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*Write to Be Read: Reading, Reflection, and Writing*

William R. Smalzer.

New York: Cambridge University Press. 1996.

CANDACE AGUIRRE

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All too often, academic writing is merely a restatement of what has been written before, condensing or expanding a previous author's voice, insight, and style. William Smalzer's *Write to Be Read* challenges this thinking by guiding high-intermediate to advanced ESL/EFL students through critical thinking processes that assist them in learning to express their own voices as writers of academic essays.

Smalzer has created a valuable tool for any teacher who requires written work from students. This carefully designed book provides a wealth of varied activities to help students identify the components of different genres of writing and engages them in the process of producing quality academic compositions.

*Write to Be Read* incorporates both product and process approaches to writing that assist students in fulfilling academic criteria expected of native speakers of English. Smalzer has designed extensive collaborative activities to assist writers in clarifying their thinking and focusing on meaning through discussion of readings and peer review processes. Students are led through an increasingly complex series of writing activities beginning with paragraphs and advancing to essays and essay exam answers.

Smalzer's book is divided into eight chapters, each anchored by a main reading of three to four pages on a topic sure to catch the attention of students. Readings such as "Birth Order: Your Place in the Family, Your Place in Life," or "A Better Quality of Life: Through Modernization or Tradition?" are thought-provoking and engaging; authors range from the not-so-famous to the famous, like Somerset Maugham and Norman

Vincent Peale. Additional shorter readings on closely related themes are also included to further spur student thought; these run the gamut from a student's personal essay to an excerpt from an academic paper.

Each of the eight chapters prepares writers for a core writing assignment by breaking down the writing process into five main parts. Part 1, called "Getting a Grip on the Topic," helps students develop a schema for the main reading. Exercises include a brief, independent written reflection on a prereading question, a discussion of informational notes or vocabulary related to the reading, a guide question to help students pinpoint the main idea of the reading selection, an exercise to identify supporting details, and, finally, a small group or class discussion on one of the prewriting activities.

Part 2, "Responding to the Main Reading," encourages students to develop a sense of audience and includes personal journal writing, shared writing with feedback from classmates, and an individual follow-up evaluation of reader response. Part 3, "Going More Deeply into the Topic," develops critical thinking skills by presenting students with a reading selection from a different genre that contains an opposing viewpoint yet is related to the main reading. Brief notes set the stage for this reading selection, and a guide question helps direct the reading. The reading selection itself is accompanied by notes for rereading, a section on negotiating the meaning of the passage, a group follow-up activity, and a guide for a small group or class discussion to encourage development of comparison, analysis, inference, and evaluation skills. Part 4, "Improving Writing Skills," assists students in paraphrasing without plagiarizing, and deals with phrases, clauses, fragments, and composing topic sentences.

The "Core Writing Assignment" begins in Part 5. Students are first asked to choose an appropriate writing style such as comparison/contrast, description/example, narrative, or cause/effect. A free-writing exercise follows, and then students are guided through individual and group methods of assessment, review, and revision of their first draft. Students may then write a second draft and repeat the review process or write an explanation to the teacher of their reasons for not revising. At the close of each chapter the teacher is provided with a convenient evaluation checklist to assess the students' writing.

The only drawback to Smalzer's work might be in its fine attention to detail. Students may find the amount of time spent producing each core writing objective to be excessive and become bored long before they complete their final drafts. However, Smalzer does seem aware of this possibility and states in his "Recommendations for Teaching and Assessment" that students and teachers alike may find it more productive to move on to new topics rather than repeatedly rework a paper.

*Write to Be Read* is a comprehensive guide to producing writing within an academic setting and is a valuable tool for any teacher who stresses writing in the classroom. Through much prereading and prewriting, assessment, and revision, students are clearly guided through a step-by-step process. Progressively more complex activities assist teachers and students alike in identifying the necessary components of a particular genre of writing. Using this text, students can complete a piece of academic writing equivalent to that of native English speakers.



*The Internet Guide For English Language Teachers.*

Dave Sperling.

Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall Regents. 1997

CATHERINE DANFORTH

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A growing number of savvy ESL professionals around the world are roaming the Internet making contacts, responding to the latest information, and accessing a cornucopia of teaching resources. Some level of Internet proficiency is increasingly being demanded, but what fraction of our community is really connected? At entry level, for example, an informal poll of TESOL trainees revealed that out of a class of 20, one was adept and one other had successfully managed several forays into cyberspace. Of the rest, five had no access, while the others lacked both the confidence and the time necessary to persevere through the frustrations of self-instruction. I believe this group is representative of the community at large. The difficulty, for the novice as well as the too-busy teacher, is that getting started and finding one's way around the on-line maze once connected can be intimidating and prohibitively time consuming.

Until I myself got hold of Dave Sperling's *An Internet Guide For English Language Teachers*, my access to the Internet's wealth of resources for research and teaching depended heavily on my more Web-proficient family and friends; without them at my elbow the Internet was a bewildering and enormously frustrating place. This handy, 150-page paperback, a colleague's reliable, highly pertinent guide to the treasures of cyberspace, changed all that: It got me cruising around the Internet on my own and loving every minute. Gone is the dependency and the irritation of not knowing how to access information I know is out there. I was even able to plan a Web-based summer writing class.

Each of the book's seven sections introduces the user to a different Internet domain— vocabulary and culture (10 pages), access tools (11 pages), communication strategies (18 pages), Web page construction (8 pages), references and resources (44 pages!), job search assistance (10 pages), and a useful Internet “dictionary”— a comprehensive subject/key-word index and bibliography (24 pages). The user is launched on the Web by page 3 and thereafter led systematically to visit address after address, one site after another, picking up the lingo and expertise en route. Every reference is accompanied by a brief descriptive comment. Interspersed throughout are quotes from Internet users, students and colleagues, *with* their e-mail addresses, and “Tips” for related or helpful sources (Universal Resource Locators [URLs] provided).

Sections 1 through 3 clearly explain the components of the Internet with their capabilities and introduce the basic tools for continuing exploration. Address links to directories, libraries, publishers, and institutions abound. ESL/EFL links invite users to join the community of language learners, teachers, and researchers according to their own personal needs and preferences. E-mailing instructions, mailing lists, news groups, discussion groups, chat groups, and other communication tools are illustrated with plentiful and immediately useful examples.

Sections 4 and 5 launch the user on a solo flight with a minimum of fuss. Navigational assistance is provided with an annotated selection of what the author considers the best available sites for the ESL/EFL professional. But first there are clear, precise instructions on how to create your own Web page to help you and/or your class off the sidelines and into interactive participation in this virtual world.

Next is the “Best of the Web,” an enticing smorgasbord of 49 alphabetically arranged subject areas. This is the most exciting section of the guide. Here are the addresses of major libraries, bookstores, professional directories, and publishers. Here are ESL teacher pages and student projects, lesson material, special interest groups, and TESOL journals and associations from around the world, as well as sites for grammar, vocabulary and idioms, for writing, listening and speaking, literacy, and ESP (English for Specific Purposes). For the applied linguist and classroom researcher there are databases and reference resources, including some for literature, on-line newspapers, and popular magazines. Each Web site on these 44 pages has links to a multiplicity of other sites, so that by traveling from one to another you can span a community that is truly global. And best of all there is access to plenty of on-line help beginning with Sperling's own Web site where you can ask questions or make comments and get a personal response.

Sections 6 and 7 deal with issues of more general interest, for example, legal issues, troubleshooting, an Internet glossary, Internet slang and conventions, a bibliography of books about the Internet, as well as 10 pages of job information. And lastly there is a comprehensive index.

A close look at some of these Web sites reveals some peculiarities of Web culture that might have been made more explicit in this guide. First, the diversity of sites is somewhat misleading, as quite a few sites may be from the same creator. Secondly, not all sites are created equal; some sites are the home-grown creations of one individual, some are school and university based (including on-line courses), and others are commercially developed or even international government sites.

One of my few criticisms of this book is that sometimes the commentary accompanying the Web citations sounds distractingly like real estate advertising; however, for the most part the text is usefully descriptive. Another is the omission of an extremely useful on-line bookstore that includes book reviews <<http://www.amazon.com>>. As the World Wide Web is expanding so rapidly, a couple of blank end-pages for notes and additions would also be welcome.

With these minor caveats, I heartily recommend *The Internet Guide* to teachers, students, and teachers-in-training. It is easy and quick to read, and its instructions are to the point and often amusing. It is impressively comprehensive, yet leads the reader by easy stages from the threshold level of proficiency to mastery. It is infinitely useful because of the sweeping panorama of Web destinations it reveals and by virtue of the ever-expanding nature of the Web itself. With this friendly guide, the user is empowered to explore the Internet's potential for building community, sharing ideas, and creating new avenues for language learning.

The Second Edition of Dave Sperling's *The Internet Guide* was published in 1998 by Prentice Hall Regents. It includes a free CD-ROM.





*On the Write Track: Beginning Literacy for Secondary Students*

Deborah Becker Cotto.

San Francisco: Alta Book Center. 1997.

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“Which book is the best for my students?” Every ESL instructor has asked this question. If the students are beginners, it is especially difficult to break down their fear of English. I have seen beginning ESL students intimidated simply by a glimpse of a book’s cover. What I have looked for in my own classes are books that dispel students’ fears by offering interesting themes and motivating activities that attract them to learning English. *On the Write Track (OWT)* by Deborah Becker Cotto meets these criteria; this is a very intriguing and encouraging book for secondary students at the beginning literacy level.

*OWT* is composed of nine chapters and two prechapters, “Get Ready” and “Get Set.” The prechapters accustom beginning students to recognizing and writing English letters by starting with the very basic and easy activity of tracing. This activity encourages ESL students to believe in their abilities in English, thereby reducing possible anxieties and engaging them in a process that is not simply verbal. Students are thus encouraged to believe that learning English can be fun and that English skills are something that they can acquire.

The nine main chapters include interactive English language skills. All of the chapters are comprehensive, developing the four principal skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Every chapter has a theme; the focus moves from oneself, through school, to calendar and weather, and then to families and communities. A final summary chapter gathers together simple categorized building blocks of English (units of measurement, everyday words for colors, punctuation marks, days of the week, months of the year, shapes, multiplication tables, graphs, numbers, letters, units of

money, and so forth) that have been treated in the previous chapters, providing a ready reference for the student.

The most outstanding strength of the book is its diversity of approach—there is no one fixed format or order. A variety of activities is presented (encompassing, for example, graphs, problem solving, writing, and reading), all of which are adapted to the theme of each chapter. This diversity challenges students to concentrate on the content of the book and become curious about what will follow next because they cannot readily guess what activity is to come.

A second strength is that all chapter themes are closely related to daily life. Students can apply information and activities encountered in this book to aspects of their own lives. Personal information about oneself such as “Who Are You?” (chapter 1) and “Where Are You From?” (chapter 2) are of interest to virtually everybody, and “Classroom,” “School,” “Families,” and “Communities” (chapters 3, 4, 7, and 8) are familiar and not intimidating. The survival themes of “Calendar” and “Weather” (chapters 5 and 6) are basic and necessary as well.

Visuals are another strong feature of this book. The colorful cover plays a role in decreasing students’ concern that English is a difficult language, making them think of the book as entertaining. Every chapter is visually organized, which helps students, especially the visual learners, understand the contents more quickly. Although the method of teaching is varied across chapters, providing variety for both student and teacher, each chapter begins with an announcement of what the student will learn in the chapter. This announcement prevents the student from feeling caught off guard and makes clear the usefulness of what is to follow.

There are two shortcomings, however, in the way *OWT* teaches numbers: One is that many numbers are presented at the same time. The second is that the book does not deal with the spelling of numbers, probably to avoid confusion. Unfortunately students do not learn to read and write English numbers but instead learn just the Arabic symbols for numbers. As a matter of fact, it is not rare that students must confront numbers written in English rather than in Arabic symbols. Further, the author ignores the pronunciation of numbers. In fact, students are very likely to be confused by the pronunciation of some numbers, such as *fourteen* and *forty*, *fifteen* and *fifty*, and so on.

These minor limitations do not diminish the many virtues of this beginning book. *OWT* is varied without being disjointed, systematic without being intimidating. ESL beginners’ predominant fears are dispelled while they become engaged in the process of acquiring English. Students will come away from *OWT* with vital tools for using and understanding

everyday English. Certainly, students will be “on the right track” all the time with *On the Write Track*.

### **Acknowledgment**

The author wishes to thank Ann Johns for reading and commenting on this review.



***For Your Information: Intermediate Reading Skills***

Karen Blanchard and Christine Root.

White Plains, NY: Addison-Wesley, 1996.

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How can I get my students to read for general meaning instead of trying to understand every word? As a teacher in an intensive ESL program, I have asked myself this question many times. Even advanced students get stuck on individual words, so we can assume that many intermediate students also encounter this problem. *For Your Information: Intermediate Reading Skills (FYI)* provides the kind of help that ESL readers need. It is a combination of interesting texts and reading strategy development exercises.

Karen Blanchard and Christine Root have designed this book for intermediate secondary and adult ESL students. Of course, *intermediate* encompasses a wide range of learner abilities from just above beginning to just below advanced. This text has been designed to meet the needs of everyone in this range of abilities by presenting progressively more complex and demanding readings and tasks. Readers are asked to read various texts for different purposes while employing various reading strategies. The authors' ultimate goal is to develop independent readers by engaging students in the "process of reading thoroughly."

Having used this text for the high-intermediate level, I have found that the readings are stimulating and provoke lively classroom discussions. For example, unit 1 opens by asking students to think about when and why people kiss in their cultures. A short article (from *Cricket* magazine) addresses kissing and culture and leads into a related text about gestures and cultures (from the *International Gesture Dictionary*). Unit 3 begins by asking students to consider reasons why people are fascinated by mysteries

from the past; readings discuss Easter Island, the Peruvian Nazca Lines, and NASA and extraterrestrial life. Although students and teachers may be familiar with some of these topics, the reading selections not only engage students but also provide multiple cultural perspectives that lead to interesting cross-cultural comparisons

Within the framework of high-interest topics, the authors have designed activities that require the use of various reading strategies. Unit 1 asks students to identify the main idea and specific information; students must then apply details from the text to oral interviews and proverbs. In unit 2, the authors ask students to scan in two ways: first, by locating specific details; second, by identifying paragraphs that contain certain topics. Unit 3 continues to build on scanning skills and clearly introduces inferences. Unit 5 formally addresses skimming and making predictions. Unit 6 has more skimming exercises but does not identify them with this term; one of the exercises is simply entitled "First Reading." In contrast, unit 7 specifically reinforces skimming and scanning by asking readers to complete a chart with specific details from an article about superstition. Unit 8 concludes the book with a focus on scanning for main ideas.

Although *FYI* effectively helps students develop different reading strategies, the authors are not always consistent in their labeling of these strategies. Students are asked to read quickly or for specific details, but they are not always reminded that these are strategies that they learned in previous units. Although learning the terms *skimming* and *scanning* is not the most important task, students must be aware that they are being asked to employ previously introduced reading skills. Clearly, the instructor can reiterate these terms, yet the book should have been more clear.

Despite this drawback, *FYI* is a very useful text. Students can start with any unit because reading strategies are recycled and reinforced throughout the text. There is a wide variety of discussion activities to choose from. Finally, each chapter includes a reading journal that asks students to reflect on the topics that have been addressed. Despite the limited use of writing as a tool for reading in this text, journal writing is a nice way to integrate reading experiences with writing on the discourse level, in addition to concluding a topic.

*FYI* is a well organized and interesting text. The integration of high-interest topics with worthwhile reading tasks is something that experienced teachers need and want to use. Ultimately, students can certainly apply these strategies to English proficiency exams and their real lives.

*Extensive Reading in the Second Language Classroom*

Richard R. Day and Julian Bamford.

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1998.

TED PLAISTER

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Once in a great while a reference textbook is published that makes old ESL hands wish they had had a copy to study and learn from during their teaching careers. Day and Bamford's *Extensive Reading in the Second Language Classroom* is just such a book.

Extensive reading (hereafter ER) has been around a long time. Day and Bamford report that Louis Kelly, in *Twenty-five Centuries of Language Teaching*, credits Harold Palmer with first using the term *extensive reading* in foreign language pedagogy in his 1917 book *The Scientific Study and Teaching of Languages* (p. 5). Today, reading looms large as perhaps the most important linguistic skill for much of the L2 (second language) population, with listening comprehension a close second. (That screaming you hear comes from writing teachers, but according to Krashen [1984], the most significant element in the learning of writing is reading.)

A model of how a teacher's text should be written, *Extensive Reading* is a beautiful blend that introduces the ER literature, presents well-crafted arguments for implementing and using ER, and provides an extensive list of resources. It discusses ways for timid or reluctant teachers (who recognize ER's value but are hesitant to recommend including it in their school system) to introduce and implement ER in their classes and make it a permanent part of their curriculum. Not only does this book synthesize ER pedagogy, but it also provides sufficiently fresh material to appeal to experienced teachers already using ER.

This 238-page book contains 173 pages of text divided into three parts: "The Dimensions of Extensive Reading," "Materials for Extensive Reading: Issues in Development," and "The Practice of Extensive



Reading.” The remainder of the book contains a bibliography on reading (pages 219-231), an index, and an extremely useful bibliography of some 600 titles (selected from the Edinburgh Project on Extensive Reading bibliography of language learner literature in English). Charted information in this bibliography provides a wealth of information about each title in ready-reference form, listing the age group suitability, English language level, locale where the book is set, theme (family, adventure, environment, school, humor, fable, and so on), and publisher.

Part I analyzes current knowledge about ER. In five chapters it teaches what teachers should know in order to implement successful ER programs. Chapter 1 (“An Approach Less Taken: Extensive Reading Introduced”) presents an overview of ER and its importance in L2 classrooms. Chapter 2 (“A Cognitive View of Reading”) explores reading from a cognitive perspective. Chapter 3 (“Affect: The Secret Garden of Reading”) is arguably the most important chapter; it examines the affective aspects of attitude and motivation as they pertain to L2 reading. Chapter 4 (“The Power of Extensive Reading: Insights from the Research”) discusses the results of a number of ER programs. Chapter 5 (“Extensive Reading and the Second Language Curriculum”) provides suggestions for integrating extensive reading into second language reading programs.

Part II addresses the variety of materials that can be employed to implement ER programs. For teachers constantly seeking new materials, this section is rich with resources and ideas on what can be used (including resources teachers may have overlooked). Part II also contains a reasoned discussion on the debate surrounding the use of authentic materials versus simplified materials.

In Part III, chapter 1 (“Setting Up a Program: Curricular Decisions”) discusses the amount students should read, evaluation, in-class versus homework reading, levels of difficulty, and dictionary use. Chapter 2 (“Materials: The Lure and the Ladder”) presents information on children’s books, learner’s own stories, newspapers, magazines, children’s magazines, popular and simple literature, young adult literature, comics, and translation. Chapter 3 (“The Extensive Reading Library”) covers program size, budgetary considerations, reading level determination, student interests, purchase of materials, organization and cataloging of materials, establishing a check out system, and display of materials. Chapter 4 (“Student Orientation”) focuses on program goals and procedures, reading requirements, and reading materials. Chapter 5 (“Building a Community of Readers”) deals with ongoing class guidance, individual counseling, in-class activities, the teacher as role model, and help for weak readers. Chapter 6 (“The Reading Community in Action”) discusses writing (e.g., answers to

comprehension questions, summaries, and reaction reports) and speaking (e.g., making oral reports). In addition, this chapter suggests ways to organize rave review sessions, reading fairs, and wall displays. Chapter 7 ("Program Evaluation") addresses purpose, audience, method, as well as determining if a program has achieved its goals, looking at what other results a program might have had, identifying program aspects needing improvement, and results. Chapter 8 ("Taking the Approach Less Traveled") offers a review of the conditions necessary for extensive reading to flourish and a summary of the book's major themes.

Under the heading "At What Level of Difficulty Should Students Read?" chapter 8 also considers a reader's "comfort" zone: Some students try to read above their comfort level, "not for enjoyment but because they think they ought to be reading more difficult material, or because they think it is the best way to make progress..." (p. 92). Day and Bamford challenge this notion, saying, "This is a symptom of what might be called the macho maxim of second language reading instruction—no reading pain, no reading gain" (p. 92); they provide arguments teachers can use to dispel the idea that struggle is a necessary component of eventual proficiency in L2 reading.

If I were an ESL graduate heading overseas to my first teaching assignment, this book would be in my carry-on baggage for study during the flight. Moreover, the book is just as relevant for use in English-speaking countries. Neophytes as well as experienced teachers will find in this book a rich collection of ideas, methods, and techniques that will enable them to hit the ground running in teaching reading, no matter the circumstances. The book is powerful ammunition of an extremely practical nature, based on sound theoretical and time-tested practices that teachers can use in helping their students achieve proficiency in L2 reading. Finally, I strongly recommend that teachers of other languages read this book because everything Day and Bamford serve up in this book applies equally to the teaching of ER in all languages.

Now for the bad news. This book has an ugly cover. I know, I know. One is not supposed to judge a book by its cover, but why the publisher of such an important book, one that I believe will become a classic, couldn't come up with a more attractive cover is beyond my ken. So ignore the cover, buy the book, and treat yourself to a text that will help you help your students become better and very likely lifelong readers in their second language.

## Reference

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*Listening to the World:  
Cultural Issues in Academic Writing*

Helen Fox.

Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English. 1994.

STEPHANIE VANDRICK

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In *Listening to the World*, Helen Fox gives the best portrayal I have seen of the massive and often wrenching changes U.S. universities ask international students to make when they become writers of academic English. In effect, U.S. universities ask them to become, at least temporarily, different people with ways of thinking different from those that they have employed their whole lives.

Fox interviewed a variety of international (mostly graduate) students over a period of several years, at two institutions, in a variety of contexts (from office tutoring sessions to informal chats in homes and at parties) as well as several faculty members with international students in their classes. The book is directed at *all* university faculty rather than ESL instructors in particular, but certainly ESL instructors will find it of great interest.

Fox reports on these interviews in detail, giving her narrative a forward movement and vividness that are quite engaging. She allows revelations regarding the various cultures and writing styles to unfold gradually, sometimes dramatically. It is apparent that she worked to build rapport with the students and did not force them to confront issues or to reveal themselves before they were ready. Her observations and conclusions are interwoven with her descriptions of the interviews. However, she tends not to state her conclusions directly, so the reader must be patient and let the argument flow at its own pace.

Fox's main point is that the cultures from which international students come to the U.S. profoundly affect their view of what academic writing is and should be: Their views are often very different from, even

diametrically opposed to, our western view. To complicate matters, the differences are so basic and so ingrained that neither side is even able to imagine that there could be another legitimate way of seeing. Each is thus confounded and frustrated by the expectations of the other. U.S. professors cannot understand why intelligent and accomplished students cannot seem to express themselves “clearly” and “directly.” International students cannot understand why U.S. professors want them to write in a way that is so straightforward that it seems to them childish and even disrespectful. There is usually a series of crossed signals that leaves everyone increasingly bewildered and even angry.

A graduate student from Chile tells Fox “how it feels to try to do something in writing that is contrary to what everything inside you is telling you to do . . . ‘It felt as though I was being aggressive to myself. I was really mad sometimes, because I felt as if something was going against me’” (p. 18). Another graduate student, who was a journalist in his home country, Nepal, speaks of being torn between the two cultural modes of writing. He speaks of hearing two voices inside his head, one telling him that he is stupid and can’t write, and the other reminding him of his own competence and assuring him that if he keeps trying, he will be successful (p. 70).

Some students fear that if they transform themselves and their writing into the American mode, they will lose their own cultures and by extension their true selves. Christine, for example, thinks about and writes about everyday matters in English but reserves important thoughts for her native Cantonese. She half-consciously resists improving her English, even though she knows she will need to write well in English to achieve her goal of attending medical school in the U.S. (p. 81). Fox points out that such resistance is common and takes many forms, but

whether it is angry, or polite, or depressed, or panicked, or blithe and uncaring, or devious, or continually confused, resistance to academic writing has one primary function for a writer with different cultural assumptions—to avoid the inevitable changes in personality, outlook and world view that go hand in hand with the new writing style. (p. 82)

Fox’s descriptions show how very rooted humans are in our cultural assumptions and practices, and how traumatic it is to be forced to question and try to change those assumptions and practices. Such a process has profound implications. For instance, what happens when students return to their own countries? How much difficulty will they have in

returning to their former mode of thinking and writing? Will they ever be able to return to it fully?

The students Fox speaks to are justifiably concerned about these questions. And we who teach them should be concerned too. Teaching students to write the way that fits the expectations of U.S. institutions of higher education is clearly a pragmatic decision, but is it right to teach students to give up their own voices and cultures, even temporarily? In doing so, are we giving students the message that our way is better? Thoughtful instructors need to consider these questions when they teach international students, particularly every time they evaluate the writing of these students.

Fox uncovers and discusses some specific differences in writing processes and styles. For example, students from many parts of the world are taught to express themselves indirectly, complimenting their audiences by assuming they can fill in the contexts—this is clearly very different from the direct, explicit Western style of academic writing. One of many characteristics of this indirection is often a long introduction, easing into the actual body of the work. A second difference is that in many cultures unity and harmony are valued over confrontation and aggressive argument and assertions. Thirdly, in many cultures, the wisdom of society is valued over the knowledge of the individual; it is seen as almost presumptuous for an individual to assert original thoughts or knowledge. In fact, memorization of the work of great thinkers is common. And professors and other academic experts are supposed to be authorities, dispensers of knowledge who are not to be questioned by students. This difference may lead to much more quotation and paraphrasing in international students' papers than U.S. professors find acceptable. This approach is clearly in opposition to the western academic emphasis on individuals' developing, stating, and supporting their own theses and ideas; indeed, originality is a high priority in U.S. universities, particularly at the graduate level. For women students, the situation is complicated by additional gender-related cultural issues. For example, women from many countries are expected to be silent and to be modest. "Women graduate students from Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Chile, and Korea all told me similar stories of being silenced, in their own cultures, by the expectation that it was proper for a woman to keep her ideas to herself" (p. 57).

Because Fox's research is based on fairly unstructured interviews, in various formats and with various students, and because it is unclear how many students were involved in the study, the results are quite subjective, almost impressionistic. This approach is not necessarily a limitation and perhaps allows readers a more in-depth understanding than a more objective study would. The recent movement, especially among feminist

researchers, to be less bound by the god of objectivity seems to have influenced Fox's approach: she has produced a more connected participatory ethnography.

However, it would have been helpful to include more specific information about the number of participants and other data, and to clarify, for example, if "a Japanese graduate student" mentioned on one page is the same "Japanese student" referred to in a different chapter. Also, "international students" are generally treated as one category, although the author cautions that her conclusions do not represent *all* international students.

A reader looking to this book for a clear list of problems or differences will not find them. And one looking for a list of solutions will not be satisfied; Fox does not give any, and perhaps there are none to give, beyond advocating understanding and communication. But understanding and communication can make an enormous difference. This book will be illuminating not only for ESL and writing instructors but also for instructors who encounter international students in their economics or biology or business classes. I recommend it to anyone who teaches at universities with students from around the world.