduction of the entire community, rather than focusing exclusively on processes of initiation.

Activity Theory. Much of Prior's (1998) disagreement with the term discourse community centered upon ideas from activity theory (a.k.a. CHAT, or cultural historical activity systems theory), a sociohistoric approach used to conceptualize student writing that also appeared elsewhere, whether in L1 or L2 composition research. While Prior's use of the theory is important for its contributions to clarifying writing as only one means of literate activity within much larger activity systems, the theory has been significantly helpful for

other RGS researchers interested in expanding and articulating the multiple and sometimes conflicting social influences students encounter in disciplinary writing contexts. Several researchers have used the theory to explain how memberships vary and change over time, in addition to focusing upon genres as a means of both distinguishing and organizing disciplines, and mediating social interaction among participants and systems of activity. Proponents of activity theory contest that over-emphasizing disciplines as locations implicates movement from some undocumented periphery into an alleged – and comparatively more desirable - center. Location thinking implicates the one-way, limited contextual focus these proponents criticize (Bawarshi, 2003; Bazerman et al., 2005; Prior, 1998). Instead, disciplinary socialization occurs over extended periods of time – and across *multiple* social spaces. The explanatory benefits of activity theory are complex because it covers broader literate activity inclusive of, but not limited to, writing, and it considers the immediate context, in addition to those occurring in other locations or across varied periods of time (Woodard, 2015). Furthermore, activity theory emphasizes *process* when describing socialization as individuated learning since learning involves: (1) subjects’ engagement with multiple activity systems; (2) determinations about the division of labor; and (3) a varied sense of goals, outcomes, norms, and the use of tools, like genres, to coordinate activity within networks of activity systems. As one kind of activity system, disciplinary classrooms function as communities with notably wide variation across even two classrooms in the same discipline (Russell & Yanez, 2003). Thus, activity theory represents a current sociohistoric theoretical approach integrated in both L1 and L2 composition research. It may also be combined with other approaches, such as genre systems theory, goal theory, and research on identity.

Theoretical Summary. The increasingly social turn in theoretical developments and empirical research is an important one. These approaches emphasize social factors often referred to as history, culture, experience, values, agency, discipline, activity system, identity, and others further evident in the studies contained in this literature review. Early evidence of this changing orientation was apparent in both L1 and L2 composition research, though it appeared in markedly different ways. In moving from text to context, and in broadening conceptualizations of context and writer, more complex explanations can be offered for L2 or multilingual student writing in the disciplines. For L2 student writers in disciplinary settings, broadening perspectives of social influences and literate activity is beneficial because of the potential for drawing linguistic and cultural variables into conversations about context. As both the included studies and theories demonstrate, context is local and activity is situated across space and time.

However, based on the literature discussed so far, some aspects of studying L2 writers emerge more clearly than others. The categorization of disciplinary courses as WAC, WI, or ESP, and the values embedded in such courses may be easier to decipher, even without explicit mention. Scholars' degrees of interest in text versus context may further reveal theoretical beliefs guiding their work. However, with studies of L2 writing in particular, it is quite important to explicitly address theory, as it is a newer field by comparison to its more mature parent fields (e.g. L1 composition or applied ESL). Furthermore, finding useful theories with strong explanatory power is important in exploring theoretical fit, and when borrowing theories not derived from within L2 composition. Despite the need to work with theory and to articulate its usefulness clearly, studies of L2 writing

remain under-theorized, thus limiting the potential for theory integration and theory development from within the L2 writing field (Belcher & Hirvela, 2010).

Evidence of this under-theorization is apparent in several of the included studies where explicit mention of guiding theoretical principles was sometimes absent. Because of the various theoretical orientations contributing to second language writing studies, it is possible to infer theoretical beliefs, though that seems less useful for a field working towards more expansive and explicit use of theory (Belcher & Hirvela, 2010). In cases where theory was clear, theory may not have addressed L2 linguistic or cultural variables as part of the research process (e.g. Prior, 1998). In other cases of clear use of theory and applicability to L2 writers, other drawbacks were evident, as with over-emphasizing individual cognition or desire to the point that it detracted from stronger social explanations (e.g. Cumming, 2006). All of the included literature and discussion of theoretical paradigms combine with field-specific needs to clearly integrate and articulate theory in L2 writing research, and point to opportunities for further study and theoretical development. Clearly, one opportunity is to make explicit use of theory in explaining observed phenomenon. Another opportunity lies in questioning the fit of L1 composition theories with L2, or multilingual, writers, as the strength of certain theories may be of benefit in transitioning fields. Finally, as empirical and theoretical trends indicate, applying sociohistoric theories of writing to disciplinary writing and L2 students is both interesting and valuable because these prioritize variation across presumably similar writers and contexts. By becoming more systematic in working with theories developed elsewhere, L2 composition may move closer to the development of its own theories; furthermore, both L1 and L2 composition would benefit from a richer dialogue

about the nature of writing for diverse L2 and L1 writers who may be both alike and dissimilar in ways not yet understood.

Before closing this chapter, I now return to the specifics of what further study can accomplish, given what has come before both theoretically and empirically. This returns to deeper consideration of various gaps left by the aforementioned studies, thus presenting a transition to the methodology for this dissertation.

Opportunities for further research. In addition to theoretical clarity, changes could be made to the subjects of study in avoiding students directly taught by the researcher(s), operationalizing the term *international student*, and comparing several students' writing experiences in the same course. These suggested changes arise from the collective findings of the empirical work previously discussed, and could further enrich what is known about L2 students writing in non-composition disciplinary contexts.

There are benefits in avoiding research with a researcher's own students. While much can be learned from the opposing scenario, it may be more likely to remove some of the researcher's bias in avoiding students directly taught by the researcher. Three of the studies relied upon the use of teachers as researchers, while simultaneously using interviewing as a core method of investigation. Though other methods were present to triangulate students' responses, it may be difficult to entirely remove the subject's desire to perform well in the eyes of their instructor. For example, subjects may engage with various behaviors intended to please their teacher as with modifying responses to be more desirable, persisting with study participation despite hardship or other variables, or even in joining the study to gain some favor with the person assessing their coursework. This is not to suggest that the aforementioned studies fell prey to issues of reliability or validity due to having researchers

also play teacher; however, it does suggest that teacher interference is plausible, and that it is arguably useful to sometimes avoid researching one's own students when possible.

Some of the studies specify L2 or multilingual subjects as being international students, whereas others are less clear, leaving room to improve classifications of international student subjects in research studies. There is room to differently operationalize international students as subjects, given the increasing diversity occurring in this population. Institutions and researchers may classify these students differently, as some first arrive to U.S. study with their freshman year of university enrollment, whereas others may have had prior educational exchange in the U.S., but returned to their home country for the majority of their education, or they may have transferred to a U.S. university from a local community college. In each case, the student's initial arrival to U.S. university study is different, but interesting for the varied results one may find when examining this population of student writers. Therefore, because of the variation in this shifting population of students, different ways of operationalizing who an international student is may yield unique results for investigations involving international students as writers.

Comparing writers in the same disciplinary context tends to diversify findings, which in turn generates more awareness of writers' activities and habits in responding to similar writing tasks. This is particularly important with international students, as disciplinary faculty often lack training in working with such students, perhaps becoming more likely to see limited interactions as far more generalizable than realistic. Comparisons across international students in the same course can also reveal how students' unique educational backgrounds, former kinds and amounts of writing experiences, and cultivated dispositions

towards writing over time could impact the writing they produce in non-composition contexts..

One such disposition involves if or how students engage with writing in non-composition disciplinary settings. Engagement may arguably be easier or at least more of an assumed characteristic of advanced writers, as with graduate students and professionals already immersed in their fields of study. However, as Russell and Yanez (2003) importantly argued, general education undergraduate courses pose a unique conundrum, as students often do not want to be there and students also may be resistant to receiving messages about writing that contradict those they already hold. Prior studies have not consistently addressed the comparative experiences of undergraduate international students writing for general education courses, but prior research has demonstrated that L2 students struggle to remain engaged in majors and general education courses where writing overwhelms. In such courses, students may not only hold perspectives about writing that compete with those of their instructor, but they may also hold perspectives about writing that contradict with those of their fellow international student peers. This means that some students may readily engage with writing tasks across the disciplines because of desired outcomes such as improving or maintaining their G.P.A., finding course topics personally relevant or interesting, or making plans to apply to the discipline as a major. For other students, their engagement with disciplinary writing may be conflated with the need to satisfy an institutional requirement, or the need to repair – or even replace - a previously acquired grade in the same course or elsewhere. Regardless of a student’s motivation, researchers studying writing in undergraduate general education courses are likely to encounter not only diverse students, but also diverse reasons for enrollment. Since undergraduate student engagement with non-

composition disciplinary writing tasks is not a given, research could explore how students navigate such writing tasks and why for a given course. Furthermore, research could compare how international students in the same course might differently navigate what appears to be the same assignment.

Other contextual factors could contribute greater understanding to disciplines as sites of writing study. For one thing, Hyland (2013) noted that the majority of research still focuses upon writing in composition classrooms and not in other disciplinary settings, even though we know non-composition disciplinary writing assignments and expectations are under-articulated for students (Thaiss & Zawacki, 2006). Given evidence that instructors in non-composition contexts provide less writing instruction than their composition counterparts - yet rely upon it as a significant means of assessment – and given that disciplinary writing is often perplexing and contradictory for undergraduates, it would be informative to research writing not only in a non-composition disciplinary context, but also in a disciplinary context that deliberately aims to clarify writing expectations, as others have done. However, while others like Russell and Yanez (2003) have done this, it would also be informative to do this with L2 international undergraduate student writers.

Furthermore, while some of the included studies did focus upon non-composition disciplinary writing and L2 or multilingual undergraduate student writers, none inquired into courses featuring a combination of well-articulated assignments with high stakes assessment practices, or other features characteristic of competitive courses. Since none of the studies established comparisons across international students writing for the same large disciplinary course, none were able to speak to students' varied reasons for enrolling and writing, whereas investigating multiple students writing for a disciplinary course that is both general education

and pre-major would. This is important because large disciplinary courses can arguably camouflage student writers from instructor awareness; the writing experiences of L2 international students may be even less apparent, as these students often struggle in silence (Andrade, 2006).

Closing Summary

Changes to the population, site, and researcher's role can expand understandings of L2 students as heterogeneous writers in disciplinary contexts. These modifications can further be supported by clear use of theory. The next chapter details the specifics of my methodology for investigating social factors involved in L2 students writing for disciplinary contexts, as with their interpretation and approach to completing writing assignments, and their use of strategies and resources when navigating them. Calls for research on the social influences impacting student writing indicate that such studies are likely to improve understanding of writers as heterogeneous (Woodard, 2015), which is a facet of understanding particularly important with increasingly diverse populations of international students. However, important social factors reflected elsewhere in research still need to be explored while considering other variables: (1) comparing several writers in the same course; (2) investigating lesser-known contexts, as with competitive GE courses using high stakes writing assessment; (3) barring researcher-as-instructor dynamics; and (4) accounting for the ways in which specifically defined international students engage with writing in the same disciplinary course. These variables help to account for the situatedness of writing in an immediate and local context for diverse international student writers.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This methodology chapter details the qualitative procedures behind a study of five international students writing in a social science disciplinary course that is classified as both general education and pre-major. In examining their writing processes between a first and second assignment, it gathers accounts of interpretation and subsequent actions taken to navigate situated writing tasks, including their use of strategies and help seeking resources. Specifically, this study asks two research questions: (1) How do L2 international students interpret and approach writing assignments in a general education, social science course? (2) What strategies and resources do they use in the writing process, and where do they come from? Interpretation refers to how students understand the goals of writing assignments and what they believe is foremost in them. Similarly, approach reveals actions participants take based upon interpretations they hold. Strategies and resources further relate to actions taken, but are more specific to emerging or established tendencies in seeking help or relying upon acquired knowledge. These variables (e.g. interpretation, approach, strategies, and resources) are kinds of social factors that mediate writing, as several of the aforementioned studies established.

Introduction

As the preceding literature review also indicated, studies of the social factors influencing L2 writers' composing processes are critical to understanding these writers, but may be limited by the site of study, researcher's role, and population, thus inhibiting the potential of creating heterogeneous accounts of writers often presumed to be more similar than they actually are (Woodard, 2015). Because this dissertation study seeks to contribute to the field of L2 writing, it seeks to be both methodologically explicit to allow for replication

(Polio, 2001), and, later, to be theoretically clear in order to expand current perspectives (Belcher & Hirvela, 2010).

Confidentiality. To protect confidentiality, the exact name of the university, course, and participants is not identified. Pseudonyms are used where necessary to camouflage otherwise identifying information. Appendix G provides an overview of students' consent to participate.

The Research Site

The course is housed within a large California research university in a small social science department that is highly ranked and regarded for its research activity. It enrolls a maximum of five hundred students who meet twice weekly for lectures led by the professor. Six or seven teaching assistants lead smaller discussion sections once weekly. Because the course is large and the department is small, teaching assistants are most frequently from within the department, except for a few outside hires each term.

The course has more than one institutional classification; it is one of four required courses for pre-major students, and it also satisfies a writing requirement per the undergraduate general education curriculum. The writing requirement stipulates that undergraduates write at least 1,800 words in one or more assigned papers or written examinations, and that writing should function as a central means of overall course assessment.

Writing in the Course. Course assessment is through two multiple-choice exams and two paper assignments. Appendix A details the course syllabus, whereas Appendices B and C overview each writing assignment. Collectively, the writing assignments account for nearly a third of the total points possible in the course. Both assignments ask students to

apply course concepts to media content chosen by their teaching assistant in a five to seven page analytical paper. In assignment one, students choose one scene from the assigned television episode, whereas in assignment two, students choose between one of two preselected advertisements. The use of outside resources is controlled by each assignment prompt; the papers allow students to rely upon lecture notes and course readings for support, but the second prompt explicitly requires the additional use of two empirical studies, which students must locate on their own using university databases.

Suggestions for seeking help are also articulated in the assignment prompts. With both papers, students are limited to single-submission final drafts, although they do complete smaller tasks, such as outlines, citation style exercises (see Appendix E), and practice library searches. Students are directed to seek more general help from the writing center and its tutors (mainly of a grammatical or organizational type), and students are also allowed to seek more content-driven help from the professor and TA. However, the professor and TA will only review one paragraph of writing (based upon the student's choosing). Additionally, though students complete outlines, these are only checked for credit; students must explicitly request outline reviews if they desire feedback. Finally, assignment prompts warn students against collaborating with their peers in an attempt to prevent accidental plagiarism of others' ideas.

Teaching assistants bear the responsibility of grading writing assignments using a unique system of grading. Student submissions are graded comparatively, whereby teaching assistants allocate low, average, and high scores based upon the overall work of students in the course. Furthermore, teaching assistants use blind grading, or the masking of students' identities, as means of preventing potential bias. Teaching assistants meet weekly with the

professor to review guidelines for grading and commenting, and to discuss other pedagogical concerns both related to writing and course content. Additionally, all teaching assistants enroll in a teaching practicum that further explains and illustrates writing assessment practices prior to their first appointment in the department. In the weekly meetings, the professor provides direction by setting medians before grading begins and in confirming tentative scores fit a normal distribution before papers are returned to students. The median score for assignment one is generally set at 38 points out of 50 possible, whereas assignment two is 39, or sometimes 40, points out of 50 possible. The change in median scores reflects students' tendencies to improve with the second paper assignment. As APA adherence factors into comparative grading, student guidelines for APA are included in Appendix D.

The logic behind the unique system of assessment involves high demand for a small major. The department has the highest pre-major G.P.A. requirement on campus, yet far more students apply to the major than the department is actually able to accept (or even consider). Additionally, the course meets a writing requirement, which further increases enrollment. Given strong enrollment trends, assessment practices remain stringent, as both the course's exams and writing assignments are notoriously challenging for undergraduate students. Writing assessment thus ensures equity across teaching assistants in a competitive pre-major course, and it also acts as one determinant of student preparedness for the major.

A Compelling Site to Study. There are several qualities specific to this course that position it as a kind of unexplored terrain for studying newcomers' perspectival accounts of non-composition disciplinary writing as both Bazerman (2013) and Prior (1998) suggested. As mentioned in the previous chapter, it is important to move studies of L2 writing forward with respect to highlighting subtleties among students writing in the same disciplinary

course, addressing students' post-composition writing experiences in general education courses across the curriculum (Hyland, 2013), and avoiding potential bias created by instructor-as-researcher dynamics. This course provides an opportunity to address these limitations from previous work.

As a general education, pre-major disciplinary the writing centers, the context of the course is both unique and typical. The course has a longstanding history of being taught by the same professor for the last several years. As an award-winning professor, the professor is a teaching mentor for TAs enrolled in the teaching practicum. The professor clearly enjoys teaching and works hard to introduce students to social science writing via paper assignments that are arguably well articulated, despite usual observations to the contrary in non-composition disciplinary contexts (Prior, 1998; Thaiss & Zawacki, 2006). In this disciplinary context, the professor develops curricular materials to help TAs and students navigate writing in the course. As indicated earlier, writing in the course is tough, and the current writing assignments have adjusted in only small ways over the years because quarterly changes in assigned media content prevent larger concerns over plagiarism. However, given my prolonged involvement with the course as a teaching assistant and my sustained interactions within the department, demographic shifts in the course have been as palpable as elsewhere on campus. Over several quarters of employment, conversations of international students and the quality of their writing increased in weekly meetings with the professor and other TAs in the course. Some TAs worried over international student persistence in the course, noting some dropped the course around the timing of the first assignment. While conversations turned to the writing of NNES students, the writing assignments remained the same, not adjusting according to the demographic shifts we experienced. It was unclear to any of us

what kind of role – if any – language or culture played in these students’ writing experiences. Furthermore, as with many students in large general education (Russell & Yanez, 2003), pre-major courses, it was equally unclear as to what motivated these international students to enroll, as a variety of scenarios were possible. The sheer size of such courses makes it easy for students to disappear from instructor awareness, which may be particularly true of students anxious about their writing placing them “on the line,” (Bazerman, 2013, p. 197) in feeling judged for linguistic and cultural inadequacies they fear. So, while it remains unclear how several L2 international students engage with disciplinary writing tasks in a single course of mixed classification, it is also unclear as to how related variables of fast-paced academic quarters, high stakes assessment, and perpetuated writing assignments affect their writing.

Further benefit is provided by the fact that I have in-depth knowledge of the course while managing to avoid the inclusion of my own international students. This move mitigates issues of reliability raised by other, similar studies displaying a researcher-as-teacher dynamic. While there are different benefits in either direction, the studies contained in the literature review indicated it would be important to remove myself from the student’s immediate instructional realm. In possessing a deep understanding of the course’s dynamics and having observed students and enrollment patterns in the course over the years, I was able to form research questions that sought a deeper understanding of the international students I encountered. As social factors involved in L2 students’ writing processes, language and culture interact with their disciplinary writing experiences. Attending to social factors involved in student writing – as with interpretations of assignments, approaches to writing, use of strategies, and help seeking behaviors – lends a greater likelihood of establishing

variation among international students enrolled in a single disciplinary course. Establishing variation is particularly important because disciplinary instructors often lack training in working with NNES student writers (Fishman & McCarthy, 1987), and they tend to stereotype students from similar regions of the world as being more homogeneous than they actually are (Andrade, 2006). International students are a complex population, and they can be hard to homogenize, much less classify, given noted tendencies to study abroad and return home. Additionally, some attend community colleges or other preparatory intensives before university enrollment, or otherwise engage in transitory study of English academics.

Thus, the course provides an ideal site for comparing the writing processes of L2 writers in a single disciplinary context across two writing assignments. In doing so, it circumvents trends noticed in the selected studies presented in the preceding chapter. Instead of studying several writers in several courses or one writer in several courses, this study attends to several writers in one course, so that social factors in a highly localized setting can question the presumed alikeness of international student writers in a specific context that has not yet sorted out how to respond to demographic changes.

Methodological Approach

This study makes use of several methods in an effort to achieve thick description, or fuller elaboration of contextual influences on student writing (Charmaz, 2002) while simultaneously using these methods to encourage cross-cultural rapport (Ryen, 2000). Methods included a recruitment survey, a pre-interview survey, three semi-structured, text-based interviews with each subject, text collection, and analytic memos. I collected data during one ten-week academic quarter of study, winter 2014.

Interview Timing. My method of conducting interviews at regular intervals across the ten-week academic quarter helped me see students' development according to the terms of my research questions. Because I was looking at students' writing processes across two writing assignments, I needed sustained contact with students, so that later interviews could extend my knowledge and understanding of issues uncovered in earlier interviews (Blakeslee & Fleischer, 2007). Both grounded theory interviewing (Charmaz, 2002) and ethnographic interviewing (Spradley, 1979) emphasize multiple sequential interviews as a means for allowing complexity to fully emerge.

The timing of interviews was deliberate. Each student was interviewed three times with interviews lasting for one hour apiece. The first occurred during the fourth and fifth weeks of the quarter, in the days immediately after the deadline for the first paper assignment (January, 30th, January 31st, February 3rd). The second occurred in the seventh week of the quarter (February 19th, February 20th, February 21st), a few days after the first writing assignments had been returned with scores and comments, and also while students had been introduced to the second paper assignment. The third and last interview occurred during the ninth week of the quarter (March 4th, March 5th, March 6th, March 7th) and right after students had turned in their second and final paper assignment. The sequencing of interviews allowed me to intercept students at a time when their perspectival accounts would be most reliable: either in the days immediately after completion of a major writing assignment, or, as with the second interview, in the days immediately following feedback and scoring. In the course under study, feedback and assignment completion are potent times for gathering perspectival accounts because students not only tend to seek more input, but they also direct more of their attention and energy toward the assignments.

Interview Structure and Analytic Memos. Each of the three semi-structured interviews allowed departures from planned questions. This flexibility enabled me to change the direction of some questions to better suit an individual student's recollected procedures and to revisit information a student provided previously (Blakeslee & Fleischer, 2007). During interviews, I took notes, which helped me recast questions where necessary, monitor repetition in students' feedback, and regulate participants' responses through follow-up questions, for example (Patton, 2002). I also reviewed students' texts prior to each interview, and took notes that further guided interview questions.

Sustained interviewing and note taking helped the creation of analytic memos, which then enabled emergent analysis (Charmaz, 2002). In borrowing ideas from grounded theory, I wrote analytic memos in between instances of data collection, updating them before and after interviews. My note taking during interviews also assisted with the development of analytic memos. Before interviews, I reviewed participants' backgrounds, texts, and prior responses to direct interview questions in a way that would be more particularized to individuals, unless I noted trends common among more than one subject. After interviews, I again noted observable trends found within single subjects or across them. In sum, my systematic processing of each interview allowed me to examine one subject's responses across the set of interviews, while also enabling me to compare feedback across multiple subjects and interviews. Consequently, analytic memos sometimes redirected questions and interview purposes.

Cross-Cultural Interviewing. Patton (2002) argued that interviewing is viable because it allows participants to express their own conceptualizations using their own words, which is particularly important with L2 speakers. Semi-structured interviews are especially

useful with L2 speakers because of the flexibility they permit. Unlike structured interviews, which impose responses on subjects and are criticized for lacking cross-cultural sensitivity, semi-structured interviews allow control to freely shift between researcher and subject. In this manner, definitions can be negotiated, rather than presumed, and participants can construct their own responses, rather than having them imposed by preset categorical options that inadequately attend to variety. Semi-structured interviewing invites a collaborative research dynamic where participant contributions are able to shape analysis (Ryen, 2000). This kind of interviewing was important, given my desire to understand the social and historical influences impacting international students' writing.

I took other actions to be sure the interviewing process was culturally sensitive and comprehensible. I referenced the phrasing of interview questions and reviewed interview topics from other studies working with non-native speakers (e.g. Cumming, 2006; Prior, 1998). Though subjects' proficiencies in English were generally unproblematic during the interviews, I recast questions and redefined critical terms until comprehension was evident in their responses. In most cases, this was only an issue at the beginning of our work together, as some were likely adjusting to my way of communicating in English. Thus, I generally conversed with students in a more casual manner before interviews began, and I also presented critical terms and explained what I meant, as well as providing examples. I often asked conversational questions before interviews began to ascertain if or where my own communication patterns might be problematic. This dialogue assisted a cross-cultural rapport, and ensured participants were comfortable with me, my use of English, and their own use of English. I further made sure critical terms were consistent across the various methods students would encounter (Ryen, 2000). Finally, I avoided multi-part questions, as

these are notoriously problematic for interview subjects, including non-native speakers (Murphy, 1980).

My teaching background further enabled sensitivity toward the international students in my study. Having taught ESL and writing to college-aged international students for several years, I have had an abundance of students from the same East Asian countries my participants were from. I had taught and traveled with specific cohorts of students from China and Japan, had engaged regularly with students' Chinese English teachers, and had even been invited to social outings not generally extended to Americans. These experiences helped to broaden my cultural understandings. I was familiar with cultural customs surrounding teacher-student relations, authority or respect, and expressing opinions. I was also familiar with high and low context cultures, and the potential for miscommunication. I had taught Chinese and Japanese students who seemed to fit alleged cultural stereotypes, and I had taught those who seemed quite unlike the stereotypes. These sustained interactions mitigated potential insider-outsider problems (Ryen, 2000). I further addressed potential issues through gaining enough of a social dialogue with individual participants to gauge their verbal and non-verbal cues for confirmation of understanding and overall comfort. Thus, part of my study involved studying my individual participants and their related behavioral, communicative, and dialogic tendencies so that I could trust in the co-creation of our research process.

Interview Topics. I likely asked more questions than necessary, mostly because I was influenced by the qualitative work of Brandt (2001; 2009) and Prior (1998) in trying to account for a fuller picture of participants' histories. Brandt (2001; 2009) studied the acquisition of literacy over individual lifespans. Though her work did not involve writing

across the curriculum or L2 students, her work did include diverse groups of people, and it accounted for a variety of literate engagements as a way of creating broader understanding of subjects. While she argued that sponsors of literacy act as resources for learners' acquisition, I similarly view disciplines as one kind of sponsor, whereby students' literacy development can be shaped by disciplinary participation. Her protocol directed me to address how students had accumulated experience with English academic writing through interactions with others, as students' prior engagements were likely to shape what happened in the course. While her interview script was far more comprehensive than needed for my study, selected topics also helped me compare students' literate practices across cultural contexts, as with accounting for schooling, peer interactions, values, and influential events or people. Students discussed English academic writing in terms of instruction or events significant to acquisition, motivations for learning, how they navigated challenges in assignments, and which genres they wrote in and for whom. These recollections involved both their history in the current university, as well as English academic writing experiences acquired in their home country. Brandt's influence helped me broaden my own understanding of my research subjects.

I also incorporated aspects of Prior's (1998) interview protocol because his work did involve multilingual international students in a disciplinary context, and he investigated variables similar to those included in my own research plan. Our populations differed; he focused upon graduate students and also involved their professor, whereas I focused upon undergraduates and did not include their TA or professor. Because his study was expansive, he pursued a more comprehensive design than necessary for the parameters of my own study. Still, his interview protocol was very useful and similar in intention to my project; additionally, unlike Brandt, his questions were formulated with NNES students in mind. His

protocol shaped aspects of mine, providing me with rich student discussions, including: perceptions of writing expectations; goals for writing and enrolling in the course; selections leading up to writing and selections made during writing; problems encountered during the writing process and solutions used to overcome them; self-perceptions of written work; and interpretations of TA feedback and scoring. Both Brandt (2001; 2009) and Prior (1998) helped me rethink my subjects' histories, but Prior also sensitized me to the particulars of my context.

Retrospective Accounts of Writing. Because I wanted to compare several students' processes between two papers for the same course, interviewing provided the dominant method for data collection. Interviewing is particularly central because of its ability to direct attention "beyond the written text" and "towards a consideration of some elements of writers' perspectives about texts" (Lillis, 2008, p. 355). The attributes of interviewing as a specific method for studying writing are noted elsewhere (e.g. Blakeslee & Fleischer, 2007; Patton, 2002). Generally, interviewing provides a rich means of expanding upon the context for students' writing choices, which was a central goal of this study.

Context and talk around texts. As one method of interviewing, talk around texts foregrounds contextual considerations in studies of academic writing (Lillis, 2008; Mortensen, 1992) and it highlights the "sociohistoric writing trajectories" (Lillis, 2008, p. 360) of participants. Talk around texts consists of participants providing accounts of their writing. This writer-focus prioritizes contextual significance by examining local experiences of academic writing situations for specific individuals. Talk around texts also enables analysis to extend beyond both the text and the predetermined research agenda. For example, a writer-focus may expand the research agenda to include issues such as writers':

interpretations of the significance of specific text features; emotions associated with a writing experience (Lillis, 2008); perceived expectations of writing goals and writing tasks; or other perceptions that frequently point to how texts were socially constructed (Mortensen, 1992). I incorporated talk around texts to capture the kind of sociohistoric development suggested by my research questions; however, I specifically looked at students' retrospective accounts of writing.

Text-Based Interviewing. Retrospective accounts of writing are one kind of talk about writing that illuminates social aspects of composing (Mortensen, 1992), though retrospective accounts break down into two types of interviewing: discourse-based and text-based. While sometimes distinguished from one another (Odell, Dixie, & Herrington, 1983), they tend to overlap and be synonymous (Prior, 1998). Essentially, discourse or text-based interviews involve participants' bringing written texts to interviews, so that questions can be posed in light of writing choices the subject has already made (hence, the retrospective aspect). There are variations (e.g. Prior, 1998), as with replacing portions of a subject's text with alternate passages and posing questions about acceptance or rejection of options. However, the focus in this study involved an unmodified version whereby students brought their writing to the interview, in addition to submitting it to me before the interview. Student writing included early drafts (with or without written input from others), final drafts (with and without input from their TA), outlines, and any other written activity that students claimed as a predecessor to their final assignment. Other documents also included the syllabus, written section assignments related to writing, and the two writing prompts. I reviewed course documents and student writing before interviews, which enabled me to ask pointed questions about observations I had made. I also asked general process-based

questions, and asked students to revisit their texts or course documents when responding. In this manner, written texts functioned as cues for retrospective accounts of writing.

My own impetus for using this method of interviewing (herein referred to as text-based interviewing) was to uncover writers' perceptions of writing tasks and related contextual expectations they held. Perceptions and expectations are often conflated with tacit knowledge; while this tacit knowledge may be acquired through social interactions over periods of time, it continues to be deployed in more immediate writing situations. Thus, text-based interviewing further aided me in accounting for social or historical variables affecting student writing in the immediate context of study, and it was particularly useful because of its suitability for writers across varied types of settings and of diverse ability (Odell, Dixie, & Herrington, 1983).

Further support for the use of text-based interviewing is provided in the previous chapter's literature review where three studies of both L1 (Hyland, 2000) and L2 (Prior, 1998; Spack, 1997; Spack, 2004) or multilingual writers made use of this method to investigate social influences on writing of a kind similar to those included in this study. Given the kinds of questions asked in this study, the method is worthwhile because "it is not always possible to capture textual practices in action...to account for this, many studies of writing-as-activity rely at least in part on retrospective accounts" (Woodard, 2015, p. 8), was with text-based interviews that trace writers' processes. This method covers local activity in a situated site, but also captures participants' broader histories, activities, and text production.

As previously mentioned, Prior's (1998) work was particularly helpful in constructing interview questions to broaden my understanding of both context and participants, however his study was also useful in aiding the construction of text-based interview questions.

Because I was tracing students' processes between the first and second assignment, I did ask them to reflect upon changes they would make between assignments as related to their own perceptions of their work, the TA's feedback, or things they had rethought in seeking help from outside resources. I reviewed TA comments after the first assignment and posed questions correspondingly, checking to see how students understood these evaluations, what they had learned, and what they intended to do. Essentially, I too wanted to see "what (if any) actions the students [would] take"(Prior, 1998, p. 293) as a result of their writing trajectory in the course so far.

Collecting Texts. Texts were collected, but not independently analyzed because I wanted to emphasize students' procedural recollections, rather than the products of their accounts. Text-based interviewing provides a rich reflective account that texts often miss when analyzed as stand-alone artifacts, and text analysis tends toward the evaluative (Brandt, 2001). Teacher and researcher evaluations are not a function of the present study; instead, evaluation is derived from the student perspective. Furthermore, many of the procedural and interpretive questions I asked would not be observable in the texts. In order to elicit such information, semi-structured and text-based interviews were instead necessary.

That said, I did refer to students' texts and thoroughly reviewed all writing-related documents they submitted. At times, these documents contained written advice obtained from the various resources of help they sought help from. While I could see differences in the subject's drafts, I could not be sure of the context surrounding these changes. Thus, my review of student documents served the purpose of not only guiding my analytic memos and interview questions, but also referring me back to specific text points I had overlooked or not been able to understand. As a benefit of the semi-structured and text-based interview

methods I used, participants' accounts helped direct my attention back to salient text aspects because my informal analysis of students' texts lacked the kind of retrospective richness their accounts instead afforded. In revisiting their texts post-interview, I could better see evidence of the procedures and social interactions they recalled. Furthermore, I could see salience from the eyes of the students, rather than via their inanimate texts.

Recruitment

At the start of the winter 2014 quarter, I recruited participants through two means: in lecture and via the department's online system for listing research studies. In lecture, I made a brief announcement of my study's parameters and distributed recruitment surveys to interested international students, later using these to vet potential participants. In some cases, snowball sampling (Murphy, 1980) also generated interested participants. Further participants were acquired via the department's online system. The recruitment survey is included in Appendix F.

Recruitment Meetings. After recruiting students, we had an initial meeting so I could better determine their eligibility and inquire about information contained on the recruitment survey. This informal meeting lasted approximately ten minutes per interested student. My goals included: (1) explaining the overall research process and commitment expected; (2) answering students' questions; (3) screening interested students to confirm their age, educational background, and academic goals suited the parameters of the study, and; (4) inviting suitable students to participate. I accepted some students on the spot; others required more consideration. All selected students were not handpicked; rather, my review of their recruitment survey and the recruitment meeting determined that they indeed fit the parameters for qualification. Beyond these immediate administrative goals, I was also

gauging participants' comprehension by intentionally asking multi-part questions, using slang, and altering my speech patterns to see how well they followed my intended meanings. Gathering casual information about their English proficiency was not a determinant in their eventual acceptance or rejection; rather, it served to prepare me to think more clearly about linguistic and cultural assumptions embedded in data collection and that I would need to be aware of my own speech patterns. This tactic was quite helpful as it illustrated that, while some of the selected participants were at ease with my linguistic and cultural adjustments when speaking, others struggled to keep up, thus better preparing me to work with a range of students.

Selecting Participants. While I ended up collecting data on eight participants for the duration of the quarter, this dissertation represents the experiences of five subjects who emerged to most accurately fit my conceptualization of an international student: (1) they had no prior educational experiences in the U.S.; (2) they were studying at the undergraduate level; (3) English was not their first language; (4) English was not an official language in their home country; and (5) course enrollment was for credit towards an academic degree. Essentially, participants were encountering their first academic experience in the United States through university matriculation. These clearly defined parameters are intended to support replication, which is an issue in second language writing research (Polio, 2001). Additionally, students were prohibited from being my own, as mentioned before, and they were required to be at least eighteen years of age. I accepted students regardless of their year of matriculation, major, or reason for enrolling in the course. The final five subjects were all female, between the ages of eighteen and twenty, and all Asian, with four from China and one from Japan. All spoke only English and their respective native language. They had varied

reasons for enrolling in the course. Table 2 provides a general overview of each of the five subjects who emerged as most clearly fitting my study criteria.

Table 2

Summary of Selected Participants

Pseudonym	Cai	Yilin	Yuriko	Quinn	Vivien
Nationality	Chinese	Chinese	Japanese	Chinese	Chinese
Matriculation	Fall 2011	Fall 2013	Fall 2013	Fall 2012	Fall 2013
Enrollment	G.E.	Pre-major	Interest	Pre-major	Pre-major
Age	20	18	19	19	18

Note. Under *Enrollment*, G.E. refers to the fulfillment of general education writing requirements for graduation.

Table 2 forgoes a couple of details. Institutional scores were irrelevant in selecting participants, and thus are not addressed directly herein. Institutional scores simply placed participants in writing or ESL courses upon matriculation – with the exception of Yuriko who was a study abroad student allowed to bypass these requirements. Additionally, scores in former coursework requiring writing were not collected because subjects instead provided detailed accounts of these experiences. Subjects’ accounts are far more inclusive than grades, and align more truly with the perspectival nature of this project.

While curiosity led me to also collect data for the other three students, I did not process their data because each had some mixture of high school study abroad or community college experience prior to studying at the university, which would confound my later analysis of the data. Thus, my dissertation includes only the most qualified subjects per the parameters I set and as reflected by their emergent compatibility with those parameters.

Compensation. Compensation for two hours of participation in my study equated with a two-hour research participation credit, satisfying an ongoing course stipulation required of enrolled students with each term the course was offered. Each quarter, the

department lists and manages faculty or graduate student research studies via an online system. Students in the course are required to participate in one of the listed studies as subjects, or they can instead elect to complete a brief, written non-research alternative assignment. Either way, students must obtain two hours of research participation. While they do not gain points for participation in any study or research alternative, they do lose five points from their overall final score if they fail to complete the required two hours.

While my dissertation research project was listed in the department's online system, meaning qualifying international students could use it to satisfy the research participation requirement, my study also offered additional compensation via a third hour of participation. Again, this extra compensation was only available to qualifying international students enrolled in the course, and also only for those whom had completed the initial two hours of my study. Still, the professor offered extra credit to all students in the course via participation in listed studies or the non-research alternative. Students completing extra credit received a maximum of two additional points added to their course totals via one hour of extra work. In the case of my study, which also offered the maximum allowable one hour of extra work, I offered students a choice of either the two extra credit points or a \$20 gift card.

From the start of my study, extra credit was made available for all students in the course; thus, my study was of no comparatively greater advantage or compensation for participants when compared with other options they had. I presented the third hour option from the start of recruitment, but did not request student commitment until after the second interview. At that time, I notified students that they had met the course requirement, and were not expected to proceed further, explaining that the extra credit was both optional and available via other means. Still, all of my student participants completed the required two

hours of participation, plus the additional hour for extra credit points, though they could have chosen other, shorter studies, or the non-research alternative to fulfill the extra credit. None of my subjects requested the gift card for the extra hour of participation.

Data Collection

The Pre-Interview Survey. The first few minutes of the first interview overviewed the research process and related expectations, helping to create an impression of further data collection for both the subjects and myself. We spent about ten minutes discussing informed consent, the recording process, the pace of research, and my intentions for the project's completion and contribution to my program of study. We discussed not only that meeting's procedures, but also its fit with other data collection and subsequent meetings. These procedural conversations were interspersed with small talk to further establish cross-cultural rapport and to remedy any comprehension barriers.

The next fifteen minutes were devoted to the pre-interview survey whereby students reported demographic data and historical information, their current status at the university and in the course, and their background with writing (Thaiss & Zawacki, 2006). I explained what certain words meant (e.g. "friend" as any social or peer contact) and answered students' questions when they were unsure how to respond. Students entered self-reports of their scores on the SAT, university writing placement exam, and TOEFL where applicable; I later verified these institutionally. These questions helped me understand their proficiency at an institutional level, even though it would likely differ across settings and with different kinds of people. The pre-interview survey also contained some key questions meant to again assure participants' eligibility (Blakeslee & Fleischer, 2007; Werner & Schoepfle, 1987), as with

inquiring about U.S. high school or community college study. Appendix H contains the pre-interview survey in its entirety.

As accumulated over time, observations of and conversations with international students revealed interesting patterns regarding institutional and course enrollment, thus prompting related pre-interview questions. I asked students to detail how they had heard about the university and any connections they had to it before matriculation because earlier (and unrelated) conversations with international students had revealed influential instances that occurred in their home countries, as with online discussion groups, active high school recruitment by university representatives, social connections among peer groups, and so on. So, in some cases, students knew quite a lot about the university before choosing it, whereas other students made a seemingly more random selection or were forced to attend because of rejection elsewhere. Students also described their course enrollment, indicating their TA's name and potential social connections they previously or currently had with the course. I wanted to know who their TA was to help me contextualize the written feedback I would eventually review. As the most experienced TA in the course, I personally knew each of the other TAs I worked alongside, understanding their general disposition towards teaching and reviewing student writing. This coupled with my knowledge of the course to allow me to mediate students' interpretations of TA feedback, particularly when they did not seek clarification. Questions about their friends derived from my awareness that international students – particularly those newer to the university - liked enrolling in courses with their international student friends. Even more so, they often pursued additional means to secure spots in the same discussion sections alongside their fellow international student friends. I inquired further about American students because I was less sure about this tendency,

especially for those international students with stronger linguistic, cultural, or social ties to the American university context. Gathering initial information about social connections was critical because all students converse among themselves about courses, majors, instructors, and experiences with assessment. Given my relationships with various international students over the years, I knew that these conversations were prominent in their curricular decision-making within a foreign academic context where they longed to be successful; though, while salient factors, some students still persisted with decisions their peers deemed risky. Still, I wanted to know what students' social connections were and how these interacted with the immediate context of study.

It was important to gather information about English and writing in academic English via the pre-interview survey. I tried to keep these questions and subsequent discussions broad (Thaiss & Zawacki, 2006), so that students would fully consider any personally meaningful experience and so they would provide these recollections on their own, rather than through parameters imposed by me. Essentially, these pre-interview survey questions gave me a greater perspective of their institutionally assigned scores, as I asked them to retell their experiences with English and to assess their own proficiency strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, this gave me an emergent impression of where they thought their writing most needed improvement, or where they felt it was strongest, which allowed me to later compare and inquire about these initial reports as data collection progressed. While English may serve more of an exam purpose in other countries, I wanted to gather information about subjects' prior coursework with English academic writing to avoid making incorrect assumptions. Students also listed experiences with English academic writing as acquired in the university. These were important because it gave me a sense of their knowledge about writing.

Additionally, students had often taken courses I had also taught (though, I did not teach any of my final participants selected for this study). Thus, I was familiar with the curriculum for many of the courses they had taken, or were currently taking, which better informed my awareness of what they might know about writing. Similarly, students reported their use of various helpful resources, as with the writing center, TA, professor, and friends, and they discussed any other means by which they felt they had learned or received support for English academic writing. These early inquiries were simultaneously designed to get students to see resources for writing as broadly conceptualized and, to avoid confusion, as not related to citation practices. These requests were similarly designed to enable broader conceptualizations of learning English academic writing from the perspective of participants.

Once the pre-interview survey was completed, it provided a natural segue into the first interview, which then began officially. Because the pre-interview survey connected to interview topics, it also assisted me in redirecting semi-structured questions to suit the survey responses of individual subjects. In this manner, we were able to further clarify points of confusion, and I could elicit elaboration on points of interest deriving from the pre-interview survey.

All interviews were recorded for audio feedback. Each interview occurred in the same neutral location (Blakeslee & Fleischer, 2007): a campus research office that did not belong to me, nor was it associated with the department where the course was housed. The interviews were within a building not frequented by undergraduates (when compared to others on campus), and were located in a wing designated for faculty. Thus, there was less traffic and disruption in this wing in particular, and I hoped its neutral location would allow

for freer response. Each participant indicated they were previously unfamiliar with this building.

Finally, during the first meeting, which consisted of the varied tasks described above, I was also engaged in note taking that later transitioned to analytic memos. Specifically, I was monitoring the amount of time it took participants to review and sign the informed consent, in addition to how long they spent on the pre-interview survey. Although not entirely reliable, this information helped me check for signs of struggle whereby I documented issues of comprehension and excessive time expenditures, so I could intercept and prevent ongoing confusion. This information also helped me form early impressions as to which participants were more comfortable reading, interpreting, and writing English. For example, some subjects multitasked by engaging in side talk with me while filling out the pre-interview survey, or hurriedly skimming the informed consent form and signing while also providing evidence that they understood it. One subject in particular did not even read the informed consent form, whereas others labored over the pre-interview survey and exhibited more cautious response behaviors. Some of these early behaviors seemed to match later comprehension and attention issues that arose with the writing assignments. I captured these initial impressions on my early analytic notes to check assumptions as they arose.

The First Interview. The first interview lasted approximately thirty minutes and thus served a preliminary function of not only reaffirming details contained in the pre-interview survey, but also extending them via a semi-structured format. Students discussed both prior experiences and those they had just encountered, given the deadline for the course's first writing assignment. Unlike subsequent interviews, this one was not text-based, though students did submit their assignment to me for review. Initial questions directed participants'

attention to academic writing through L1-L2 comparisons and collecting more detail about how they navigated university writing tasks. I sought elaboration on obstacles they perceived and how they managed these, in addition to inquiring about their preparation for English academic writing at the university prior to matriculation. I also asked them to discuss aspects of university writing assignments that were difficult and easy. Essentially, I was trying to determine if they had patterns of help seeking behavior. However, as mentioned previously, at the time of the first interview, the first paper assignment was a central focus during weekly discussion sections with teaching assistants. For the first time, students were directly engaged in a weighted assignment for the course, which permitted me to inquire about their knowledge of the course writing assignments prior to receiving grades. Rather than have students respond based on assessment, I wanted to instead find out what they knew based upon information from previously or currently enrolled peers, or other significant resources that had informed their knowledge of the course. Thus, in some responses, students discussed experiences gained over time, whereas, in others, they referenced experiences they had just had in recently completing the course's first writing assignment. At the close of the interview, I gave participants a copy of the informed consent and confirmed details for the second interview. Appendix I has the protocol for the first interview (though it is named preliminary interview in the appendix).

The Second Interview. Text-based interviewing emerged with the second interview, as students referenced the assignment prompt and the graded version of assignment one, which had just been returned to them. At the time of the interviews, students had about five days to review their graded assignments, and I specifically asked them to. In addition to reviewing these on their own, they had also submitted a graded copy to me on the same day

the assignments were returned plus any assignment-related documents like outlines and drafts. Since the first interview occurred right as the paper had been completed, but not yet graded, the timing of the second interview was meant to give students time to review their graded paper and to reflect upon their writing experience now that TA feedback had been provided. Thus, the second interview allowed them to review their writing assignment again, but this time with feedback. I supplied the writing prompt to direct their recollection back to it. Before interviewing students, I read their assignments again, but also considered TA feedback and scoring. This informed my analytic memos and adjusted questions where necessary.

Initial questions focused upon their interpretation of the assignment, as separate from TA feedback. These also asked students to compare this assignment to others they had encountered previously. The purpose of these questions was to stimulate their recollection of what they had done in light of explicit and implicit guidelines. Although students sometimes jumped to inclusions of TA feedback, they still parsed out their own impressions from the end result as it was later critiqued by their instructor. In these responses, students often paused to review the writing prompt and their own texts, as these stimulated more accurate recollections of what they had believed.

Because interpretation feeds action, I then proceeded to ask about their procedures for writing. Students described their process from start to finish, mentioning timing and revisions. They also discussed their use of resources. While my questions specified certain resources as an example, students generally recounted whomever or whatever had helped them understand or complete the paper. As with questions of interpretation, students also had

to refer back to their assignment to recall things such as the order of writing, how they resolved issues that arose, and the impact of help seeking across multiple drafts.

Students discussed the effectiveness of their work, noting both their own impressions when they turned in the assignment and contrasting those with the comments they received from their TA. Students also compared their score to their own estimation upon turning in their work, and they related it to their efforts to seek help. These questions helped me establish what students thought of their work as separate from the TA. Students both agreed and disagreed with their TAs, but the point was to explore if or how experiences with assignment one would impact the writing process for assignment two. As before, students directly referenced their assignment and the prompt when answering these questions. Appendix J has the protocol for the second interview.

The Third Interview. Text-based interviewing continued with the third, and final, interview, which began immediately after the second course paper was due and prior to TA scoring. Students again provided their second paper, drafts, outlines, and other paper-related texts, and I provided the assignment prompt. I also requested that students review these documents before our interview. Prior to the interview, I read each participant's paper. Before the meeting, I again reviewed their writing and the prompt, which helped the emergent analysis of my memos and modified questions to make them more specific to subjects' experiences.

Questions were similar to the second interview in discussing assignment interpretation, approach, presumed effectiveness, use of resources, and score estimations. Although these questions were similar, students' reflections incorporated both pre-course writing experiences and experiences they had gained with assignment one. As with the first

interview, the timing of the interview allowed students to discuss their papers prior to assessment and to speculate about the results of their work. However, at this time, students were able to reflect upon their prior writing experiences in the course, as this interview sought information about if or how their use of writing resources had changed. Furthermore, students were able to recount any other changes to their process. Thus, in some cases, they directly compared changes in their process, issues encountered and overcome, and how they managed time. I explicitly asked them to compare their use of resources between both papers and students also described their understanding of the required empirical studies, as these presented a new challenge for many, and one which required outside assistance. As this was the final course paper, students also discussed impacts on their future writing in the university. Appendix K contains the protocol for the third and final interview.

Data Analysis

Transcribing Interviews. Recorded interviews were transcribed using all five subjects' expressed wording and what I deciphered as their intended meanings. I used hand coded qualitative coding (Charmaz, 2002) to allow patterns to emerge from within the data. Transcription occurred during spring quarter 2014; however, I had already begun composing analytic memos, which initiated an early stage of analysis and informal transcription. I segmented formal transcripts into units of meaning because this helped illustrate subjects' perspectives of their writing processes and conveyed meaning in the ways subjects intended to express it (Bloome, et al., 2005; Kvale, 1996). I felt confident in this process, as I had enough exposure to students from similar regions and cultures. However, to be sure, I submitted transcripts to participants for review. I described the purpose of the transcriptions and that I would directly quote and paraphrase from them. Thus, I requested participants: (1)

approve the accuracy of transcripts; (2) consent to having words quoted as-is, without correction. All subjects agreed to as-is quoting, and for those who responded to member checking, no arguments were given as to how I deciphered meaning and wording.

Coding. Codes evolved directly from the data, as I again borrowed ideas from grounded theory in moving from the ground up and pursuing category saturation (Charmaz, 2002). Following transcription, I transferred data to a single transcription document to better enable the emergence of analytical themes based upon cross-subject comparisons per question. Through a series of coding processes, I listed potential codes and then established relationships among them. Meanwhile, I had organized data enough to provide a more contextualized narrative account of each subject, which appears in the next chapter, *Findings*, and provides a broader context for the later *Analysis* chapter. Coding followed a process of thematic reduction whereby I condensed a longer list of initial codes. Condensation was based upon salience to the research study, rather than quantitative occurrence.

One way of establishing relationships among my most initial emergent themes was through using Attride-Stirling's (2001) method of thematic network analysis. This systematic method helps organize and establish connections among themes in qualitative interview data based upon basic, organizing, and global themes. *Basic Themes* are lowest-order, and are then grouped into any number of broader middle-order *Organizing Themes*. From there, *Global Themes* consist of macro-order themes evident in the data and provide a summative picture of the main themes. Essentially, this method helped me organize and categorize large volumes of interview data, though I later condensed longer lists of themed codes into those that were more salient. This early part of my method is illustrated by the example of codes 4-6 in table 3.

Table 3

Example of Thematic Network Analysis for Codes 4-6: Approach

Organizing Theme	Basic Theme
Code 4: Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4A: formal preparation • 4B: informal preparation • 4C: lack of preparation • 4D: evaluation of preparation
Code 5: Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5A: planning to write • 5B: writing • 5C: independent decision-making while writing • 5D: planning to seek help
Code 6: Self-Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6A: performative confidence • 6B: performative insecurity • 6C: unresolved insecurity post-help • 6D: transitioning assignments • 6E: resolved insecurity post-help

Table 3 shows the evolution of codes. Basic codes began from the ground up, evolving into organizational codes by encapsulating lesser codes. Finally, global codes provided more succinct terms that were very aligned to my research questions. As one example of a longer list of codes, this process simply served to categorize and organize data into more meaningful units of study.

This process resulted in an abundance of codes, which I needed to refocus, as there were four global codes, collapsing into several organizing codes, and far more basic codes, as illustrated by Appendix L. While the fuller list of codes had aligned well with my research questions and pursuits in collecting data, more prominent codes began to emerge through thematic reduction based upon the narrative I wrote of each subject and consistent conversation with my advisor. In reviewing these accounts and reflexively modifying the fuller list of codes, I transcribed again by isolating a list of more salient organizing codes.

Appendix M shows the full list of both organizing and basic codes. For the purposes of the immediate discussion and again due to thematic reduction, the organizing codes included: (1) interpretation of explicit assignment criteria; (2) interpretation of implicit assignment criteria; (3) process; (4) self-evaluation of writing ability; (5) strategies influenced by English-language writing in home country; (6) strategies influenced by English-language writing in U.S.; (7) peers as resources; and (8) evaluation of resources. These codes best addressed the aims of the present study; quantitative occurrence was not important.

These codes narrowed analysis even more. In reviewing and condensing codes further, and meeting with my advisor, it became evident that the most salient code was not only *Process*, as it directly addressed my research questions, but also that a newly emerging code – *Challenges* – was equally as salient. *Process* captured how subjects interpreted and approached the writing assignments, while *Challenges* spoke to how they navigated troubles that arose. In deriving from my process of thematic reduction, these two codes were prevalent, complexly interrelated, and very connected to my research questions. These codes returned my attention to the immediate social factors I sought to investigate. They also indicated a theoretical explanation for the recollections subjects provided whereby the overlapping writing activities subjects had engaged in served to inform their immediate thoughts and actions in the course's writing assignments. The overlapping activities were interesting; the subsequently diverse ways in which subjects thought and behaved were even more interesting. Thus, I began working with Prior's (1998) *Writing/Disciplinarity* text, specifically finding his work on exposures to be most meaningful. Finally, to be sure, I recoded transcripts for evidence of four of Prior's exposures, and found ample support for this emerging theoretical explanation. Thus, the subsequent chapter begins by detailing

rewritten narratives. These more clearly showed participants' recollections as evidence for each of the two codes.

Replication and Limitations

Though my intention is to be methodologically and theoretically clear for the benefit of future study, limitations are inevitable. When one method is central, related data can dominate findings and camouflage phenomenon under a more singular explanation. Theoretical perspectives highlight different phenomena, impacting what researchers pursue, how they pursue it, and how they explain their findings. My program of study, my advisor, and the conversations I had with colleagues engaged in similar studies also shaped my theoretical stances. To overcome shortcomings, I attempted to triangulate participants' responses with my own observations of their texts and my analytic memos (Charmaz, 2002). At times I needed to inquire further about subjects' reported processes, as I noted contradictions in their recollections of integrating feedback and the written work I reviewed. For example, in carefully reviewing TA feedback, I could see instances of participants reading and integrating feedback more closely than they had originally led me to believe. These seemed to be the kind of recollection issues characteristic of post-process research, but informal text analysis assisted me in overcoming this obstacle.

I attempted to overcome perceived shortcomings, and have tried to be transparent, as with offering more detailed description in my appendices (Krappels, 1990). Transparency serves the goal of replicating this study so that these methods of inquiry can be followed again with later studies unrelated to this one. Coding for utterances and analytic memos helped me keep a ground up focus that I felt was necessary for the questions asked and the population studied (Charmaz, 2002). I also tried to carefully define the terms of my study to

avoid replications issues noted elsewhere with studies of L2 writing (Polio, 2001). I was careful to remove myself from a teaching role by avoiding my own students, though that does not guarantee stronger reliability in self-reports. Interview sequencing gave me enough time to reflect and write further before re-engaging with participants and I tried to prevent a strict reliance upon text-based interviews by including the initial semi-structured interviews and the pre-interview survey. Still, text-based interviews most strongly addressed the broader social and personal contexts surrounding the production of writing (Prior, 1998). Finally, I addressed cross-cultural communication at all stages of the data collection process, but cannot guarantee the effectiveness of my attempts. Finally, I chose to compare the experiences of five students in one course because of the over-generalization noted elsewhere in L2 writing studies (Krappels, 1990; Polio, 2001). Rather than extend my findings to non-applicable situations, I hope this study provides a means by which others can attempt to validate what I have demonstrated as relevant in a particular context, at a particular time, and with a particular group of heterogeneous students.

Participants

Before getting into more extensive findings per each subject, the next section of the methodology chapter overviews subjects' basic background information as reported via the pre-interview survey. It details participants' histories with English and writing in English, preparation for U.S. university study, reasons for enrollment, and initial impressions of the course. It also portrays subjects' initial reports of help seeking behaviors for writing prior to the course. It does not include exam scores, course grades, or other institutional classifications other than the initial writing course students' scores placed them in. However, it does include my perception of participants' comfort levels with English, based upon my

own means of informal triangulation, whereby I observed for written and spoken comprehension barriers. This section is important because it helps to illustrate the quantity and kind of writing experiences students had prior to the course and it also establishes this history before delving further into the significance of these experiences as described by students in the next chapter. Formal, institutional classifications are not the central focus of these descriptions or this dissertation study, as testing and grading are often politically contested and fraught with linguistic and cultural biases beyond the scope of this study. Rather, this study emphasizes how participants view their own competence and preparedness and how they evaluate writing experiences they have had, whether classified as significant, somewhat meaningful, or just cursory. Considering institutional perspectives would complicate – and perhaps compete with – students’ accounts. Because participants’ perspectives are critical to this dissertation study, students’ self-evaluations are more critical than any other form of assessment. Furthermore, as the next chapter will indicate, my decision to prioritize self-evaluations was further supported by students’ recollections of certain writing experiences as insignificant to their progress as writers, despite achieving an ‘A’ in such courses. Student feedback consistently indicated that neither grade nor institutional classification could adequately detail the kind of richness their own accounts provided.

Participant descriptions point to mixed histories with writing. Some students exhibited several diverse writing experiences at the university – including ESL, composition, and other disciplinary writing experiences – whereas others had very little prior to enrolling in the course. Furthermore, some students had far more composition or ESL experience, but little to no writing experience in other disciplines. Others were mainstreamed from the point

of matriculation. Writing experiences similarly pointed to habits students had developed for seeking help with writing. Subjects also had diverse reasons for enrolling, whether revisiting a major they had previously abandoned, trying to gain access to the major for the first time, satisfying general education requirements, or taking the advice of peers whom had taken the class and liked it.

Cai. Cai had studied English for six years and self-reported as fluent. My early impressions of her proficiency were similar; she barely read the informed consent agreement and never struggled to understand my speech or writing, seeming at ease with English. However, she felt her experiences learning English in Chinese schooling had not included English academic writing, or at least the kind of writing she faced at the university. Her first experience with English writing was the SAT exam and related preparation.

Cai had chosen the university for its academic excellence and desirable location. She first heard of the university through a test preparation agency in China and did not know other students before selecting the university. Before transitioning from China to the U.S., she did not report any intentional preparations for writing at the university.

Unlike the other students, she was the only junior and her major was Financial Math. Cai enrolled in the course because she needed to meet the university's writing requirement for her upcoming graduation, though the course was not her first writing experience at the university. From her collective writing experiences, she felt she had a solid understanding of writing thesis statements, but doubted her analytical abilities. Table 4 shows Cai's history of writing courses at the university.

Table 4

Cai's Writing Experiences at the University

Course	Term
ESL Alternative	----
ESL 1	----
ESL 2	----
ESL 3	Winter 2012
ESL 4	Fall 2012
First Year Composition	Spring 2013
Humanities Writing	Fall 2012 Winter 2014
Social Science Writing	Fall 2012 Fall 2013
Science Writing	----

Note. The social science course of study was excluded from the above data.

Table 4 shows that Cai had a fairly balanced set of writing experiences at the university, having experienced ESL, FYC, and disciplinary writing. Her score on the entrance English exam placed her in the third highest of four possible ESL course. Cai did not elect to take the alternative ESL course, likely because it was not yet offered when she began studying at the university. She described her overall writing ability as, “I guess ‘B’?” Per her initial reports of her university writing history, she was not intensively interested in seeking help from others when writing. Table 5 shows Cai’s reported use of resources when needing help with writing assignments at the university.

Table 5

Cai's Initial Report of Using Writing Resources at the University

Resource	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Writing Center			X		
TA			X		
Professor				X	
American Peer				X	
International Peer					X

While Cai knew no one in the social science course at the time of enrollment, she had friends who had taken the course previously: two American friends and five international student friends. Their reports – although mixed messages - stimulated her interest and subsequent enrollment. Despite some friends' warnings, Cai bypassed enrollment hesitations. She described herself as a devoted student, taking general education courses more seriously than many of her friends.

Yilin. Like Cai, Yilin's entry English exam also placed her in the third ESL course, however she reported a more extensive history with English than Cai. Yilin had studied English for ten years, attending an international high school in China where both English and English academic writing were more infused in the school curriculum. In my initial interactions with Yilin, she was comparatively much slower in filling out the pre-interview survey and had some questions about words (e.g. proficiency). She sometimes asked me to repeat questions, or I would rephrase them. Yilin felt her speaking and listening skills were weak, but did think her writing was stronger, unless compared to NES Americans.

Like Cai, she chose the university because of its location and did not exert great effort to prepare for writing at the university. In Yilin's case, she referenced how her high school curriculum had helped her understanding of English academic writing. She did not take additional steps to learn more before matriculation.

Yilin had studied writing since middle school, but felt she first learned English academic writing via an EAP (English for Academic Purposes) course she took in high school. Additionally, her high school psychology and economics classes required essays written in English. She felt she was adept in thinking about topics and generating ideas, yet she had only written about five essays during her time at the international high school. Her

early confidence was also mixed with doubt, as evidenced by her response of “I am still not sure what English academic writing” on the pre-interview survey. Additionally, she questioned if academic writing was the same as what she had encountered on the TOEFL. Yilin’s enrollment in the course was her first disciplinary writing experience at the university. Table 6 illustrates Yilin’s writing experiences at the university.

Table 6

Yilin’s Writing Experiences at the University

Course	Term
ESL Alternative	Fall 2013
ESL 1	----
ESL 2	----
ESL 3	Fall 2013
ESL 4	Winter 2014
First Year Composition	----
Humanities Writing	----
Social Science Writing	----
Science Writing	----

Note. The social science course of study was excluded from the above data.

Yilin elected to take the supplementary ESL course. Yilin did not have a wide range of writing experiences at the university, as she was still in her first year of study. Though she was newer, she had already developed relationships with peers and the campus writing center, as these helped her navigate writing assignments. Table 7 shows Yilin’s reported use of resources when needing help with writing assignments at the university.

Table 7

Yilin’s Initial Report of Using Writing Resources at the University

Resource	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Writing Center		X			
TA			X		
Professor				X	
American Peer			X		
International Peer		X			

Once enrolled in the university, Yilin learned more about the course and her intended major. When choosing the university, Yilin did not know any other students, but she later came to know students who had also taken the course. While she had no American friends in the course, had known one international student friend who had taken the course previously, in addition to meeting two international students simultaneously enrolled with her. Through friends of friends', Yilin learned that the course was especially difficult for international students, but she had to persist, since it was her major.

Yuriko. Unlike the other students, Yuriko was enrolled in the university for only one year as an education abroad student working towards a degree in political science and economics. In Japan, she knew one other exchange student who had also studied at the university, in addition to one American who had graduated and moved away. She liked the campus, felt it was a good place to focus on academics, and had heard it was mid-level in its university system.

After seven years of English study, including classes at her Japanese university, she still doubted her speaking and listening skills, and had limited writing experience. My early interactions with her seemed to indicate she was more adept with the language than she stated, however she did have some questions of clarification (e.g. defining proficiency). Despite her years studying English, she felt she had only studied academic writing for six months – the amount of time she had been in the U.S. She felt her writing was “okay,” saying, “I am beginner. I wrote long paper for the first time when I came here. I had never written long paper in Japan.” She reported that her strengths were using examples and sources to support her opinions. Her reported weaknesses included grammar and difficulty articulating her thoughts in English. To prepare for the writing demands of the university, she

enrolled in an English the writing centers at her home university, but did not feel this preparation was all that similar to the experiences she later had in the U.S. university. Table 8 portrays Yuriko’s university writing experiences.

Table 8

Yuriko’s Writing Experiences at the University

Course	Term
ESL Alternative	----
ESL 1	----
ESL 2	----
ESL 3	----
ESL 4	----
First Year Composition	----
Humanities Writing	Fall 2013
Social Science Writing	Fall 2013 Winter 2014
Science Writing	----

Note. The social science course of study was excluded from the above data.

Because she was a study abroad student, she did not take ESL or FYC writing courses.

Instead, she enrolled in courses relevant to her major or related areas of interest. Thus, at the time of our meeting, she was gaining experience in disciplinary writing, and also had an established set of resources for seeking help. Table 9 is Yuriko’s initially reported use of writing resources.

Table 9

Yuriko’s Initial Report of Using Writing Resources at the University

Resource	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Writing Center	X				
TA	X				
Professor					X
American Peer			X		
International Peer			X		

She had some prior knowledge of the course. Upon transferring to the university, she encountered three American friends and four international student friends whom had formerly taken the course. None were currently enrolled, however the collective opinion of friends whom had taken the course previously helped inspire her interest in enrolling.

Quinn. Quinn had chosen the university because it was the best of the admissions offers she received. She did not know anyone whom had attended the university before she selected it.

She had studied English for six years in China, feeling confident in reading, but struggling with writing. Though she filled out forms and responded to questions quickly, which indicated greater ease using English, she also exhibited comprehension struggles. I often rephrased questions because her responses indicated she did not actually understand them. Over time, this improved. She reported only having studied writing for two years, but felt these experiences were more incidental, rather than deliberate. She felt she understood paragraph and essay structure, and how to write a thesis, but that her thesis statements remained weak and unclear. She tried to prepare for writing at the university by reading fiction. She felt this would improve her grammar, structure, and vocabulary.

Quinn only had writing experiences in ESL and FYC courses at the university. Her examination scores placed her the second of four ESL courses; this was one level lower than the other participants. The course was her first disciplinary writing experience, as table 10 shows.

Table 10

Quinn's Writing Experiences at the University

Course	Term
ESL Alternative	----
ESL 1	----
ESL 2	Fall 2012
ESL 3	Winter 2013
ESL 4	Spring 2013
First Year Composition	Summer 2013
Humanities Writing	----
Social Science Writing	----
Science Writing	----

Note. The social science course of study was excluded from the above data.

While she liked working with the campus writing center, she also liked soliciting advice from friends and instructors. Given the nature of some ESL courses, she was required to see the writing center tutors and instructors when needing writing help. Table 11 shows her other patterns of seeking help with writing.

Table 11

Quinn's Initial Report of Using Writing Resources at the University

Resource	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Writing Center		X			
TA			X		
Professor			X		
American Peer			X		
International Peer			X		

She had been interested in the social science major during her freshman year, but friends' warning about the tough writing and assessment put her off. She returned to the major in her sophomore year instead because she was close to declaring a major in economics, but thought she might double major instead. She wanted to work in public

relations, business, or entertainment, and felt a double major would be more attuned to her goals. She was also finding economics less interesting over time.

She had known four international students whom had taken the course, some of whom had warned her about the course. During her time of enrollment, she connected with two American friends and two international student friends.

Vivien. Vivien was forced to choose the university because she reported that her dream school had rejected her. She knew of the university from friends in China and had even met a student who planned to attend while preparing for the SAT.

She had a rapid rate of speech, used slang often, and was very comfortable with English. Vivien had many international student friends, but also many American friends, as she was in a sorority. While she had twelve years of English study, she was less sure of how she learned English academic writing. Vivien noted that one of her university instructors deemed her writing proficiency “basically native,” other than issues with sentence structure. She felt confident with her written analyses, but struggled with writing thesis statements. She had prepared for academic writing at the university by purchasing an AP English book and studying it on her own. Additionally, she had worked with tutors in China on a regular basis.

Unlike the other participants, Vivien’s SAT score qualified her for mainstream FYC, which she took concurrently with the social science course. Still, she had chosen to take the alternative ESL course the prior quarter because she felt it would be important to gain experience with university academic writing. Table 12 shows her history of writing at the university.

Table 12

Vivien’s Writing Experiences at the University

Course	Term
ESL Alternative	Fall 2013
ESL 1	----
ESL 2	----
ESL 3	----
ESL 4	----
First Year Composition	Winter 2014
Humanities Writing	----
Social Science Writing	----
Science Writing	----

Note. The social science course of study was excluded from the above data.

The social science course was her first disciplinary writing experience at the university. While her university experiences were comparatively limited overall, she still tested at a higher level. In these limited experienced, Vivien tended to rely upon instructors for help with writing assignments. Table 13 details Vivien’s initial reported use of writing resources.

Table 13

Vivien’s Initial Report of Using Writing Resources at the University

Resource	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Writing Center					X
TA		X			
Professor			X		
American Peer				X	
International Peer					X

Vivien was a pre-major student, and experienced friends had warned her against concurrent enrollment in FYC and the social science course. Both had demanding writing assignments, but Vivien persisted. Initially, she knew little of the writing required in the course, but understood it was a difficult the writing centers. Prior to enrolling in the course, two of her American friends had also taken the course, in addition to three that were enrolled

during her term. Only one of her international student friends had previously taken the course.

Closing

Before proceeding to the next chapter, it is important to synthesize participants' backgrounds as related to composition or other disciplinary courses taken at the university where writing was required. Distinctions are important because they align with participants' perspectives and evaluations of themselves as writers, and correlate with their processes and related struggles in writing for the course. Distinctions are discussed later via the subject comparisons and telling cases included in Chapter 6, *Emergent Theory*. Table 14 portrays students classified as experienced.

Table 14

Summary of Participants Classified as Experienced

Student	<i>Cai</i>	<i>Yuriko</i>	<i>Vivien</i>
Composition	3	0	2
Disciplinary	4	3	0
Total	7	3	2

Note. Composition refers to FYC, ESL, and the ESL Alternative course because general academic writing is a strong focus in each of these courses. Disciplinary includes any kind of non-composition disciplinary class requiring writing assignments.

Experienced students were stronger because they had some amount of prior disciplinary coursework requiring writing. These experiences were meaningful for students, even if they were dissimilar from what they encountered in the course. Despite differences, students were able to also find similarities or they were able to gain valuable writing experience in non-composition classrooms, as these often demanded writing as a means of comprehending disciplinary course content – objectives not mirrored by composition or ESL.

Still, students noted ways in which they made use of composition learning. Issues of comparison among different courses will be discussed in detail in the next chapter. However, Vivien is an anomaly here because she had no disciplinary writing experience. The reason for her classification relates to her awareness of herself as a writer, the independence she exhibited in often working alone, and in her preexisting strengths in writing, which were significant enough to land her in FYC, as opposed to ESL. Furthermore, Vivien was quite socialized to the U.S. academic and culture life. She was very engaged in her sorority and spoke with slang and colloquialisms characteristic of a confident NNES.

By contrast, other subjects also lacked non-composition disciplinary writing experience, culminating in significant frustrations detailed in later chapters. Table 15 portrays students who were inexperienced, and often also weaker writers as apparent from their own reflections.

Table 15

Summary of Participants Classified as Inexperienced

Student	<i>Quinn</i>	<i>Yilin</i>
Composition	3	3
Disciplinary	0	0
Total	3	3

Note. Composition refers to FYC, ESL, and the ESL Alternative course because general academic writing is a strong focus in each of these courses. Disciplinary includes any kind of disciplinary class requiring writing assignments.

It may be initially unclear as to why Quinn is inexperienced while she shared the same lack of disciplinary writing experiences as Vivien who is instead classified as experienced. Later discussions will make this apparent, but for now, it is important to note Quinn's first placement in an ESL course that was comparatively lower than that of the other

four subjects. Furthermore, despite the fact that Quinn was also in a sorority, I also noted Quinn's issues with comprehension early in our research process, and Quinn – unlike Vivien – had sought a major avoidant of writing. While she had expressed early interest in the course's major, she quickly changed to economics after heeding friends' warnings. Only later did she return to try again, as her actual major was less satisfying for her. Quinn's early behavior indicated intimidation that was later verified by some of her experiences in the course.

This chapter detailed the methodology for this dissertation study, closing with brief participant summaries. The next chapter, *Findings*, provides a detailed narrative overview of each participant's history with writing in and out of the course, based upon the second round of condensed codes. Following that chapter, the *Analysis* chapter instead focuses on narratives involving the two main codes of analysis (*Process, Challenges*) and, also, the four exposures that derive from these two codes as again reflected by thematic reduction. These next two chapters highlight the network of people, tools, and understandings students built and their related reasons for doing so. They also clarify subjects as experienced versus inexperienced, based upon not only the criteria in the tables above, but also their own personal accounts.

Chapter 4: Findings

This chapter provides a lengthier narrative account of each subject to better account for context as intended by the aims of this study; furthermore, these context-sensitive accounts reveal distinct trajectories that later correlate with heterogeneous response practices. This heterogeneity is illustrated clearly through comparisons across subjects via the telling cases included in chapter 6, *Emergent Theory*. Essentially, the accounts in the present chapter provide portraits of students' experiences as influential to writing in the course while also helping to establish heterogeneity among subjects. Heterogeneity emerges concretely here, but takes analytical shape in the next chapter, *Analysis*. That chapter deeply considers the two main codes most pertinent to the research questions, *Process* and *Challenges*, as realized through thematic reduction. Per each participant, the current chapter discusses only those codes derived from the second round of condensed categorical coding and also deriving from thematic reduction: (1) interpretation of explicit assignment criteria; (2) interpretation of implicit assignment criteria; (3) process; (4) self-evaluation of writing ability; (5) strategies influenced by English-language writing in home country; (6) strategies influenced by English-language writing in U.S.; (7) peers as resources; and (8) evaluation of resources. To make participants' accounts more concrete, they are reordered in narrative form per subject. Data here derives from the first through third interview, accounts provided via the pre-interview survey, and information contained on the recruitment survey.

Introduction

Narratives are organized in four main areas of discussion. The first deals with *participants' histories with English academic writing*, which includes experiences with English academic writing in their home country, additional preparation for university writing

prior to matriculation, university writing experiences acquired prior or simultaneous to those in the course of study, help seeking behaviors, and overall self-evaluation related to writing as a result of these collective experiences. The second addresses *participants' understandings of writing in the course before, during, and after writing*, as reflected by impressions of writing in the course before enrollment, interpretation of assignment expectations, individual processes for writing and seeking help, and self-evaluation related to each writing assignment. Self-evaluation of writing ability included not only students' own assessments of their work, but also how these were impacted by the TA's responses to it. Finally, the narratives end with *students' self-assessment*, including evaluations of their help seeking behaviors, reflections upon their writing development, and overall self-evaluation as a result of their experiences in the course.

Narrative of Quinn

History with English Academic Writing. Quinn had first encountered English academic writing while still in China. However, her descriptions of these writing experiences revealed writing tasks that were less congruent to those she later had in the U.S. university.

English academic writing in China. Quinn distinguished L1 writing from English academic writing, pointing to sentence structure, word choice, and the interpretation of others' behavior as problematic differences. Quinn's high school had an English the writing centers taught by a Chinese instructor where she learned "really easy writing," which she characterized as mostly descriptive and short. Her Chinese experiences writing in English had not required her to write the kinds of analytical papers she later encountered in the U.S. In the U.S., she struggled to express her thoughts in English academic writing.

Preparing for English academic writing at the university. She prepared for U.S. university writing by reading novels and short stories. These enabled her to improve her vocabulary and grammar, while also studying the “[American] logic of writing,” which included the structural differences she had noted in China. Still, she felt she had done “few things to prepare” for writing.

Other English academic writing experiences at the university. Exam scores placed her in ESL 3B, 3C, 12, and FYC at the U.S. university. Quinn recalled that the ESL assignments were not difficult and that they had components of analysis, opinion, and comparison, which she described as “basic writing.” In the ESL courses, she learned revision, structure, and how to form a thesis. ESL courses also required students to meet weekly with a writing center tutor for one-hour sessions where Quinn reported discussions based upon grammar, sentence structure, word choice, and (occasional) brainstorming. FYC felt quite different from the preceding ESL courses, as this instructor asked students to read and then analyze an assigned topic in writing. With the FYC papers, Quinn reported, “I [was] total lost cause I don't know how to start with this kind of understanding then writing.” Sustained reading comprehension followed by writing posed challenges for Quinn. While she also worried about using her own words to analyze what she had read, she eventually found that, “after this the writing centers – I think I get some – improve a little bit.” She noted that FYC had taught her how to demonstrate understanding of assigned academic readings using written explanation, and that it also strengthened her ability to write a thesis.

Self-evaluation of writing ability. Before the course began, Quinn already had insecurities about her ability to write effectively in English, and these often revolved around her impressions of and interactions with native speakers. She was aware of her non-native

speaker status, and felt her meanings were often confused because of her method of translating sentences from her L1 to English. As Quinn described it, “Like, when I write some essay, I always use, like, Chinese English sentence – like, translate Chinese to English – like, the orders of the words and some word choice. It’s really Chinese style, not like native speaker’s style.” Thus, given structural differences for composing sentences, Quinn noticed her American friends could not decipher her intended meanings when reviewing her writing, resulting in an issue she referred to as her “biggest problem.” Given her history of abandoning the major and its related pre-major coursework, Quinn’s enrollment in the course did not appear to correlate with renewed confidence. In comparing herself to her peers, she felt she lacked experience in social science writing, which motivated her later decisions to seek their help with assignments one and two. She was also sensitive to the comparative grading in the course, and knew her writing had to compete with that of native speakers. Given the writing experiences she had already had at the university, Quinn knew “I need to use, like, twice or three times of [American students’] time, like, to prepare one essay.” Quinn’s anxieties about writing were frequently connected to presumed native-speaker abilities, which were increased by her uncertainties about writing for a new discipline and her procedures for doing so.

Writing in the Social Science Course. In [the course], Quinn found some parallels to her prior writing experiences, but also noted differences that made these assignments more challenging. Quinn described the unique purpose of the course’s writing assignments in applying course content noting that “other writing assignment is just all about really academic explain, but [the course] is really back into the reality” because of the course’s

focus on real world phenomena. Quinn did not feel her other writing experiences required her to analyze real world phenomena, as this course did.

Quinn felt that both international and American student friends were important sources of support in the course. International student friends advised Quinn about the major in general, as she had been interested since freshman year. They advised Quinn that the major was “really hard” for international students due to extensive reading and writing. Peers warned her, “You need to have really high skills of writing. You can maybe get better in this major - otherwise you will be so tortured.” Quinn was also warned about the long paper assignments students encountered in the major and the added challenges of collecting and analyzing data. However, American students downplayed the difficulty. “They said it’s not that difficult. Just you need to write a lot of thing, but not that difficult.” Quinn believed this disagreement was “definitely because of the language background” of the American students, so she abandoned the major in her freshman year. In describing her return to the pre-major coursework, Quinn reported that her new major – Economics – lacked a focus on careers she was interested in. Of her intention to double-major, Quinn said, “I like [this major] better. I also like accounting. I didn’t hate it – just normal.”

She also had a habit of asking friends to read her writing, but expressed that, “[American friends] totally misunderstand my meaning. I mean, the structure of the sentence meaning. I think the sentence structure is totally different.” These interactions contributed to Quinn’s perception of her “biggest problem.” “[My writing is] really Chinese style, not like native speaker’s style,” hence, her anxieties about expressing meanings in another language, and her tendencies to rely upon peers for help.

Assignment one expectations. For the first the course assignment, Quinn made frequent references to the assignment's requirement that students apply course content to real life. Because of FYC, she had experience with understanding course content before writing about it, but felt that other university assignments emphasized explaining "just one basic thing...it's not like that application," or the level of difficulty she found in the first the course assignment. Nonetheless, the assignment was similar in requiring explanation and examples.

Quinn was less focused upon the importance of understanding course content and making claims. She appeared conflicted in interpreting the explicit criterion of making claims:

For every other writing, we need, like, topic sentence in every paragraph. For this paper, we don't really need to write every topic sentence in the beginning of every paragraph. Just give a definition of some terms or just really effect about why I think it's okay.

For these reasons, she described assignment one as "really different" from her prior university assignments. Quinn underestimated the importance of making claims, and instead fixated upon the process of applying course content to real world phenomena.

There were other expectations Quinn felt the assignment prompt implied. Quinn included comparison, brief and clear sentences, structure, and good writing skills as implicit assignment expectations. When asked to discuss good writing skills further, Quinn commented that this meant she needed to "think like American people's way, not my traditional way to think about why [Americans] behave like this, why [Americans] say this word. I should probably more focus on American thought, not my thought." In order to

uphold explicit assignment criteria, Quinn felt she must first be able to interpret cultural meanings as an American would.

Assignment one process. Quinn discussed her process for writing assignment one, which had required five days of work. She began by reviewing the assignment, lecture notes, and assigned readings in preparation for the required paper outline. Quinn followed her review of course content with watching the assigned T.V. episode. As she watched her chosen scene, she listed observable course concepts alongside scene examples, which led to the content she needed for the paper outline. Quinn reported writing a series of drafts with the first one focusing upon “what I have in my mind. Just write what I want write – like really, really non-organized paper – like, give all the information.” For the second draft, Quinn’s revisions included removing unnecessary information, in addition to marking areas of uncertainty for which she planned to seek help. These areas pertained to her topic sentences, thesis, and the amount of scene description included. After seeking help, she wrote her third draft. Quinn reported that the final and fourth draft contained minimal changes, and that she changed the phrasing of her thesis for improved specificity, and corrected grammar and sentence errors.

Quinn spoke of obstacles she encountered when writing, and how she overcame them. One issue involved time management. In order to improve her writing performance, Quinn made independent decisions to start early and to write more than initially required of her. A way she resolved issues with timing was to draft an outline that allowed the early stages of writing to emerge. Though she submitted this outline for credit in discussion section, her method of outlining was more comprehensive than required. In describing her outline, Quinn said, “Mine is also a list. I just separate three part and under each part, I list all the thing I

need to write about.” However, she added more detail for later use. “I first write the explanation of the term, give the brief summary of this thing and then start to explain why the character use this word to show what kind of her personality or her situation and how this work affect the relationship among them.” As Quinn summarized of this process, “Almost, it is one of my paragraph.” One impetus for starting early and revising was to allow time for editing because she felt her English writing revealed a Chinese way of thinking. Quinn stated, “If I didn’t edit so many times, it will be definitely really traditional Chinese structure,” when referring to the meanings contained in her sentences. Quinn inferred that it was important for her writing to reflect a culturally appropriate structure, while also showcasing cultural comprehension.

This is where she initially ran into trouble, as she reported watching the entire assigned T.V. episode “around five times,” and re-watching her chosen scene “maybe more than ten times” to improve the cultural understandings she feared she overlooked as a non-native English speaker. When asked why, Quinn responded, “I don’t really get the point – why they behave like this. Cause I don’t really understand the words – like slangs – or the really common jokes among American, but not for me. So, I have really hard time on this one.” Because she worried about cultural comprehension when writing assignment one, she resolved this anxiety by repetitively watching the episode and scene. Quinn was also careful with providing examples of course concepts from the scene, saying, “I find many examples and choose, like, really – like, what I understand really well. I choose to write that.” These independent choices reflected how Quinn was methodical in resolving insecurities and strategic in her subsequent decision-making. In addition to measures to improve her exhibition of cultural comprehension, Quinn also needed to ensure she understood the

prompt. Here again, she reported revisiting the prompt “maybe ten” times. Additionally, she made use of Google. “I tried to look some resource or some essays to help me understand my – understand the assignment and, like, improve my writing sentence words,” but this proved unhelpful. When Quinn’s independent resolutions fell short, she often went elsewhere for guidance.

Quinn felt that some challenges related to assignment one required external input. One of the primary resources Quinn relied upon was her friends, or peers. Quinn consulted with a variety of American and international student friends across majors. During the course, she began asking friends already admitted to the major for help. Two of these friends were Chinese international students, whereas one was an American. However, she eventually came to more heavily rely on one of the Chinese international students who was a senior in the major, in addition to an American friend and sorority sister with a different major.

For assignment one, Quinn asked her peers for various kinds of support. Her American friend, Maggie, was also her sorority sister, and helped her revise for grammar mistakes. To combat the cultural meanings she felt unable to decipher, Quinn instead turned to one of her Chinese friends who was a senior in the major. Quinn felt this friend offered sound advice, despite performing better on the course’s exams, as compared with the two paper assignments. This perplexed Quinn. “I don’t know cause she is a really good student – like, a really, really good student, so maybe low is just about the average.” Quinn described the experience of re-watching the scene, saying, “Actually, I got a help from one of my friends cause I can’t get any further about this, so I just ask her how to – why this people say this word...I don’t get the point. I don’t get the sentence, so that’s what I’m stuck on.” Another international student friend was not in the major, but was enrolled in the same

course with Quinn. Quinn and this friend – whom also happened to be her roommate – discussed the aims of the assignment and clarified lecture content for better understanding.

They worked on the paper together, with Quinn saying:

We talk about something and I ask her how is she going write about this paper. She said just give the examples and explain how the word works. And, I just talk about – I ask her do I need to really large part – large part to describe the scene or what should I focus attention on this paper.

These conversations primarily occurred during Quinn’s first draft and helped her “delete some, like, really not necessary part” for the second draft. Quinn asked her other Chinese friend to review this draft. “I ask her to read whole draft, but she is...yea, I think she did, but she just told me I have too much information about the description of the thing and some part of the evidence and the explanation is unclear. Like too general.” Even though this friend focused on the prompt’s major content, she also offered grammar revisions. Thus, drafts three and four reflected the combined input from her Chinese friend in the major, her roommate, and her American friend.

Quinn sought her TA’s help with the second draft, saying, “we just talk about the – what’s the problem with my explanation or what can I do to improve my paper.” Rather than examine one paragraph, as course protocol specified, Quinn stated the TA actually read two paragraphs. In this meeting, Quinn recalled her TA “told me my thesis is really not specific. It’s really too general.” The TA’s feedback also impacted Quinn’s third and fourth drafts.

While Quinn had hoped to attend the professor’s office hours, she had a the writing centers conflict, which prohibited her from going.

One more source impacted Quinn's drafts as she transitioned from her third to her fourth. In a meeting with the writing center, Quinn's tutor read two of her paragraphs. Quinn reported that the tutor, "give me some really good idea, like, how to change the sentence to clearer meaning – cause sometimes I know what I want express, but I don't know how to use the sentence to express, like, clearly. So, [the writing center] help me to write that sentence to help me to clarify what I want say." In this instance, Quinn sought out the writing center for help in clarifying her sentences so that her meanings could emerge more clearly.

Self-evaluation of assignment one. Quinn reported confidence with various aspects of her final draft for assignment one. These tended to be tied to specific criteria for which she had sought help, as with the thesis and word choice. For example, Quinn discussed her confidence in the sentences she had written, saying, "My friend help me to change some word or sentence sequence – order of the words to make it more American style, not my Chinese English style. So I think after she helped me pretty good on this part." She was equally confident about similar help received from the writing center. However, she had felt confident in her overall structure, which she recalled having learned in prior ESL writing courses. While Quinn had sought support for sentence-level structure, she had not sought external guidance for her overall structure.

Other aspects of assignment one generated less confidence. Despite five days of work, Quinn felt she had not spent enough time on the paper. She also doubted her analytical and explanatory abilities in writing, and believed these were problematic because both were "a really big part" of this social science writing assignment. The TA's feedback mirrored Quinn's anxieties, but she attributed fault to an inability to express herself clearly as a non-native speaker. Despite feedback that confirmed – and added – to her suspicions, Quinn had

planned to talk to the TA, particularly about the feedback she disagreed with, and the ways in which she felt the TA's advice or instruction had misled her. While this move illustrates confidence in the writing choices she made, Quinn never initiated a direct conversation with the TA, which potentially suggests some degree of uncertainty about confronting the TA or believing her counter-position was correct.

In discussing assignment one's implicit expectations, Quinn again revealed a lack of confidence tied to her non-native speaker status. This made her mistrust not only her writing, but also the thinking behind her writing because she felt it was important to emulate an American way of understanding the media content students had been asked to analyze, in addition to being able to write about it as a native speaker would. Even after her friend explained the scene's meaning to her, she still admitted that for "maybe just two small points, I didn't get the English meaning." Her work on the assignment left her worrying that her sentence structures, grammar, and word choice easily identified her non-native speaker status and also compromised meanings.

Other uncertainties arose with procedural decisions she made in writing, which resulted in her marking drafts with particular questions for friends, the writing center, and her TA. When asked what kinds of content she marked, Quinn responded, "Like all about the topic sentence or thesis," in addition to, "some large part of description of the scene. I'm not sure it is too much information or just keep it, so I want to make sure about it." Often, doubts about her ability persisted post-help. As with talking to her TA about the thesis while writing a draft of assignment one, Quinn reported, "Yea, I try to change it, but it's not really big difference." Quinn had underestimated the importance of making claims in assignment one, but she had still sought help in this area, in addition to other areas. As with understanding

cultural meanings embedded in the scene, this was another time when seeking external guidance could not fully satisfy Quinn's hopes for progress.

Assignment one assessment. For assignment one, Quinn received a 34 out of 50, describing this as "so bad." Quinn believed time was her main obstacle, saying, "I know if I worked on it several days more, I would have higher grade." Even though she had spent five days working on the paper, she believed her editing was not specific enough, saying, "I didn't put too much time to edit really carefully, like one-by-one." Instead, she felt her editing was too general.

Her TA's feedback indicated specific issues, though Quinn did not agree with all. When she initially received assignment one with feedback, she only briefly read her TA's comments because papers were handed back at the end of the writing centers. The TA had critiqued her analysis, citations, evidence, and claims. Quinn countered, "All of my analysis or examples is focus on my thesis. Maybe just expression of the thesis, like, it's not unclear, but all the examples is to prove the thesis." Quinn believed her claims and evidence were clearly related, but that she still struggled to express her ideas in English. Additionally, the TA indicated Quinn had overestimated the length of media content she was to analyze for assignment one; in this regard, Quinn reported confusion about the TA's directions.

Quinn intended to seek the TA's help for assignment two in improving her understanding of forming arguments, especially because of her unsuccessful attempts with argumentation in assignment one, despite seeking the TA's help. As Quinn said:

I ask [the TA] the thesis statement so many times and she always told me I need pretty clear and specific sentence to clarify what I am meaning. I did it like what she

told me, but I don't know why the thesis is not strong. So I want know, like, what kind of sentence? What kind of expression?

She worried about assignment two, saying, "I feel so frustrated." "I never write analysis about ads so I don't know how to really work on this paper."

Assignment two expectations. For the second writing assignment, Quinn again emphasized the expectations she associated with assignment one, but paid more attention to making original claims. She mistakenly felt the main grading criterion were different between the two assignments:

The first one is kind of just explain the nonverbal and verbal issues and what did people do to – how to say it...mmm...what did people do can be called those features and why they have those features to function – what function did those issues have.

And, this paper is all about argument – how it effectively influence audience.

Even though claims were explicitly required in assignment one, Quinn struggled to see both assignments as requiring argumentation.

Quinn discussed implicit assignment expectations for the second assignment. She again cited structure, clear sentences, and cultural comprehension. Additionally, she felt her personal perception was important, as well as choosing varied course concepts.

Assignment two process. Before beginning assignment two, Quinn expressed insecurities about time management, saying, "I need to start the paper really early this time." However, her timing was about the same in starting the paper immediately following completion of the outline and finishing it the day it was due. Her initial tasks mirrored those of assignment one: she reviewed the assignment, course readings, and lecture notes, and then reviewed the assigned advertisements. As before, she listed course concepts observed in the

ads. However, this time she incorporated her personal perception directly by “[trying] to think about why it is make me funny – like, make me feel funny – and why it can persuade other audience to buy this product.” Even though she did change her mind about some of the course concepts prior to outlining, Quinn felt this process helped her to select the three required course concepts, which also enabled her to write the outline. The outline again fed her initial draft; similar to assignment one, it contained all that came to mind. Draft two led to more changes in her selection of course concepts. Draft three was her final, and this was when she finally found her two required outside sources. Other changes included sentence improvement so that her evidence and argument were strengthened, and grammar corrections.

In assignment one, Quinn had developed procedures that she continued to believe in; thus, she repeated her initial tasks of starting early so that she could revisit lecture content and edit drafts for “improve my sentence, like give stronger evidence to make my argument persuasive or something like that. And try to change my grammar mistakes or words or something like that.” In assignment one, she had also learned to manage fears of cultural comprehension by strategically making selections that were clearer for her. In this regard, Quinn reported, “the Doritos [advertisement] is really easy for me and the other one is kind of hard for me to understand, so I just choose the easier one.” In assignment two, Quinn again made choices based upon what she understood best, and this included selecting course concepts. Regarding an initial change in course concepts, Quinn explained, “I don’t have so many things to prove the effectiveness of the likability. It’s not really a strong argument.” For a subsequent change, she rationalized, “I didn’t choose [the course concept] because I don’t know how to argue about that. I’m not really know too much the details about [that

course concept] so I just didn't choose that." Quinn's choices reflected her desire to choose course concepts she understood well so as to help provide effective argumentation. In a final change, Quinn was motivated by providing evidence for her arguments. "When I try to explain the likability – how it is effective – I can't find really strong evidence to improve that or to persuade myself. Like, it's not really effective actually, so I just decide to change to use of narrative." In addition to solid comprehension of course concepts, Quinn felt that she needed a strong argument backed by strong evidence, and that she also needed to believe in her own claims. However, she still struggled to defend her choice of course concepts, worrying that the "evidence or explanation are really similar." Regarding this problem, she believed, "It's kind of like talk about just one topic so I think it's really – I really struggling about this one." This challenge was part of what led her back into iterations of writing while revisiting course content because she wanted to, "Really try to understand the features really deeply and try to find the difference between those two features." She also needed to check the episode to "try to find some difference."

Quinn had no experience locating outside sources, and she struggled to find studies to support her arguments up until the last draft. With her research process, she recalled, "I just tried really similar topic." Part of her struggle was locating an exact fit, which she felt she needed. Because the studies were required, Quinn settled upon two that were "really related" to her claims instead because they would be "most persuasive in my essay." In these instances of independent decision-making, Quinn again showed strategic thinking in challenges both familiar and unfamiliar.

Like assignment one, Quinn also experienced challenges requiring outside guidance with assignment two. Quinn maintained that, "for me, getting some suggestion or advice

from my friends is important.” However, this time she only worked with two of her friends. Her American friend, Maggie, continued to provide help with grammar, while her Chinese friend who was a senior in the major, helped to illuminate an important realization about argumentation that Quinn had not yet grasped:

Cause, actually at first, I don’t really know what is argument. Actually, I misunderstand the argument. I thought argument is just the thesis or topic sentence, but actually the whole essay can be called argument, like, why the product is effective on audience – those explanation can be called argument. So, Zixi helped me to understand what is argument and give me some examples.

This feedback changed Quinn’s perspective of argumentation, impacting her third draft. Interestingly, Quinn reported that her international student friend, Zixi, was more helpful with advancing her understanding of argumentation than the native-speaking, American TA.

As with assignment one, Quinn sought her TA’s help by attending office hours once and emailing. This time, the TA read only one of her paragraphs. During their meeting about draft one, Quinn reported, “I ask how to make a argument about the appeal to humor and use of narrative. And, she give me some description about the argument, like, what the argument look like and how it affect people’s behaviors.” These questions reflected Quinn’s concerns regarding argumentation.

For assignment two, Quinn did not report making use of the professor or writing center.

Self-evaluation of assignment two. Initially, Quinn struggled to articulate major differences between assignment one and two, saying the first focused on explanation, whereas the second focused on argumentation. She recalled, “That’s what I thought, but I

don't know the difference. I think this is difference.” Her feedback suggests she doubted her comprehension of the main components of each assignment, and, therefore, had a harder time comparing them. There were also procedural decisions in writing for which she lacked assuredness. Even though she seemed more relieved when shifting decisions about course concepts, she still doubted her comprehension of course content. This tension led her to repeatedly change her mind about concepts to use in assignment two, especially when she felt it disabled her from creating a strong argument – something pointed out in assignment one feedback. Rather than seeing related concepts as beneficial to her argument, Quinn would instead revisit course content and re-watch the scene looking for other concepts. Changing concepts allowed her to avoid overlapping explanations. She did not seem to realize the potential benefit of congruency in argumentation. Additionally, she did not have experience in locating or using outside sources to support her claims, which resulted in her making final selections while writing the last draft.

Prior to assignment two, Quinn reflected upon assignment one, saying she knew the first assignment had taken her too long to write. “I think it's kind of, like, not that efficiency, not that productive.” She felt she lacked strategies for saving time with the second paper, saying, “I want cut the time and get the best productive to prepare it, but I don't know how to do that – how to prepare better.”

After writing assignment two, she continued to worry about argumentation, stating, “I didn't write this kind of paper in China. So...just because of my writing level, I think. I don't know how to describe those kind of thing.” While Quinn had L1 experiences with argumentation, the course genres were unfamiliar. Simultaneously learning new genres and acquiring related writing skills was problematic. However, Quinn had taken TA feedback on

assignment one and her friend's guidance into consideration; this feedback directed her thinking about forming arguments, affecting her sensitivity to argumentation in assignment two. With assignment two, fears of inaccurate cultural comprehension continued. Quinn recalled, "I talked with my friend – just complain about it's really easy and funny commercial, but why I can't explain it really well?" She again reported struggling with deciphering and reporting cultural meanings in English, leading her to believe, "I don't know how to start explain or start my argument."

Assignment two assessment. Ultimately, Quinn felt conflicted in projecting her score for assignment two, saying, "I don't think I did well on my paper." She continued by estimating her strengths as "maybe just the first [course concept]. I think that part I might explain really well," and the external sources because they were related to her argument. She believed she had more weaknesses than strengths, and thought the remainder of her assignment was less effective than desired. As Quinn described the experience, "This paper is not easy at all for me. I really, really don't know how to write this paper." She believed her score would be "lower than the first one." According to Quinn, this was primarily because "I really, really don't how to write argument. It makes me so struggling and so painful." Despite her concerns, Quinn's score showed improvement on assignment two, whereby she received a 42 out of 50.

Quinn's Evaluation of Resources and Strategies. Quinn discussed the value of the employing the knowledge she had gained in making independent decisions during the writing process, in addition to evaluating the sources of support she sought when she felt her own means were incomplete. These reflections were made in light of actions taken.

Quinn continued to believe in her own means of navigating English academic writing tasks. For example, between writing assignments, she expressed intentions to continue “read[ing] many books when I have time cause I think reading is the best way to help me to improve my writing.” Reading enabled her to ascertain “the logic of the writing” and to also “remember some basic vocabularies for the university writing level.” She also claimed “understanding the lecture or the textbook is really important,” which explains her sustained habit of revisiting course content before writing. Quinn had learned to seek TA assistance with writing in FYC, and she continued this with assignment one in the course. Although she initially downplayed reviewing her TA’s feedback on assignment one, her responses showed thoughtful consideration. While she had intended to discuss assignment one feedback with her TA, she later reported, “I want to, but I don’t have time.” However, it is possible that Quinn received indirect explanation, given her interactions with her TA regarding assignment two where she sought the TA’s advice for some of the issues noted in assignment one feedback. When asked why she did not use this later meeting to directly seek clarification with assignment one feedback, Quinn responded, “Cause I forgot to bring the hard copy [of assignment one] and there are so many students line up for her. So, I just ask some question about number two.” Still, during our last conversation, Quinn maintained that she intended to seek the TA’s help with assignment one and assignment two feedback, reporting, “I definitely will ask for some questions, even it’s not for the grade, but I just want to know how to improve my writing skills.” Finally, Quinn maintained methods of mitigating anxieties about her non-native speaker status, saying it was important for her to “keep editing- I mean, keep writing and changing words or sentence” because “looking back the essay is really important.” This helped Quinn to tackle what she reported as being her biggest

hurdle in English academic writing. Despite the troubles she appeared to encounter in translating her sentences to the target language, she continued doing so, likely because she relied upon her more experienced peers for sentence-level editing.

Quinn discussed writing experiences as helpful for advancing her writing, but the underlying rationale for the benefits she noted seemed to derive from her own responses to challenging situations. ESL courses helped her understand the structure of essays, whereas, while the tasks assigned in FYC initially posed a challenge to Quinn who had little experience in “understanding and explaining”, she later reflected, “But, after this the writing centers, I think I get some – improve a little bit, kind of understanding.” Although the social science course also posed challenges Quinn had not encountered before, she agreed with some of the advice given by her international student friends saying that she could at least hope to improve her writing through these experiences. For example, although she struggled to find external resources to support her arguments in assignment two, Quinn discussed the benefits of being able to locate research:

I think it’s really useful for my following writing assignment cuz actually in the previous writing assignment, I tried to look some resource or some essays to help me understand my – understand the assignment and, like, improve my writing sentence words, but I just Google it, but it’s not really effective to find related essays. But, I think the database is really helpful cuz it has so many essays, like, different journals, academic articles, something like that.

This feedback showed Quinn’s realization that – in addition to non-academic readings - academic articles could enhance her understanding of English academic writing.

Furthermore, Quinn saw that the challenging writing assignments could also benefit her

general education, saying, “I mean, if I have high skills of writing, I can...easily to get in this major and learn some knowledges or some basic things.” Even though Quinn had initially abandoned the major, these reactions demonstrated her willingness to engage with unfamiliar writing tasks and to persist in the face of difficulty, which may explain her decisions to later enroll in the course and pursue the major.

Where her own means for navigating English academic writing felt incomplete, Quinn liked relying upon friends for advice. However, she edited her network of helpful peers to just two: her American friend – whom edited her grammar – and her Chinese friend in the major – whom advanced her understanding of the writing assignments. She noted both as very influential to changing her drafts. As Quinn reflected of all of her friends in the major, “I think they’re really good student, like, really good at writing social science paper. So, I need their help.” Quinn felt her work benefitted from asking these friends to “revise my essay and give me some opinions, some advice, like, how to structure my essay really clear and with deep understanding.” Thus, she consulted with her friends on both papers, and these interactions helped to increase her knowledge of English academic writing. Quinn said of her pivotal experience in learning about argumentation from her Chinese friend, “I think it is really helpful.”

In some cases, Quinn did not seek the same help for assignment two as she had for assignment one. For example, she had edited her network of helpful peers, eliminating some of her American and international student friends across (the same and different) majors. She also did not report working on the paper with her international student roommate, whom was enrolled in the same course. Finally, though she positively evaluated assistance received at

the writing center for paper one, in saying, “I will use this again,” she did not revisit it with paper two.

Quinn’s Self-Evaluation at the Course’s End. At the start of the course, Quinn intended to apply for a double major, which was why she had enrolled in the pre-major course. During the course, Quinn had again spoken with her Chinese friend about the major. Of this conversation, Quinn reiterated “if she have assignment bout seven pages or eight pages paper, she just need five or six hours to finish a really good one.” Based on Quinn’s experiences in the course, she speculated about her own potential, saying, “But, for me, it’s really impossible. Definitely, I need so long time to finish one good paper and maybe it still not good.” By the end of the course, Quinn discussed changes to her academic plans, saying, “My chance the major – I told you I try to be major, but right now, I think I can just stay in Econ/Accounting major cause I really struggling about the [pre-major course’s] paper. I try to challenge the major.” However, despite Quinn’s best efforts, she stated she had to abandon the major again because of the potential for negative academic consequences. She described her situation, saying, “I want to graduate school. So, I can let the communication major to affect my GPA.” For Quinn, the course’s writing assignments might have improved her writing skills, but at the cost of her overall academic performance and plans for a timely graduation.

Narrative of Yuriko

English Academic Writing in Japan. In Japan, Yuriko was required to take an English the writing centers at her home university. She distinguished this course’s writing from the writing she encountered at the American university describing it as “totally different from the academic writing here.” Assignments at her Japanese university consisted of

reading newspaper articles, summarizing them, and forming opinions, but all within a single page of writing that required no forethought. These experiences did little to ready her for writing at the American university. She explained that the writing was far easier:

It was like I didn't have to think about the topic deeply. The main thing was summarizing the article so I didn't have to do any research or thinking about the topic deeply. So it didn't take long time to write a paper. I could've finish just one day. So, yea, it was easy. And my teacher was very – how can I say – not strict so if I turn it in, he give me a A. He didn't see the detail so it was easy.

These experiences contradicted her later writing assignments at the university where length and content requirements demanded more of her than the English academic writing she experienced in her Japanese university. Furthermore, assessment was also taken more seriously. When asked how she sought help for English writing assignments at her Japanese university, Yuriko replied, “I didn't have to ask any help because it was so easy.” She also believed this was related to the instructor's orientation to assessment, saying, “If there was a difference, it didn't matter for my teacher. He didn't care about grammar mistakes or something.”

One aspect of English academic writing Yuriko later realized she did not learn in Japan was organization. She had not learned structure in Japan, and had to quickly learn this once at the U.S. university. “Before I came here, I even didn't [know] there was the introduction part, and the body part, and the conclusion part.” Learning this aspect of English academic writing benefitted Yuriko's writing in more than one university course.

Other English Academic Writing Experiences at the University. Prior to the course, Yuriko had three main writing experiences at the university, including International

Relations 1, International Relations 2, and History. In discussing each course's writing assignments, she reported spending about one week on each assignment.

She described writing for her history the writing centers as “most difficult for me” because the assignment was “very organized.” She described these writing assignments as linked and chronological, meaning the initial historical topic she chose was traced through a series of papers exploring the chronology of the event up through modernity. Connecting the shorter papers to the final paper was difficult because it required her to trace and comprehend the historical arc of a particular topic from its genesis up until modern times. As she put it, “The most difficult thing for me was to compare the things. I can write the fact, but it's difficult for me to compare the facts and then what do I know from that. It was the difficult part for me, for that writing.” Furthermore, in Yuriko's case, there was a double challenge of demonstrating historical knowledge in a foreign culture, and effectively tracing it through time by writing a series of related papers. Research was an apparent challenge she noted from the start:

I didn't know how to research about the topic, but that the writing centers has like – that the writing centers had information about how to research information for the paper so I could use the information. It was so helpful so I could research deeply or find out lot of information from some books or some online journal.

In this course, Yuriko used course resources to overcome perceived obstacles to demonstrating historical knowledge by conducting library research. As Yuriko described it, “We had to go to the workshop in the library as a requirement for the course so there I learned how to use the library website.”

She also faced challenges in writing in new academic genres or when facing unfamiliar topics. In International Relations 2, students were required to write a policy brief. In comparing this experience to the writing assignments in her history the writing centers, she recalled, “It was my first time to write policy brief so I was very nervous but it was more easier for me to write policy brief than history paper.” For International Relations 1, she initially struggled to write about liberalism with the first of three paper assignments for that course:

It was like – the 1st paper was most difficult for me because it was about liberalism, even in Japanese. So it was difficult topic for me, but it made me easier to write because – I have to connect liberalism and the policy of Obama so it was easier for me to write about actual real thing, not like philosophy.

Her early struggles with the topic were eased by her realization that the paper was focused upon evidencing concrete facts. The second International Relations 1 assignment ended up being easier because of connections to content she learned in History. This paper was about Guantanamo Bay, and Yuriko described it as “easier” saying, “I didn’t know about Guantanamo Bay in Japan, but I learned about Guantanamo Bay in History the writing centers before the paper assignment. So it was easy for me to write about that.” Finally, the third paper included a mixture of fact and opinion, which intrigued Yuriko. Furthermore, she liked the global security topic of the third paper, saying, “I am very interested in global issues or solution of the global issues so it was much easier for me to write my opinion than history paper.” Yuriko expressed that her motivation to write was increased by personal interest in the assigned topic.

Yuriko did not always get feedback on her writing for the courses that preceded the course. In International Relations 2 and History, Yuriko did not receive feedback on her final writing assignments, as these were due at the end of the quarter. She did not receive either assignment, saying, “they told me just a grade for whole the writing centers, but not for that paper assignment.” However, in International Relations 1, she had received a 90% on each of her three assignments. She did not reference written feedback directly, instead discussing her scores.

Despite inconsistent feedback practices, she made gains in understanding the structure of English academic writing – an instructional component she noted as lacking in her writing experiences in the English the writing centers at her Japanese university. In each of these courses, Yuriko reported learning about the structure of English academic writing, saying it helped her realize structural differences in writing in Japanese versus English. “Once I understood structure of English paper assignment, now I get used to it. So I know what I should write in English paper different from Japanese one.” Specifically, Yuriko had learned that this meant, “if I said this thing in the introduction, you have to follow your argument for whole paper.” These realizations increased over her writing experiences at the university, but she still found structural shifts challenging, saying, “It’s still difficult, but now I’m used to it so it’s much easier for me.” Yuriko reflected upon her acquisition of English academic writing based upon the writing experiences she had at the university:

The experience of the last quarter help me a lot, I think. Before I came here, I even didn’t there was the introduction part, and the body part, and the conclusion part.

Because I experience writing last quarter, I knew how to organize a paper, at least.

Because she recognized the importance of structure early on, Yuriko developed a habit of using the writing center as a resource for checking not only her grammar, but also her structure. She had realized that the structure of her paper reflected her underlying argument, and grasped the importance of this feature of English academic writing. In describing how the writing center was helpful, she commented, “I think I write in very Japanese order so they correct me to write in English order.” She also received help from a Japanese friend, Keiko, who loaned her a textbook about organizing academic papers in English. Yuriko did not know this student in Japan, and initially met Keiko at the U.S. university. In reference to this friend, Yuriko stated, “she is from same university as me, but she was in different department, and she took the writing centers which teach you how to organize the paper” at their home university in Japan. The book was written in English, but was published by their Japanese university. As a fellow international student, this friend brought the course’s textbook to the U.S. university, and loaned it to Yuriko whom learned, “how to organize or what words you should use or this is like you shouldn’t use “I” or “you” in the paper or something information like that. So, I knew how to write paper assignment from her.” Yuriko gave Keiko credit for teaching her how to write the International Relations papers, which had initially confused her. “I had no idea how to write paper so I asked how – tell me how to write a paper and she showed me how to write paper using her laptop. Yea, it was so helpful and she lend me the textbook of how to write English essay.” Yuriko was able to retain this instruction for later application in other writing tasks. Keiko not only provided structural help, but also “how to organize or what I should include.” Still, Yuriko did not ask this friend to read through her papers. Despite her lack of formal preparation for English

academic writing, Yuriko felt Keiko's guidance was "most helpful" for improving her understanding.

Additionally, she had learned to seek the help of TAs for clarifying assignment expectations or conceptual confusion, saying, "sometimes I'm not sure about the topic or what I have to include in the paper so I visit TA for clarifying what I have write or is there anything I missed. So, purpose of visiting the writing center and TA is little bit different." Yuriko explained that the TA generally helped her to comprehend the writing prompt, particularly because the International Relations prompts were quite short, and less clear. She described these prompts as "more vague - like write about this topic and then provide your opinion after you explain the issue. So, I didn't know how many issues and problems I should write or what opinion I have to write." This resulted in her seeking TA support. "Yea, so I have to ask my TA what I should write because I didn't get correctly – I was worried that if I misunderstood the prompt. So, I had to ask my TA."

Self-Evaluation of Writing Ability. Yuriko felt she had not adequately prepared for English academic writing, which led to self-doubt. "Actually I didn't prepare in Japan because I was busy to do other stuff. So, after I came here and I know there is a paper assignment and after the topic is informed, I started to prepare paper assignment. I know I should have prepared academic writing in Japan, but I didn't." While she knew preparation was important, she proceeded without it, despite her own concerns that her writing style felt very Japanese. Yuriko felt challenged by her prior writing experiences at the U.S. university, and she consistently wondered if she was capable of successfully completing these tasks, though her confidence appeared to increase over time, experience, and personal engagement with assigned topics. During these early experiences, she recalled nervousness, self-doubt,

and confusion. Yuriko's reliance upon her Japanese friend correlated with her apprehensions about writing in English. "I had never written academic writing in English before I came here. So, um, the last quarter was my first quarter here and I was very nervous. I didn't know any structure or how to compose the writing so I asked my friends how to write." In reflecting upon her first quarter's writing experiences, she said, "The experience of the last quarter help me a lot... Because I experience writing last quarter, I knew how to organize a paper." She also made use of the writing center and TA to mitigate other insecurities about writing. Despite notable increases in her confidence as her writing experiences increased, she still experienced mixed feelings of confidence and self-doubt upon entering the course. While she felt comfortable relying upon writing knowledge gained in prior assignments at the university, she felt challenged in writing for a new context.

Writing in the Social Science Course. Yuriko had some prior knowledge of the course writing assignments in saying, "I knew that I have to write about TV shows, connect it with communication usages, and verbal and nonverbal, but just that. Just like that." She indicated having superficial knowledge of the writing requirements in the course, and that this knowledge was gained from Japanese friends also studying abroad at the university. In discussing conversations with her Japanese friends in the same university EAP program, and whom had taken the course in the prior quarter, she said:

It made me feel interesting, but it seemed difficult for me when I first heard about verbal and nonverbal. When I heard about verbal and nonverbal from my friend, she was going to her office hours and she was not sure about nonverbal so, um, it sounds – it sounded very difficult for me so I didn't think about taking the course last quarter when I heard about [it]. But, during the winter quarter, I was thinking about what the

writing centers I should take and I asked some of my friends because many Japanese students take the course last quarter so I asked them about [it] – how was it. They say it was very organized and contents was very interesting. So, I decided to take the course.

Peer feedback made the course sound challenging, particularly because not all of her friends had performed well on the writing tasks; yet, her friend's input also sparked Yuriko's interest in the course, ultimately leading her to enroll.

Once enrolled in the course, Yuriko was more aware of the new writing situation she found herself in. For example, prior to the first assignment, she described anticipated challenges in analyzing media content - something she had not experienced when writing elsewhere at the university. "I think I will have new challenges bc for this the course paper I had to analyze, but before this the writing centers, I've never analyzed some TV shows or what people do." Because of the newness of the writing tasks and the greater specificity of requirements, she attended more to the prompts, which she found helpful.

She explained her reliance upon the assignment prompt, saying, "Because the paper prompt is explain very detail so I could figure out what I have to do from the paper prompt." The prompt helped her confirm her thinking, and she revisited each prompt several times for further guidance when encountering confusion. She felt comfortable with the specificity of the prompts, which generally spanned a few pages of detailed instruction. In fact, the prompts were clearer in the course than others she had for prior courses. "I think the biggest difference between the other course's paper and this paper is this paper is very clear to what to do." While she found aspects of the course prompts quite challenging, she also felt, "the goal is very clear. So, I could know what is lacked from my paper. So, it was easier for me to

revise and what I should put, what I should add to my paper or it is not necessary or something like that.” Thus, she relied more upon the prompt.

Even with the course writing assignments, she continued to attend to exhibiting the preferred structure for English academic writing because she had already realized that structural choices in writing correlated with argumentative development. Thus, in the course writing assignments, she continued to seek outside input on her structure, in addition to independently integrating prior knowledge into the structural choices she made.

Assignment one expectations. Early on, Yuriko realized distinctions between writing for courses that preceded the course. She discussed the first the course assignment prompt saying, “This paper assignment was very new to me because the last quarter I was taking International Relations the writing centers. It was like – I just – what I have to do was like explain my opinion, just my own opinion. I didn’t have to analyze specifically so it’s very different.” For the course’s first paper assignment, she sought greater understanding of the assignment by consistently rereading the prompt, which was different than her prior writing experiences, where she had instead sought assignment clarity from TAs. In describing the former courses’ prompts, Yuriko said, “The structure of the paper is very – how can I say – the last quarter – the paper I did in last quarter was more flexible in the structure but [in the course] it’s very organized so I was...I was more careful to follow this instruction than last quarter, I think. I didn’t read this [prompt] deeply the last quarter, but for this the writing centers, I read this again and again.” While she found this flexibility somewhat confusing and sought clarification for it, in the course, she was instead able to refer to the prompt.

Yuriko described explicit assignment aspects, and related these to her understanding of the assignment prompt. She focused upon observation, understanding and applying course

concepts, connecting ideas, and interpretive analysis. She also knew that the structure of her writing was important, as with her introduction and thesis statement. In describing analysis, she reported that she needed to, “find actual using of the nonverbal and verbal language and then analyze how it works to explain the characters’ feelings and their relationships.” While she gleaned the importance of analysis from the prompt, Yuriko exhibited an additional understanding of the paper’s subtler requirements in pointing to relational impacts or effects, which were implied by the analysis required of her. Of this awareness, she claimed to have acquired it “directly from the [prompt].” Yuriko seemed to see the interconnectedness of the various explicit requirements, as illustrated by her comment that, “You understand the verbal and nonverbal issue correctly, and define it and...not only defining and explaining what was going on, but also explain how they work to show characters’ feelings and relationships.” This statement displays her understanding of explicit requirements, in addition to showing how she saw the assigned tasks fitting together and how she interpreted the ultimate goal for writing. Her statement also indicates Yuriko’s particular sensitivity to incorporating unique insights and analysis, as implied by the prompt and the competitiveness inherent in the high-stakes grading context.

In addition to these more complex aspects of writing, Yuriko was sensitive to the assignment’s explicit (though less emphasized) specification for correct grammar. She felt this was not a main grading criteria, but interpreted its importance, nonetheless, in saying, “It’s important part because if the English was too bad to read, the TAs won’t give a good grade.”

Assignment one process. Yuriko reported preparing for the first assignment “maybe two weeks” prior to the deadline, which was an additional week more than she spent on

previous course's assignments. Ultimately, she had roughly two versions of her outline and two versions of her paper, which resulted from her own work and collaborations with others she sought help from. "I don't remember when I start, but I think I started to plan to write this paper as soon as the TV shows were provided." In discussing the time she spent, Yuriko stated, "the difference is I prepare before writing the paper. I think about the – what do I want to write first – and then put information – what do I want to say in order – and then start writing." She contrasted this time spent with not only that of her course's assignments, but also her English academic writing assignments in Japan, which required no forethought. Because the the course writing assignments required forethought and outlining, Yuriko began earlier. Starting earlier changed her usual process because "I don't usually do this outline specifically because I wanna finish my paper as soon as possible so I usually skip this process, but I had to do outline to hand in in the section." Starting earlier also meant she had more time to review the assigned episode and make decisions about which scene to analyze, in addition to aiding her comprehension of cultural implications from the episode. Yuriko realized, "Because the TV show was in English, I was not sure I get the meaning correctly or not so I watch that TV show again and again." She could not recall how many times she watched the assigned episode, instead recalling, "I don't know, but many times, I think." Even though she reviewed the episode several times, she was not able to resolve all of her questions.

Thus, during the week the outline was due, Yuriko sought help from her TA. This initial meeting with the TA also sought to clarify the media content she was analyzing. During this meeting, she reported, "I didn't ask about outline, but I ask him about that TV show and definition of the verbal language issue, I think, because I didn't familiar – I wasn't

familiar with the word “mopes” so I asked him what it was exactly mean.” Additionally, Yuriko asked her TA to distinguish between two closely related concepts with subtle distinctions that often confused students. This meeting resulted in deletions of things her TA deemed “not necessary, so I cut this part off,” in addition to corrections of grammar she perceived as incorrect. She also revised her thesis, saying, “Actually, I was worried that my thesis statement is weak so I asked him should I be more specific and he said ‘Yea’ - that my thesis statement was kind of vague. He advised me I can be a little more specific.” Finally, a more significant change was made to her conclusion, though this advice came from the writing center– not her TA.

Following the initial meeting with her TA, she visited the writing center for grammatical help, but ended up receiving more assistance with her overall structure. She had highlighted some words on the draft she took to the writing center; these represented perceived grammar errors, which she intended to fix on her own or with the help of writing center tutors. However, she reported, “I wanted [the writing center] to help me to correct grammar, but actually there was only one hour so I could just know the structure. We did mainly structure things so we couldn’t correct all the grammar. I think the first half of the paper’s grammar was corrected, but we couldn’t go through everything.” Part of these structural changes included feedback about her conclusion. “I was told that, ‘Your conclusion is very vague and weak...and everyone can write this, so you should write more what you can – what you learned from this paper assignment. So, write what only you can write, not what everyone can write.’ So, I changed,” Yuriko reported. Furthermore, this interaction with the writing center changed her thesis. While the writing center tutor pointed out a needed change to her thesis statement, Yuriko elected to follow her own intuition, saying, “He just

advise me to “You have to improve your thesis statement,” and he give me example, but I didn’t use it.” I think of how my thesis statement should be myself so...yea, he gave me opportunity to rethink thesis statement.” While the writing center tutor had helped guide her awareness and revision, Yuriko maintained authority over her work. In describing her reason for refusing the example thesis he offered, she stated, “He’s not familiar with the paper assignment as me, so I think that point was a little bit different.” Because of her familiarity with the course and its writing assignment, Yuriko decided to take accept the tutor’s suggestions for rethinking her thesis, but determined that she was best equipped for the actual revisions to it.

After the outline was due, she met with her TA a second time. She had intended to show him her outline and conclusion “to make sure my, like, structure and analyze is okay or not so I want him to see whole structure.” However, he believed he could only look at her outline or one paragraph, rather than both (which was technically the correct procedure for reviewing students’ writing in the course). Thus, she instead requested help with one paragraph – her introduction.

Self-evaluation of assignment one. While Yuriko had initial reservations about the analysis required in the course’s assignments, she was drawn to the course, both for the reasons her Japanese friends described, and out of personal motivation. In reflecting upon the analytical challenges of the first paper assignment, Yuriko said, “It was new for me, but I enjoyed this paper. The topic is very interesting.” Thus, while she anticipated difficulty, she also felt motivated enough to enroll in the course, despite her closest Japanese friend’s lackluster performance in the course. In some way, Yuriko seemed to possess certainty in her ability to tackle the course’s new writing demands.

The assignment prompt both gave her confidence and anxiety. Anxiety manifested as re-reading the prompt at a greater frequency than she had for other courses. For example, she recalled, “I was more careful to follow this instruction than last quarter, I think. I didn’t read this paper deeply the last quarter, but for this the writing centers, I read this again and again.” In cases where her tendency to intensively study the prompt correlated with increased confidence, she reported increased decisiveness in her ability to make decisions about writing, saying, “Because the paper prompt is explain very detail. So, I could figure out what I have to do from the paper prompt.” Even though she still had uncertainties in navigating the writing assignment, she did not doubt its required contents, or her interpretation of the assignment.

Yuriko’s awareness of explicit and implicit assignment criteria embedded in the assignment prompt also led her to seek external support. For example, she knew that, in order to sustain the structure of English academic writing, her ideas and paragraphs would need to be cohesive. Thus, she sought the TA’s help with structure. Specifically, she wanted confirmation that her introduction, thesis statement, and conclusion were effectively written, as she knew these created the structure of her overall argument and analysis. As she described it, “I am not good at writing introduction and conclusion, so, yea, I was worried about both parts. Interestingly, she felt confident in the structural techniques her Japanese friend had shared with her, recalling and integrating advice about organization, diction, and English academic styles of writing, rather than seeking this input again. She continued, “The most difficult for me is to come up with thesis statement.” Thus, she sought feedback from the writing center tutor, whose advice she integrated, but also challenged. In questioning the

tutor's understanding of the course's writing assignment, she agreed that her thesis needed revision, but chose to forgo using the thesis the tutor had suggested, instead creating her own.

Despite working with writing center tutors, she was not entirely confident about her grammar. Due to timing issues, "I think the first half of the paper's grammar was corrected, but we couldn't go through everything at [the writing center] so...yea, I was worried about my grammar." Nonetheless, she still managed to self-correct grammar on her volition, and prior to visiting the writing center. In places where she needed more guidance, her confidence waned without confirmation from a writing center tutor.

Yuriko described her approach to analysis in assignment one, detailing aspects of her work that she liked:

I like my examples, which I used like I compare the detective and waitress. I think I did well. I was analyzing the way that the detective speak and I compared how it different from the waitress – the way of speaking of the waitress. I wanted to emphasize the way of speaking of the detective by comparing way of speaking of waitress.

This thinking reiterated Yuriko's belief in connecting seemingly separate assignment tasks, and showed she felt confident in doing so. It also seemed to reflect her awareness of the competitive writing context, as she took a very individual approach to analyzing media content. These independently conceived writing choices reveal Yuriko as thoughtful and self-confident, something furthered by the process of outlining, which she also felt made it easier to connect separate ideas.

Still, she had mixed feelings, saying, "I think I did well to analyze each [concept], but I was not sure I could connect them, but I think I did well to analyze each issues." In

clarifying this worry, she continued, “Actually, I wrote about – I tied each [concepts], but I was not sure I did correctly. So, I didn’t – I was not sure everyone will agree my way of connecting the [concepts].” Thus, Yuriko was sensitive to the implication of using the independent writing choices she deployed.

Assignment one assessment. In reacting to her high score on assignment one, Yuriko discussed being surprised, saying, “I was very surprised.” She continued, “I don’t think I did well. I think I was okay with this paper, but I didn’t done well, so I was surprised.” She was “very happy” with her score, adding that, “Because I didn’t expect this high score and I didn’t think I did very well, but I thought I did do my best so...yea...I was very happy.” She was aware that she had spent considerable time working on the paper. “I think I spent as much time as I can to do this paper so it’s – I don’t know, how can I say – it’s – I deserve. Yea, I think it’s relate to my spend time – to my score.” She acknowledged that her hard work had paid off. Despite her effort to seek help and her confidence in making independent decisions, she still felt unsure of herself. “This was my first time to do analyzing things so, um, yea, I was enjoying to analyze the TV show, but I was always not sure what I am doing.” And, despite her hard work, she still doubted her score, saying, “I was nervous. I was not sure I deserve to have this grade. Also my English was bad and I think I made errors a lot.” As a non-native student, Yuriko worried over the readability of her work. She discussed grammar as a grading criteria, saying it was “not main, but it’s important part because if the English was too bad to read, the TAs won’t give a good grade so...yea.” She also lost confidence in some of the revisions she had made, especially those affecting key areas she worried over – like structure. Of her conclusion, she said, “Although I change

my conclusion, I was not sure it make sense.” Although she received quite a high score, she could not anticipate this upon turning in the paper, given the unresolved worries she had.

In discussing her impression of the TA’s feedback on assignment one, she commented, “[The TA] praised me about my analyzing and connection of each issues, but I think...advises me to know more about like grammar thing and the way of organize the paper.” Furthermore, the TA had, “replaced some of the words,” or even “put phrase over word.” Organization actually referred to using page numbers, and the TA also pointed out issues with capitalizing citations. Yuriko did not express that her Japanese friend’s help with diction and organization had been detrimental; rather, she maintained her belief in the value of this guidance. Frequently, the TA had marked aspects of her work as “good,” to which Yuriko questioned, “I made a good point? I’m not sure.” Thus, her confidence was both internalized and affected by external factors like TA feedback, even when it resulted in uncertainty. Aspects of Yuriko’s confidence with assignment one transitioned to assignment two.

Assignment two expectations. In noting similarities between the first and second assignment, Yuriko discussed analysis, and described it as more difficult in assignment two. “It was different because I need to watch the advertisement and analyze it. As I said before, I haven’t done like analyzing paper assignment before so it was different.” Even though she had gained experience with analysis in the first paper assignment, she found analysis more complicated for paper two, saying, “I think paper number one was much easier for me because it was difficult to analyze the advertisement.” Unlike the first paper assignment, she did not feel that her other, former writing experiences prepared her for the analysis needed in assignment two.

Furthermore, her prior writing experiences had not required the use of outside sources; rather, she perceived this as implied. In some cases, “I was recommended to use journals – two journals for evidence – but there was no requirement for using journals, like how many journals you use or something like that.” In other cases, she felt “there was no requirement to use empirical studies, so I might have used one, but I didn’t care about it is empirical studies or not so I didn’t even remember.” With assignment two, she needed two outside sources – specifically, two empirical studies. As with assignment one, the prompt was “very clear for me – what should I do.” Additionally, the TA’s feedback helped with simpler tasks like using page numbers and defining course terms from lecture or section.

For assignment two, Yuriko again described observation, understanding and applying course concepts, connecting ideas, and analysis as important aspects of the writing prompt. She again referenced the importance of her overall structure, as reflected by her introduction and thesis statement, and the need for her grammar to be improved. Because the prompt was different, she also discussed the value of incorporating required outside research. Although she struggled with finding empirical studies, she stated, “I think the most important thing is how you can strengthen your opinion using the journals - like evidence.” Yuriko again exhibited deeper understanding of the prompt in seeing the studies as a means to amplify her own claims – something many students overlooked. She knew that the studies needed to relate to her analysis as much as possible, even though the assignment did not emphasize it as much as Yuriko did. She placed greater emphasis upon connecting separate ideas, believing, “how you can connect strongly” was a central grading criterion. Statements like these and others Yuriko made again reflected her sensitivity to the high-stakes grading context, and the need to set her thinking and writing apart from that of other students.

Assignment two process. With assignment two, Yuriko began “as soon as my TA give us the advertisement,” and began studying the prompt and outlining. In discussing the prompt, she recalled, “I want to make sure if I am doing right and there is – if there is missing part in my writing.” Thus, she said, “I read repeatedly.” She spent one to two days outlining, which was proceeded by writing her first draft a week-and-a-half before the paper was due. She discussed her selection of which advertisement to analyze, saying, “The other one is too long. And they have fewer words than the other one, which I chose.” She felt more comfortable choosing the ad with more verbal content, explaining of the rejected choice, “I tried to find features from that advertisement, but I watched the advertisement twice or three times, but I could find only [one concept], so I didn’t come up with any other ideas for that advertisement. So I chose the one I chose.” Increased dialogue allowed Yuriko to see more course concepts.

Once her outline had been finished, she took it to her TA’s office hours before it was due in section that same week. One question concerned the clarification of a course concept she intended to use. “I asked him the definition – I was trying to find definition from journals or newspaper article, but I couldn’t find anything to define [the course concept]. So, I asked him what should I do.” Her TA directed her to revisit the lecture notes, but Yuriko knew, “I had the [course concept] in my lecture note, but no definition.” She later clarified that there actually was a definition in her lecture notes, but that its meaning was still unclear to her, saying, “I understood what [the professor] meant and I could know the meaning, but I couldn’t write definition. I can image the meaning of the [the concept], but I couldn’t, like, explain in English.” Therefore, she had found a supplemental definition by using the Internet, and sought the TA’s approval in using this clearer definition. Her conversation with the TA

revealed that she had instead correctly understood the definition for the course term in her lecture notes, and that the supplemental definition was unnecessary because she had, in fact, understood the definition in English. She was also unsure of her application of another concept, saying, “I think like it’s not...not reasonable? Or everyone thinks as I think? So that’s why I wanted to make sure my outline is okay sooner.” As with some of her independent writing choices in assignment one, Yuriko worried there were implications for trusting her assumptions. However, while she had intended to discuss this with her TA, she did not directly mention it in their meeting. She reported, “[The TA] didn’t say anything. He said, “Your outline seems ok”, but I didn’t ask him this part is okay or not so that’s why he didn’t mention it, I think.” When asked why, she replied, “I was nervous maybe. I don’t know...but I thought if there is something bad on my outline, he will mention something. So...but he didn’t say anything about it – the [concept], so I thought it was meaning okay.” Rather than directly ask for confirmation of her assumptions, she hoped the TA would mention inconsistencies, but could not be sure he would. Finally, this same meeting with her TA resulted in feedback that she needed to provide more evidence for a major claim contained in her outline. While the TA had not specified using the two required empirical studies to provide this evidence, that was the method Yuriko chose, describing, “So, after I went to the office hour, I searched the journal which can explain this sentence and revised myself again.” This reflected Yuriko’s prior realization that the studies could substantiate her own arguments.

Next, she twice sought the help of the writing center. Her first session sought out the ESL specialist who generally worked with international students, but since the tutor was out sick, she instead worked with a drop-in tutor. Time was short, so they focused on her

introduction for her first draft of the paper. “[The tutor] said like I have a lot of information in the introduction, but it was not organized so you have to make introduction for readers to understand what I am thinking like...the order of my thinking?” Yuriko recalled. She worked with the ESL specialist for her next writing center session, and they worked on her overall structure in the second draft. Her overall structure was deemed sufficient, so she asked for help with grammar and sentence structure. Yuriko reported, “After he saw the first page, he said, “You can do this,” like, other pages by myself because we know how to revise. And then so after I went to [the writing center], I revised my paper again and then I finished it in the evening.” Part of her revisions focused on topic sentences for paragraphs. Yuriko said, “I was careful about the first sentence of the paragraph because, every time I show my paper to [the writing center tutors], they say, “I don’t know what you are going to write in this paragraph because your first sentence is not clear.” So, I think the first sentence of the paragraph is important to allow readers to read easily or easily to understand what I’m gonna say.” While structural awareness had been gleaned over several writing center sessions across different courses, Yuriko’s response highlights the immediate way she was able to integrate feedback. She had consistent experiences in learning and improving upon her knowledge of structure, yet this was her first mention of topic sentences, which posed an additional structural element. Thus, for the second the course assignment, she managed to integrate preexisting knowledge with new advice, in order to improve her exhibition of structure.

Part of her writing process involved selecting the two required empirical studies. Yuriko described her process of searching for and finding the studies:

It took me long time to decide a journal cause I didn't want to choose so long one because I didn't think I can read, so I tried to find shorter, but which correspond to my argument. I decided the studies because the conclusion part was most important for me – if the conclusion is consistent to my argument, I can use the journal, but it's inconsistent, I couldn't use. So, at first, I read abstract and then I skipped like method or something and then I read conclusion.

In determining how to strategically position her own claims, she had skimmed studies for their main arguments. Still, she was uncertain as to the location in her paper where the studies should be integrated, and this also slowed her search process:

I pick the part of the paper, which I might use, which I can use a journal. So, I pick three or four parts of the paper and then I searched for each and then...the most good journal I could find – how can I say. I search for four parts of the paper, but I – like I chose two of them, which I could find good journals.

Yuriko had already decided the placement of the studies in her paper prior to seeing the TA.

Finally, Yuriko discussed major changes between the first and second drafts. While she had changed the introduction during this process, she had also changed one of her studies. She rationalized, “I changed because I was told by [writing tutor] staff it's not strength your idea so I changed the source. It was from first draft to second draft.” The tutor mirrored Yuriko's belief that the study complement her own claims. A second change was more minor in changing the formality of her language.

During her writing process, Yuriko had discussions with her Japanese friend who loaned her the English academic writing textbook. Of these conversations, she said, “Just I told her my worries,” as she had not asked the friend to review her work. When her friend

was in the course, she had received a poor score on the second assignment. Still, Yuriko sought her reassurance, saying, “even if she was bad, she told me, ‘You are okay.’” For Yuriko, this input was helpful. “I didn’t know am I writing right way...but she was like, ‘You’re fine, you’re fine.’” While this conversation did not directly result in revisions, it did help Yuriko progress and gave her an outlet for expressing concern.

Self-evaluation of assignment two. At the start of assignment two, Yuriko reported difficulty in analyzing an advertisement, saying the analysis in assignment one was easier. “In the TV shows [of assignment one], they talked and like there was a communication, but like interpersonal communication, but the advertisement I analyzed was like one person. So, it was much difficult for me.” Thus, her main struggle with analysis was due to advertisements having “less words,” compromising her ability to apply course concepts to the assigned content. She overcame this by choosing the advertisement with more words.

In addition to her struggles with analysis, she also struggled to find outside studies to support her argument. Whereas she could rely upon prior experience using the library databases to locate outside studies, selecting them was more cumbersome. She realized that the studies could amplify her argument, yet locating and analyzing them presented a new challenge. She knew these were important aspects of the assignment, but felt “it was difficult for me to find such journals and analyzing specifically...why they made the commercial like this.” Still, she again felt confident in procedurally knowing what to do, as the prompt was clear. And, she had correctly honed in on a key distinguishing factor in the comparative grading used on assignment two.

In seeking outside help, she gained confidence in areas she previously questioned. Her TA helped her realize that she did understand concepts she thought she did not

understand. Though she was resistant, the writing center tutors forced her to trust her own knowledge of grammar in making final corrections. Finally, her Japanese friend helped reassure her ability to write.

Yuriko discussed her strengths and weaknesses in assignment two. For example, she had less concerns over the thesis. She discussed paper one, saying, “I have to connect like...not everything, but I have to connect [concept one and concept two] and its effect to make my thesis the last time. So it was difficult for me. But, this time, the thing I should mention in my thesis is whether the advertisement is persuasive or not. So, it was much clear. So, I didn’t have to worry about thesis statement [unlike] the last paper.” She had other strengths, as with stating, “I think I did well in [one concept] of my paper.” She elaborated that, “I think I did well with [the concept] because I put not one aspect, but several aspects of [it] to strength my argument. And I used journal for this part. Whereas she felt confident about her application of one concept, she worried over another, saying she was “not sure” her interpretation was correct. This was why she sought the TA’s approval of her outline. “I think like it’s not...not reasonable? Or everyone thinks as I think?” she worried. She also worried about the study she tied to this concept, saying, “I’m not sure I could connect the journal and my analysis well.” Yuriko compared this experience to her last where she had received a near-perfect score, saying of this experience, “I was less confident for this paper than last paper, so I don’t think I did well many parts of this paper.” She felt the pressure of her higher score, reporting, “I wanted to do well again. But, I didn’t think I could do well like that first paper.” She encountered challenges early in the process of assignment two, and these concerns affected her belief that she could meet the page requirement:

When I decide the three [concepts], I was not sure...when I wrote the first paper, I had a lot of things I wanted to write, so I was not worried about, like, how many pages I write, but for this paper, I didn't have not so many things I want to write. So I was worried if I couldn't write the pages, which they required.

Finally, she again worried about grammar as problematic to the meanings she intended.

When she visited the writing center, she "hoped [the tutor] would correct all the grammar."

However, she reported "He didn't. He told me, 'Do this by yourself' so I didn't think I could correct all the things by myself because I'm not English speaker." Of these lingering concerns, she laughed, "It can['t] be helped."

Assignment two assessment. Yuriko had predictions for her score, guessing, "I hope I can have at least forty [out of fifty], but I don't think I do well like the first paper." She ultimately believed her score would be "less than forty-five," and that her TA's main criticism would be "us[ing] empirical studies more effectively. I don't know. I tried to improve how to use the journal, but I didn't know how to improve." While she seemed to understand the importance of the studies in advancing her own argument, she questioned her ability to carry out this task.

Yuriko's Evaluation of Resources and Strategies. Yuriko continued to believe in the resources she used and their positive influences on her writing, as with the significant leaps in understanding she experienced with structure. She felt the writing center was useful for help with issues of grammar and structure, and she felt the tutors helped her change from a Japanese to a more American style of writing. Furthermore, she found the TA helpful in clarifying her ideas and understandings. She was also able to rely upon information previously provided by other resources of help, as with the structural knowledge she gained

from her Japanese friend, and the process of conducting library research as part of a prior course's writing assignment. In relying upon previously acquired knowledge, she was able to further advance what she knew, as with developing her notion of structure by paying attention to topic sentences per the advice of the writing center. Part of her confidence in using resources was tied to realizing which kinds of advice each source provided. This was illustrated in her somewhat resistant attitude to accepting the writing center tutor's revised thesis; instead, she wrote her own. Despite seeking help from these familiar resources, Yuriko did not embrace the idea of working with professors, explaining, "I am too nervous to visit professor." As with avoiding directly asking her TA to confirm her independent decision-making and interpretations, she also avoided direct input from the professor.

Still, her experiences in the course also managed to change the resources she relied upon, and how she relied upon them. For example, outlining was required, but it was not something she had practiced before the course. While she normally skipped outlining for other course's writing assignments, in the course, she realized, "If I don't do this, sometimes I don't know what I'm writing. But if I have this, I know what I'm writing and then what I have to write next. So, it is easier to connect the former paragraph and later paragraph. So, it's very useful I think." Furthermore, she envisioned adding this step to future writing preparation, saying, "I found that this is very useful to write. So, maybe I will do this next time." Additionally, the highly specific prompts served not only as clear instructions, but also points of reference when she felt confused. Thus, she reviewed them numerous times, and did not need TA clarification for assignment guidelines, unlike her writing experiences in prior courses.

In discussing the course's impacts on her future writing, she again returned to the importance of outlining, saying, "The biggest thing is to start preparing the paper, I will use outline. Yea, I didn't use outline at all before taking this the writing centers." Additionally, she discussed a refined perspective of incorporating outside research:

Before taking this the writing centers, I used [outside research], but I didn't care much about how it is effective or not. But, once I used empirical studies to strengthen my argument [in assignment two], I knew it is important to put other sources to strength my argument in right phrase frequency. So, I will care about – I will care more about how to use journals or other sources."

This perspective illustrates that Yuriko had realized how studies could amplify her claims, and that a study's placement was an important way of signifying its meaning and potency to the reader. Finally, she realized the importance of engagement in writing assignments, especially in challenging circumstances. Yuriko reflected, "I found analyzing is very interesting because I did paper what my opinion is - so this is very new to me - but it was interesting to write about." For Yuriko, a mixture of internalized knowledge and external support helped her navigate past and current writing tasks.

Yuriko's Self-Evaluation at the Course's End. Yuriko had gained confidence in skills she already understood, and continued to add to her existing knowledge. She remained interested in the course, even amid significant writing challenges, and saw herself as capable of further growth.

Narrative of Vivien

English Academic Writing in China. Vivien noted that Chinese writing exam-based, preventing revision opportunities she had experienced with English academic writing

at the university, saying, “here we got plenty of time to reread and like make changes, so we can improve like while we writing.” However, despite her positive attitude towards revision, she was less enthusiastic about structural differences. She remarked, “Here you got to write like within a certain format or certain tone, be like really like – not to be personal, not to use ‘I’ – that’s totally different.” She felt Chinese writing allowed for a freer expression. In contrasting genre differences in Chinese and English, she continued:

And here we are like - every paper we do is basically about making arguments. Like you don’t have to get people to agree with you, but you have to make sense. But, in China, you are just basically writing about like the things – whatever you want. Like they will give you a title like the most memorable things you have - like elementary school writing - and then like memory like some really abstract title and you can write whatever and what kinds of genres you want. So, there is no genre limitation except poetry.

Thus, while Chinese writing emphasized freer expression, poetry was more of an exception.

Vivien had studied English since primary school, and discussed her high school experiences writing in English, saying, “we were asked to write about – I don’t know - they will give you a topic and you will like write a hundred or two hundred words.” However, she continued, “I don’t think that’s academic.” This led Vivien to define academic writing, in light of her experiences in the course:

You have to make a really strong thesis, and also like you are trying to demonstrate a theory with examples . Like the paper I wrote for the course. It’s like we have to like find examples for my statement, not just write down whatever you want, not just describing things. You have to analyze things.

Still, she did feel she had some academic English writing experience prior to the course, as with when she began studying for the SAT exam. Vivien differentiated her two high school experiences writing in academic English, saying, “Our teacher - he also teaches GRE - so his requirement was pretty high. We have to like write specific kinds of format – like the 5 paragraph kinds of writing, and you have to make a statement, and there will be support - like support examples of support sentences - you have to analyze it and make conclusion.” Her teacher generally required about two pages per writing task resulting in “a structured essay.” “Yea, like 5 paragraph. That kind of writing.” These academic writing tasks felt more complex, but she was still able to revise when time allowed it, and to ask for help when desired. “I just write everything – like everything I can think of for the first time, and then revise it. Sometimes, I will like ask advice like from a teacher or my tutor, but I don’t really ask anyone for help. I just try to solve it by myself.” This early experience with English academic writing in China illustrated that Vivien was comfortable being self-reliant, but that she was also comfortable approaching teachers for help. She described one issue for which she did not seek help:

The thing is, in high school, you are always like – they will give you like a description of topic they want to talk about and that kind of description can limit your thoughts. Actually, you don’t agree with the description – they are like supporting your opposite opinion and sometimes you have to just follow that. And, sometimes it’s kind of like hard for me to write something that I don’t agree with.

While this occurred both in Chinese and English writing experiences, Vivien’s recollection showed an early tendency to accept and manage challenging aspects of writing tasks.

Despite her appreciation for more extensive instruction in English academic writing, Vivien's experiences with the exam changed her impression of the instruction she had received via an additional resource: a private SAT tutor:

She told me to write - like you don't make a strong argument. You just write, but kind of equivocal things so people can't argue with you and they will give you high score. That's what she told me. But, actually that's not true. So, when I took SAT for the first time, I didn't learn anything, so I just write, but I made a really like – there are, for example, two parts of a topic like 'Watching TV is a good thing.' and 'Watching TV is a bad thing.' and what my tutor taught me was to make a paper sound like 'Oh, okay, on the one side, watching TV can be a bad thing and also it has advantages.'

That's what she told me, but actually I wrote a paper about 'Ok, watching TV is a bad thing.' I got – that's the highest score I ever got.

This impression left Vivien in doubt about the advice of her private SAT tutor, as her resistance to this advice had paid off during the exam. She added of this experience, "That's why it is easier for me to write just on one side." Although she had become used to working closely with teachers on English academic writing and was accustomed to encountering challenging aspects of these writing tasks, Vivien's resistance to her tutor's advice showed a bold confidence that would later repeat itself at the university. It further developed Vivien's beliefs about argumentation.

Vivien initially said she had done nothing additional to prepare for English academic writing at the university. "I actually didn't study [English academic writing] before here. I didn't do any preparation for the writing cause I knew I didn't have to take the AWPE – some kind of thing – so I just play all summer and didn't do anything." This attitude was

based on her high SAT score on the writing portion. Later, she recounted this, stating, “I actually bought the AP English language and composition – I bought that book and studied by myself, and there was a professor in [my] university, and he actually like give me some help – offer me some help with like AP English.” While this professor was a native speaker of English, Vivien did not consult him beyond the duration of her study in China.

Other English Academic Writing Experiences at the University. Once at the university, Vivien enrolled in a special section of a ESL Alternative course that targeted the ESL reading and writing needs of international students, even though her SAT scores placed her in mainstream composition. Academic advisors often recommended the course to international students, as a supplement for the university’s heavily impacted ESL courses. While this supplemental course was housed in Education, Vivien stated that it was “actually not an education the writing centers.” Instead, it fulfilled a writing requirement, which she did need to complete for graduation. Here again, she questioned the usefulness of the writing assignments, saying, “Most of the essays we did was not academic.” Furthermore, although the course taught citation styles like MLA and APA, the writing topics felt unrealistic to Vivien, as they dealt with “personal stuff.” She elaborated, “You don’t have to write about like academic topic.” The final paper dealt with cultural differences and asked students to write in groups of three. In this regard, Vivien did struggle, recalling, “That is a challenge for me because you have to operate with some other students and you might have different ideas. Sometimes, you need negotiate with them.” She was unaccustomed to group writing tasks, negotiated writing, and the newness of APA. Vivien felt, “I’m used to MLA style, so using APA style, it’s like I don’t know what to do with the citation! Like, everything is different.” In later recollections, she found this initial instruction in APA quite helpful.

While Vivien was enrolled in the course, she was also enrolled in first-year composition, within which her SAT scores had placed her. In this course, she was learning to distinguish non-academic and academic genres of writing. At the time of our first interview, Vivien had completed her first writing assignment for FYC:

It's about genre - like non-academic genres. We write like little essay of like describing genres and analyzing genre and then we did our first paper about like not academic writings - like compare and contrast, and like what kind of strategies the author use, and how do they belong together.

Vivien described a process of scaffolding used with the first assignment, and freely adopted course terminology she had learned. She then describe the course's next unit of study:

And, now we are working on the second part, which is like academic part. It is harder cause like you have to find scholarly articles to cite, and also you have to make sure both of the details and like overall structure are professional.

Scaffolding was again apparent across the two units in Vivien's FYC course.

She contrasted the writing assignments in ESL Alternative and FYC, finding FYC to be more demanding. Vivien recalled that in ESL Alternative "it's more about your interpretation of topics...that's based on your opinion." However, FYC was different. "We have to be like - we have to write about things that you can never use 'I' so it's kind of hard to like avoid that word." Although Vivien believed the writing in ESL Alternative was not academic, and therefore less applicable to other types of university writing, she had become accustomed to its writing assignments that encouraged personal recollection. Still, she felt she was able to modify her language to avoid problems, saying, "I didn't use too much

personal opinion – I mean, not personal opinion – I didn't use that kind of word.” Another struggle that emerged in FYC concerned Vivien's impression of a thesis statement:

You have to make a strong thesis, but that's kind of hard for me cause like analyzing the genres is kind of like – it's kind of about a simple fact. So, how can you make a strong thesis about a fact and not make it sound like a fact? That's kind of hard.

With this and other FYC struggles, Vivien reported overcoming them by “read[ing] the prompt and the rubric my professor gave me and try[ing] to find some breakthrough.” These means reflected Vivien's prior tendencies to rely upon herself and her teacher when encountering problems with writing.

Although FYC was challenging, Vivien had experienced gains in her understanding of English academic writing, based upon advice from her teacher. “The professor in my [FYC], she's like, ‘Use connection sentences. Use – like, do not quote a long paragraph from your source. Just paraphrase it or quote a short sentence and make sure that you have a long analysis or connecting sentence you can connect your evidence with the meaning.’” Vivien later found this advice helpful in navigating the course writing assignments because her FYC instructor had taught her to “focus really on the analysis of our paper,” a skill explicitly required in the course papers. “She said, like, ‘Treat me as I'm a five year old,’ which reminded Vivien to fully explain and analyze her points in writing. Additionally, she had learned more about APA, thesis statements, and the library databases for locating outside research. Furthermore, her teacher taught her to distinguish scholarly articles and empirical studies. She described empirical studies as “peer-reviewed” and knew how to search narrowly for them, saying, “When you search [the library databases], you can just click, like, academic, like, scholarly article. And, basically scholarly article, which has lots of, like,

bibliographies or lots of citations, which are credible.” She gleaned these understandings directly from her FYC teacher, and again found them useful upon later use in the course.

Despite her enrollment in three courses that concurrently required writing assignments, Vivien initially expressed doubts about attending the writing center for help, instead preferring to self-manage or meet with teachers. Concurrent to her enrollment in FYC and the course, Vivien was also taking Music 15, which required writing. At the time of this first interview, she had plans to review a draft of writing with her TA for this course, again showing her reliance upon seeking teacher input. While she had visited tutors at the same learning center where writing tutors worked, these visits were for a statistics course. When describing why she had not used the writing tutors for help with her writing assignments that quarter, she said, “I mean I know I can use [the writing center], but right now it’s like I don’t want to – I don’t want to make my work sound like plagiarism or something, so I just basically go to my TA’s office hours.” She continued, “Yea, cause sometimes you are not allowed to – get some kinds of outside information? I don’t know.” For Vivien, the learning center was a “good source” when required of her statistics the writing centers the previous quarter, but it was suspect as a resource for writing.

In addition to relying upon teachers for help with English academic writing assignments at the university, Vivien had her own means of managing writing tasks. She reviewed writing prompts, but also used an online grammar checker, which also checked for plagiarism. She had found this resource via a university Facebook group, but could not recall its name. Vivien also had an American friend at the university who was majoring in a science discipline. Often, she would ask her friend to read her papers – silently or aloud – in order to catch awkward phrasing and grammar errors. Vivien explained, “The thing is, she is like

American student, so she knows what kind of things is awkward to American readers, so that might help me to identify some kind of awkward sentences I use.” While this was Vivien’s underlying rationale for asking for her friend’s help, she made this aim more explicit later in our interview process.

Self-Evaluation of Writing Ability. Vivien did not find writing in English difficult unless she felt it was actually academic. This was why she described the ESL Alternative assignments and her high school English writing as not academic. In her prior English academic writing experiences both in China and at the university, she had more freedom with incorporating sources, saying, “The papers I’ve written before, it’s more about like you can use whatever sources you want.” Vivien had grown accustomed to this freedom, and it helped her gain confidence in writing.

Prior to entering the course, Vivien had developed confidence in certain aspects of English academic writing (most of which derived from FYC), and concerns about English academic writing. In FYC, she learned to distinguish description from analysis, revision, integrating evidence, paraphrasing, and finding outside research. She was confident in her use of APA due to both ESL Alternative and FYC, and ESL Alternative had given her practice in expressing her opinions, albeit in writing style different from others she would later encounter at the university. She was also mostly confident in her decision-making about writing, which later turned out to be of a more strategic nature. Finally, her SAT prep course had given her some structural and argumentative insights into English academic writing. Despite these areas of confidence, she had her doubts. She was uncertain of her grammar and her ability to avoid awkward phrasing. As she said, “Sometimes, I write awkward sentences, but I’m not aware of that, but when I read it out loud, I’m like, ‘Crap. What did I write?’”

She also worried about plagiarism. “[The grammar checker] just check if some of your part might be a plagiarism, like, you didn’t cite. Importantly, Vivien had learned when to rely on existing knowledge she had gained about writing, and when to seek help from others.

Positive experiences in seeking help from others meant she tended to return to these sources later in the challenging writing tasks of the course, including instances when previously learned techniques were met with criticism.

Writing in the Social Science Course. Vivien was a pre-major student interested in working in advertising after graduation; yet she knew little about the course’s writing assignments before enrolling. “I don’t know there was writing,” Vivien remarked. In an eventual conversation with a friend, she learned of the heavy writing requirements. Once enrolled, Vivien had a better grasp of the writing assignments, which she initially underestimated. “I thought it was just like the Education the writing centers I took before, but actually it’s more like serious.” She incorrectly assumed the course writing tasks would mirror her experiences in ESL Alternative the prior quarter, later realizing, “. When asked what else she initially knew about writing in the course, Vivien stated, “My friend told me it is hopeless to get As, including A-. And, also like the average score is like B-.” This was how she learned about the comparative grading system used for course writing assignments. Her friend described acceptance to the major as difficult. “She told us many students who like chose [the course] as their pre-major changed their major cause of the...like the GPA requirement, and also the course is really hard to get a high score, so they just changed their major.” But, Vivien had to enroll, saying, “I have to take it cause I’m a [word deleted] major.” She needed admission to the major due to her plans to work in advertising. Still, she chose to enroll during a particularly challenging time with her overall course load, recalling,

“My friend like warned me not to take the course and [FYC] together,” but Vivien enrolled in both courses anyhow. Early in the quarter, she questioned her choice:

Now I know and I regret it – I chose these two the writing centers together. They are so overwhelming. Every two day, you got a thousand word to write. It’s kind of like you gotta write like every minute. You can’t stop...[FYC] is hard cause you got a lot of things to write. And, the course cause it is really hard to get an A. You have to work hard. So, you cannot like distract yourself, like with other the writing centers.

Despite the competitive grading system in the course, her concurrent enrollment in FYC, and the notorious burden of both courses’ writing assignments, Vivien enrolled. And, despite her pre-major status, Vivien often referred to herself as “lazy” in recollecting her writing process. This self-characterization initially appeared with the first writing assignment.

Assignment one expectations. The first writing assignment helped Vivien’s conceptualization of academic writing, as this was something she struggled to observe in her writing assignments prior to the course. As she described it, “I feel like academic writing – you have to make a really strong thesis and also like you are trying to demonstrate a theory with examples.” While this was a more general definition for academic writing, she then related it directly to her first the course assignment, saying, “Like the [first] paper I wrote for the course. It’s like we have to like find examples for my [thesis] statement, not just write down whatever you want, not just describing things. You have to analyze things.” Vivien emphasized the distinction between description and analysis, which she was learning in FYC, while also using the same skills for the course writing.

She discussed her interpretation of the explicit requirements for assignment one. These included understanding course concepts, defining course concepts, identifying course

concepts, analysis, providing evidence, and forming arguments. Additionally, she referenced APA, and made occasional mention of grammar, mechanics, and the expected page limit. Like the prompt stated, she knew it was important to have connections among her ideas, and to “be specific with the ideas” she discussed, adding “It’s like a research paper so you need to have enough definition.” She qualified her descriptions of the importance of conceptual comprehension and definitions in saying, “Like, it’s about your personal interpretation or understanding of this the writing centers.” She continued, “Like, there are like some definitions of a specific term, but you have to interpret it and understand it so you can use it in your paper.” Vivien emphasized this deeper kind of comprehension, which required students to identify course concepts in non-course material.

The prompt for assignment one also influenced Vivien’s impressions of the more implicit requirements students needed to demonstrate in writing. One example was careful decision-making. In reference to this, she claimed it was important to “try to find something that you can talk a lot about” in order to meet the page requirement, but to also “try to find some points you are good at.” Thus, she thought it was important to choose concepts that she understood well enough to talk about at length.

In discussing the explicit and implicit aspects of assignment one, Vivien compared its similarities and differences from other English academic writing she experienced. One distinction involved the use of sources. “The papers I’ve written before, it’s more about like you can use whatever sources you want. But, this paper – the sources are limited. You have to use the sources from the book or the lecture.” This presented an added challenge to assignment one. Vivien said, “So, it is really hard to find definition for words cause sometimes you can only have one definition cause the professor didn’t mention it in lecture.

So you only have the definition from textbook.” She felt restricted by parameters for resources, and struggled to rearticulate what she had learned. However, she noted similarities with other assignments, describing the prompt as “more about a specific topic. You are not just like talking about what you think, but you have to make sense.” To Vivien, this meant, “Like, first present your argument. Then, use like one or two connecting sentences, and use your evidence, and like analyze those evidence so you can support your argument.” She had observed this pattern of sense-making and argumentation elsewhere.

Finally, in specifically discussing grading criteria, she believed the TA would focus on “main points and how you used [concepts] – like trying to see whether you understand [the concepts] or not.” Furthermore, she thought grading priorities might reflect those she had experienced in FYC, saying, “I don’t know. Maybe just like other writing classes – looking for your connecting sentences and your analysis.” She also felt APA would be important.

Assignment one process. Vivien’s process began by watching the assigned episode and selecting a scene about four days before the paper was due, as she needed to make decisions for the outline due in section. She recalled her process as “I just did the outline right before the outline due date, and I just wrote about this one [scene] cause like I had two different scenes. But, I wrote the outline according to this scene, which I finally chose.” Her outline also reflected concepts she observed in the scene, which she would then discuss in the paper. As her writing process got underway, she felt conflicted in sticking with her scene selection. “I actually didn’t choose this scene first cause like I chose another one, but then I thought there is nothing for me really to talk about. So, I changed.” While she preferred a different scene, she thought she might struggle with finding enough course material to relate

to it, so she remained with the original scene selection she had made when outlining. As she described her scene choice, “It’s kind of like a rush decision,” since her actual paper writing did not begin until the day before the paper was due, yet she had hurriedly committed to a scene for the purpose of turning in the outline. In Vivien’s case, outlining was more cursory; she simply wanted section credit for completing it. She stated, “Actually, my outline was just for the – cause the professor said the TAs will check the outline – so I just basically did before the checking.” Thus, upon writing the paper the day before it was due, she felt she had less flexibility in modifying choices reflected by her outline. She recalled, “I didn’t decide. I just like, “Ok, I don’t wanna talk about this [preferred scene].” She felt she lacked time and motivation in changing back to the scene that had originally appealed to her. “I intended to write about [the preferred] scene, except I was too lazy to change.” This feeling persisted. “When I was writing the paper, I was like ‘Oh, I want to change the scene.’ but I am too lazy to do that. So, I just stayed.” She ended up regretting this, saying, “The thing is, after I made my outline, I found out some of the [concepts] I intended to talk about didn’t work.” To manage this, she reported, “I just switch to different [concepts].” While she had chosen a scene and concepts during outlining, she did not deeply consider her choices until writing the paper the day before it was due, saying, “I didn’t think about it.” Thus, while she ended up remaining with her less favored scene, she changed the concepts she would write about, as these were substantial elements of assignment one.

She discussed her process of changing concepts while writing the assignment. In abandoning one concept she had committed to on her outline, she lamented, “I finally give up on that [concept] cause it is too hard to analyze.” She continued, “I watched the show again, and I saw the same thing that I remember.” In questioning whether or not the characters in

the scene demonstrated the concept she had initially chosen, Vivien realized, “Actually, that’s just what I remember. They actually didn’t do that.” Thus, she let go of the concept, in favor of another, particularly because she realized she had been struggling to analyze a concept that did not actually appear in the scene.

Vivien’s entire process for writing assignment one was rushed, and she wrote only one draft. As she described it, “Right before the deadline, I finished this paper.” She added, “I actually did my paper in two hours.” Part of the rush was due to similar assignment deadlines in her other courses. She claimed, “I had three papers at the same time, so I actually didn’t pay much attention about my paper [for the course].” Though the outline technically gave her a head start, she had other, competing deadlines.

Despite her rushed process, Vivien managed to consult the professor and TA with assignment one, but she met with them before writing. As she recalled, “At that time, I didn’t have any draft for my paper”. She met with her TA during office hours and emailed her several times, and also went to the professor’s office hours more than once (though some meetings were more focused on unrelated questions). In meeting with her TA “the day before the deadline,” the TA did not review her outline; they just discussed its contents. The TA clarified conceptual confusion, and reminded Vivien of the relationship between seemingly separate concepts, or, basically, advised Vivien to “extend that part” of her writing. After the meeting, Vivien emailed her TA, reporting, “I’m still confused...like the difference between [two concepts]. So, I just emailed her like about this several times. And, then I understand it.” In the short timeframe before the paper was due, the TA had helped Vivien feel more confident in her understanding of course concepts. The professor had provided the same support. Vivien attended office hours, but forgot to print her outline, instead saying, “I

basically just ask her a question and went away.” She struggled with determining which of two closely related concepts applied to her chosen scene, saying, “It is really hard to decide.” The professor clarified which concept was more correct, and suggested she layer two smaller concepts with a more central concept Vivien had chosen. Vivien accepted these suggestions.

When writing, Vivien prioritized some last-minute changes over others. She made changes independently, suggesting confidence in her thinking. In discussing changes made before meeting with her TA, she attributed them to her own ideas, saying, “It was on my own.” Other changes were influenced by the meeting with the professor and Vivien’s TA, as she had relied upon them for conceptual clarification. However, time presented an issue in problem-solving, leaving her to forgo other tasks she normally would have completed. In this regard, she reported, “Actually, I just checked my spelling, I didn’t even check about my grammar.” Although grammar was briefly mentioned in the assignment prompt, Vivien was less attentive to it, given time constraints. She explained, “I usually will change [my grammar errors] after I read my draft, but at that time, I didn’t have time so I just turn it in anyway.” Finally, Vivien also paid less attention to her thesis, recalling, “I know this [assignment] is more about a research fact, so I just didn’t care about my, like, thesis - more about my analysis.” Because Vivien could not attend to all changes and aspects of the assignment as she knew she should, she instead allocated time for what she perceived as the more central aspects of the prompt.

None of Vivien’s friends were in the course at the same time as she; however, her friends were familiar with the course and major. Vivien had many American friends, and she also socialized with international students. Recall that one friend advised her against taking

the course with FYC; Vivien had proceeded against this friend's advice. Nonetheless, for assignment one, Vivien did not seek out her friends during her writing process.

Self-evaluation of assignment one. Circumstances surrounding Vivien's writing process, and her admitted lack of engagement led her to doubt writing choices she had made in a hurry, resulting in last-minute changes. Consequently, she worried about the content of her paper, saying, "I actually did a bad job on this [paper] cause I started my paper really late, so I didn't really have time to think about what I am good at and what I am not good at." Although she managed to get the desired credit for her outline, she did not find her resulting choices to be facilitative of a smooth writing process, and she felt inhibited in making more thoughtful choices, which she had previously claimed as an important part of writing. One self-critique correlated with defining terms. She recalled, "It's like a research paper. So, you need to have enough definition, which I didn't do a very good job at." In retrospect she thought, "I should do that – give more definitions and evidence." However, she did not feel entirely responsible for these perceived faults, saying, "This paper – the sources are limited. You have to use the sources from the book or the lecture." She ran into problems, saying, "It is really hard to find definition for words cause sometimes you can only have one definition cause the professor didn't mention it in lecture. So you only have the definition from textbook." Vivien was unable to resolve her anxiety about imposed limitations for defining key concepts.

Despite her admitted laziness, heavy workload, and hasty decision-making, Vivien felt confident with certain aspects of assignment one. Overall, she reported attending most to analysis, definitions, and evidence, so she felt more secure about these aspects of her writing, commenting, "That's basically what I focused on." She also discussed APA, which she

learned in ESL Alternative, saying “I don’t really have trouble with this paper cause I used APA style before.” As a whole, she believed, “I think I did okay,” because she had made “specific analysis for each concept.” She thought her use of evidence was also solid. She thought her paper was effective enough, thought not her best work. However, her impression changed upon receiving her graded paper.

Assignment one assessment. Some of Vivien’s concerns were verified by the TA’s feedback. After reading the feedback, Vivien thought, “I actually think she marked down like all the disadvantages, so I don’t know what she think is good in my paper.” Her TA noted issues with the explanation of definitions, which led Vivien to elaborate, “She want me to make more like in-depth definition, like not only from the lecture, but also from the book.” The TA had marked “explain” in conjunction with concepts Vivien had chosen, but not defined adequately. The concept she expanded upon at the recommendation of her professor was one such example. Of this shortcoming, she rationalized, “I thought this paragraph is long enough, so I just didn’t keep going.” Specifically, she remembered, “I understand what [the professor] was talking about, but I was like [the first concept] and [the second concept] is just a part of the [overall concept], so I don’t have to talk too much about it.” But, the TA noted its insufficiency, and the incompleteness of other explanations, leading Vivien to summarize, “All of the problems are the same – like lack of definition, basically.” Still, she was surprised at the feedback:

When I got my paper back, I saw like a lot of marks. I was kind of confused because some of the terms, I can only find one definition from lecture. The book doesn’t mention it at all. Some of them are both, but I just paraphrased them so...I never expected there will be something wrong with my definitions.

She had been stressed about using only course material to define concepts, and had attended to definitions more than other aspects of the prompt. As with her explanations that needed more work, she also felt the TA wanted deeper analysis, though she felt she had provided this. In retrospect, she said, “I intended to, like, explain everything, but sometimes I will just like – it doesn’t mean you do something because you want to do something. Sometimes, even though I want to explain more, I will feel lazy. So, I just gave up.” Although she had previously felt comfortable with her analysis, the TA’s feedback made her reconsider how much effort she put into it. She added, “I mean, if I check it again, I will make more difference on my explanation and analysis.” Because she had limited time to write the paper, she did not revise and wrote only one draft.

The TA also pointed out issues Vivien had thought less about, or not thought about at all. In downplaying the importance of the thesis, Vivien had been unable to anticipate the potential for a problem. After reading the TA’s feedback, she recalled, “I know I’m having a hard time like writing thesis in all of the papers so I expected that I will not have a strong enough thesis,” but, she still did not think the strength of her thesis would matter much for the paper, and instead attended to other aspects of the prompt. The TA’s feedback changed her mind. Vivien reported, “After I got this paper, I’m like ‘Oh my god. It’s 37. It’s below average.’ And then I went to [the writing center] and asked them for help about making a strong thesis.” Her dismay at having received a subpar score led her to seek further support in learning how to better write a thesis – but for her FYC paper. “I know like [the TA] said I should make a more – like, make a stronger thesis – so, I just went to [the writing center] ask, ‘How can I make a strong thesis?’ for another paper.” Still, she sought this help before the second the course assignment was due. The TA’s feedback also brought up linguistic issues.

“She marked one of my sentence like as “awkward.” I know I sometimes use the sentence...like that’s kind of awkward.” The TA made more of a point of linguistic correctness than Vivien had time to address.

Receiving a subpar score affected Vivien’s impression of academic writing, her thinking for assignment two, and her ambitions for declaring the major. Based upon her experience with assignment one, she made a further distinction between writing for ESL Alternative and writing for the course:

I actually feel this is way different from [ESL Alternative]. [ESL Alternative] is not that serious. It’s just like paper. You will get an A whatever you do. That’s for me. I mean for other people, it’s kind of different, but for me, as long as you don’t make too much grammar mistake, you will get a good grade. But, this is different.

She felt her score should be better, saying, “I think it should be like five points higher,” explaining further, “That’s what I expected. Just a feeling.” She felt she should have been at least 38, which was the average score, given her performance in the course so far. “I was a A- after the midterm score came up, but then after the paper score came up, I became a B,” she said. “Before the paper score came up, I thought that I would be way better at writing papers, than take exams, but now I feel like...that’s not true.” She struggled to predict her scores in the comparative grading system. She also critiqued the TA’s feedback. “She can be more specific about what I should add, that would be more helpful. Like, some part – like the definition, explanation part – I can understand. But, some part, she just said, ‘What else?’ I’m like ‘What do you mean?’” Much of the TA’s feedback was clear on how to improve, but some comments were vague, and Vivien disagreed with the TA’s critiques of her definitions. She explained, “[The TA] marked down some parts like my definitions, but the thing is, there

are only like limited definitions that I can use, so even if I want to cite more, there's not enough resources." While she remained critical of the TA's feedback, she accepted fault for her score:

I mean, I deserve it cause I only use the day before to write the paper. If I spend more time, I would be more...specific about the analysis? Although, I think I did a good job on the analysis, but like [the TA] said I should have more in-depth analysis.

She resolved, "So, like for the next paper, I should spend more time like rewriting – not just turn in my first draft." She knew she would need more time to write, if she wanted to improve her score in a comparative grading system.

While she had been able to rely upon her existing writing skills to make high marks in ESL Alternative, the course's comparative grading system demanded her writing skills develop more. She continued, "There are people who are really, really good at writing, so you have to figure out how you can compete with them." In light of the comparative grading system, she would need to work hard to gain admittance to the major. She added, "The professor mention the TAs will grade your paper according to other students so...even though you did a good job, someone's better than you, you might have problem."

For assignment one, Vivien had run into several problems, which she resolved to overcome in assignment two. She knew, "I should start earlier than last time." "Like, before the outline, I should decide what I wanna write." This would allow her time to seek help from the writing center, which she had thought she should avoid for assignment one. She would again work with the professor and TA, "but that's after I have my draft, so they can give me advice according to, like, parts of my paper – so I can use their suggestion to all of

my paper.” And, she intended to discuss assignment one with both the professor and her TA. She reflected upon the TA’s feedback, and her thinking for assignment two:

I thought that I had a lot analysis, but it seems like I need to work on my analysis more. And, also this time, since I can use extra sources – so I should have a stronger definition. At least I can use more sources to increase the credibility, than just one quotation from, like, lecture.

She did not think she would seek a friend’s input, but ended up consulting with an international student friend whom had taken the course previously. She had avoided this friend with assignment one because “You should not show anything related this course to your friend, but felt it was okay to “ask my friend, like, what’s her suggestion about the paper.” She was careful about plagiarism, and preferred general discussions about grading. “So, I will basically just ask her about the score, not anything specific.” Thus, after assignment one, she talked to her friend about assignment two. “I ask her about the grading standard, so like according to last year’s average, I can decide what should I do.” Her friend received a 37 on the second paper, yet believed Vivien “should get a higher score.” Vivien’s explained, “She said, like, the score of second paper will be higher,” given the comparative grading system. Vivien continued, “My friend told me the average score for paper number two should be higher, so that means a lot of people are doing better. So, if I still came like my second paper as the same, I will probably get a B- or lower.” She also talked to an American friend who “told me that B is pretty good so don’t expect more. But, I’m still sad about that,” she recalled. She planned to be more careful with grammar, saying, “I can read it out loud because that helps a lot.” In spite of plans desire to improve, she realized she would again encounter conflicting deadlines, saying, “I have three paper together at the same time

next time. I don't think I will have enough time. That's the problem. Oh – four paper at the same time. Even worse than I thought.”

Assignment two expectations. Vivien discussed her impressions of the second paper's explicit assignment criteria, finding similarities and differences between the first and second assignment. Similarities she discussed included the importance of defining concepts, applying them, and analysis. As with the first assignment, she noted that, “Understanding the definitions, like, of the lecture and know how to apply it into your paper is really important.” Unlike before, students were required to incorporate two empirical studies into their writing, a requirement that impacted Vivien's thinking. As she said, “Like, you can use a definition to explain your own chosen [concept], and then also understand how to, like, find and *use* the published study.” When struggling to define concepts in assignment one, Vivien had felt limited in relying exclusively upon course materials. With assignment two, she again questioned the helpfulness of course materials, claiming, “The textbook is definitely not a useful source.” Her TA's feedback on assignment one helped her refine her thinking about analysis in general. “You have to understand it so you can explain it. Not only say what it is and how they use it, but also, like, make your paper into *why* part – like, *why* this strategy or this feature and *why* they are important.” Another distinction involved a different kind of analysis. Because students were analyzing advertisements, Vivien stated, “The audience is really important. I believe that this paper requires us to, like, analyze the demographics and psychographics of audiences.” She knew that her analysis would relate to her overall assessment of the advertisement whereby she had to make argue its effectiveness on the intended audience. Finally, she again discussed grammar and APA, though more briefly than the other aspects she discussed.

Given trouble with assignment one, Vivien liked that assignment two required students to use two empirical studies in their writing. According to Vivien, this meant, “you can have more, like, information to support your paper, instead of just like writing both like a basic analysis. You can use the research to help your argument, which can make your paper stronger.” However, she realized, “That means we have to have the ability to find and recognize those studies and get information from those studies.” While she liked the inclusion of outside resources, she knew they had to be integrated carefully.

Vivien made similar assumptions about the implicit requirements for assignments one and two. For example, she again believed it was important to make thoughtful choices:

Before you actually write your paper, make sure you have, like, something that it is easy for you to talk about. Like you can write a lot of things around that feature.

Cause in *advertisements*, there are lots of, like, strategies and techniques they use.

You can't talk all of them, but what you should do is choose the one that is most favorable for your paper.

This reflected her concern about meeting the page limit, but it also showed her awareness of making careful choices, rather than simply those most readily available, especially in a comparative grading system. As she had learned in assignment one, the thesis was important, as it presented her overall direction and argument, and thought about where to place the empirical studies in her paper. Similarly, she also thought the overall structure was important. Making thoughtful choices appeared in Vivien's process for writing assignment two, as with choosing which advertisement to write about, selecting concepts, and finding studies.

Assignment two process. Her process for writing assignment two was different from assignment one, largely because she had an earlier start, and she wrote three drafts, instead of only one. Vivien compared her process for both papers:

Last time...I didn't really have enough time for my paper, so I basically just spend, like, one or two days on my paper and I got a really, like, low score. And so this time, I started early. Basically, I started thinking about this paper, like, a week before the due date.

Ironically, part of her advanced timing was due to deadline confusion. She reiterated, "I thought the due date is, like, on Thursday, so I thought, 'Oh, it's Thursday' so I got to have my last draft on Tuesday and then I can revise it." After she realized her mistake on, "I got this part [of the paper], and this is kind of like my outline for this paper, and I used this one as my outline, which I should turn on Friday." Thus, though she had mixed up the deadline, it advanced her thinking, planning, and writing, leading her to turn in her first full draft for outline credit, rather than just an outline. While the first draft reflected choices she had made, it did not yet include the studies. As Vivien described her process, "For me, it's like, I first choose the topic I want to talk about, then I, like, find my research later, according to the topics that I want to choose." Still, she felt the deadline mix-up continued to benefit her process.

One of the first things Vivien did was choose one of two advertisements her TA had selected for students. In comparing the Doritos and Goldiblocks ads, Vivien vacillated between interest and logic. She explained her initial choice. "At first, I actually wanted to write about the Doritos one...I thought that the Dorito advertisement is really funny. However, she changed her mind, saying, "The thing is, there is not a lot of things that I

wanna talk about, so it's kind of hard, and actually, for me, it has ineffective features so...this ad – the Goldiblocks – it is more effective for me.” Although the prompt had not specified that students’ find their chosen ad effective, Vivien followed a path similar to most students in preferring to claim the ad was effective on its target audience. As she settled on the advertisement, she then considered, “why is it important, like, why is it effective,” which led her to choose three concepts. “That’s basically what I, like, wrote on this draft. And then, I went to [the writing center] cause, like, I want to expand this part, you know?” Recall that Vivien had been encouraged to expand more on her ideas in assignment one – both in meeting with the professor, and in receiving her paper back from her TA.

Since she did not have studies yet, Vivien took draft one to the writing center to get structural advice on where to place the studies, but ended up discussing more than intended. “I asked them, like, how to structure my paper – like, at that time, I didn’t, like, have my published study yet, so I asked them, like, where to, like, put my published study.” Her session with the tutor went in a different direction. “That tutor actually helped me with, like, my thinking. She told me, like, make the – like, make the paper more in depth, like don’t write about the surface level kind of thing.” Specifically, she encouraged Vivien to “think more about, like, social part of audiences.” They discussed ways Vivien could tie her ideas to the feminist movement. “And, that’s basically how I got, like, my second draft,” Vivien recalled.

Another impact of her work with the tutor involved changing concepts by critiquing her work. She discussed the change, saying she abandoned one concept because it “should be more obvious” in the ad. Because it was not, she felt, “So, it’s kind of controversial. That’s why I took that away.” Another conceptual modification arose from reconsidering the

targeted audience. “When I was on my first draft, I said that because the targets are, like, little girls, so they use little girls in the advertisement.” However, she reconsidered her position, saying, “But, then I thought about, like, little girls - they are not, like, actually a person who buys the product. Their parents will buy... So, like, during my second draft, I, like, analyzed the demographic.” She then read her second draft again, but struggled to believe one of her arguments about a concept she had chosen. “I feel like [the concept] can attract the audiences. It can make the audiences happy, but that doesn’t mean people want, like, to buy the products,” she critiqued. Furthermore, she had begun searching for empirical studies, reporting, “I didn’t find any, like, study that shows the positive correlation [between the concept] and people’s, like, desire for want to buying a specific product. So, I delete that part.” Draft two reflected the kind of thoughtful decision-making Vivien wished she had time for in assignment one. This thoughtfulness increased with each draft.

By the time she got to draft three, there were other changes, which reflected the time she had for sophisticated thinking. Though she had questioned the value of the course materials for defining terms, she revisited a reading to expand upon a definition for a concept she had chosen, but was unable to find empirical support for.

On our reader, there is a part about, like, audience persuasability and one part talked about, like, the importance of need. So, I use that part to relate it to my [concept] and made some arguments, like, how [the concept] is, like, related to [the ad]. And then, I related [ad] as a way to solve their need, like, it actually attracted the audience and kind of make them want to buy their products for their kids.

This again reflected deeper thinking about the choices she was making, but, this time, she felt she was able to use course material to her advantage. In this case, she was using the course

reading much like she had described the ideal use of empirical studies: for argumentative support. She exhibited similarly critical thinking when selecting studies. As she said of one such study, “I found a study, which shows a positive correlation between the attitude toward the ad itself and the brand and the [concept]. It’s like when [the degree of the concept] goes up and also, like, the people’s attitude toward the brand and also the advertisement goes up. So this helped, like, to attract audiences.” This also enabled Vivien to strengthen her argument.

In draft three, she also incorporated advice from her TA and the writing center. With regards to her meeting with the writer center tutor, she said, “I talk about – like, how the feminist movement make people’s belief toward girls change.” She reasoned, “The advertisements doesn’t have too much conflict, like, contradict people’s belief. So, it can be successful. It was ten years ago, there would be a failure.” In this case, she attributed her ideas to “what I got from, like, [the writing center].” She took draft three to her TA, and discussed studies she had found, saying, “I told her what my study is about and she helped me, like, identify how I can apply it – how I can use the research to support my argument.” Her meeting with the TA also changed her thinking regarding another concept she had written about, whereby Vivien reported the TA had said, “You have to explain why people like [the ad].” As a result of their conversation, Vivien felt, “So, that basically make the logic more clear and reasonable,” as the TA wanted her to explain her ideas more. Her TA had also challenged her to rethink a concept she had abandoned, in light of its relationship to a study Vivien had chosen. Vivien reported:

She said this study actually, like, is like example for [the original concept]. I change that part back and uh – she said, like, to understand [the original concept], you can, like, analyze the demographics and psychographics of the audience.

Vivien described her process of reconsidering the original concept she had thought of, given the TA's insights. She summarized, "So, I switched," returning to her original concept, but with renewed understanding. Furthermore, what the TA had been pointing out was that Vivien's chosen concept was really not a concept, but that her original choice was. Vivien reported, "She said that [the new concept] is, like, inappropriate. It's not a [concept]. You should change this part." In sum, draft three reflected influence from the writing center tutor, the TA, and course readings Vivien returned to.

Like settling on concepts across the various drafts she wrote, locating empirical studies was also challenging. She stated, "I learned how to find researches first in [FYC] and then in the course, like, so I know just going to the library and search." This helped her navigate challenges that arose. She had begun by searching under the key words for each concept she chose, stating, this "didn't help at all," despite her familiarity with using library databases, until one concept was more fruitful. "It's easy cause, like, there are lots of studies about [that concept]." However, she did not choose the first or most easily available. Instead, she noted, "I read the abstract and then I found this one actually show the correlation between the people's attitude toward the brand and the advertisement. So, I thought that might be, like, more helpful than those other studies." The other studies had more superficial connections, but the one she chose "related to *why* people want to buy these products." Still, she could not locate studies for all concepts, saying, "I couldn't find any research about

[some concepts], so I didn't use any research for that part. Like, I found, like, research for the other parts of my paper." She summarized her study selection process:

Actually, the sources I found are really limited, so basically I can just go over all of the articles I found and just compare them. And, some of them are just abstract or it is not supportable for my – for my own, like, argument. So, I decided to use just those ones which are more related and more favorable for my argument.

Vivien thought about the analytical possibilities in choosing this study over others, recalling, "Basically, it took me a day to find these research," or single empirical study. Because she had started early, she had time to critically compare studies, and to be more discriminating.

With the third draft of assignment two, Vivien turned to her American friend for help with readability. She said, "That's how I got my final draft," and continued, "I read it out loud in front of her. It's like, 'Oh, this is awkward.' It's not about my content. It's more about grammar mistake and how to make it sound less weird. I mean, I still have some awkward sentences, but if you just, like, change the way you talk, it might be better." This friend was to be her roommate the following year, and had not taken the course. Vivien explained, "She's the one I always ask for help. She help – I don't know – she's more patient than others, so she is kind of willing to read my drafts and just point out the grammar mistakes and kind of – that kind of thing."

Self-evaluation of assignment two. In comparing assignment one to assignment two, Vivien felt more confident with the second assignment. Her feeling was largely the result of having invested more time and effort. She differentiated, "Last time...I didn't really have enough time for my paper, so I basically just spend, like, one or two days on my paper and I got a really, like, low score. And so this time, I started early." Vivien clarified why:

Actually, it's not start writing your paper early, but start thinking about what you want to write early. Like, last time, even the day before the due date, I was struggling about some of the definitions. I still have some problem with understanding the definitions and that was a really huge problem when I was writing my paper. And this time, I just started thinking about what I want to write, like, earlier. So, as you know, I change a lot with my different [concepts] I chose. Like, if I start really late, I might not be able to make my decision, which means I might write about some things that I feel not comfortable in or I'm not sure with. If I started my paper yesterday, I won't have time to talk to [my TA], which means, like, my third [concept] will be a total disaster for my paper this time.

Furthermore, she felt the second assignment was "more easy to control – I mean, like, for the last one, you can only use the course readings and, like, the conclusion you got from the lecture, so sometimes when you want to argue something, you don't have enough sources. This time you research can be – like, can provide you with really strong, like, theories to back up your argument." As she had indicated all along, she preferred using outside resources to maximize her points, but felt she could not with the first assignment.

Vivien exhibited confidence with aspects of assignment two that she perceived as important grading criteria. One such criterion was the use of the studies. She knew how to read empirical studies, and how to extract meaningful content. "I think the most important thing is the conclusion from the studies. Like, you have to summarize and introduce your research before people can understand it," she explained. The course website also provided helpful resources for working with the studies. She reported, "I basically just use this as a guide to summarize my study. And, also I saw a link from past TA about, like, further help

from – for research studies. I basically looked at that and that helped.” Also, she felt her thesis improved, as it had been an issue in the first assignment and in other courses:

Although, I did, like, a terrible job making my thesis...the thing is, this time, like, I think I had a thesis, although it’s not that strong or a really good thesis, but I write about what I want to talk, like, in the following paragraphs, at the beginning of my introduction. So, that makes things clear, like, clearer for readers to know what I want to talk about.

She was beginning to realize that a thesis was important in all types of writing. And, she again felt confident in her APA formatting.

She also knew she knew she needed to make “favorable” choices for her paper because of the comparative grading system, and the implicit demands the prompt suggested. She seemed willing to challenge it through thoughtfully examining studies that fit her argument best, and making modifications to the concepts she discussed. For example, she elaborated on the concept she felt most confident about:

Basically, the most confident part is [that concept]. The study was really supportable, so at first, just talked about what [the concept] and how [the concept] was applied in [the advertisement]. And then I get this useful result as a conclusion for why is it important. So, the why part is more, like, obvious, and it didn’t need me to do much on it. I just need to explain the research and that conclusion can prove – not prove – can indicate something.

Vivien was excited to have found a study that made her argument stronger, and her writing tasks easier. She also elaborated on the concept that had made her return to course readings

for support. Although it had initially been “tricky” to work with because she could not find supporting research, she persisted. She described her method:

Our reader – like, it talks about, like, how need and satisfaction works to make people want to buy a product. So, it’s basically, first you need to arouse the need from your audiences and then, like, give them a plan. Give them a plan for why you can satisfy their need. And when you say, ‘We can satisfy your need,’ they will want buy your products. That’s basically what I explained.

Vivien’s recollection showed how she strategically re-read course material to find support she was otherwise lacking. “So[the concept] – it is effective – it is effective in attracting people, but does not mean it makes people want to buy, but it effectively attracted people.” Re-reading course material also fine-tuned her arguments about effectiveness, making her feel surer of her choices.

Still, she had some doubts. She noted, “This happened to me last time. I was reading my paper. I know there is something I can improve and I just don’t know how. And, that happens a lot while writing papers. And...maybe it’s just I need to get my final draft done, like, earlier so I can put that away and take some relax and go back. Then, I maybe can identify, like, some of the problems and revise it.” While she had an earlier start than intended, she had other papers to write. “The thing is...although, I began really early – as I said, I have three papers all together, so the time is even more separated than last time.” This left her with mixed feelings about her analysis and explanation, whereby she said, “I wasn’t really clear. I feel like this might be okay, but it can be better.” As with assignment one, she felt course materials offered incomplete definitions, despite her expanded use of the readings, saying, “It is really difficult to explain some of things.” She continued, “No offense to the

professor, but she didn't really give us a definition for that! It's like I have to explain everything on my own, according to my own cognition and perception. That's kind of hard." In many cases, she felt that the professor "didn't really give us, like, a accurate or specific definition." While Vivien had reviewed course material, she felt some important definitions were unclear, and had sought the TA's support during their meeting. For one such concept that was unclear, the TA indicated there was no clear definition, but that the concept could be related to another one, which did have a definition. Vivien took this advice, but still felt, "That's not a strong definition cause there is nothing for me to quote from the lecture." She did not worry excessively over her grammar, but still referred to her sentence structures as "awkward," asking her friend to review her work. And, she used the online grammar checker, which also reviewed her work for plagiarism.

Even though she felt confident looking for studies, some issues arose. She had sought help from the writing center tutor regarding placement of the studies in her paper. She had also had some initial struggles to find studies, and had invested an entire day just finding one suitable study. While she had previously felt comfortable identifying empirical studies from other academic source types, she ran into a problem with her second study, saying, "I'm kind of worried about my second one." She continued, "In the abstract it said...like about content analysis. I thought it might be okay cause it said it's a content analysis." She felt uncertain that the study was empirical. For other concepts, she could not find studies at all.

Assignment two assessment. Vivien was not sure what her score would be, saying, "I just hope this time can be better than last time." Given her friend's belief that Vivien would receive a higher score on assignment two, along with the other the course students, Vivien had "No guess" for her score, explaining, "Cause it is compared to other students. This time,

if they can do a better job, that means I will get a lower score. Hopefully not.” She explained further why she felt unsure as to what her score would be:

This time I explain my definitions, and further explained my analysis part, but I’m kind of worried about research cause it’s kind of, like, tricky. The second research I used in my paper – I don’t know whether TAs will actually Google the article – like, if it’s empirical or not. If it doesn’t qualify the criteria, it might be a problem.

When asked what kinds of comments she anticipated, she replied, “It’s like still reasoning part. I know I want to say a lot of things, but actually I didn’t reflect my thinking on my paper well, so they might be, like, ‘Explain some of the things.’” Even though she had put significantly more time and thought into assignment two, she was not entirely satisfied with her work.

Vivien’s Evaluation of Resources and Strategies. For Vivien, areas of uncertainty easily became areas of confidence when she sought help, which she was generally able to understand and integrate. She had sought help from her TA, her American friend, and the writing center tutor. In many cases, what began as uncertainty transitioned into confident thinking. She understood the advice she received, and integrated it. She also exhibited instances of security in her own judgments, as when selecting among studies, or making changes to the concepts she planned to write about. Thus, she was simultaneously self-reliant and sought guidance from others when uncertain. When thinking on her own, she leaned towards sophisticated choices and interpretations; yet, she was often aware of her own shortcomings, which led her to seek targeted input from others. The course reaffirmed her knowledge of APA and recognizing empirical studies, and added to what she had already known about both. She also came to see the writing center as a useful resource, rather than a

plagiaristic threat. And, she had learned to heed the advice of her friends, whom had warned her about over-enrolling in courses with heavy writing requirements. Despite these challenges, she discussed ways in which she developed further as a writer.

She considered what she had learned from her concurrent enrollment in the course and FYC, and how her writing experiences affected her future writing in the major (if she gained admission), and elsewhere at the university. Based on her work across assignment one and assignment two, and her experiences writing more than one paper at a time, she had definitely grasped the importance of starting early, revising, and facing her tendency toward laziness. Importantly, she learned more about what academic writing was, and not to underestimate writing in disciplinary courses. Specifically, she discussed what she had learned about logic, argumentation, and the process of writing. She tied logic to analysis:

Logic is really important. You cannot just say something. You have to explain why is it. Usually, when I am writing, I can do good in the what and how part. Sometimes, I just cannot get to the why part, or I cannot explain enough for my why part, so that's what I really need to focus on – like, to make sense.

Although Vivien was learning more about analysis and the logic she described above in FYC, her experiences in the course also highlighted the importance of these skills, and her TA's feedback on assignment one had indicated the same. Furthermore, her experience in both courses had led to an epiphany about writing thesis statements, which she initially underestimated. She traced this realization:

I feel like most of my arguments are vague and they are not as strong. I just need to find a way to make my argument more argumentative and more strong cause like I had trouble finding thesis, but when I actually write – after I write my whole paper, I

can know what I talked about and I can use that as a clue to find that thesis and come back and write a thesis.

While she had always doubted the strength of her thesis and struggled to write one, Vivien realized she could locate a thesis in her own writing, after her draft was finished. This would benefit her work because “I thought like thesis can make things more clear and make your paper stronger.” Finally, she thought about how outlining could benefit the formation of a thesis, saying, “I should outline better, like, in the future. Like, if I have a good outline, I will know what I’m gonna talk about in my body paragraphs, so I can just write my thesis at the beginning.” This statement again reflected her realization that a thesis statement could arise directly from her own ideas – particularly when they were well articulated ideas.

Vivien’s Self-Evaluation at the Course’s End. While Vivien had learned things about academic writing that she could apply on her own, she also discussed how she would seek help in future writing tasks. She thought she should change the way she made use the writing center. As with assignment two, she believed it would be most helpful to “go after I have more matured draft.” Otherwise, “If I just go with my, like, rough draft, they will criticize more on the thinking part – especially with the course. A lot of times they don’t know what this the writing centers is about. They will actually lead you into, like, a wrong direction,” without a more complete draft. However, her experience with assignment two made her realize that “If you know what you want to talk about, they will help you with making your arguments more...make your analysis better.” Having clearer ideas meant she would receive better help. She planned to continue asking her American friend to help her with her grammar, saying, “She knows what kind of things is awkward to American readers so that might help me to identify some kind of awkward sentences I use.” Based upon her

experiences working with the professor, she felt comfortable continuing this because “She’s been really helpful.” And, so was the TA, but in an additional way. “I feel like sometimes it’s the TAs who actually grades your paper, so you just need to ask what they want from your paper and write your paper according to their expectation. That will help you to get a higher grade.” Vivien realized that not only could the TA help to clarify and refine her ideas, but that the TA could also give her an advantage in a department that used comparative grading in pre-major courses. Finally, as with the writing center, she knew it was best to take a full draft when meeting with the professor and TA.

She saw the usefulness of writing the papers, and studying in the major, given her interest in advertising. “I really want to focus on the advertisement direction, so the second paper is really helpful.” She continued, “If I wanna do anything related to the advertisement, I have to understand it well. By reading, like, all of the researches I found, I actually found some interesting things, so maybe I can focus on those studies later.” She liked how the second writing assignment helped to deepen her understanding of a field she was interested in working in. Still, she could not be certain of gaining access to the major, saying, “If I can’t get into my major, that’s another thing.” Thus, although she had not yet sought help for assignment one, or received her score for assignment two, she still planned to meet with her TA, even after the course had ended, saying, “Even though I already turned in my second paper, I still need to know, like, how I can improve – like, for my future process.” She explained that she needed to understand her overall scores, in order to continue her growth as a writer. While she had learned from both assignments and worked harder on assignment two, the ambiguity of the comparative grading system made it difficult to know what lie ahead.

Narrative of Yilin

English Academic Writing in China. Because Yilin had attended an international high school in China and a two-week summer institute in the U.S., she had prior experiences with academic English writing as taught by American teachers. She was enrolled in EAP (English for Academic Purposes). She recalled, “It’s a writing the writing centers – and he always – the teacher always taught us to write some papers. And, he also taught me how to write MLA format.” She felt this course helped her prepare for English academic writing, saying, “The foreign teacher in my high school always ask to read some articles and the newspapers – New York Times – and to prepare for writing academic essays. However, she struggled, adding, “but, sometimes it’s hard for me.” Additionally, her EAP teacher suggested she watch an English channel broadcast at her high school. Here again, she struggled, saying, “sometimes they speak so fast and I cannot [understand].” She distinguished the EAP course from the exams she also needed English academic writing for, saying, “I think it’s a little different from writing TOEFL essays.” This led to her conceptualization of English academic writing. “In TOEFL essays, I can write everything I want and even some things I’m not sure, but in academic writing, I have to have some evidence to support my ideas, not just my opinion, my thoughts, my feelings.” Furthermore, she continued, “I think academic writing is harder.” She also had experience with disciplinary writing in her economics and psychology classes, albeit these writing tasks were more limited than the kinds she would encounter at the university. Of these classes, she said, “Other the writing centers did not focus on writing too much but we still will write something.” In the summer institute, she took an American history the writing centers where

she learned how to “write some paragraph, and the teacher taught us how to paraphrase some article.”

She generally relied upon her Chinese English teachers for help with writing, despite having a native-speaking EAP instructor. She rationalized, “So they can help us because we all talk – speak in Chinese - so mistakes and some understanding can face-to-face to speak out.” She explained her apprehension about asking the American teacher for help with her writing:

There are several reasons: first of all, there are more Chinese English teachers than foreign teachers so we can have more time with them, the second one is when I talk to my foreign teachers, some – because of the language – my level of English, I cannot say some of my feelings in English, so sometimes they cannot understand me, understand what I want to say, and, the third one is the total difference. Some ideas foreign teachers cannot understand. Maybe Chinese people can understand my thoughts.

In addition to the greater prevalence of non-native speakers of English, Yilin revealed that she felt more comfortable discussing her ideas with - and being understood by – non-native speakers.

Yilin described other influences upon her preparation for English academic writing, and her struggle to feel adequately prepared for university writing. Based on her experiences, she found, “I think reading over novels is less helpful. Maybe reading novels is good for my English skills, but it’s not good for writing academic papers.” However, she liked reading the New York Times, which her EAP teacher required because “You can see it’s real different – academic writing and the other styles of writing.” For Yilin, this meant, “Sometimes, I can

use some words from them,” helping her to build an academic vocabulary. Still, she did not yet feel she could integrate these words into her writing, saying, “It’s too academic.” While Yilin had experience with English academic writing, she was more comfortable with Chinese writing, saying, “I like writing in Chinese, but English is challenging for me.” This disposition arose from her high school preparations, which she perceived as limited. She explained, “We need have AP exams, so when we learn the English, we focus on TOEFL test and the SAT test - not so much focus on academic writing.” Thus, as her conceptualization of English academic writing exhibited, most of her high school time writing in English focused upon obtaining high exam scores, rather than preparing her for university writing.

Other English Academic Writing Experiences at the University. She continued to gain experience with English academic writing at the university via ESL courses into which her exam scores had placed her. She described how she felt upon experiencing academic writing at the university, saying, “At [the university], I begin to write in academic essays.” She also described her feelings about her first ESL writing course at the university, saying, “I think it’s not so hard for me to adapt to the classes because I have already took the English academic writing in high school. So, unlike other students, I can know how to write academic writing and some MLA format and APA format. I know all of them.” She felt comfortable with the material covered in the first ESL writing course. Students used MLA format in three essays: the first focused on political correctness, the second focused on food, and the third involved interviewing classmates about their experiences in the U.S. However, the course was not entirely the same as her high school experience. She reported, “I need to read a lot of thoughts – articles. This maybe is a difference because in high school, we just need to read two or three articles, but in [the university], maybe I need to read some books.” She

continued, “Maybe sometimes need to read six articles and some of them are very long, unlike in high school.” Reading selections were also different. “The [high school] teachers always ask me to read two articles, and we can not chose this article by ourselves. The teachers ask me to read something.” However, “In [the university], we need to choose articles by ourselves.” Not only was the length of university readings more substantial, but she also had to take more accountability in selecting readings by conducting research and locating useful readings on her own. In fact, the final (third) essay required a series of reading logs leading up to submission.

During the time of data collection, Yilin was enrolled in her second ESL course, and they had already written their first five-page research paper – this time using APA style, which was new to her. Students learned more about how to quote and paraphrase via direct instruction and the writing centers readings. She described the other paper guidelines, saying, “There are six topics the professor ask me to choose, and I choose one about my personal experience because before we do this paper, we need to read five articles and they have all different topics.” She continued, “My topic is about my family because the article I read before - one is about family. I wrote about my grandparents.” However, she again questioned whether this was academic writing, stating, “I don’t think it’s academic writing, maybe? Just like TOEFL essays.” Because the assignment invited personal opinion and experience, it felt more like the prompts exam writing; thus, she found it less akin to academic writing, particularly because the assignment did not require research. As Yilin described her writing process, “Because the topic is something about your important people in your life, so I describe my grandparents. I do not need to any research, or quotation, or citation.” This assignment mirrored the use of personal experiences she associated with non-academic

writing in English in high school. Finally, she was pleased to learn some grammar in this second ESL course because she admitted, “I’m really weak at grammar,” and liked that this course required weekly visits to the writing center.

She also enrolled in a supplemental ESL course the university offered, due to increases in the international student population, and limited space in the traditional ESL courses. In ESL Alternative, Yilin recalled, “We need to write a paper every week about the topics the professor gave me.” This culminated in about six short papers of around 500 words apiece, again written in APA style. However, there was a final paper, which Yilin describe as “most academic one and longest one. It’s about the anything we want to choose.” So, Yilin chose LGBT people in the U.S. The paper was preceded by a presentation, and research, whereby Yilin reported, “I read about more than five books, two articles to write this paper.”

Although she had a habit of soliciting the help of her Chinese English teachers when running into writing problems in high school, these resources were not available at the university, so she instead developed a habit of turning to the writing center and friends. Yilin discussed how she sought writing help for the two ESL courses and ESL Alternative. For the ESL courses, she reported, “Because I’m enrolled in [ESL], we have to go to the writing center every week. And the tutors in the writing center always suggest me to do some events.” She had made use of both the required tutoring and scheduled events offered by the writing center, believing, “I think it’s very helpful.” She also relied upon a Taiwanese friend, Yumeng, saying, “She have been [in the U.S.] for six years. She is helpful and she can help me to make my paper better.” Despite her Yumeng’s status as a freshman whom had never been in the course, Yilin still trusted her for writing advice because “She is really good at writing essays and she’s organization is very good.” This friend played an important

supplemental role to Yilin's acquisition of English academic writing because she recalled, "The teacher didn't taught me how to organize the essay, but during we writing many essays, I learning by myself and especially from my friends." Yilin was discussing her cumulative understanding of organization, based upon gaining writing experiences and asking her Taiwanese friend for help. In discussing her again later in our interviews, she clarified, "And she was the person I mention before. She is really good at writing essays and she's organization is very good." Though she had also been an international student, Yilin believed, "She is not international student, I think. She is American now." Yilin's use of this friend focused on improving her understanding of the organization of academic writing and grammar, instead of content or help with disciplinary writing. Regardless of Yumeng's actual citizenship status, Yilin relied upon this friend because she certainly had more U.S. experiences than Yilin, but – importantly – she could relate to Yilin's own experiences and could share wisdom with her.

In sum, while her ESL courses provided useful instruction in aspects of academic writing and experiences that helped her understanding of academic writing, she reported that the writing tasks did not feel academic. Still, she had not reporting struggling with any of these assignments prior to the course, and had felt that the readings were clear, and that her purpose for writing was also clear. Instructors had helped her navigate the reading and writing process by providing clear instructions and limited choices, as with providing readings for reference in the writing assignment. While she felt she had always struggled with English grammar, she had gained some awareness of English academic writing, as with cohesion, incorporating evidence, and analysis, and she had learned how to prepare by

outlining and seeking help. Furthermore, she had taken an introductory library course that oriented her to locating research.

Self-Evaluation of Writing Ability. Yilin's experiences in English academic writing assisted her with developing confidence, but she mostly felt unsure of herself. For example, while she felt confident in English writing for exams, her confidence faltered when faced with what she characterized as academic writing situations. Further, while she readily distinguished academic writing assignments from those that felt less academic, and characterized them by the sorts of tasks contained by the prompt, by contrast, she worried about her ability to express herself in English, saying, "Cause I think I am international student so maybe I will make some...just common mistakes an American writer never made." In China, she had a preference for seeking the help of her Chinese instructors, and, in the university, she continued to worry about her grammar and her ability to construct meanings that a native speaker would understand. "Sometimes I want to express some ideas, but I cannot write them in English, so maybe the readers cannot understand my thoughts...because of some misunderstandings," she said. She was sensitive of her non-native speaker status when writing in English for an English-speaking audience, and worried about confusing the reader. She had expressed that she preferred writing in Chinese because of the difficulty of writing in English. Therefore, she reported, "I have write the paper in Chinese, then I need to translate in English." This often led to a series of revisions whereby she recalled, "And I keep changing the grammars, vocabularies, and I want to make sure the audience – no, the TA -can understand my ideas." One issue related to reading comprehension and incorporating readings into writing. "I think reading articles and understand what they talk about is very easy, but it's hard to make the conclusion and think

about something from those articles and write them in my own words.” She repeated, “It’s hard. Maybe in Chinese I can do it, but in English it’s so difficult.” One reason why she could not practice the academic diction found in the New York Times articles she liked was because “Some vocabulary is hard and I cannot distinguish which word is academic or which word is informal,” thus limiting her confidence in being able to use words learned elsewhere. While she was able to recognize more sophisticated forms of writing in English, she felt less able to emulate them. These self-perceptions of her ability to write in academic English reappeared when she encountered the writing assignments in the course.

Writing in the Social Science Course. Though she had little knowledge of the writing assignments in the course, Yilin felt the assignments in the course were unquestionably academic. She described her prior knowledge of the course’s writing, saying, “Because I saw the communication course is writing requirement that satisfies the requirement, but I am not sure what kind of writing it will be.” However, friends told her more because, “Some friends of my friends – they tell me the course was very hard, very difficult, especially for international student.” She surmised, “So, I guess the paper will be very hard.” Her opinion was partly based off of the actions of her friends’ friends whom had “dropped the the writing centers - before writing paper.” However, while these students were not declaring the major, Yilin was. She explained her reaction, saying, “At that time, I was scared, but I have no choice because I am enrolled in pre- major.” She enrolled anyhow, with no friends in the course, save for another international student she briefly connected with, but whom did not play a very significant role in her course experience. The nature of writing in the course became clearer as the course got underway. As she said, the writing assignments

were “different from other paper I had wrote before,” mainly because she perceived them to be more academic, and more challenging.

Assignment one expectations. From the start of assignment one, Yilin ran into challenges. As she said, “When I first see the assignment, I think I have some misunderstandings.” Yilin came to realize she misconstrued the elements of analysis for assignment one. “I found out it should be some usage, not only the sentence or the action.” The former represented the required concepts (or the “usage”) students were to analyze in the assigned T.V. episode, whereas the latter were Yilin’s misinterpretations of the assignment’s explicit criteria for analyzing the episode. In discussing how she came to this discovery, she relayed “Because I see there is for some examples,” which were listed in a later section of the prompt. She came to realize she needed to discuss four concepts observable in her chosen scene, that she would need to understand them in order to write about them, and that she needed to provide evidence, or logic, for these choices. She also listed APA, grammar, and making connections as key parts of the prompt. After resolving this misunderstanding, she believed “the assignment wants me to analysis characters and sentence and actions, and why they do such things, why they say such sentence and how these things make the conversation continued.” Here, she discussed further the importance of analysis, this time focusing on communicative effects, or what she called conversation continuation.

In addition to conversation continuation, she discussed other aspects of the assignment that she felt were implied by the prompt. She explained conversation continuation further:

Cause it's communication. I think communication means we need to communicate with each other and this usage need to help us to continue the communication. I didn't see any...yea. So, did I understand this assignment right or I misunderstand it?

This was one of a handful of instances during data collection where Yilin sought confirmation of her interpretations and decision-making. She elaborated on what conversation continuation meant, in light of her understanding and the scene she had chosen. "I want to organize the essay by time – it means I describe the situation I wrote by times. For example, I first analysis the first sentence of the character, then the middle story in the situation, and the final step is scene," she recalled. She also explained why she thought this was an important skill to emphasize, saying, "When we communicate with others, we need to respond to each other, give others feedback. So we need to know the logic – know the content of the conversation." In turn, this meant, "So, I think it should be one – first thing and the second – the first thing is leads to the second thing and the second thing leads to the third thing." Conversation continuation was simply the timing, or chronology, of the conversations Yilin observed in the scene. Beyond that, she felt organization was important to attend to, and again questioned her ability to understand the T.V. episode, as she knew this comprehension was important.

She also discussed what she perceived as main grading criteria. She believed, "I just think both knowledge from the lecture and book is most important thing." Aside from this, she prioritized, "Grammar. Vocabulary." However, she elaborated that it was "General English" vocabulary, and not course vocabulary.

Assignment one process. From the start, Yilin characterized the writing in the course as "different" than her past experiences with English academic writing. Assignment one

amplified this impression, and she described why it had nothing in common with her prior experiences at the university:

First, it should be academic, I think. The second reason is I don't have any articles to get as a resource. I need to get the information from watching by myself. And also maybe in other academic writings, I have some articles and I need to get some information from it, but I know the topic sentence of the article and also my ideas. But, in this essay, I just can guess what the – I cannot know exactly something – I don't know how to say it – I just – I need to do everything by myself. So, when I writing it, I become nervous and confused.

Whereas Yilin appreciated having more academic writing in the course, she felt more comfortable writing from resources that explained the content to be analyzed. In these cases, she could paraphrase or quote sources to create her own essays. the course's first assignment was nothing like these prior assignments, and it led to an uncomfortable feeling of confusion.

Because of her initial challenges in comprehending the assignment, Yilin worried about further issues with executing what was expected of her, which led to her re-watching the assigned episode and writing several outlines. She had begun her process one week before the paper was due. She was careful in watching the assigned episode “three times,” and her chosen scene, “more than five times.” From there, she began observing the scene for course concepts, but ran into confusion:

Before I wrote the paper, I see the TV show for several times. I think I have different ideas, and when I first see the one of sentence of the character, I think it may be one [concept] and when I second to see the scene, I think it's not the issue. So, sometimes

I'm confused about their sentence. So, I change my ideas during my several times of watching them.

Thus, from the start of her process, she was unsure of the ideas she was selecting, and whether or not the scene accurately reflected the concepts. She had outlined three times. She described the first as “wrong because I had two sentence and two actions,” which reflected her initial misunderstanding of the prompt. As she said, “I realized I made some mistake. I need to find [two concepts] and two [other concepts].” For the second, she had better comprehended the prompt because she had referenced the examples included on the prompt. Therefore, she reported, “So, I watch the show – the scene – and write down all the sentence of the characters and then analysis.” From here, she wrote down the first set of concepts she had observed. “And then I watch the scene for several times to watch their actions and I choose the [second set of concepts].” Still, she felt her second outline reflected less effective choices, saying, “The second outline is I just randomly choose two [concepts] and [two other concepts]. Finally, I found I have nothing to write.” This led to the third outline, whereby she changed most of the concepts from her second outline, instead focusing on concepts that had more examples in the scene. She explained the logic of her choices, saying, “Because I see the scene for several times, I think of these things occurred many times than other scenes. The scenes I wrote happened the most the time than other scenes.” She had chosen all of the concepts based upon frequency of appearance, adding, “Because I can write more things.” At this point, she was able to add more elaboration to her third outline, whereby she identified and analyzed concepts. She clarified, “I need to say why [the character] did such things, and maybe I can make another example to let audience to know what exactly meaning of [the concept].”

From this third outline, she began writing. There were about two drafts, whereby she stated, “I think the most difference is about organization.” She elaborated, “In the first draft, I just write everything I thought without the logic of what I think. For example, I just write so I talk about the first scene [concept] because here is a sentence about this example.”

Yilin had also preexisting concerns that a native-speaking TA would not understand her writing, so she made writing choices accordingly. She used headings to denote the contents of her work, explaining, “I think I wrote like this style, not because it’s important. Just because it’s easy for me to write. And, it will come more clear because if I wrote the [first two concepts] and the [remaining two concepts] in the same paragraph, it will be confused.” She hoped the headings helped her connect the paragraphs without confusing the TA.

Yilin’s Taiwanese friend, Yumeng, provided help on assignment one, even though her friend had never taken the course. Yilin recalled that her Taiwanese friend’s knowledge of organization influenced her writing process for assignment one. Though she did not seek Yumeng’s help directly with organization, she recalled organizational principles her friend had taught her, and felt she was able to successfully deploy them on her own with assignment one. However, she did seek direct help with grammar. She reported, “I asked my friend - she live in the U.S. for several years - to check my papers” for help with grammar.

In addition to her Taiwanese friend, Yilin briefly sought the help of her roommate. When watching the episode, she struggled to comprehend the dialogue. She explained, “I need to write down all the sentence the characters say, and I’m a poor listener, so maybe one sentence I missed and she helped me to write down.” Yilin had difficulty following

broadcasted English conversations in the same way she had when watching the English channel in high school.

Self-evaluation of assignment one. In high school, Yilin preferred to seek help from non-native speaking instructors because of concerns over being misunderstood; however, at the university, she only had native-speaking instructors. She asked her TA for help, saying, “I sent two email to my TA because first I’m confused about the assignment and she answers my questions.” Still, they did not meet in person, and she did not contact the professor for help, saying, “I think each section have different topics, so the professor don’t know about the TV shows.” Even though the professor had written the assignment, Yilin seemed less aware of this and had questions about not only the prompt, but also the assigned episode. Yilin had not only expressed concerns about her writing being unclear for the TA, but she also worried over her comprehension of what was expected in assignment one.

Yilin had mixed feelings when she turned in assignment one. She felt sure she understood the content of her chosen scene, saying, “Because I watch the scene for so many times, I think I have totally understanding about what they doing. I know the meaning of why they say the sentence or how they continue the conversation.” She also felt confident about APA, stating, “I know how to write it”. Despite this confidence, she was unsure about her grammar and the connections among her ideas. She said, “Grammar always be my biggest problem,” thus, she had her friend review assignment one. She described her secondary problem, saying, “And, I think it’s connection or transition.” To overcome transitional issues, she reported, “I just did the headings...I use these titles to connect the paragraphs.” She sought to make her ideas more comprehensible to a native speaker, and to follow the edicts of the assignment. She explained, “In any essays I wrote before, anything I wrote should be

connected, but in this essay I think it's hard to connect these paragraphs. I even talked totally different things in two paragraphs. How can I connect them?" She felt forced to discuss different concepts in the same paragraph, and had hoped headings would resolve concerns about clarity.

Some of her writing choices reflected greater confidence, which were sometimes the result of her interpretation of the assignment's implicit requirements. For example, she had thought it best to focus her ideas on conversation continuation, and had developed a logic for this choice that was grounded in the scene she analyzed, in addition to her unique interpretation of the assignment. She did not seek instructor or peer confirmation for this choice, and seemed to be sure it was logical, until I asked her to talk about it in retrospect. At that point, she questioned the adequacy of this choice. She had also made organizational choices that likely reflected the skills she believed she already possessed. These included headings and the deliberate positioning of the various concepts, so her ideas could be more clearly understood. Also, she determined it was best to choose concepts that appeared with the greatest frequency, again not seeking outside input. Many of her actions were based upon what she believed were implicitly required criteria. While she had realized her misinterpretation of the explicit criteria, she seemed to feel sure enough about the implicit criteria to not seek help. However, while these choices might have resulted in apparent confidence, they were often motivated by an underlying insecurity. Thus, her insecurities led her to make choices that reduced feelings of anxiety.

However, other writing choices traced persistent insecurity. She was keenly aware of how different – or how much more academic – the assignment was than those that preceded it, and felt nervous when writing. She reported that she did not like the writing process for

assignment one. While she felt confident in her ability to outline, as she had learned this in her ESL courses at the university, she had repeatedly outlined to not just refine her ideas, but because she had misunderstood the assignment, and doubted her decision-making. She had also repetitively watched the show because she was unsure of her scene comprehension, and she asked her roommate to verify what characters were saying.

Assignment one assessment. The TA's feedback clarified Yilin's doubts, and pointed to other areas of weakness. For example, her initial assignment misinterpretation gave rise to other doubts, which were confirmed by her TA's feedback. Yilin stated, "I think I have some misunderstanding about the knowledge from the lecture." Feedback from her TA confirmed this. At the time of our interview, she was still confused about a concept the TA critiqued in her paper. After I explained it and she finally understood it, she surmised, "No, I didn't understand. I just think some word before the thing when you talk." Yilin had a broader assumption of the definition, which made her application inaccurate. Furthermore, while she had thought about transitioning between separate ideas at the sentence-level, she failed to connect her ideas as a cohesive whole. She recalled the TA's feedback:

I forgot to tie the everything together, and I did not understand what's the meaning of the tied together. I even ignored it from my assignment cause I just see the title 'tie together.' I just think we need to tie this paper together.

Yilin explained that she misunderstood 'tie together' as stapling the pages of the assignment, leading her to underestimate the significance of this requirement. Finally, Yilin responded to aspects of her paper that the TA liked, saying, "Uh...I don't see that." Much of her experience with assignment one confirmed - and expanded upon - doubts she already had.

Her score of a 39 was slightly above the average of 38 for the course. Still, she felt “very bad” about it, saying, “It’s not a good score.” She believed a 40 would have been a good score because “39 and 40 is totally different.” She elaborated, “I don’t know how to describe it, but just like the feeling about the B+ and A- - the difference.” Though the numerical score had no grade equivalent until the end of the course, the subtle numerical difference was significant for Yilin. Even though she could not identify things the TA had liked, Yilin has positive responses to her feedback, saying, “I think the comments is good, and I really did not do a good work so...I can know something I did not understand, and she also told me how to improve the essay.” Save for a few unclear comments she asked me to clarify, Yilin seemed to mostly understand the feedback, and embraced it as a means for improvement on assignment two. Still, though she wanted a higher score, she felt it was a reasonable enough, given the comparative grading system:

Maybe I think the score should be higher, but I know cause it’s blind. When you score the papers, you are blind. So, compared with other native speakers’ papers, I think maybe the score is fine.

Yilin felt she had performed well enough, given she was a non-native speaker. She explained, “I think they don’t have some confusion, which I have.” Specifically:

First, the assignment. I think they can understand immediately. And, the second one is all the T.V. show - they do not need to see several times. I don’t – maybe they can just for one time or two times, and they can understand it. The third one is about [the concept I misunderstood]. Maybe it’s common sense for them.

Yilin presumed native speakers had an easier time with assignment one, mostly because their native-speaking status would allow greater assignment, conceptual, and conversational comprehension.

Given her experiences with assignment one, she thought forward to assignment two. “I think I should do more work on papers, especially for the paper two.” She continued, “I will put more effect on paper two because I think I just – I did not work on too much on paper one.” She seemed to be specifying seeking outside help, as with her statements that, “Maybe I need to go to the [writing center], and ask the professor about the knowledge from her lecture. I need to make sure I understand everything.” She explained, “I really need to read the textbook and ask professors about the knowledge.” While she had not thought the professor would be her best resource for the assignment one prompt or the contents of the assigned T.V. episode, her experiences with assignment one changed her thinking. Even though she had consulted with her friend about grammar, she thought further about resources that could help her, saying, “Maybe I can go to [the writing center] and they can improve my writing skills cause I perform some grammar mistakes.” Nonetheless, she again planned to ask her friend to review assignment two, and intended to seek out her TA.

Assignment two expectations. Yilin compared assignments one and two in the course, and contrasted both with other types of writing she had done elsewhere. Yilin found similarities across assignment one and assignment two:

Both paper I need to watch some video and uh understand them by myself, not someone give my idea. Such I need to know – I need to say the ad effective or ineffective by myself. No one told me I need to write it is effective.

As a whole, she found the course assignments to be very similar to each other. However, she felt they were different because “in [assignment two], I need to read some articles, do some research.” This reminded her of other writing assignments she had at the university. “I think [assignment two] is more similar than [assignment one] to other papers because this paper I do the research, and in other papers, I do research and then use their ideas to support my ideas.” Thus, the first assignment did not require outside research, but the second did, and this was a familiar task for Yilin.

Yilin provided a succinct description of the purpose of assignment two, seeming to better grasp the assignment’s requirements:

The paper asking me to first watch the advertisement, and then I need to analysis three important [concepts] of the ad, and the three important [concepts] should be learned in the lecture. I understand the purpose of the paper should analysis the effectiveness of the ad.

She believed analysis was important, and she understood the specification of using outside research, or empirical studies, to support her own claims about the concepts in the ad. She described the purpose of the research as, “We need to – according to this research paper - need to get more evidence or support to support my idea.” Yilin also knew this connection should be clear, as she had struggled with connections in assignment one. Furthermore, she understood what empirical studies looked like, saying, “The TA told me this kind of study has the abstract, introduction, results – you know, such things. So, the article have the results and method would be the empirical study.” She correlated the last two aspects as indicators of an empirical study. Additionally, she still believed grammar was important, in addition to

her vocabulary. While the latter was her own interpretation of the assignment's requests, both derived from her sensitivity to being understood by a native speaker.

As an aside to some explicit skills necessary in assignment two, she discussed implicit skills that were important. For example, she believed it would be important for her to seek help, saying "I think the skill to ask the professor or some people to help is very important cause last paper I did not get a good grade because I misunderstand some knowledge. So, this time I went to Professor Mullin to ask some questions, make sure I actually understand the point." The professor helped to clarify lecture content, whereas she also thought she would need to seek help to ensure her understanding of the requirements of the assignment. She believed the main grading criteria to be, "the connection between the knowledge learned in lecture and this ad," and "the depth of my ideas." Again because of her native speaker status, she felt it would be important to understand what Americans thought of the advertisement, in addition to analyzing its effectiveness among representatives of the target audience she claimed. Yilin also felt she needed to make strong choices, as with choosing what she felt would be the better of the two advertisements, and distinguishing between studies.

Assignment two process. Yilin's process for writing began with assignment comprehension. She spent time analyzing it, and sought help for clarifying her impression of the assignment's requirements. This led her to the writing center "to make sure I didn't misunderstand the assignment," she reported. The ESL course she was concurrently taking required her to visit the writing center weekly; she took advantage of this with her the course second assignment, saying, "One time, I just ask them to look at this and uh I told her about my own opinion – own understanding of this instruction, and to ask her to help me to check

and she help me to analysis the instruction.” Yilin reported that her understanding of assignment two remained intact, save for an oversight about including the abstract for each empirical study. In reference to her comprehension of assignment two, she said, “I think it doesn’t change a lot cause she thinks I didn’t misunderstand.”

She then watched the advertisements and began outlining a little over a week before the paper was due. After choosing her ad, she selected three concepts quickly, saying, “I just choose these three features immediately cause I think I just know I need to choose these three.” However, she asked for the input of a few male international student friends. These friends were also Chinese; some were roommates of Yilin, but none were enrolled in the course. She recalled, “When I first watch the ad, ask my friends to decide if they think the ad effective or ineffective. They all say, ‘It is ineffective.’” She continued, “And all of them think this ad is weird and they will never buy this product - because of ad.” Yilin had already been thinking the ad was ineffective like her friends, but she still sought their input, saying “The product is for males, so I only ask for my male friends.” Additionally, she had sought Americans’ input, though less directly. She remembered, “I Google about the ad, and I see American likes it, and surprising American like it.” In laughing about this, she explained she had also referenced Wikipedia and Facebook opinions, saying, “Many people like it. I don’t know why.” While the input of her friends and the general American public helped to inform her thinking, she did not formally use their feedback in her paper.

Unlike assignment one, Yilin felt she had more clarity from the start of assignment two, as reflected by her process of outlining. She discussed how this impacted her outlines, saying, “I think writing outline for this paper is easier than the last one cause this one is clear for me to choose three features so immediately I choose these three features and I didn’t

change them.” Thus, she only had two outlines and one draft of her paper for assignment two. However, she was unsure of the ideas contained in her first outline, saying, “I’m not sure about if they are correct,” so she prepared “about six questions” and met with the professor. Furthermore, while she had also started early writing on her first paper draft, uncertainty led her to meet with the professor instead of continuing to outline or write. Five of the questions sought concept clarification, whereas with the sixth, Yilin wondered, “Can I express my own opinion about the effectiveness in the ad?” even though it was stated in the assignment prompt. The professor provided examples to clarify course concepts, and told Yilin to express her opinion about the effectiveness of the ad.

From meeting with the professor, Yilin then revised to her second outline. She reflected, “I think I have more understanding about my idea, so I change something I wrote in outline one.” The meeting with the professor refined her ideas. She elaborated about one such change, reporting, “For example, in the beginning, I think that [two separate concepts] should be same thing...but after visiting [the professor], I changed.” She continued, “I think they are different [concepts],” as a result of meeting with the professor. Additionally, her conversation with the professor changed her understanding of one concept she had already chosen. As Yilin recalled, “At first, I think the [concept] is easy. It’s just like the audience have the same feeling with the character in the ad, but after visit, I know everything can be similar. For example, same age, same sex, same experience – all can be the similarity with target.” In this instance, Yilin’s meeting with the professor expanded her understanding of a concept she already understood. Finally, while she had gained insight about a concept she was unsure of, the conversation with the professor made her not only understand the concept, but also led to her realization that it was an interesting problem present in her advertisement

– one Yilin had previously overlooked. She explained after the meeting, “I know more about the [concept]. At first, I know [the concept means] there is no connection between the product and the ad...but [the professor] said could also be people misunderstand the product because of the ad,” and, after Yilin thought further about this concept and her ad, she revised her outline to include mention of this additional concept because, as she said, “I notice that my ad have this problem.” In this instance, Yilin’s meeting with the professor made her see something she had not noticed before.

One concept remained somewhat unclear for Yilin, so she tried other means of obtaining understanding, saying, “First, I read my notes and there are some examples, so I can compare the examples in the ad to make sure they are similar. And, the second is I emailed to my TA for some questions. So, finally I Google it.” Of this series of inquiries, she explained, “This knowledge, this point - there are only two sentence the professor gave me. It’s really hard for me to explain them to two paragraph.” Furthermore, she reported, “I didn’t find any articles about this [concept].” Thus, she tried her own means of seeking improved understanding.

During her second outline, she was also searching for empirical studies, which was challenging because it was her first time integrating these in writing. In her prior meeting with the writing center tutor, she received additional help with finding studies, saying, “I think I have some problem to find the article, so the [writing center] give me advice about searching for those articles.” Yilin recalled that the tutor suggested she “change some key words cause I always use ‘the advertisement’...to search the article and she told me maybe I can [try the concept] cause they are something appear in the ad.” Essentially, the tutor advised her to refine the search to focused course terms, rather than more general phrases. As

she began searching for studies, she reported, “I almost find eleven articles. I just download all of them.” However, she felt “They are too much article, [so] I just see their abstract and results – these two part of them.” While this was helpful, she then had to distinguish among them, saying, “Maybe I want to talk about the [concept]...but the article is just mention a little about the [concept], and the most is about [a different concept], so it’s hard to have the same topic with the article.” She detailed how she dealt with this dilemma, reporting, “Finally I get two of them which is most matched to my idea.” After completing the second outline, Yilin narrowed the studies down to two by selecting those that best fit her argument. However, she had hoped for more, saying, “I want to find three article – one article for each [concept], but it’s very hard for me to find the article for [the third concept].” Therefore, she returned to writing her paper.

Yilin returned to writing the paper upon completion of her second and final outline. She talked about having a single draft for her paper saying, “Whole paper [revised]...no. But, part I changed many times.” She described what the changes primarily were, saying, “I think my idea didn’t change, so mostly I change the grammar.” Her outline reflected major changes to her ideas, whereas her draft incorporated more refined ideas. She continued, explaining, “I have already write the Chinese for my idea. So I have write the paper in Chinese, then I need to translate in English. And I keep changing the grammars, vocabularies.” Her feeling that she wanted the TA to understand her ideas motivated this decision. Additionally, she made changes to her argument. She recalled, “Because I find some articles, so my analysis – when I decide if the ad effective or ineffective - I change some conclusion.” Yilin indicated that reviewing empirical studies changed her arguments. Ultimately, Yilin finished the paper a day before it was due, and, though she felt satisfied

with her work, she kept making adjustments to it. Specifically, she stated, “I still keeping change the grammars,” but she left the content alone. She explained, “When I read it, sometimes I always think some sentence is weird, strange for me to understand.” This strangeness was due to her non-native speaker status. She rationalized, “I am international student, so maybe I will make some...just common mistakes as American writer never made.” Yilin’s final adjustments sought written clarity for the TA who would read her work.

Yilin had relied upon friends’ help with assignment two, albeit in a slightly different way than assignment one. Instead of asking her Taiwanese friend for help with grammar, Yilin revised her grammar on her own, and did not seek outside help. She reported that, “I didn’t ask because I know she is busy,” when asked why she did not request help. Further, she did not enlist her roommate’s help with American dialogue as she had done before. However, she had asked her male roommates and other friends to review the ad’s effectiveness, and to gauge her own opinions. While this presented a slight departure from the help she received with assignment one, she still relied upon international student friends, rather than Americans.

This time, Yilin did report making acquaintances with a fellow international student enrolled in the course. She described this student saying, “She don’t know how to find articles. And, she didn’t read academic papers before, so it’s very hard for her to write the research articles – to put them into [the paper].” Yilin did not help her, as they had only just met in lecture.

Self-evaluation of assignment two. Yilin’s misunderstandings with assignment one led her to seek help and validation. In particular, she had stated, “The last time was very confused when I first read this kind of paper.” Thus, the negative experience motivated her to

change her writing process, and to allow more input. With assignment one, she had avoided the professor's input, but she directly sought it with assignment two. And, she continued to work with her TA over email, but benefitted more from her conversation with the professor. While she had wanted help with grammar, due to lingering concerns about her non-native speaker status, help was not available, and she managed on her own. She did, however, revise grammar up until the paper was due, as she did not seem to be entirely comfortable without her friend's feedback. The negative experiences with assignment one may have led to anxiety about assignment two, but Yilin still managed solid comprehension of the new assignment from a much earlier point in her thinking and writing process. She appeared to have learned from her mistakes, and, while she sought input from others, she was still able to navigate the writing assignment with enough confidence to make many choices independent of outside advice. In these instances, Yilin persisted fairly independently, even when others' feedback made her think about something in a new, more expansive way. Others may have brought some idea to her attention, but Yilin was capable in integrating advice she was given. In assignment one, she relied upon others to refine her ideas, but her thinking exhibited enough accuracy that she wrote only one draft, making smaller modifications to ideas she already had.

Yilin exhibited confidence in her decision-making. She reported, "I'm not so nervous anymore." She felt she had gained increased understanding in transitioning assignments, saying, "First paper help me know how to analysis things and connect them with the knowledge I learned." For assignment two, once comprehension concerns were abated, she quickly chose and remained committed to one of two ad choices and three concepts she observed in the ad. In choosing her ad, she reported, "I think the second [ad] - it's more

interesting, and I have more to write about it.” While she had a similar rationale for this choice as with her scene in assignment one, she did not falter. Unlike assignment one, she did not question her selections, and meetings with the professor and writing center helped her confidence. In the meetings, she sought clarification for things she already understood. In some cases – as with meeting with the professor – she needed to expand her thinking. But, unlike before, Yilin’s comprehension of the assignment and course concepts remained intact. Thus, it was no surprise that she also found this paper easier to write, saying, “Because of the past experience, I was not so panicked.” Unlike the international student acquaintance she made in lecture during assignment two, Yilin felt she was prepared for the new challenges of assignment two.

Yilin had also been nervous about a few aspects of assignment one. Despite her improved understanding of the assignment, she felt she had to commit early, saying, ““I need to choose the ad, so I’m not sure maybe if I don’t choose it immediately, maybe I will regret.” She feared that delaying her choices would mean starting all over again. In revising her paper, she reported, “I think my idea has come out, and I just keep the paper looks better.” Aside from grammar, which she had been referring to, she expressed concerns about findings studies, which was why she sought help from the writing center. While she had prior experience with empirical studies, it was less relevant to writing because her high school statistics teacher used empirical studies to illustrate statistical concepts. Yilin had never written empirical studies into a paper assignment, much less used them for argumentative support. With assignment two, she recalled, “I think finding those articles is my biggest problem. It’s really hard to find the article I want. Maybe there is something fit my idea, but I don’t like them so it’s very hard to find exactly I want.” Thus, she had to negotiate her own

process of finding studies that fit her argument well, despite the initial guidance she received from the writing center tutor. While it was an anxious struggle for her, she did not question her final selections or her process of narrowing down the eleven studies she found.

Furthermore, Yilin continued to worry over her non-native speaker status, as with continually correcting grammar, seeking verification from the writing center that the assignment wanted her to form an argument about effectiveness, and researching Americans' attitudes towards the ad. In each of these cases, she seemed to exhibit some degree of confident, but simultaneously self-questioning, behavior. It seemed Yilin did not entirely trust her ideas, which was a possible result of her experience with assignment one.

After turning in assignment two, she had some uncertainties, despite the changes to her overall process, but she also felt confident in some aspects. Due to her concurrent enrollment in an ESL course, she felt confident in her ability to properly cite and integrate the studies in her writing; however, she critiqued her use of the studies, saying, "I need to make more connection with my article and those three [concepts]." Yilin struggled to connect ideas in assignment one also. This time, she said, "I think I did not make some strong connection between the article I found and the three features. The transition is little strange, not natural." Still, she did not use headings to resolve transitional issues, as she had done before, though she considered it. Yilin recalled, "I separate them into two parts: first talking about the three [concepts] and then the second part is about the two articles." However, she rethought this, saying, "But, I think if I did that, it will be more unnatural cause they are talking about the two different part." Finally, she decided, "I put them together. They are more difficult for me [the original way], so I change the other way." In sum, she reported, "I separate the features and each feature with articles." Yilin believed, "I think it will be more

clear.” She also worried about grammar, despite revising it, and comprehension of course content, despite seeking help, stating, “I still worry I understand all the knowledge.”

However, in describing where she felt confident, she said, “I think my analysis from many ways, many sides. I express my own opinions about the ad. I think the ad is ineffective and I guess the strong evidence, I suppose.” She felt she had expressed her argument and had used evidence to effectively support it.

Assignment two assessment. At the time of the last interview, her paper had yet to be scored. Yilin guessed, “I think it should be greater than last one, but I’m not sure. Around 40...maybe more than 40.” Because she had lingering concerns about course comprehension, she worried about similar comments with assignment two. “In last paper, I get some feedback about the lecture knowledge cause I misunderstand some. Maybe this time there are...the same comments about that.” She continued, “And, I didn’t receive some comments about grammar and vocabulary, but I still worried about it.” For Yilin, it was not her TA’s feedback that made her worry about grammar and vocabulary; it was instead her insecurities about being a second language speaker.

Yilin Evaluation of Resources and Strategies. Her experiences across both assignments had led her to reassess her requests for outside help, not only from whom she sought it, but also why. For example, while she had initially questioned the professor’s role in the writing assignments, she at least came to see that course content was a significant aspect of writing the assignments. She thought about future help she might seek with writing assignments, saying, “I think I will use the [writing center]. I think it’s really helpful. And for the professor because professor can help you about the lecture knowledge. And the TA cause

many professors very busy.” She also thought she would continue to ask for help with grammar, as it was a lingering concern.

Yilin’s Self-Evaluation at the Course’s End. Yilin was a pre-major student, uncertain of her future in the major and forthcoming writing assignments on campus. As she said, “If I have grade I want. Maybe I won’t change major.” Writing for the course had been tiring for her, and she wanted to see that her hard work had been worth the effort. At the end of the course, she recollected, “I really like the experience, although I don’t like during writing,” referencing retroactive benefits she saw, but was unable to experience while writing. She explained, laughing, “The process. It’s exhausting.” While she appreciated that the assignments felt more academic than others she had encountered, she found them tiring, reporting, “It’s really hard to start. Not like other paper, I get the topic and I can write it right now.” the course was different. Yilin stated, “I need to do many work,” before writing both assignments. For example, she said she needed to “do research, and ask questions, and meet professors and TAs maybe.” Her enhanced process for assignment two had helped her appreciate the new methods she undertook, but it was a lot of work for her.

Narrative of Cai

English Academic Writing in China. Cai’s first encounter with English academic writing came via the SAT exam and related preparatory courses she took at Chinese language school. As she said, “The only preparation I had was the SAT preparation – the essay writing. So, before my freshman year, that was the only preparation I had had for the English academic writing.” She continued, “My first experience with English academic writing is the time I took SAT test. So, before the test, I have zero experience about English academic writing. So, that was the time that I first learn about English academic writing – when I

prepared for the SAT.” In discussing these classes, she recalled, “They don’t have any assignment for us cause it’s just a short term the writing centers - last for about half month, fifteen days - so we don’t have any actual assignment for us. Just basically instructions on the writing.” Thus, teachers emphasized vocabulary, format, grammar, and diction. Cai reported that teachers wanted students to, “have enough vocabulary to write English academic writing. So [teachers] will also have instructions on about the standard format about the English academic writing, and also the grammar use, and also the word choice.” During these preparatory courses, Cai formed impressions of her strengths and weaknesses, citing vocabulary, critical thinking, and analysis as her main challenges. “I think the first [difficulty] is about vocabulary when I first prepare for the SAT in high school. The second difficulty I think is how to write analysis, and how to critically in English. I think that’s an issue for me during that time.” However, she reported ease with understanding the format. She specified:

The teacher told us that first, you have to write a thesis statement about your essay, and then for the body of the text – in the middle part – you have to like prove your thesis, use some examples from literature and also from historical figures. And, also the last part is writing conclusion – to just write down a conclusion. So I think the format is pretty easy for me.

When she encountered difficulty preparing for the SAT writing portion, she sought help from her high school teachers whom were either Chinese or native English speakers. She did not ask the course instructor for help because she explained that the instructor did not reply to her emails. In reflecting upon how helpful the preparatory course instruction was, she felt she gained most from “How to write a clear thesis statement, and also the standard format - APA

style, the MLA style.” By contrast, she felt she learned less about critical analysis because, “the course just helped me how to prepare for the exam, but not help me in the long-term. For short-term preparation for the test. It is only focused to ace the exam.” Prior to her freshman year at the university, Cai’s experience with English academic writing focused on achieving admittance to an American university.

Other English Academic Writing Experiences at the University. Once enrolled at the university, Cai was reminded of her challenges with analysis, saying, “I think the difference is just the analytical skills is more important here in English academic writing. I think I’ve had more training about it in the U.S., but not in my home country. Her writing experiences at the university resulted in consistent feedback from instructors that questioned her depth of analysis. “They all said that my – I have a clear thesis statement and also the structure is clear – but they all point out that I should have more – focus more on improving my analytical skills during my ac writing.” While she received similar compliments from instructors, she came to question her analytical ability. She explained what instructors meant, saying, “They mean that I have to think deeply about the thesis and the issue that I’m going to write about, but sometimes they said I just focus more on the shallow part, not the deeper into the issue.” Furthermore, through these experiences, Cai became aware of value differences in writing in Chinese versus English:

In my native countries – my teachers, I guess – we always like someone whose writing has – whose word choices has more – how do I say that? – whose language is more beautiful? But in my – when I first took Eng academic writing classes at [the university], my professor told me that it is an academic writing. It’s not a novel writing or an essay. You should focus more on the academic aspect of the writing.

Cai had gained these impressions as a junior who had experiences writing for ESL, first-year composition, and in courses across the curriculum.

Cai described the kinds of writing she encountered at the university when writing across the curriculum. Her first experiences occurred in a Feminist Studies course that required in-the writing centers written essay exams for both the midterm and final. She detailed, “First, they provide us with an issue – the background information about women and also globalization. Then they want us to analyze the issue with what I’ve learned in that the writing centers.” In a second experience in Anthropology during her sophomore year, she had to write a term paper that was “quite long” for a non-writing requirement course. The paper was “about five pages” long:

I think the topic is about the research. The professor asked us to observe in one public setting and observe how people interact with each other and to find out how their cultural backgrounds, I think, affect their interaction w each other. Technically, not a research I think? They told us not to use interview, so it’s not a research I think.

Maybe just an observation log I think.

Cai could not entirely recall the paper assignments goals, but felt it was her second experience with English academic writing at the university. Next, she had a two-page writing assignment in Greek Mythology, another non-writing requirement course. She recalled this assignment more clearly, saying, “First we pick a film, and then we have to link that film to what we have learned in that mythology class. So it’s more about the hero in Greek Mythology and how we associate the hero in the film – the main character.” Finally, she described her current enrollment in an East Asian Studies course, which would require an eight-page term paper, in addition to written exam questions.

Cai had previously taken ESL courses. In her first ESL course, she recalled a course theme, saying, “I remember the professor during that course we talk about the environmental issue, and so all my papers during that quarter were about environmental issues.” The course’s first two papers were 600-700 words apiece, whereas the third was 1000 words. There was also a group presentation. Her next ESL course also required three papers. However, she felt, “That [course] was the introduction to the academic writing. That the writing centers – we also talk about the current issue so the professor picked some current news or issue for us to discuss and then we wrote papers about it.” While this second ESL course also had a theme, Cai believed this course was more reflective of academic writing instruction. She continued to describe this second ESL experience:

During the lecture, the professor talked about academic writing skills a lot, but I think the class focuses more on the discussion part. About the skills, I think we only – I think I only learn about the skills when I heard the feedback from the professor. I think the professor helped me a lot with writing. And we also had a tutor for us in that course.

Cai felt she had learned more about academic writing from her professor’s feedback. She found this helpful, in addition to the course’s assigned tutor from the writing center. “We had to meet her to get the points for the course,” she explained. Despite the mostly indirect means of learning about academic writing, she had realized significant progress in the second ESL course, as with establishing a format and process for writing, saying “It helped me a lot. First, the professor taught us to approach each assignment in an organized process, step-by-step process.” She continued, “ She also taught us about the APA style and also the MLA style – those basic rules for it. And also the reference. I think those are all the things that I learned

from [the second ESL course] because, before that class, I was not so familiar with...how to write a reference in APA style or MLA style. I was so confused before that class about the reference.”

As a junior, she had not only taken her required ESL courses, but had also moved to Academic Writing in her sophomore year after completing the two ESL courses. She described this experience as frustrating, saying, “The professor will assign us a reading before the lecture, so when we came into lecture we just discuss about the reading.” She explained why she felt she had learned less from this instructor:

I think the professor did not talk too much about the academic English writing skills cause we had a reader for that course. So, I learned most of my skills from the reader.

During his lecture, the only thing he did was to discuss the reading with us.

In both the final ESL course and FYC, Cai felt each course covered English academic writing, but that the instruction was less direct. Whether receiving instruction from the instructor’s feedback on her writing or through assigned readings, Cai expressed ways in which she had indirectly learned more about English academic writing. Regarding FYC, she recalled, “That class was pretty hard for us cause grade we got – from the friends I know – we didn’t get a very satisfactory grade. We are not satisfied with the grade. It was pretty difficult.” She had felt bored with the course’s complex theoretical focus on Marxism, saying, “Those kind of Marxist theories - they’re so difficult to understand. Even with an example, I still could not understand.” Her lack of comprehension affected her engagement and grade. “I receive a really low grade in that class. But, the only problem that I think from that class was that I didn’t understand the concepts, so I didn’t write a really great paper. My paper was not good, not clear, in a confusing way.” She continued, “We had to talk about the

Marxist and his ideas. I was totally confused about the whole concept so my paper was just not good.” While she knew she did not understand the course well, she still did not seek help for her writing assignments.

In each course, Cai reported that she relied upon the writing center tutors and her TAs for help. She specified, “I usually go to the [writing center] if there is no time conflict.” She also stated, “I think I relied more on the former instruction and also the university resources – academic learning resources more.” These were the means she had established for navigating assigned writing tasks. Still, motivation affected her requests for help, as with the disengagement she experienced with the FYC assignments. In this case, she explained, “I didn’t go to [the writing center] at that time cause - I don’t know - I just lost interest in that the writing centers. So, I didn’t go to [the writer center] for any help because the topics just were so boring. I don’t think [the writing center] will help me. Maybe they don’t understand the topics well.” Cai had struggled to understand that course’s writing assignments, and assumed the writing center would too. This, coupled with her lack of interest, led her to not seek help, and to instead rely upon herself. Finally, though she felt she had both American and international student friends, she avoided asking either group for help with her writing, saying, “I don’t like to ask for my friends for help. I don’t know – I don’t want them to see my writing. I’m afraid – I’m a little bit shy for them to see my writing. I don’t want them to judge my writing.” Instead, she dealt with her writing on her own, sometimes seeking help from TAs or the writing center, but never from her friends.

Self-Evaluation of Writing Ability. Cai’s efforts to seek help correlated with her confidence; she also discussed her impression of her university writing experiences, and how they reflected beliefs about her own shortcomings and attributes. In general, she continued to

find the same aspects of writing easy as she had upon first learning English academic writing; the same was true for areas of challenge. She found ease with the format, saying, “I think it’s still the basic - like the format and the standard of the English academic writing, and the format is the understandable part,” but described her struggles, saying, “I don’t understand – I think it is still the analysis - how to analyze deeper into my thesis - not just on the outer part...I think I have to improve more on the deeper level of the analysis. So, that’s the part I don’t understand. I think I still need some improvement on that.” She discussed how each course had led her to the same realization, saying, “I don’t just make a conclusion, I also need to delve deeper to think, to provide more in-depth conclusion.” She felt this was generalized across writing in different courses, saying, “All those classes - they do expect me to make a in-depth conclusion.” Despite these challenges, she had developed a systematic approach for navigating writing assignments, and she felt confident in using it. While it had been realized from former instruction, she came to see it as her own method. In addition to relying upon herself, she had developed a habit of seeing teachers as useful writing resources. Finally, her self-evaluation of her writing ability was also connected to motivation. As with her experiences in FYC, she recalled, “Sometimes, I don’t like the topic. I think the reason why I didn’t receive a fairly good grade for my [FYC course] was that the topics were discussed I was not really interested in. I think were pretty boring for me so I didn’t delve deeper into the topic.” When Cai lacked interest in a challenging topic, she did not seek help, and suffered the consequences. However, while these challenging experiences initially seemed to have little consequence on her understanding of English academic writing, she was later able to see their significance when writing in the course.

Writing in the Social Science Course. Before she enrolled in the course to satisfy a GE writing requirement, Cai's friends provided contrasting information about what to expect. "I didn't hear much about the American friends cause they thought this course – the multiple choice exam was hard, but they did not talk too much – they talk nothing about the writing." By contrast, Cai reported, "But my international friends, they talk just about the multiple choice exams and also the writing requirement." While feedback from American student friends seemed to indicate they were less concerned about writing, international student friends were more concerned about writing. She also learned that there were two papers, which her friends described as "not that difficult" and "quite understandable." Her friends explained that the difficulty was not in the assignment, but in the grading process. From these conversations, Cai came to realize, "We have to be very good at writing." Particularly because "The TAs for that course were pretty harsh graders." This feedback made her nervous. She explained, "I was hesitated. I was struggled whether or not I should take this course." Cai critiqued her friends' advice:

I think I am really willing to put my effort into learning this course. I think that won't be a problem cause my other friends, they don't take GE classes seriously. They all just take it for pass/no pass, so they don't care about whether they get a C or B-. So, they think this course is difficult, but I think if I put more effort into it, it won't be too difficult.

Cai proceeded with enrolling in the course because she not only believed she could exert the necessary effort, but she also found it interesting. Her interest in the course was also influenced by the experiences of a friend. She recalled, "One of my friends – she majors in journalism - but she also took [the same] the writing centers from her university. She told me

that it was interesting. I always thought [the topic of this the writing centers] was important part of our life - is a keystone for people's success." Thus, the experiences of this friend had solidified the interest Cai already had. She added, "I think this course is interesting because it tells me how to [relate] with people, but in a more theoretical way, in a more academic way." She decided, "So I still choose to take this the writing centers." Nonetheless, she took her friends' warning about the grading system seriously, and enrolled as pass/no pass. "I still can take it for pass/no pass, so there is no bad influence on my grade or any other thing. I still want to learn about this course." While she had enough motivation and confidence to enroll, she was careful to not let a tough GE course negatively impact her GPA.

Assignment one expectations. Cai discussed the explicit assignment requirements for the first assignment. She included understanding course material, identification of course concepts in the assigned episode, interpretation of human behavior using course concepts, and connecting among different concepts to establish a relationship among them. She felt critical analysis was akin to applying course concepts to the episode. She also discussed the main grading criteria her TA would look for, including, "the depth of analysis in my paper, how I used those course concepts, and how I used the concepts to analyze what I saw in this specific scene – this episode. And also how I used the scene to back up my argument for this paper," as with her thesis statement. In addition to the thesis, Cai stated, "And also I think the writing style she was looking for – the university level and the basic grammar, organization." The grading criteria Cai listed were derivative of the assignment's explicit requirements.

She also discussed her impression of the first assignment's implicit criteria. While she noted "the skill of understanding the lecture" as an explicit skill, she clarified this by saying, "We first have to choose some of the course material that I'm most familiar with." To Cai, it

was not enough to understand the course content; she had to feel confident enough when choosing among ideas, so that her work stood a better chance of a high grade. She expanded in other areas as well; such as when adding detail to her conclusion, as she felt this was necessary “to back up my thesis statement with the evidence from [the episode].” She reasoned that these expansions would make her work clearer for the TA. Cai had also taken steps to ensure she understood course content better when writing. For example, she recalled, “I always added something else that [the professor] said during lecture - not just on her slides – and also wrote something down on my notebook when [the professor] gave an example to explain a certain theory.” In this instance, Cai was discussing how she had taken more detailed notes, rather than simply following the lecture slides as most students would.

The first writing assignment felt similar to assignments she had experienced before because she had been asked to analyze media or other content using course concepts. In addition to the overall clarity of instructions across her former experiences and the first for the course, she added, “There are a lot of similarities such as the depth of analysis that they are looking for. They’re also looking for how I apply this course concept into the real life experience or the TV episode and how I understand the concept...how well do I understand about this concept and how well do I apply to the paper.” Furthermore, she reported, “I don’t recall any differences.” Cai noted that these tasks were reminiscent of earlier assignments at the university. She specified one assignment from her Greek Mythology course. “We have to choose a movie, and then we also have to apply the certain course concept to analyze this movie,” she recalled. She also referenced her difficult experience in Academic Writing where she had received a low grade, saying, “My understanding of those theories that were strange to me, those kind of social science theory - I really learn a lot from this course cause those

social science theory are really vague.” While the course had posed considerable difficulty, in retrospect, Cai realized, “I had practice. I had the experience of being exposed to different social theory about social science.” Finally, she referenced an idea from her last ESL the writing centers, saying, “The professor taught us to approach each assignment in an organized process, step-by-step process.” This was the process Cai adopted as her own because she had integrated it into all subsequent writing experiences since initially learning it freshman year. As she described it, “I use the same approach for all my writing assignment, so that’s the way that my past writing experiences help me with this paper, with this assignment.” Although it had been learned in a previous course, Cai had inferred that it was important in other classes. So, she continued to use it, and to make it her own, which was met with enough success to justify its continued use. The professor had also taught students about citation practices, which were required in the first assignment for the course.

Assignment one process. Her paper writing process felt hastier than she would have preferred, and it was a single-draft process with no time for revision. She recalled, “It was procrastination, I think.” She described her timing, saying, “I started this paper two days before the due date, but I spent four hours the night to finish this paper. So it was in a rush.” However, she countered, “I spent only one night to finish this paper, but I do go from one step to another step to finish this paper.” This was the method for writing Cai had learned, and then adopted as her own. With assignment one, she felt it was one area she had dedicated appropriate time to, despite the rush otherwise. Cai downplayed the role of the outline, even though she recalled, “I wrote this outline a week before the due date.” She continued, saying, “I remember that I finish this outline long before the due date. I remember we have to turn it in at the section so – but I think there might be some minor changes in my actual paper.

There may be some differences between my outline and my paper, but mostly they are the same, I think.” Thus, Cai noncommittally wrote a quick outline for section points, but ended up finding her content useful when she revisited the scene and began writing.

The first steps of her systematic process involved reading the assignment and watching the episode to select a scene. “First I read the assignment and want to go thru every requirement - every the professor has given to us about the requirements and policies.” She reasoned, “I have to understand the assignment really well before I start writing my papers.” Cai specified this important first step further, saying, “I look at this paper assignment from the point one, starting from number one.” With the course, Cai found the assignment’s instructions clear, saying, “I think this kind of requirements help me a lot in writing my paper cause her requirements is not to vague – they are really specific so I know what kind of direction I should choose when I’m writing the paper.” Thus, Cai then proceeded to watch the assigned episode. She watched it in its entirety about five times because, as she recalled, “Choosing the specific scene was also quite difficult for me. She then watched her chosen scene six times. Although Cai knew that application of course content was important, she did not find it easy. She recalled, “When I first watched the episode, I was not quite so sure about how to apply the course material into understanding – into this episode.” She resolved this, saying, “So I just watched the episode again and again to analyze their dialogues, their gestures, and their facial expressions - that I understand some of this clues - and then how to apply the course material into this episode.”

However, while Cai described reading the assignment and selecting her scene as the first steps she took, these steps actually overlapped with her choice of concepts and beginning to write the paper. The first thing she wrote was the introductory paragraph. Next,

Cai simultaneously chose the concepts, and began to write them. However, she was not writing the outline; instead, she was writing actual paragraphs for her paper. In describing her process of reviewing the assignment further, she recounted, “It says I have to identify two [concepts]. So then I watch the [scene] for like five times. Then I decided to use...I decide to choose [the first concept].” While she continued and also chose her second concept, her writing had begun. “So then I’ve started writing about this first [concept].” And, she repeated the writing process for the second concept. Next, she recalled, “When I finished writing about the [the first two concepts], then I go back to the [scene] and I watched it again to identify the [next two concepts].” This next set of choices again resulted in paragraphs of writing for her paper. At this point, she had the body paragraphs of her paper written, so she proceeded to the conclusion, where she ran into uncertainty, but dealt with it independently.

I had a difficulty when writing about the conclusion. I was not so sure how to write my conclusion, but then I start thinking about these [first two concepts] and also the [the next two concepts]. They’re complementary, I think in my thesis statement. So I just – the introduction and conclusion the same I think, but I just wrote more on the conclusion to explain why I think they’re complementary.

While Cai had felt unsure about how to write a conclusion for assignment one, she reasoned that a logical choice was to include more of the same detail she had written in her introduction. Although she had begun writing by crafting an introduction, her thesis remained unclear to her as she wrote the body paragraphs. “When I started writing about the conclusion, that’s when I started realizing what my thesis statement was. I wasn’t so sure of my thesis when I wrote the introduction,” she recalled. So, she expanded in the conclusion.

She had developed this systematic process for writing papers, but did not directly address how it contributed to writing a thesis.

Because Cai felt apprehensive about having friends see her writing, she did not directly seek their help with assignment one.

Self-evaluation of assignment one. As a junior, Cai had several prior writing experiences to draw from, and she exhibited confidence in independent decision-making, writing the first assignment with little outside help. From the start, she selected a scene and concepts without ever validating her choices or understanding of course content through external assistance. Furthermore, she was certain enough in her decisions to begin writing her paper while still making further conceptual choices. This certainty was again reflected in the haste of her outline. She had simply wanted to receive section points, but later realized her ideas were useful. While she had been concerned about procrastinating, she dealt with this by deploying the same systematic process that had previously been effective for her:

Even though I didn't take several days or weeks to finish my paper – the only thing that I did well was I finish this paper in a process...I didn't finish this paper in a rush so that my paper could've ended up in mess, but I think my paper was organized well. So, that's the thing that I was confident about my paper.

In some areas of confidence, as with this one, Cai became confident after tackling an obstacle. Another example was gaining familiarity with social science thinking, as with her difficulty in FYC. Though she felt this was her only strength, she later reconsidered her other strengths, saying, “And, also my analysis of how the course concepts are related to the specific scene.”

Cai was not entirely self-sufficient with assignment one because she did seek support, though more minimally than her insecurities would suggest. She went to see her TA and emailed her. “I had a question about the third part – about tie together the different aspects of my paper. I asked her what does that mean cause I actually thought I was just going to introduce those two [concepts] separately, but I didn’t think about just tie them together.” Cai sought assignment clarification. At the time of their meeting, Cai had only outlined, and the TA reviewed her outline. She described the result of this meeting saying, “She just told me that I should work on my thesis statement. She also said that my thesis statement is vague for my outline.” Interestingly, this issue arose again in the TA’s feedback on assignment one. Additionally, she was apprehensive about APA, and relied upon the professor’s handout, saying, “I don’t usually write in APA style, so...I just check on the document to see if my citation style is correct.” She clarified, “I checked the handout to avoid plagiarism if I didn’t cite them correctly.”

Even though she was very self-reliant, she still faced challenges with assignment one. For many of these challenges, she was again self-reliant. In a few cases, she sought input. Initially, she was not sure how to apply course content to the assigned episode. She resolved this uncertainty, saying, “So, I just watched the episode again and again to analyze their dialogues, their gestures, and their facial expressions that I understand some of this clues and then how to apply the course material into this episode.” Through repeated viewing, Cai was able to more clearly decipher course concepts in the assigned episode, and she was also better equipped to choose her scene. She also had anxiety about incorporating course content, even though she felt confident about citations. “I was afraid that I use too much quotes, even though they are not the direct quotes, but I think some of them I don’t know if I should use

them, use this a lot.” Cai thought she had relied too heavily on course material, but resolved this concern on her own. She reported, “I didn’t really do much before I turn in this paper cause I think that I really need those quotes to back up my argument. But, I did not use the direct quotes – I just paraphrase them in the APA style, so I think that is okay.” She felt that a mixture of direct quotes and paraphrasing would minimize the issue. Finally, she continued to question her thesis statement, as she had always done, saying, “I think that my thesis statement is vague.” However, she did not seek help for improving upon it; instead, she again resorted to her own solutions, saying, “I try to elaborate it more clearly in my conclusion. So, I think that’s the only thing I did to help my TA to understand my thesis statement in my conclusion.” Cai’s resolutions focused on improving her work in the TA’s eyes.

Assignment one assessment. The feedback from Cai’s TA also shaped her self-evaluation with assignment one, and she considered this feedback when discussing plans for assignment two. Post grading, she reported, “The feedback she gave me was I have a quite weak and vague introduction.” She elaborated, “This is the first time that my TA told me that I had a vague introduction. So I think the part I should improve about my writing – the introduction. Have a strong introduction, a strong thesis statement.” She realized her introduction was subpar because she had written it first, based upon the systematic process she used. She reasoned, “That’s why it’s so vague.” This made her think ahead to assignment two, saying, “So I think the next time for my second paper, I should write the intro after I finish all the other points of the paper.” She understood her TA’s feedback, embraced it, and had plans for integrating it into the systematic process she would again deploy for the next assignment. Though she had procrastinated with assignment one, she intended an earlier start with the next assignment because, “I have to look for the published studies for my paper, so I

think I may need some time to write my paper.” Cai had not written any papers that required outside studies.

Though Cai grasped the TA’s feedback, she initially minimized it because of her surprise at receiving a much higher score than expected: 46/50. As she said, “When I saw the score...I didn’t expect that.” Instead, she expected a score in the mid-30s. She explained further:

I finish this paper in just one draft, no revision, and that’s why I was not confident about my paper. Because I heard a lot of students - they just revised their paper - and they went to their TA office hour, and they went to the writing center for help. So, I think I thought I was going to get a lower score.

She did not feel she had spent enough time on her paper, despite using her systematic approach as a means of overcoming issues:

I spent too little time cause I just finished this in four hours. I don’t know how to say that – I just didn’t expect that I would get this score. And so it surprised me. But, I think I would have worked hard for this paper to deserve this score.

Cai compared her work to her peers, and felt that her choice to not seek as much outside input would negatively impact her score. In describing her process of seeking help, Cai instead reported, “No, just myself.” Thus, she barely read the feedback, reporting, “Yea, so that’s why I didn’t read the comments, but I read the part that I need to improve – the introduction – the weak point.” Cai prioritized finding out her score and reading comments focused on how to improve for the second assignment. Still, her further explanations revealed she had considered the comments more than she indicated, and that she was confused about what she had read. “The only thing from her comments that I think was something positive

about my paper is the paragraph that I wrote about [one concept], and the only comments she gave me was ‘Good.’ The other comments she gave me was questions.” Cai did not understand the questions because “Actually, the comments are not so...there aren’t a lot of comments about my paper.” The lack of comments led her to guess, “I think what she means was this is the part I had the most – that I analyzed most effectively.” She continued to interpret the TA’s feedback, saying, “Her last comment was weak and vague intro, and the other things ‘Good job’ otherwise. So, I don’t know what she means by that.” Still, she felt certain enough in her interpretations to not seek correction from the TA. Specifically, she reported that the TA “did correct something about my thesis statement cause I said [the set of concepts] do not conflict with each other, but she pointed out that they can conflict.” Cai felt this introduction was where she lost most of her points, saying, “I think the introduction – the vague introduction – I think that’s the reason why she deducts the points.” Still, she could not fully understand her high score enough to replicate what she had done here in the second assignment.

Actually, I don’t know why I got the higher score, but I think it’s just maybe the organization of my paper is clear, maybe she understands my analysis well...I didn’t analyze the scene in a very confusing way. Maybe she understands it clearly, except the introduction. And maybe my paper just suffused the grading criteria such as the depth of analysis, I think? Cause usually my paper for the other assignments for my other GE classes are usually 88 out of 100 or 86 out of 100.

Cai was not used to receiving such a high score, and was equally surprised at receiving it in a notoriously tough course. She wanted to perform well on the second paper, but, rather than ask the TA to clarify her feedback, Cai was satisfied with her own interpretations.

In making assumptions about her peers, Cai intended to seek more support with the second assignment, in addition to repeating methods she had used with the first assignment. Because her high score on the first assignment was “unexpected,” she reported, “It does give me some pressure for my second assignment.” She continued “To try to keep the score the same...I guess I have to work harder on my second assignment.” This presented a challenge, as she was not certain of her interpretation of the TA’s comments. She revisited her confusion in attempting to replicate the score for the second assignment, saying, “I was hoping she could give some kind of comments about why I did get the score – why did I get the 46. I really want to know about that.” Though she was not entirely certain and she did not seek clarification, she replied, “But, she did give me comments about the improvements I can make on the paper. I think that is helpful.” She decided, “I’m going to the [writing center] for help with my second assignment.” Furthermore, Cai expressed concern about working with empirical studies, and she planned to again seek her TA’s input. “I’m gonna need to talk to her more about my paper.” She explained, “We have to incorporate some kind of published study into the paper, which I’m not so familiar with. So I think I’m gonna go talk to her a lot to clarify some of my confusions about this.” Finally, she described the process she would follow, saying, “I’m still going to use the same approach from my assignment one.” She reiterated that she would “read the assignment first,” and then scan course content to select applicable features for the advertisement. However, this time, she stated, “Then I’m going to write an outline, and then a draft. I’m gonna go see my TA or professor to get some feedback from them about my draft.” Unlike before, Cai intended an earlier start that would allow for revision.

Assignment two expectations. Cai discussed explicit expectations for assignment two. She recalled the importance of identifying and applying course concepts to the assigned advertisement, using outside research, or empirical studies, and establishing connections among these separate requirements. Cai also made brief mentions of her thesis statement, grammar, and APA, but only when discussing her writing process. She described connectedness further, saying, “We have to make a conclusion about both the course concepts and also the features in the advertisement and also the published studies. We have to make a connection among these three.” Furthermore, the purpose was “To actually analyze the effectiveness of those three important features in the conclusion, and also to provide some kind of advice for these kind of advertisement – like how – what they should do to improve their effectiveness, to make the advertisement more persuasive.” Cai felt certain writing skills were emphasized, repeating, “First, the understanding of the course concepts after the midterm. And also...the analytical skills because we have to analyze how effective these features actually help this advertisement to be more persuasive – whether they are helpful or not. And also the critical thinking skills.” She interpreted critical thinking as, “I not only have to make a conclusion about how effective these three features are, but also I need to give some advice to actually think about their effectiveness and give some advice, some improvement they need to make.” Finally, she believed her main grading criteria would be, “How well my understanding of the course concepts and also the three features showcased in the advertisement, and how well I relate them – relate the concepts into the advertisement, and also my arguments, and also my analysis of the effectiveness of those three features.” Cai saw a close fit between the assignment’s key criteria, and assessment.

Providing advice was one of several inferences Cai made that was not directly suggested by the prompt. There were other nuances she extended upon – particularly connections among different requirements. While she knew connectedness among ideas was suggested directly by the prompt, she made deliberate conceptual choices, in order to create connectivity from the start. Also, Cai knew she needed to discuss the target audience, but chose to do this more consistently in her writing so she could enhance connectedness among ideas. Because she emphasized connectedness, her conclusion ended up spanning two paragraphs. Though she had not worked with empirical studies before, she had incorporated outside research in previous writing assignments. She realized she could address only the parts of the empirical studies that best fit her argument, saying, “We have to learn how to select the most helpful outside research for our paper assignment.” She knew it was less likely that a study would be a perfect fit. Finally, she felt her systematic, step-by-step process was an important part of writing the assignment.

Cai considered the second assignment in light of others she had written previously. She first discussed how assignment one was mostly similar to assignment two, saying, “The most obvious difference is that the second assignment requires us to use outside research, so that is the only difference.” These similarities helped her complete the second assignment. She elaborated upon the similarities, saying, “Yes, cause the similarities a lot, such as we have to apply our course concepts to the advertisement, and also we have to analyze how the concepts are applied in the advertisement.” Research came up as another distinction between assignment two and writing she had completed for other courses. Cai recalled, “I don’t usually have paper assignments that require me to use outside research to back up my argument. This the first time that I use outside research.” However, she also noted

similarities between the writing she had done in other courses, reporting, “The assignments usually give me some T.V. episode...and also ask me to analyze the T.V. episode with the course concepts, which are similar to [this course].” She found similarities not only between the first and second assignments, but also between the course and courses that preceded it. “Some of my other classes also ask me to do the same thing – to apply the things we learned in the classes into the real world experience.” Thus, Cai exhibited experience in writing similar types of assignments and in working with research; the distinctions were fewer. Furthermore, she was aware of feedback trends from past assignments, realizing, “I don’t just make a conclusion, I also need to delve deeper to think, to provide more in-depth conclusion.” In prior assignments, she had learned she needed to be more analytical.

Assignment two process. As with assignment one, Cai began with the same “step-by-step” process. “I read the assignment first. I read them carefully.” She began this way to get an understanding of the “basic requirements...like, the format or APA style.” She did this to ensure these smaller elements were not overlooked. In the next step, Cai reported, “I look at the specific assignment I need for the paper.” After checking the basic and more detailed requirements, Cai said, “And then I started watching the advertisement, which I think is the Old Spice advertisement for the shampoo.” Cai did not watch both ads before choosing because, “I watched the Old Spice advertisement before [the TA] posted the ad, so I think I was familiar with this advertisement.” She reasoned, “I know how to write about it, so I just picked the Old Spice.” Thus, rather than consider both, she opted for the advertisement she had already seen. “After watching the advertisement, I chose three important features that I think are – had some connection – had some kind of relations with the course concepts.” In initially choosing concepts, Cai was sensitive to the fit among them. “And then I looked back

on my lecture notes, and also the textbook to familiarize myself with this course concepts once again to make sure I know what they are, to make sure I know the definitions of those three features.” Cai knew it was not enough to observe the concepts in the advertisement; she had to thoroughly understand them too. From there, she reported, “I started looking for the published studies in the library website.” To decide among possible choices, she focused upon those that seemed “useful” for the assignment. She then read the studies to get a better grasp of them.

Before the outline was due in section, Cai also had to turn in a study-related assignment, where students summarized and compared possible studies. However, she stated, “For this exercise, I just used random articles – published articles.” At the time the assignment was due, she had not yet chosen the three concepts. Cai also discussed her understanding of empirical studies. As it was her first time using empirical studies, she referenced a handout provided by the professor. To identify an empirical study, she recalled, “We have to look at the abstract of the article. So if it is empirical article, it has key words such as study and experiment and also... I think that is the only method I used to identify.” She ended up with two experiments for her empirical studies, but was still uncertain if other study methods would classify as empirical, saying, “I think so. I’m not so sure...yes, I think they are still empirical study.” The handout was somewhat helpful, and her TA had also provided some clarification, yet she remained uncertain. “I remember [the TA] used some lecture slide to tell us what – to tell us about the empirical studies and we also – I also made some notes about it.” Still, she avoided non-experimental methods because she was unsure what else would classify as empirical. Her TA’s instruction had been helpful, but “[The TA] just told us how to use an empirical study to back up our paper – how to use it correctly in a

correct format.” Thus, she realized it was more challenging to distinguish and classify types of studies. In the initial stages of her search, Cai reported, “First, I was typing the key words, and then there were tons of articles showing up on the website.” However, she recalled, “A lot of them are not experiments. They are not empirical studies, I think, so I just look for those experiments - those studies that are actually experiments.” While this decision reflected her inaccurate belief that empirical studies only used experimental methods, her choice did help her narrow the search results. She found additional means for focusing her search, saying, “I can use them to back up my argument cause some of them are not really helpful for my paper.” Cai selected among the studies to find the best argumentative fit. This process took longer, however. She recalled, “So it took me a while to select the final studies.”

Once she had the studies, she began writing the paper, which again reflected her preferred systematic process:

First, I started writing the references, I think, so in case I forgot. Then I started writing the first paragraph of my paper, which is the introduction of my paper. And then the second paragraph I think is the first feature that I am going to talk about.

Then I started writing about the first feature...The first paragraph I mostly contain my analysis of the advertisement’s first feature, and also how it is related to my course concept.

She referenced lecture notes in this area of her paper, but did not use an empirical study because those fit with the next features. She explained, “I didn’t use any empirical study for my first feature, but I used empirical studies for both the second and the third feature.” She described her third paragraph, saying, “I’m still discussing the first feature, but for this paragraph...I was still analyzing how the first feature was used in the advertisement, and

how effective it is for the advertisement, and also I talk about what are the target audiences for this advertisement.” Thus, Cai’s systematic process for assignment two involved a multi-paragraph approach to describing and analyzing course content she had observed in the assigned advertisement. Though her approach was systematic, she did not limit her discussion of required content to single paragraphs. Instead, she allowed her ideas to develop across more than one paragraph. She moved on to her next feature in the following paragraph where she again quoted lecture material, “but I included an outside research for this second feature. And for the second feature, I once again just repeated what are the target audiences for the advertisement, and also I used some outside research to back up my argument about...the effectiveness of the second feature.” While she did not have an empirical study for the first feature, she did have one for the second, and used it to craft her argument. She followed a similar structure with the third and final feature, saying, “And then for the 3rd feature...I also used another published empirical study to back up my argument.” Unlike before, she reported, “I did not quote any lecture notes or textbook. I just quoted from the published empirical study.” In this instance, Cai found the study was helpful for both explanation and providing argumentative support. She concluded in two paragraphs where she analyzed all three features together. Additionally, she reported, “I also gave some advice about how these there features should be used to actually improve the advertisement’s persuasion.” This longer conclusion felt unfamiliar to her and reflected a change to her systematic process. She recalled, “I’m not so sure if the last paragraph is the conclusion or the last two paragraphs are the conclusion cause – I think the last two paragraphs are the conclusion.” She seemed to have allowed for a new kind of flexibility in her systematic process, and was realizing the impact of this change.

After her experiences with assignment one, Cai had intended to write more than one draft of assignment two. She recalled, “I started writing the paper one week before the due date.” Cai clarified, “I was reading the assignment, watching the advertisement, looking for the study. I think I actually started writing the paper was five days ago before the due date.” Her paper was completed “two days before the due date.” She had started early because she knew the studies would take time to locate. She said, “I remember there is the exercise for section, so when I used the search engine to find a random empirical study, I just found out there are so many empirical studies on the website. So, I may need some time to look for and select the articles that I’m gonna use for my paper.” However, rather than write separate drafts with the extra time she had, she made minor changes to the same draft. She discussed these changes, saying, “Mostly I just deleted some sentences, which I think are not really related to my argument. Some of the sentences are just simply repeating these things I said before.” And, she removed “grammatical errors.” She had intended to visit the writing center for help, but was unable to. “I just missed the appointment time. Just so many other appointments – the time conflict just prevented me from going to the [writing center] for help,” she recalled.

Cai did not report making deliberate use of her peers in writing assignment one. However, she did find “the section discussion” helpful. She referenced a side conversation she overheard among peers, saying, “Some of the students in my section had a question about how to define a target audience, and also I had some questions so...uh...just talk about it.” She had overheard peers talking about similar questions she had, reporting, “And then one student went to ask [the TA] about this question.” While Cai had not participated directly in the conversation, she benefitted from being nearby. “I also heard about it. I didn’t remember

it clearly, but I remember she said to provide some characteristics – some features of the target audience - to describe them in a specific way, to add more features about them. Not too broad.”

Self-evaluation of assignment two. As with assignment one, Cai exhibited independent decision-making that seemed to reflect her confidence and experience with writing. This confidence again led her to make decisions without much further questioning, as with selecting the concepts she would apply to the advertisement, establishing connections among her choices, and not bothering to watch both ads before selecting the one she was already familiar with. The continuity of her systematic process again seemed to reveal that she felt confident in following set procedures because she rarely hesitated during her writing process, but she allowed for modification to the method she used. While she again followed some procedures that had been troublesome before, as with writing an introduction and thesis that were unclear until the close of the first assignment, she allowed for invention through multi-paragraph discussion of important points and relying upon external sources for explanation in lieu of only lecture content. Indirect knowledge of what her peers had done to navigate the first writing assignment made her reconsider if or how she would seek outside help with the second assignment. Still, her recollection of the second assignment showed that her changes tended to be independent, rather than the result of outside help.

Nonetheless, Cai felt limited confidence in her work with assignment two. She described one aspect she liked, saying, “My conclusions were the only thing that I think I did well for my paper.” She referred to both the two-part closing paragraph and the way she connected her analyses throughout. “I first analyze how effective are those three features used in the advertisement...then I make a thesis statement for my paper...and then I started

use analysis before I jump into the conclusion.” She summarized, “So, I think that is the only thing I did well for my paper cause I provide some explanation for my conclusion, for my statement. I didn’t just write my statement, but I provided more arguments to back up my thesis statement.” She felt this attempt was different than with assignment one, which her TA had critiqued, and that it also differed from the feedback she historically received. It seemed to represent a subtle modification to her systematic process. On a subtler level, she exhibited confidence in following her own method. Cai reported, “I used exactly the same process for both of my two papers,” though her discussions illustrated subtle adjustments to it. While she had initially discussed learning this process in her ESL course, she had been using it for three years, and had modified it as her own. She claimed, “I learn on my own. Just my own habit or my thing. My own writing process I developed on my own.” This feedback encompassed Cai’s tendency toward self-reliance, whether she felt confident about what she was doing or not.

Still, there were areas of hesitation. Using empirical studies was new to Cai. She reported, “I was meeting [the TA] before I started writing that paper.” She described the meeting, saying, “My question was I was not sure if I need to use, um, empirical studies for all my three features, or I can just use two of them.” Upon turning in her paper, she questioned her work with the empirical studies, saying, “I didn’t think I understand them well before using them.” Additionally, she believed, “It’s difficult for me to find an empirical study that is really related to my paper. I think the topics discussed in the empirical studies are a little bit far away from what I’m going to talk about.” She dealt with this challenge on her own, rather than seeking the TA’s input. “So, I focused on the parts that are related to my paper cause I found the experiments and empirical studies are not related to my argument for

my paper, but the concepts that empirical studies discuss are related to my paper.” On her own, Cai realized that the studies could still be useful, even if the fit was not as exact as desired. She was still concerned about her thesis statement, despite paying more attention to it. In her introduction paragraph, she felt, “I don’t prove a really clear thesis statement in my introduction paragraph.” This was another area of her writing that had received consistent critique. Again, she relied upon her own means for mitigating this uncertainty. “So, I made up for the unclear thesis statement in the introduction by providing more analysis, more explanation in my last two paragraphs, which are my conclusion paragraphs,” she claimed.

Assignment two assessment. Cai hoped her score would be “forty to forty-five out of fifty points.” Namely, this was because, “The only part I think I didn’t do well was my empirical study research. I don’t think I applied those outside research well into my argument.” When asked how this presumed weakness could be counteracted by her strengths, she claimed, “Yes, but I’m not really confident about this.” She considered what the TA’s feedback might be, saying, “I think her comments will first focus on my empirical study research.” She felt this reflected her biggest weakness, but that the TA might “comment that I need to make a strong argument, make a clear thesis statement in the introduction.” This paralleled feedback from assignment one, and feedback she had received elsewhere at the university. She discussed why she remained concerned about this, saying, “I still am having the same problem. I didn’t solve it, even after this first paper.” Despite being a junior with several writing experiences behind her, this aspect of writing continued to challenge her, though she did not report seeking help.

Cai’s Evaluation of Resources and Strategies. As a GE student, she had no further plans for coursework in the department, but the patterns of feedback Cai had received made

her reflect upon changes she would need to make with future writing in other departments. “For my future writing, I need to write a clear thesis statement and introduction paragraph.” The second assignment also changed her thinking. “I need to familiarize myself with using the empirical studies to back up my argument in my future writings.” She continued, “There are other courses that also require – ask me - to use empirical study for my paper.” She was aware her experiences in the course were not necessarily unique, especially because she had past writing experiences to draw from in forming this impression.

Cai’s Self-Evaluation at the Course’s End. Cai continued to believe in methods she used to navigate writing assignments - most importantly, her self-reliance in using a systematic process. She also felt course handouts, readings, and lecture content were invaluable. As a student, she tended to take more extensive notes, making mention of instances where she elaborated upon what was being said in lecture or discussion section. She did not change her mind about working with peers, and never expressed regret at not having done so, despite benefitting from a conversation she overheard in section. Instead, she continued to believe in her own methods, and thought that her teachers were useful tools. However, she worked with TAs, rather than professors. She did not seem attached to the writing center, remarking that with future assignments, “First I will definitely go to my TA or professor for help on my paper, and if they’re not available, I will just to go [writing center] for help.” In the various writing experiences she had, Cai tended to like to stick with what had evidently worked, making only small, independent modifications as necessary.

Chapter 5: Analysis

By isolating my findings to two themes (processes and challenges) through thematic reduction of codes, this chapter takes a closer look at how students went about writing both assignments, where issues began to emerge, and how they managed these problems. It illuminates students' comparatively diverse experiences. However, prior to writing this section, I reviewed my findings in their entirety to extract other procedural aspects or areas of struggle students reported elsewhere in my findings. I did this to be sure nothing was overlooked, as students provided reflections across three separate interviews, sometimes exhibiting forgetfulness or not realizing the significance of an experience until a later interview.

Processes and challenges emerged because each captures the developmental trajectory of students transitioning from one disciplinary writing assignment to the next. These themes also directly address the research questions guiding this study:

1. How do L2 international students interpret and approach writing assignments in a general education, social science course?
2. What strategies and resources do they use in the writing process, and where do they come from?

In reviewing their reports, it was evident that students differed in how they interpreted, navigated, and performed each assignment. Differences were noted within the same student's practices across each assignment (hence, the reason for combining subjects' reports for each assignment into one discussion topic per student), and also by comparing among students.

The processes and challenges discussed in this chapter reveal students responsively making

changes in interpretation, navigation, and performance; but the subsequent theoretical chapter offers an explanation as to *why*.

P1 refers to the first paper assignment, whereas P2 refers to the second paper assignment. Before delving further into each participants' experiences, table 16 shows students' scores on both assignments.

Table 16

Student Performance on Course Papers

Student	Cai	Yilin	Yuriko	Quinn	Vivien
P1	46	39	49	34	37
P2	39	40	44	42	43

Note. The course median for P1 was set at 38, whereas the median for P2 was set at 39. Both papers were scored out of fifty points.

It is important to remember that the course features a unique system of comparative grading, which is yet another reason why institutionally assigned scores are not entirely helpful here. Although relevant to their transitions between assignments and writing in future classes, assigned scores can problematize participants' perspectives of their own process and challenges if taken too literally. Thus, the focus instead returns to the context surrounding these scores, as that is more central to this study. Still, these scores provide some clarification as to how students performed, and in the case of assignment one, students directly referenced how their score impacted what they might do next. Thus, scores in this study are helpful to the extent that students digest feedback and reflect upon their practices, even when scoring practices tend toward the contrived.

Quinn's Processes Across Papers One and Two

Her process had some repetitive patterns across the two assignments. She preferred an early start, and began at about the same time with each paper. Between both assignments, her

overall sequencing was similar. In creating her outlines for each paper, she followed a format of stream-of-consciousness, whereby she allowed all of her thoughts to emerge freely before constraining them with organization; she followed this same format with both first drafts.

Although her process for P1 was technically more involved, Quinn made important changes to her P2 process that reflected comparatively deeper thinking: (1) she allowed herself to change concepts with P2; (2) she focused on argument more, whereas she had less depth to this focus with P1, and; (3) draft revisions differed. With P2, Quinn's last draft mostly revised lower order concerns because she had already addressed higher order concerns in previous drafts of that paper. With P1, she had begun revising lower order issues with the first of three drafts. Thus, with P1, her various friends provided help with issues like grammar, adherence, and comprehension in the first draft, whereas her first draft of P2 showed a desire for her TA's help with argumentation and paragraph review. In this first draft of P2, not only did she switch her focus from lower to higher order concerns, but also she switched the focus of help from peer to TA. She had asked the TA for similar help with P1 also, but not until draft two. And, the nature of the help she requested from the TA across both papers was different, as she was far more concerned with argumentation – a higher order concern- than she had been with her TA interaction during draft two of P1. Quinn had exhibited confusion that P1 required an argument; she did not yet see a relationship between thesis and argument, but her process on P2 exhibited such growth. Overall, Quinn's P1 and P2 ran somewhat opposite of each other, as she had prioritized lower order concerns early in her P1 process, but then delayed these in her P2 process. Quinn appeared to realize the importance of other, higher order concerns. The depth of her revisions reflected this change, as with her P2 draft three sentence revisions that were not only attentive to grammar, but also

evidence and argument. By contrast, the sentence revisions in her final draft of P1 focused only upon grammar error correction. Quinn started early with both papers, but P2's early start seemed to allow for more in-depth sentence revisions when compared to the more lower order sentence correction she did with P1. Both the kinds of revisions she made and the help she sought differed across the two assignments. These differences seemed to suggest a revised rationale with related objectives for starting early.

In addition to early P2 drafts reflecting greater attention to higher order concerns, other growth appeared in Quinn's overall process and later drafts. With draft two of P2, Quinn exhibited independence in changing concepts on her own without outside consultation. This challenge was both new in P2 and self-managed. While it illustrates independence in making choices and changing them, the logic underpinning these choices was somewhat askew, as Quinn was trying to avoid related explanations. She saw overlapping concepts as detrimental to her paper, rather than an attribute upon which she could maximize. Still, P2 changes were made in light of her overall argument. This was an issue she neglected to consider concretely with P1.

Quinn's Challenges Across Papers One and Two

Quinn's challenges also reflected advances in her thinking, even though she experienced the same amount – but not the same kind - of challenges across both papers. Quinn was strategic in choosing media content and in choosing concepts for P2, even though this was tied to her comprehension. Some struggles disappeared with P2, as with prompt comprehension. In P1, Quinn had sought example essays to complete her understanding of what was required. With P2, Quinn discussed several benefits of using outside research, one of which was her ability to use empirical studies as a means to better understand the writing

that was expected of her. While the studies were not a strong example of how to write either paper, Quinn's feedback indicated she felt more confident with the paper requirements after seeing more relevant examples than the ones she was able to locate online with P1. Other challenges were new to her P2 experience, as with concept selection, which reflected a move to more sophisticated, higher order concerns.

Other challenges were rearticulated between the first and second assignment. In P1, Quinn sought the TA's help with her thesis and argument. She felt she had followed the TA's advice, but learned via P1 feedback that she had not. For P2, she again sought the TA's help; this time, she asked more direct questions about *how* to make an argument. She somewhat changed the way she used the TA from P1 to P2 in seeking a more sophisticated understanding of argument based upon negative P1 feedback. Ironically, Quinn's understanding of argumentation seemed to grow most from a conversation with her Chinese friend in the major. This friend helped her understand that argumentation is reflected by cohesion. Concept clarification showed up across both assignments, but Quinn was far more thoughtful about it with P2, in addition to being self-reliant. Even though her logic was flawed, Quinn exhibited self-sufficiency with concept clarification in continually consulting course materials to distinguish (or change) concepts.

Overall, Quinn exhibited greater self-sufficiency with P2, as she reported outside assistance with only a couple of issues. Given that P1 had about nine help-seeking interventions, changes to P2 may reflect greater self-confidence or comfort with assigned tasks after gaining experience with P1. However, her navigation of some challenges may have benefitted with outside assistance. Finding studies was new to Quinn, yet she managed on her own. She thought she needed an exact fit, but settled on studies that were only related

or persuasive enough; Quinn did not realize the rarity of a perfect fit. This may have added to her struggle to locate studies, and complicated the overall process of completing this requirement in the final stages of her paper. As with P1 and Quinn's underestimation of the thesis, her late and independent attention to P2's studies may reflect a tendency to overlook or resist challenging - but salient - assignment criteria.

Quinn also made changes to the sources of help she sought. From P1 to P2, she refrained from further use of her second Chinese friend, her Korean friend and roommate, and the Writing Center. In P1, her Korean friend has mostly served as incidental conversational help whereby they strategized the assignment and discussed concepts they did not understand, likely because they were roommates enrolled in the same course. In seeking CF2's help with P1, Quinn reported requesting feedback about prompt adherence, but received grammar help instead. This disjuncture may have been the result of an unsatisfactory response, or Quinn's failure to articulate exactly what she needed. Quinn elaborated little on this conversation, and did not use CF2 with the second assignment. While Quinn continued to have concerns about expressing herself as a non-native writer, she particularly liked working with her American friend, which may be why she changed her use of the writing center with P2. Though more subtle, Quinn also changed the quantity of times she sought help from a given person. With P2, CF1 intercepted her navigation of challenges one time, as opposed to three times with for both Chinese friends in P1. With P2, Quinn also sought less of the TA, asking for help once, as opposed to twice. She referred to her American friends once per assignment. Quinn's friends provided the only unexpected help she received across both papers.

Some challenges appear likely to follow Quinn into her next writing assignments, based on her expressed degree of difficulty and the challenge's consistency between both

assignments. One example is cultural comprehension, which generally led to re-watching assigned media content, even though the reason differed somewhat between assignments. While re-watching content was a repeated behavior, she was not only using it to understand concepts, but to also choose them. Incidentally, it also helped her understand P2's media content – or it should have – but the complaints to her friend instead suggest ongoing insecurity. She addressed this issue similarly across both assignments, seeming to believe revisiting media content and discussing it with international student friends would improve her understanding. Quinn did not seek help from native speakers when experiencing trouble with cultural comprehension. Because she worried about her non-native status, Quinn began both papers early, even though her revision patterns and process changed. Her need to mitigate linguistic and cultural constraints will probably influence future decisions to start writing assignments early.

Yuriko's Processes Across Papers One and Two

Other than adding more steps to her process with P2, Yuriko's processes for P1 and P2 were mostly similar. Yuriko initiated both papers as soon as her TA released related media content. Selecting segments for analysis was always her first step, and analyzing the dialogue in a TV scene for P1 left her feeling she should choose the P2 ad with more words. One of the two ads lacked significant dialogue and interaction, leading her to question writing about it. After choosing what to analyze, Yuriko always created a first draft of her outline, followed by a second draft that reflected the TA's input on higher order issues. In P2, Yuriko did not have issues with cultural comprehension as she had in P1; therefore, she sought the TA's help for other higher order criteria. Yuriko never involved the TA in questions about lower order concerns, but she also did not ask the TA all higher order questions she would have

liked to ask. She generally had several questions in advance of meeting the TA, but in both papers, she received less help than she hoped for, mostly because she was too shy to inquire further. One difference between the two papers' processes involved Yuriko seeking help from the writing center twice during P2, whereas she had only sought it once in P1. In both assignments, she sought the same kinds of help with grammar and structure, yet she moved the timing of this help back to the second draft with P2, instead of with the first draft as she had done in P1. Furthermore, with P2, she asked the writing center for the help with her introduction the TA had provided in P1. Finally, when comparing her second draft of each paper, Yuriko made more revisions with P2 versus P1.

Yuriko's Challenges Across Papers One and Two

In P2, Yuriko experienced more challenges than with P1, possibly because of her concerns about maintaining a high score, yet she also managed more P2 challenges on her own. With P1, Yuriko was self-directed in managing six challenges. With P2, she dealt with fourteen challenges on her own. Yuriko's self-sufficiency showed development in adding new learning to knowledge she already understood. Structure provided one such example, as this was an aspect of writing she first grasped in former writing assignments at the university and via the help of her Japanese friend. Thus, while structural aspects of writing continued to challenge her (and she still doubted her overall competency in this domain), she possessed enough knowledge to mitigate many structural challenges on her own with both assignments while asking for help from others when her knowledge fell short. Similarly, she had experience working with outside research, but was presented with the new challenge of integrating it into an unfamiliar writing assignment. Although more superficial in application, Yuriko's former experience with research helped her navigate some initial aspects of

working with P2's empirical studies, and her new experience helped her appreciate the deeper role research could play in argumentation. Additionally, she had an independent realization that citation frequency related to how she advanced her argument in writing P2. She came to these realizations on her own, and she navigated all challenges related to the studies on her own. Overall, her struggles were similar between the two papers, other than the new challenges of working with studies, and emerging concerns about having enough to write in P2 and not knowing how to improve her work. As with the studies, she managed concerns about not having enough to write on her own.

She repeated the same use of resources with each paper, but made some changes to the frequency. The writing center intersected her work in five places with P2, whereas there were only three in P1. She made equal use of the TA and her Japanese friend in both assignments.

Although Yuriko had positive past experiences to build from, she still doubted her abilities. She doubted her understanding of course concepts with both papers, which the TA's feedback generally indicated she had understood. The first draft of both outlines was intended for TA confirmation, which she generally received. In not feeling bold enough to ask more of the TA, she exhibited mixed confidence in her own thinking and in ideas the TA had not reviewed. When in doubt, she often found confidence for her thinking in the clarity of the prompt's guidelines for both assignments, and in a reassuring conversation with her Japanese friend for P2. While she was highly capable via past papers and P1, in both assignments she had a tendency of gaining more confidence from the TA's direct approval of her ideas. In these instances of incomplete approval, she later worried whether "others" – namely, her TA – would agree with her thinking and structural choices. Again, Yuriko had

successful experiences with structural choices and writing, but she still did not entirely trust her knowledge. Similar issues repeated with her use of the Writing Center. In both P1 and P2, Yuriko relied upon herself and the writing center for resolution of grammatical issues. However, she was forced to do more self-correction with P2, which she disliked, and reported feeling insecure about. She seemed to feel more confident when also feeling satisfied with the amount and kind of help received. Thus, Yuriko generally sought to clarify and enhance her existing knowledge through seeking targeted advice and approval from others. In possibly not finding complete satisfaction working with the TA on structural issues in P1 or the initial draft of P2, Yuriko then added visits to the writing center with P2 where she sought similar structural advice after meeting with the TA.

Some struggles disappeared or were greatly reduced in the second assignment. In P2, she no longer struggled with cultural comprehension, and it had not been a significant barrier in P1. She also found the prompt's thesis guidelines for P2 more reassuring than P1, as she felt the goal of the thesis was clearer. Relatedly, she had consulted the TA for thesis help with P1, but resolved thesis issues on her own in P2.

Finally, the TA, writing center, and her own realizations provided unexpected help with each assignment. However, with P2, all three sources pointed to the need for a strengthened argument or evidence. Interestingly, her score on P2 was lower than P1, though the significance of this change is difficult to explain, given the unique assessment practices of the course.

Vivien's Processes Across Papers One and Two

A major change to Vivien's process involved timing and her related ability to make better choices. She started in advance of the deadline with P2, even though this was

somewhat of a mistake. With P1, she only had time for one draft with no revision; P2 had four drafts and many kinds of revision, including grammar, which she generally attended to. Vivien also had plenty of time to move through each step of her more comprehensive P2 process. In changing concepts in P2, her rationale was more careful and strategic versus just being the result of hasty, flawed choices as experienced in P1. The timing of both papers clarified her priorities. For example, in P1, she had limited time, but chose to change her concepts when running into last-minute trouble versus changing her scene. She appeared to realize that the segment she chose could still be useful, and she had the confidence to allow for last-minute conceptual changes. She may have also realized that changing scenes could prove more time-consuming than altering concepts. Additionally, with P2, she used the extra time to her advantage, considering her argument and thesis from the early point of selecting which ad she would analyze. With this, she chose her ad based upon its effectiveness with the target audience, which was then related to her thesis and overall argument. And, she used her thesis to guide conceptual choices before writing. Although Vivien was clearer about making conceptual choices, she still reported confusion in making a strong thesis.

In starting earlier with P2, she was able to seek more help and more in advance of the deadline. For example, Vivien was able to ask the TA for help defining concepts, rather than being forced to rely upon her own means. She was also able to seek help with her actual drafts of writing, whereas her help seeking with P1 was rushed and occurred before she had a draft written. Having more time also affected her use of help. She repeated use of the TA and professor in P1 and P2; yet, prior to P2, she visited the writing center, which she had feared and avoided in P1 due to plagiarism concerns. The writing center advanced her understanding of how to create a strong thesis, which was a critique levied by her TA for P1,

in addition to feedback she had historically received. Her use of the writing center for thesis help with a different the writing centers assignment showed an indirect integration of P1 feedback into her P2 process. While the writing center helped advance her thinking, after writing P2 she discussed her own realization that the contents of her paper could help her locate a thesis in future writing assignments.

Vivien's Challenges Across Papers One and Two

Because Vivien had had several writing experiences at the university, she also had familiar struggles. One was formulating an in-depth thesis, and she did exhibit growth in P2 with her realization that she could formulate a thesis based off of her own ideas with later writing assignments. In P1, she mentioned revisiting the prompt for ideas, but did not seem to find this sufficient. She also struggled with the limitations writing prompts could place on her work, as with prompts for former writing assignments. Other struggles carried over from P1 to P2, as with feeling confined by source limitations. In P1, Vivien disliked relying upon only course material to define concepts. She felt it was unnecessarily difficult and longed to use additional sources. Yet, with P2, she again struggled with source limitations, though she was initially excited to have empirical studies for further support. While she was able to strategically use the studies to complete her definitions and support her arguments, she still felt some conceptual definitions were weak, and sought the TA's help. The range of solutions she attempted still did not satisfy her feeling that something was missing from her definitions. However, her concern may have been the result of both historical and P1 feedback indicating that her writing lacked analytical depth.

Other challenges were new to Vivien – or, they were at least newly realized. With P2, she began to worry about comparative grading, which might be explained by pressure she felt

to improve her score with P2. Vivien's conversations with friends did not really ease her anxiety; she felt it was important to instead work with her TA, as she knew that was her grader. Interestingly, Vivien sought the TA's help with P2 as specific to the two issues she felt most reduced her P1 score: argument and definition. In both cases, Vivien sought explicit, targeted answers from the TA about how to argue in P2, and how to complete an insufficient definition. Even though she worked with the TA, she only asked her friends about comparative grading. She assumed her work with the TA would indirectly benefit her score in the comparative grading system, and she was aware of her main weaknesses as indicated in P1. Finally, in discussing P2, Vivien realized a challenge that had been nagging her former writing experiences too. This involved not knowing how to improve her writing. While she knew what her historical shortcomings were, P2 made her realize she did not know how to improve them. These historical challenges may provide additional logic for her specific requests of the TA with P2, as she may have been realizing that consistent feedback reflected places she was stuck in, rather than places she lacked motivation to change. In P1, Vivien had consistently referred to herself as lazy, which was also a result of the limited time she spent on the paper. With P2, she no longer described herself this way, which may again suggest that she *was* motivated to address issues historically plaguing her writing, but that she may have lacked certainty in how to procedurally overcome them.

Vivien also had a history of self-reliance, and this appeared in P1 and P2. In some cases, this was reflected by other strategic decisions. For example, she made use of online guides for summarizing and formatting the studies, as posted by the professor. These guides were not required reading; she elected to review them, and used them in working her studies into the paper. Further, she had a specific method for locating and selecting studies, which

involved strategic reading of the abstract and conclusion for argumentative fit. While she was conflicted as to whether or not one of her chosen studies was empirical, and also had some misunderstanding of categorizing empirical studies, she knew how to read the studies and what to do with them. Vivien's troubleshooting not only reflected her realization of this key assignment criteria, but it also illustrated how she was able to transfer former search practices from earlier courses also requiring outside research. She also built off of former knowledge when tackling the thesis in P2, and in more directly attending to her argument in P2. Another example of her self-sufficiency with sophisticated assignment elements involved defining concepts. Whereas P1's hasty timing forced her to give up under the constraints of limited sources, in P2, she developed a circular process of checking studies and course readings against each other in an effort to complete unsatisfactory definitions. She also consulted with the TA, though she was never entirely satisfied with her definitions. Vivien fully relied upon the various sources she was allowed to use in P2. Overall, Vivien's self-reliance correlated with cleverness about making writing choices and taking actions to mitigate perceived weaknesses. Given she had more time to complete P2, this cleverness was also more readily observable.

Other aspects reflected Vivien's ability and adaptability in writing. For example, the unexpected help she received across both papers focused upon only higher order issues. Vivien's capability as a writer may be reflected by her placing value on higher order help as important – though unexpected - points of realization. Additionally, while she was concerned about the studies like the other subjects, she worried about three different aspects of them. She seemed to understand their significance, and felt challenged in completing the expectations asked of her. And, she needed concept clarification in P1, but felt she

understood concepts sufficiently in P2. While she doubted her definitions for P2, she felt this was due to insufficient resources – not drawbacks in her understanding. Finally, although she avoided the writing center with P1, she made gains in allowing their help to influence her work. While she had visited the professor for concept selection issues with P1, Vivien’s work with the writing center affected her thinking about which concepts to select. Although the tutors did not know her assignment, they made viable suggestions, which she – surprisingly – took. The fact that she allowed the writing center to influence her thinking may show that her own understandings were solid enough to enable her to trust in the more external influence of writing center tutors less familiar with the course’s assignments.

Yilin’s Processes Across Papers One and Two

Yilin had some similar approaches to navigating P1 and P2. She always started about one week ahead of the due date. In P2, she discussed how this eased her concern about encountering problems with delayed decision-making. Although not mentioned directly, this was likely also influential in her P1 process because of the similar timeframe for starting. Yilin also liked to develop outlines that directly fed her drafts; in both papers she revised her outlines until they felt right. At that point, she began writing drafts. Finally, Yilin liked using sentence translation – initially writing drafts in Chinese, and then continually and systematically altering vocabulary, grammar, etc. for TA clarity. These revisions always focused upon the TA’s understanding of her meanings. While it seemed she inferred this sentence translation was risky, she repeated its use. With P1, she had enlisted her Taiwanese friend’s help with grammar, but this friend was busy during P2, leaving Yilin to self-correct. In doing so up until the paper was due, it seemed Yilin was not entirely comfortable relying upon her own means in correcting grammar.

In other areas, her process across both papers differed. With P1, she had written two drafts, whereas P2 had only one draft, even though she made changes directly to it. In Yilin's perspective, this was owed to her increased confidence in making decisions for P2. With P2, she made decisions dealing with concepts, studies, and which ad to analyze quickly and did not second-guess them. She changed her P2 process so it began with prompt reviewing and seeking help from the writing center and professor to validate her impressions of the assignment. They simply validated what she had already understood. Thus, her P2 process exhibited far less anxiety about deciphering the prompt because her help seeking reflected confirmation of what she already knew. In P1, she was very anxious as she realized early on that her understanding of the prompt was off. Yilin had completed an exhausting P1 process of reviewing the scene and episode, writing down all sentences, and changing concepts in order to correct conceptual errors she realized along the way. TA feedback on P1 had confirmed her anxiety, which may also explain her comprehensive attempts to validate understandings she already had with the P2 prompt. In P2, she did not report re-watching the ad or taking other measures correlated with prompt misunderstandings exhibited in her P1 process. Still, P1 issues appeared to influence how she began the P2 process – soliciting confirmation seeking from the writing center and professor. This display seemed to emphasize Yilin's orientation to prompt comprehension as a significant barrier in her writing, which was evidenced in P1. Finally, although she had used a stream of thoughts approach to writing draft one of P1, she did not use this with P2.

Yilin's Challenges Across Papers One and Two

Yilin's P2 writing experiences were not without anxiety, but she showed significant growth in seeking help across the two assignments. First, she sought different kinds of help.

With P1, she felt the professor would not be a helpful resource, failing to realize the professor's pivotal role. With P2, she sought the professor's help – mostly with concept clarification and the aforementioned validation of her thinking about the prompt. Even with the concepts, Yilin had generally already understood them; meeting with the professor again appeared to validate what she had already known. But, the fact that she sought out the professor illustrated her changed way of thinking about writing assignments. While she sought the TA via email across both assignments, she only worked with the professor face-to-face. In China, she described how she consistently avoided NES teachers, instead preferring her NNES Chinese English teachers. Seeking the professor's help was a big step forward in mitigating higher order concerns with a NES teacher's help, and in overcoming worries that that teacher would not understand her. Yilin had not only sought help from a NES resource, but she had also sought help with both lower and higher order concerns – prompt comprehension and concept clarification. Furthermore, the professor played an important part in enhancing Yilin's ideas. The professor both refined Yilin's understandings, and also expanded her thinking by pointed out an idea Yilin had overlooked. Yilin integrated the professor's ideas. In P1, she had not even worried about concept clarification, not realizing the gravity of this issue until receiving TA feedback. With P2, Yilin went above and beyond to avoid such issues again, enlisting the help of the professor, the TA, and taking matters into her own hands when dissatisfied with her understanding. Finally, Yilin was again able to focus on more sophisticated concerns with P2 as reflected by her intention to use three – instead of two – studies. While she was unable to locate three, this plan did reveal heightened sensitivity to the comparative grading context.

In a few areas, Yilin continued to question her ability. In both papers, she worried over making decisions that would give her enough to write. She also remained concerned about connecting ideas, though she resolved this with headings in P1. In P2, she again exhibited growth in her understanding of connecting ideas by expressing this worry in a more meaningful way. Rather than think of surface-level ways her writing could appear tied together, she was instead concerned about the connection between her concepts and studies. Although this felt unresolved, her thinking had progressed greatly since P1 when she approached a similar facet of writing with an entirely different mindset. Finally, in P1 she second-guessed herself in many steps of the assignment. With P2, her second-guessing was less extreme and limited to expressing her opinion or argument. In this domain, she sought consultation with the professor and verified her thinking with male friends of the same target audience she conceived of for the ad.

Overall, Yilin struggled far less with P2. She did not need her roommate's help with English comprehension as she did with P1, and she addressed English expression less in her overall P2 process. Her reduced concern about understanding English and being understood in English reflected significant growth, particularly because these concerns had plagued her since high school. Concept selection really was not a concern in P2 – essentially disappearing from the list of things she felt challenged by. Importantly, she also did not worry about her lack of experience with P2; on the contrary, she discussed how P1 readied her for P2, and directly described feeling less anxious overall. While the studies were challenging to locate, she did seek help from the writing center, which increased her search results. This created a new dilemma, so she condensed the studies by focusing upon core parts and argumentative fit. While she exhibited less sophistication in initially searching for studies, her prior work in

integrating outside sources seemed to help her approach to condensing and selecting studies for P2.

Yilin exhibited confidence in similar areas across both assignments. She was often self-reliant, though this was more to her detriment in P1. In P2, she felt confident based upon verification of her understanding of the prompt, enabling her to make higher order decisions quickly, whereas she had struggled over these in P1. This is likely why her persistent anxiety about her own thinking with both assignments changed to higher order issues with P2. Even though she had some later doubts with P1, Yilin was consistent in feeling capable of making structural or organizational choices by herself in both assignments. She also mentioned transferring related knowledge from prior conversations with her Taiwanese friend. The same was true for APA, whereby she relied upon former learning for guidance, and felt little threat.

Cai's Processes Across Papers One and Two

Whereas Cai ran short on time with P1, she had plenty of time with P2. With P1, she began thinking about the assignment two days before it was due; with P2, she was finished two days before the paper was due. In both cases, she only wrote a single draft of the paper. However, her early P2 start enabled her to make revisions she lacked time for with P1. Her draft of P1 essentially mirrored the hasty outline she had written for section credit. She ended up finding these arbitrary ideas useful, and her single draft reflected few deviations from the P1 outline. With P2, she revised her draft for grammar, but also argumentation whereby she edited unnecessary sentences and repetitive ideas. Interestingly, her P2 outline was also cursory; she chose random studies that were different from the ones she actually settled upon. Cai's feedback seemed to indicate she found outlining less valuable to her overall writing process. This was perhaps due to her more extensive writing experiences at the university.

Without question, Cai did find value in her own means, specifically the systematic process she deployed for both papers. Its purpose across both papers differed: with P1, Cai relied upon her systematic process to overcome concerns about being short on time, whereas her systematic process changed with P2 and became more complex. In P1, she knew she had procrastinated, and used the systematic process as a means of ensuring organized work that would not appear as rushed as it had felt to her. In P2, she followed a similar systematic process, but modified it. These changes resonated with the TA's criticisms of P1 and reflected historical feedback Cai reported. Again, with P2, Cai had time to address these improvements and to make changes to her process. Essentially, her systematic process always began with a thorough review of the assignment to ensure she understood its expectations. From there, she made decisions about which media content to analyze. With P1, she then moved to decisions about concepts, which were overlapped by stints of writing. These iterations continued with each concept she chose. With P1, her writing followed the same order in which the paper was read. Her TA's feedback indicated both a vague thesis (feedback Cai was accustomed to receiving) and a vague intro (feedback she was not accustomed to receiving). Thus, Cai claimed she would not begin by writing the intro with P2, as she felt that was a central problem in P1. Still, her systematic process for P2 indicated that she still began her writing with the intro paragraph. While she modified some of her process, other elements seemed more resistant to change. Perhaps she decided against this change because of her high P1 score whereby she may have assumed she could afford the risk. Other differences with her P2 systematic process involved steps taken that directly addressed negative P1 feedback. Cai slowed her process considerably, making conceptual choices that were deliberately connected, revisiting course material to improve her

understanding, and allowing herself to deliver ideas across multiple paragraphs. Her conclusion alone spanned two paragraphs, and she added an implicitly derived criterion of providing advice. Overall, her P2 systematic process reflected attempts to maintain a high score in a comparative grading system and efforts to overcome prior critiques of her writing. Additionally, her P2 systematic process was significantly more developed because she gained time that had been lacking with P1.

Cai's Challenges Across Papers One and Two

Some of Cai's difficulties repeated across both assignments; however, the way she experienced repeated issues did differ. For example, Cai dealt with time management issues in both papers by relying upon her systematic process for writing. With P1, she used the systematic process to undercut issues arising from her own procrastination. In P2, she managed time issues by starting earlier because she was concerned about finding and integrating the studies. By nature of the assignment, the studies were interwoven in her systematic process. In both cases her systematic process helped her manage time concerns, but for very different reasons. In P1 she used it to manage a lack of time, whereas in P2, she used it to manage more time, thus having greater control over writing decisions.

Additionally, her systematic process was also connected to writing weaknesses she and others perceived. In both P1 and P2, Cai worried over her thesis – an aspect of writing her teachers generally thought she could improve upon. In writing P1, Cai discussed writing thesis statements, indicating that this experience helped her realize she could locate a thesis in her own writing, even though she still felt her P1 thesis was vague after making this attempt. Cai had a tendency of writing her introductory paragraph first; P1 made her rethink writing a thesis later in her writing process, even though she ended up repeating this habit

with P2. Nonetheless, she did try to compensate for potential issues in her P2 thesis by elongating her conclusion. While changes to the length of her P2 conclusion served multiple purposes, combatting thesis issues was one rationale she discussed. Interestingly, Cai did not discuss her overall argument in P1 – just her thesis – but attended to this aspect of writing in P2, and expressed concern about it. Specifically, she worried about how her thesis and arguments related to the studies she had chosen for her paper. In P1, she did not have this concern, possibly because outside research was not required. It seemed Cai developed greater sensitivity to argumentation when choosing outside resources to craft and support main points. The elongated thesis in P2 was also an effort to add analytical complexity to her conclusions – another criticism she consistently received. Here again, her systematic process was revised with P2 so that she could tackle criticisms made by both the TA in P1 and others prior to the course. In both assignments, Cai had worried over her conclusions, but she had changed her systematic process to better address this concern in P2. Finally, prompt comprehension appeared in both assignments. In P1, she worked with the TA to gain advice about how to connect different aspects of the paper together. In P2, she again sought the TA's help in clarifying whether two or three studies were required.

Other issues disappeared from Cai's list of concerns. She was cautious with APA in P1, but did not worry about it with P2. However, two more challenging aspects also disappeared. In P1, she struggled to select a scene to analyze and also worried about applying course material to the scene she chose. In P2, she immediately chose the ad she was already familiar with, not bothering to watch the other option. She was far more decisive and confident in her selections with P2. Additionally, she did not express concerns about applying course content to the ad. It seemed some of her P1 experiences allowed her to overcome anxieties in P2.

Whereas some issues disappeared, new concerns arose with her P2 writing experience. Cai exhibited concern about the comparative grading. This appeared through inferences she made about how best to approach the assignment, and how to maintain the high score she had on P1. For example, Cai felt her conclusion could provide advice for improving the effectiveness of the ad. She also felt her conclusion could be more than one paragraph, and she made conceptual choices that were related. As with the elongated conclusion, some inferences addressed historical criticisms her writing had received in P1 and prior to the course. Additionally, in P2, Cai openly discussed her realization that she did not know how to improve some of these historical criticisms. In P1 and in prior writing assignments, she dealt with similar challenges in trying to improve her writing; however, P2 made her aware that this struggle had persisted and would continue to persist. Despite her best efforts to improve in P2 and elsewhere, Cai admitted she did not know how to correct issues that plagued her writing.

Finally, Cai's process of navigating challenges spoke to the significant amount of self-reliance she exhibited. Rarely did she seek help from others, and she generally did not seem bothered by this or motivated to change it. In both papers, she sought only the TA's help. In both instances, she was clarifying task expectations related to the prompt. Despite her reluctance in seeking help, she benefitted from others in unexpected ways. For example, in P1, she did not directly ask the TA to review her outline, but they did examine her outline during the meeting. The TA pointed out her vague thesis, to which Cai responded by attempting to improve it (even though this attempt was unsuccessful according to later TA feedback). While Cai had other P1 concerns, she only brought up prompt-related questions because she had not begun writing, and probably because she was also accustomed to being

self-reliant. In P2, Cai overheard classmates talking to each other and then approaching the TA for help. Cai and her classmates had similar questions about defining the target audience. While Cai did not engage in her classmates' conversation with each other or the TA, she did overhear the advice the TA provided and followed suit in her own writing. Still, she was reluctant to see her peers as helpful, and did not feel her peers could be helpful in future writing tasks. In most cases, Cai indirectly benefitted from others, as with her TA reviewing the P1 outline, overhearing P2 discussions in section, and making use of handouts posted to the course website. Instead of seek help for finding and integrating studies (which she expressed several concerns about) or grasping APA, Cai managed these issues on her own by using the online handouts the professor provided. Despite her varied concerns with P2 and the fact that she had more time to seek help, she persisted on her own. Though empirical studies were new to her, she had worked with outside research before. Cai had several prior writing experiences and was a junior; it seemed she felt experienced enough to recognize challenges and navigate them on her own. Additionally, she seemed to recognize which issues were more salient, as she had several former writing experience to draw from in making decisions about how to allocate the time she had for both papers. She lacked time to address grammar with P1, and so she did not bother with it, and did not seem greatly concerned about it affecting her score. What she did make time for was deploying her systematic process, which she felt made her work more organized, readable, and less indicative of rushed writing. With P2, she had more time, but did not seek tutor help from the writing center for her grammar, even though she had sometimes done this in the past. Cai knew how to allocate her time, and understood which assignment tasks were more central to assessment, generally focusing upon important higher order concerns. Whether rushed or

starting early, she divided her time according to what she perceived as most important. Throughout both P1 and P2, she never exhibited anxiety. Even when she was concerned about an aspect of writing, she managed it on her own, and always appeared calm in navigating writing challenges – including those that had long problematized her writing.

Chapter 6: Emergent Theory

Studies of second language writing have tended to be under-theorized because of the field's status as young and interdisciplinary, falling under the influence of more established fields like applied ESL, rhetoric, and writing studies. At present, there is limited consensus about theories borrowed from these more established fields, yet studies in second language writing continue to borrow theoretically (Belcher & Hirvela, 2010).

Sociohistoric theories of writing are able to shed light on the complexities of second language students writing in local circumstances. These theories attend to heterogeneity in students' experiences, accounting for a multiplicity of interpretations, influences, and motives that mediate a writer's work. Importantly, they look beyond texts in considering a broad range of activities that lead writers to produce and reproduce actions and written products, and the resulting communities that form around efforts to align such activities (Bazerman, 2013, Prior, 1998).

A sociohistoric perspective becomes critical when examining and comparing second language writers in disciplinary settings, especially if those settings include courses where multilingual students could more easily disappear from instructor awareness. This study focused on a large-enrollment, pre-major course that also happens to satisfy a writing requirement. It is both large and popular; it is also notoriously challenging for any student enrolled for any of these reasons because writing assessment is used as one determinant of access to a historically competitive major. Given these variables influencing writing in the course, there remain others, many of which operate tacitly due to the large number of students assigned per TA. That is to say, while we may have some understanding of what L2 writers do in challenging disciplinary writing situations, there are other aspects of their

composing process we do not understand, some of which may be particular to fast-paced, competitive writing environments such as this and within which many L2 students are likely to find themselves during university study. Because sociohistoric frameworks consider the surrounding dynamics influencing a student's writing process, they are also valuable in expressing the L2 student experience in light of multiple, influential factors.

As Bazerman (2013) and Prior (1998) both argue, it is necessary to explore writing in highly specialized circumstances - such as that of this dissertation context - where less may be known of the student's writing experience. In discussing his research within disciplinary contexts Prior, (1998), specifically noted that, "To make such practices visible, it is necessary to examine them in non-routine use, in development as relative newcomers are learning them" (p. xiii). Prior (1998) continues, "Such research must be perspectival, sensitive to the multiple positions and developmental trajectories from which participants orient (p. 28) Bazerman (2013) adds that studies must investigate writing in contexts "barely charted," (p. 198) likely because such contexts put writers "on the line with some permanence and consequence" (p. 197). While Prior (1998) was investigating graduate student writers, undergraduate students writing for a pre-major course share a similar status as disciplinary newcomers expected to grasp and perform unfamiliar genres as a key means of disciplinary socialization – whether or not students assume the same disciplinary goals as their instructors. Regardless, writing in the context of this dissertation study functions institutionally as assessing disciplinary preparedness, leading to the various kinds of academic, social, or cultural consequences Bazerman (2013) implies. Thus, while Belcher and Hirvela (2010) claim it is crucial to identify useful frameworks for theorizing second language writing, Bazerman (2013) and Prior (1998) urge writing studies researchers to

consider the broader social and historical influences on student writing occurring in less documented circumstances, such as within this study's disciplinary context.

Introduction

The results of this study support sociohistoric frameworks of writing, which are described in a later section, and they also extend beyond these theories as an analytical lens applicable to the present phenomena. While the results of this study speak to the usefulness of sociohistoric theories in elucidating the experience of L2 students writing in lesser-known disciplinary settings, findings also point to the need for greater elaboration of linguistic and cultural concerns experienced by L2 international student writers in non-composition disciplinary contexts. As such, the latter part of this chapter delves into the idea of *dual enculturation* as a term conceived by this research and capable of better accounting for L2 students' writing experiences in disciplinary contexts.

Dual enculturation derives from the perspective this study's participants and portrays how they feel additionally burdened by writing in non-composition disciplinary contexts. As will be discussed, the five international students in this study reported that this context required them to exhibit disciplinary competence in social science ways of thinking and writing, but that their NNES status burdened them with a perceptibly additional hurdle – one they presumed their NES peers did not face. Students reported needing to simultaneously exhibit competence in English academic writing as an additional discipline and one that required their comprehension of foreign linguistic and cultural knowledge they presumed NES peers could more easily take for granted. In short, students struggled to balance the demands of two disciplines – one more immediate and another less so, although they feared both were important in assessment. In this manner, students differently balanced the demands

of both the non-composition discipline with those of English academic writing as an additional discipline - one that was capable of obscuring their competence in the former. This term also serves an important function in not only contributing to the development of theory for studies of second language writing, but also uniting influential ideas from predecessor fields. The result is a concept that straddles two related worlds, but speaks more specifically to the immediate experiences of L2 students in particular contexts.

Participation, Processes, and Activity. While Prior's (1998) work in further developing sociohistoric frameworks of writing activity is central to organizing meaning in this dissertation study, it is first important to address the conceptualization of disciplines as sites of learning. Lave and Wenger (1991) pointed out that learning happens via participation within *communities of practice* - such as within academic disciplines. Arguments such as these helped to destabilize notions of academic disciplines as locations into which newcomers could enter – a property implied by the alternate notion of disciplines as *discourse communities*. Deconstructing disciplines as discourse communities was important because that idea led to misconceptions that disciplines were uniform, congruent locations where expert members agreed upon and espoused communicative rules and norms to passive newcomers who unquestionably followed suit, thus “entering” into some preexisting, aligned space of thinking and acting. This not only alluded to disciplines and disciplinary members as aligned in action and meaning, but it also implied that disciplinary newcomers had little to no agency in participation. Thus, Lave and Wenger (1991) coined the term communities of practice to better account for the inevitable heterogeneity apparent when collectives of people engage with learning in contexts such as disciplines. The term also drew attention to the

agency all actors in communities of practice could exercise, illuminating the diverse ways of thinking and being found within seemingly fixed sites of study.

In extending Lave and Wenger's (1991) ideas about communities of practice, Prior (1998) reiterated that learning in academic contexts or disciplines is far from consistent or regular, and that meanings exchanged among members are frequently incomplete, misaligned and equally as irregular as the learning surrounding such exchanges. Prior instead argued for *disciplinarity*, or attention to how processes within academic disciplines are initiated, reproduced, evolving, and based upon the agency of participants, and how these processes are related to participants' identities in the social contexts within which they act. This better captures the various activities happening in and around disciplines – as well as among individuals – and at multiple levels of influence from personal to institutional, etc. Writing within communities of practice often results in heterogeneous written outputs because people are influenced by multiple sources, and people engage with various – and more or less immediate - communities of practice. Rather than enter a stable, insulated, static-seeming location – as with discourse community – writers participate in, shape, and view themselves as writers from within communities of practice to which they are more or less aligned, and within which they may hold multiple (even competing) memberships. Furthermore, because “Writing and disciplinarity are studied as situated, distributed, and mediated activity” (Prior, 1998, p.5), meanings may be partially shared, ambiguous, and incomplete. In relying upon a foundation of sociohistoric theories, Prior's notion of disciplinarity highlights the versatile and negotiable nature of meaning, particularly within functional systems of activity.

Meaning, Motive, and Literate Activity. While activity theory is “grounded in the notion of motive” (Prior, 1998, p. 105), related studies of writing may presume motives are

singular, implying students' motives match those of the course or instructor. Instead, students may have various, conflicting motives for writing due to *multiplicity*, or different underlying representations of a writing task. Correspondingly, students' interpretations of the task are often tacit, leading them to assume they have completed the task in a way similar to their peers engaged in the same writing task. Prior (1998) refers to multiplicity to address the variation in students writing tasks, but uses *lamination* to account for additional influences beyond the immediate writing task. Prior (1998) argues that lamination provides "one way to think about this multiplicity in motives" (p. 105) evident in students' work because it includes the broader influences in "students' activity across time and settings" (p. 104). Therefore, while more expansive than the multiplicity seen in a single writing assignment, lamination is still able to impact the immediate assignment. Because motives may be multiple, Prior (1998) also asserts that *intersubjectivity* is an attempt to coordinate and negotiate meanings as shared. While meanings within a disciplinary context may appear as shared, the process of intersubjectivity is not only heterogeneous, or fraught with incomplete and divergent meanings, but also tenuous. Prior's own data with graduate students enrolled in the same seminar was diverse, showing students differently interpreted, negotiated, and performed assigned writing tasks, thereby framing a "question of how experiences in seminars are linked to form a trajectory of disciplinary enculturation" (Prior, 1998, p. xv). Similarly, undergraduates may have different motives for writing, leading to dissimilar textual products for the same course.

Because writing in a disciplinary context is indeed a complex activity, Prior (1998) instead refers to *literate activity*, which is more inclusive of the various social influences and interactions that surround and result in writing. Furthermore, "Literate activity is central to

disciplinary enculturation, providing opportunity spaces for (re)socialization of discursive practices, for foregrounding representations of disciplinarity, and for negotiating trajectories of participation in communities of practice” (Prior, 1998, p. 32). Through reflecting upon the literate activity of second language writers engaged in more than just disciplinary writing tasks, a clearer understanding of these writers in non-mainstream contexts can be provided.

Exposures and L2 Writers in Disciplinary Contexts. Furthermore, in explaining the multiple influences a graduate student writer navigates in a writing situation, Prior refers to these as *exposures*, listing eight types encountered in his data. Of these, he claimed, “The real writing task, I argue, is not in any one exposure or any privileged perspective on them, but in their densely textured totality” (Prior, 1998, p. 37). Exposures observed in his data aided Prior’s (1998) argument about the role of social interactions in producing written texts. Rather than assume students simply receive and respond to a writing assignment, Prior’s data elicited how assignments were framed via various interactions, or exposures, surrounding students’ eventual written products. These included things like course documents, in-the-writing centers discussion, email conferencing, conversation in office hours, critiqued drafts, responding to instructor comments, and so on. The combined picture of exposures reveals the interpretive work that goes into a single writing assignment for any student – including for L2 writers. As Prior (1998) states in his study of the graduate seminar, “The diverse backgrounds of the students and the wealth of potential cues for the writing tasks embedded in their history of the course provided ample resources for students to construct heterogeneous representations of both the writing tasks and their communicative and social contexts” (p. 45). Therefore, exposures help to highlight students’ multiple motives for writing as they interface with the laminated activities surrounding that assignment,

consequently explaining how interpretation and negotiation of the same writing task can lead to different written products.

Students in disciplinary contexts may not only differently interpret meanings embedded in writing assignments and the instructional activities surrounding them, but they also face other challenges of learning to write for a new context. Related difficulties include tasks often specified by assignments in disciplinary contexts, as with synthesizing knowledge to produce authoritative texts capable of illustrating mastery of course material. Bazerman (2013) argues, “Moving from the role of knowledge receiver to knowledge maker requires many fundamental changes of stance and role” (p. 196). Even at the undergraduate level, students are asked to read, digest, and reproduce knowledge contained in disciplinary texts, perhaps requiring them “to have something to say about it that is not just repetition” (Bazerman, 2013, p. 195). And then there is the management of genre sets found in disciplinary circumstances – establishing recognition of them through knowing when and how to use them. Difficulties students face in disciplinary writing situations often relate to the perceived audience or readers for texts because students know they are charged with exhibiting communicative competence from within given communities of practice. While resultant angst stems from “the way people make judgments about ethnicity, the writing centers, education, creativity, and intelligence on the basis of one’s writing,” it is also due to “whether others will attend to, take seriously, and understand what it is one has written, and then further whether others will approve” (Bazerman, 2013, p. 197). Audience anxiety may be even more pronounced in the case of multilingual writers managing academic, linguistic, and cultural elements associated with disciplinary writing tasks.

In sum, heterogeneity was a central impetus for Prior's (1998) work in questioning existing frameworks for interpreting student writing in disciplinary situations, and for instead using sociohistoric approaches to attend to the variation inherent in his data. Prior advanced the conversation of disciplinary writing by challenging the notion of discourse communities as fixed, uniform locations for students to enter. By replacing it with disciplinarity, attention is instead focused upon the processes students engage with in disciplinary enculturation, acknowledging that disciplinary enculturation is indeed heterogeneous because communities of practice are not consistently stable and because interactants themselves are diverse. Furthermore, Prior discusses intersubjectivity as equally challenging to align, given students may share neither goal nor assignment interpretation with their instructors. In expanding his point of analysis to literate activity, Prior was also able to better capture multiplicity in students' motives and additional influence from laminated activity – both of which impacted textual production through a series of well documented exposures.

Analysis of Key Themes

As with Prior's (1998) findings, data from this dissertation study indicate heterogeneity in the ways L2 international students interpret and complete two writing assignments in a disciplinary setting. Furthermore, it is apparent that the course functions as a site of disciplinarity, as subjects reiterated the presence of multiple levels of influence impacting not only their creation of heterogeneous texts, but also their processes of disciplinary enculturation. Given subjects' prior and overlapping histories with writing at the university, the course existed as one of several communities of practice within which students engaged - each equally capable of mediating the writing situation at hand, while also entangling with individuals' motives. Students did not just receive each writing assignment,

and then respond accordingly; rather, their response was mediated by other factors both including and going beyond the scope of the actual assignment itself, and their response was also shaped by the agency they had. Thus, what began as a comparative study of five international students writing two assignments in a lower division disciplinary course expanded to include subjects' broader literate activities that contributed to the conceptualization and production of two writing assignments. These perspectival accounts of literate activity helped reveal the various exposures leading to the completion of each assignment. For the purposes of analyzing the immediate and most salient findings of this dissertation study, the following ideas from Prior's (1998) work are primary: (1) disciplinary enculturation occurring through processes associated with disciplinarity, rather than discourse communities, and (2) exposures as a means of accounting for the various, interacting influences on students' written texts. Interconnected terms are also discussed, as with the multiplicity evident in students' task representations and related laminated activities that functioned as broader influences on students' written work. All of this reveals disciplinarity in a local circumstance, analyzing the specific exposures impacting L2 students' writing in a disciplinary setting, and speaking more specifically to how exposures can provide a lens for tracing the process of disciplinary enculturation for these students.

Analysis of the data resonates with four of Prior's (1998) exposures: (1) writing tasks as texts, (2) students' representations of the task, (3) negotiating the task, and (4) situating the writing task. Table 17 helps to warrant the use of these four exposures based upon occurrence.

Table 17

Occurrence of Each Exposure Type

Exposure	Description	Occurrence
Exposure 1	Writing Tasks as Texts	13
Exposure 4	Representations of the Task	65
Exposure 6	Negotiating the Task	36
Exposure 7	Situating the Writing Task	66

Note. Exposure occurrences were tabulated across all three interviews per subject.

While exposure one had the least amount of occurrences, it was still relevant for inclusion because it helps demonstrate that writing tasks are a significant element of students' experiences in this disciplinary course. Students exhibited awareness of related documentation for writing as amply provided by course handouts. Thus, while writing tasks are well articulated in this disciplinary setting and related expectations intend to be elaborate, this exposure helps to show that students acknowledge the significance of writing in the course in referring directly to the materials and guidelines provided. The fourth, sixth, and seventh exposures were more plentiful in my data, and are articulated fully in the next section.

While the occurrence of each exposure is helpful for understanding why it was chosen, that is not the ultimate point. Instead, these patterns of occurrence also coincide with heterogeneous response practices on the part of the students in my study. Therefore, as later discussion will indicate, my data aligns with four exposures, serving to reinforce the use of sociohistoric theory as viable in studies of second language writing. However, my findings also move beyond these exposures in presenting a new concept, *dual enculturation*, not adequately addressed by any of the preexisting exposures as they were conceptualized.

In the next section, I briefly describe Prior's exposures as he conceptualized them, and then use selected examples from my data to support and elaborate upon the exposures

Prior described, but from within the scope of my own subjects and their context(s) for writing. Selected examples are telling cases that best illustrate the corresponding exposure, and most clearly illustrate students' heterogeneous experiences writing in the course - sometimes through meaningful comparison in-text or via tables. When comparisons are made, these sometimes appear across inexperienced and experienced students to further illustrate how heterogeneous students' practices were. Still, even within students grouped as experienced or inexperienced, diversity was apparent. Thus, not all telling cases included in the next section are meant to contrast solely inexperienced from experienced students, as heterogeneity was found both within and across categorizations of students. Furthermore, not all telling cases necessitate comparison to illustrate evidence of the corresponding exposure. Finally, because of the alignment between Prior's data and my own, I have retained the name of each exposure, except for omitting "in students' projects" from the last exposure.

Writing Tasks as Texts. Prior (1998) asserts that disciplinary writing tasks and expectations are communicated through a system of interrelated genres for a given course. This course provided ample documentation of writing assignments and related expectations, as presented through a variety of materials: the course syllabus, schedule, course policies related to writing expectations and assessment, two multi-page sets of instructions for each paper assignment, online citation style and library database guides, two section assignments focused on outline production, one section assignment for finding empirical studies, and one section assignment practicing APA. These interrelated genres communicated explicit expectations for writing as related to reading, outlining or otherwise engaging with the process of writing, understanding assessment, reviewing and interpreting disciplinary research, seeking help, submitting work, and adhering to field-specific citations. These

combined texts were suggestive of what students' final texts ought to aim for, and they implied "heuristics for thinking [word omitted], reading, and writing" (Prior, 1998, p. 37) within the social science discipline. The documents also implied writing values attached to the discipline, the course, or its instructor (e.g. as with paper assignments alluding to a series of steps one should follow when writing), in addition to providing explicit tips for engaging with and writing about course material. As with Prior's (1998) graduate seminar, these documents "provided a fairly elaborated textual representation of the expected products and processes for the writing tasks" (p. 39). Thus, in both cases, ample documentation was provided as a means of communicating writing processes and expectations within a disciplinary context. In addition to the various documents distributed, students were also given media content to analyze that acted as extensions of the writing tasks. Although not in written form like the other course documents, media content was a required aspect of each assignment, and students communicated that it also served as a task reference – particularly when they found the written assignment ambiguous. Table 18 exhibits how Yilin interpreted what was expected of her.

Table 18

Yilin's Interpretation of Paper Organization

-
- "I want to organize the essay by time – it means I describe the situation I wrote by times. For example, I first analysis the first sentence of the character, then the middle story in the situation, and the final step is scene... We need to know the logic – know the content of the conversation."
-

As an inexperienced student, table 18 illustrates Yilin's mistaken belief that chronology was the preferred means of organization, rather than the connection among her ideas. Documents were provided from the outset of the course as contents in the course reader, or as online

supplemental guides, whereas media content was released a couple of weeks before each assignment was due. While the array of documentation was intended to help students clarify course expectations for writing, students interpreted and interacted with them differently. Furthermore, some students found both course documentation and assigned media content confusing due to a lack of experience comprehending writing expectations communicated via a foreign academic language and culture.

Students agreed that these documents were simultaneously useful and limiting. Students recalled that they began their writing processes by reviewing the assignment prompt. Cai believed this was a particularly important starting point, and a key aspect of the overall systematic process she relied upon. Yuriko remarked that both paper assignments were very clear, leading her to revisit the assignment for support as needed while planning and writing. Vivien and Yuriko both revisited and reread specific sections of the assignment prompts while writing, as with looking for hints about how to generate a thesis. However, whereas Yuriko found each prompt's specificity reassuring, Vivien found this frustrating because of the limitations she perceived. For example, with assignment one, she longed to use outside resources to better support her definitions and ideas, but the prompt redirected students to course material instead. With prompt two, she was able to use outside sources in the form of empirical studies. While this initially pleased her, she lost enthusiasm when she realized that course materials were still the central point of reference in the second paper as well. In addition to the writing prompts, students made use of the other written materials. Cai and Vivien liked using the online guides when for procedural questions about the studies and APA. Still, these examples show that while course documents served as useful heuristics for planning and writing, the inherent detail provided by the range of documents available could

also be restrictive in some cases. Table 19 portrays Vivien and Yuriko's contrasting impressions about the usefulness of course documentation.

Table 19

Vivien and Yuriko's Reactions to Course Documentation

Vivien	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Perceived limitations</i>: "This paper – the sources are limited. You have to use the sources from the book or from the lecture... So, it is really hard to find definition or words cause sometimes you can only have one definition cause the professor didn't mention it in lecture. So, you have only the definition from the textbook."
Yuriko	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Perceived usefulness</i>: "Because the paper prompt is explain very detail, so I could figure out what I have to do from the paper prompt... the goal is very clear, so I could know what is lacked from my paper. So, it was easier for me to revise."

Although they were both experienced students, Yuriko and Vivien did not share similar views of the course documentation as indicated by table 19.

Detailed guidelines also caused confusion, posing a significant writing hurdle for non-native English speaking students to overcome. Quinn clarified the prompt with three different people: her TA, a Chinese friend in the major, and her Korean friend and roommate who was also enrolled in the course. Additionally, she used Google to track down example essays because, despite the extensive instructions and other supporting documents, she could not conceptualize the final written product expected of her. The range of input Quinn sought revealed her uncertainty in deciphering the prompt. However, in assignment two, Quinn no longer worried about her comprehension of the prompt, as she came to realize she had understood the first well enough. The reverse was true for Yilin because her concern over prompt comprehension intensified as she progressed through assignment one and reported that it posed a significant barrier to her performance. Her repeated process of outlining reflected her gradual realization that she did not understand the assignment well; her TA's feedback confirmed her concern. In assignment two, Yilin was increasingly worried over her

comprehension of the assignment prompt – though unnecessarily – and sought help from the writing center and professor, whereas she had only emailed the TA with assignment one. Although she sought prompt clarification from more than one source, she ended up verifying her existing comprehension of the assignment with each source of help she sought. Despite her concerns, Yilin transitioned from struggling with the first prompt to exhibiting much greater confidence in understanding the second prompt – after seeking help. With Yilin and Quinn, the ability to decipher assignment-related texts was greatly influential in their process of writing, seeking help, and in gaining familiarity with the diverse kinds of writing challenges found in non-composition disciplinary writing situations.

Interestingly, Cai also had questions about both writing prompts and posed these to the TA; however, her questions were more specific to clarifying aspects of the prompt she already understood, as with exactly how the TA wanted the paper to be tied together. Thus, in Cai's case, she had not struggled to decipher assignment-related texts as Yilin and Quinn had; instead, she questioned how to perform expectations she perceived as somewhat different than assignments she encountered elsewhere, given her increased amount of experience.

Students ironically exhibited confusion in relying upon course documents and media content for writing guidance; this confusion was often attached to linguistic and cultural issues pertinent to the U.S. academic context, rather than just social science content. Yilin and Cai's recollections of revisiting media content for assignment clarification also illustrated this distinction. Yilin's attempts to overcome struggles with prompt comprehension led her through a circular process of re-watching the entire episode and her eventual scene several times to clarify assignment objectives. This process resulted in the

multiple outlines she wrote. Thus, when revisiting the assignment prompt and related examples was insufficient, Yilin turned to the assigned media content for guidance. Whereas Yilin used media content to understand the assigned writing prompt, Cai revisited media content to re-analyze specific aspects of the prompt, as with selecting a scene and clarifying how to apply course content to that scene. This again showed that Cai understood the prompt, but felt challenged in performing some of its component parts, whereas Yilin did not understand the prompt well and tried to supplement it with reviewing associated media content for clarification. Table 20 provides comparative comments of Yilin experiencing confusion about the prompt, whereas Cai was in search of procedural clarification.

Table 20

Yilin and Cai's Issues with the Prompt

Cai	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Confirming the prompt:</i> “I was meeting [the TA] before is started writing that paper...My question was I was not sure if I need to use, um, empirical studies for all my three features, or I can just use two of them.”
Yilin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Overcoming prompt comprehension:</i> “I just ask [the writing center tutor] to look at this and, uh, I told her about my own opinion – own understanding of this instruction, and to ask her to help me to check and she help me to analysis the instruction... She thinks I didn't misunderstand.”

Thus, Cai sought to clarify what she perceived as an odd gap in the prompt for assignment two, while Yilin sought to prevent the same assignment misunderstandings she suffered from in the first assignment. Yilin attributed her misunderstandings to linguistic and cultural struggles in comprehending communicated expectations for academic writing. While this exposure aligns with Prior's definition of it, findings point to linguistic and cultural comprehension as problems not accounted for with its baseline description provided by Prior.

Students' Representations of the Task. As with Prior's (1998) student interviews, my own showed that students interpreted the assignment and drew task representations from explicit statements in course documentation and from implicit variables tacitly impacting their impression of the task. Task representation derives from the work of Flower, et al. (1990), suggesting that student texts are indeed heterogeneous, but attributing these differences to student – rather than other social or historical – factors. Despite Flower, et al.'s differences with Prior's conceptualization of task representation, which were inclusive of other social and historical factors, the important contributions were heterogeneity and students' assumptions that they produced texts similar to those of their peers, even when that was not the case.

My students' interpretations resonated with Prior's conceptualization of task representation, but were still bound up linguistic and cultural obstacles that often overshadowed students' abilities to focus solely on social science disciplinary learning. Their representation of the task correlated with their writing priorities and spanned degrees of simply directing their attention to specific aspects of writing to anxiously fixating upon perceived concerns. At times, their chosen foci was misdirected and correlated with overestimating or underestimating aspects of the assignment. As Prior (1998) argued, students' diverse backgrounds and varied experiences in a course result in a “wealth of potential cues for the writing tasks,” and “ample resources for students to construct heterogeneous representations of both the writing tasks and their communicative and social contexts” (p. 45).

The present data indicated heterogeneous representations translating to which assignment criteria received attention and to what degree, particularly as illustrated by

students' attention to lower and higher order concerns. Lower-order concerns involve attention toward grammar, punctuation, spelling, and other syntactical forms of awkwardness, whereas higher-order concerns deal with substantive content, argumentative development, cohesion, clarity, organization, and so on (Bean, 1996). This multiplicity stemmed from lower and higher order concerns that were explicitly addressed in course documents pertaining to the assignments; however, students also made inferences about where to direct their attention and why. Across subjects, an interesting distinction appeared in how they attributed importance to linguistic and cultural variables, as with cultural comprehension, English expression, English comprehension, and grammar or other markers of the NNES status. While these were lower-order concerns, they complicated less experienced students' abilities to focus on higher-order aspects of writing. Table 21 illustrates how Quinn and Yilin attributed importance to such issues with the first assignment.

Table 21

Quinn and Yilin's Focus on Lower-Order Issues in Paper One

Quinn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Comprehension of media content:</i> "I don't get the point. I don't get the sentences, so that's what I'm stuck on." • <i>Grammar:</i> "[My writing] is really Chinese style, not like native speaker's style...my biggest problem." • <i>Writing in English:</i> "I know what I want express, but I don't know how to use the sentence to express, like, clearly."
Yilin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Comprehension of media content:</i> "I think [American students] don't have some confusion, which I have." • <i>Grammar:</i> "Grammar always be my biggest problem." • <i>Understanding English:</i> "Sometimes, I'm confused about their sentence. So, I change my ideas during my several times of watching them."

Both Yilin and Quinn had fewer writing experiences overall. Yilin needed to repeatedly watch the episode from assignment one and also needed her friend's help translated sentences. Quinn also relied upon friends and the writing center to help her translate what she was seeing and saying. Both were very much caught up in issues of language and culture as tied to their ability to engage with the not only the social science writing task, but also to demonstrate effectiveness as a writer in a foreign context. Nonetheless, in reality, assessment focused primarily upon execution of higher order criteria, as lower order issues were largely ignored unless so numerous as to be distracting from students' overall writing.

Some subjects attenuated the frequency of lower order concerns – as with navigating Western processes of writing - in transitioning to the second assignment. Quinn recalled her process for writing assignment one as frontloading and prioritizing lower order concerns, leaving higher order concerns as something she attended to less and only in later drafts. After thinking about her TA's feedback on assignment one, she reversed this process in the second assignment, whereby she attended to higher order concerns earlier in her writing process and paid more attention to them overall in revising her various drafts. For example, she thought more comprehensively about concepts with assignment two and considered argument for the first time, whereas time in assignment one was largely devoted to the linguistic and cultural concerns she felt impeded her writing. Quinn reported struggling more with these sophisticated aspects of the second assignment, whereas she had focused more upon linguistic and cultural struggles in assignment one. However, she also neglected important, higher order aspects in both assignments, as with underestimating the thesis in assignment one and her delay in searching for and selecting studies in assignment two. While Quinn progressed in turning her attention toward higher order concerns, she did not appear receptive

to the full range of important criteria, instead appearing to make slower advances by focusing on fewer, more manageable criteria. As a writer less sure of herself, Quinn was learning how to simultaneously decipher and manage multiple key assignment criteria and related expenditures of her time. Similarly, Yilin also progressed by easing her concern over prompt comprehension in assignment two. She sought a full spectrum of help in trying to better grasp concepts, as she had also struggled with those in assignment one. She involved the professor, TA, and her own means of trying to find study support, revisiting course notes, and resorting to Google for concept clarification. In the instance of the first paper, she was troubled by prompt comprehension and concept comprehension. While she had realized during assignment one that she did not understand the prompt, she was surprised to learn that she had also not understood some of the concepts she used. Thus, in assignment two, she turned her attention to improving her comprehension of the various course materials needed to write the paper assignment. While Yilin's comprehensive attempts to improve conceptual understanding were impressive, she was still struggling with comprehension as before. Students' reported struggles showed that they felt compelled to attend to issues of comprehension before being able to transition their focus to the presumably more immediate context for writing in a given discipline. Furthermore, students were often unaware that their initial focus had been misdirected from the underlying aims of the assignment, which placed much greater emphasis on disciplinary thinking and writing.

Also similar to Quinn, Yilin was very fixated upon her insecurities as a non-native English speaker in assignment one, as this worry had followed her from high school. She had worried about expressing herself in English, understanding English speakers in the assigned media content, and her overall lack of experience with both disciplinary and academic

writing. Her transition to assignment two illustrated less of a preoccupation with linguistic concerns, and increases in confidence with both lower and higher order concerns she had managed in the prior assignment. Both Quinn and Yilin had fewer experiences with disciplinary writing at the university, but their experiences with assignment one helped direct their focus toward higher order issues. In short, based on their experiences with assignment one, they exhibited degrees of progress in learning how to read into an assignment prompt and multiplicity in directing their attention to important criteria and attempting to perform accordingly.

By contrast, having more prior disciplinary writing experiences at the university seemed to help students decipher key assignment criteria and see relationships among criteria. Yuriko, Vivien, and Cai consistently appeared able to extract salient assignment criteria and generally trusted their comprehension of assignment prompts. These more experienced writers still attended to – and struggled with – lower order concerns; however, they were not as caught up in less central assignment aspects, and recognized there were more important criteria to focus on. For example, they noticed structural aspects of writing that directly fed their thesis and arguments, having greater sensitivity to the cohesion needed among the various writing decisions they had to make. This was apparent in the consistent attention they paid to the same complicated aspects of writing across both assignments: Vivien selecting and defining concepts carefully, Cai using the conclusion to her advantage, and Yuriko ensuring soundness of structure. These three writers worried over aspects of writing in ways that showed their recognition of the relationship among separate elements.

Having more prior experience also helped students manage challenging criteria with sophisticated thinking and know how to allocate time to multiple, important criteria. In

assignment two, Vivien worried about multiple aspects of working with empirical studies; this evidenced her realization of the importance of using studies, but also showed her sophistication in thinking comprehensively about them. She was not only able to extract a key assessment criterion; she was able to view it from multiple angles, thus leading to her varied concerns. By contrast, Yilin had multiple concerns about prompt comprehension with both assignments, even though she gained confidence with assignment two. This led to varied forms of help seeking for the same issue, rather than varied approaches to executing a challenging criteria. Cai and Vivien both made interesting decisions when faced with time constraints. In electing to remain with a scene choice she later regretted in assignment one, Vivien exhibited awareness that concept selection was more important to assessment than scene selection. Furthermore, she knew that anything related to concepts was more important than grammar, which she did not bother revising in her last-minute writing process. Cai also abandoned grammar revisions when working close to the deadline, and she adapted her systematic process to make her work appear more organized than it actually was. These responsive shifts to time constraints spoke to the accumulated experiences Vivien and Cai had at the university, which culminated in an awareness of where to place time and attention in disciplinary writing situations. In both their cases, they chose to forgo lower order concerns; instead prioritizing higher order concerns.

Still, Yuriko had some similarities with Quinn and Yilin in terms of attention to linguistic and cultural concerns. Like Quinn and Yilin, she also attended to grammar and other markers of her NNES status across both papers, whereas Vivien and Cai deprioritized these aspects. However, unlike Quinn and Yilin, Yuriko did not use sentence translation. She felt her writing had a very Japanese order, and sought help in correcting related features, but

never used sentence translation. By comparison, Yilin and Quinn had more extensive grammatical correction because of relying upon sentence translation. Though Yuriko was also newer to the university, she seemed to have similar timesaving techniques resonant with Vivien and Cai who were the most experienced writers. Nonetheless, Yilin, Yuriko, and Quinn all worried about fewer linguistic and cultural issues with the second assignment, even though Yilin and Quinn continued to use sentence translation. However, while students' responsive shifts arose from the data, the exposure did not adequately account for them.

Negotiating the Task. As with the heterogeneous influences of course documentation and communication surrounding the immediate writing task, students also exhibited heterogeneous task negotiation behaviors. Task negotiation generally arose at points where students encountered uncertainty; consequently, students made explicit attempts to resolve their uncertainty by seeking help from others. Before assignments were due, students in the present study reported task negotiation interactions with a variety of persons acting as resources of help: the professor, the TA, international student friends, American friends, and writing center tutors. Additionally, students also revisited media content as a means of navigating troublesome assignment terms. By explicitly asking for feedback during their writing process, students were “essentially renegotiating the terms of the assignment to create a kind of provisional final draft” (Prior, 1998, p. 48), especially when engaging with persons of authority. Over time, students who sought explicit negotiation realized changes in whom to seek help from and why, which showed progress in their ability to match the source of negotiation with the type of help sought. However, Prior (1998) also described how negotiation could be implicit, as with forms of resistance to authority. In the present study, implicit negotiation appeared as apprehensive avoidance of authority (or other) figures

capable of helping with explicit negotiation. Resistance also appeared as self-reliance, whereby students resisted external writing input. Whereas some subjects negotiated assignment terms with resources of help, others relied upon themselves, essentially negotiating the terms of the assignment alone and refusing outside help. Since students in the present study had differently interpreted the assignment and consequently arrived at heterogeneous task representations, it is unsurprising that they also exhibited divergent kinds of task negotiation. However, each student exhibited awareness that some level of cultural and linguistic task negotiation was necessary in order to exhibit academic writing competence beyond the level of the social science task. Furthermore, this awareness exceeded the limits of the exposure as an analytical device.

Variation in task negotiation appeared when students' help-seeking behavior changed across both assignments, as represented by which resources of help they pursued. For example, Quinn sought the help of four different peers (both international students and an American student) with assignment one, but then limited peer help to just her American friend with assignment two. In one interesting case, she had discontinued seeking help from one of her Chinese friends with whom she had collaborated in assignment one. Quinn claimed she approached this friend for verification of her adherence to the prompt; instead, she received grammar revisions. However, it is notable that Quinn struggled to understand the first assignment and its key criteria. Her reports of the conversation with her friend indicated that she was somewhat unsure of the kinds of help she had asked her friend for – possibly explaining her dissatisfaction with the help received, and her decision to discontinue further use of this friend. Although not directly reported by her in this way, given Quinn's comprehension issues with the first assignment prompt, it is possible she was unable to

explain the assignment adequately to others outside the course. Furthermore, her comprehension issues and negative experience with her friend redirected her to the TA whose help she sought with assignment one after meeting with her Chinese friend, and as the last step in her process of checking prompt comprehension. Quinn's role in task negotiation was likely much easier with her TA versus her Chinese friend who was not enrolled in the course. The TA could likely compensate for and indicate gaps in Quinn's understanding that her peer could not; thus providing a rationale for Quinn taking her inquiries to the TA, and for discontinuing this friend's help with assignment two.

In assignment two, Vivien and Yilin chose to negotiate the writing task with resources they previously avoided, and received significant help in doing so. While she was comfortable addressing the TA and professor, Vivien was apprehensive about working with peers and the writing center because she feared that integrating their advice would make her work plagiaristic. She loosened her stance after assignment one, largely because another course's writing assignment sent her to the writing center for thesis help before assignment two was due. With assignment two, Vivien not only benefitted from visiting the writing center, but also from conversations with friends. In the former, she deliberately started the assignment early to have time to visit a writing center tutor. Vivien reported that her thinking and eventual work were significantly changed by this visit; the tutor helped with study placement, thesis development, and her argument about the target audience, which culminated in a concept shift to accommodate these improved ideas. Table 22 shows an excerpt about Vivien's recollection of this conversation.

Table 22

Impacts on Vivien's Second Paper from Seeking Writing Center Help

-
- *Deepen thinking*: “That tutor actually helped me with, like, my thinking. She told me, like, make the – like, make the paper more in-depth, like, don’t write about the surface level kind of thing.”
 - *Clarify arguments about audience*: “[She said] think more about, like, social part of audiences...then I thought, like, little girls – they are not, like, actually a person who buys the product. Their parents will buy.”
 - *Make convincing arguments*: “[The feature] should be more obvious... It’s kind of controversial. That’s why I took that away.”
-

Vivien’s paper changed as a direct result of seeking help she had previously misunderstood and avoided; furthermore, she was able to appreciate the quality of help she received and reframed her future thinking about working with writing center tutors. Yilin also changed her mind about resources of help for negotiating assignment two. She previously questioned the professor’s knowledge of course writing assignments, but turned to the professor for help with the second assignment. As with Vivien’s newfound use of the writing center, Yilin’s work benefitted greatly. Yilin brought a list of questions to the professor, and sought verification of her understanding of the prompt by asking the professor if she was allowed to express her opinion about the ad’s effectiveness (even though the assignment stated it), and requesting that the professor review her outline. They discussed Yilin’s choice of concepts, which led Yilin to two changes: a refined understanding of one concept, and the inclusion of an idea she had overlooked, but which added depth to her existing ideas. The depth of Yilin’s decisions benefitted by seeking the professor’s help, and like Vivien, she readily integrated the professor’s advice, rather than doubting a resource as she once had.

Still, there is the question as to why Vivien would not see the writing center as a helpful source for negotiating the course’s writing tasks in assignment one. This can probably

be explained by her status as a both a pre-major student and a more experienced writer than Yilin. Unlike Yilin, Vivien understood both prompts well – perhaps taking course documentation a little too seriously when heeding warnings about plagiarism (see Appendix A, B, and C). Because Vivien wanted to be in the major, she may have been unnecessarily cautious until a chance writing center interaction stemming from another course’s assignment forced her to the writing center. Yilin also wanted to be in the major, but had fewer writing experiences than Vivien and struggled to understand the writing prompts. Because Yilin was unaware that the professor had crafted the course’s writing assignments, she was late in realizing how helpful the professor could be. Thus, both Yilin and Vivien avoided resources of help with the first assignment, but for different reasons. Yilin’s comprehension issues inhibited her ability to negotiate the first assignment and to understand the course context surrounding it, whereas Vivien’s overly cautious disposition led her to unnecessarily fear a source of help. In either case, both Vivien and Yilin overcame their apprehensions and benefitted significantly in doing so.

For Yilin, seeking the NES professor’s help was particularly significant because of her admitted historical avoidance of NES teachers. In fact, only Yilin and her Taiwanese friend saw the first paper before Yilin handed it in. While she had emailed the TA for help, she did not show the TA (or any NES person) her writing until handing in the assignment. With assignment two, Yilin sought the professor’s help early in her writing process – while outlining. Although she did not show anyone her actual writing before it was due, she opened herself up for feedback more in negotiating the assignment with other resources of help such as again emailing the TA and approaching the writing center for help. While these instances represent a small gain in task negotiation for Yilin, further progress is still possible. When

questioning her own perspective on the ad's effectiveness, she approached fellow male international student friends for their feedback because she reasoned that young men were the target audience. Still, she avoided directly asking Americans and instead searched online to see what American men generally thought of the ad. In a related instance, Yuriko appeared comfortable enough asking Americans for help as evidenced by her varied resources of help with both assignments. However, in both assignments she had more questions for her TA than she actually asked. When pressed as to why she did not pose all questions, she stated that she assumed such questions were not an issue if the TA did not mention it directly. These instances of Yuriko and Yilin avoiding degrees of help from NES Americans could be for reasons of culture, shyness, a lack of American contact, or other unknown variables. Alternately, given Yilin's historical resistance to discussing her ideas with NES Americans, her resistance could be another instance of avoidance. Whatever the underlying cause, Yuriko and Yilin's avoidance is illustrative of the potential for unanticipated linguistic and cultural challenges international students face when attempting to negotiate writing assignments in an English-speaking context. While the exposure addressed disciplinary interactions as a means of navigating writing tasks, it did not address language and culture as intervening variables capable of altering if or how students sought help. As with other instances where subjects reported struggling through linguistic or cultural variables impacting their ability to write, they perceived these as uniquely their own as NNES students.

Subjects also rethought which resources were most helpful for which kinds of task negotiation. Yilin wanted to ensure better understanding of assignment two and asked both the professor and writing center to confirm her thinking, whereas she only emailed the TA with assignment one. She also took the writing center's advice about searching for studies.

Her difficulty with assignment one led her to rethink her use of sources; assignment two was the first time she sought help from the writing center. In Yuriko's case, she already had a habit of using the writing center for grammatical help, but intensified this with assignment two in seeking help twice. Part of the reason for this change stemmed from unexpected help on assignment one, whereby the tutor pointed out that Yuriko could improve her overall structure by deepening her thesis and conclusion. Therefore, with assignment two, Yuriko visited the writing center twice: once for help with grammar, and another time for the same structural help she previously received. Finally, in assignment one, Quinn relied upon the TA for help with prompt comprehension, which resulted in the TA reading two paragraphs and reviewing her thesis in draft two. Quinn seemed to realize the TA's help was beneficial; she sought the TA's help more immediately with draft one of assignment two, and asked the TA to review a paragraph and her argument, but did not request confirmation of prompt adherence. In addition to showing a shift away from a particularly troublesome lower order concern, Quinn's changed behavior with assignment two illustrates her awareness of the TA as a significant source of advice, rather than exhibiting such heavy reliance on her peers. Quinn continued to experience some troubles in navigating the second assignment. However, as with the other subjects discussed, Quinn improved her ability to modify sources of task negotiation to her advantage and better understood which sources of help could be influential in ensuring a stronger paper. In sum, each of the aforementioned subjects learned how to better navigate sources of help with assignment two because of their experiences with assignment one.

Students also exhibited consistency in negotiating both writing tasks with resources best paired with the kinds of help they needed, but with differing degrees of satisfaction.

Although Vivien was short on time with assignment one, she sought help from the TA and professor with clarifying and selecting concepts. This pattern reemerged and intensified with assignment two during which Vivien had more time to write. Though she was unable to make the professor's office hours, the TA again helped her with important higher order criteria, and more than Vivien had time to seek with assignment one. Vivien spoke of her awareness of the TA as her grader, stating this as the cause for seeking help with two issues she felt most reduced her assignment one score. They discussed conceptual choices, study argumentation, and defining concepts. Vivien's more expansive use of the TA in assignment two resulted in her avoiding a mistaken conceptual choice, but she was still dissatisfied with a conceptual definition the TA provided. Yuriko also experienced underlying insecurities despite negotiating writing tasks with familiar resources. Yuriko had a favored network of helpful resources, and she relied upon them in both assignments. However, like Vivien, Yuriko's sense of satisfaction correlated with her confidence in receiving the amount and kind of help she desired because she also sought targeted advice from others. Unlike Vivien, Yuriko was often very unsure of her thinking; thus, another motivation for negotiating assignments was receiving validation for her ideas. Yuriko was newer to the university than Vivien. In instances where she was unable to receive the full range of help she had hoped for, she expressed anxiety over related aspects of her work, but also trusted herself less when forced to negotiate aspects of writing tasks on her own. Both Vivien and Yuriko knew which kinds of resources were helpful for which aspects of the paper, reflecting sensitivity to obtaining help as appropriate to the designated source of help.

In the present study, resistance was found not only in subjects avoiding resources out of fear (e.g. Vivien's concern about the writing center and plagiarism) or misunderstanding

(e.g. Yilin's false assumptions about the professor's involvement in writing assignments), but also in the form of resisting negotiation altogether. Prior (1998) tied student resistance to authority, whereby his graduate student subjects negotiated "the spirit rather than the letter of the assignment," (p. 48). This meant that students gained independence through experience. As a junior student enrolled in the course for general education credit, Cai primarily negotiated the course's writing tasks on her own. She elicited the TA's help only twice when gathering information about how the TA wanted assignment one's ideas connected, and when verifying that a third study was not required with assignment two. By accident, Cai received more help with assignment one; the TA reviewed her outline and pointed out her weak thesis, though Cai had not sought this help. This criticism was repeated in Cai's feedback on assignment one; yet, Cai proceeded on her own with assignment two. While she did benefit from indirect negotiation in overhearing a conversation between her classmates and the TA, which changed her description of the target audience, this experience did not change Cai's thinking. She had also benefitted indirectly by making use of the online handouts the professor had posted to help students locate studies; still, she did not seek the professor's help in either assignment. She preferred self-reliance in negotiating writing tasks on her own, and resisted outside help. Furthermore, Cai said she intended to clarify the TA's vague feedback on assignment one, but instead opted to trust her own interpretation, and proceed with writing. As the most experienced student in the group and the only one enrolled for general education units, Cai approached the writing assignments with greater degrees of independence, and less of a need for confirmation from - or consultation with - others. Thus, Cai not only seemed more experienced with navigating various non-composition contexts for

writing, but she also appeared more at ease with the structures surrounding English academic writing, even as these overlapped with the social science context within which she wrote.

Aside from supporting prompt comprehension in the case of Yilin, revisiting assigned media content also played a role in students' negotiations of writing tasks as they sought clarification for their ideas and linguistic or cultural understandings. Yuriko returned to assignment two's advertisement as a means of figuring out what else to write when she ran out of ideas otherwise. Revisiting media content also aided cultural and linguistic comprehension. In assignment one, Quinn, Yilin and Yuriko re-watched the episode to clarify cultural meanings they could not decipher on their own. Quinn also re-watched her chosen scene several times, finally asking her Chinese friend in the major for help. Yilin recorded all of her scene's dialogue in assignment one, finally asking her roommate for help. Yilin also changed concepts because she was still confused by her chosen scene. Comprehension issues further affected students' choice of media content, as with Quinn choosing both the most understandable scene examples and advertisement and Yuriko choosing the ad with more dialogue. Meanwhile, Vivien and Cai did not report revisiting media content for linguistic or cultural reasons.

Finally, there were other ways language and culture interacted with students' negotiation of writing tasks, and these again challenged the exposure's existing conceptualization. All students addressed lower order concerns of grammar, in attempting to remove markers of the NNES status, but they went about this differently. Quinn and Yuriko repeated their means of linguistic negotiation across both assignments. Quinn worked on grammar both with her American friend and on her own, whereas Yuriko worked on her own and with the writing center. Cai and Vivien only attended to grammar with the second

assignment because they had more time. While Yilin had wanted her Taiwanese friend to continue helping her with assignment two, she was too busy; thus, Yilin persisted on her own. Cai worked alone, and Vivien asked her American friend to review her work. Students managed some linguistic aspects on their own, even when less comfortable doing so, as with Yuriko and Yilin. Even though Yuriko performed well on both assignments, she had comprehension issues and sought her TA's help with explaining a slang word in the episode of assignment one. Students struggled to articulate ideas in their own words, as with Yuriko asking the TA to help her articulate a concept in English for assignment two, Vivien feeling her definitions were limited by course resources, and Yilin relying upon headings in assignment one to express connections she could not make on her own. Given Cai's culmination of academic experiences and her reduced risk in taking the course as a pass/no pass student, she exhibited the least concern. Still, all students exhibited an awareness of needing to negotiate linguistic and cultural aspects of their work so that it adequately addressed English norms for writing, in addition to numerous other criteria embedded in the social science writing assignments. Their attention to linguistic and cultural issues in writing surpassed the exposure's emphasis on negotiating assignments to align with non-composition disciplinary ways of thinking and writing.

Situating the Writing Tasks. The prior exposures have dealt with the immediate context for writing: the course and its related writing assignments. However, Prior (1998) also described student writing as “embedded in and infused with motives, contexts, and resources” (p. 49) that extend beyond the scope of the immediate course and assignment. The influence of prior learning experiences via practice and feedback gives rise to factors that shape how students go about writing an assignment. These factors can further elicit responses

of student willingness or resistance to developing further as writers, as with students experiencing significant breakthroughs or seemingly becoming stuck. Furthermore, because students in the present study are non-native speakers of English, linguistic and cultural differences may compound their reported challenges in writing, although these challenges are not addressed in Prior's description. As students engage with multiple systems of activity over time, their written work is thus situated in not only the immediate context for writing and its broader institutional dynamics, but also in the contexts for writing students have encountered previously. Therefore, examining disciplinary writing tasks through only the lenses of course writing assignments and related documentation "would be like judging a movie still in production on the basis of a few disconnected frames" (Prior, 1998, p. 50). Considering how students' written work is situated among past influences analytically enriches the previous analysis of the immediate context for writing. By doing so, the influence of students' laminated activities across time and location emerges more clearly within the scope of the immediate course.

Students' written work was situated in the context of their experiences with assignment one and related TA feedback. Yilin's responsive and multifaceted approach to overcoming issues with assignment and conceptual comprehension illustrated this; however, she was dealing with comprehension issues. Alternately Vivien's responsiveness to criticisms of her definitions and Cai's reliance upon a systematic process for writing provide particularly clear examples because they readily changed their existing practices in light of TA feedback. Vivien's final version of assignment one was met with criticism for lack of conceptual definition. She discussed how she had tried to provide adequate definitions, but had apparently underestimated how much depth was desired. She disagreed with the TA's

feedback and countered that the limitations placed on sources prohibited further depth. Still, she took the TA's feedback in stride with assignment two whereby she used a comprehensive process to ensure her definitions were solid. While she again realized the use of sources was limited, Vivien still took full advantage of the sources she was allowed to use. Thus, when she felt her definitions were incomplete, she turned to another source for support, whether it was a study, course reading, or lecture material. She even consulted with the TA when unable to resolve definitions among permissible resources. Essentially, Vivien changed her practices for defining concepts across the two assignments. Cai's adapted her systematic process differently to suit the context surrounding each assignment. With assignment one, she adapted it to manage time a lack of time, cutting away grammar correction, and focusing more on higher order concerns to camouflage her hasty writing. When her work on assignment one was criticized for having a weak thesis and introduction, she responded by re-adapting her systematic process. This time, she had ample time to write, adding a step and further depth to other steps. She slowed her process, revisiting course content after choosing her three concepts and spending more time on her conclusion. The latter directly resonated with the TA's feedback on assignment one; Cai hoped an expanded, two-part conclusion would compensate for her concerns about repeated issues with the introduction and thesis. In these instances, it is apparent that Cai and Vivien's decisions in writing assignment two stemmed directly from their experiences with assignment one. Rather than just deal with the immediate assignment context for the second paper, they instead considered the experience and critiques that preceded it, and modified their practices accordingly.

In addition to responding to assignment one, Cai, Vivien, and Yilin attempted clever writing decisions in the second assignment that resonated with the system of comparative

grading used in the department's pre-major courses and related institutional fears they held. While comparative grading was an explicit part of both writing assignments, students attended to it differently, as more overwhelmed students instead focused on navigating the immediate assignment while resigning themselves to whatever outcome awaited them. For other students, comparative grading was both a central element of the immediate context for writing and an institutional barrier they feared. As a pre-major student interested in improving her score, one strategy Yilin attempted was incorporating three studies, instead of two; however, she was unable to find a third. Cai and Vivien had both written assignment one close to the deadline, but with different results. While Vivien was dissatisfied with her score and wished to improve, Cai had performed better, but wished to maintain her score. Both students exhibited sensitivity to their prior score and the comparative grading system by starting assignment two much earlier and putting in greater effort overall. Table 23 overviews the more substantial process each created between assignments one and two. It further details expansions Cai made to her systematic process.

Table 23

Comparison of Processes Between Papers One and Two for Vivien and Cai

Vivien P1 Process	Vivien P2 Process	Cai P1 Process	Cai P2 Process
Timing	Timing	Timing	Timing
• Outlining right before due	• Started earlier due to deadline confusion – “started thinking a week before due date”	• Started paper 2 days before due; wrote whole thing in four hours night before	• Writing one week before deadline but this was systematic process start
• Writing before due in “two hours”	Sequence	• No time for revision	• Actual writing: five days before. Finished two days before due.
Sequence	• Chooses ad: one was “really funny...there is not a lot of things...it has ineffective features,” so chooses other bc “more effective”	• “procrastination”, but did use “one step to another step to finish this paper”	• Started early bc studies
• Watched episode	• Considers “why it was effective” & chooses 3 concepts	• Outlines “long before the due date” – found hasty outline helpful when writing	Sequence
• Selected scene	• All turns into D1	• Read prompt	• Like P#1, began step-by-step process: read assignment for basics & specifics, watch ad, picks 3 concepts that are already connected, revisits course content “to familiarize myself w concepts once again,” looks for studies that are “useful,” reads studies, selects studies
• Outlining	• WC: expand more on ideas based on P#1 feedback of TA/prof	• Watched episode 5x	• Starts writing
• TA helps her day before deadline	• Generally - “I first choose the topic...then I find my research”	• Watched scene 6x	• Didn’t watch both ads “I was familiar” w one she chose. “I know how to write about it”
D1	• Each study takes one day to find	• Writes intro para	Outline
• Rushed process; no time for more drafts	D1	• Overlapping steps in systematic process: simultaneously chooses concepts & writes paras for them	• Studies are arbitrary & just for credit
Reviewing	• Due to mistaken early start, turned this in for outline credit	• Writes conclusion	D1
• Checks her spelling, but no time for grammar	• Not studies yet	• Mostly same as outline; changes are minor from outline	• Systematic approach involves multi-paragraph description/analysis
• Believes assign is about “research fact, so I didn’t care about my thesis – more about analysis”	• WC: structural advice on study placement, but ends up revising thinking		• Develops audience throughout
	D2		• References
	• Revisions from WC meeting: in-depth thinking, revision of audience from kids to parents, changed concepts		• 1 st para: intro, even though vowed not to do this from P#1
	• Looks for studies		• 2 nd para 1 st concept: analysis, relation to course material
	D3		• Etc.
	• Revisits reading to expand definition bc of not finding empirical study		• Conclusion: 2 paras of analyzing all 3 features together
	• Incorporates TA help (study argumentation, rethinking concepts), WC help (feminist movement)		• Uses studies for explanation & argument
	• Reads aloud to American friend		• Intended more than D1, but made minor changes to same draft instead – deleting sentences unrelated to argument, grammar
	D4		
	• Final draft. Based on read aloud w friend		

Note. D is shorthand for draft.

Table 23 illustrates a longer, more complex process with the second paper. Cai was unsure what her TA's feedback meant, but she decided not to seek clarification, and instead trusted her own estimation, which was also based off of historical feedback she was used to receiving elsewhere. Cai proceeded with responsive writing decisions based upon inferences she had made of assignment two. She opted to provide advice about how the ad's effectiveness could be improved, strengthened connections between her ideas, and made her analysis clearer through use of multi-paragraph discussion. Vivien responded by also starting early, but doing this to allow time for changing ideas (as she had been unable to in assignment one) and getting help with actual drafts of writing (as opposed to just her outline). She had also realized the importance of incorporating the studies, again reserving time to deal with the multiple study-related concerns she anticipated. Finally, because she knew the studies were integral to her overall argument in assignment two, she specifically began early so she could visit the TA after finding her studies. This way, she was able to make direct reference to them, and to ask about how to use the studies to form her argument. Vivien's experiences with assignment one led her to an awareness of how her process would need to change if she wanted entrance to the major. It also led her to focus upon her TA as a potential gatekeeper for the major and someone capable of helping her elevate her performance in a comparative grading system. Cai, on the other hand, also recognized the TA as a gatekeeper, but enlisted the TA's feedback more indirectly by assessing and addressing criticisms on her own. Cai likely took this risk because she was experienced in receiving feedback and the stakes were lower for her as pass/no pass student. Still, as a junior, she cared about academics and was very interested in the class; she may have taken less direct actions to address comparative grading, but she still showed sensitivity to institutional dynamics in

doing so. She wanted to maintain her appearance as a solid student. In both cases, Cai and Vivien's strategic writing choices responded to not only their immediate TA as grader, but also the system of grading used in the department because of the potential barrier to achievement it imposed. However, Vivien and Yilin focused upon barriers to the major, whereas Cai focused upon barriers to maintaining her academic performance.

As Cai's account demonstrates above, there were instances of students responding to historical feedback, in addition to being engaged in the immediate assignments of the course. Students had goals for writing improvement, and exhibited sensitivity to their documented weaknesses in writing. Cai was accustomed to receiving certain kinds of feedback on her writing, which helped her confidence in independently assigning meaning to the TA's feedback with assignment one. Essentially, Cai was used to critiques pointing to a lack of depth, often with her conclusion, thesis, and overall thinking. In assignment one, the TA had also disliked her introduction – a new critique for Cai. Thus, she strategized to overcome presumed weaknesses by developing a multi-paragraph conclusion to compensate for her thesis and introduction, and used a multi-paragraph analytical approach to enhance the depth of her ideas. Vivien was simultaneously enrolled in other courses requiring writing, leading her to synthesize similarities in task representation, pursue related means of assignment negotiation, and to make decisions that reflected overlapping, laminated activity. In assignment one, Vivien was unsurprised that her TA thought the thesis was weak, as she admitted similar feedback in writing assignments elsewhere at the university. She did attempt to make progress, as with visiting the writing center for help with another course's paper while integrating their thesis advice in assignment two. Vivien felt her thesis was improved with assignment two because it was a clearer guide for readers. In sum, Cai and Vivien's

actions clearly represented how their writing tasks were situated not only in the immediate context of the course, but also in other contexts that contributed to their understanding of academic writing and related perspectives of themselves as writers.

While some students had gleaned a sense of progress by connecting the immediate writing task to prior experiences, this did not preclude a sense of being stuck in some intangible location: somewhere between their perception of practicing a challenging writing technique and fully acquiring that technique. While Vivien and Cai had in fact changed historical practices to respond to immediate writing tasks, they still felt a mixture of confidence and doubt. Table 24 shows responses Cai and Vivien made that indicated lingering doubt about their writing practices.

Table 24

Vivien and Cai's Lingering Doubts

Vivien	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Knowing what and how to revise:</i> “This happened to me last time. And, that happens a lot while writing papers.”
Cai	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Provide a strong argument and clear thesis:</i> “I still am having the same problem. I didn’t solve it, even after this first paper.”

As stronger, more experienced writers, both admitted that they actually did not know *how* to improve historical issues that plagued their writing. Vivien knew things were awry in her writing, but she was unsure of how to strengthen her existing work, whereas Cai felt the same issue plagued in each class she wrote for. They had several experiences to draw from, consistent feedback patterns, and an awareness of their shortcomings; yet, they were unsure of which practical changes would guarantee progress. Yuriko also struggled with not knowing how to improve her use of the studies in assignment two, despite attempts to carefully select studies that fit her argument and changing to a stronger study per writing

center advice. Her sense of being stuck occurred despite having prior experience and success integrating outside research. These collective experiences of stronger, more experienced writers show how points of impasse are cultivated over time and location; they are very much situated within a historical trajectory of writing experiences, inclusive of – and often triggered by - the present assignment. While both the sense of being stuck and progress were not directly accounted for by the exposure, these were particularly crucial, given students' tendencies to be stuck at various points that were often conflated with the language or culture surrounding English academic writing.

By comparison, Quinn and Yilin were often stuck navigating language and culture; however, Yuriko faced similar struggles. Yilin's issues with prompt comprehension were well documented in assignment one. After addressing them thoroughly, she experienced no further issues in assignment two and exhibited significant progress. However, Yilin and Quinn clung to writing methods that seemed time-consuming and counterproductive, as with sentence translation. These practices reflected how they were caught in linguistic barriers that likely obscured attention to or recognition of more important assignment criteria. In fact, Quinn described language as her biggest issue. She was aware that Americans did not understand her writing, but she also exhibited evidence of struggling to establish understanding in help seeking interactions with her American TA. While Quinn had underestimated the thesis in assignment one, she still reported asking her TA for help numerous times. By the second interview, she had received her assignment back and reflected upon the TA's criticisms of the thesis. Quinn felt that she had followed the TA's advice of being clear and specific. She felt her work had been critiqued, despite following the TA's advice. While this may have been the case, Quinn later revealed deeper issues in not

understanding what a thesis was and how it functioned. Her meeting with the TA revealed that she understood the thesis as an isolated sentence; a later conversation with her Chinese friend in the major helped her understand how the thesis functioned as a cohesive argument. Quinn thought others struggled to comprehend her writing, but this example may instead illustrate potential comprehension issues arising in conversation. Additionally, Yuriko was consistently unsure of herself, even though she performed well on both assignments. While this may be an influence from her home culture, it still impeded her writing. In both assignments, she made numerous attempts to have her thinking verified in an American context in order to validate that she was approaching the social science writing tasks with the mindset of someone more experienced in U.S. university writing. She referred to writing center tutors and her TA. While she consulted with her Japanese friend about the structure of English academic writing, this occurred prior to her enrollment in the course and prior to her establishing patterned contact with instructors and the writing center when needing help. Yuriko was very interested in improving her writing, but also challenged her ability to write without the support of others. While this may have been a culturally based tendency, it still inhibited Yuriko's progress by limiting her ability to see herself as a competent writer in a foreign context – even if its impacts were subtler than with other students. In sum, Yilin, Yuriko, and Quinn struggled to believe in their abilities to write convincingly in the academic language of a foreign context, as primarily caused by linguistic and cultural challenges they perceived as unique to NNES writers. As a collective group of less experienced writers with greater degrees of self-doubt, they needed more experience in order to progress as the stronger writers had. Yuriko had experiences with disciplinary writing, but they closely preceded her enrollment in the course, and she had yet to see herself as a capable

writer. However, as with the more experienced writers, being stuck provided another means of illustrating how immediate writing tasks were situated within other variables of language, culture, and experience; yet, these were not analytically clear given the exposure's parameters. Each experience clearly illustrated how gains in practice informed larger contexts of student self-perception and self-assuredness as writers in foreign disciplinary settings.

With L2 students, it is important to consider linguistic and cultural blocks because these could continue to influence the future writing subjects complete if overshadowing other concerns of greater significance. Yilin and Quinn were quite preoccupied with linguistic challenges and tended to cling to methods from prior learning, even when time-consuming. They both used sentence translation and created stream-of-thoughts initial drafts; however, Yilin discontinued a stream of thoughts approach with P2, suggesting she may have realized its inefficiency in the course. Yilin and Quinn also liked outlining and Yuriko praised its value in having just learned it as a result of the course. However, Cai and Vivien saw little practical value in outlining and the disorganized first drafts Yilin and Quinn used, as their concerns had progressed elsewhere at some point prior to the course. Because of their multiple experiences writing in academic English, they seemed to eschew processes deemed cumbersome. However, they likely faced continued challenges, despite being more experienced. In not knowing how to improve, Cai also exhibited resistance to improving. Since the TA did not approve of her introduction or thesis, Cai had discussed intentions to reverse her writing process with assignment two by delaying her preference to write the introduction first. Yet, she was unable to break this long-held habit, even though assignment one helped her realize it was detrimental to her work. In assignment two, Cai instead

attempted other means to compensate for the repeated weakness she anticipated. Cai knew her drawbacks in writing, and seemed to also embrace new criticisms received in the course, but her inability to modify this habit indicated otherwise limited effort to change her practices. As with the other students, being stuck seemed likely to follow Cai until some later breakthrough was to take place.

In addition to progress already documented, subjects experienced other important breakthroughs in the course; however, these epiphanies could not be attributed solely to the course, as evidenced by the situated nature of subjects' writing in the course, nor could these breakthroughs be adequately explained by the exposure. Recall that Quinn learned the relationship between a thesis and an argument, whereas Yilin was able to overcome issues with prompt comprehension and hesitance in seeking help from Americans. Similarly, Vivien allowed herself to seek help from the writing center. Yuriko had prior experience integrating outside research, but had not taken it very seriously until encountering the course's writing assignments. From her experience with assignment two, she suddenly realized how valuable research was in enhancing her argument. While all subjects experienced breakthroughs in their thinking about writing after assignment two, only Cai had had an additional one with the first. Vivien and Cai had similar realizations about writing a thesis, as this was an aspect of writing they both struggled to develop further. They separately discovered that they could find a thesis in their own writing by reviewing what they had written and going back to the start of their paper to revise sequentially. Whereas Vivien's reformulation occurred after the second assignment, Cai came to this realization after writing the first assignment. As a result of assignment two, Vivien and Cai both became aware of their lack of knowledge about how to improve longstanding writing issues. They also managed writing challenges using

complex – and often strategic - solutions, even if they felt blocked from progressing further.

Table 25 shows changes Vivien and Cai made with assignment two.

Table 25

Vivien and Cai's Strategic Solutions with Assignment Two

Vivien	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Define concepts</i> via finding studies, applying studies, placing studies, selecting concepts, thesis, argumentation
Cai	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Establish cohesion</i> via thesis, selecting studies, consistent argumentation, conclusion

Their feedback in table 25 illustrates broad thinking and resourceful means to overcome perceived shortcomings. They each used multiple methods and circular processes to ensure the stability of their choices. However, because Cai was the only junior in the group of students, and she had more experience writing across different university settings, she was able to make important realizations about writing as a result of both assignments. While students' writing in the course could be influenced by unanticipated factors situated across time and place, repeated exposure to writing and the process of reflection both seemed to provide tools for growth.

Concluding Remarks

My research on international students writing in a social science disciplinary context demonstrates evidence for four of Prior's (1998) exposures, but my findings also extend beyond these exposures in noticing students' struggles to balance social science aims for writing with linguistic and cultural aspects of university writing. Course documentation, whether through texts or media content that guides writing expectations, provided students with course-related objectives for writing, but also led to comprehension barriers. Explicit criteria and implicit interpretation shaped students' representations of the tasks expected of

them, although some were more or less ready to read between the lines and see past linguistic and cultural barriers they perceived. Procedural tensions led students to then negotiate tasks by either seeking help or resolving problems independently of others. Still, help seeking behaviors exceeded the limits of the exposure. Finally, students' responsive practices, or a lack thereof, showed how their written products were indeed situated in experiences both within and external to the course, while also pointing to ways in which future writing could be overshadowed by misdirected attention to language and culture. The evidence of exposures in the present study certainly speaks to what Prior (1998) called a "densely textured totality" (p. 37) for writing, or the multiple, interactions of assignment documentation, the immediate writing task, help seeking behaviors, and prior experience influencing a student's process of writing as a form of disciplinarity. Texts, whether written by or given as an assignment to students, are not produced in a singular writing moment. They interact with the aforementioned variables and are situated not only in the present context for writing, but also in past (and often imperceptible) contexts for writing. They also interact with variables of the language and culture attached to U.S. academic writing, as indicated by participants' recollections, despite the seemingly greater immediacy of the social science context.

Based upon the preceding theoretical analysis of my findings, I again align with Prior (1998) in arguing that disciplinary enculturation occurs via processes of disciplinarity, rather than taking the view that students enter academic locations, as with the term discourse community. This position better accounts for L2 students' individual developmental trajectories and their emergent identities as writers. While the examination of writing is one means of uncovering processes of disciplinary enculturation, this project further reveals the

presence of laminated activities that are very influential – and perhaps just as immediate for students – as the task itself. Exposures clearly portray the heterogeneity in students’ processes of disciplinary enculturation, and they also portray the complexity of tracing that process as non-linear, mediated, and tenuous. However, exposures could also portray the ways in which the academy’s language and culture interact with the immediate demands of a social science disciplinary writing assignment in illustrating why some students are unable to focus their attention on just the immediate writing assignment, instead feeling caught up in aspects of writing also perceived as important. Finally, sociohistoric theories attend to local circumstances for writing, account for diverse experiences, and account for writing as a process occurring beyond just the level of text. Thus, in returning to the notion that studies of second language writing are under-theorized, this dissertation study argues that sociohistoric theories are quite useful as an analytical explanation of L2 writers in a disciplinary context, but that modification may be necessary to better account for the kinds of enculturation students reported beyond the level of the social science discipline.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

This chapter addresses theoretical and practical implications relevant to the present dissertation study findings. It begins by considering how Prior's (1998) theoretical work can be extended to account for L2 students, thus advancing the conversation about how to better theorize examinations of L2 student writing. It then considers the role of feedback processing in students' progressions as writers. Finally, it ends with a discussion of the limitations of the present study, and directions for future, related inquiry.

Theoretical Implication: Navigating the Language and Culture

One factor limiting Prior's (1998) work is the exclusion of linguistic and cultural influences (although his work did involve multilingual students), as clearly evidenced by the L2 writers in the present study. This variable appeared in each of the four exposures and consistently related to a student's ability to decipher writing assignment expectations, direct their attention to salient aspects of the task, seek help, and see themselves as writers in both a social science discipline and English-medium university, rather than just viewing themselves as L2 writers navigating a foreign linguistic and cultural context. However, Bazerman (2013) argued, "Learning to write is learning to navigate" (p. 198). In reality, each exposure is a form of navigation: students must first navigate course objectives in order to then navigate an individual representation of the task and applicable sources of help, and all while students navigate themselves as writers in a new context. Because of the prevalence of linguistic and cultural influences in students' reports, I argue for the inclusion of an additional exposure: *navigating the language and culture* because, while arguably all students (whether NES or NNES) are certainly navigating the aforementioned social science discipline, L2 students report additional linguistic and cultural struggles as though they are specific to NNES

students navigating elements of a foreign context. These reports appeared consistently across the exposures and students' feedback.

Furthermore, the L2 students in my study provided feedback indicating a sense of *dual enculturation*. By identifying dual enculturation, I am not suggesting that students *ought* to enculturate at all, as that is an issue separate from the findings of this study. Instead, I am noting subjects' reports that in order to feel effective as writers, they felt they must appear as not only competent in the social science discipline, but also competent in the language and culture specific to U.S. university academic writing. Dual enculturation often appeared as competing aims whereby students' attention to the latter meant they were critiqued for neglecting the former. Thus, over time, students seemed to learn where to direct their attention, though there was often residual tension in feeling both should be addressed as NNES. As a process, it seemed subjects with less experience actually felt they must first attend to issues of language and culture before being ready or able to tackle issues of the social science discipline. Thus, they were navigating not only a social science discipline's way of thinking and writing, but also cultural and linguistic values embedded within the academic institutions and its associated values of good academic writing. While it was apparent that my subjects were engaged in a process of social science disciplinary enculturation, they were also immersed in varying degrees of academic enculturation. The more experienced writers appeared more accustomed to the linguistic and cultural elements of the U.S. academic context for writing. In fact, Cai and Vivien arguably took these less seriously, and seemed to realize that linguistic and cultural enculturation was actually less necessary in being deemed an effective writer when producing texts for a non-composition context. However, the less experienced writers struggled to focus on more salient criteria

because they could not as easily bypass these aspects of writing. In many cases they reported intense anxiety, which, “when unmanaged, can interfere with the clarity of thought necessary for difficult writing, and can even steer a writer away from taking on a needed writing task” (Bazerman, 2013, p. 197). This anxiety seems to relate to what Bazerman (2013) refers to as writers “on the line, with some permanence and consequence” (p. 197), as L2 students anticipated being judged by their reader. In the case of less experienced L2 writers, anticipated judgments revolve around their non-native status. On the contrary, it seemed experiences accumulated over time and place helped students move past concerns over their non-native status in the foreign academic context, thereby eventually releasing them from the added stress of a felt dual enculturation, and allowing them to more effectively divert their attention toward the values for writing specifically associated with non-composition disciplinary contexts.

Finally, it should be emphasized that dual enculturation not only arises from subjects’ perceptions, but that it also attaches itself to their NNES status. What this means is that students presumed they struggle additionally with writing in the social science context because they felt they also had to simultaneously exhibit competence in the general values associated with U.S. academic writing. Furthermore, they often spoke of how their NES peers would not face these same burdens. However, these were students’ impressions, reflecting a kind of self-consciousness characteristic of many non-native speakers, regardless of the language. Dual enculturation represents the balancing struggles students in the present study faced when tasked with challenging non-composition writing tasks. However, as with other instances of finding applicability in transferring theories from L1 composition to explain phenomena observed with L2 students, dual enculturation likely follows the same

path. Although the students in my study assumed they were worse off than their NES and quite different from them, there is likely more overlap between NNES and NES students than my subjects guessed, as any university student can find immense challenge in navigating writing in non-composition contexts. Still, this is not to discredit the noted linguistic and cultural struggles my subjects did report, as some of those may be more particular to NNES students; rather, dual enculturation provides an improved means of explaining the tension writers feel when given a disciplinary writing task they correctly infer as simultaneously embedded with composition norms for writing. That these NNES international students noticed and experienced how two disciplines can interact in one course's writing assignments and can subsequently cause procedural confusion likely speaks to the experiences of other writers in similar settings.

Practical Implication: The Systemic Nature of Feedback

In tracing students' experiences with writing, and learning about patterns of feedback they were accustomed to receiving, another interesting finding emerged. Though less central to the purpose of the immediate inquiry, students reflected upon absorption of feedback. Recall that students were often stuck in their writing progress and that they sometimes did not know how to improve. Recall that students also experienced significant breakthroughs in understanding aspects of writing they had long struggled with. Student reports indicated that feedback absorption might be less immediate than instructors would assume it to be and instead more systemic. If feedback absorption is systemic, this would mean that students digest feedback over time and place, perhaps not understanding it or being able to apply it to their writing until much later, as with a later course, a later assignment for the same course, or not at all. As my findings indicated, students may be stuck, or otherwise unaware, unable,

or even unwilling to integrate feedback and change related writing practices. This suggests that students' absorption of instructor comments may be spontaneous, delayed, and mediated by laminated activities that call patterns of feedback to mind, essentially bringing prior comments back to the forefront of students' cognition with greater purpose and clarity.

Finally, recall that students reported breakthroughs as a result of peer interaction and interview reflection, rather than tying these new realizations to written comments *or* interactions with their teachers. Instead, it seemed feedback was processed through laminated activity involving the right person at the right time and that it was often disconnected from the immediate act of writing or reading feedback. Furthermore, several students had these realizations as a result of their own reflections during the interview process, rather than as a direct consequence of the written comments they received in the course or elsewhere. This implies that feedback absorption is as complex as writing, and that it is also mediated over successive writing experiences. Through help seeking behaviors, accumulated writing experiences, and developing self-awareness, more and less experienced students may experience feedback as a systemic process of acquiring knowledge. This may challenge institutions to rethink international student advisement, by better preparing international students in gaining other experience in writing across the curriculum before proceeding to higher stakes writing potentially found in their pre-major courses.

Summary

This study's findings have generated alignment with the idea of exposures as an analytical lens for explaining student writing in disciplinary settings, yet these findings have also challenged the boundaries of existing exposures in modifying them to better fit the experiences of L2 international students. *Dual enculturation* adequately captures the

tensions international and other students feel in knowing they are tasked with a disciplinary writing assignment, but simultaneously being aware that the assignment demands linguistic and cultural attributes compatible with the Western university context for which they write. While these international student subjects may exhibit progress in learning to read between the lines of disciplinary writing assignments and directing their attention correspondingly, they also read between the lines of these assignments when exhibiting sensitivity to their NNES status. Thus, their process of learning to participate in writing across the curriculum involves attention to discipline, language, and culture while prioritizing the salience of each in a given moment or assignment. Experience teaches these students how to more effectively read between the lines, and how to balance these sometimes-competing aims. Two disciplines – composition and applied linguistics – offer rich explanations of student writing in different contexts. Genre studies questions disciplinary activity, whereas applied linguistics looks to language and culture. Each field is influential because researchers borrow, apply, revise, and later develop their own theories from within the field of second language writing. My theoretical contribution seeks to pair the priorities disciplinary activity found in composition with those of applied linguistics that speak more concretely to L2 learners. This combined perspective is needed to more fully understand the needs of L2 international student writers in non-composition disciplinary settings. It may further address L1 students writing in similar circumstances.

Limitations

Although this study sought to overcome issues found in prior research, it is not free from limitation. Examining multiple writers in one course has its advantages in providing rich, comparative descriptions of heterogeneous practices, but findings are limited in

generalizability. Generalizing findings was never a goal, though it could be interesting to extend this inquiry further in an effort to see how applicable my findings are in other circumstances – particularly my findings about dual enculturation. Additionally, in focusing upon international students, my subjects mirror research limitations noted elsewhere because they too are female and Asian (Leki, 2001). Still, the demographics of students in my study speak to enrollment patterns, which heavily sway towards Asian countries as the top nations sending students for study abroad in the U.S. (Andrade, 2006). Furthermore, my analytical focus upon sociohistoric theory resonates with the field of composition, and critiques of transferring L1 theories to L2 contexts are documented for not providing seamless transitions across students who may be dissimilar (Silva & Matsuda, 2001; Spack, 2001). Thus, the need exists to develop theories from within the field of second language writing, but some borrowing is warranted until the merit of promising analytical tools has been fully investigated (Belcher & Hirvela, 2010). Finally, I naturally see phenomenon through the lens of my own beliefs about theory and pedagogy. Despite these limitations and others, I still believe this study contributes meaningfully to the problems of establishing heterogeneity across diverse writers in disciplinary settings and developing theories that adequately bridge predecessor fields while originating from within studies of second language writing.

Future Inquiry

In retrospect, I do wonder if the stress of dual enculturation could be responsible for the disappearance of international students in the course somewhere around the time of the first paper. This was an issue I noticed after teaching the course several times, and after we experienced a higher influx of international students. In fact, this observation was actually the genesis of my interest in pursuing this line of inquiry for my dissertation. While highly

speculative, I do think it provides a possible scenario, and one worthy of further study. In future inquiries, it would be useful to again look at competitive, large courses in the disciplines, but in relation to international student persistence, and particularly where writing and the dual burdens of two disciplines in a foreign context are concerned.

Furthermore, because student accounts were perspectival and provided the grounds for comparison among subjects, it would be useful to study other international students. More so than home country, I envision including subjects I had to turn away from the study because of their prior study in the U.S. Some had attended community college and transferred to the university, others had been in the U.S. for high school, and a few were more akin to generation 1.5 students, rather than typical international student classifications. The present inquiry would be useful with other types of students as a means of investigating just how similar or different L2 students' writing activities are in non-composition disciplinary environments. Doing so would challenge theoretical consideration of the kinds of exposures necessary to explain other L2 students' experiences.

Finally, the issue of systemic feedback provides another interesting line of inquiry. If the same the writing classification of international students were followed in a longitudinal study at the university, it would be possible to achieve greater clarification on the role of feedback and how it is digested over time, thus informing pedagogy.

Given the under-theorized nature of second language writing studies, it is my hope that this dissertation makes a positive contribution to the potential of sociohistoric theory in illuminating and explaining the writing activity of diverse international students, and in expanding the field's use of theory. Furthermore, it is my hope that the idea of *dual enculturation* not only straddles two fields that precede the emergence of second language

writing, but that this concept more accurately reflects the experiences of L2 international students writing across the curriculum.

References

- Adler-Kassner, L. & Wardle, E. (2015). *Naming what we know: Threshold concepts of writing studies*. Logan, UT: Utah State University Press.
- Andrade, M. S. (2006). International students in English-speaking universities. *Journal of Research in International Education*, 5(131), 131-154.
- Atkinson, D., & Ramanathan, V. (1995). Cultures of writing: An ethnographic comparison of L1 and L2 university writing/language programs. *TESOL Quarterly*, 29(3), 539-568.
- Attride-Stirling, J. (2001). Thematic networks: An analytic tool for qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*, 1(3), 385-405.
- Bawarshi, A. (2003). *Genre and the invention of the writer: Reconsidering the place of invention in composition*. Logan, UT: Utah State University Press.
- Bawarshi, A. S., & Reiff, M. J. (2010). *Genre: An introduction to history, theory, research, and pedagogy*. C. Bazerman (Ed.). West Lafayette, IN: Parlor Press.
- Bazerman, C. (1993). Writing in the disciplines. *Encyclopedia of English Studies* (pp. unknown). Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Bazerman, C. (1997). From cultural criticism to disciplinary participation: Living with powerful words. In R. Jones, P. Bizzaro, & C. Selfe (Eds.), *The Harcourt Brace guide to writing in the disciplines* (pp. xi-xvi). Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt College Publishers.
- Bazerman, C. (2007). Genre and cognitive development: Beyond writing to learn. In C. Bazerman, A. Bonini, & D. Figueiredo (Eds.), *Genre in a changing world* (pp.279-294). Fort Collins, CO: The WAC Clearinghouse and Parlor Press.

- Bazerman, C. (2013). *Literate Action Volume II: A Theory of Literate Action*. Fort Collins: Parlor Press.
- Bean, J. C. (1996). *Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Belcher, D., & Hirvela, A. (2010). "Do I need a theoretical framework?" Doctoral students' perspectives on the role of theory in dissertation research and writing. In T. Silva & P. Matsuda (Eds.), *Practicing theory in second language writing* (pp. 263-284). West Lafayette, IN: Parlor Press.
- Blakeslee, A. M., & Fleischer, C. (2007). *Becoming a writing researcher*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Bloome, D., Power, C., Morton S., Christian, B., Otto, S., & Shuart-Faris, N. (2005). *Discourse Analysis and the Study of Classroom Language and Literacy Events*. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Brandt, D. (2001). *Literacy in American lives*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Brandt, D. (2009). *Literacy and learning: Reflections on writing, reading, and society*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Carson, J. G. (2001). Becoming biliterate: First language influences. In T. Silva & P. K. Matsuda (Eds.), *Landmark Essays on ESL Writing* (pp. 137-158). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Carson, J. G., & Nelson, G. L. (1994). Writing groups: Cross-cultural issues. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 1*, 17-30.
- Casanave, C. P. (2002). *Writing games: Multicultural case studies of academic literacy practices in higher education*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

- Charmaz, K. (2002). Qualitative interviewing and grounded theory analysis. In J. F. Gubrium & J. S. Holstein (Eds.), *Handbook of interview research: Context and method* (pp. 675-694). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Connor, U. (2001). Research frontiers in writing analysis. In T. Silva & P. K. Matsuda (Eds.), *Landmark Essays on ESL Writing* (pp. 75-90). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Connor, U. (2003). Changing currents in contrastive rhetoric: Implications for teaching and research. In B. Kroll (Ed.), *Exploring the dynamics of second language writing* (pp. 218-241). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Cumming, A. (Ed.). (2006). *Goals for academic writing: ESL students and their instructors*. Philadelphia: Jon Benjamins.
- Ferris, D., Brown, J., Liu H., & Stine, M. E. A. (2011). Responding to L2 students in college writing classes: Teacher perspectives. *TESOL Quarterly*, 45(2), 207-234.
- Fishman, S. M., & McCarthy, L. (2001). An ESL writer and her discipline-based professor: Making progress even when goals do not match. *Written Communication*, 18(2), 180-228.
- Flower, L., Stein, V., Ackerman, J., Kantz, M., McCormick, K., & Peck, W. (1990). *Reading to write: Exploring a cognitive and social process*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Herrington, A. J., & Curtis, M. (2000). *Persons in process: Four stories of writing and personal development*. Urbana, IL: NCTE.

- Hinds, J. (2001). Reader-writer responsibility: A new typology. In T. Silva & P. K. Matsuda (Eds.), *Landmark Essays on ESL Writing* (pp. 63-74). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Hirvela, A. (2011). Writing to learn in content areas. In Manchon, R. M. (Ed.) *Learning-to write and writing-to-learn in an additional language* (pp. 37-59). Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.
- Hyland, K. (2000). *Disciplinary discourses: Social interactions in academic writing*. New York, NY: Longman.
- Hyland, K. (2012). *Disciplinary identities: Individuality and community in academic discourse*. C. A. Chapelle & S. Hunston (Eds.). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Hyland, K. (2013). Faculty feedback: Perceptions and practices in L2 disciplinary writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 22(3), 240-253.
- Johns, A. M. (1997). Discourse communities and communities of practice: Membership, conflict, and diversity. In *Text, role, and context: Developing academic literacies*. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Johns, A. M. (2001). ESL students and WAC programs: Varied populations and diverse needs. In S.H. McLeod, E. Miraglia, M. Soven, C. Thaiss (Eds.), *WAC for the new millennium: Strategies for continuing writing across the curriculum programs* (pp. 141-164). Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Kaplan, R. B. (2001). Cultural thought patterns in inter-cultural education. In T. Silva & P. K. Matsuda (Eds.), *Landmark Essays on ESL Writing* (pp. 11-26). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

- Krapels, A. R. (1990). An overview of second language writing process research. In B. Kroll (Ed.), *Second language writing: Research insights for classroom* (pp. 37-56). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Kvale, S. (1996). *InterViews*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Leki, I. (1992). "Pretty much I screwed up": Ill-served needs of a permanent resident. In L. Harklau, K. M. Losey, & M. Seigal (Eds.), *Generation 1.5 meets college composition: Issues in the teaching of writing to U.S.-educated learners of ESL* (pp. 17-43). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Leki, I. (1995). Coping strategies of ESL students in writing tasks across the curriculum. *TESOL Quarterly*, 29(2), 235-260.
- Leki, I. (2000). Writing, literacy, and applied ESL. *Annual Review of Applied ESL*, 20, 99-115.
- Leki, I. (2001). Hearing voices: L2 students' experiences in L2 writing courses. In P. K. Matsuda & T. Silva (Eds.), *On second language writing* (pp. 17-28). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Lillis, T. (2008). Ethnography as method, methodology, and "deep theorizing": Closing the gap between text and context in academic writing research. *Written Communication*, 25(3), 353-388.
- Matsuda, P. K., & Silva, T. (2001). Introduction. In T. Silva & P. K. Matsuda (Eds.), *Landmark Essays on ESL Writing* (pp. xiii-xxv). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- McCarthy, L. P. (1987). A stranger in strange lands: A college student writing across the curriculum. *Research on the Teaching of English*, 21(3), 233-265.

- Mortensen, P. L. (1992). Analyzing talk about writing. In Kirsch, G., & Sullivan, P. A. (Eds.), *Methods and methodology in composition research* (pp.105-129). Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University.
- Murphy, J. T. (1980). Getting the facts: A fieldwork guide for evaluators and policy analysts. In *Intensive Interviewing* (pp. 75-107). Glenview, IL: Scott Foresman.
- Odell, L., Dixie, G., & Herrington, A. (1983). The discourse-based interview: A procedure for exploring tacit knowledge of writers in nonacademic settings. In P. Mosenthal, L. Tamor, & S. A. Walmsley (Eds.), *Research on writing: Principles and methods* (pp. 220-236). New York, NY: Longman.
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). Qualitative research and evaluation methods. In *Qualitative Interviewing* (pp. 339-384). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Pincas, A. (2001). Structural ESL and systematic composition teaching to students of English as a foreign language. In T. Silva & P. K. Matsuda (Eds.), *Landmark Essays on ESL Writing* (pp. 1-10). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Polio, C. (2001). Research methodology in second language writing research: The case of text-based studies. In T. Silva, & P. K. Matsuda (Eds.), *On second language writing* (pp. 91-116). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Prior, P. (1998). *Writing/disciplinarity: A sociohistoric account of literate activity in the academy*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Raimes, A. (2001). What unskilled ESL students do as they write: A classroom study of composing. In T. Silva & P. K. Matsuda (Eds.), *Landmark Essays on ESL Writing* (pp. 37-62). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

- Russell, D. R. & Yanez, A. (2003). 'Big picture people rarely become historians': Genre systems and the contradictions of general education. In C. Bazerman & D. R. Russell (Eds.), *Writing selves/writing societies* (pp. 331-362). Fort Collins, CO: The WAC Clearinghouse, Colorado State University.
- Ryen, A. (2000). Colonial methodology: Methodological challenges to cross-cultural projects collecting data by structured interviews. In C. Truman, D. M. Mertens, & B. Humphries (Eds.), *Research and inequality* (pp. 220-235). London: UCL.
- Ryen, A. (2002). Cross-cultural interviewing. In J. F. Gubrium & J. S. Holstein (Eds.), *Handbook of interview research: Context and method* (pp. 335-354). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Silva, T., & Matsuda, P. K. (2001). *Landmark essays on ESL writing*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Spack, R. (1997). The acquisition of academic literacy in a second language: A longitudinal case study. *Written Communication*, 14(1), 3-62.
- Spack, R. (2001). Initiating ESL students into the academic discourse community: How far should we go? In T. Silva & P. K. Matsuda (Eds.), *Landmark Essays on ESL Writing* (pp. 91-108). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Spack, R. (2004). The acquisition of academic literacy in a second language: A longitudinal case study, updated. In V. Zamel and R. Spack (Eds.), *Crossing the curriculum: Multilingual learners in college classrooms* (pp. 19-46). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Spradley, J. (1979). *The ethnographic interview*. Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace.
- Swales, J. (1990). *Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Thaiss, C., & Zawacki, T. M. (2006). *Engaged writers and dynamic disciplines: Research on the academic writing life*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook.
- Werner, O., & Schoepfle, G. M. (1987). *Systematic fieldwork: Volume 1*. Newbury Park: Sage.
- Woodard, B. (2015, March). *Mapping disciplinary activity: Methods for tracing material and historical trajectories*. Symposium conducted at the meeting of the Conference on College Composition and Communication: Tampa, FL.
- Zamel, V. (2001). Teaching composition in the ESL classroom: What we can learn from research in the teaching of English. In T. Silva & P. K. Matsuda (Eds.), *Landmark Essays on ESL Writing* (pp. 27-36). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Zawacki, T. M., & Habib, A. S. (2010). "Will our stories help teachers understand?": Multilingual students talk about identity, academic writing, and expectations across academic communities. In M. Cox, J. Jordan, C. Ortmeier-Hooper, & G. G. Schwartz (Eds.), *Reinventing identities in second language writing* (pp. 54-74). Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Appendix A

– Winter 2014

Introduction to

PROFESSOR

Office:

Office Phone:

Office Hours: **Tuesdays & Thursdays 11am – 12:30pm**

(& by appointment)

E-mail:

TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Office:

Office:

Office:

Office:

Office:

Office:

Office:

Email:

Email:

Email:

Email:

Email:

Email:

Email:

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an introduction to the fundamental concepts and contexts of . is explored in contexts. The course provides a survey of the concepts, principles, and major theoretical ideas involved in these various forms of . This course also fulfills a general education writing requirement.

REQUIRED READING

(2012). (2nd ed.).
Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's.

[NOTE: This textbook comes in two versions, so be sure you have the version “with ”!]

Additional readings and handouts posted on

COURSE GRADING

Grades in the course are based upon total points earned (NOT percentages), roughly distributed as follows (see “How Points are Earned” for detailed information about how points are awarded for each item below):

Midterm	90 - 100 points (approx)
Final	140 - 150 points (approx)
Paper #1	50 points
Paper #2	50 points
Section Participation	12 points (approx)

TOTAL	345 points (approx)
-------	---------------------

LETTER GRADES are decided at the end of the quarter, based on the distribution of **total point scores** earned by each student (no letter grades are given for any single exam or assignment—just points). I use the **median** point total (i.e., half of the students in the class are above this point and half are below) as roughly the dividing line between the “B-“ and “C+” grade ranges (depending on how well the class does as a whole compared to other quarters). The rest of the grade ranges go up and down from there. I do NOT base the letter grade cutoffs on the percentage of points earned out of some high score or points possible. However, if you compute your percentage out of the possible points on any given assignment or for your point total, that is a reasonable conservative estimate of your grade, because your final course grade will at least never be *worse* than it would be on a straight percentage scale. I will try to keep you informed about the class median scores on each individual exam or assignment, so that you can estimate how well you are doing compared to the rest of the class as the quarter progresses. If you have any questions about how grades are computed, please feel free to ask, and I am happy to explain further.

CONTINUED→

LECTURE SCHEDULE

[REDACTED] – Winter 2014

<u>Week</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Lecture Topic</u>	<u>Readings</u> ([REDACTED] Textbook Chapters or Readings on [REDACTED], as noted)
1	Tues 1/7	Introduction & Defining [REDACTED]	
	Thurs 1/9	[REDACTED] Contexts & Models	[REDACTED] Ch 1 (basic [REDACTED])
2	Tues 1/14	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED] Ch 4 ([REDACTED]) & [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
	Thurs 1/6	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED] Ch 5 ([REDACTED])
3	Tues 1/21	Studying [REDACTED] as a Science	[REDACTED] et al.
	Thurs 1/23	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED] Ch 2 ([REDACTED])
4	Tues 1/28	[REDACTED] (cont.) & [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] Ch 7 ([REDACTED])
	Thurs 1/30	[REDACTED] (cont.) *** Paper #1 Due in lecture***	[REDACTED] Ch 8 ([REDACTED])
5	Tues 2/4	Catch-up & Review	
	Thurs 2/6	*** MIDTERM EXAM ***	
6	Tues 2/11	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED] Ch 3 ([REDACTED])
	Thurs 2/13	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED] ch13 ([REDACTED])
7	Tues 2/18	[REDACTED] (cont.)	[REDACTED] Ch 6 ([REDACTED])
	Thurs 2/20	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED] Ch 9 ([REDACTED])
8	Tues 2/25	[REDACTED] (cont.)	[REDACTED] Ch 10 ([REDACTED])
	Thurs 2/27	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED] Ch 11 ([REDACTED])
9	Tues 3/4	[REDACTED] *** Paper #2 Due in lecture ***	[REDACTED] appendix B ([REDACTED])
	Thurs 3/6	[REDACTED] (cont.)	[REDACTED] 1 & 2
10	Tues 3/11	[REDACTED]	
	Thurs 3/13	Catch-up & Review	

Finals **Thursday, March 20, 8 – 11 am** ***** FINAL EXAM *****

DISCUSSION SECTION SCHEDULE

██████████ – Winter 2014

- Week #1; Fri 1/10 (1st Section): Intro to Section; Your ██████████
(& some sections Thurs, 1/9)
- Week #2; Fri 1/17 (2nd Section): ██████████; Discuss Paper #1
(& some sections Thurs, 1/18)
- Week #3; Fri 1/24 (3rd Section): Research Methods; Paper Writing Tips & Basic APA Style
(& some sections Thurs, 1/23) **Paper #1 outline due**
- Week #4; Fri 1/31 (4th Section): ██████████ or ██████████; Midterm preparation
(& some sections Thurs, 1/30)
- Week #5; Fri 2/7 (5th Section): Finding & Understanding Published Empirical Research
(& some sections Thurs, 2/6)
- Week #6; Fri 2/14 (6th Section): ██████████; Discuss Paper #2
(& some sections Thurs, 2/13)
- Week #7; Fri 2/21 (7th Section): Paper Writing Workshop; More Advanced APA Style
(& some sections Thurs, 2/20) **Exercise due: Understanding Published Studies**
- Week #8; Fri 2/28 (8th Section): ██████████; Last-minute Paper Qs
(& some sections Thurs, 2/27) **Paper #2 outline due**
- Week #9; Fri 3/7 (9th Section): ██████████
(& some sections Thurs, 3/6)
- Week #10; Fri 3/14 (10th Section): ██████████; Final exam preparation
(& some sections Thurs, 3/13)

HOW POINTS ARE EARNED

Discussion Section

In order to get full credit, you must: a) attend section, b) complete exercises or other assignments that are due, *and* c) participate fully in discussions.

ATTENDANCE: You will earn roughly one attendance point for each section. **Note that you can only earn section points if you are *there*, no matter what the reason is for the absence! There is no way to “make up” discussion sections.** If you know that you need to miss a section, you should inform your TA in advance, and he/she will **make a note that you have been responsible**, but you will not receive any points for the missed section (if the reason for missing is really important, it should certainly be worth sacrificing a point or two in the class!). When it comes time to decide grades, if you are on a grade borderline, I will take into consideration that you were a responsible student.

ASSIGNMENTS: There are a few additional points given during section for some assignments related to the papers (e.g., outlines--see the lecture/section schedule for details). In order to get the points, you must bring your completed assignment to section on the due date. NO emailed assignments nor other early or late assignments will be accepted!

Midterm and Final Exams

Both exams are in MULTIPLE CHOICE format. Questions are designed to test your **detailed understanding of course material**, not your ability to memorize terms. Questions also frequently ask you to **apply** course material to “real-life” examples. More information about the exams and some practice at exam questions will be given in lecture and/or discussion section. Some practice questions will also appear online at the course website on [REDACTED]. See also information on the syllabus about getting help (such as workshops on preparing for multiple-choice tests) from [REDACTED].

Both lecture material *and* reading assignments will be tested in great detail. There is material covered in lecture that is not found in the reading, and there is material in the reading that is not covered in lecture, so you must study *both* carefully and completely in order to do well on the exams!

FOR LECTURE MATERIAL: Be sure to **attend every lecture** and take **detailed notes**. Re attendance, I do not take roll at lecture, but I also do not provide lecture notes for missed class, so you need to be there to get the information. RE taking good notes, perhaps the biggest mistake [REDACTED] students can make is to write down only what appears on the Powerpoint slides and leave out the details. Because this is an introductory course, the material during lecture often *sounds* self-explanatory and easy, but if you do not fill in the detail, you are not likely to remember it later and you *will* have difficulty on the exams. Even the examples given in lecture can be helpful to write down, because many exam questions give you an example and then ask you to *apply* the course concepts.

FOR THE READING: I recommend that you practice pulling out the **important points and ideas** being made rather than just trying to memorize definitions of bolded or italicized terms. As you read, stop for a moment after reading a section and make note (in your head at minimum, but even better make a written note in the margin or on a separate sheet of paper) of the important point(s) of that section. Bolded terms are often included in the important points, so don't neglect these--just don't focus on definitions. Focus instead on why the term/concept is important and what it relates to. Some sections will have very little important information and others will have major points, so you'll need to practice at learning how to tell the difference. When you go back to study the reading(s) later, you can then be systematic and organized (which is always a good thing): You can look at the heading of each section and then remind yourself about the important points in that section that you noted earlier.

IMPORTANT EXAM POLICY: Both exams are to be taken in class on the designated exam dates. *No early exams are permitted, and no late exams are allowed except in the case of a serious emergency.* In the rare event that an emergency arises, it is your responsibility to: 1) inform your instructor and TA in a timely manner (e.g., prior to or at the scheduled exam time), and 2) provide your instructor and/or TA with written documentation of the emergency (e.g., medical note from the attending physician).

CONTINUED→

HOW POINTS ARE EARNED (continued)

Research Participation

REQUIREMENT: Unless otherwise announced in lecture, **you must complete TWO HOURS** (also known as two “credits”) of participation in research studies (or two hours of a non-research alternative assignment) conducted in the Dept. of [REDACTED]. **All participation must be completed by the Friday of the 10th week of the quarter** (i.e., by the last day of class), unless an exception has been made for a particular study’s time slots.

Note that **participation that is less than two full credits/hours results in a 5-point deduction**. Any individual study may be worth ½ hour, 1 hour, 1½ hours, or 2 hours of credit, depending on how much of your participation time is required (most are worth ½ hr or 1 hr). The studies vary from quarter to quarter, but since most are worth ½ or 1 hour of credit, you’ll likely need to participate in more than one study to meet the requirement. Note that if you are enrolled in more than one pre-major comm course, you’ll need to complete two hours for EACH COURSE (each researcher will ask you which course you want credit for).

NON-RESEARCH ALTERNATIVE: Participation in any particular study is your own choice, and if you do not wish to be a research participant for any or all of your credits, **you may download the non-research alternative from [REDACTED]**. The alternative assignment is set up in one-hour increments, so that each hour of the assignment takes the same amount of time/effort as would participation in a one-hour study. You receive the same credit(s) for each hour of this assignment as would a student who participates in a study(ies). So, you can use the alternative for a portion or for your entire participation requirement, as you prefer. Note that if you are under 18 years of age, you **MUST** do the non-research alternative, given your legal status as a minor. **IMPORTANT NOTE: You must turn in the completed assignment(s) no later than Thursday of the 10th week of the quarter** (the last day of lecture).

EXTRA CREDIT: In quarters where there are a great many studies being run, I can sometimes offer extra credit for going OVER the two hours of participation (or doing an additional hour of the alternative assignment). You can get a maximum of two extra credit points (1 point of extra credit for an extra ½ hour, 2 points for an extra hour). I cannot promise you in advance that you’ll have this opportunity, as it depends on how many studies the Department is running, but listen for announcements in lecture. Please do NOT purposely do extra studies unless I announce that extra credit is available, because if we do not have enough studies, we cannot afford for you to be taking spots from students who need them.

HOW TO FIND AND/OR SIGN UP FOR STUDIES: Research participation in all [REDACTED] lower division classes is managed in an online system (called [REDACTED]). You will go to the online site to find out what studies are being offered in a given quarter, and you will use the site to sign up for studies. Researchers will also use the site to award you your credit. In order to access the site, **you need first to create a new "account"** (see detailed instructions on [REDACTED]). Please create your account ASAP, as you **MUST** have an account and use the system to sign up for studies in order to get credit (unless you are doing the non-research alternative).

GETTING YOUR CREDIT: The researchers each keep track of which students have participated in their studies, and they enter each student’s participation credit in the online system. Neither the TAs nor I will know how many hours of participation you have done until the end of the quarter. You may check on your participation on the online system, but note that many researchers wait until their studies are completed or until the end of the quarter to enter credit. **YOU** should also be keeping track of your own studies in case there is ever any dispute about your credit. If you are uncertain about any particular study, email the researcher directly (email addresses are posted on the same website with the study description). For the non-research alternative, Professor [REDACTED] or your TA will keep track of your credit when you turn in your completed assignment.

PLEASE SEE IMPORTANT ADDITIONAL INFORMATION POSTED ON [REDACTED] (including a FAQ) ABOUT USING THE SONA SYSTEM AND COMPLETING YOUR RESEARCH PARTICIPATION!

CONTINUED→

HOW POINTS ARE EARNED (continued)

Paper Assignments

You will find **detailed** descriptions of the two paper assignments in this course manual. Read the assignments carefully, and **attend discussion section** for further information and assistance. See also information on the syllabus about getting writing style help from [REDACTED], although please note that the tutors at [REDACTED], while helpful with general writing skills, usually do not know the specific course material nor the assignment.

Your TA will devote much time in section to helping you understand and do well on the assignment, but your TA cannot tell you what to write to get a good grade. A good paper begins with good thinking, then a good outline, and THEN good writing. An even better paper goes through several revisions before being turned in. Be sure you give yourself time on your own to think, outline, write, and then revise your paper. You get **points in section for having outlines ready**, as well as for completing an **empirical study assignment**, so listen for announcements about this in lecture or section.

Note that it is a mistake to think that if you just “do what the assignment asks” you will get a good grade. Doing the assignment is the *minimum*, and usually results in an “average” grade (i.e., in the “C” range). To get a higher grade, you’ll need to apply course concepts **not only with accuracy, but also with depth and insight**. Your grade is based ultimately on **how effectively you are able to articulate and support good ideas**, relative to other students.

IMPORTANT PAPER POLICY: Paper assignments are due on the designated date at the end of lecture. As soon as lecture ends, a paper not turned in is considered late. **Late papers are marked down 5 points per day** (note that papers are marked down based on when your TA receives the paper, not necessarily when you turned it in). Always keep a copy of your paper on hand for your records, and remember that **it is your responsibility to see that your TA receives your paper**.

TIPS FOR OVERALL SUCCESS IN [REDACTED]

First, **follow this manual carefully!** Give some thought to the important information above about exactly how points are earned for exams, papers, section participation, and research practicum, as you don’t want to be surprised later that you didn’t do something you were supposed to do! Following this manually closely will also help you keep track of due dates and give you details that will help you prepare for exams and paper assignments. Your TA and I will make reminder announcements about these things in class, but we cannot give you all the details in class that we expect you to know from what is written here.

Second, **don’t blow off the easy stuff**, like *section exercises* and the *research practicum* (see above). These are not worth enough points to save an otherwise poor grade, but **if you don’t do them, they are enough lost points to seriously hurt a grade!**

Third, make time each week to “digest” the course material thoroughly and make sure you understand it, as this will help later with the “hard stuff” (preparing for exams and writing your papers). See tips above on studying for exams and writing papers.

Finally, you are strongly encouraged to **come see me and come see your TA!** Whether you drop by during office hours or make an appointment, we are happy to answer your questions (big or small), or just talk about the course material. We are also happy just to get to know you better and chat about anything at all! Remember that we are a resource and are here to help you!

CONTINUED→

ACADEMIC HONESTY

It is expected that students attending the [REDACTED] understand and subscribe to the ideal of academic integrity and are willing to bear individual responsibility for their work. Any work (written or otherwise) submitted to fulfill an academic requirement must represent a student's original work. Any act of academic dishonesty, such as cheating on an exam or plagiarism on a paper, will result minimally in receiving zero points on that assignment/exam, will also likely lead to a failing grade in the course, and will subject a person to University disciplinary action. You should be aware that I will report ANY violation to the Associate Dean of Students for possible referral to the Conduct Committee. That committee has the authority to impose a range of sanctions, including suspension.

PAPERS:

All source material (e.g., lecture, textbook, academic journal articles, online sources, etc.) must be appropriately cited using APA style (whether directly quoting or paraphrasing). If you "borrow" from another student's paper, even if the specific words have been changed, YOU ARE PLAGIARIZING and will receive a zero. **I strongly suggest you DO NOT EVEN READ someone else's paper**, as it is difficult to write your own ideas in an original way once you have seen how someone else has written theirs.

EXAMS:

Preparation: I make available to ALL students the legitimate practice questions for my exams. I have NEVER released an exam from a previous quarter. Thus, ANY exam from a previous quarter that you get hold of MUST HAVE BEEN ILLEGALLY OBTAINED. If you come across a previous quarter's midterm or final, you are under the obligation of the university's "code of conduct" to surrender it (and all copies of it) to me. If, however, you choose to study from a previous quarter's midterm or final, no matter how that exam came into your possession, be aware that YOU ARE CHEATING, and if found out will receive a zero. Furthermore, if I discover that a particular organization (e.g., sorority, fraternity, or other club) provides to students or maintains an archive of ANY of my previous exams, I will file a code of conduct complaint with the University against the organization.

During the exam: You may not look at another student's test or answers, share your answers/test with another student, nor remove a test from the exam room. All of these behaviors are forms of CHEATING and will result in a zero on the exam.

ADDITIONAL CAMPUS RESOURCES

If you experience difficulty in this course for any reason, please don't hesitate to consult with me (Professor [REDACTED]) or your TA. In addition, a wide range of services is available on campus to support you and your efforts in this course:

[REDACTED]: [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] helps students increase their mastery of course material through course-specific tutoring and academic skills development. The tutorial groups and drop-in tutoring schedules are posted on the web site. [REDACTED] also provides workshops and counseling in test-taking as well as paper-writing skills.

[REDACTED]: Bdlg [REDACTED], [REDACTED], or [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] offers counseling for personal concerns and crisis intervention, stress management, self-help information, and connections to off-campus mental health resources.

[REDACTED]: [REDACTED], [REDACTED], or [REDACTED]
The [REDACTED] provides assistance with student emergencies, administrative withdrawals, and other unique academic situations and options.

[REDACTED] Program: [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] provides academic support services to eligible students with temporary and permanent disabilities. Please inform Professor [REDACTED] and your TA as early as possible during the quarter if you require special classroom accommodations due to a disability. You must register with [REDACTED] prior to receiving these accommodations.

GOOD LUCK, AND I WISH YOU MUCH SUCCESS IN THIS COURSE!!

Appendix B

PAPER ASSIGNMENT #1 – [REDACTED] Interaction in a TV Scene

IMPORTANT: See next page for key info about format requirements, policies, grading criteria, and getting help!

You will be analyzing a communication scene that appears in an assigned television show/episode. You must write your paper on the specific show/episode that your TA assigns you to watch (or else you will receive a zero). Once you know which TV program and episode to watch, select one particular scene/interaction within the show to analyze (choose a scene with interesting [REDACTED] usage and [REDACTED] forms of [REDACTED]). In your introduction, remember to identify which show and scene you are analyzing, and be sure to provide a thesis statement(s) about what you plan to discuss in your paper (but keep the whole intro very brief!).

In this paper, you must:

- 1) Identify and analyze **two** important [REDACTED] usage issues that are operating within the scene and having an effect on the interaction/characters.

To find two [REDACTED] USAGE issues, watch the scene and look at the [REDACTED] characters make and the [REDACTED] they use. Think about how and why different characters [REDACTED] in certain ways to [REDACTED], and about whether characters use a particular style of [REDACTED] ([REDACTED], etc.) in particular contexts or with particular people. Then look through your lecture notes and your textbook chapter on [REDACTED] (Ch 4) and see which two separate course concepts fit with what you have observed. Some example [REDACTED] concepts that you could use (and where to find them in our course material) include:

[REDACTED] (lec & Ch 4); [REDACTED] (lec & Ch 4); [REDACTED] use (Ch 4); [REDACTED] (lec); [REDACTED] (ch. 4); [REDACTED] (Ch 4); [REDACTED] (section & Ch 4); [REDACTED] (Ch 4); [REDACTED] (lec & Ch 4); biased (Ch 4); [REDACTED] (Ch 4), etc.

- 2) Identify and analyze **two** important [REDACTED] communication issues that are operating within the scene and having an effect on the interaction/characters.

To find two [REDACTED] issues, watch the [REDACTED] that go on in the scene, and again, see how characters use and [REDACTED]. Note for yourself also how the [REDACTED] actions relate to the [REDACTED] patterns (and vice versa). There are numerous [REDACTED] that you'll see, so you'll need to choose two for which you can make the most interesting/insightful analysis. Some example [REDACTED] that you could use (covered in both lecture and Ch 4) include: [REDACTED] (or specific aspects of [REDACTED]); [REDACTED]; [REDACTED] (or specific types of [REDACTED]); [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; etc.

For each separate [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] issue, give evidence that that particular [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] usage is indeed going on in the scene and make arguments about how it appears to have a significant impact on the interaction(s) between characters (e.g., how [REDACTED] were more effectively/ineffectively [REDACTED]; how [REDACTED] ended up being created; how the characters' [REDACTED] were affected; etc.). **Be sure that your arguments are both thorough and thoughtful**, and be sure that you define your terms and support all of your claims! Your own opinion is NOT enough – use appropriate reading and lecture material (cited in APA style) and specific, concrete examples from the scene in order to prove to your reader that you know what these issues are, that they are going on in the scene, and that they matter.

- 3) **Tie together** the different aspects of your paper, including how the different [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] issues that you've discussed for the scene work together. Some tying together should be done "as you go along" in the paper (e.g., to provide a good transition between issues; to note an important connection between a [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] issue that happened at the same time, etc.), but you will also need to draw some larger conclusions about how the different issues affect one another on different levels—e.g., how the [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] issues may operate differently for the characters' personal [REDACTED] than for their connection as [REDACTED], etc.

Remember that a good paper is not a detached bunch of paragraphs that just address each of the above things. You should be building toward some point or points that you wish to make. Your conclusions should even be fairly complex! Your goal is to take the ACADEMIC ideas of the course and show us that you recognize how they APPLY to REAL LIFE interactions (albeit as dramatized in a TV show, of course).

PAPER ASSIGNMENT #1 CONTINUED...

Requirements and Policies

FORMAT: You should have a **title page** with your name and your TA's name/section clearly identified. Do not use a running head nor put your name anywhere else in your paper, as the TAs do blind grading (which means they turn over the title page for all papers before grading, so that they cannot tell whose paper is whose while grading them). Your papers must be **5-6 pages** in length (please number your pages and do not exceed 6 pages). All papers must be typed, using **Times 12pt, double-spaced, with one-inch margins**. Note that MS WORD uses different default formatting, so be sure to change your settings! All papers should also have proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

APA STYLE: All source material (e.g., lecture, textbook, academic journal articles, online sources, etc.) must be appropriately cited using **APA style** (whether directly quoting or paraphrasing). Be sure to use **APA (not MLA!) style**, both in the **text of your paper**, as well as in the **Reference list** at the end of your paper. See "Using APA Style" in this manual for examples.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: Plagiarism will result minimally in a zero grade, so be sure to properly cite your sources. In addition, do NOT "borrow" from another student's paper, new or old. Even if you change the specific words, **YOU ARE PLAGIARIZING** and will receive a zero. **I strongly suggest you DO NOT EVEN READ someone else's paper**, as it is difficult to write your own ideas in an original way once you have seen how someone else has written theirs. You must also be sure to write your paper **on the exact TV show or advertisement that your TA assigns to you**. If you write about the wrong TV show or ad, we must assume that you have plagiarized from an old paper, and you will get a zero.

TURNING IN PAPERS: Paper assignments are due in **hard copy** version on the designated date in lecture (see syllabus and course schedule). Electronic versions of papers are NOT acceptable! **Late papers are marked down 5 points per day** (note that if your paper is late, it will be considered "turned in" when the TA receives the paper, not necessarily when you dropped it off). **Always keep a copy of your paper on hand for your records, and remember that it is your responsibility to see that your TA receives your paper.**

Grading Criteria

Grading will be based on how well your paper, **compared to the papers of other students**, shows: depth of analysis in using course concepts, effectiveness at articulating and supporting arguments, accurate and thorough understanding of course material, university level writing style and organization, and adherence to the assignment.

Note that it is a mistake to think that if you just "do what the assignment asks" you will get a good grade. Doing the assignment is the *minimum*, and usually results in an "average" grade (i.e., in the "C+" range). To get a higher grade, you'll need to apply course concepts **not only with accuracy, but with depth and insight**. Your grade is based ultimately on **how effectively you are able to articulate and support good ideas**, relative to other students.

Getting Help on Your Paper(s)

A good paper begins with good thinking, then a good outline, and THEN good writing. An even better paper goes through several revisions before being turned in. Be sure you give yourself time on your own to think, outline, write, and then revise your paper. To encourage you to do this, you get **points in section** for doing paper preparation, such as having **outlines** ready, as well as for completing an **exercise** on finding and summarizing empirical studies.

Your TA will devote much time in section to helping you understand and do well on the assignment, so it is important to attend section to get this vital information. You are also encouraged to see your TA or Prof. [REDACTED] at office hours. But neither your TA nor Prof. [REDACTED] can just tell you what to write to get a good grade. When you come in, it is a good idea to **bring your outline or some notes** you've made (brainstorm which potential issues you could use and what you could say about each). You may also get writing help from [the writing center] (see syllabus for info), although please note that the tutors at [the writing center], while helpful with general writing skills, usually do not know the specific course material nor the assignment.

RE rough drafts: You may bring a rough draft to your TA's or Prof. [REDACTED] office hours, and you may **ask questions** about any part of your draft or outline. But you must choose only ONE paragraph of your actual draft to have us go over with you in detail for writing style and/or content issues. We will not read the entire draft and give you comments. This is because a) any *general* comments we make would be misleading to you (i.e., you'd think you're "on the right track" or just need just a few changes, but then might still end up with a lower grade than expected), and b) making more *detailed* comments throughout the paper would be editing your paper for you, which is not fair to other students, and is YOUR job anyway. So, ASK about ANY part of your outline or draft, but choose a small portion for detailed writing help. Then you can take what you have learned from how we tore apart the one paragraph and edit/fix the rest of your paper on your own. ☺

Appendix C

PAPER ASSIGNMENT #2 – Effectiveness of Persuasion Tactics in Advertising

IMPORTANT: See next page for key info about format requirements, policies, grading criteria, and getting help!

Your TA will provide you with two TV (or print) advertisements to view. Choose ONE of these two ads to analyze for your paper. Each TA will be assigning a different set of ads, so you must write your paper on one of the specific ads that your TA assigns to you (or else you will receive a zero). In your introduction, remember to identify which ad you are analyzing, and be sure to provide a thesis statement(s) about what you plan to discuss in your paper (but keep the whole intro very brief!). Your goal in this paper is to build a sophisticated argument about the potential effectiveness of the ad for the audience(s) targeted, given the research and the concepts we have covered in this class.

In this paper, you must:

- 1) Identify and analyze **THREE important features** of the ad that you think would help determine the degree to which the ad is **effective** for the particular **target audience(s)** (which means, of course, that you will also need to identify who you think is/are the target audience(s) and why).

All three features must be concepts discussed in lecture or course readings. The persuasion-related features, such as **_____** characteristics (e.g., **_____**) or **_____** characteristics (e.g., **_____**) usually work best. However, you may also choose features that come from other course topics, such as **_____** (e.g., **_____**) or something you find applicable from **_____** (but not topics that would have been discussed in Paper #1).

For each feature, you'll need to provide evidence that it is indeed being used in the ad, as well as discuss how that feature would help or hurt (or both) the effectiveness of the ad. You'll ultimately build toward an argument about how persuasive the ad (or aspects of it) would be for the particular audience(s).

- 2) Use outside research: In addition to supporting your arguments with clearly defined course concepts and concrete examples from the ad, you must find and discuss the findings of at least **TWO published empirical studies** to support your arguments about the effectiveness (or lack of it) of this ad. The empirical studies must examine in some way the specific feature(s) of the ad that you've chosen to analyze (e.g., a particular **_____** or **_____** characteristic). Your studies may both address the same feature, or they may each address a different feature. The studies **must be complete studies reported in academic journals** (not findings summarized in a textbook; not news reports of studies, etc.).

For each study, describe what the study was about, what the study did (e.g., its basic procedure as an experiment or survey, etc.) and what its main findings were. The Exercise that you do for section (Understanding Published Studies) is practice for this part of the paper, so use it to help you figure out what to summarize. After describing the study, apply the study's findings to the ad you analyzed (e.g., do the findings suggest that the particular use of the feature in the ad would be effective or ineffective? Why/how?). **Be sure to print and attach at the back of your paper the published "abstract" for each study (i.e., the study's summary paragraph, usually found on the 1st page of the article).**

Tip: Choose and use your studies carefully—your application of the studies and where in your paper you discuss each of them will depend on the findings and how closely you can relate those findings to your arguments about the ad's features and its effectiveness! For example, suppose you find a study that finds that **_____** is persuasive under certain conditions. You can use that study to argue for or against (or maybe even both) your ad's effective use of **_____**, depending on how closely your ad's **_____** aligns with the type of **_____** or conditions used in the study, etc. Ultimately, you'll need to draw some conclusions as to what kinds of influence (or not) you think the ad might have, and these conclusions should be based on the support/arguments/evidence you have provided/built throughout the paper for the various features.

Remember again that a good paper is not a detached bunch of paragraphs that just address each of the above things. You should be building toward some point or points that you wish to make, so you should organize your paper in a way that best helps you accomplish this. Your conclusions can even be fairly complex – not just a conclusion about whether or not an audience is likely to be influenced, but an argument about which *parts* of the audience might be more influenced by the ad than others or about how one feature of the ad might increase persuasion while another

PAPER ASSIGNMENT #2 CONTINUED...

feature might hinder it for a given audience (and what might then be the ultimate result). You should rely on course material and scientific research to help you make your case, but your goal is to take these academic ideas and APPLY them to what is likely to happen in the REAL WORLD (i.e., with real audiences watching a real advertisement).

Requirements and Policies

FORMAT: The format for Paper #2 is the same as for Paper #1. You should have a **title page** with your name and your TA's name/section clearly identified. Do not use a running head nor put your name anywhere else in your paper, as the TAs do blind grading (which means they turn over the title page for all papers before grading, so that they cannot tell whose paper is whose while grading them). Your papers must be **5-6 pages** in length (please number your pages and do not exceed 6 pages). All papers must be typed, using **Times 12pt, double-spaced, with one-inch margins**. Note that MS WORD uses different default formatting, so be sure to change your settings! All papers should also have proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

APA STYLE: All source material (e.g., lecture, textbook, academic journal articles, online sources, etc.) must be appropriately cited using **APA style** (whether directly quoting or paraphrasing). Be sure to use **APA (not MLA!) style**, both in the **text of your paper**, as well as in the **Reference list** at the end of your paper. See "Using APA Style" in this manual for examples.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: Plagiarism will result minimally in a zero grade, so be sure to properly cite your sources. In addition, do NOT "borrow" from another student's paper, new or old. Even if you change the specific words, YOU ARE PLAGIARIZING and will receive a zero. **I strongly suggest you DO NOT EVEN READ someone else's paper**, as it is difficult to write your own ideas in an original way once you have seen how someone else has written theirs. You must also be sure to write your paper **on the exact TV show or advertisement that your TA assigns to you**. If you write about the wrong TV show or ad, we must assume that you have plagiarized from an old paper, and you will get a zero.

TURNING IN PAPERS: Paper assignments are due in **hard copy** version on the designated date in lecture (see syllabus and course schedule). Electronic versions of papers are NOT acceptable! **Late papers are marked down 5 points per day** (note that if your paper is late, it will be considered "turned in" when the TA receives the paper, not necessarily when you dropped it off). **Always keep a copy of your paper on hand for your records, and remember that it is your responsibility to see that your TA receives your paper.**

Grading Criteria

As with Paper #1, grading will be based on how well your paper, **compared to the papers of other students**, shows: depth of analysis in using course concepts, effectiveness at articulating and supporting arguments, accurate and thorough understanding of course material, university level writing style and organization, and adherence to the assignment.

NOTE that many students do improve from Paper #1 to Paper #2, at least regarding the basics, but this means that our expectations are higher on Paper #2 as well. In addition, Paper #2 brings in an additional challenge with the empirical studies. So, it is a mistake to think that if you just improve a bit from the first assignment that your grade will improve as well. To improve substantially on the second paper, you'll need not only to apply course concepts **with accuracy, depth and insight, but you will need to be able also effectively to summarize and integrate the empirical studies**. Remember that your grade is based ultimately on **how effectively you are able to articulate and support good ideas**, relative to other students.

Getting Help on Your Paper(s)

A good paper begins with good thinking, then a good outline, and THEN good writing. An even better paper goes through several revisions before being turned in. Be sure you give yourself time on your own to think, outline, write, and then revise your paper. To encourage you to do this, you get **points in section** for doing paper preparation, such as having **outlines** ready, as well as for completing an **exercise** on finding and summarizing empirical studies.

Your TA will devote much time in section to helping you understand and do well on the assignment, so it is important to attend section to get this vital information. You are also encouraged to see your TA or Prof [REDACTED] at office hours. But neither your TA nor Prof [REDACTED] can just tell you what to write to get a good grade. When you come in, it is a good idea to **bring your outline or some notes** you've made (brainstorm which potential issues you could use and what you could say about each). You may also get writing help from [the writing center] (see syllabus for info), although please note that the tutors at [the writing center], while helpful with general writing skills, usually do not know the specific course material nor the assignment.

RE rough drafts: You may bring a rough draft to your TA's or Prof [REDACTED] office hours, and you may **ask questions** about any part of your draft or outline. But you must choose only ONE paragraph of your actual draft to have us go over with you in detail for writing style and/or content issues. We will not read the entire draft and give you comments. This is because a) any *general* comments we make would be misleading to you (i.e., you'd think you're "on the right track" or just need just a few changes, but then might still end up with a lower grade than expected), and b) making more *detailed* comments throughout the paper would be editing your paper for you, which is not fair to other students, and is YOUR job anyway. So, ASK about ANY part of your outline or draft, but choose a small portion for detailed writing help. Then you can take what you have learned from how we tore apart the one paragraph and edit/fix the rest of your paper on your own. ☺

Appendix D

USING APA STYLE Help For Doing Citations in Your [REDACTED] Papers

CITING SOURCES WITHIN THE TEXT OF YOUR PAPER

Important: NEVER write out the titles of books or journal articles, nor give the full names of authors, within the TEXT of your paper. All of that info will appear in the full citations you provide in your “References” list at the end (see next page for examples). In the text, you ONLY use last names and year of publication (and page numbers when appropriate), as shown below.

1. Examples of how to cite direct quotations from a source:

Direct quotations are sentences or phrases taken word-for-word from another source. Quotations can be useful, but do NOT rely heavily on them! Use them only when someone’s exact wording or definition is important. See next page for how to cite the *ideas* of authors that you summarize in your *own* words.

NOTE below the formatting and phrasing differences in how you cite authors when stated as part of the actual sentence versus when in parentheses at the end (or middle).

From the textbook:

According to [REDACTED] (2012), [REDACTED] are “ [REDACTED] that [REDACTED] that might be perceived as upsetting” (p. 106).

or

[REDACTED], a type of [REDACTED], are “ [REDACTED] that [REDACTED] that might be perceived as upsetting” ([REDACTED], 2012, p. 106).

From an article in the class reader (note that you must cite the authors of the **reading**, not the class reader itself!):

[REDACTED] (2010) argues that a [REDACTED] is “the [REDACTED] a source is thought to have prior to the time he or she [REDACTED]” (p. 386).

or

A [REDACTED] is “the [REDACTED] a source is thought to have prior to the time he or she [REDACTED]” ([REDACTED] 2010, p. 386).

From lecture (but do NOT quote Prof [REDACTED] unless you have [REDACTED] exact words, e.g., from ppt slides!):

According to lecture, [REDACTED] is “intentional imprecise [REDACTED]” ([REDACTED], 2013, January 15). [there is no page # for lecture, because this is a live talk, not a written quote.]

From a journal article:

Based on their findings, [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] (2005) argue that [REDACTED] is “a valuable targeting variable for anti drug campaigns” (p. 316).

or

Because this study found that authoritative [REDACTED] already engage in more drug-prevention behaviors, the researchers argue that [REDACTED] should be “a valuable targeting variable for anti drug campaigns” ([REDACTED], & [REDACTED], 2005, p. 316).

[NOTE: With 3 or more authors, you must cite **all** the names the first time, but then use the first author and “et al.” for later citations [REDACTED], et al. (2009) argue that...]

CITING SOURCES WITHIN THE TEXT OF YOUR PAPER (continued)...

2. Examples of how to cite paraphrased ideas from a source:

Paraphrasing is not directly quoting, but **using ideas/concepts** from another source that you put into **your own words**. Paraphrasing is useful to show that YOU get/understand what the authors are saying, as opposed to just quoting them. It also allows you to summarize and synthesize information (i.e., to write more concisely and to the point!).

From lecture:

According to lecture, people often use [REDACTED] in order to spare someone's feelings ([REDACTED], 2013, January 15).

From readings: (note that you do not use page numbers when you are not quoting directly)

Using [REDACTED] is clear and precise for [REDACTED] of the [REDACTED] who know the terms, but it can be confusing and vague for [REDACTED] ([REDACTED], 2012).

or

While [REDACTED], a source can [REDACTED] by establishing a connection with the audience ([REDACTED], 2010).

From a journal article:

[REDACTED] (2005) conducted a survey to compare the drug-prevention behaviors of [REDACTED] with authoritative versus non-authoritative [REDACTED].

or

The findings of the study suggest that it is important to design anti-drug campaigns differently depending on the particular [REDACTED] of the target audience ([REDACTED], 2005).

EXAMPLE REFERENCE LIST AT THE END OF YOUR PAPER

These are the citations for the same sources used in the in-text examples above. Note the formatting, such as indenting, author order, use of italics, and capitalization!

References Note that it is "References" NOT "works cited"!

[REDACTED]. (2013, January 15). [REDACTED] Class lecture for [REDACTED].

[REDACTED].

[REDACTED]. (2012). [REDACTED] [REDACTED] (2nd

ed.). Boston, MA: Bedford/St.Martin's.

[REDACTED] (2005). Authoritative [REDACTED] and drug-prevention practices: Implications for anti-drug ads for [REDACTED]. [REDACTED], 17, 301-321.

[REDACTED] (2010). Chapter 13: [REDACTED].

Appendix E

Exercise

Understanding Published Studies

This exercise is designed to give you practice at synthesizing the important information from a published empirical study so that you'll be better prepared to summarize and apply studies in Paper #2. First, you'll need to search [redacted] online databases and find a published empirical study in an academic journal, preferably on a topic related to [redacted] (e.g., [redacted], etc.). This article may or may not end up being one of articles that you'll use in your actual paper (Paper #2), because this exercise is mainly for practice.

Read the "Introduction to Scientific Journal Articles" handout (see next page below), and read the journal article that you found on your own. Answer the following questions regarding the study you found. **Type your answers and bring it in to section on the due date (see the discussion section schedule in the syllabus).**

CITATION INFO: [see the "Using APA Style" document on [redacted]]

- a) Give the full APA style citation for this article, as you would list it on your "References" page (i.e., the authors' names, year published, title of study, journal name, volume #, page #'s, etc., all in the correct order and format).
- b) Write an example sentence showing how you would cite this article within the actual text of the paper assignment.

FROM THE INTRO/LIT REVIEW SECTION:

Synthesize the researchers' lit review in only one or two sentences. What is the topic/problem under investigation, and how does the previous research/theory lead to the authors' study?

FROM THE METHOD SECTION:

Describe in only one or two sentences what the researchers did in their study. Do not give minor details (e.g., sample size), but rather identify the overall method (experiment, survey, content analysis) and describe the basic procedure for how they tested their hypotheses/answered their research questions.

FROM THE RESULTS SECTION:

Ignore the statistical procedures described (unless you enjoy that sort of thing) and look for sentences in this section that tell you what the authors *found*. Briefly identify the *main findings*.

FROM THE DISCUSSION SECTION:

In one or two sentences, describe what the authors argue is the importance of their study.

TIE TO PAPER ASSIGNMENT:

Finally, think about how this study would relate to any of the persuasion topics we covered in lecture. Jot down some pros and cons of using this study for your actual paper assignment.

INTRODUCTION TO SCIENTIFIC JOURNAL ARTICLES

What is a scientific journal

Research is complete only when the results are shared with the scientific community. The traditional medium for communicating research results is the scientific journal.

Scientific journals contain the accumulated knowledge of a field. In the literature are distilled the successes and failures, the information, and the perspectives contributed by many investigators over many years. Familiarity with the literature allows an individual investigator to avoid needlessly repeating work that has been done before, to build on existing work, and in turn to contribute something new.

Research articles published in scientific journals typically contain the sections described below.

Abstract

An abstract is a brief, comprehensive summary of the contents of a journal article. Usually 100-200 words in length, it appears at the beginning of the article and allows readers to survey its contents quickly.

Introduction/Literature Review

In the opening section of an article, the researcher introduces the **problem** that is under investigation and describes the research strategy. The author here reviews previous research and theory on the subject, developing a rationale for the present study and specific hypotheses to test (or research questions to answer). The author also defines relevant variables and provides an overview of the research method.

Method

The method section describes in detail **how** the study was designed and conducted. Several subsections typically appear. One subsection identifies the **participants** (also called "subjects"), describing their major demographic characteristics (e.g., age, sex), how they were selected, and how they were compensated for participation. The author also describes **materials** used in the study, such as measurement equipment (e.g., heart rate monitors, questionnaires) and stimulus materials (e.g., film clips that were viewed). The **procedure** subsection summarizes each step in the actual data collection of the study, including instructions to participants, experimental manipulations, and any important features of the design. In sum, the method section describes what the researcher did and how he or she did it.

Results

The results section describes the statistical techniques used to analyze the data and reports the results of these analyses. This section frequently includes tables, graphs, and figures. The researcher emphasizes statistically significant findings, often reporting which hypotheses were supported and which were not.

Discussion

The discussion section is where the researcher **evaluates** and **interprets** the results of the study. Here the author attempts to answer the research questions and explain how data support (or do not support) the hypotheses. The researcher criticizes the study in light of previous research, identifying strengths and weaknesses, explaining the practical and theoretical implications of the findings (i.e., how the study contributes to knowledge or society), and suggesting avenues for future research.

Appendix

Some articles include an appendix in order to present **complete** examples of measurement instruments (e.g., questionnaires) or statistical data that was only summarized briefly within the text of the article.

References

The reference section is a complete list of the sources that the researcher cited throughout the article. Typically these sources are published works (e.g., articles, books) that the author relied upon to conceptualize concepts and design the study. Within the article itself, the majority of references are typically cited in the literature review section, but they may appear elsewhere in the article as well.

For most communication research journals, the format for citing references, both within the text of the article and in the reference list, follows the guidelines of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (Fourth Edition)*, and is thus affectionately known as "APA style."

The above descriptions are paraphrased from the 2001 *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (Fifth Edition)*, Washington, DC.

Appendix F

My Research Study: Hello. My name is Kara Otto. I am a graduate student in Education and I am a T.A. (Teaching Assistant) for [REDACTED]. I am conducting a study about academic writing in [REDACTED] for which you can voluntarily participate. It lasts approximately ten weeks, or all of Winter Quarter 2014. Your real name will never be used in reporting data collected as part of this study. The study will primarily involve face-to-face interviews between you and me, if you choose to participate. Additionally, I will collect or photocopy your course documents related to writing. To voluntarily participate, *you must meet the following requirements:*

- You are 18 or older.
- You are an *international undergraduate* student.
- Your first language is *not* English.
- You are in the U.S. for academic study at [REDACTED].
- Your pre-college education was in a country where English is *not* an official language.
- You are enrolled in [REDACTED] for academic credit during Winter 2014.
- You are *not* enrolled as student in one of *my* [REDACTED] discussion sections. All other TA discussion sections for [REDACTED] are fine.

Benefits to You:

- Completion of the [REDACTED] 2-hour research participation requirement
- A choice of: \$20 gift card to the iTunes App Store or Victoria's Secret OR 2 extra credit points for your final grade in [REDACTED]*
- Deeper understanding of your writing
- Understanding of adjustment process to American university study

To Be Considered for Participation:

Your Name:
Your Age:
Your Phone Number(s):
Your Email:
Your Home Country:
Languages Spoken:

First Language:
Arrival Date for Study at [REDACTED]:
Expected Completion Date for Study at [REDACTED]:
<p>Total Number of Times Studying in U.S. Education:</p> <p>(1) Location:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Dates:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Purpose:</p> <p>(2) Location:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Dates:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Purpose:</p> <p>(3) Location:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Dates:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Purpose:</p> <p>(4) Location:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Dates:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Purpose:</p> <p>If you need additional space, please follow the same format above. Write on the reverse side of this paper.</p>

Questions: If you have questions about this research study, please feel free to contact me at [REDACTED]

*The gift card/extra credit will be given at the end of the research study for participants who complete the study.

Appendix G

Informed Consent for Research Study on Academic Writing in [REDACTED]

Purpose: You are being asked to participate in a research project. The purpose is to understand the nature of international student academic writing in [REDACTED].

Research Procedures: With your consent, you will be interviewed three times during winter quarter 2014. Each interview is 60 minutes long. The total for all three interviews is 3 hours. Interviews will be conducted face-to-face. Interviews will be audio recorded using a digital voice recorder. Additionally, you will provide your writing for [REDACTED]. It will be collected or photocopied. This includes smaller assignments before the two papers, any early drafts you write, and the two paper assignments. It is possible I will conduct a focus group, which includes interviewing several students at one time. Finally, you may be observed in your discussion section for [REDACTED]. Any focus group or observation would be arranged with you beforehand.

Payments & Credit: The [REDACTED] research participation requirement is 2 hours total. The first two interviews of this research study complete the [REDACTED] research participation requirement. For the third interview, you have a choice. You may choose to use it as 2 points of extra credit towards your final grade. Or, you may instead choose a \$20 gift card. If the three interviews last longer than expected (between three and four hours), you will receive both the 2 extra credit points and the \$20 gift card.

Benefits: Your participation may assist you in understanding your own writing process. Additionally, it may help your adjustment to the American university system.

Confidentiality: All information revealed by you in this study will remain in the possession of the researcher (Kara Otto) and the [REDACTED]. The researcher will protect data to the best of her ability. Interview recordings will be deleted once the project is finished. Your name will be removed from reports or publications, and a fake name will be used instead. However, absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed if research documents are subpoenaed (requested by a court of law).

Risks & Right to Refuse or Withdraw: There are minimal risks to participating in this study. You may choose not to answer interview questions you do not want to answer. You may withdraw from the study at any time without question from the researcher. If you withdraw from the study after the first interview, you will receive one hour of the [REDACTED] research participation requirement. If you withdraw after the second study, you will receive two hours of the [REDACTED] research participation requirement. If you withdraw before the first interview, you will not receive any payment or credit. It is also possible that the researcher may end your participation before the study is complete.

Alternatives: You have choices for completing the [REDACTED] research participation requirement. This study is not your only option. You may instead participate in a different study. Or, you may instead choose the “Non-Research Alternative” assignment described on [REDACTED].

Researcher Contact Information: If you have any questions about this study, please contact:
Kara Otto
Gevirtz Graduate School of Education
University of California, Santa Barbara

[REDACTED]

Questions: If you have any questions regarding your rights and participation as a research subject or if you think you may have been injured as a result of participation, please contact: [REDACTED]. Or write to the [REDACTED].

SIGN BELOW IF YOU AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH STUDY. AT YOUR REQUEST, YOU CAN RECEIVE A SIGNED AND DATED COPY OF THIS FORM.

Signature of Participant: _____ **Date:** _____

Appendix H

Pre-Interview Survey

Please write responses in the boxes below. You may use the backside of this paper if needed.

1. Name									
2. Perm #									
3. TOEFL score									
4. AWPE/ELPE score									
5. How did you first hear about [REDACTED]?									
6. Who did or do you know that was or is a [REDACTED] student?									
7. Why did you choose [REDACTED]?									
8. Circle your section time for [REDACTED]: <table><tr><td>Thursday 2:00p.m.</td><td>Thursday 3:00p.m.</td><td>Thursday 4:00p.m.</td></tr><tr><td>Friday 8:00a.m.</td><td>Friday 9:00a.m.</td><td>Friday 10:00a.m.</td></tr><tr><td>Friday 11:00a.m.</td><td>Friday 12:00p.m.</td><td>Friday 1:00p.m.</td></tr></table>	Thursday 2:00p.m.	Thursday 3:00p.m.	Thursday 4:00p.m.	Friday 8:00a.m.	Friday 9:00a.m.	Friday 10:00a.m.	Friday 11:00a.m.	Friday 12:00p.m.	Friday 1:00p.m.
Thursday 2:00p.m.	Thursday 3:00p.m.	Thursday 4:00p.m.							
Friday 8:00a.m.	Friday 9:00a.m.	Friday 10:00a.m.							
Friday 11:00a.m.	Friday 12:00p.m.	Friday 1:00p.m.							
9. Circle your TA's name: [REDACTED] [REDACTED]									
10. How many of your American friends have taken or are taking [REDACTED]? In the Past Currently Enrolled									

1. How many of your international student friends have taken or are taking [redacted]?		
<u>In the Past</u>	<u>Currently Enrolled</u>	
2. What is your proficiency level in the English language?		
3. How many years have you studied the English language?		
4. In your native country, where/how did you learn the English language?		
5. Describe your proficiency level in English academic writing.		
6. How many years have you studied English academic writing?		
7. List English academic writing classes you took in your home country.		
<u>Course Name/Topic</u>	<u>Grade/Age</u>	<u>Year</u>

1. List writing classes you have taken at [REDACTED].				
<u>Course Name</u>	<u>Teacher</u>	<u>Quarter/Year</u>		
2. At [REDACTED], circle how often have you used [REDACTED] for writing help.				
Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
3. At [REDACTED], circle how often you have used office hours with a TA for writing help.				
Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
4. At [REDACTED], circle how often you have used office hours with a professor for writing help.				
Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
5. At [REDACTED], circle how often you have asked American student friends/peers for writing help.				
Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
6. At [REDACTED], circle how often you have asked international student friends/peers for writing help.				
Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
7. If you attended American community college , list writing classes you took there.				
<u>Course Name</u>	<u>Quarter/Semester</u>	<u>Year</u>		
8. If you attended American grade or high school , list writing classes you took there.				
<u>Course Name</u>	<u>Quarter/Semester</u>	<u>Grade/Level of School</u>		

1. If you attended **other school types in the U.S.**, list writing classes you took there.

Course Name

Quarter/Semester

Grade/Level of School

2. What are your strengths in English academic writing?

3. What are your weaknesses in English academic writing?

4. How else have you learned English academic writing for the university level? Other instruction, classes, tutoring, friends, etc.? Include both in your native country and the U.S.

Appendix I

Preliminary Interview Questions

- How do L2 international students interpret and approach writing assignments?
- What strategies and resources do they use and where do they come from?

Thursday January 30 th ██████	Student	Friday January 31 st ██████	Student	Monday February 3 rd ██████	Student
10:00-10:50	Yurkio	2:30-3:30	██████	11:00-11:50	Cai
11:00-11:50		3:30-4:30	Quinn	12:00-12:50	
12:00-12:50	Yilin			1:00-1:50	██████
1:00-1:50	Vivien			2:00-2:50	
2:00-2:50				3:00-3:50	
				5:00-5:50	██████

1. Analytic Memos, Subject Files
2. Informed Consent (10)
3. Recording Notification
4. Pre-Interview Survey (15)
5. Preliminary Interview (30)
6. Follow-up (5)
 - a. Email copy of informed consent
 - b. Next interview

Interview

1. How does English academic writing compare to writing in your native language?
2. Tell me about experiences you have had with English academic writing in your native country/grade-HS, CC) before ██████.
(classes, assignments, structure/requirements, ease/difficulty)
 - a. If you needed help with writing assignments, who/what helped you?
3. Tell me about experiences you have had with English academic writing at ██████.
(classes, assignments, structure/requirements)
 - a. What do you understand well? What is easy about writing at ██████?
 - b. What do you not understand well? What is difficult about writing at ██████?
 - c. If you need help with writing assignments, who/what helps you?
(tutor, international friend, American friend, TA, professor, [the writing center], former instruction, etc.)
4. How did you prepare for English academic writing at ██████?
 - a. What helped the most/best?
 - b. What helped the least/worst?
5. What did you know about the writing required in ██████ before you were a student in ██████?
(assignments, ease/difficulty, length, type of writing, deadlines, grading)
 - a. How did you know?
 - b. What was the effect on your decision to take ██████?

Appendix J

Interview #2 Questions

- How do L2 international students interpret and approach writing assignments?
- What strategies and resources do they use and where do they come from?

Weds 2/19	Student	Thursday 2/20	Student	Friday 2/21	Student
[REDACTED]		[REDACTED]		[REDACTED]	
11:30		10:30-11:30	Yurkio	2:30-3:30	Quinn
12:30-1:30	[REDACTED]	11:30		3:30	
1		12		4:00-5:00	Cai
2:00-3:00	[REDACTED]	1:00-2:00	Vivien	5:30	
3:30-4:30	[REDACTED]	2:30-3:30	Yilin		
4		3			
5		4			
6		5			
		6			

1. Analytic Memos
2. Read Subject File before each one comes in to refresh memory of subject specifics
3. Recording Notification
4. Use [REDACTED] P#1 assignment + their paper in interview (TA graded version)
5. Give them back P#1
6. Follow-Up
 - a. One interview left – will be after 2nd paper is turned in

Interview

Interpretation of Assignment

1. Let's look together at the first writing assignment for [REDACTED]. What did you think this assignment was asking you to do?
2. What were some of the most important skills for the first [REDACTED] paper?
 - a. What did you think the main grading criteria were?
3. How was the paper assignment similar to and different from other writing assignments you wrote in the past?

General Approach

4. How did you approach the task of writing the paper? Walk me through your process for writing the paper.
5. When did you begin writing/working on the paper?
 - a. How many drafts of your [REDACTED] paper did you write, including the final draft?
 - b. Tell me what the major changes were between your early draft(s) and your final draft.

Effectiveness

1. Show me/walk me through what you believe/think you did well in your paper. What was easy? You can agree or disagree with the TA.
 - a. Show me/walk me through what you believe/think you did not do well in your paper. What was hard?
 - b. How did you handle the difficulties?
2. Show me what the TA believes/thinks you did well in your paper.
 - a. Show me what the TA believes/thinks you did not do well in your paper.

Resources

3. How did your other writing experiences help you write the first [redacted] paper?
 - a. ESL
 - b. [FYC]
 - c. [redacted], etc.
 - d. Disciplinary writing classes with a writing requirement
 - e. HS
 - f. CC
4. How did [redacted] resources help you write the first [redacted] paper?
 - a. [the writing center]
 - b. Library
 - c. Past TAs
 - d. Past Professors
 - e. Friends – international or American?
 - f. [redacted] friends – international or American? Current or Past?
5. How did [redacted] resources help you write the first [redacted] paper?
 - a. TA(s) & Professor
 - i. What did they help with/look at?
 - b. [redacted] docs
6. What other resources did you use to write your first [redacted] paper? What else helped you to write this paper?

Scoring – can save for interview #2 if necessary

7. How did you feel about your score/grade?
 - a. How did you feel about the TA's comments/written feedback?
 - b. How does the score/feedback compare with the time you spent on the paper?
 - c. How does the score/feedback relate to the resources you used to write the paper?

Next Paper – can save these for interview #2 if necessary

8. How does your experience with paper #1 affect your thinking and preparation for paper #2? What will you do (differently/the same)?
 - a. How does your TA's comments/score affect your thinking and preparation for paper #2?
 - b. How does your use of resources for paper #1 affect your thinking and preparation for paper #2?
9. Is there anything else you want to tell me about paper #1?

Appendix K

Interview #2 Questions

- How do L2 international students interpret and approach writing assignments?
- What strategies and resources do they use and where do they come from?

Tues 3/4	Student	Wednesday 3/5	Student	Thursday 3/6	Student	Friday 3/7	Student
1:00-2:00	Vivien	11:30-12:30	█	12:00-1:00	Yuriko	2:30-3:30	█
2:30-3:30	Quinn	1:00-2:00	█	1:30-2:30	Yilin	3:45-4:45	Cai

1. Analytic Memos & Read Subject File before each one comes in to refresh memory of subject specifics
2. Read final P#2 before each interview
3. Recording Notification
4. Use █ P#2 assignment + their paper in interview
5. Follow-Up
 - a. Which P#2 does do you need returned to you?
 - b. Satisfied █ research participation + maximum extra credit allowed
 - c. Submitting participation + extra credit to █ & TA

How do you recognize an empirical study? How did you find them? How did you choose among them? Where did you learn what an empirical study is?

Interview

Interpretation of Assignment

1. Let's look together at the second writing assignment for █. What did you think this assignment was asking you to do?
2. What were some of the most important skills for the second █ paper?
 - a. What do you think the main grading criteria are?
3. How was the paper assignment similar to and different from other writing assignments you wrote in the past?
 - a. For █ or elsewhere?

General Approach

4. How did you approach the task of writing the paper? Walk me through your process for writing the paper.
 - a. Meeting with TA re: paper #1 - ?
 - b. Choosing an ad
 - c. Understanding published studies/empirical studies
 - d. Outlining, Drafting
5. When did you begin writing/working on the paper?
 - a. How many drafts of your █ paper did you write, including the final draft?

- a. Tell me what the major changes were between your early draft(s) and your final draft.

Effectiveness

2. Show me/walk me through what you believe/think you did well in your paper. What was easy?
 - a. Show me/walk me through what you believe/think you did not do well in your paper. What was hard?
 - b. How did you handle the difficulties?

Resources

3. How did your experiences with the first [redacted] paper help you write the second [redacted] paper?
4. How did your other writing experiences help you write the second [redacted] paper?
 - a. ESL
 - b. [redacted]
 - c. [FYC]
 - d. Disciplinary writing classes with a writing requirement
 - e. HS
 - f. CC
5. How did [redacted] resources help you write the second [redacted] paper?
 - a. [the writing center]
 - b. Library
 - c. Past TAs
 - d. Past Professors
 - e. Friends – international or American?
 - f. [redacted] friends – international or American? Current or Past?
6. How did [redacted] resources help you write the second [redacted] paper?
 - a. TA(s) & Professor
 - i. What did they help with/look at?
 - b. [redacted] docs
 - i. APA
 - ii. Finding empirical studies guides
 - iii. Understanding published studies
7. What other resources did you use to write your second [redacted] paper? What else helped you to write this paper?

Scoring

8. What do you think your score/grade will be? Why?
 - a. What do you think the TA's comments/written feedback will be?

Future Writing

9. How does your experience with paper #1 and paper #2 affect your thinking and preparation for future writing? What will you do (differently/the same)?
 - a. In [redacted]?
 - b. Elsewhere at [redacted]?
 - c. How will your use of resources be affected?
10. Is there anything else you want to tell me about paper #2?

Appendix L

Initial Codes as Global/Organizing/Basic Themes

(1-3) Global: Interpretation of a Social Science Writing Assignment

(1) Organizing: Interpretation Of Explicit Assignment Criteria

- *(1A) Basic: Understand Course Content*
 - Examples: demonstrate comprehension of course content including readings and lecture, exhibit depth with ideas discussed
- *(1B) Basic: Apply Course Content*
 - Examples: identify course content in real world phenomena, interpret/explain real world phenomena using course content, analyze real world phenomena using course content
- *(1C) Basic: Make Original Claims*
 - Examples: evaluate real world phenomena using course content, evidence claims with course content, evidence claims with outside research, devise a thesis/argument, devise a comparatively strong thesis/argument, connect separate claims to consistently develop thesis/argument
- *(1D) Basic: Demonstrate University-Level Writing*
 - Examples: provide an introduction, use correct grammar, citations
- *(1E) Basic: Reflection Upon Explicit Assignment Criteria*
 - Examples: lack of experience, clarity of expectations

(2) Organizing: Interpretation Of Implicit Assignment Criteria

- *(2A) Basic: Exhibit Good Writing*
 - Examples: follow structural guidelines, showcase good writing skills, use brief and clear sentences, word choice
- *(2B) Basic: Competitiveness*
 - Examples: choose course content that is best understood to ensure clarity and satisfaction of page length, choose course content that occurs with greatest frequency, choose concepts that fit well together, choose concepts that enable comparison or some other relationship among them, critically compare/contrast outside research for best fit with argument, strategically extract compatible information from research to complement argument
- *(2C) Basic: Extend Beyond The Prompt*
 - Examples: provide advice, provide detailed evidence
- *(2D) Basic: Think And Write Like An American*
 - Examples: interpret American thinking/behavior in real-world phenomena, use advanced vocabulary, imitate the American structure of writing, understand content well enough to paraphrase or use synonyms for course terms
- *(2E) Basic: Reflection Upon Implicit Assignment Criteria*
 - Examples: lack of experience, clarity of implications

(3) Organizing: Interpretation Of TA Feedback

- *(3A) Basic: Cognitive Interpretation*
 - Examples: confirmation of prediction, disconfirmation of prediction, confusion, unclear feedback, comparison of effort to outcome
- *(3B) Basic: Emotional Interpretation*
 - Examples: negative reaction, positive reaction

- (3C) *Basic: Engagement*
 - Examples: disagreement, clarification seeking
- (3D) *Basic: Disengagement*
 - Examples: disregarding feedback
- (3E) *Basic: Internal Attributions*
 - Examples: L1 culture/language, strategies used
- (3F) *Basic: External Attributions*
 - Examples: resources used, timeline, workload

(4-6) Global: Approach To A Social Science Writing Assignment

(4) Organizing: Preparation For U.S. Academic Writing Prior To Matriculation

- (4A) *Basic: Formal Preparation*
 - Examples: home high school assistance, home university assistance, exam preparation services
- (4B) *Basic: Informal Preparation*
 - Examples: self study, reading English publications, studying components of English writing, memorization of components of English writing
- (4C) *Basic: Lack Of Preparation*
 - Examples: no time for preparation, no desire to prepare
- (4D) *Evaluation Of Preparation*
 - Examples: not helpful, helpful, mixed

(5) Organizing: Process

- (5A) *Basic: Planning To Write*
 - Examples: comprehending the prompt, making writing plans, initially reading the prompt, initially watching assigned content, initially completing assigned readings, time management, listing, outlining
- (5B) *Basic: Writing*
 - Examples: writing, revising, lack of revising, watching/writing iterations
- (5C) *Basic: Independent Decision-Making During Writing Process*
 - Examples: rejecting initial decisions, modifying initial decisions, accepting initial decisions
- (5D) *Basic: Planning To Seek Help*
 - Examples: listing questions to be asked, intending to use resources while in process of writing

(6) Organizing: Self-Efficacy

- (6A) *Basic: Performative Confidence*
 - Examples: explicit assignment criteria, implicit assignment criteria
- (6B) *Basic: Performative Insecurity*
 - Examples: explicit assignment criteria, implicit assignment criteria, comparison to peers
- (6C) *Basic: Unresolved Insecurity Post-Help*
 - Examples: performance of explicit assignment criteria, performance of implicit assignment criteria, comprehension of prompt, time management, resistance to seeking help, incompleteness of help received, struggles to enact advice, uncertain how to improve, unable to improve, NNES status

- (6D) *Basic: Transitioning Assignments*
 - Examples: confidence expressed, uncertainty expressed, insecurity expressed, self-competition, peer-competition, clarity of expectations, comparison of assignment requirements

(7-10) Global: Strategies For Writing A Social Science Writing Assignment

(7) Organizing: Strategies Influenced By English-Language Writing in Home Country

- (7A) *Basic: Acquisition Of Similar Strategies*
 - Examples: awareness of assignment similarities, focus of assignment, type of class, genre, conventions, writing values, length, amount of time required, depth of planning, depth of thinking, research, reading to write, revision, structure, formatting, limitations, locating research, integrating research, explicit assignment requirements, implicit assignment requirements, process, competitiveness
- (7B) *Basic: Acquisition of Different Strategies*
 - Examples: awareness of assignment differences, focus of assignment, type of class, genre, conventions, writing values, length, amount of time required, depth of planning, depth of thinking, research, reading to write, revision, structure, formatting, limitations, locating research, integrating research, explicit assignment requirements, implicit assignment requirements, process, competitiveness
- (7C) *Basic: Impression Of Writing Experiences*
 - Examples: awareness of easiness, awareness of difficulty, applicability/relevance to U.S. writing, assignment clarity
- (7D) *Basic: Strategies Acquired In Relation To Seeking Help*
 - Examples: kinds of help sought, outcome of help sought
- (7E) *Basic: Strategies Acquired In Relation To Feedback Received*
 - Examples: negative feedback, positive feedback, lack of feedback, appreciation of feedback

(8) Organizing: Strategies Influenced By English-Language Writing in U.S.

- (8A) *Basic: Acquisition Of Similar Strategies*
 - Examples: focus of assignment, type of class, genre, conventions, writing values, length, amount of time required, depth of planning, depth of thinking, research, reading to write, revision, structure, formatting, limitations, locating research, integrating research, explicit assignment requirements, implicit assignment requirements, process, competitiveness
- (8B) *Basic: Acquisition of Different Strategies*
 - Examples: focus of assignment, type of class, genre, conventions, writing values, length, amount of time required, depth of planning, depth of thinking, research, reading to write, revision, structure, formatting, limitations, locating research, integrating research, explicit assignment requirements, implicit assignment requirements, process, competitiveness
- (8C) *Basic: Impression Of Writing Experiences*
 - Examples: awareness of easiness, awareness of difficulty, applicability/relevance to C1 writing, assignment clarity
- (8D) *Basic: Strategies Acquired In Relation To Seeking Help*
 - Examples: kinds of help sought, outcome of help sought
- (8E) *Basic: Strategies Acquired In Relation To Feedback Received*

- Examples: negative feedback, positive feedback, lack of feedback, appreciation of feedback

(9) Organizing: Self-Initiated Strategies

- *(9A) Basic: Strategies Of Engagement*
 - Examples: appreciation of experience, enjoying the process, appreciation of strategies acquired, interest in topics, competitiveness, starting early
- *(9B) Basic: Strategies Of Repetition*
 - Examples: rereading the prompt, re-watching assigned content, rereading writing, rereading assigned readings, reusing previous resources, repeating same processes while writing and between assignments
- *(9C) Basic: Strategies Of Critical Thinking*
 - Examples: strategic use of research, strategic decision-making, developing an individualized process
- *(9D) Basic: Strategies Of Supplementation*
 - Examples: adding to allowable resources, using additional research, taking extensive notes
- *(9E) Basic: Strategies Of Substitution*
 - Examples: use of unsanctioned resources, replacing assignment requirements
- *(9F) Basic: Strategies Of Contextual Awareness*
 - Examples: overcoming cultural differences in writing, taking advantage of cultural similarities in writing, use of translation method, thinking/acting/writing like an American, reader/TA sensitivity

(10) Organizing: Reflection Upon Strategies

- *(10A) Basic: Evaluation Of Strategies*
 - Examples: usefulness, future intentions, limitations, lack of strategies
- *(10B) Basic: Modification To Strategies*
 - Examples: improvements, abandonment, replacement, critical thinking/reflection
- *(10C) Basic: Newfound Writing Knowledge*
 - Examples: procedures, writing values, deciphering explicit requirements, deciphering implicit requirements

(11-15) Global: Resources For Writing A Social Science Writing Assignment

(11) Organizing: Peers As Resources

- *(11A) Basic: American Peer Influence*
 - Examples: kinds of help intentionally sought, conversational emphasis, lack of substantive discussion, impact on course impression, impact on writing impression, impact on major impression, impact on self-efficacy, impact on assignment decisions, perseverance
- *(11B) Basic: Use Of American Peers*
 - Examples: nature of contact, nature of relationship to peer, status of peer, lack of contact, avoidance, unable to use
- *(11C) Basic: International Peer Influence*

Examples: kinds of help intentionally sought, conversational emphasis, lack of substantive discussion, impact on course impression, impact on writing impression, impact on major impression, impact on self-efficacy, reciprocal

- collaboration, lending materials, impact on assignment decisions, perseverance
- (11D) *Basic: Use Of International Peers*
 - Examples: nature of contact, nature of relationship to peer, status of peer, lack of contact, avoidance, unable to use
- (12) Organizing: Professor As Resource**
 - (12A) *Basic: Professor Influence*
 - Examples: kinds of help intentionally sought (clarification-seeking, validation-seeking), conversational emphasis, impact on course impression, impact on writing impression, impact on major impression, impact on self-efficacy, impact on assignment decisions
 - (12B) *Basic: Use Of Professor*
 - Examples: avoidance, nature of contact, limitations of help, unable to use
- (13) Organizing: TA As Resource**
 - (13A) *Basic: TA Influence*
 - Examples: kinds of help intentionally sought (clarification-seeking, validation-seeking, improvement-seeking), conversational emphasis, impact on course impression, impact on writing impression, impact on major impression, impact on self-efficacy, impact on assignment decisions
 - (13B) *Basic: Use Of TA*
 - Examples: nature of contact, limitations of help, unable to use, providing unsanctioned help
- (14) Organizing: Writing Center As Resource**
 - (14A) *Basic: Writing Center Influence*
 - Examples: kinds of help intentionally sought (clarification-seeking, validation-seeking), conversational emphasis, impact on course impression, impact on writing impression, impact on major impression, impact on self-efficacy, impact on assignment decisions (resistance, acceptance, modification)
 - (14B) *Basic: Use Of Writing Center*
 - Examples: avoidance, nature of contact, limitations of help, unable to use
- (15) Organizing: Evaluation of Resources**
 - (15A) *Basic: Reflecting Upon Resource Use*
 - Examples: usefulness, future intentions

Appendix M

Initial Codes as Global/Organizing/Basic Themes

(1-3) Global: Interpretation of a Social Science Writing Assignment

(1) Organizing: Interpretation Of Explicit Assignment Criteria

- (1A) *Basic: Understand Course Content*
 - Examples: demonstrate comprehension of course content including readings and lecture, exhibit depth with ideas discussed
- (1B) *Basic: Apply Course Content*
 - Examples: identify course content in real world phenomena, interpret/explain real world phenomena using course content, analyze real world phenomena using course content
- (1C) *Basic: Make Original Claims*
 - Examples: evaluate real world phenomena using course content, evidence claims with course content, evidence claims with outside research, devise a thesis/argument, devise a comparatively strong thesis/argument, connect separate claims to consistently develop thesis/argument
- (1D) *Basic: Demonstrate University-Level Writing*
 - Examples: provide an introduction, use correct grammar, citations
- (1E) *Basic: Reflection Upon Explicit Assignment Criteria*
 - Examples: lack of experience, clarity of expectations

(2) Organizing: Interpretation Of Implicit Assignment Criteria

- (2A) *Basic: Exhibit Good Writing*
 - Examples: follow structural guidelines, showcase good writing skills, use brief and clear sentences, word choice
- (2B) *Basic: Competitiveness*
 - Examples: choose course content that is best understood to ensure clarity and satisfaction of page length, choose course content that occurs with greatest frequency, choose concepts that fit well together, choose concepts that enable comparison or some other relationship among them, critically compare/contrast outside research for best fit with argument, strategically extract compatible information from research to complement argument
- (2C) *Basic: Extend Beyond The Prompt*
 - Examples: provide advice, provide detailed evidence
- (2D) *Basic: Think And Write Like An American*
 - Examples: interpret American thinking/behavior in real-world phenomena, use advanced vocabulary, imitate the American structure of writing, understand content well enough to paraphrase or use synonyms for course terms
- (2E) *Basic: Reflection Upon Implicit Assignment Criteria*
 - Examples: lack of experience, clarity of implications

(4-6) Global: Approach To A Social Science Writing Assignment

(5) Organizing: Process

- (5A) *Basic: Planning To Write*

- Examples: comprehending the prompt, making writing plans, initially reading the prompt, initially watching assigned content, initially completing assigned readings, time management, listing, outlining
- (5B) *Basic: Writing*
 - Examples: writing, revising, lack of revising, watching/writing iterations
- (5C) *Basic: Independent Decision-Making During Writing Process*
 - Examples: rejecting initial decisions, modifying initial decisions, accepting initial decisions
- (5D) *Basic: Planning To Seek Help*
 - Examples: listing questions to be asked, intending to use resources while in process of writing

(6) Organizing: Self-Efficacy

- (6A) *Basic: Performative Confidence*
 - Examples: explicit assignment criteria, implicit assignment criteria, positive predictions
- (6B) *Basic: Performative Insecurity*
 - Examples: explicit assignment criteria, implicit assignment criteria, comparison to peers, negative predictions
- (6C) *Basic: Unresolved Insecurity Post-Help*
 - Examples: performance of explicit assignment criteria, performance of implicit assignment criteria, comprehension of prompt, time management, resistance to seeking help, incompleteness of help received, struggles to enact advice, uncertain how to improve, unable to improve, NNES status
- (6D) *Basic: Transitioning Assignments*
 - Examples: confidence expressed, uncertainty expressed, insecurity expressed, self-competition, peer-competition, clarity of expectations, comparison of assignment requirements
- (6E) *Basic: Resolved Insecurity Post-Help*

(7-10) Global: Strategies For Writing A Social Science Writing Assignment

(7) Organizing: Strategies Influenced By English-Language Writing in Home Country

- (7A) *Basic: Acquisition Of Similar Strategies*
 - Examples: awareness of assignment similarities, focus of assignment, type of class, genre, conventions, writing values, length, amount of time required, depth of planning, depth of thinking, research, reading to write, revision, structure, formatting, limitations, locating research, integrating research, explicit assignment requirements, implicit assignment requirements, process, competitiveness
- (7B) *Basic: Acquisition of Different Strategies*
 - Examples: awareness of assignment differences, focus of assignment, type of class, genre, conventions, writing values, length, amount of time required, depth of planning, depth of thinking, research, reading to write, revision, structure, formatting, limitations, locating research, integrating research, explicit assignment requirements, implicit assignment requirements, process, competitiveness
- (7C) *Basic: Impression Of Writing Experiences*
 - Examples: awareness of easiness, awareness of difficulty, applicability/relevance to U.S. writing, assignment clarity

- (7D) *Basic: Strategies Acquired In Relation To Seeking Help*
 - Examples: kinds of help sought, outcome of help sought
- (7E) *Basic: Strategies Acquired In Relation To Feedback Received*
 - Examples: negative feedback, positive feedback, lack of feedback, appreciation of feedback

(8) Organizing: Strategies Influenced By English-Language Writing in U.S.

- (8A) *Basic: Acquisition Of Similar Strategies*
 - Examples: focus of assignment, type of class, genre, conventions, writing values, length, amount of time required, depth of planning, depth of thinking, research, reading to write, revision, structure, formatting, limitations, locating research, integrating research, explicit assignment requirements, implicit assignment requirements, process, competitiveness
- (8B) *Basic: Acquisition of Different Strategies*
 - Examples: focus of assignment, type of class, genre, conventions, writing values, length, amount of time required, depth of planning, depth of thinking, research, reading to write, revision, structure, formatting, limitations, locating research, integrating research, explicit assignment requirements, implicit assignment requirements, process, competitiveness
- (8C) *Basic: Impression Of Writing Experiences*
 - Examples: awareness of easiness, awareness of difficulty, applicability/relevance to C1 writing, assignment clarity
- (8D) *Basic: Strategies Acquired In Relation To Seeking Help*
 - Examples: kinds of help sought, outcome of help sought
- (8E) *Basic: Strategies Acquired In Relation To Feedback Received*
 - Examples: negative feedback, positive feedback, lack of feedback, appreciation of feedback

(11-15) Global: Resources For Writing A Social Science Writing Assignment

(11) Organizing: Peers As Resources

- (11A) *Basic: American Peer Influence*
 - Examples: kinds of help intentionally sought, conversational emphasis, lack of substantive discussion, impact on course impression, impact on writing impression, impact on major impression, impact on self-efficacy, impact on assignment decisions, perseverance
- (11B) *Basic: Use Of American Peers*
 - Examples: nature of contact, nature of relationship to peer, status of peer, lack of contact, avoidance, unable to use
- (11C) *Basic: International Peer Influence*
 - Examples: kinds of help intentionally sought, conversational emphasis, lack of substantive discussion, impact on course impression, impact on writing impression, impact on major impression, impact on self-efficacy, reciprocal collaboration, lending materials, impact on assignment decisions, perseverance
- (11D) *Basic: Use Of International Peers*
 - Examples: nature of contact, nature of relationship to peer, status of peer, lack of contact, avoidance, unable to use

(15) Organizing: Evaluation of Resources

- *(15A) Basic: Reflecting Upon Resource Use*
 - Examples: usefulness, future intentions