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WPA: Writing Program Administration publishes articles and essays concerning the organization, administration, practices, and aims of college and university writing programs. Possible topics include the education and support of writing teachers; the intellectual and administrative work of WPAs; the situation of writing programs within both academic institutions and broader contexts; the programmatic implications of current theories, technologies, and research; relationships between WPAs and other administrators and between writing and other academic programs; placement; assessment; and the professional status of WPAs.

The previous list is meant to be suggestive, not exhaustive, but contributions must be appropriate to the interests and concerns of those who administer writing programs. The editors welcome empirical research (quantitative as well as qualitative), historical research, and theoretical, essayistic, or reflective pieces.

The length of submissions should be approximately 2,000 to 5,000 words, although the journal occasionally will publish shorter or longer pieces when the subject matter warrants. Articles should be suitably documented using the current MLA Style Manual. For citations of Internet resources, use the Columbia Guide to Online Style.

Please submit only electronic versions of manuscripts as WORD or rich text (.rtf) attachments, with the author identified only on a separate cover letter. Submissions are anonymously reviewed by the Editorial Board. The editors aspire to respond within two months after the receipt of the submission.

Authors whose works are accepted for publication will be asked to submit a final version following a style sheet that will be provided. Please double-check all citations. Illustrations should be submitted as print-ready copy in electronic format. Authors will also be asked to submit a 100-word biography for inclusion in the “Contributors” section of the journal.

Reviews

WPA publishes reviews of books related to writing programs and their administration. Publishers are invited to send appropriate professional books to Duku Anoyke at aanokye@asu.edu, who assigns reviews.

**In addition to the general guidelines set forth in the Author’s Guide, book reviewers should include a summary of the text, some discussion regarding the text’s construction, as well as an evaluation of the text’s relevance to the profession. The review should be between 1500-2000 words.**
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Letter from the Managing Editors

Once again, we want to use this space to thank those who have contributed time, effort, and expertise to the journal.

We especially thank members of our editorial board (all of whom are listed on the front pages of the journal) for their conscientious work. We also thank you, the readers of WPA, for sending us your interesting and thought-provoking writing. Because of your many strong submissions, we have planned the next few issues, and we are now scheduling essays for publication in the future.

This is a special ESL issue, edited by Paul Kei Matsuda of the University of New Hampshire. Currently we are also planning a special issue focusing on innovative writing programs (currently planned for the spring, 2008 issue).

Part of the formal call for papers reads:

WPA: Writing Program Administration, the journal of the Council of Writing Program Administrators, seeks papers that address new and innovative program design in rhetoric and composition. We welcome articles that explore programs in all aspects of writing administration—first-year writing, undergraduate writing, masters, and doctoral programs, as well as writing centers, writing across the curriculum, and writing in the disciplines. We are especially interested in articles that not only outline new programmatic trends, but also place those trends within both an historical context of the field and within evolving theoretical conversations about the field.

The deadline for submissions was August 1, 2006. For more information, please contact the guest editors, Catherine Chaput (cchaput@georgiasouthern.edu), Danika Brown (redmonkey@mac.com), or MJ Braun (mbraun@uwf.edu). Manuscripts should be documented using the current MLA Style
Manual, should be submitted by email attachment, and should be accompanied by a message that includes the author’s relevant affiliations and contact information.

Greg Glau, Duane Roen, and Barry Maid
Arizona State University
Second Language Writers and Writing Program Administrators

The student population in U.S. higher education is becoming increasingly diverse linguistically and culturally as institutions continue their efforts to diversify and internationalize the student population, thus—often unwittingly—recruiting a growing number of students who did not grow up using the privileged variety of English. As a result, the need to address language issues in writing programs has become undeniably clear (Matsuda), and it has become difficult, if not impossible, to run an effective and ethical writing program without some understanding of second language issues; second language writing is a *sine qua non* of writing program administration today. Perhaps that idea is no news to writing program administrators at urban or open admissions institutions that have traditionally enrolled large numbers of so-called language minority students and nonnative English speakers. But today, WPAs are facing similar issues even at institutions like the University of New Hampshire, where the student population is highly homogeneous by the national standard, where the number of international students is relatively small, and where there are separate sections of first-year writing for second language writers.

Issues in second language writing permeate many aspects of our work as writing program administrators. We need to prepare new instructors and retool existing instructors to work with an ever-growing population of second language writers in writing courses traditionally designed for native English speakers from privileged language backgrounds (Braine). We need to design new courses or modify existing courses to provide placement options appropriate for the changing student population as well as placement procedures that are sensitive to language differences (Crusan; Kroll; Matsuda and Silva; Silva). We also need to work closely with second language specialists on campus, who may or may not have the expertise in writing issues but who do have expertise in second language issues—the expertise that WPAs and writing instructors alike could benefit from considerably. Such collaboration
is necessary because second language courses and programs are often administered separately; in many cases, they are housed in a separate program or even in a different department (Williams).

While some institutions have writing program administrators who also have expertise in second language writing, that situation has yet to become the norm. Traditionally, the professional preparation for writing program administrators has not included issues in second language writing; even today, only a handful of doctoral programs in rhetoric and composition studies offer courses related to second language writing. Even if such courses are available, they are not always taught by second language writing specialists who also understand the issues and concerns that writing program administrators face; the number of individuals with such dual specialization is only beginning to increase. Furthermore, while they are often expected to “take care of” second language issues, they do not always have the necessary institutional support nor are they sufficiently compensated for such time-consuming work that requires special knowledge and skills. To address the nationwide growth of language difference in writing programs, then, second language writing issues need to be fully integrated into writing program administration—both the institutional structure and the professional discourse.

Our primary goal in editing this special issue of *WPA: Writing Program Administration* is to facilitate the process of integrating second language issues into the field of writing program administration by providing an overview of some of the key issues and by exploring possible approaches to such integration. For this purpose, we have sought to bring together the perspectives of second language writing and writing program administration by working with authors and reviewers who represent differing disciplinary perspectives.

The first article is “Assessing the Needs of Linguistically Diverse First-Year Students: Bringing Together and Telling Apart International ESL, Resident ESL and Monolingual Basic Writers,” by Patricia Friedrich, a writing program administrator with backgrounds in sociolinguistics, world Englishes, and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). She provides a broad overview of student populations by contrasting three major categories of student writers: basic writers, resident ESL writers, and international ESL writers. While any attempt to categorize students risks the danger of overgeneralization, it can also serve an important heuristic function as WPAs make sense of the complex reality of the increasingly multilingual student population.
The implications of the linguistic diversity in writing programs are further explored in “Preparing for the Tipping Point: Designing Writing Programs to Meet the Needs of the Changing Population” by Ana Preto-Bay and Kristine Hansen, who bring together the perspectives of a second language writing specialist and a writing program administrator, respectively. They provide a telling critique of the current status of second language issues in writing programs and the professional literature. They also provide specific suggestions as writing programs continue to evolve in response to the presence of second language writers who are quickly reaching the “tipping point” at various institutions.

Gail Shuck, in “Combating Monolingualism: A Novice Administrator’s Challenge,” presents the perspective of a WPA with an expertise in second language writing. She provides a situated account of her work as a tenure-track faculty member in a university English department with the administrative responsibility of coordinating English language support programs, including second language writing courses. She concludes by presenting practical suggestions that WPAs might consider as they develop or modify programs for the linguistically diverse student population. Her article also raises many important issues to consider as more institutions create additional administrative positions to address second language writing issues.

In “Geography Lessons, Bridge Building, and Second-Language Writers,” Talinn Phillips, Candace Stewart and Robert Stewart—a doctoral student in composition with a TESOL background, a former writing center director and current composition director, and a master’s student in TESOL with a background in tutoring second language writers—discuss the importance of developing multiple and creative ways of addressing the presence and needs of second language writers. By reflecting on their collaborative efforts, these authors show how the writing center can serve as a site of interdisciplinary collaboration in preparing U.S. higher education for today’s linguistically diverse college student population.

We hope this special issue of WPA will provide the necessary background and resources to help the field of writing program administration integrate a second language perspective into its institutional and discursive practices. We also hope that these articles, by providing models of fruitful interdisciplinary collaboration, encourage further inquiry by WPAs and second language specialists, and further dialogue between their respective fields.

Paul Kei Matsuda, Maria Fruit, and Tamara Lee Burton Lamm
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We are grateful to Greg Glau, Barry Maid and Duane Roen, WPA editors, and the editorial team—especially Roberta Burnett, Duku Anokye, and Susan K. Miller—for their generous support and encouragement that made this special issue possible. We also thank the editorial board members who offered helpful comments from the perspective of experienced WPAs and WPA readers. Jay Jordan also provided his valuable time and expertise in the planning stage of this project—thank you.

WORKS CITED


Assessing the Needs of Linguistically Diverse First-Year Students: Bringing Together and Telling Apart International ESL, Resident ESL and Monolingual Basic Writers

Patricia Friedrich

As teachers and administrators of composition programs, we are all aware of the increasingly diverse body of students with varied profiles and different needs enrolling at universities across the United States. Some are international ESL students, who face the challenges of pursuing higher education in a second language. Others receive the label “basic writers” and, as other works show, struggle to reconcile their experience in college with their own cultural, linguistic and educational backgrounds (Matsuda 68). Yet what teachers of writing have to address now goes beyond the relative heterogeneity of the international ESL population or the specific needs of monolingual basic writers; we increasingly work with and must take account of another group of linguistically diverse students—resident ESL students.

In other works, readers will find these students labeled as “Generation 1.5,” a term I chose not to adopt for several reasons. Generation 1.5 students are defined by Harklau, Siegal, and Losey as a group formed by “bilingual US resident students who enter US colleges and universities by way of K–12 schools” (1). Born to immigrant parents, who more often than not use a language other than English in the home, many such students are highly fluent and even native-like in oral English. They may be more acculturated than are internationally-based visa students—who have traditionally dominated the ESL student population—and consequently identify more with the United States than with any other nation.1 Still, they may be faced with difficulties akin, in many respects, to those of international ESL students, making a complete separation of these two groups impossible—they naturally overlap. To complicate the matter further, some international ESL students (a synonym for “visa students”) also arrive at college after attending US sec-
ondary schools for a few years. While coining the term “generation 1.5” was helpful in calling attention to the difficulties a specific set of ESL writers, the distinction between resident ESL students and ESL internationals seems more appropriate, given the kind of comparative analysis that this article proposes and employs. Indeed, this paper often refers to the combination of international ESL and resident ESL as “linguistically diverse students,” a term suggested by Harklau, Siegal, and Losey (1–16).

It is important to draw a distinction between ESL writers and monolingual basic writers (i.e., native users of English regardless of their degree of proficiency in a foreign language). That is not to say that resident ESL and, to a lesser extent, ESL international students cannot be basic writers. In fact the two can coincide; while being ESL has to do with one’s relationship with the target language, being a basic writer has to do with state of academic development. In fact, these ESL students may also be basic writers in their native languages as well. Nevertheless, the needs of ESL basic writers often differ significantly from those of monolingual basic writers, hence making necessary the three-way distinction used here. If ESL students are at a basic level of writing, they need to receive instruction within an ESL context.

While many problems may affect the college experience of international ESL and monolingual basic writers, the situation of resident ESL writers is even more critical. The fact that resident ESL students do not fit neatly into the other two classifications may erode their placement in first-year composition classes, thus clouding their self-perception and ultimately impinging on their university success. Such domino effects further exacerbate the familiar challenges for international ESL and monolingual basic writers as well.  

Linda Blanton (119–41) portrays quite a disturbing picture of the possible outcome of the academic endeavor undertaken by resident ESL students. She explains that “At worst, language minority students succeed academically but lose themselves, lose the struggle to hold on to their selves. [. . .] Or they think the price too high, and they abandon the struggle altogether, leaving academia embittered and defeated” (136).

With the writing discipline, the situation becomes all the more worrisome because, given budgetary constraints of composition programs (rather than pedagogical beliefs), many higher education institutions have had to “mainstream” all students, directing them to traditional composition classes. In such classes, linguistically diverse students (i.e., international ESL and resident ESL) often see educational practices falling short of addressing their individual needs; many times instructors of traditional composition classes simply do not have the training to teach any type of ESL student. As a result, the gap between expected outcomes and the actual performance of these students may continue to widen in a process that can ultimately pre-
vent these learners from achieving their full potential as educated persons and from discovering themselves as writers (i.e., their voice, interests, and inclinations).

Because of these perspectives and because of aspiring to reach program administrators and instructors who may face these challenges, this article synthesizes and expands the current understanding of the differences between (monolingual) basic, international ESL, and resident ESL writers. A proposition regarding reasonable ways of dealing with the reality of diverse college writers despite the bureaucratically imperative need to mainstream all students seems necessary. It is only when we, as scholars and teachers, cease to perceive the differences in profiles, needs, anxieties, and expectations of these students as deficiencies and begin actively to engage in educating all faculty that teaching to these differences has become a necessity will we start to serve this population well in spite of the many constraints encountered nationally by first-year composition programs.

In the following, the overriding characteristics of resident ESL writers are contrasted with the traits of international ESL students and monolingual basic writers. The emphasis in this article is often placed on resident ESL writers because they have been the most neglected population of the three groups (see Valdés, 85–193; for more on basic writers see Zamel; DiPardo). To understand the whole picture, it is necessary to analyze additional factors affecting linguistically diverse learners, for instance, those aspects relating to the professional qualifications of instructors, the learning environment, and the sociocultural milieu. We can then pursue suggestions for better serving a population of linguistically diverse students. The next few sections will show how intertwined and influential these aspects of a student’s learning can be.

**What Makes Diverse Students So Diverse?**

The diversity of writer profiles in college composition classes has already drawn the attention of several scholars who have established the challenges of dealing with minority groups that do not fit neatly into preestablished categories. Leki’s *Understanding ESL Writers: A Guide for Teachers*, although not focused on resident ESL students, creates a comparative analysis of characteristics of ESL writers and monolingual basic writers, showing their profile distinctions and thus the differences in pedagogical treatment needed. Matsuda (67–89), in his historical account of basic and second language writers, discusses the difficulties of all-inclusive definitions and the changing profile of university writers. Thonus (17–24) addresses the important role of the writing center in serving linguistically diverse students, particularly resident ESL writers. Finally, Ferris (143–157) calls for a comparison of the needs and
characteristics of these three overlapping groups. These writers share a common concern for students’ unique needs as a group of diverse learners as well as having great respect for their individuality. Although we often resort to grouping them together, it’s a perennial truth that each of these students is a distinct human being with a singular history of life and learning.

In Table 1 below, Leki’s contrastive examination of basic and international ESL writers has been complemented to include resident ESL writers.

**Table 1.**
The Distinguishing Characteristics of Three Populations of Writing Students: An Expanded Contrast of Basic, Resident, and International ESL Writers in 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attributes</th>
<th>Monolingual Basic</th>
<th>Resident ESL</th>
<th>International ESL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Register</td>
<td>More comfortable with everyday language</td>
<td>More comfortable with everyday language</td>
<td>More comfortable with formal language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies</td>
<td>Possibly lack study skills and writing strategies</td>
<td>Possibly lack study skills and writing strategies</td>
<td>Probably well trained in L1 writing strategies transferable to L2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of Linguistic Background</td>
<td>Possibly lack awareness of their own linguistic traditions</td>
<td>Possibly lack awareness of and have conflicting attitudes toward L1 and L2 cultural and linguistic traditions</td>
<td>More likely to be aware of and have respect for cultural and linguistic traditions of L1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Acquisition</td>
<td>Find themselves in the process of learning the specific uses of English</td>
<td>Find themselves in the process of acquiring the language</td>
<td>Find themselves in the process of acquiring the language and learning specific uses for it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral and Written Language</td>
<td>Often transfer the oral language into written form</td>
<td>May transfer oral language into written form, simultaneously incurring ESL errors</td>
<td>Often aware of differences between oral and written language, yet displaying ESL errors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Acculturation</td>
<td>Likely to present shared cultural assumptions with context (acculturated)</td>
<td>May be trying to be a part of the culture, yet are still presenting ambiguous and conflicting responses to acculturation</td>
<td>Are in the process of learning cultural integration and contrasts. May or may not want to acculturate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational History</td>
<td>May have been held back by the educational system</td>
<td>May have been held back by the educational system</td>
<td>Usually have been satisfactorily pre-tested and screened on multiple occasions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes—Placement</td>
<td>Averse to remedial placement</td>
<td>Averse to ESL placement</td>
<td>Accept ESL placement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammaratical Knowledge</td>
<td>Possibly unfamiliar with parts of speech and grammar terminology</td>
<td>Possibly unfamiliar with parts of speech and grammar terminology</td>
<td>Possibly aware of grammar because of prior instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes—Errors</td>
<td>Are frustrated by errors that can be associated with “bad” English</td>
<td>May see errors as further disabling evidence of their non-mainstream status</td>
<td>Expect and understand that they are bound to make errors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Style</td>
<td>Are primarily “ear learners”</td>
<td>Are primarily “ear learners”</td>
<td>Are primarily “systematic learners” (i.e., learn through reason)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language and Emotions</td>
<td>Can rely on their oral skills to express frustration, needs, doubt or disagreement.</td>
<td>Can usually rely on their oral skills to express frustration, needs, doubt or disagreement.</td>
<td>Are often prevented from expressing their frustrations and needs because of their limited oral skills.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The information for this table was drawn from the work of Leki; Blumenthal; Blanton; Harklau, Losey and Siegal; and Thonus; see Works Cited.
Oral and Written Language and Grammar

While most international ESL students have learned L2 in formal settings and are thus more comfortable than other ESL learners with the differences between oral and written discourse and with the use of a more formal register in academic settings, most monolingual basic writers and resident ESL writers, as shown by Thonus (18) tend to be more comfortable with an oral and more informal mode of communication. Often resident ESL students “picked up” English by using it in daily tasks, listening to language use on television, and interacting with peers or coworkers. Their international counterparts, on the other hand, have usually been involved in language learning in formal classroom settings (Harklau, Siegal and Losey 2). It is not uncommon, then, to find resident ESL writers transferring oral patterns to their writing assignments in what can look and be understood by the instructor as an almost stream-of-consciousness draft. Many times, the result will be a seemingly underdeveloped paper in which the student employs few coherence devices and uses unrelated pieces of information at widely separated parts of the written work. What makes the situation more complex in the case of resident ESL students is the presence of the so-called ESL errors scattered across the text.

Whereas many instructors would immediately start editing these texts and requesting further drafts, it is not particularly clear that these students could transform their own writing without an overt acknowledgement of the cross-cultural rhetorical confusion that lies beneath their surface errors. Such complex difficulties in making indirect connections between the product and the underlying rhetorical structure should evidence the need for direct instruction about rhetorical conventions which can then be complemented by organization and grammar level corrections and changes.

However, resorting to grammatical categories and classifications can once more prove frustrating because these students are often unfamiliar with grammatical terms. While many international ESL students can, given their L1 and L2 instruction in their native countries, understand and appreciate the use of terms such as conjunction, adverb, clause, and sentence fragment, many resident ESL students cannot. As Ferris explains, “[M]ost discussions of teacher feedback strategies and accompanying teaching materials overlook immigrant ESL students’ lack of knowledge of formal grammar terminology” (146). Thus, this kind of instruction can not only be unsuccessful, it may further perpetuate in students the idea that their language is deficient and inappropriate, creating self-identity problems which further erode their confidence to do the language learning required of them.
Instructors can thus choose between two options, which have generated much debate in composition studies. They can either avoid the issue of grammar altogether—after all, unlike many international ESL students, resident ESL learners can often rely on their oral skills to express their needs and wants and to provide intuitive clues (Thonus 17–18)—or they can choose to pursue grammar studies, especially through a contextualized approach that will enable students to incorporate some language terminology into their vocabulary. Further help can come from a grammar of style, such as rhetorical grammar.

Kolln explains that rhetorical grammar allows students to become aware of “this language ‘facility,’ this conscious ability to ‘select effective structures for a given rhetorical context’” (29). The advantage of using this method with students (and using other forms of contextualized teaching of grammar) is that it requires students to consider purpose and audience consistently when selecting any grammatical form. At the same time, it defuses the possible misconception, often perpetuated by high school education, of the existence of “prohibited” forms in a language (such as passive voice). Instead, rhetorical grammar replaces prescriptive ideas of what written discourse should look like with an emphasis on student effort to analyze their own choices. This process of discovery and conscious decision-making tends to be very fulfilling and liberating for students. In the specific case of ESL students, contextualization becomes a crucial aid to their increasing competences, one that can facilitate language acquisition and their written English.

**Acculturation, Attitudes, and Cross-Cultural Issues**

Different degrees of and desire for acculturation characterize monolingual basic writers, resident ESL writers, and international ESL writers. While there are many shared assumptions between monolingual basic writers and the instructors who teach them, resident ESL and international students deal with quite different realities. Resident ESL individuals also have, in many respects, a desire for assimilation. If they came to this country on a permanent basis, they may wish to become a part of it, that is, to see and be seen by those around them as belonging. On the other hand, resident ESL students often face the same struggles of international ESL learners, and consequently both groups end up forming networks with other resident ESL individuals or with international students (Leki). ESL residents may feel ambivalent toward their linguistic and cultural heritage, especially when these aspects of their being are devalued or not recognized by L1 monolingual users. They may also be partially unaware of their linguistic, literary, and cultural backgrounds (Leki), the very traditions that could give them a feeling of pride and satisfaction in being a part of their home language community.
At the other end of the spectrum, many international students are well versed in and display great reverence for their home country traditions. If they live temporarily in this country, they may feel more curious about its cultures than they are eager to gain membership in it. Despite often being engulfed by the traditional stages of culture shock, they usually leave this country with a feeling of better understanding and appreciation for the value of their own culture. At the same time, they tend to retain certain traits of the new culture that they found appealing and, conversely, become particularly critical of the ones they did not. Thus, although they may or may not be willing to assimilate, they use their experience both in this country and abroad as an aid to learning, a strategy not always available for monolingual basic writers and resident ESL writers.

Because resident ESL students want to see themselves as and, indeed, at least in terms of oral command, often are similar to native users of English, they may be averse to being placed in ESL composition courses (Blanton 123), and they may have good reason to feel that way. Given that they have progressed to a later stage in the process of acculturation (i.e., they dress like the locals, use current slang, respect cultural conventions such as the ones governing turn-taking and personal space), they do not require extensive instruction on culturally appropriate behaviors (Leki) of the sort that is an active component of many ESL curricula. To make matters worse, they may feel ashamed of their status vis-à-vis their peers who are native English users and reject any suggestion of cross-cultural difficulties.

**Language Acquisition**

Students within these three groups are at very different stages of language acquisition. Monolingual basic writers may be acquiring the dominant variety of a language they already possess. Nevertheless, an instructor can rely on these students’ use of intuition and on their emphasis of thinking patterns that lead to more developed papers. They may need to expand their active vocabulary and to work on depth and presentation of evidence, but they have an intuitive knowledge of their mother tongue.

International ESL students, on the other hand, are acquiring the language and at the same time learning a particular academic use for it. Nevertheless, they may be very familiar with academic discourses and the differences between the particular setting of academia and other situations of communication. While it is usually a mistake for instructors to “simplify” their language in an attempt to become more intelligible for these students (these students probably have much more trouble with phrasal verbs such as *take after* and *run into* and idiomatic uses such as “You are pulling my leg” than they do with formal language), they may need to be openly taught that
rhetorical practices may change from language to language, even within more or less the same genre. It is not uncommon for international students to label rhetorical practices in English as “worse” or as less intuitive than the ones they bring with their native tongues. Overt criticism of rhetorical practices in English can in turn make composing in English all the more difficult as attitudes can play a big role in language acquisition performance.⁴

Resident ESL students may well stand anywhere between the other two groups. They might be acquiring the language and its various uses or be primarily involved in learning the ways of academe. Because their educational experience may be fragmented and not consolidated in either language, they often have little past experience to draw from.

**Academic Skills**

Sometimes the writing challenges that affect monolingual basic writers stem from problems beyond the writing arena. Some of these students display difficulties with strategizing their learning and coordinating their study practices. They may present maturing academic skills and often display a simplistic interpretation of complicated matters. They may have been pigeonholed as remedial students, which could further widen the gap between them and “traditional” college students.

Some resident ESL students may struggle with similar difficulties. As mentioned above, their previous learning experience may have been interrupted several times; they may have started in one language only to continue in another, and their experience may still have been permeated by very different educational philosophies which were never fully consolidated. They may display maturing academic skills, which are at times counterbalanced by good set of skills relating to their potentially bilingual experience and their memberships in different linguistic communities. To sum up, their academic experience may as well be very fragment which will impact the way they learn.

Many international ESL students are confronted with a challenge of a different nature. While they may display very mature academic skills (to have traveled to this country, most likely they have been screened and tested extensively for academic skills), they may suffer from the intense frustration of having “knowledge trapped inside” because that knowledge may be far beyond their linguistic ability to express it linguistically. They may agonize over their own attempt at engaging in a complex discussion, only to realize that their language development is still insufficient to help them achieve that goal. On the other hand, some are surprised to realize that their language abilities are better than they anticipated and indeed better than those of some native writers (e.g. basic writers).
Additional Factors Affecting the Experience of Linguistically Diverse Students

Several other factors compound the difficulties of these three types of L2 students. They involve, but are not limited to, the preparation of the instructors teaching first-year composition courses, instructional time, socioeconomic status, and placement constraints. Some of these aspects are discussed below.

Who Teaches Them? Teaching students who come from different linguistic backgrounds requires specific skills and abilities, familiarity with features of other languages, and some knowledge of cross-cultural issues. What complicates the instruction of linguistically diverse writers is the fact that they are sometimes assigned to instructors with little or no preparation in these areas of expertise. Additionally, many composition programs rely heavily on graduate teaching assistants and adjunct faculty who are left out of important discussions regarding methodological practices. It is not that the instructors are unwilling but that they may not have the appropriate professional background. As Frodesen and Starna observe, “Typically, mainstream [composition] instructors are troubled by the uncertainty of how to best assist these L2 students in developing writing proficiency” (63). Great frustration on both parts usually results. The instructor, on the one hand, may return papers with a heavy load of corrections, most of which only scrape the surface by attacking misspelled words, verb tenses and the like. The students, on the other hand, have a hard time converting these corrections into information to be used in subsequent papers, given that the corrections do not necessarily follow a pattern.

Even when classroom instruction is geared toward these students, the time allotted for them to become competent writers might be inadequate. Because groups typically meet for three or fewer hours a week, the struggling student may lack the necessary time to absorb and incorporate instructional materials. Some may also feel the need for more one-to-one attention than the instructor can afford. Still others may feel self-conscious about sharing their work with peers, an attitude which further isolates them and slows down the process of becoming effective writers.

Who Are They Outside of Class? When it comes to their reality outside the immediate classroom, resident ESL learners are arguably subject to more socioeconomic challenges than their international student counterparts. According to Judith Rodby (45–60), the financial situation of immigrant families is difficult more often than not, a fact that leads many students to take on heavy work loads outside campus. My experience with this population tells me that some work as many as forty hours a week, despite university guidelines that suggest a maximum of twenty hours for full-time stu-
Friedrich/Assessing the Needs of Linguistically Diverse First-Year Students

students. With fewer hours to study and more stress than is manageable during college years, resident ESL students feel the effect of their overloaded life reflected on their academic performance.

**Community Misconceptions about ESL Students.** International ESL learners have to deal with many preconceptions about their background and language ability: in extreme cases they stumble upon very patronizing attitudes in the community towards them, their linguistic skills and life back in their countries. Many international students will tell anecdotes about being talked to loudly, slowly, and with unnatural and excessive gestures; they will report being asked silly questions about their reality abroad (for example, “Do you have refrigerators in your country?”), getting explanations in overly simple terms even though the student understands the conversation (“Do you understand the word ‘avenue?’”), and so on. Despite being initially taken aback by such momentary lapses in judgment, most international students finally come to terms with these mishaps and store them as interesting episodes to retell back home. The situation may be a little different for resident ESL students, who have a vested interest in being considered a part of the community and who, as mentioned before, probably feel as much insiders as any native English user. Lack of sensitivity to and awareness of their circumstances can be disruptive to their social lives and to their academic progress.

**Placement into Composition Classes?** Finally, the issue of placement cannot be downplayed. According to Jessica Williams’s (157–79) survey of ESL writing program administration, ESL students can encounter a host of configurations under which ESL composition instruction takes place. From the beginning of these students’ college careers, such configurations range from non-credit ESL requirements prior to their taking regular composition courses to their inclusion in traditional composition classes. Having ESL writing instruction outside of the English department is also among the possibilities, as is a two-track composition program in which parallel composition courses are offered to native and nonnative English users.

Even two-track institutions have to decide whether resident and international ESL students belong to one or the other class configuration or whether they want to create an additional set-up, one that Silva, in “An Examination of Writing Program Administrators’ Options,” refers to as cross-cultural composition, “designed to include a more or less equal number of ESL and NES [native English speaking] writers” (40). Given the heterogeneity within the groups, adequate placement can be quite challenging. Too often students are placed not on the basis of their individual needs but according to how they fit predetermined standardized categories. Misplacement has caused many international ESL students who could be in regular classes to
be labeled as ESL, and it has been the catalyst to many resident ESL students who needed only specialized attention to fall through the cracks of the track to mainstream composition (Harklau, Siegal and Losey 8). The situation seems particularly critical in the case of resident ESL students. As Harklau, Siegal, and Losey put it: “In which program or configuration immigrant students are placed depends on how they are classified when they arrive in college out of U.S. high schools, and the way in which bilingualism is construed in any given institutional setting appears to be quite varied, if not idiosyncratic” (6). Such idiosyncrasies may further complicate the already delicate situation of many linguistically diverse students, and thus call for action on the part of instructors, researchers and administrators alike.

**WHAT CAN BE DONE REALISTICALLY?**

Given the challenges outlined above, it becomes necessary to find and strategize ways to address at least some of the needs of linguistically diverse sets of composition students. A great deal can be achieved if administrators and faculty work toward a paradigm shift, one in which diverse students are perceived as already engaged in multiple literacies and in which their needs are deemed different rather than greater or more challenging.  

WPAs need to commit to creating some revisions of programs and continuing education of the faculty: the suggestions contained here can be better communicated to faculty through a continuous process rather than through isolated (that is, instance-based) training, and any such process needs to include to a great extent a department’s adjunct faculty and teaching assistants. Because several ideas relate to a change in beliefs and attitudes, they cannot be implemented overnight. Instead, ideas will consistently come with dialogue, negotiation, and even some cross-disciplinary training. For the latter, I recommend that both WPAs and faculty read and discuss works in sociolinguistics and particularly in world Englishes. When instructors become aware of the magnitude, the scope, and the many different functions of English around the world, their perceptions of the language tend to change completely, and their sensitivity to issues facing users of the language who are different from themselves seems to grow accordingly. Some classic works that can serve as a springboard to dialogue and professional development are Braj Kachru’s *The Alchemy of English* and *The Other Tongue*, and Larry Smith and Michael Forman’s *World Englishes 2000*.

Among the many other ways WPAs can help address students’ needs is by providing opportunities for ongoing assessment. Frodesen and Sterna propose steps for continuous assessment and instruction of students after initial placement has been made. Those steps include (a) the gathering of student information through a needs analysis questionnaire that also includes
academic background information, (b) a coordination between mainstream and ESL instructors (as well as basic writing instructors) when two tracks are available, (c) an invisible seam between ESL and traditional writing tracks to make possible transitions between them smooth, (d) attention to course design so that course offerings will focus “on continuity of instruction, assessment and further placement,” and, finally, (e) support through tutorials (77).

Needs Analysis. Typically, a needs-analysis questionnaire directly and indirectly assesses the concerns and needs of students. The questionnaire may ask students directly about their past experience with multiple languages and writing, as well as what attitudes they have vis-à-vis formal instruction, grammar instruction, etc. Many other elements, such as stereotypical (and culturally assumed) perceptions of writers and writing and perceptions of the self as writer, can be inferred from their answers to the questions. One of the advantages of conducting needs analyses, besides the obvious tailoring of the course according to the needs of the students, is that the instructor can become aware of the challenges that the student associates with the English language as differing from those the student has also faced when writing in another language.

Coordination between Mainstream and ESL programs. If these students will be using their writing in similar environments in the future (e.g., in their upper-division courses and jobs after graduation), they should be receiving equivalent instruction even if their more immediate needs are different. Therefore, the ESL track should not overlook the primary reasons students attend composition classes which include the need to communicate knowledge in the disciplines throughout their academic careers and beyond that in the job market.

Invisible Seam between Tracks. Some institutions do not allow students to take one composition course in the ESL track and another in the mainstream composition program. The rationale behind this policy is often that a better sense of continuity will be achieved if one remains in a single track. However, this prohibition has serious implications for students, especially if the number of ESL classes is limited. The risks and benefits of allowing students to move between the tracks based on performance and needs should be carefully weighed vis-à-vis the unique situation of each program.

Course Design. As with item (c) above, careful thought should be given to the fact that no composition class stands in isolation but exists only as a part of a larger whole, one that is populated by other instructors, students, and academic demands.
Tutorials. Whether in a school’s writing center or through another configuration, individualized attention may be responsible for maintaining a student’s status in the program, especially during times of student stress or heightened demands.

Because many composition programs do not offer multiple tracks, I offer some suggestions (one ideological, two structural, and three pedagogical) as extensions of the ideas of Frodesen and Starna: they are (f) the adoption of a more holistic approach to literacy, (g) synchronized coordinated work with the disciplines, (h) coordinated work with the writing center, (i) the teaming up of students who have different profiles, (j) the employment of different feedback practices, and (k) a systematic focus on rhetorical practices as opposed to the surface level of the language.

The Adoption of a Different Approach to Literacy. As pointed out throughout this article, each group of linguistically diverse students has a unique potential to develop literacy skills further and has the ability to communicate within academia. However, what was once thought of as “literacy” (i.e., the ability to read and write) is actually one among several forms of literacy that interact and intertwine with one another. In the spirit of fostering all forms of literacy, the instructor should take advantage of whatever the students already have as the foundational blocks on which they will ultimately construct a new whole. Nevertheless, too often we focus on what the student is lacking (e.g., appropriate and linear knowledge of writing conventions, grammar-related vocabulary, and a history of writing proficiency) as the starting point of teaching as opposed to starting from their present competencies (typically computer literacy, creativity, knowledge of the world, and work experience), accomplishments that will in due course provide the foundation for their developing writing ability. It is our job as instructors to change our own frame of mind to accept the realities of these students’ lives, whatever they may be, and use them to their advantage. This central change will guide most of the decisions to be made from this point in pedagogical history onward.

Synchronized Work with the Disciplines. The Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) movement resulted from an acknowledgment of the role of teaching writing throughout all disciplines in the university setting (Maimon). Because writing-intensive classes are a reality in disciplines as diverse as corporate strategy and women’s studies (each of which carries its own rhetorical conventions), each discipline’s instructors have become involved in addressing writing concerns. Nevertheless, if instruction and feedback in the disciplines are not aligned with the practices of composition programs, the results can be more damaging than encouraging. Students who receive conflicting messages about their writing must ultimately decide
for themselves what they value in their writing. That is, of course, different from their acknowledging that in the spirit of addressing various audiences and purposes, a writer will make discipline-specific adaptations. Administratively, then, efforts should aim at ensuring the classroom use of language philosophies that are not conflicting; in the end, it is very hard to convince a student to work on invention when other instructors are arbitrarily proclaiming that they will “mark down any sentence that starts with ‘because,’ any construction that employs the passive voice, and any use of the weak ‘to be’” no matter what the rationale behind those choices might be. It is counterproductive if the composition professor says one thing and the instructors working in the academic disciplines say another. While comprehending readers’ individual preferences is yet another challenge that writing students must learn to deal with, a partnership with the disciplines can help ensure a more invisible seam between the writing that occurs in the composition classroom and writing elsewhere in academia. Team-teaching, WAC or WID (Writing in the Disciplines) programs, learning communities, and writing councils are only a few of the many formats that campus-wide writing initiatives can take. Once again, working with the disciplines means acknowledging that a multiplicity of literacies will be at work when students engage in writing outside of the composition classroom to satisfy other assignments.

The Writing Center at Center Stage. Much of the difficulty relating to serving students of varying profiles has to do with finding time to service individual needs. In the classroom, given its many curricular constraints, the instructor may find his or her time as restricted as their students do. Nevertheless, many institutions count on a learning or writing center that can partner with instructors to offer individualized attention to learners. What is more, because such centers provide the opportunity for one-on-one interaction with students, the tutors there can help dissipate problems before they overwhelm students who already have crowded lives. One such problem is the occurrence of plagiarism (Sterngold; Pecorari; Buranen), especially by at-risk students. The writing center is often the first place where a suspicion of plagiarism arises. Thus, the center can be an active aid the process of informing the students of the seriousness of such acts. At the same time, writing center tutors can help students build strong composition skills that might encourage them to rely on their own writing rather than on someone else’s. In the case of international, and, to some extent, resident ESL students, the writing center can also help educate learners about the importance of respecting intellectual property in the United States. It is not always the case that a student’s country of origin considers the misappropriation of intellectual assets as critical an issue as the misappropriation of material belongings. Certain students may feel that using someone else’s words is a demonstration
of their having done their research. Early attention and detection by the writing center can help students make sense of another area outside of rhetorical practices in which cultures can collide.

It is not only in the case of plagiarism that writing center personnel can be important allies. From providing a nonthreatening environment where reading and writing can be celebrated to offering the individual attention that many nontraditional students need, the writing or learning center can underscore for learners the importance of peer review and feedback, a practice that all scholars know should continue and develop throughout their academic career. Programs can consider an even more formal partnership between classroom instructors and writing center tutors, one in which a number of sessions and tasks have to be accomplished before student promotion may occur. It is then up to the specific programs, in light of their unique challenges, to find the right measure and extent of this important cooperation.

The teaming-up of students. Realistically speaking, instructors might see themselves in a position where these three linguistically-diverse student types have been placed in the same class. Such a complex situation can be viewed by a pessimist as chaotic and unmanageable; after all, teachers are well aware, either intuitively or more formally, of the challenges of instructing heterogeneous groups. The realist, on the other hand, might see these unique but mixed groups as justification for trying out innovative practices and experimenting with different teaching modes. If instructors assume that each of these individuals has distinctive strengths to share with the other members of the class, then these teachers will not only make the most of learning but also empower the learners by making them sense that they are active participants in their group’s learning process. The benefits of peer review, for example, are maximized if students who can offer different interpretations of texts can be paired with one another. For example, international ESL students can offer their accomplishments to basic writers by focusing on the development of a basic writer’s work while trying to get the student to work on acquiring a level of formality. A basic writer, who has the colloquial skills in place, can focus on ESL interference in the writing of both international ESL learners and resident ESL learners. Finally, a resident ESL learner’s unique ability to shift from one audience to another might help both monolingual basic writers and international ESL writers with matters of register and context of communication. The teaming of students who have varying profiles indicates that the instructor believes each student can contribute to developing the multiple literacies necessary for successful writing in academia.

Employing Differentiated Feedback Practices. Thonus (17–24) argues that international ESL writers and resident ESL students have various ways of processing feedback and, further, that a more direct approach usually works
better with resident ESL students than does the indirect feedback usually employed with international ESL writers. In that case, it appears that resident ESL learners benefit from advice when it is posed in the form of statements rather than from those “more polite” rhetorical questions (for example, “I believe you should restructure this paragraph,” instead of “Do you think you would want to restructure this paragraph?”), since statements can come across as directions for change rather than suggestions.

I consider that the quantity and quality of corrections and suggested changes are also crucial and can be complemented by specific tasks that are individualized to each learner’s needs. For example, I try to read each student’s essays, looking for a pattern that students can work on and apply in subsequent assignments. This pattern may have to do with voice in the case of one student, organization with a second, and subject-verb agreement with a third. I then provide specific directions about methods of working on the assigned task, explaining that I will be reading for it again when I get subsequent essays. I avoid overediting the surface level otherwise. This system has helped me the most in classrooms where a great variety of needs is represented among its students, allowing me to offer some personalized attention regardless that any challenges faced by one’s peers might be very different from one’s own. Ferris (143–57) suggests that pointing to patterns of error instead of pinpointing every instance of an error helps reduce the frequency of such patterns in further writings. Therefore, avoiding the correction of every single error in a text can benefit students academically while concurrently providing encouragement through selective editing practices. By doing this, once again the instructor acknowledges an individual’s skills and understands that given specific personal strengths, students need different feedback.

Shift in the Overall Focus from the Surface Level to Rhetorical Practices. The literature has often acknowledged that some major differences between basic and more mature writers are connected to their awareness of audience and purpose (Rosenwasser and Stephen). Nevertheless, many composition classroom practices still focus heavily on the correction of surface-level errors, with little or no effect on further occurrence of the same errors in later assignments. One reason for this practice’s lack of effectiveness has to do with the stage of development of a student’s linguistic abilities. An intermediate-level international ESL writer, for example, might not be mentally prepared to systematize an advanced grammatical rule or an idiomatic use of language, and if that’s so, then excessive corrections are likely to make him or her more self-conscious. By the same token, a basic writer might be unable to avoid all of the “there,” “their” and “they’re” confusion, if he or she is still heavily reliant on oral language as a source for writing. It is then the instructor’s role to know when addressing surface errors is helpful and when
the students might be better served thorough instruction on the other levels of writing (e.g., organization, thinking patterns, and rhetorical moves that better address considerations of audience and purpose). It is also noteworthy that work on these areas can finally revert to the surface (e.g., students who understand that the audience of an essay is an academic readership may decide to avoid slang as a basic decision), preventing certain surface level errors to occur altogether.

**Conclusion**

The challenges facing first-year students and their instructors are many. The more multicultural the university classroom becomes, the more interesting and complex the teaching gets. The teaching experience is always multifaceted with linguistically diverse students, and yet almost everything about a student can make him or her unique and diverse (gender, age, race, ethnicity, linguistic history, etc). Bringing together the three groups of diverse learners—international ESL writers, monolingual basic writers, and, in particular, resident ESL writers—is certainly a more methodological maneuver than it is a manifestation of their homogeneity, given that great diversity, as well as overlap, is found within and between the groups. However, acknowledging the differences between international ESL writers, monolingual basic writers, and resident ESL writers is also a departure from a dichotomist treatment of learners as necessarily and exclusively either native or nonnative. Additionally, being able to tell the groups apart helps instructors realize that writing instruction must be customized. A call for customization of composition instruction should at the very least bring awareness to multifaceted college composition and to the potential for each student to become a competent writer.

It is to be hoped that teaching methods and techniques will continue to advance toward serving different learner profiles. If that is the case, the grim picture of challenges faced by linguistically diverse students will exist only as a line in an academic paper. Ultimately, serving linguistically diverse students in an academic environment begins and ends with accepting all forms of language as classroom assets rather than thinking of these language forms as if they were liabilities.
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NOTES

1 For a discussion of the shift in L2 populations in US universities, see Matsuda, 67–89.
2 See Valdés for an extensive discussion on challenges.
3 Refer to Kolln and Carl Smith for both sides of whether or not to teach grammar explicitly.
4 See Friedrich for a discussion of attitudes and their role in language learning and use.
6 See Gee for extensive work on literacies.
7 For further information on needs analysis, refer to Ferris and Hedgcock who extensively present suggestions for analyzing the needs of students and for designing ESL programs.
8 For further discussion of the role of writing center in bridging the disciplinary gap, see Phillips, Stewart, and Stewart in this issue of WPA.

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Preparing for the Tipping Point: Designing Writing Programs to Meet the Needs of the Changing Population

Ana Maria Preto-Bay and Kristine Hansen

Malcolm Gladwell’s bestselling book *The Tipping Point* caught the attention of people in many disciplines, causing them to look at all kinds of natural and social phenomena differently. Briefly, a tipping point comes when one or more seemingly minor changes in the external environment produce a dramatic change in the existence or behavior of a few key people, a change that spreads quickly to others. Tipping points are explained mathematically as the point when a steady-state equilibrium is disrupted, followed rapidly by a chain of events that can be difficult to manage. Nationally, Americans are about to reach a tipping point in the demographics of the student population in college composition courses—in fact, many institutions of higher education have already reached such a point—and that point will have profound implications for the way writing programs are conceived, designed, and staffed. This article outlines the nature of this demographic shift and how professionals can prepare for it by using tested principles of instructional design. Then, by reviewing the information that is available on mainstream composition programs, we attempt to infer the ways those programs will likely need to change to meet the needs of a rapidly changing student population. Finally, we outline issues regarding curriculum for first-year composition, materials and practices for teacher development, and writing program location—issues that we believe writing program administrators must begin to consider, debate, and decide now, if we want to be ready for the near future.
New Student Demographics

Because many universities and colleges consider international and multicultural students as two distinct groups, they usually have independent offices to offer administrative and academic support to them. This division reflects institutional attempts to acknowledge and address the needs of these students as linguistically and culturally diverse populations. Traditionally, international students have been defined as students attending classes on a student or exchange visa. Many have been educated in their first language and primarily in their home country; their most visible characteristic is the fact that they speak English as a second (L2) or another language, and they are developing their English language competence while they study in North American institutions of higher education. The term “multicultural,” on the other hand, has been loosely used to describe United States-born students of non-Caucasian background who have received their formal education in the K–12 public education system in this country. According to Ogbu, these students are “involuntary minorities” whose ancestors were incorporated into the nation through slavery, conquest, or colonization (Ogbu, qtd. in Wurr 1). They generally belong to what Gibson has described as “a group occupying a subordinate position in a multiethnic society, suffering from the disabilities of prejudice and discrimination and maintaining a separate group identity” (318).

In contrast to international students on visas, multicultural students have a sense of inherited powerlessness, which is, according to Wilson, “the result of restricted opportunities and feelings of resignation originating from bitter personal experiences” (Wilson, 158-59).

While the terms international and multicultural may have worked in the past, these classifications no longer accurately describe student populations in the twenty-first century. Without disregarding the persisting need for more equitable access to higher education by less privileged groups, we must now turn our attention to the needs of a broader population of linguistically and culturally diverse students, including immigrants and refugees, who are already or will soon be attending our institutions. According to the United States Department of Education’s Center for Educational Statistics, while the population of five- to twenty-four-year-olds grew by 6% between 1979 and 1999, the number who spoke a language other than English at home increased in the same period by 118%; the percentage within that same age group who “spoke English with difficulty” grew by 110% (qtd. in Wurr 14).

Similar statistics are presented by Fix and Passel in connection with the Urban Institute, a nonpartisan research organization focusing on social and economic trends. According to these authors, more than 14 million immigrants made their home in the United States during the 1990s, and projec-
tions point to an equal number of immigrant entries between 2000 and 2010. The foreign-born population in the United States tripled over the past thirty years. In 2000, 20% of all children under eighteen years old in the US public school system were either foreign-born or first-generation US-born, and by 2015, 30% of the school-aged children will be children of immigrants, either first or second generation. Poverty rates—which greatly affect access to higher education—fell sharply in the late 1990s among the immigrant population in general, pointing to immigrant parents’ desire to succeed as well as to their growing ability to pay college tuition for their children, for example.

While immigrant populations have tended to concentrate in certain eastern and southern states, recent immigrants have settled in twenty states in the Intermountain West and Midwest, states without a tradition of immigration or newcomers (see Fix and Passel’s *U.S. Immigration: Trends and Implications*). Such dispersal of linguistically and culturally diverse populations is already changing various social institutions, not the least of which are educational institutions. A report from the State of Illinois, for example, shows that the enrollment of Hispanic undergraduates in the state grew by 80% in the last decade and the number of Asian-American undergraduates and graduates grew by 43% during the same time period (see *Changing Demographics*). In addition, recent announcements by the US Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, point to the easing of restrictions on visas to international students, which will also greatly affect enrollments on our college campuses. All data seem to support the assertion that the immigration and population trends will continue and that access to higher education will continue as well. Given these college population trends, college composition requirements are not likely to decrease, either. We do foresee, however, that changes will be needed in the way college composition is taught because of the changing population that will enroll in the courses.

Finding terminology that accurately describes the socially, linguistically and culturally diverse nature of the new student population has not been easy. Some authors and teachers, choosing from many possible and debatable designations, have called some of these students “Generation 1.5” (Harklau, Losey, and Siegal) or “cross-over students” (Schwartz 42). Because, among other things, the background of this subset of the student population often includes “isolated rural communities with one-room schools, refugee camps, war-torn countries, and families with persistent migration patterns” (Hamanian 281), they are unlike typical international students. The all-inclusive “multicultural” designation does not describe them, either, because, while usually of non-Caucasian ethnicities, these students do not carry the deep sense of permanent and institutionalized discrimination pervasive among
minorities who have lived in the United States for several generations. These new students do share some linguistic, social, and cultural characteristics with both international and multicultural students, but in different ways and to varying degrees, thus presenting institutions, and composition programs in particular, with a new and unusual constellation of linguistic, cultural, social, and educational diversity to address.

As a response to this reality and to ensure that these students receive the academic support they need to be ready to enter college, regulating bodies such as the Academic Senate for California’s Public Colleges and Universities have called for intensive language teaching for the immigrant, refugee and other “limited English proficiency” (LEP) students in the public education system. Such assistance is often hindered either because of decisions made by public education institutions that lack funding and/or qualified personnel or because of issues associated with the students themselves. According to Cummins, some of these issues include the length of time it takes students to acquire academic English proficiency, the kind of language instruction they received before entering the public education system in the United States, the length of time they were allowed to study English during the K–12 years, the nature of the students’ first-language literacy, and the point at which they started learning English or began their formal education in North American institutions (see also both of Collier’s essays).

To those of us who teach in and administer writing programs, responding effectively to these students’ needs can be challenging indeed. Because of funding shortfalls and, in some cases, by “legal mandate” (Wurr 15), many small and large institutions cannot offer differentiated composition curricula for linguistically and culturally diverse students. Now LEP students who pursue higher education are heavily concentrated in two-year colleges and other open-admissions institutions (see Worthen 58; see also “Almanac”), but as population demographics change, these students will be more likely to enroll in all institutions of higher education. For these and other reasons, composition classrooms are starting to look like a microcosm of the US population: in the same class one can find any combination of native-born, international, refugee, permanent resident, and naturalized students. The progressively ubiquitous presence of these students in “mainstream” composition classes creates the need to revisit long-held curricular and pedagogical assumptions about first-year composition. One or two ESL specialists on any given college campus can no longer answer all the questions that puzzle mainstream composition teachers, not only about those we have traditionally labeled L2 students (see Shuck, this issue) but also about the increasing numbers of other culturally and linguistically diverse students, whom we must
label L2 as well, but for different reasons. These students will soon make up a large portion of the enrollment of “mainstream” composition classes. This issue of WPA attests to that realization.

Composition Programs: Curriculum by Design

It may seem obvious to state that curricula should be designed to meet the needs and goals of the stakeholders in any educational endeavor: the teachers, the learners, those who will later teach or employ those learners, and society at large. But even a cursory perusal of the history of composition shows that the interests of all these groups have not always converged, nor have the interests of each even been equally considered or represented in curriculum design. According to Connors, the so-called current-traditional paradigm for teaching composition that evolved in the late nineteenth century and dominated the first two-thirds of the twentieth century was focused largely on enabling an undertrained and transient staff of composition teachers to cope with large numbers of students. Teachers exercised their students in the production of formally correct writing that could be graded with relative speed, on the assumption that correctness would be the prime desideratum of other teachers and employers. In the 1960s and ’70s, as theorists recognized how narrow and stultifying this curriculum was, new approaches were tried, and new theories were developed that are now generally classified as expressivist, cognitivist, and social-constructionist (the last is also called socioliterate, transactional, or rhetorical). Miller, Groccia, and Miller, for example, have argued that the different general approaches designed to help first-year students negotiate the process of cultural, social, and cognitive adjustment have tended to focus on some things at the expense of others (see also Auster and MacRone). That has certainly been the case with approaches to teaching writing.

Richard Fulkerson, looking back in 1990 at changes in composition theory and pedagogy during the 1980s, characterized the field as having axiological consensus despite pedagogical diversity. By this he meant that the field agreed on the ends of composition instruction but not the means. Taking a second look at the field in 2005, Fulkerson now identifies “axiological diversity” in composition studies, arguing that “we currently have three alternative axiologies (theories of value),” which “drive the three major approaches to the teaching of composition” (655). Despite his assertion, however, Fulkerson admits we actually know very little about the nature of composition programs across the nation because “there is no available and current synthetic account of what goes on in college writing classrooms in the United States: the syllabi, writing assignments, readings, [and] classroom procedures”; thus, the field as a whole “desperately need[s] a comprehensive
empirical study of what actually goes on nationwide” (682, note 3). Fulkerson’s characterization of the various philosophies that underlie curricular practices leads him to predict that, rather than converging on a consensus, the field of composition studies is threatening to fragment along axiological lines.

If Fulkerson is right—and we think the evidence he points to is certainly worth considering—the lack of consensus in the concepts and design of composition programs indicates a need for broad dialogue about the ends and means of composition programs. This dialogue should take into account the needs of stakeholders in any curriculum, particularly the needs of the new L2 students and the needs of the teachers who will be asked to teach them. Given the phenomenon of growing student diversity, designing program-wide curricula and classroom-specific instruction will seem shortsighted—and it will become progressively problematic—unless WPAs learn more about the needs of the new L2 students and develop a plan to address their writing development. As Gagné, Briggs, and Wager have admonished those involved in the process of curriculum and instructional design in general, “It is usually not sufficient for a designer to guess what the skills of an intended audience will be. A better procedure is to interview and test the skills of the target population until you know enough about them to design the instruction appropriately” (25).

According to Paul Matsuda, it was precisely on the basis of the characteristics and needs of academic English-learning that L2 composition took its first steps as a distinct discipline and topic of inquiry (“Second Language Writing” 18). Therefore, the call to look at students’ needs before designing instruction has come initially from those working directly with linguistically diverse students. Daniel Horowitz was one of many to argue that student needs should be the main force driving curriculum design for composition courses (see also Pratt; Savignon). Along similar lines, Leki admonishes faculty and administrators not to just talk about students but to talk with them, and Kroll suggests that teachers must get to know their students because individuals can tell us a lot about themselves and their needs.

Dick and Carey have maintained, throughout the years, that in all responsive and robust instructional design processes, the curricular, pedagogical, and methodological decisions should reflect at least the following three factors: the acknowledged need for instruction, the content to be presented, and the characteristics and entry behaviors of the learners (The Systematic Design of Instruction). People in charge of making instructional decisions need to take the time to find the discrepancy between “what is” and “what ought to be.” This discrepancy is the gap that instruction should be designed to fill. It is, therefore, neither responsible nor advisable to conceive
and design instruction without taking into account the learners for whom that instruction is being designed. Finding out the characteristics, interests and knowledge base of an audience is almost too basic a concept to need mentioning, yet perhaps because it is basic, it can be overlooked. Joy Reid, for example, argues that composition instruction needs to be “thoughtfully designed to integrate immediate student needs with the hierarchy of institutional values, disciplinary goals, and professional expectations” (“Advanced EAP Writing” 144). In his pioneering work in systems theory, Ludwig von Bertalanffy argued that designers of instruction should pay careful attention to the interrelated and interdependent nature of the aspects of any educational setting. Along similar lines, Banathy and Jenlink, also systems theorists, have the following to say regarding a systemic approach to design and to change in general:

There are times when there is a discrepancy between what our system actually attains and what we designated as the desired outcome of the system. [...] We realize that something has gone wrong, and we need to make some changes. [...] Changes within the system are accomplished by adjustment, modification, or improvement. But there are times when we have evidence that changes within the whole system would not suffice. [...] We realize that we now need to change the whole system. We need a different system. (50)

When the population for whom instruction is designed changes, the whole system often needs to be re-envisioned. If enrollment trends in composition classes persist—and it looks as though they will—composition programs may need to do just that: rethink the whole system. To infer whether a systemic change is needed, and if so, how to facilitate it, we first need to consider the programs we presently have. Since we lack reliable national data about what actually happens in today’s composition programs, such an examination must rely on indirect methods. These might include a review of teacher development programs, materials used to prepare new composition teachers, and current philosophical trends in composition. The following is an attempt to understand and assess how well prepared we are for the changing demographic tide.
Assessment of Existing Composition Programs

Teacher Development. Beyond descriptions of local practices and populations (e.g., Brobbel et al.; Long, Holberg, and Taylor; McBroom; Morgan; Reagan; Thomas; Welch; Weiser), we know relatively little about the way teachers are prepared to work in mainstream writing programs. The few “national” surveys, now ten to twenty years old, are based largely on the responses of doctoral-granting institutions that use a constantly changing stream of graduate students to staff composition courses. Those universities lacking graduate programs, small four-year colleges, and two-year colleges are not even represented in these surveys. The omission of two-year colleges from such surveys is particularly troublesome since they teach composition to approximately 40% to 50% of the nation’s college students, including the highest percentages of linguistically diverse nonforeign students (Goggin 164; “Almanac” 15).

Two-year and small four-year institutions rely much more on regular full-time and adjunct faculty to staff composition courses than do larger universities, which rely mainly on graduate students. In fact, according to Worthen, the percentages of adjunct faculty who teach writing in community colleges have climbed to well over 50% and even 60% in several states (52-55). Such institutions may not even have formal teacher development programs, either because they assume that their full-time teachers already know how to teach composition or because they lack the funds, time, and expertise to offer development to adjunct faculty who staff their courses. The fact that a large percentage of adjunct faculty are former graduate students leads to the further assumptions that they would teach as they were trained to when they were graduate students and that their training likely did not include teaching multicultural and linguistically diverse students. At any rate, it is very difficult to generalize, given the paucity of information about writing curricula and teacher training in two-year and small four-year institutions.

Our lack of information about these institutions is confirmed by Goggin’s research, which indicates that two-year and four-year college faculty have contributed very little to leading composition journals, even though publication in all fields at all types of institutions, including community colleges, has risen dramatically since 1980. Goggin also cites other indicators, such as low membership in CCCC and attendance at conferences, that similarly suggest teachers in smaller and less prestigious institutions do not participate much in the discourse of composition studies, which increasingly emanates only from public and private research universities. This, however, is not stated as a criticism of full-time or part-time faculty in two-year and four-year colleges. Their teaching loads are often so heavy that they lack
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time to do research and write about their knowledge. Yet we believe they have much to tell the rest of the profession about teaching diverse students to write.\textsuperscript{1}

Turning to the data we do have, we find that, in her 1986 study of writing program administration at prestigious institutions, Hartzog concluded that 83\% of the forty-four writing programs surveyed required graduate teaching assistants to complete a course in how to teach writing, and another 10\% offered an optional course of that nature. In 1996, Latterell solicited descriptions of teacher development courses and course materials from seventy-two doctoral programs in composition and rhetoric. On the basis of thirty-six responses, Latterell concluded that the typical teaching practicum is a required, three-credit course, taught by the WPA or a “member of the writing program committee”; it meets once a week for the first semester (and sometimes the second) of a new graduate teaching assistant’s employment. It focuses largely on practical and immediate concerns, such as leading a discussion, making assignments, and evaluating student writing, and requires little reading, presenting only a “brief overview of composition and rhetorical theories.” The GTAs keep a “journal or teacher’s notebook in which they record and reflect on lesson plans, assignments, and their students’ progress” and at the end turn in “all teaching materials as well as sets of graded papers or a selective sample of graded papers for evaluation by the practicum instructor.” As part of the course, GTAs are observed in their teaching and often observe other teachers (18).

From this aggregate view of teacher development courses, Latterell cautioned that WPAs may be “encouraging a notion that writing courses are contentless and that teaching writing requires minimal expertise” because these practica “devolve writing pedagogy from a critical practice with an epistemological grounding to sets of lesson plans and activities disconnected from a teaching philosophy” (19). Thus, they may actually foster the perception that “teaching writing is not valued, even by the rhetoric and composition field. By dispensing ‘training’ in one to two hour doses once a week for one (possibly two) terms, this model encourages the passing out of class activities and the quick-fixes—an inoculation method of GTA education” (19-20). While there is some evidence that GTA training may be efficacious (see, for example, Liggett), Latterell raises serious questions that deserve more investigation. There is little reason to assume that graduate students or adjunct faculty are learning more than a few basics about how to teach writing in general, and may, consequently, have an even greater lack of knowledge of how to address issues of linguistic and cultural diversity in their classrooms.
Books for Preparing Teachers of Composition. Turning to the books often used in teacher preparation courses, we find some encouraging news. However, most of these books, even those published recently, still apparently assume that classrooms will be full of monolingual, monocultural students. For example, the fourth edition of Erika Lindemann’s popular *A Rhetoric for Writing Teachers*—which has always been updated significantly with each new edition—lacks any mention of the unique needs of L2 students who might be present in mainstream composition courses, though the book does contain a strong introduction to the insights that linguistics can give teachers about language acquisition and dialects of English. Of the 109 essays in Duane Roen et al.’s lengthy and diverse *Strategies for Teaching Composition*, only two touch on L2 student issues (“‘Black people tend to talk Eubonics’: Race and Curricular Diversity in Higher Education,” 46-51, and “Teaching Composition with International Students in an Electronic Classroom,” 479-482). Cheryl Glenn et al.’s *St. Martin’s Guide to Teaching Writing* (5th edition) has two paragraphs on diversity in the writing classroom with suggestions for further reading (5), and its anthology of essays includes one on race and gender (392-402), one on diversity (438-461), one on Ebonics (525-542), and one on the “English Only” movement (543-572)—each an important issue to be sure, but not the kind of in-depth exposure to linguistic and cultural issues that teachers will need. Irene Clark’s recent *Concepts in Composition* contains a chapter on nonnative speakers of English, followed by a reprint of Silva, Leki, and Carson’s article, “Broadening the Perspective of Mainstream Composition Studies” (388-412) and a chapter on linguistic diversity with suggestions for teaching nonstandard dialect speakers; these are followed by three reprinted articles, two dealing with teaching speakers of African American Vernacular English and one analyzing the replication of linguistic stereotypes in popular culture. Inclusion of readings such as these in a text for new teachers is a heartening sign of awareness that today’s composition instructors need to know more about the nature of the issues and problems confronting linguistically and culturally diverse students, but it is also only a small step down a long road that teachers and program directors must soon traverse quickly and completely.

Trends in Composition Studies. Most worrisome of all is the possibility that as the demographic tipping point approaches, specialists in composition studies will be squabbling about what foundation the profession should rest on. Fulkerson’s 2005 analysis, “Composition at the Turn of the Twenty-first Century,” draws on textbooks and on current research to conclude that there is greater axiological diversity now than there was in the 1980s, when composition teachers across the nation at least agreed on the ends of instruc-
tion, if not the means. Now, he says, disagreement exists about ends as well as means. Fulkerson identifies four competing perspectives, each with its attendant axiology, epistemology, view of the writing process, and view of pedagogy: (1) the ever-persistent formalist “current-traditional” rhetoric; (2) the dominant critical and cultural studies popular in English departments; (3) a widespread and “quietly expanding” expressivism; and (4) rhetorically informed perspectives with varying emphases on argument, genre analysis, or entering the academic discourse community. He predicts that the field is on the verge of a new round of theory wars.

If Fulkerson is right—and one could certainly quibble with his use of inferential rather than empirical methods for reaching his conclusions—our readiness to deal with increasing numbers of linguistically diverse students seems more problematic than ever. Assuming that the four approaches he describes are the most widely used, we believe that new curriculum designs that address the needs of a different student population will have to be based on careful understanding and evaluation of the possible candidates. Space precludes a full analysis of each of the approaches identified by Fulkerson, but we offer here some brief reasons why we believe a rhetorical or socioliterate approach should inform the curriculum design of composition courses for the new student population.

With respect to the critical and cultural studies approach, we note that, in response to Sarah Benesch’s argument for a place for politics in L2 composition teaching, Terry Santos has convincingly shown why such an approach to college composition is unlikely to address the needs of the linguistically and culturally diverse students we expect to see in greater numbers. One reason, Santos says, is that such an approach goes against the strong desire of these students for writing instruction that supports their educational, social, and career goals and prepares them for immediate academic needs. Another reason is that the assumptions and goals of critical pedagogy have simply not attracted very many teachers of L2 writing; thus, very few materials and textbooks have been published for classrooms using this approach (188). We think that a critical-cultural approach might have something to offer L2 students at a later point in their academic careers, but they need to learn first the norms and standards of academic and professional discourse before they attempt to unmask or criticize them.

For similar reasons, it is unlikely that adopting expressivist approaches to teaching will prove a sound choice for the changing student population. Although expressivist emphases on self-exploration, self-actualization, and developing one’s writing voice may help students develop their “fluency, confidence, and personal [. . .] literacies,” Johns argues that such a focus “can be detrimental to students as readers and writers within academic
contexts” (10) and has an “insidious benevolence” which “may not provide adequately for all students, particularly those who are culturally, socially, or linguistically distant from English academic languages and discourses” (14). By focusing instructional efforts on personal meaning and discovery, these approaches can, and often do, divert time and attention from, students’ introduction to academic discourse practices. According to Martin, expresivist views “promote a situation in which only the brightest, middle-class monolingual students will benefit” (qtd. in Johns 14; see also Atkinson and Ramanathan).

Rhetorical approaches—focused as they are on linguistic and sociocultural strategies for negotiating the constraints and complexities posed by various audiences, purposes, and situations—seem the most likely candidates for serving the new student population. But they, too, would also require redesign informed by insights offered by both first and second language composition teachers and researchers. In their 2004 article, dealing with the history of the influence of applied linguistics and composition studies on second language writing studies, Silva and Leki articulate the inherent philosophical differences between composition studies and applied linguistics in matters of ontology, epistemology, methodology, axiology, and political orientation, among other issues. According to these authors, applied linguistics, the parent discipline of second-language acquisition and L2 composition, views itself, its role, its instructional objectives, and even language itself from a positivist, realist, objectivist, empirical, manipulative, and explanatory perspective. L1 composition studies, on the other hand, tends to emphasize the relativist, subjectivist, hermeneutic, and dialectical nature of reality and of the field. The authors further state that applied linguistics focuses primarily on aspects of instruction related to the international and multicultural origin of its learners and has a much more diverse teacher population and more varied linguistic emphases, while composition studies focuses on the monocultural and monolingual make-up of its learners and tends to have a teacher base of monolingual, US-native, Caucasian speakers of English. Clearly, what we need in an approach to composition that is better designed to serve the new population of students is an open and informed dialogue between scholars of both approaches.

**Redesigning Composition Programs for the Twenty-First Century**

The preceding assessment of the nature of contemporary composition programs, while admittedly brief and limited by insufficient national data, does suggest that a systemic redesign of composition programs should be under-
taken to prepare for the all-too-imminent tipping point. If we are to undertake systemic change, we must first consider the questions that will need to guide it:

- What should the larger disciplinary goals of first-year composition be?
- What body of knowledge do students need to acquire?
- What materials will we use to teach composition?
- What should be the focus of teacher development?
- How should teacher development be planned and executed?
- What program-wide changes in terms of disciplinary orientation, materials, and personnel will need to take place?

Independently of where students of the near future are found along the cultural-educational-linguistic diversity continuum, many or most will need further support in academic English and in their transition and adaptation to postsecondary academic culture. While there is still much debate about the objectives and function of composition studies in the overall postsecondary curriculum, it has become apparent that the curriculum must reflect careful consideration of students’ academic literacy needs. For students to learn what Kern calls the “socially-, historically-, and culturally situated practices of creating and interpreting meaning,” which vary by purpose as well as “across and within discourse communities and cultures,” composition courses will need to focus “on a wide range of cognitive abilities, on knowledge of written and spoken language, on knowledge of genres, and on cultural knowledge” (16). These practices and these focuses are the same for L1 and L2 students, we argue, varying not in kind but only in degree.

Although the concept of academic literacy is much more common in applied linguistics and in general L2 literature than it is in recent composition studies literature, the 2000 WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition is congruent with Kern’s view of academic literacy. It outlines the rhetorical, critical thinking, reading, and writing skills that students need, as well as the processes they should follow and the knowledge of conventions they must attain to develop their academic literacy. But how will L2 students who are still developing their linguistic ability perform in these areas if they do not receive further and explicit instruction in how to use academic English language as well as support in the large cultural transition they must make?
There is, we believe, a tendency in mainstream composition programs for WPAs and teachers to engage in a kind of self-deception that if we teach what we believe we should teach, the students will learn what they need to learn. The changing student population will soon challenge this notion by forcing us to question our assumptions and goals. In addition to using the WPA Outcomes Statement, we propose a consideration of what Singhal has called the linguistic, cognitive, and language discovery components of writing. These include phonological, lexical, grammatical, and sociolinguistic aspects of language as well as strategies for knowledge-receiving, knowledge-making, and knowledge-transmitting. Going into more detail than does the outcomes statement, Singhal outlines lower-level objectives, some of which deal specifically with applying “major grammatical conventions of academic English meaningfully and accurately to oral and written communication” as well as the writing of “focused, coherent, and substantially supported multi-paragraph essays in correct, formal, grammatical English appropriate for college level” (11–12).

Interdisciplinarity and Change in Composition Programs

The advent of the composition classroom in which L2 students will have an increasingly greater presence calls for collaboration and interdisciplinarity between the mainstream and L2 fields. While there have always been similarities between mainstream and L2 composition, their differences have not always been easy to bridge. According to Matsuda and Silva, “Despite the efforts of some writing specialists and ESL specialists to fill the gap between first- and second-language writing scholarship and pedagogy, the differences between perceptions and expectations of specialists in these two intellectual formations that have evolved separately over the last four decades have not been easy to reconcile” (Landmark Essays xiv). Ironically, during the same period that L1 and L2 composition have grown disciplinarily and philosophically apart, the dividing lines among the student body have become progressively blurred.

Composition teaching focusing on linguistic and cultural acquisition issues, which has been the thrust of the L2 composition field, must now become an integral part of all composition teaching. The “disciplinary division of labor” which occurred between L1 and L2 composition allowed L2 composition to develop as a field and create its own identity, pedagogy, research agenda, and methodologies (Matsuda 18). In the design of new mainstream composition curricula, professionals in composition studies can now look to the accumulated body of knowledge available in L2 composition and find much of the information they need to answer some of the inevitable and necessary questions about L2 students. Interdependence and
collaboration are all the more important now because the future of composition programs nationwide and the academic success of students will depend on WPAs integrating the accumulated knowledge of those working in mainstream composition and those in L2 composition programs so that WPAs can design better curricula and teacher training programs.

Mainstream composition programs that have mainly served monocultural and monolingual students in the past will have to be prepared for the increasing numbers of new L2 students—those students whose English proficiency is not as developed as that of the native speakers, but whose proficiency is also different from that of those L2 students attending college on a student visa or of the multicultural students. To be prepared for this new generation, composition program directors must undertake needs analyses and then design curricula in light of those analyses. We believe that this redesign will be enhanced if WPAs begin now to discuss and debate the particulars of the following four factors: philosophical bases of instruction; books and materials for teacher preparation courses; teacher selection and development; and program location.

As we have argued above, we believe that a composition program informed by a cultural/critical studies or an expressivist approach does not serve L2 student needs as well as a rhetorical approach that takes as its goal competence in communicating to various audiences, using the genres and strategies that discourse communities have developed for various rhetorical situations. We believe a rhetorical approach will jibe best with the increased attention to language and cultural issues that must be a part of a redesigned curriculum for a diverse student body. It follows that those who educate new teachers will need to devise materials and find or write books and articles that draw more heavily than instructors presently do on the accumulated knowledge of L2 writing researchers. As noted above, many of the currently used teacher preparation materials are heavily monolingual and monocultural. Despite the epistemological and methodological differences between L2 and L1 writing research and practices outlined by Matsuda and Silva, we now must find ways to surmount those differences to meet the needs of the students who used to be on the margins but who will increasingly make up the middle (Landmark Essays). It also follows, then, that teacher preparation must be a lengthier and more substantial process. In the near future, we believe it will not be possible simply to rely on a crash course a few weeks before the semester starts to orient monolingual, monocultural teachers to their new positions, even if the crash course is followed by a practicum and in-service training during the first semester of teaching. Silva argues for the hiring and visibility of L2 professionals in writing programs, a recommendation that ought to be seriously
considered by recruitment committees so that L2 professionals can contribute to curriculum planning, and choosing or creating materials for educating future teachers, and can participate in teaching methods courses.

Teacher selection and development will play a critical role in writing programs of the future. Graduate students in English and former graduate students hired as adjunct faculty are the largest supply of labor for mainstream composition programs—not necessarily because they are the best prepared, but because they are available and want employment, and because writing programs need many relatively inexpensive teachers for the numerous small, labor-intensive sections of writing that must be offered. However, there is usually little in the undergraduate or graduate education of these teachers that will have prepared them to teach writing to L1 students (a course many of these new teachers never took themselves) and probably nothing in their education that will have prepared them to teach writing to linguistically and culturally diverse students. As Latterell has noted, the practica for training new teachers tend to develop procedural knowledge, but what is needed is more declarative knowledge, especially about such topics as language acquisition, cultural influences on writing, and contrastive rhetoric. According to Hedgcock, the domain content that writing teachers should master includes grammar, sociolinguistics, discourse strategies, and language awareness, as well as metaknowledge of learners, learning processes, and instructional approaches. Even if program-wide curricula do reflect the needs of the linguistically diverse population, teacher commitment and systemic change will, according to Weiss, come about only if teachers are allowed to and expected to find their own strategies and solutions within each classroom. It is difficult to imagine that we will have teachers with the depth of declarative knowledge needed for the composition courses of the future if they are constantly recruited from the ranks of English BAs and MAs who have spent most of their academic lives studying literature and literary theory.

The issue of teacher selection leads to the fourth issue, questions about program location that we believe must be discussed and debated among WPAs: when enrollments tilt more in the L2 direction, will English departments continue to be the best home for writing programs? That becomes a consideration because the curriculum of FYC courses must also tilt with the weight of more knowledge and practices from applied linguistics. If teachers of FYC will need deeper and more extensive declarative knowledge, and if they will need lengthier preparation time to qualify as teachers, what challenges will these requirements pose for English departments? Will writing programs be better able to function if they are more autonomous and if they don’t feel obligated to draw their teachers so heavily from English graduate programs? Or can undergraduate curricula in English departments change
sufficiently so that students will arrive at the graduate level better prepared with declarative knowledge they can draw on if and when they become composition teachers?

A WPA’s life is almost never one of equanimity and equilibrium. Major and minor crises may develop at just about any time, and it is obviously better to see them coming whenever possible. We foresee the need to plan now, as individuals and as a profession, for the changes that will soon be required to address the phenomenon of changing demographics in the student population. On many campuses, in individual classrooms, the tipping point has already arrived. When enough teachers face enough students for whom present methods of instruction and present materials and methods of teacher development are inadequate, the tipping point will be programwide, then nationwide. We believe that we all will be wise to seize the initiative and begin preparing now for the realities that, if they are not here yet, certainly lie just ahead.

Notes

1 For helpful profiles of community college writing programs, see Adger; Davies, Safarik, and Banning; Desser; Holmsten; Lovas; Nist and Raines; and Worthen.

2 Although Fulkerson claims the current-traditional paradigm still informs many composition programs, he doesn’t elaborate, and we do not address it as a possible candidate either.


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Preto-Bay-Hansen/ Preparing for the Tipping Point


Combating Monolingualism: A Novice Administrator’s Challenge

Gail Shuck

In an insightful discussion of the tacit monolingualism of composition studies in the United States, Bruce Horner and John Trimbur highlight the need to evaluate our own scholarly participation in perpetuating an English-Only position. Examining the historical division of English departments from departments organized around the study of other languages, they argue that “a chain of reifications” (596) regarding language use has shaped composition teaching. This tacit language policy reifies languages as static, clearly bounded, and evaluated according to a narrow canon of rules, and it also reifies social identities in terms not only of language use but of nationality. This ideology, which supports a monolingualist view of a linguistic and social order in which the ideal speaker is thought to be a monolingual native speaker of a prestige variety of English, comes into particularly clear view as increasing numbers of multilingual users of English enter institutions of higher education.

As a response to this increasing linguistic diversity, many institutions have hired faculty with some training or expertise in addressing second language issues. My current position as coordinator of English language support programs at Boise State University was created to help our campus address the needs of this more diverse population. In 2001, I joined the English Department faculty as a tenure-track faculty member and was given a permanent one-course release each semester to develop new English language support programs and coordinate existing ones. In this essay I examine the linguistic ideologies inscribed in the way my position has been configured, responding to Horner and Trimbur’s call for critical examination of the ways that scholarly, administrative, and pedagogical practices in composition studies perpetuate potentially exclusionary ideologies (Currie).¹ This paper is thus an opportunity for critical reflection about the ways I have used my position to challenge the ideology of monolingualism and on the ways the position
itself, and even the programs I have initiated, may inadvertently support that ideology. It is also an opportunity for other program administrators to imagine how they might adapt new strategies to their own institutional contexts—strategies for bringing about greater integration of multilingual students into a community that continues to see them as permanent outsiders (Spack; Zamel). An equally important purpose is to argue for increasing the number of second language writing specialists who also have administrative recognition of their increasing role as advocates for multilingual students. To address language diversity among users of English, it is critical that composition teachers and scholars develop theories, pedagogies and, as I will argue in this paper, administrative and curricular structures that support a more inclusive, multilingualist stance.

**Local Demographics**

At Boise State University, second language learners of English make up a small but growing percentage of the student population. Based on a recent survey of almost 2,000 first-year students, we have been able to estimate that approximately 7.5% of the student population—1,380 out of 18,500 students—consider a language other than English to be their native language. About three hundred are traditional, student-visa-holding international students. The other thousand-plus are immigrants, refugees, and other nonnative English-speaking residents and citizens. Approximately 9% of Idaho’s resident children between ages 5 to 17 years speak a language other than English at home. Two of the cities nearest to Boise (within a forty-five-minute drive) have a growing Latino population—now 18% and 28%, respectively. The number of refugees from Bosnia, Sudan, Afghanistan, Somalia, and Albania has also grown recently. The percentage of language-minority students at Boise State University is thus likely to be higher than 10% in the near future. These figures are often greeted with surprise by my colleagues. Because Boise has long been a predominantly Caucasian, English-speaking community, Boise State faculty and staff seem to have imagined the language-minority population to be far smaller than the data demonstrate.

The work of Constant Leung, Roxy Harris, and Ben Rampton (“Idealized”), Linda Harklau, Kay Losey, and Meryl Seigal (Generation 1.5), and Ilona Leki (Understanding) urges us to recognize the great variation in what we imagine to be “the ESL population” and to critique our common tendency to assume that the prototypical L2 writer is an international student who is thoroughly familiar with academic literacy practices in his or her native culture and who identifies primarily with his or her country of origin. In contrast to this image, language-minority students at Boise State, as in many United States colleges and universities, have dramatically vary-
ing lengths of stay in the United States (from one week to more than thirty years) and dramatically varying L1 academic literacy levels—from no L1 academic literacy to PhDs from the students’ native countries. Our students also have highly varied language identities vis-à-vis English and their native languages. That is, in addition to having varied levels of expertise in English and in their L1s, students might have a sense of affiliation with English that may or may not be greater than their affiliation with their native languages. This kind of variation has been examined in research on multilingualism and multiple literacies, global Englishes, and the shifting, negotiated nature of language identity (Rampton), demonstrating that language boundaries and identities are far more fluid than the common terms “native English speaker” or “ESL” suggest.

Discovering the L1/L2 Divide

In “Composition Studies and ESL Writing: A Disciplinary Division of Labor,” Paul Kei Matsuda persuasively argues that the L1/L2 division in composition studies developed in relation to specific disciplinary histories of composition and applied linguistics. I would add that this “disciplinary division of labor” has taken a firm hold on the way we conceive of language and language users precisely because of the same monolingualist ideology described by Horner and Trimbur, as well as by linguistic anthropology research on the common identification of one nation with one language (Blommaert and Verscheuren). This language ideology also underlies the often rigid dichotomy of L1 (“regular”) and L2 (“ESL”) composition course sequences, program structures, and even research, as well as the common tendency to ignore the internal variation within the multilingual population. For example, a composition teacher might note that a particular student “is ESL” (a syntactic construction that explicitly reifies the student’s identity as a particular kind of language user) and should therefore transfer to an ESL class. Such comments ignore the possibility that the student may know English better than his or her native language, and they suggest that the responsibility for working with multilingual writers belongs solely to ESL teachers.

By the time I accepted my new faculty position at Boise State University, I was well aware of this widespread tendency to separate second language composition from “regular” composition, as Matsuda (“Composition”) observes, but I did not know exactly how that divide would be manifested at my new institution. When I interviewed for the position, I learned that the primary curricular strategy for dealing with second language writers of English at Boise State was to offer a sequence of three preparatory ESL
writing courses (English 121, 122, and 123) and then to mainstream ESL students into the required first-year, two-semester English composition sequence (see Table 1).

Table 1.

Boise State University’s First-year Writing Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Regular” Composition Sequence</th>
<th>ESL Sequence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult Basic Education (GED, etc.)</td>
<td>Adult Basic Education (ESL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No “regular” equivalent</td>
<td>English 121: 3 elective credits (P/F) Intermediate ESL writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No “regular” equivalent</td>
<td>English 122: 3 elective credits (P/F) High intermediate ESL writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English 90: Developmental Writing (P/F) (administrative credit only)</td>
<td>English 123: 3 elective credits (P/F) Advanced ESL writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English 101: English Composition I (3 credit hours)</td>
<td>No ESL equivalent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English 102: English Composition II (3 credit hours)</td>
<td>No ESL equivalent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This strategy perfectly coincides with what Mike Rose calls “the myth of transience,” a widely held belief that only after a few courses or perhaps years of “remedial” instruction can legitimate academic work occur (355–59). Second language writing scholar Vivian Zamel notes the role of this myth in higher education as it applies to second language instruction and argues against “the notion that these students’ problems are temporary and can be remediated—so long as some isolated set of courses or program of instruction, but not the real courses in the academy, takes on the responsibility of doing so” (Zamel 510). The perception that many multilingual students simply need a few more courses before they can participate in “real” academic courses is often supported by administrative and curricular forms of “linguistic containment,” which Matsuda describes in “The Myth of Linguistic Homogeneity in U.S. College Composition” as practices that serve to separate students who do not use prestige varieties of English from the rest of the academic community, imagined to be prototypically, perhaps ideally, monolingual (“Myth”). Thus, although second language writers at Boise State University do take first-year composition courses together with their native English-speaking counterparts, the existence of only three pre-
paratory courses with no other overt support for or training in L2 issues suggests that L2 writers’ language differences are expected to disappear after they complete the ESL courses. Such practices, as Horner and Trimbur and Matsuda (“Myth”) suggest, fuel the widely held but inappropriate belief that US college composition serves a fundamentally, linguistically homogeneous population.

That myth seemed to play out here at Boise State in this university’s administrative and curricular separation. Before I arrived, “one overworked, underpaid adjunct” (as my department chair describes her) who had been teaching the entire ESL sequence was the only person who knew anything about the courses. None of the English 90/101/102 instructors had ever taught them. Moreover, the portfolio assessment program, which every spring allows the writing program to assess how well it is helping students to meet the program’s minimum competencies for each course, only evaluated portfolios from the developmental writing course and the two required English composition courses. Until they enrolled in English Composition I, second language writers did not seem to be considered part of the writing program at all. The writing program was perhaps unknowingly participating in the widespread practice of implicitly “relegating the responsibility of working with [language] differences to second-language specialists” (Matsuda, “Myth” 2).

My discovery of this linguistic containment came about before I was officially on duty as a faculty member. As I was getting syllabi together and unpacking boxes, I came across a note from a student left in my new mailbox: “Miss Shuck, Please let me know when I can come and see you. M. P.” My responsibilities as an administrator thus began earlier than I had anticipated. I became suddenly grateful for my course release. Once I contacted M. P., I discovered that he had wanted to get institutional credit for courses he had taken at a nearby community college—courses that were coincidentally called English 121, 122, and 123. He also wondered if his community college courses were not evaluated as equivalent, would he be required to take a placement exam and then, potentially, to take three more semesters of writing courses before being allowed to take English 101?

My fact-finding mission on M. P.’s behalf gave me a much more detailed understanding of the ways institutionalized monolingualism had been operating at Boise State. Two separate placement exams existed, both of which were administered by the assessment center in the College of Applied Technology. One was the COMPASS test, which placed students who did not have ACT scores into first-year composition courses, and the other was the Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency, which placed second language writers into the pre-101 ESL sequence. The question became, then,
should M. P. take the “regular” COMPASS placement exam or the Michigan Test? Might the COMPASS place him in an ESL class, if that were appropriate? Might the Michigan Test place him into (or even out of) English 101? Are the placement-essay readers familiar with important differences between first and second language writing processes and products? The crossover between the placement instruments, it turned out, was nonexistent. Neither test allowed for a student to be placed into the alternative sequence. Often, administrative assistants in the writing program, international admissions, or the English department simply told students who have unfamiliar, foreign-sounding accents to take the Michigan Test, regardless of actual English language proficiency. Because the COMPASS test primarily assesses grammatical knowledge and editing ability, multilingual students who took the COMPASS test because they did not know about the Michigan Test usually received low scores and ended up in developmental writing, which is not staffed by instructors educated in second language writing.

The same dedicated instructor who had taught all three ESL writing courses before I came to Boise had also read and evaluated every placement essay written by a Michigan Test-taker. Few faculty or staff—or, for that matter, students—seemed to question the inevitability of this isolation of the ESL courses, which was certainly buoyed by the monolingualist ideology discussed by Horner and Trimbur (see also Shuck, “Racializing”). When this instructor left her job to care for a disabled daughter, the staff of the assessment center took over the job of reading placement essays. However, none had any experience in the teaching or assessing of writing (L1 or L2), and so they simply counted errors as a way of determining a placement. Once I took up my new position a few months later, I had to deal first with the issue of training the readers of these essays.

I also had to learn quickly about what other forms of language support English language learners could receive beyond the ESL composition sequence. As is the case in many institutions, a resource often used by English language learners was the university’s writing center (Williams and Severino 165–66). For a small minority of students who actively sought out whatever resources were available, the university’s Gateway Center for Academic Support provided some help—in the form of online and small-group tutoring for any student in common core (general education) courses such as introductory biology, math, and chemistry. The university also offered free, non-credit ESL courses at its Center for Adult Basic Education, as well as a tuition-funded intensive English program, but because these programs are intended for students not enrolled in degree programs, they did not constitute significant means of support for multilingual Boise State students.
Unless these students were nearly native-like in their English proficiency, were highly capable of navigating the system, or both, the university did not seem to have a place for them.

**Becoming the “ESL Person”**

Within a very short time, I learned about the material effect of the monolingual myth on multilingual students at Boise State—particularly in regard to the demands to “purge their work of errors” (in one history instructor’s words), as well as the financial burden and risk of academic probation that results from a student’s delaying fulfillment of the first-year composition requirement for the three semesters that a placement into the lowest level of the three-course ESL sequence would require. It was also becoming clear that the monolingualism that underlies both the curricular structure and the university’s lack of support programs would also have an effect on me in my role as the second language writing specialist. Moreover, my role as the second language writing specialist seemed to be implicated in that very monolingualism, despite my desire to counter it with every strategy up my administrative, pedagogical, and scholarly sleeve. I suggest here that the monolingual ideology has such a firm hold on the discursive practices of the academic community that even the way that my position has been administratively described can feed this pervasive monolingualism without my wanting it to.

Being “the ESL person on campus” is, to say the least, an enormous responsibility. My duties include

- directing the ESL sequence,
- revising its curriculum (in collaboration with the two other ESL writing teachers),
- consulting with faculty across the disciplines who are concerned about nonnative English speakers in their classes,
- consulting with students—matriculated or not—about what kinds of language support are available,
- scheduling and conducting workshops for faculty and staff,
- writing proposals for new programs,
- meeting with upper-level administrators,
- supervising the program budget,
• writing annual program reports,

• meeting with the assessment center director to discuss alternatives to the Michigan Test,

• interviewing prospective instructors for the cross-cultural composition sections that I initiated at Boise State (see Silva, “Examination,” and Matsuda and Silva for a description of such courses),

• and working with the ESL advisory committee, composed of concerned faculty and staff members whose dedicated work resulted in the decision to create my position.

This year, I used funds carried forward from last year’s budget to hire one of our ESL instructors as a temporary assistant. She has helped me to develop a tutoring program, provided mentoring and resources for those tutors, arranged workshops (and collaborated with me on conducting a few of them), investigated funding sources, gathered student data, and offered other important support. She will again be hired only as a temporary assistant this coming year, because her position has not yet been funded as a permanent one.

Despite the active (if temporary) support of my assistant and the ESL Advisory Committee, and the well-established support for students in the program for migrant workers (CAMP), as well as for bilingual education majors, I am perceived as having sole responsibility for all of the nonnative English speakers at Boise State University. Even the members of our advisory committee seem to have breathed a collective sigh of relief that a specialist was brought in to take over the job of developing language support programs. Having a second language specialist, and particularly having one with a comprehensive administrative role, can prevent the rest of the university from taking any responsibility for accommodating linguistic diversity. A number of faculty, both within and outside the writing program, have sent students to me, sometimes for “fixing,” as those faculty members seem to imagine me as the campus ESL tutor, but mostly they send them so that these students can be placed into an ESL writing class for further ESL instruction. While my primary goal as “the ESL specialist” has been precisely to work toward creating a sense of shared responsibility among faculty for the welfare of all students, the fact that I am here at all may make it difficult for the entire university community to see such responsibility as inherent in its own work. The misperception of my role, and indeed of the location of responsibility for educating second language learners, is one facet of the containment of language differences prevalent in US higher education. Because of the pervasiveness of such practices and the monolingualist
language ideology underlying them, merely having an L2 writing specialist committed to challenging this ideology is not sufficient for resolving the issue.

I have frequently imagined that this situation might be resolved if the position of coordinator of English language support programs were described as a full-time position within academic support services or some other unit serving the entire campus. I have seen parallels between my role and the role of the service learning coordinator at my institution, although I hold a faculty position and the service learning coordinator is a classified staff person. Both of us work with faculty across disciplines to effect changes in pedagogy and in how the relationships between campus and community are viewed. However, the service learning coordinator’s position is housed in the Gateway Center for Academic Support while mine is housed in the English department. Symbolically, service learning is seen as an approach to higher education that cuts across disciplines. This suggests that the responsibility for adopting new pedagogies that connect classroom work with service work can be assumed by instructors throughout the academic community. English language learners, on the other hand, because of the location of the program in the English department, are institutionally regarded as the charges of specialists within the field of English studies—indeed, to be specific, the charges of the one tenure-track faculty member in the English department who specializes in applied linguistics. The rest of the university, then, is symbolically absolved of responsibility for educating this multilingual population.

A kind of autonomy coincides with this marginalization of L2 learners. For example, I can offer individual advising for students, occasionally circumventing an ineffective placement process. As the director of the three-course ESL sequence, I have been able to interview prospective instructors myself, since I have the L2 writing expertise that would allow me to make informed hiring decisions, and simply get them hired without going through the WPA’s office. My assistant and I were also able to implement the new tutoring program with no administrative difficulty at all. Such forms of language support, helpful though they may be and easy to accomplish given this autonomy, allow nonnative English-speaking students to be sent somewhere outside of the normal college curriculum, rather than to be supported across the curriculum by means of linguistically inclusive pedagogies. I have thus unintentionally constructed my own position as the only person who can help English language learners. This makes it doubly difficult for the university as a whole to move beyond a strategy of linguistic containment and to reconceptualize linguistic diversity in the academic community.
Challenging Monolingualism

Because monolingualism is so pervasive, it would indeed be difficult to imagine an administrative position that could be created pointedly to raise awareness of linguistic diversity among native English-speaking students and faculty. Certainly, some institutions have undergraduate foreign language requirements (I use the term “foreign” with some irony—all non-English languages taught in US secondary and tertiary educational institutions are spoken as native languages by citizens of the United States), and some require all undergraduates to take courses designated as having a diversity component. However, such requirements are insufficient for helping to foster a culture in which multilingualism is not perceived as a deficit. If the dominant perspective were instead a multilingualist one, the question then becomes what would language support programs or writing programs look like?

Fortunately, despite the ways in which I have inadvertently perpetuated a monolingualist ideology in the particular ways I have carried out my responsibilities at Boise State, I do have the relative security and status of a tenure-track position, which allows me to make well grounded recommendations regarding cross-curricular language support programs and strategies, as well as to shape our graduate program. Matsuda has rightly argued that a complete blurring of the L1/L2 division is neither realistic nor advantageous (“Composition” 715). I similarly believe that increasing the number of L2 writing specialists among university faculty is critical to reshaping the ways in which language diversity is addressed. Indeed, my work as an interdisciplinary scholar with a background in both composition studies and second language acquisition has led me, as an administrator, to keep a primary goal in mind: to develop curriculum and programs that conceptualize linguistic diversity as a natural state of things, rather than as a problem to be solved. Although my position as coordinator of English language support programs has the potential to reproduce a dominant ideology of monolingualism, I hope to use my scholarly knowledge, as well as my administrative capacity, to work toward dismantling that ideology, which perpetuates exclusionary practices based on a fallacious view of the world as essentially monolingual.

Integrating language-minority students into a writing program means we must accomplish at least the following two things, discussed in more detail in the strategies sections below. First, English language learners should become less “marked” in terms of administration and teaching. That is, students’ identities as writers should not be so wholly associated with their status as native or nonnative English speakers that the students are automatically funneled into either “ESL” classes or “regular” classes. Once the writing program can imagine the prototypical writing class as a fundamentally
linguistically-diverse environment, we are in a better position to accomplish the second goal: to educate composition faculty, as well as faculty across the disciplines, about linguistic diversity. Those of us in administrative positions can thus work toward dismantling the myths of transience and linguistic homogeneity.

**Strategy 1: ESL and Cross-Cultural Composition.** Administratively “unmarking” students’ language identities means creating placement processes that account for linguistic diversity and offering course options for all students, as Silva (“Examination”), Braine (“ESL Students”), and others have argued. Alice Roy further suggests that completely integrating native and nonnative English speakers is most effective as long as teachers actively construct an atmosphere of equitable treatment and mutual respect. Simply offering a few preparatory ESL courses and then mainstreaming second language learners with no training in L2 issues for their first-year writing and other instructors, as we have long done at Boise State University, does not accomplish this goal. However, I simultaneously believe it would be inappropriate to eliminate those courses entirely. Many nonnative English speakers attempt to take university courses with only an intermediate level of linguistic proficiency. They should, therefore, have the opportunity to take such preparatory courses and receive the same kind of university credit that the study of a foreign language receives. Rather than eliminate preparatory courses, curricular changes must be facilitated primarily at and beyond the first-year level in a composition program. Many colleges and universities offer credit-bearing, first-year ESL composition sequences that parallel “regular” first-year composition. If we offer such ESL sections of composition, they should be credit-bearing, requirement-fulfilling courses. Many language-minority students prefer the comfort of being in an all-multilingual class (Braine, “ESL Students”). While this option may continue to construct multilingual students as “Other” and different from the unmarked norm, it does allow students to determine their own identities as writers.

In addition to ESL sections of first-year courses, we should also adopt cross-cultural composition courses, which systematically integrate native and nonnative English speakers. Matsuda and Silva argue in “Cross-Cultural Composition” that such cross-cultural courses have important advantages over both segregating ESL students and unsystematically mainstreaming them. These include providing a nonthreatening environment for ESL writers, challenging the “remedial” image often associated with ESL classes, and providing important opportunities for native English speakers to learn about members of other linguistic and cultural backgrounds. In addition, at institutions whose L1 and L2 composition programs are administratively separate from each other, cross-cultural sections are a way to allow for more
crossover between “regular” and ESL course sequences. They also acknowledge all students’ varied linguistic identities and provide an opportunity to educate monolingual students about language variation as well. Rhetorical issues such as voice, audience, grammar, use of outside sources, etc., come under critical examination in such a course precisely because those issues become more overtly complicated by the greater linguistic diversity in the room. That was the case with the English 110 course at City University of New York’s Hunter College, described by Trudy Smoke as a response to the legislation to eliminate developmental courses. This course, although not explicitly an ESL course, consisted of a majority of nonnative English speakers. By the end of the course, both native and nonnative speakers had learned a great deal from each other.

As a first step toward offering greater options for multilingual students, Boise State’s writing program offered in fall 200 one ESL section of English 101, promoting it as an optional alternative to a “regular” section. It filled almost to capacity its first semester, offering support to Braine’s findings about L2 student preferences. However, as coordinator of English language support programs, I was concerned about the potential for segregation that might result from having a separate ESL section. I feared that instructors would—as they did when I first arrived—believe that a student’s nonnative English-speaking status meant that a “regular” 101 placement was a mistake. The following semester, we offered one cross-cultural section of English 102, as well as one ESL section of 101, as a transition to having a cross-cultural section of each course. As of this writing, we now offer one cross-cultural section each of English 101 and English 102, until we have enrollment in all of these sections sufficient to justify offering two alternatives to “regular” 101 or 102: one ESL section and one cross-cultural section of each course. In the predominantly monolingual, English-speaking context that is Boise, Idaho, these courses offer more officially instituted support for L2 writers at the English 101/102 level than had previously existed.

I have discovered three administrative challenges in creating cross-cultural sections. First, it is difficult to control the ratio of nonnative to native speakers in a university that does not have separate, parallel courses. If we had two parallel, requirement-fulfilling first-year writing sequences with different course numbers, as my previous university did, we could simply offer two conjoined sections and cap the sections appropriately. At Boise State, we ask that students register for a cross-cultural section in person at the writing program office and identify themselves as native or nonnative speakers (some may find it difficult to categorize themselves so narrowly).

Another administrative challenge is to promote the new sections. Monolingual English speakers should be informed that a specific class will be international and that they will encounter varieties of English with which
they may be unfamiliar at first. I have asked teachers to make announcements, conducted class visits, and written special section descriptions on the online registration system. Without an administrative course release, promoting the course would be much more difficult. The third challenge may be peculiar to institutions in which there is no graduate program in teaching English to speakers of other languages: to find instructors with experience in second language issues. Braine (“Starting”) created for composition teachers who don’t specialize in ESL a well designed, three-day workshop in L2 issues as a way of overcoming this problem. At our university, we do have a few teachers with varying degrees of ESL teaching experience who happen to live in the area and teach as adjunct instructors. However, I have deliberately invited applicants who have very little experience working with non-native English speakers but who are genuinely interested in learning more. They receive a stipend in addition to their regular compensation for teaching a course, and they meet with me periodically to discuss matters of concern. The goal is to enlarge the pool of teachers who are both willing and prepared to work with any L2 writers who might enroll in their future “regular” first-year composition courses. In these ways, we can administratively “unmark” such students while recognizing the very real difficulties that L2 writers face in their academic and perhaps social interactions in English. At the same time, we must also help faculty, staff, and students understand the unrealistic standards to which we often hold nonnative speakers. Without such education, the sink-or-swim, assimilationist approach is here to stay.

Strategy 2: Educating Faculty. Recruiting teachers for cross-cultural or ESL composition sections is only one small way to educate faculty about second language issues. Many other strategies are also necessary, including the kinds of formal and informal publicizing of our work that Rebecca Moore Howard describes: meeting with administrators, exploiting avenues such as campus news sources, and simply “volunteering to talk about our programs at every opportunity” (9). Second language writing specialists such as Paul Kei Matsuda, Tony Silva, and Ilona Leki have been particularly successful in bringing L2 issues into greater prominence in the field of composition studies. The “CCCC Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers” (CCCC Committee), for example, has provided an important foundation for communicating with nonspecialists about issues such as assessment, teacher preparation, and college credit for ESL writing courses. Many courses or orientations for graduate teaching assistants or for writing center consultants also include discussion of L2 issues. A number of universities and colleges go beyond the composition program and the writing center to educate faculty across the curriculum (Mlynarczyk and Babbitt).
Educating faculty across the curriculum has been one primary administrative focus of mine since I arrived. I have conducted or arranged a number of faculty development workshops, which, although insufficient for covering the vastness of second language writing, second language acquisition, or cultural issues in education, have positive effects beyond what the participants learn during a given workshop. They signal that the responsibility for educating all students, multilingual and monolingual alike, belongs to the entire academic community. The ESL advisory committee also initiated a university teaching award, called the Faculty Award for the Enhancement of Second Language Learner Success, and announced it in the campus-wide electronic newsletter. Along with this announcement, we attached a list of linguistically inclusive teaching strategies (see Appendix), many of which were suggested by multilingual students at Boise State. I believe these efforts have been partly successful. First, workshop participants have requested that I reproduce those workshops for other groups of faculty and staff. Second, rather than being the “fix-it” person to whom my colleagues send their students, I seem to have become, much to my relief, a resource person on whom the instructors rely to help them develop strategies for addressing the needs of their multilingual students, such as asking pertinent questions about the students’ language backgrounds or pointing out a few patterns of error in a given draft.

To help our colleagues understand in more depth the strengths and struggles that multilingual students bring to our classrooms, I have also attempted to publish multilingual student work (see also Adrian Wurr’s and Erin Whittig’s discussions of service learning and ESL). The culminating and most public activity of my ESL writing class is the English 123 Conference on Language. Although this conference is an activity that I have devised and incorporated into the course curriculum, it is a public event whose audience consists of faculty, staff, administrators, and other students, as well as family and friends of the speakers. The conference achieves what Howard calls for in her article on multimedia presentations to administrators: the use of *pathos* as a significant form of argument. Students speak publicly about their struggles with English or their knowledge of two or more language systems, and the audience listens intently to these formerly silent voices (Shuck, “Ownership”). The dean of our College of Arts and Sciences has made a point of attending the conference almost all of the nine semesters it has been presented. An unexpected result of my students’ presentation of the conference every semester has been that audience members studying English at the adult basic education levels and through intensive English programs are inspired to work toward a college degree. They see that they, too, belong at the university.
One final strategy is in its early development stages here at Boise State. I hope to pilot a faculty liaison program, whereby a faculty member in each department across the curriculum serves as a liaison between that content area—chemistry, nursing, marketing, etc.—and the English Language Support Program. He or she would be an advocate for second language learners in that department and would learn about our university’s resources for helping those students. The faculty liaison would participate in the work of the ESL advisory committee, attend at least one half-day workshop on teaching linguistically diverse populations, and invite ESL specialists to the faculty liaison’s home department to offer similar workshops. The faculty liaison would also direct students to appropriate language and academic support services. The program will require extra funding to track its effectiveness, to offer faculty development grants to the liaisons, and to cover expenses for workshops, but such a program will instrumentally help the rest of the university community share in the collective responsibility of educating all of its students, faculty, and staff.

By emphasizing this collective responsibility, I do not want to diminish the need for interdisciplinary, advanced scholarship in second language writing. It is critical that we develop graduate programs that integrate L1 and L2 composition perspectives and that we create faculty positions in second language writing. I also urge institutions to recognize officially the role that most such specialists will increasingly play as advocates, consultants, workshop facilitators, and program administrators. As Silva argued in a roundtable discussion at the Conference on College Composition and Composition 2005, (Matsuda, Goldstein, Kroll, Mangelsdorf, and Silva), scholarly and administrative equity is at stake in the creation of such positions. However, until second language writing specialists can be hired, it is possible for WPAs and other composition faculty to consider these as important program and classroom goals, including the establishment of

1. Assessment practices and standards that rely not on an imagined native-speaker ideal but on principles of language variation, negotiation of identities, and communicative agility (i.e., across discourse communities).

2. Placement processes that do not reify students’ language identities.

3. Curricular options for multilingual and monolingual students.

4. Continuing conversations that include an understanding of linguistic variation and change between ESL specialists and administrators, fellow faculty members, and students.
Conclusion

Integrating multilingual learners and other often marginalized groups into the academic community offers us a look at how we can work within institutional structures to effect ideological as well as pedagogical changes. I have attempted to demonstrate that an ideology that constructs second language learners of English as foreign and “Other” is embedded in the institutional position I occupy. I also urge readers to consider how similar positions and practices in other institutions may enact the same ideology. This ideology has a cumulative, material effect on students’ lives. However, I have also attempted to illustrate some ways we can use our own administrative positions and work with committees, administrative bodies, and faculty development programs to challenge this ideology and help faculty and staff develop a sense of responsibility for all students, regardless of language background. In other words, I believe that those in administrative positions play a critical role as advocates for students and as agents of change. As Howard writes, we should make our work public at every opportunity. Gerri McNenny similarly argues, in her introduction to *Mainstreaming Basic Writers*, that WPAs and other composition scholars must take “a more public, proactive role” (5) in the form of participation in public discourse, the development of curricula that account for diversity, and the documenting of the intellectual work of both students and faculty in writing programs.

There is a central paradox here, to which Mary Soliday alerts us in “Ideologies of Access and the Politics of Agency.” As we develop agency as administrators, we may be even more susceptible to suggestions that we have sole responsibility for solving particular problems—problems that many of our colleagues and the public at large believe to be located in open-admissions policies and associated with students from certain class and ethnic backgrounds. A dominant ideology of “access,” Soliday argues, makes those students and the programs that serve them vulnerable. If students in basic writing or ESL courses do not succeed, the courses (or the students) are blamed, rather than the economic, ideological, and institutional factors that hamper their success. In such a context, it is easy to feel a sense of powerlessness. Smoke writes, “[W]e must respond to our needs with local, perhaps temporary, solutions, knowing that at any time, changes may be imposed on our programs because of political and ideological shifts” (209). There is, then, a felt conflict between our pedagogical and scholarly ideals, on one hand, and the institutional and ideological structures that constrain us, on the other.

To resolve this conflict, we might, as Smoke suggests, create sustainable programs that have within them the means for revision and restructuring. Indeed, social theorist Anthony Giddens argues that structures themselves are the result of human activity and “contain within them the seeds of
change” (18). Agency is, then, not opposed to structures, although we often understand those structures to be powerful institutions or discourses outside of our control. Rather than asking how much power we have within these seemingly restrictive structures, we might do well to ask how our individual and collective agency is related to specific institutional, historical, and political contexts. Giddens argues that agency is recursively related to those contexts. Drawing analogies between linguistic and social systems, he proposes a theory of action that recognizes that the very rules and systems that seem to constrain individual practice also contain within them the means for change. He writes, “According to the notion of the duality of structure, rules and resources are drawn upon by actors in the production of interaction, but are thereby also reconstituted through such interaction” (71). For those of us in administrative positions, but also for anyone on the academic margins—adjunct faculty, students and faculty from underrepresented groups, scholars with certain critical perspectives, etc.—this view of structure offers hope. As we participate in interactions, even those interactions mediated by exclusionary ideologies like monolingualism, we change the rules themselves. We must also recognize that the students for whom we design writing programs are also agents and act in relation to a variety of structures, not only to the programs that we create. All of these human actors—administrators, students, legislators, teachers, family members—interact with each other in various contexts, shaping and reshaping those contexts through their very participation. Even if institutional positions like mine are structured in ways that might justify continued marginalization, as I imagine they will despite our attempts to encourage critical reexamination of pedagogical responsibility, those of us creating and holding such positions must continue to work for change, knowing that change will be the result of this intricate web of human interaction.

APPENDIX:

Linguistically Inclusive Strategies for Working with Nonnative English Speakers (last revised March 3, 2006)

These suggestions come from nonnative English-speaking students at Boise State University and from the English as a Second Language Advisory Committee. The comments are grounded in second language acquisition theory and in multilingual students’ knowledge of the ways in which their second language status affects their learning. These forms of language support are critical to integrating a linguistically and culturally diverse group of people into the academic community. (The suggestions are not listed in any step-by-step order but appear simply as a variety of suggestions.)
CLASSROOM STRATEGIES

1. Identify those who need language support.
   
a. Early in the semester, let all students know that you are happy to talk with any student who feels he or she needs some extra help. That simple step lets students know they are all welcome in your class while it also can assure native English speakers that you do not give “special treatment” to a few students.
   
b. Assign a short piece of in-class writing early in the semester—for example, they should spend no more than 5 minutes summarizing that day’s lecture or activity. You can then talk to those students whose writing might reveal some second language needs. First, by asking, you can confirm that they are indeed second language users, rather than students who write in a nonstandard variety of English. In either case, students should not simply be sent to a tutor, particularly because they might not identify themselves after all as second language learners or as being in need of help. Rather, have a brief conversation with them, asking how they’re doing in the class. You notice that they’ve made some errors in their writing, and you wonder if there is anything you should know about their educational or language background, or if those errors were a result of the short period of time allotted for producing a sample writing piece. Simply opening up the dialogue can pave the way for directing the student to appropriate campus resources or for providing important support as an instructor. (You can also use such quick in-class summaries to find out whether any review of the material might be necessary for the whole class!)
   
c. Ask the whole class if anyone has any particular needs the instructor should be aware of. Of course, don’t ask for a show of hands. Students needing assistance can identify themselves to you by email or after class.

2. Recognize that nonnative speakers do not become native speakers. Grammatical perfection in a second language is an impossibility for most nonnative speakers. See http://www.boisestate.edu/esl for additional suggestions regarding such expectations.

3. Allow nonnative English speakers some extended exam time. Writing and reading in a second language can take considerably longer than writing and reading in one’s native language.
4. Allow nonnative English speakers to take exams in a separate room. Some students find it helpful to read questions and multiple-choice options aloud as a way of processing the language in them.

5. Give permission to use bilingual dictionaries. Students are far more likely to look up words like “analyze,” “exception,” “subsequent,” or other typical academic words than they will to look up words they’re being tested on. Indeed, students recognize that they sacrifice valuable exam time if they use a dictionary, but the same students have found the occasional dictionary search for general academic expressions to be quite useful. Moreover, if they don’t know what a discipline-specific term, such as “oxidation” or “habeas corpus,” means in their native language, a mere translation from their native language wouldn’t help them anyway. Thus, the chances for abuse of the dictionary-use privilege are slim.

6. Allow students to tape-record your lectures. This strategy should also be available to native English speakers who simply require time to absorb information and fill in sketchy notes.

7. Put lecture notes, charts, visual aids, course outlines, and details of writing assignments and projects on Blackboard.

8. Pair a native English-speaking student to study with, and perhaps take notes for, a nonnative English speaker in the same class. This strategy benefits the native-speaking “tutors” as well because they, too, are trying to synthesize and remember new ideas.

9. Write an outline on the board or provide another visual means of understanding how the lecture or class period is organized. Nonnative speakers often miss intonational, syntactic and lexical cues, such as stress on particular words to highlight a contrast or phrases such as “now what you don’t want is . . .” which help native English-speaking listeners identify important points or relations between points.

10. Allow take-home exams or create group exams for all students. With the latter, students collaborate as teams, with each member of the team responsible for a different set of material.

11. Periodically throughout the semester, invite students to register concerns or ask questions about the class. This can be a blanket invitation.

12. Be willing to offer extra explanations occasionally or offer review sessions before exams.
13. Tape-record and listen to your own lectures occasionally. Ask a committee of second language learners to talk with you about phrases or speech patterns they might find difficult. A little awareness goes a long way.

14. Assign all students to study groups or strongly encourage them to form their own. Study-group facilitators are available through the Gateway Center.

DEPARTMENT-LEVEL STRATEGIES

Tutoring/Mentoring:

1. Assign a peer advisor/mentor to each incoming ESL student in your department. These mentors may be people with the same ethnic/cultural/language background or they may be any patient, interested student who is majoring in that field. The mentor would simply be there to help the student navigate program requirements.

2. Arrange for majors in your department to serve as tutors for nonnative speakers in lower-division classes. ESL specialists can provide assistance and training for such discipline-specific tutors. As one student says, “We need help on most of the classes and not just the English classes.”

3. Offer internship credit for discipline-specific tutoring.

Other suggestions:

1. Select a faculty member to be a liaison to the English Language Support Program. That person would attend ESL advisory committee meetings and learn about the kinds of English language support currently available. He or she would also serve as an advocate or advisor for nonnative English-speaking majors.

2. Offer ESL-only or balanced, cross-cultural sections of large core courses. The departments of communication and English have offered such sections with great success.

3. Encourage language diversity training among faculty in your department. The English Language Support Program periodically offers workshops on working with nonnative English speakers.
4. Encourage faculty to offer online or hybrid sections of a course. These are particularly useful for giving students time to formulate answers to discussion questions.

5. Consider linking an introductory level core course to an ESL course or an English 101 course. The students would be required to take both courses concurrently. Talk to the coordinator of the English Language Support Programs about such team-teaching or learning community possibilities, which are successful in other institutions but which we do not yet have at Boise State University.

NOTES

1 For a discussion of the role of such exclusionary ideologies in second-language composition, see Sarah Benesch’s work, Critical English for Academic Purposes. Alistair Pennycook’s English and the Discourses of Colonialism makes a similar call for critical examination of power relations in English language teaching around the world.

2 See also the work of Yuet-Sim D. Chiang and Mary Schmida, R.B. LePage and Andréé Tabouret-Keller, Diane Belcher and Ulla Connor, Braj Kachru, and Rajendra Singh.

3 For further discussions of this separation, see Alice Roy, Jessica Williams, and George Braine (“ESL Students”).

4 The COMPASS, developed by the American College Testing Program (ACT), is a computerized, indirect assessment instrument that asks students to revise and edit sentences in a paragraph provided to them (http://www.act.org/compass/). The Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency (MTELP) is a retired component of what is currently the Michigan English Language Assessment Battery (MELAB). Both the MTELP and the MELAB were developed by the University of Michigan’s English Language Institute (http://www.lsa.umich.edu/eli). For a discussion of important issues in and options for ESL writing placement, see Deborah Crusan’s “An Assessment of ESL Writing Placement Assessment.”

5 The version of the Michigan Test that we use is a multiple-choice test that has no writing component. Because of the empathy and generosity of the assessment center director, however, Michigan Test-takers are also asked to write a forty-five-minute essay, which has become our primary, and more effective, basis for placement.

6 We do have a federal grant-funded College Assistant Migrant Program (CAMP), which provides significant support (advising, tutoring, and frequent progress reports) for children of migrant farm workers. However, I have not yet been able to determine what percentage of CAMP students identify themselves as nonnative English speakers or what percentage of Boise State University’s nonnative English speakers are CAMP students.
7 I discuss the linguistic concept of markedness as it relates to nonnative English speakers is discussed more thoroughly in “Racializing the Nonnative English Speaker”).

8 For a description of an innovative program at the University of Rhode Island, which trains peer tutors in working with second language learners, see Lynne Ronesi’s “Training Undergraduates to Support ESL Classmates: The English Language Fellows Program.”

9 The document in the appendix is a slightly modified version of what our program made available to faculty at our institution.

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Geography Lessons, Bridge-Building, and Second Language Writers

Talinn Phillips, Candace Stewart, and Robert D. Stewart

Our university sits in rural southeastern Ohio, not far from the Ohio River. The river forms the border between Ohio and West Virginia to the south, and farther west, between Ohio and Kentucky. Driving across the border, one quickly notices just how many bridges span the Ohio River. Towns and cities are scattered all along the border, and even the small towns typically have at least two bridges. Residents here would never dream of building just one bridge to get people from Ohio to West Virginia, since one bridge could never hope to meet everyone’s needs. We all start from different locations, move to various destinations, and we all plan a unique set of stops along the way—or none at all. A single bridge for a region clearly can’t do the job of moving people where they need and want to go. Though this special issue of WPA is devoted to thinking about one particular bridge—one dedicated to integrating second language perspectives and writers into mainstream writing programs—our present institutional contexts and positionings do not allow us to build that bridge yet, even though we strongly agree that all mainstream composition programs need them.

We begin our discussion of second language writers with this metaphor of bridges as a way to explore our institutional history and review current outcomes of what Paul Kei Matsuda terms the “disciplinary division of labor” (“Composition” 700), or the tacit decision of mainstream composition studies and Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) to teach separate populations of writing students. At our institution this division has, for the past forty years, provided second language writers with only one heavily-traveled language bridge.

However, as our opening metaphor suggests, since one bridge rarely does the job of moving populations to and from different places along their desired journeys, and since our university has shown us how a lack of bridges can have negative consequences for our second language writers, we have
chosen to act without formal institutional power or resources, while remaining within the boundaries of our own institutional locations. This choice has meant that we could envision and implement certain programs and activities as long as we stayed within our professional spaces; it also meant that we have necessarily become creative and resourceful in tapping into our own professional networks across campus in order to build these bridges for our second language writers.

These professional networks emerge from and reach into many spaces on campus; simultaneously, they converge in productive ways. Candace Stewart holds a PhD in rhetoric and composition and is an experienced teacher of native-English speaker (NES) writers; she also holds the position of writing center coordinator at our institution. Before taking the writing center position seven years ago, she was an instructor in the English department, with substantial experience in teaching writing courses at the first-year and junior-year levels. In her position as the writing center coordinator, she is not a member of the English department faculty, although she regularly teaches writing courses as adjunct faculty. However, the writing center’s administrative home is the Center for Writing Excellence, a WAC unit overseen by a campus WPA who is also a tenured English department faculty member. While the English department is the decision-making body overseeing first-year writing program curricula, the department works closely with this WAC WPA who has institutional oversight of first-year and junior-level writing curricula. As the full-time writing center coordinator with close scholarly and pedagogical ties to the English department, Candace works closely with this campus WPA.

Candace finds that her own WPA work, which is also situated outside an academic department, allows her to administer the writing center in the full theoretical, rhetorical, scholarly, and professional senses of a writing program administrator. Furthermore, the writing center’s WAC focus helps her to stay involved in the theoretical trajectories and challenges of rhetoric and composition and of writing program administration, and her close ties to the English department have resulted in productive collaborations. Her institutional power, what there is of it, lies within the boundaries of her writing center location and with professional and personal ties she has made with other academic units. Robert Stewart and Talinn Phillips are graduate students with little formal institutional power at all. Robert, a master’s student in our TESOL program, has taught second language writing in the university’s English language program. Talinn, a doctoral student in rhetoric and composition, teaches NES writing and has completed a master’s degree in our university’s TESOL program. Additionally, both have taught ESL and tutored second language writers in our university’s writing center.
Our varied perspectives have helped us identify and use the bridges we see and cross in our concern for second language writing instruction. But because the uneven landscape of our current positions does not give us the formal power to build a bridge into the first-year composition course, we have instead chosen to assess and access the power we do have and then act on behalf of second language writers in whatever ways we can. We have had to re-perceive existing programs that might be more productively understood as bridges, and we have had to be realistic about the bridges we can build. This situation is certainly less than satisfying at times, but we suspect that other WPAs, after examining their own institutional contexts, might find themselves in comparable situations; territorial, financial, historical, and pedagogical issues often make bridge-building more complicated than any of us first thought. What we have to offer, then, is perhaps more of a heuristic—a way for WPAs to examine their institutions’ relationships to second language writers, to assess these writers’ number, location, and the strength of existing bridges, and then to channel their administrative energies into building bridges accordingly.

In the following section, we review the broader historical framework of Matsuda’s “disciplinary division of labor” (1999), connecting his research to our own local histories, conditions, and consequences. We then address the ways in which current programs can be conceived as productive bridges for our second language writers and can be more fully explored as sites for pedagogical exchanges in the teaching of writing. We end by emphasizing how other bridges can productively emerge through this review, helping us to realize the goal of several differently placed and differently oriented bridges on our campus.

**Bridging Institutional Histories**

Matsuda’s 1999 historical study, “Composition Studies and ESL Writing: A Disciplinary Division of Labor,” suggests that, in the 1960s, mainstream composition studies essentially, though perhaps unintentionally, signed over responsibility for second language writing instruction to TESOL specialists. Matsuda suggests that because TESOL and mainstream composition teachers were becoming professionalized at roughly the same time, TESOL specialists argued that they were better qualified to teach second language writers. Mainstream composition teachers, who typically had no training in second language writing pedagogy, agreed. And so, the institutional labor of teaching writing became divided: teaching and research in mainstream composition studies has predominantly focused on NES writers (even though
second language writers are frequently present in mainstream courses), while teaching and research in second language writing has been predominantly addressed by TESOL specialists.

Matsuda’s findings in that 1999 study on these departmental, theoretical, and practical divides align almost perfectly with our institutional history. From interviews with our English language program’s founder and current instructors, we have learned that in 1967, Robert Dakin, the director of our newly founded intensive English program, was part of a committee whose purpose was reviewing the state of writing instruction at our university (Dakin). As a PhD with extensive classroom experience and training in both NES and second language writing pedagogy, Dakin was probably the most qualified person on the committee. At that time, we had no WAC program and the director of composition was a new position filled by literature specialists—because there were no other options. It would be fifteen years before we had a faculty member who specialized in rhetoric and composition and even longer before our rhetoric and composition graduate programs were developed (Pytlik). Thus, Dakin, as the new English language program director, was likely the university’s sole writing specialist at the time. When the committee had completed its work, its members made a key recommendation at Dakin’s urging: Provide separate writing courses taught by TESOL-trained faculty for second language writers (Dakin).

The two programs continue to follow this 1967 recommendation for first-year writing courses: NES writers are taught in the English department, while second language writers are taught by the English language program’s faculty, across the street in a separate building that also houses the master’s degree for the TESOL program (MA TESOL)—a fact which emphasizes the programs’ geographical isolation from each other. Clearly, the 1967 decision put into place the architecture for unintended, but nevertheless influential, administrative, pedagogical, and curricular walls where the first-year writing course is concerned. This decades-old decision has had a range of consequences for our second language students: For the first-year course, second language writers are required to enroll in designated sections that the English language program is only able to offer once or twice a year. The scarcity of class offerings sometimes makes it difficult for students to enroll in the course. However, for their junior-level advanced composition course, second language writers are mainstreamed into writing courses that are taught in the English department by instructors who frequently lack any pedagogical training in second language writing. The curricular goals of these junior-level classes are tied to those of the NES form of the first-year course, not the second language form. While our goal here is not to judge the current situation, we do want to note that this system causes complica-
tions for both the second language writers who must be mainstreamed into their junior-level courses, and for the instructors who are often unprepared to work with this group of writers.

It is important to note that compartmentalization of writing instruction through these types of designated second language writer sections is not categorically harmful to second language writers. Thoughtfully planned and carried out, such courses can be a productive option for many students (Silva, “Examination” 40) and also for the programs that sustain them, as described in George Braine’s “Starting ESL Classes in Freshman Writing Programs” (1994). In this article, Braine reviews the scope and range of second language writing instruction and student placement and provides descriptions of three well known options for placing second language writers. They may get placed into “[. . .] those [first-year courses] dominated by native speakers (mainstreaming), those for [NES] basic writers, or those designed especially for ESL students” (22). Braine’s argument for separate writing courses within his English department at the University of South Alabama emerges from the complicated effects of mainstreaming for both second language writers and for their teachers, who were not trained to work with second language populations (22–23). The situation was resolved, according to Braine, by creating “special classes in freshman writing for ESL students” (23). That is, the department created sheltered courses run by the English department and taught by instructors who had completed workshops focusing on second language writers. Clearly, the complicated dynamic of second language writers’ specific needs combined with untrained instructors encourages some writing programs to establish separate writing courses for their second language writers. Braine’s solution creates a different space within composition studies for second language writers: the integration of the second language course into the writing program offers another way of approaching such courses, allowing writing programs to be involved in second language writing courses and pedagogical development.

Good arguments against sustaining separate writing spaces nevertheless exist, and Tony Silva extends the possibilities with an option called “cross cultural composition” in his “An Examination of Writing Program Administrators’ Options for the Placement of ESL Students in First Year Writing Classes.” Silva describes this option as “first-year writing classes designed to include more or less equal numbers of ESL and NES students. The goal in such arrangements is to meet the instructional needs of both groups, and, as a dividend, to foster crosscultural understanding, communication, and collaboration” (40). This type of course offers a theoretically and pedagogically grounded approach to the complicated dynamic of having NES and second language writers in a single first-year writing section, for teach-
ers have the opportunity to incorporate students’ cultural, rhetorical, and linguistic diversity into their courses. But the course also depends on having experienced and well-trained WPAs who have instructional resources—institutional, departmental, pedagogical, and developmental—to make the case for this addition to the writing program and to maintain it.

What if WPAs do not have these resources? How do they choose the most appropriate placement option for second language writers at their institutions? Silva’s later work, “On the Ethical Treatment of ESL Writers,” illuminates this issue by considering the issue of placement within the broader perspective of what constitutes fair and ethical treatment of second language writers. He argues that “there are four basic ways in which ESL writers need to be respected: they need to be (a) understood, (b) placed in suitable learning contexts, (c) provided with appropriate instruction, and (d) evaluated fairly” (359). Regarding placement, perhaps the best guide, then, is this: second language writers have varied abilities and varied needs, so instructors must treat second language writers ethically by giving them as many placement options as possible within institutional constraints (see also CCCC Committee; Silva, “Examination”; Silva, “Ethical”).

We find Silva’s work and the “CCCC Statement on Second language writing and Writers” to be valuable tools for evaluating our placement practices; these guidelines show that our institution does not measure up as well as we would like. As instructors, we see that we have divides to bridge on behalf of our student writers. Yet we are not institutionally positioned to be able to increase placement options for our students. Given our situation, we have looked for other places to build bridges. Many such possibilities exist that are not simply “substitutes” for additional placement options, but valuable, even essential, bridges in their own right. These bridges carry the potential for the English Department, MA TESOL program, and English language program to move toward less stringently compartmentalized teacher education, curricula, and programming while examining the best ways to support our second language writers. We begin the next section by addressing what we have reconceived as a pre-existing and highly used bridge: the student writing center. It is a crucial bridge for second language writers in addition to being a site of convergence for the graduate students who both tutor in the writing center and teach/study the teaching of writing in the English or TESOL graduate programs. We then address small steps being taken to identify and build other bridges, so that both current faculty across the curriculum and future writing faculty have a grounding in second language acquisition and writing pedagogy, but with the understanding that these other bridges have been developed out of relationships forged through and in the writing center. The development of these new bridges depend on
the fact that there is already a geographically and academically centered support site working to bridge the multiple academic, cultural, linguistic, pedagogical, and rhetorical divides for our second language writers: our student writing center.

Bridging Many Divides: The Student Writing Center as Campus Convergence

For us, the writing center has been our convergence point, the site of our bridge, as we negotiate the historical divide between TESOL and the English department at our institution. We have come to see the writing center as an intersection between the otherwise divided writing pedagogies at our institution, for both second language writers and for instructors trying to develop teaching and research expertise in second language writing. The writing center provides a third site—a site which, unlike the TESOL or English departments, is already cross-disciplinary—for discussion and experimentation in second language writing. At our university, then, we have envisioned and worked toward implementing the idea of the writing center as the one site where second language writing pedagogy and practice is foregrounded; it’s the one site where we have the opportunity to help move second language writing out of the disciplinary and institutional margins.

Second language writers currently make up more than 50% of our writing center population; that statistic implies that we must always be alert for useful strategies for working with second language writers. Fortunately, even a brief literature review of second language writers in tandem with writing centers provides substantial resources for implementing productive practices with second language writers. Two of the most recent publications are *ESL Writers: A Guide for Writing Center Tutors* (2004), edited by Shanti Bruce and Ben Rafoth, and a special writing-center issue of the *Journal of Second Language Writing* (2004), edited by Jessica Williams and Carol Severino. The Bruce and Rafoth collection covers global issues in working with second language writers (cultural and rhetorical differences), and local or practical issues for provoking and expanding writing center perspectives on second language instruction. The JSLW special issue includes a wide range of research, including Williams and Severino’s bibliographic essay, which reviews the scope of research on writing centers and second language writers from 1986 to the present, and identifies several new directions in writing center research. Those new research paths include the rethinking of nondirective approaches with second language writers, investigating the dynamics of second language tutorials, and looking for connections between writing center pedagogy and research in second language acquisition (167–9). These two very recent publications point to the crucial nature and identity of the
writing center; in many institutional settings it is a lifeline for second language writers as they make their way across campus into diverse disciplinary settings.

However, Sharon A. Myers’s essay is one of the first that utilizes Matsuda’s division of labor perspective to articulate the major differences needed in institutional and writing center pedagogies and practices. Matsuda deconstructs the notion “that second language writing can be broken down neatly into a linguistic component and a writing component and that the linguistic problems will disappear after some additional instruction in remedial language courses” (qtd. in Myers 52). These comments by Matsuda were originally directed toward the “professional disjunction” he observed between English department writing specialists and second language writing specialists. Yet his comments encourage a reconsideration of current writing center pedagogy and practices concerning second language writers. We began such a reconsideration in 2001, when our university’s writing center built relationships with some of the TESOL department’s graduate students. Although these graduate students were not teaching second language students in the TESOL program, they brought second language perspectives into the writing-center conversation. Our process in rethinking these practices emerged in a much more heightened way when Robert joined the writing center staff in 2005. As a writing instructor trained by the English language program, a writing center tutor, and teacher of ESL, Robert’s experiences in his second language classroom and his experiences in our writing center prompted our thinking to suggest we amend our philosophies even more.

Robert agrees with Sharon Myers, who notes that writing center personnel tend to see current writing center philosophy, to the extent that the philosophy is constructed around Western notions of rhetorical conventions and the needs of American students, as a philosophy that should work for second language writers as well. This philosophical and rhetorical construct can easily create a tension in this or any center between American writing center theories and practices—theories and practices which have resulted and been adapted from research on writing and experience in writing courses—and second language writers’ “desire for sentence-level interventions from their tutors” (Myers 51). While writing center pedagogues have occasionally tried to distance themselves from current composition theory and practice, an intricate theoretical and practical dynamic does exist between writing center pedagogies and practices and composition studies’ pedagogies and practices (Hobson 176). And because many writing programs in English departments have long-critiqued current-traditional rhetoric and its accompanying writ-
ing practices, a number of writing centers have followed suit, thus creating pedagogical and theoretical gaps that have consequences for writing center populations who have varying writing needs (Blau and Hall 25).

Fortunately, much recent writing center scholarship has addressed these consequences in the hope that writing center pedagogies might “strike a balance between providing L2 writers with the information and guidance they sorely need and the broadly accepted writing center philosophy that writers should take and maintain ownership of their own texts” (Williams and Severino 166). In either case, whether writing centers align themselves with composition studies’ theory and practice or look for ways to manage the diverse populations using the writing center, the relationship between writing center pedagogy and composition pedagogy still exists.

In contrast, such a dynamic has historically been absent between writing centers and TESOL departments, highlighting how very separate the NES writing programs and second language writing programs often are. Little research exists on the relationship between TESOL programs and writing centers, though a recent article in the special issue of JSLW mentioned earlier does make a connection between the Department of Applied Linguistics and ESL at Georgia State University and writing center work. Sara Cushing Weigle and Gayle L. Nelson’s collaborative essay, “Novice Tutors and Their ESL Tutees: Three Case Studies of Tutor Roles and Perceptions of Tutorial Success,” offers the results of a study looking at the difference a tutorial context makes with second language writers. Weigle and Nelson argue for a tutorial context that is neither a peer-tutoring-based campus writing center nor a “curriculum-based tutoring context” (205), but one that, instead, pairs graduate students enrolled in a course called “Issues in Second Language (L2) Writing” with second language writers. While the information included in this essay offers rich possibilities for writing center work, the study is based on tutorial work outside of the campus writing center. Given the limited number of studies involving ESL specialists and linguistics scholars, Williams and Severino call for further and more extended research on second language writers in the writing center. They suggest that “WC professionals should consider collaborating with researchers” in other disciplines, including “linguistics and L2 acquisition” (170), and they cite a handful of studies that point to the possibility of “even closer connections between WC and L2 acquisition research” (169). Such collaborations will depend on local histories and bridges imagined and built at particular institutional locations. In our experience, the writing center’s relationship with the English language program has been at best uneven. Sometimes English language program instructors encourage their students to work with the writing center staff, while other instructors prefer that their students work only with the
instructors themselves. In either case, the lack of any substantial relationship between the English language program and the writing center presents yet another divide for second language writers.

Despite the existence of both pedagogical and programmatic gaps, many second language writers continue to use writing centers and to find them a valuable academic support (see Powers and Nelson). Part of a writing center’s value comes from its functioning as both a cultural and a rhetorical bridge (Kennedy 32–33) where writing center tutors and administrators can pay more attention to second language writers’ needs while those writers move in and out of various culturally- and rhetorically-oriented disciplines. Further, Eric Hobson emphasizes that second language writers continue to frequent writing centers in spite of pedagogically-oriented gaps in practice because writing centers most often are not linked exclusively to composition sequences, [therefore] their staff have [sic] opportunities to maintain longer relationships with students and thus engage in more longitudinal writing instruction that is, ideally, more extensive and of a higher order than most instructors can offer within the framework of [finite] writing courses. (177)

Certainly, the potential to maintain such extensive relationships with second language writers is more appealing than a one-quarter or one-semester writing class. The chance to work consistently with a well trained and compassionate tutor can offer second language writers substantial writing support.

We saw indications of these reported phenomena—Myers’s gap, Kennedy’s cultural-rhetorical emphasis, and Hobson’s longitudinal focus—first-hand when Robert began incorporating some of his classroom teaching strategies into his tutoring interactions. Working with the same second language student twice a week for eleven weeks, he reported that the student improved her writing from nearly unreadable prose to high academic English. He surmised that this success emerged from several factors. For example, he insisted that she learn from her own mistakes and from his corrections, thus reducing her mistakes in article usage from twenty or more per page to fewer than five per page (largely because of the number of sessions). He also developed a set of templates for her to use when writing article reviews; these templates outlined rhetorical patterns and conventions she might follow, thereby addressing shifts in cultural and rhetorical differences. Additionally, the student worked very hard, received ample praise from her classroom teacher, and continued support from one tutor. In sum, Robert
believes that a combination of student persistence, intrinsic desire, a long-term relationship, and positive feedback created the sustained network of internal and external support that this writer needed to become successful.

Though Robert’s work with this student displays the kind of commitment and focus that writing center administrators always hope for from their staffs, we can see that his approach was in no way a nondirective or hands-off-the-text approach of the type that writing center philosophies have often stressed. He combined an emphasis on reducing surface features that detracted from the student’s writing with practice on the kinds of rhetorical patterns and conventions that faculty expect to see in academic writing. In both cases, he had to give clear directions, provide many examples for the student to imitate, and stay focused on the specific writing issues that he felt the two of them could address.

In following this plan, Robert was able to help the student feel successful—and feel successful himself as a tutor—because they both had a clear sense of the issues that were causing problems and because both could see the progress she was making in the technical and conceptual aspects of language learning. After reflecting on his success with this particular student and on our more general writing center experiences with second language writers, we have now given ourselves permission to integrate whatever pedagogical practices and rhetorical strategies we need when working with our second language writers—what Blau and Hall refers to as “guilt-free tutoring” (41). Our previous one-size-fits-all approach was clearly not working, given the array of academic, cultural, linguistic, personal, and rhetorical backgrounds that second language writers brought, and typically bring, with them. Our assumptions about writing theory and practice have had to change according to student needs.

Since change is what we are after, this section reviews and reflects on how best to begin thinking about the role of the writing programs (English, MA TESOL, English language program, and the writing center) in preparing future faculty for working with second language writers. As we consider the effects of the disciplinary division of labor, we often focus more intensely on the material second language writer: the students in our classes and writing centers right now, today, who are being underserved as a result of the disciplinary division of labor. Yet if we focus too intensely on these material second language writers and their immediate needs, then the division will never be bridged, for the work of bridge-building requires many workers on many campuses. The division not only separates second language writers from the writing support they need, but it also prevents future bridge builders from developing the knowledge and expertise required to continue the
effort of bridging the divide. Thus we have not only a division of labor, but a division of laborers, and we cannot bridge the first divide unless we also bridge the second.

**Bridging Toward the Future: Preparing Future Faculty**

In his 1998 article, “Situating ESL Writing in a Cross-Disciplinary Context,” Paul Matsuda began identifying many of the markers of what he later termed the “disciplinary division of labor”—especially the ways in which division at the departmental level hampers the work of future bridge builders in graduate programs. Matsuda notes that in TESOL/English language programs, the last writing course that the teachers had typically taken was first-year writing (Reid ctd. in Matsuda, “Situating” 103). The writing pedagogy component of their graduate programs was, at best, a combined reading and writing methods course (Palmer ctd. in Matsuda, “Situating,” 103). In English departments, he notes that most graduate students received no preparation at all for teaching second language writers (Brown, Meyer, and Enos ctd. in Matsuda, “Situating” 102).

Our university unfortunately also embodies these markers of the divide, as we exactly match the teacher-training profiles Matsuda identifies. While our English department, like many others, has ongoing and rigorous teaching-associate preparation in place, until last year it had never offered these TAs any preparation for teaching second language writers, despite the fact that second language writers must take the advanced composition courses that these TAs often teach. For our purposes, it is also important to note that the vast majority of English faculty has also had neither training nor exposure to teaching second language writers.

This situation improved slightly in 2005, when new TAs took part in an afternoon workshop on second language writing as part of their second quarter pedagogy course. The course was taught by Candace, who invited Talinn into the course to provide the TAs with a conceptual introduction to how and where mainstream writing and second language writing converge and diverge on our campus and in the larger fields of TESOL and composition studies. Talinn also offered information to help the TAs gain a rudimentary understanding of key principles from second language acquisition and contrastive rhetoric research. While one class period obviously could not provide thorough teaching preparation, at its end, these new teachers gained at least some understanding of the field of second language writing during the first months of their teaching careers. They will graduate from the English department’s graduate program with an awareness of what is necessary to teach second language writers and with resources to draw on whenever second language writers are a part of their classrooms.
Across the street in the MA TESOL department, improvements have been made in the preparation that TAs receive to teach second language writing. In the last two years the faculty has moved from covering writing pedagogy in two weeks for all ages, purposes, and skill levels to requiring the combined reading and writing pedagogy course that Palmer’s survey described (Palmer ctd. in Matsuda, “Situating,” 103). Perhaps these small changes in the English and MA TESOL departments will pique graduate students’ interest in second language writing, encouraging them to pursue its teaching more fully and thereby to address another consequence of the existing divide: the lack of second language writing specialists.

Dwight Atkinson, in a 2000 colloquium article on the future of second language writing, argues that second language writing is “dying before our eyes” (Santos et al. 2) because of the scarcity of its members teaching in doctoral degree-granting institutions and therefore the scarcity of experts mentoring new doctoral students. Yet this lack of specialists in doctoral-granting universities is only one manifestation of the broader issue, for second language writing does not yet have “a disciplinary space to discuss the status of ESL writing in the wider context, as well as a way of influencing non-ESL writing specialists in both disciplines” (Matsuda, “Situating” 111). Second language writing instruction is still often embedded in TESOL (e.g. English language) programs and, because it is so tucked away, has yet to make definitive inroads into both compositionists’ consciousnesses and composition programs. Thus a second language writing specialist must be conversant in and have more than a working knowledge of three different fields, a goal that even the most enterprising and dedicated graduate student will find difficult to achieve if she is allowed access only to one specialty. Cross-disciplinary work—and engaging our profession’s future faculty in that work—is therefore vital to the future of second language writing. Graduate students need a site where they can teach and research; because so few institutions already have structures in place for that, it is essential that writing program administrators help to find or create sites where we can bridge the division of laborers as we bridge the division of labor.

We believe that the writing center is one of these sites. Graduate student instructors from the English, MA TESOL, and English language programs can build their pedagogical expertise, experiment with strategies, and lay the groundwork for their future lives as educators and instructors who have the knowledge-base and practical experience to work with second language writers wherever they go. The writing center has already been a convergence site for Robert and Talinn, and it is a site for building relationships with other instructors across campus. And so we imagine a future in which our graduate instructors find themselves with more options for pedagogical training,
first in and through the writing center, and then in and through the experience they take back to their own departments. The writing center’s role as a pedagogically centralized site for second language writers and writing pedagogy is crucial for changing assumptions about second language writers and about second language writing instruction, both now and in the future.

**Bridging across the Curriculum: WAC Initiatives and Faculty Development**

The value of bridges built across campus for second language writers will always be limited if we have not yet done the hard work of changing the assumptions disciplinary faculty hold towards second language writers. These faculty are frequently unprepared for working with the writing of second language students, and, as we have seen from frantic calls to the writing center, have been frustrated consistently by the situations they encounter in their classrooms with their second language students. Fortunately, because of a growing network of concern emerging from our WAC program and the writing center, we have envisioned another bridge site to work on; we now have embodied theoretical knowledge and practical pedagogical experiences that are useful when reaching out to disciplinary faculty.

Last winter Talinn approached our campus’s WAC director about offering a faculty workshop on second language writing. Because our WAC director had been trying to learn more about the writing philosophies and instruction in our institution’s English language program, the director was very supportive of the workshop concept and willing to fund it. Talinn, as a representative of the writing center who was equipped with pedagogical knowledge of both second language and NES writing, used her relationships with the MA TESOL department and English language program to approach some of these faculty members about facilitating the workshop along with Talinn. There had been no cross-program discussions of writing pedagogy for a number of years, and the WAC director’s perception was that such discussions would be somewhat politically fraught. Talinn therefore approached these particular faculty members primarily on a personal level. She knew of their existing interest and experience in second language writing pedagogy and selected them with the hope that they would be willing to discuss the range of philosophies and pedagogies of writing.

The workshop was attended by more than a dozen faculty members in programs ranging from social work to engineering who learned and developed various strategies for understanding and responding to second language writers. These strategies included identifying patterns of error, articulating different cultures’ ideas of textual ownership, and describing the possibilities of contrastive rhetoric (see Casanave). The workshop was structured so
that participants first spent time reflecting on their own experiences with being second language writers (for instance, when taking foreign-language courses in high school or college) and then on their experiences as teachers of second language writers. Later, the participants interviewed several second language graduate writers to learn more about the unique challenges the students faced in developing their writing abilities in a second language. All of these students were successful writers and international students with different first-language backgrounds.

During the final portion of the workshop, participants developed strategies for teaching second language writers more effectively based on everything they had heard, learned, and discovered that day. In a brainstorming session, participants offered ideas for addressing a number of second language writing issues, including improving students’ vocabularies (e.g., suggest a discipline-specific dictionary to teach students related terms; teach specific collocations; use closed captioning on the TV), strengthening organizational structure (e.g., ask writers to outline “in reverse” as a means of identifying organizational problems, offer feedback on early drafts, provide model papers and rubrics), and increasing students’ access to (and the number of) institutional resources (e.g. advocate by asking university administration to fund graduate writing courses, form a voluntary buddy system among students for writing support). Faculty, we discovered that day, were excited to have a forum to discuss second language writing and were eager to implement the ideas from the workshop. Furthermore, the core of advocates for second language writers and for the institutional resources to support them has now doubled.

Not only was this the first time our university had offered a WAC faculty-development seminar specifically devoted to second language writing, but it was also the first time in forty years that people from across the TESOL/English divide have worked together to improve second language writing instruction on our campus. As we had hoped, as a result of the workshop, other disciplinary faculty members now seem more interested in and committed to improving the institution’s environment for second language writers. We now also have a bridge that links the WAC program, the English department, and the writing center directly with the TESOL department and the English language program—even if only a rope bridge. We are excited because the collaboration is continuing, with copresenters working together on conference presentations and planning to develop another workshop.

As exciting as this workshop was and as excited as we are about the possibilities for more of these experiences, we want to emphasize that the workshop would not have been a possibility if our university had not already
had an established and thriving WAC-based writing center. All the faculty workshops in the world could not, on their own, address the varying levels of writing competencies among the large numbers of second language writers on our campus; the writing-center context for the workshop was crucial. This workshop emerged from an atmosphere of support for second language writers that has been building over the last several years. During these years, through her work in the writing center, Candace formed relationships with faculty in several departments, including the College of Education, the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, the School of Telecommunications, and our Center for International Studies, where the second language populations are fairly large and the support for writers is necessarily crucial.

Because the writing center is already well known on campus as a central resource for working with second language writers, faculty and staff frequently call the writing center asking for help with individual students, ordering materials and information for their students, and requesting presentations and workshops to be provided in their courses. We have developed workshops for second language writers focusing on the writing process, on components of particular genres such as summary and analysis, and on American rhetorical patterns and expectations for academic writing because we have seen those expectations surface consistently in the writing assignments brought to the writing center. In all this, it is important for us to remember that none of these situations—faculty workshops, the writing center as second language resource, or movement toward developing more substantial conversations campus-wide about second language writing instruction—exists in a vacuum, and that they are already participating in a reciprocal dynamic, one that provides energy for creating space for and implementing change.

**Two- (or more) Lane Bridges**

We have suggested here that not only do second language writers need bridges at many sites across the university, but that the planning and construction of these bridges depend upon the local context. At the university, the continuing consequences of the institution’s 1967 decision to divide the “labor” of writing instruction, combined with our positions of one nonfaculty administrator and two graduate students, inhibit any immediate construction of a bridge directly into the English department’s first-year writing program. So while we continue to be concerned about the ethical treatment of our second language writers across the university (see Silva, “Ethical”), we believe we can be more effective in the present and work toward building better bridges in the future by focusing our current energies
at these three bridge sites across the university. These sites are places of convergence at which the networks and collaborations we have developed individually can come together to generate larger networks and collaborations. Further, we believe that no matter what degree of integration occurs between second language writers and mainstream programs, these writers will always need the support of additional bridges across the curriculum. Any institution’s writing center is a vital and solid bridge because it not only supports the second language writers themselves, but serves as another, sometimes better, site where graduate students can study second language writing and work out pedagogical strategies. Finally, in addition to second language writers, the disciplines of composition and TESOL will benefit from the act of preparing new construction workers. Current and future faculty, especially those graduate students who are being educated in issues of second language writing, will then be prepared to bring this perspective into the new contexts they create for teaching, learning, and research.

Notes

1 A more detailed description of how this option actually works is offered in a later article by Matsuda and Silva, “Cross-Cultural Composition: Mediated Integration of U.S. and International Students” (1999).

2 No formal research process was involved.

Works Cited


Review


Kate Mangelsdorf

For many years, in my teaching and scholarship, I have bridged the worlds of first language (L1) and second language (L2) writing, two worlds that are connected in significant ways. Both L1 and L2 writing deal with language, context, audience, cognition, materiality, and power. Both L1 and L2 writing specialists have become more aware of the political implications of teaching English, a language of colonialism. So closely connected are these fields that the terms “first language” and “second language” have limited significance: because many students speak several dialects and languages, there’s no clear way to determine which language is learned first. In many cases administrators decide to use the labels of “first language” and “second language” for the sake of convenience rather than for accuracy.

Historically, second language writing researchers have drawn on L1 composition theories. Scholars such as Vivian Zamel and Ann Raimes began to study L2 writing, in particular, process writing, more than two decades ago. Though second language writing scholarship has progressed a great deal since then, many L2 researchers still focus on topics originally discussed regarding L1, such as collaborative writing, peer reviews, and responding to student writing. In contrast, L1 composition scholars have seldom looked to L2 writing research as a resource, despite the growing number of students (usually called Generation 1.5) who graduate from United States high schools with multilingual literacies.

Christine Pearson Casanave’s *Controversies in Second Language Writing: Dilemmas and Decisions in Research and Instruction* is an excellent resource for L1 teachers, scholars, and administrators who want to learn how L2 writing research can inform their classrooms and programs. Though the primary aim of the book is “to help L2 writing teachers make informed decisions in their writing classes and build a knowledge base for conducting research on L2 writing” (1), the book is equally valuable to L1 writing specialists, who
will find that Casanave’s clear, comprehensive treatment of pedagogical and research issues can shed light on the complexities of teaching writing and administering programs with multilingual students.

Casanave focuses on five broad topics: contrastive rhetoric, “paths to improvement” (i.e., fluency and accuracy, process and product, and error correction), assessment, “interaction” (i.e., issues related to audience and plagiarism), and politics and ideology. (Though she doesn’t directly say so, her reliance on “controversies” is clearly influenced by Elbow’s *Embracing Contraries.*) Her approach to these controversies is heuristic. Rather than simply relate the different views researchers have developed on these topics, she encourages her readers to reflect about the research by examining their own assumptions and teaching contexts. In the first chapter of the book, she prompts teachers to become self-reflective by examining their own writing experiences, their preferred teaching and learning styles, and the pedagogical theories that have influenced them. She advises teachers to develop a “coherent and internally consistent belief system” for teaching writing that will evolve throughout their teaching careers (15). In this way she engenders in her audience a sense of agency essential to self-reflection and change.

Because of her emphasis on letting teachers take their own positions on these issues, Casanave strives to present all sides of the controversies she describes. Throughout the book she uses the same systematic approach. At the beginning of each chapter she presents several quotations from L1 and L2 scholars, showing different sides to a particular issue; for example, in the chapter on commentary on students’ texts, she gives quotations from Peter Elbow and David Bartholomae as well as L2 scholars Ilona Leki and John Truscott. After presenting several questions to introduce the topic, she reviews seminal research and connects it to her own classroom experiences in Japan or to experiences of teachers elsewhere. Each chapter ends with an overview of unresolved issues about the controversy and a series of questions intended to help teachers reflect about their own classroom practices and beliefs.

Almost always, Casanave’s tracing of these controversies is enlightening. She does a particularly good job presenting the issues associated with contrastive rhetoric, which has been riddled with controversy from its inception in 1996 with the publication of Robert Kaplan’s article in *Language and Learning*, “Cultural Thought Patterns in Inter-Cultural Education” (also known as the “doodles” article). Kaplan claimed here that students from various parts of the world use culturally-based rhetorical patterns that he depicted as zigzags, circles, and lines. Kaplan’s overgeneralized descriptions of complex cultural and rhetorical systems was widely criticized for being inaccurate, uninformed, and essentialist. Yet it is an enduring topic because,
in Casanave’s words, “Simple treatments and interpretations of complex issues always invite critique, particularly if they also contain elements of truth” (37). She points out research, particularly Connor’s work in textual analysis, which has corrected some of Kaplan’s initial assertions while maintaining the validity of culturally-influenced structures. While noting that contrastive rhetoric continues to be ideologically undertheorized, she affirms its potential to inform teachers’ practices. Typical of her approach throughout the book, she ends this chapter by telling teachers to avoid “uncritically applying principles” of contrastive rhetoric in their classrooms.

Casanave refers consistently in these pages to L2 quantitative research on topics such as assessment, student interaction, and electronic communication. Because many L2 scholars have been trained in applied linguistics, quantitative research has played an important role in L2 writing inquiry. In contrast, most L1 composition scholars have avoided such research because of its positivistic origins. While this avoidance is, theoretically speaking, understandable, it has left L1 writing teachers and administrators vulnerable to critiques of student writing made by college administrators, the media, and the public who value measurement data over qualitative inquiry. While research conducted on L2 writers cannot be uncritically applied to other contexts, some research results do provide helpful insights. Dana Ferris’ extensive research into error correction, ably analyzed by Casanave, can help teachers make informed decisions when faced with students whose nonstandard errors imperil their chances of passing a high-stakes test or succeeding in a gateway course. Similarly, Casanave’s overview of the large body of research in L2 student interaction, including peer reviews, student collaboration, and audience analysis, should be read by teachers and administrators who want to supplement their knowledge in these areas.

Casanave’s discussion of plagiarism is also valuable. Postmodern views of authorship, as well as the wealth of information available electronically, have complicated notions of copying texts. Is plagiarism a result of different cultural notions of authorship? Is the Western concept of ownership of texts valid? Casanave’s summary of second language research highlights the difficulty of identifying culturally-determined textual strategies and connecting them to Western notions of plagiarism. In fact, some research has revealed that second language students “plagiarize” for many of the same reasons that first-language students do—inexperience, confusion, lack of confidence. Typically, after Casanave details various views of plagiarism, she asks teachers to reflect. She writes,
Before assigning writing tasks that require students to write from sources, teachers need to think through some of the issues, discuss them with colleagues, learn what institutional regulations exist, and plan how to approach the issue from a positive, educational perspective with students. At the very least, if teachers are able to design meaningful writing activities for their students and to raise students’ awareness of cross-cultural practices of authorship, plagiarism may not arise as a serious problem. (179–80)

This advice, valuable to both L1 and L2 writing teachers, promotes teachers’ sense of their own agency while acknowledging the constraints within which teachers work.

My one concern about Controversies in Second Language Writing is Casanave’s treatment of political and ideological issues in her last chapter. Her discussion of critical pedagogy is worthwhile, particularly when she describes the reluctance of some L2 writing researchers to acknowledge the political implications of their work. As she notes, many L2 teachers and scholars have resisted critical pedagogy because of their strong belief in “pragmatic accommodation”; in other words, they see teaching as a politically neutral process of helping students succeed. Casanave contrasts their belief in neutrality with Benesch’s critically pragmatic approach that provides possibilities for students to question and change the status quo (205). I wish that Casanave had probed this controversy further by pointing out that English language learning is an international industry consisting of schools, textbooks, underpaid teachers, and tuition-paying students. Obviously, this industry pushes forward pragmatic accommodation rather than critical analysis. I also wish she had dealt with politics and ideology in the beginning of the book, because these issues underlie many of the decisions that teachers, scholars, and administrators make about the controversies she describes. The way teachers decide to correct errors, for instance, is partly a result of their (examined or unexamined) notions about the purposes of teaching English.

Despite this concern, Controversies in Second Language Writing is a valuable text for L1 and L2 writing specialists. Casanave’s judicious, clear explanations and her emphasis on teacher decision-making make this volume an excellent choice for composition theory and methods classes. Not only will it help teachers and administrators understand their increasingly multilingual constituency of students, it will help expand their ideas of what it means to write in a world in which traditional notions of “first” and “second” language are increasingly obsolete.
Mangelsdorf/ Review of Controversies in Second Language Writing

WORKS CITED


Review


Jessie Moore Kapper

Think of Barbara Kroll’s volume as the Fodor’s guide to second language writing. Kroll compares entering a field of study to exploring a new territory, and she presents this edited collection as a guidebook that maps the terrain—the field’s central questions, growth, and controversies—of second language writing for future teachers. Like any guidebook, the collection is infused by a set of assumptions about the field and its new explorers. This guidebook’s writers share the assumptions that: the field of second language writing, while drawing on interdisciplinary roots, is autonomous; today’s teachers must be knowledgeable about varied aspects of writing instruction; teachers need access to current scholarship; and writing instruction requires understanding and exploring multiple variables through an assortment of research approaches. Guided by these assumptions, Kroll and her contributors examine the field’s boundaries, its stakeholders’ concerns, responses to finished student texts, and an assortment of other issues faced by teachers of second language writing. Overall, the collection fulfills its purpose, directing writing teachers (and in tandem, although less explicitly, program administrators) to these field highlights and most-visited research questions.

*Exploring the Dynamics of Second Language Writing* features five major sections, plus an introduction and an epilogue. In the first section, “Exploring the Field of Second Language Writing,” contributors map the field’s historical terrain (Matsuda) and the expansive scope of its research (Polio). Section two, “Exploring the Voices of Key Stakeholders: Teachers and Students,” shifts attention to teacher’s perceptions of their work (Cumming) and to second language writers’ autobiographies (Silva et al.), capturing the participant perspective on second language writing and instruction. In “Exploring Writers’ Finished Texts,” section three, contributors focus on writers’ texts, describing research in response (Ferris), grammar instruction (Frodesen and Holten), and assessment (Hamp-Lyons). The longest section,
“Exploring Contextualities of Texts,” corral the topics—genre (Johns), contrastive rhetoric (Connor), reading and writing relationships (Grabe), and the role of literature in the writing classroom (Vandrick)—that do not fit neatly in the other sections but that still might interest teachers. A lone chapter on using computers in second language writing instruction (Pennington) makes up the fifth section, and an epilogue closes the collection with a challenge to second language writing professionals to self-assess our valuations of writing and writing instruction (Leki).

In sections one, two, and three, this volume’s organizational structure helps new and prospective members of the field identify several key areas of focus within second language writing: disciplinary history and scope, writers and teachers, and writers’ texts. In section four, though, the signposts created by this overall organization become less apparent since the section introduction earmarks the section’s content as simply “several additional factors that teachers and researchers must investigate in order to expand their understanding of what it means to teach second language writing” (191). Even as a reader more comfortable with the field’s terrain, I am uncertain about the exclusion of technology from these “contextualities of texts.” And as a member of the field, I note the absence of a section on writers’ processes in a collection that otherwise closely follows the categories of research foci (i.e., texts, processes, participants, and contexts) outlined in Polio’s chapter on the range of research in second language writing.

While this structure might cause some confusion for readers trying to understand the subject’s topography, the individual chapters provide a strong foothold for a sequential exploration of the covered topics. Ferris (chapter 5), for instance, highlights previous research on the area of responding to student writing and discusses implications for teaching. Her historical grounding in the first pages of the chapter contextualizes her discussions of research on teacher response and peer feedback. Likewise, Hamp-Lyons (chapter 7) introduces key terms in assessment before examining situational factors that teachers should consider when making decisions about assessment. These efforts to equip readers with the terminology and background needed to engage actively with ensuing discussions should help teachers new to the field of second language writing to identify quickly the issues and applications that are relevant to their teaching contexts.

At times, though, these rhetorical attempts to position new readers in the field’s conversations are uneven. Readers might become frustrated with the lengthy lists of research questions presented on genre (chapter 8, Johns), for example. Although these lists do demonstrate the breadth of questions that genre researchers examine, they may falsely presume that the reader will have the time and interest to look up the researchers’ findings. Leki’s strat-
egy of summarizing research findings from several areas of second language writing scholarship in *Understanding ESL Writers* presents more immediate applications for teachers. Ideally, for an audience of teachers new to second language writing, chapter authors would combine these strategies within each chapter—summarizing major findings from relevant studies and presenting a list of additional questions that researchers have explored in case readers want to learn more.

Silva et al. (chapter 4) achieve a successful adaptation of this balance. They present writer’s autobiographies for five highly skilled writers, sharing these writers’ self-assessments of their developments as writers and their current abilities to write in their second languages. The authors then discuss common threads among these autobiographies, before suggesting research questions that second language writing professionals should continue to investigate. This chapter configuration incorporates participants’ voices, as well as commentary that is immediately accessible and relevant to second language writing teachers, even though Silva and his coauthors appropriately caution against making generalizations based on the five participants’ experiences. The chapter’s closing questions and discussion then allow readers to focus their continued exploration of the writers’ experiences, processes, texts, and relationship to their readers through further reading or through teacher or administrator research.

Similarly, Leki’s concluding chapter (chapter 13) presents a status quo and then challenges readers to reexamine it, thereby equipping readers with enough background to participate in her analysis and inviting their contributions. Leki identifies five assumptions that teachers and administrators make about second language writing instruction, and she investigates the implications of buying into those assumptions. For new and established members of the field, Leki’s caution to keep the role of writing in students’ lives in perspective encourages readers to approach the preceding chapters with reflective engagement.

Is this, then, to continue with Kroll’s metaphor, the guidebook new and future teachers want to select as they embark on explorations of this professional arena? For those readers looking for brief summaries and more immediate applicability, not a sustained commitment to exploring the field’s research and scholarship, the slightly dated but still relevant *Understanding ESL Writers* might serve as a better introduction to second language writers and their writing. Teachers and writing program administrators who already have a vested interest in learning more, though, likely will appreciate the breadth of the collection’s coverage of subjects and the reasonably up-to-date examinations of each chapter topic. Despite its occasional inconsistencies, the collection provides an accessible introduction to second language writing.
writing. The text also would pair well with *Landmark Essays on ESL Writing*, for readers who want a more thorough understanding of the field’s historical development, or with *On Second Language Writing*, for additional perspectives on the state of its research, theory, and pedagogy. Hence, *Exploring the Dynamics of Second Language Writing* isn’t the only guidebook I would pass on to colleagues and students embarking on a discovery of the field’s terrain, but the collection serves as a helpful starting point for charting continued, reflective participation in the field.

**Works Cited**


Review


Christina Ortmeier-Hooper

In 2001, the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) approved the Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers, noting the increasing number of second language writers in North American colleges and universities. Writing teachers and writing program administrators were encouraged “to recognize the regular presence of second language writers in writing classes, to understand their characteristics, to develop instructional and administrative practices that are sensitive to their linguistic and cultural needs” (1). The statement went on to encourage graduate program and writing program administrators to offer more course offerings and more resources to graduate students and their writing instructors to prepare both sectors for increasingly linguistically- and culturally-diverse classrooms. As that demographic trend becomes a reality in many of our colleges and universities, addressing the needs of second language writing has become a priority for many WPAs and mainstream composition instructors. In light of those needs the second edition of *Teaching ESL Composition: Purpose, Process, and Practice* by Dana R. Ferris and John S. Hedgcock is a welcome addition to the bookcases of all writing teachers and WPAs.

Since this book was originally published in 1997, the field of second language writing has grown substantially. Ferris and Hedgcock have updated this text to reflect the growing body of research in this area, along with the complicated realities and demographic shifts occurring in English writing classrooms around the world. This volume follows what the authors articulate as a “theory-to-practice approach,” combining comprehensive reviews of research and then providing practical teaching suggestions derived from the research. As Ferris and Hedgcock explain, “Instead of viewing theory as abstract and distant from the challenges we face as novice and expert teachers, we should recognize its enormous practical utility: [w]ithout the knowledge provided by theoretical principles, we lose sight of a crucial tool for
responsible instructional planning and classroom decision making” (3). The authors note that they envision four major audiences for the book: teacher-educators and graduate students in TESL programs, in-service ESL and EFL writing teachers, mainstream composition instructors, and researchers concerned with second language writing.

Chapters 1 and 2 of this Ferris and Hedgcock volume—“Theoretical and Practical Issues in ESL Writing,” “ESL Writing and L2 Literacy Development,” respectively—are of particular interest to those who are only beginning to learn about ESL writers and issues surrounding second language acquisition. Ferris and Hedgcock provide a thorough review of the research and theories from both L2 and L1 composition. These chapters provide readers with a well-informed review of the literature and help mainstream composition instructors and WPAs to see connections across the L1–L2 spectrum. An aspect of chapter 2 that is particularly interesting is the authors’ examination of genre knowledge in building academic literacies. As the authors explain, “It is necessary for L1 and L2 students alike to achieve disciplinary awareness, genre knowledge, text comprehension, and production skills” (49).

Chapters 3 and 4 concentrate on “the day-to-day planning tasks of writing teachers” (73). “Syllabus Design and Lesson planning in ESL Composition Instruction” (chapter 3) provides a comprehensive instruction kit for new teachers. A number of tools and figures assist novice instructors to develop their course objectives, including an inventory of institutional and education variables, a writing-styles questionnaire for students, samples of course objectives, a syllabus checklist, lesson-plan checklist, a sample syllabus, and a sample of a detailed lesson plan. “Text Selection, Materials Development, and Task Construction in ESL Composition” (chapter 4) builds on the elements of course design by examining the pros and cons of relying on a textbook and providing new instructors with criteria for choosing a textbook that best meets the needs of students, instructional objectives, and institutional goals.

Chapters 5 through 8 are useful to even the most experienced of composition instructors, at work with a wide range of students. Chapter 5, “Teacher Response to Student Writing: Issues in Oral and Written Feedback,” provides principles and guidelines for teacher feedback to ESL writers. The annotated student essay, showing examples of instructor response, is particularly helpful to readers. Chapter 6, “Building a Community of Writers: Principles of Peer Response” explores the benefits and challenges of peer response for ESL writers and provides solid, useful suggestions about how to make peer response an integral part of the writing classroom. In chapter 7, “Improving Accuracy in Student Writing: Error Treatment in the Composition Class-
Ortmeier-Hooper/ Review of *Teaching ESL Composition*

room,” Ferris and Hedgcock address the eight core questions that writing instructors have about error treatment, including “Does error feedback help students at all? What is an error? What kinds of errors do ESL writers most typically make? Should error feedback be *selective* or *comprehensive*? Should error feedback focus on *larger* or *smaller categories* or types? Should feedback be direct or indirect? Should errors be *labeled* or *located*? Where in the text should error feedback be given?” (263). The chapter includes sample student papers with examples of error-marking strategies, along with sample exercises, error logs, and procedural advice. The guidelines and principles put forth in these three chapters will provide writing teachers with strategies and approaches that can benefit native English writers as well as L2 students. In chapter 8, “Classroom Approaches to ESL Writing Assessment,” Ferris and Hedgcock examine the challenges and opportunities of writing assessment, the approaches to scoring ESL writing, and the principles of portfolio assessment. This chapter includes rubrics, scoring guides, and opportunities for scoring practice, ending with some practical advice on managing workload, grading anxiety, and assigning course grades.

Chapter 9, “Technology in the Writing Classroom: Uses and Abuses” reviews the effects of technology on L2 writing and writers and the pedagogical implications of computer-assisted writing instruction; the authors note that the move toward technology in the writing classroom presents both opportunities and challenges to ESL writers.

The new layout and design of the text have made it more accessible and reader-friendly. In some instances, the writing can feel dense because of the thorough treatment of research and theory. The authors, perhaps realizing that concern, have made many efforts throughout the text to supply readers with useful implications, suggestions, and comments that will resonate with teachers wherever they may be in their teaching careers and institutional settings. The book includes a good deal of course-related apparatus. Each chapter begins with “questions for reflection” that aim to situate the reader in preparation of the material to come. In addition, each chapter concludes with succinct chapter summaries, reflection and review questions at the end of each chapter, and application activities. Shadowed boxes throughout the chapters show readers some classroom implications of the research and theories. These boxes are particularly helpful for those readers who may find the theory-related sections challenging, particularly given the abundance of material included here. Such instructional elements make the text more interactive and engaging, and the redesigned layout brings instructional elements to the forefront.
The instructional elements make *Teaching ESL Composition: Purpose, Process, and Practice* a solid textbook for a course on writing theory or, better still, a practicum text for new writing teachers. Given the wide scope of the intended audience, the book could also be used as a primary text in courses for preservice ESL and mainstream writing instructors. But the inclusion of course-related devices do not diminish the book’s appeal for more experienced instructors who may be searching for a resource to better inform their pedagogy while meeting the needs of ESL students. Indeed, the text is of interest to WPAs working in a variety of university contexts, including English as a Second Language (ESL), English for Specific Purposes (ESP), and English for Academic Purposes (EAP) programs.

Well researched, this volume presents a cohesive and thorough overview of the second language writing in terms of the history of the discipline, the theories, and the pedagogy. In many ways, the weakness of the text may be that it is trying to reach a broad audience of teachers, in terms of their experience, their institutional contexts, and their geographical settings. The authors have taken an ambitious view of its potential readership, and as a result, readers may choose which sections of the text are most targeted to their current teaching situation. It also will provide new writing teachers with practical insights into the nuts-and-bolts of building a writing course, whether the course is for native-English or ESL writers. For experienced writing instructors, the chapters contain discussions that speak directly to rethinking of course design to make courses more inclusive of nonnative English speakers. For WPAs, the book is a valuable resource and a strong textbook choice for the teaching practicum as well as for courses on writing theory and pedagogy.

**Works Cited**

Review


Christine Tardy

In 1998, Tony Silva and Paul Kei Matsuda organized the first Symposium on Second Language Writing, bringing together a prominent group of scholars to discuss key issues within this growing field. Now held every other year on the campus of Purdue University, the symposium—along with the Journal of Second Language Writing, the Second Language Writing Special Interest Group at the Conference on College Composition and Communication, and the new Second Language Writing Interest Section at TESOL—has become an important forum for the exchange of ideas, particularly in the United States. Second Language Writing Research: Perspectives on the Process of Knowledge Construction is the second volume by Matsuda and Silva that collects the invited talks from the biennial symposium. In this newest volume, sixteen papers—all versions of presentations delivered at the 2002 symposium—reflect on the process of doing research in second language writing. The volume is divided into four sections, which take the reader from broad theoretical issues to conceptualizations of research projects, then through the work of collecting and analyzing data, and, finally, on to the truly practical side of research and the nature of being a researcher. The roster includes some of the most prolific researchers in the field as well as some welcome newer voices.

Part I, “Research as Situated Knowledge Construction,” includes three chapters that view second language writing through a metadisciplinary lens, exploring some of the macro-level forces that shape disciplinary knowledge and knowledge-making practices. In the opening chapter, Tony Silva lays out the fundamental principles behind the various modes of what might be deemed “research,” forcing readers to confront the philosophical assumptions that underlie their own inquiry practices and scholarly values. In chapter 2, Christine Pearson Casanave explores the role of narratives in shaping understandings of the field and of individual studies. In chapter 3, Paul Kei
Matsuda illustrates the value of historical inquiry in investigating the nature of the field and its historical development. Casanave’s and Matsuda’s chapters speak to each other in multiple ways, each capturing the critical role that stories play in knowledge construction. Taken together, these three pieces set the stage for the remaining thirteen chapters, all first-person reflections about the research practices and paradigms of second language writing specialists.

Part II, “Conceptualizing L2 Writing Research,” exposes—in various forms—the role of human interactions and exigencies in shaping research practices. The chapters’ authors push the boundaries of what might be deemed “traditional research,” asking readers to take more innovative approaches and to step outside the research box, even if in small ways. In chapter 4, Dwight Atkinson describes an overtly reflexive methodology of situated qualitative research, characterized by “relentless questioning” (49) of the research process in its entirety. Atkinson shares his own practices through a set of interview transcripts that reveal the rich and idiosyncratic nature of any research event, a window Atkinson uses to implore researchers to interrogate their practices while engaging in them. In chapter 5, John Flowerdew demonstrates how a multimethod approach might be used to tackle a larger research project. He shows how he addressed a related set of research questions through a series of studies, each employing different methods; such a multimethod approach allows researchers to adopt different perspectives on an issue, leading to a complex understanding of the object of inquiry. Miyuki Sasaki, in chapter 6, paints a picture of a continuously evolving research process shaped by a chain of exigencies and interpersonal interactions. Next, Robert Weissberg (chapter 7) considers what sociocultural theory offers to the study of oral and written modes of communication, and Richard Haswell (chapter 8) describes the potential benefits of prototype categorization theory for writing evaluation research. Haswell’s chapter is especially illuminating because he succeeds in reorienting readers’ views of evaluation through the application of an innovative approach. In chapter 9, Xiaoming Li approaches the important issue of how cultures and people are represented in research, particularly in studies in which culture is a central construct. She calls for something akin to an “open-source” approach, in which readers have access to the work that lies behind the scenes of the research report—specifically, Li asks researchers to include the full texts analyzed, the reasons behind participant selection, and the theoretical paradigms that undergird the researcher’s work.

In the book’s third section, “Collecting and Analyzing Data,” the chapters highlight the practicalities and realities that influence decisions researchers make in data collection, coding, and analysis. Susan Parks, in chapter 10, argues for understanding qualitative research as a heuristic
used to grapple with key issues like emergent design, the representation of data, and researcher stance and the role of theory. She articulates the problems of notions such as the emic-etic (i.e., insider-outsider) distinction by illustrating how she dealt with the issues in her own work. In chapter 11, Linda Lonon Blanton comes closest to discussing the central issue of ethics in research—both in what we choose to study and what we do with our findings. After describing her own experience with an ethical quandary, Blanton asks readers to consider what to do when they find no way for their research findings to bring about positive change. In other words, she cautions researchers to be careful when “mucking around,” because they might not like what they find. Next, in chapter 12, Colleen Brice exposes the concept of inter-rater reliability as problematic in single-authored, small-scale studies, especially those that study L2 writers. She concludes her chapter by suggesting that dependability be assessed not by inter-rater reliability but by evidence that a study’s conclusions are grounded in data that can be found in research reports. In chapter 13, Ken Hyland emphasizes the ways that choices made in research questions, design, method, and analysis are embedded within the researcher’s theoretical orientation. He illustrates this principle clearly through his own research which mixes corpus-based text analysis with oral interview data. In the only collaborative piece, chapter 14, Rosa Manchón, Liz Murphy, and Julio Roca de Larios detail their decision-making processes in a study using concurrent protocols. The authors focus on issues of validity and attempts to minimize causes of invalidity, and they conclude by urging researchers to address such issues more openly in their publications. Finally, in chapter 15, Sarah Hudelson reflects on a study she conducted ten years earlier, asking the important question of how her present knowledge and beliefs would affect the way she might pursue the same study today. She shows clearly the contingent nature of research as she outlines several ways that her evolving understanding of emergent (bi)literacy has a trickle-down effect on the research questions she would now ask, the procedures she might use for collecting data, and the interpretations that she would reach in analyzing data. It is striking that many of these authors are calling for some generic changes; that is, in their insistence on increased self-reflection and fuller disclosure, they reveal the ways in which the generic constraints of the traditional research article limit our ways of representing, and therefore constructing, knowledge.

The volume ends with a “Coda,” containing one chapter by Dana Ferris. Here, Ferris discusses openly the nitty-gritty of being a researcher, in what might be described as an autobiographical account. Newer researchers are likely to find Ferris’s chapter particularly interesting because she describes
the realities of researching, writing, and publishing at a teaching-intensive university. This final chapter also articulates quite overtly the theme that runs throughout the book: research is never a neat and tidy process.

While all the chapters add important insights, two are particularly notable. Silva’s opening chapter is valuable not only for its description of the landscape of research paradigms, but also for its quite explicit call for the adoption of a paradigm that blends modernism’s rationality and post-modernism’s relativity. Silva advocates a multimodal methodology driven by research questions rather than by a belief in the inherent superiority of one method over another. Though his call to lay to rest the “quantitative vs. qualitative” debate is not new, Silva presents a philosophical basis for doing so. Perhaps more importantly, he offers a multidisciplinary field—one that at times suffers from polarizing and fracturing beliefs about inquiry—a unifying paradigm for multiple ways of studying the diverse issues inherent in second language writing.

Also noteworthy is Blanton’s chapter, in which she openly recounts a research project that left her with only the negative conclusion that the writers she studied had almost no hope of improving their literacy skills within the confines of the college classroom that was supposed to support them. At the end of her piece, Blanton stresses the obligation that researchers have to their participants—a sentiment that runs through many of the other chapters but is not addressed so overtly. Blanton brings the participants directly into the picture, reminding readers that research has implications for the lives of actual people. When those implications are negative, researchers must be prepared to grapple with any repercussions.

Reading Second Language Writing Research is like taking a behind-the-scenes gaze into what research is really like—the stuff that never makes the journal pages or conference papers. New researchers may find it reassuring to see that the process is inherently messy and flawed, even for experienced and well published experts. At the same time, the book is not pessimistic, and it may even serve to inspire or invigorate those just beginning to delve into the world of empirical inquiry. And while many of the authors here do highlight issues unique to ESL writing research, their insights are of value to all researchers of writing. Although this is not a “how to” guide, it might serve as a strong companion volume to a methods text such as Charles Bazerman and Paul Prior’s What Writing Does and How it Does It. Experienced researchers are likely to find this Matsuda and Silva volume an honest and open examination of inquiry practices and, as such, a welcome addition to second language writing literature. Indeed, second language studies in general have not addressed the question of research from a metadisciplinary perspective; this volume is a valuable first endeavor.
Of course, many dimensions of knowledge construction do not make it into this book, including discussions of research dissemination: How have—and do—journals and presses enable or constrain professionals’ knowledge-making practices? What role do social networks play in knowledge construction and distribution, particularly in this relatively small arena? What are the possibilities for change? These seem to be especially important questions for an interdisciplinary, international field like second language writing, though they may be beyond the scope of this volume. Still, the underdiscussed question of research ethics—addressed explicitly only by Blanton—could hold a more prominent position in this volume. I also felt the absence of chapters on, for example, collaborative research, feminist research, or the attempt to “give back” to the community or participants through participatory action research. These absences, however, simply reflect current gaps in the field’s research orientations.

As the study of second language writing increases, Matsuda and Silva’s newest volume provides an important platform of discussion on ways that scholars in the field come to construct knowledge. In years to come, Second Language Writing Research: Perspectives on the Process of Knowledge Construction will stand as one historical account of the state of the field at this burgeoning moment, and it should serve well as a starting point for continued discussion.

**Works Cited**

Review


Terese Thonus

In recent years, the market for teacher guides on second language writing has exploded, and publishers have responded with such excellent offerings as Leki’s 1992 classic, *Understanding ESL Writers*, Kroll’s wide-ranging, edited volume, *Exploring the Dynamics of Second Language Writing* (2003), and Casanave’s thoughtful *Controversies in Second Language Writing: Dilemmas and Decisions in Research and Instruction* (2004). *ESL Writers: A Guide for Writing Center Tutors* is a departure from this growing literature on second language (L2) writing instruction. It is a long-awaited collection of writings on the theory and practice of tutoring the fastest-growing group of writing center clients: students for whom English is a second (or nonnative) language. As Ilona Leki announces in the foreword, *ESL Writers* “is the first book-length attempt to address the issue of how the promise of the writing center might be better realized for L2 students” (xi).

Editors Shanti Bruce and Ben Rafoth, both of Indiana University of Pennsylvania, have collected fifteen articles on a variety of topics of interest to writing tutors and writing center administrators. In the introduction to the volume, they list five questions they hope to answer in the volume:

- Why does interaction in the writing center between people from different cultures often feel so different?
- What can tutors do in sessions with ESL writers besides point out problems with grammar and usage?
- How can conferences with ESL writers become more interactive and less one-sided?
• How far should tutors go in helping ESL writers? What are the limits?

• What do ESL students think about the assistance they receive in the writing center? (xiii)

The book is divided into three sections. Part I (Cultural Contexts) is comprised of two chapters, “Insights into Cultural Divides” (Hayward) and “Theoretical Perspectives on Learning a Second Language” (Tseng). The largest section of the book, Part II (The ESL Tutoring Session), is comprised of ten chapters and deals with a wide range of topics from “teaching the tutorial” (Bruce’s “Getting Started”) to dealing with global concerns (Matsuda and Cox’s “Reading an ESL Writer’s Text”) to handling local errors (Linville’s “Editing Line by Line”). Three of the chapters deal with tutoring methodology in the face of L2 writers’ needs: “Avoiding Appropriation” (Severino), “Raising Questions About Plagiarism” (Bouman), and “Is This My Job?” (Gillespie), this last essay answering the question, “How are tutors to address needs that go beyond writing?” (ix). The last section of the book, Part III (A Broader View), comprised of three chapters, is described by Bruce and Rafoth as “a few issues that have arisen in the staff meetings in our own writing center and during after-hours discussions” (xv). These are “The Role of Writing in Higher Education Abroad” (Bräuer), “Trying to Explain English” (Rafoth), and “ESL Students Share Their Writing Center Experiences” (Bruce).

According to my reading, the best chapters by far in the book are chapter 5, Severino’s “Avoiding Appropriation” and chapter 11, Gillespie’s “Is This My Job?” because these engage readers in questioning of two theoretical debates in writing center research by adding “the second language twist.” In terms of step-by-step instructions for tutors, Amy Jo Minnett’s “Earth Aches by Midnight: Helping ESL Writers Clarify Their Intended Meaning” (chapter 6) is exceptionally engaging. Less relevant to the tutoring of L2 writers, in my view, are chapter 2, “Theoretical Perspectives on Learning a Second Language” (Tseng)—why do tutors need to know about second language acquisition research traditions?; chapter 12, “Creative Writing Workshops for ESL Writers” (Dvorak)—not many of the ESL students I have met approach the writing center to “broaden their experiences beyond the narrow limits of academic discourse” (ix); and chapter 13, “The Role of Writing in Higher Education Abroad” (Bräuer)—why do tutors need to read about an issue that is covered sufficiently in other chapters in the volume?

The editors are to be commended for venturing into uncharted waters in their endeavor. They and the book’s contributors, with backgrounds in composition and writing center theory, approach with caution the academic
Thonus’ Review of ESL Writers: A Guide for Writing Center Tutors

territories of applied linguistics, teaching English as a second language, and second language writing instruction. They know their audience(s) well; they recognize tutors’ expertise and respect their fears of failing ESL writers. The three-page glossary, with important definitions of terms used to describe the social, cognitive, and linguistic characteristics of English learners and their writing, testifies to that, as does the inclusion of the tales of three ESL writers’ writing center experiences (the final chapter of the volume, which might have been more effectively positioned at the beginning).

Notwithstanding these strengths, in three respects I find ESL Writers wanting: its choice of authors, its limited definition of “ESL,” and its restricted audience.

As they begin, compilers of edited volumes must “sketch out” the structure of the book and find authors who will contribute topics that “fit in” to the overall schema. The temptation is to take the easy road by assigning topics to their graduate students and those whose work is familiar without doing the difficult research necessary to find authors who, through a history of research and publishing, can best address those topics in an authoritative way (author and authoritative come from the same Latin root). Unfortunately, whether because of time constraints or favoritism, Rafoth and Bruce succumbed to temptation. A third of the chapters (five of fifteen) are contributed by PhD candidates at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. In my view, this editorial decision reduces the credibility of the volume both because of the authors’ limited experience and because of the narrow approach generated by a single writing center and its actors. Clearly, Rafoth and Bruce want peer tutors and graduate students to join the discourse in their chosen fields; I would argue that the place for such interaction with specialists is in conference presentations and in theses and dissertations. Certainly they want the quality of their writing and composition programs to be known nationally and even worldwide; University of New Hampshire’s Paul Kei Matsuda does this in an academically justifiable manner by inviting his graduate student Michelle Cox to coauthor a chapter with him (“Reading an ESL Writer’s Text”). From editors of a book on a topic of such importance, released by Boynton/Cook-Heinemann, a leader in educational publishing, I would have expected less obvious bias.

A second area of weakness is the limited definition of “ESL,” which may not adequately describe the second language writer clientele of many US writing centers. “For our purposes in the book,” explain the editors, “[the ESL writer] is anyone whose native language is not English, who is visiting the United States from another country to study at a college or university, and who is in the process of learning to write (and speak) in English” (xiii). But what about US immigrant students for whom English is their strongest and perhaps only academic language? Recent literature has described the
difficulties these bilingual (often termed “ESL”) students have with writing (see “Serving Generation 1.5 Learners”), yet there is not one word about their interaction with the writing center in this volume. That absence is unfortunate, given the direction posed by Jessica Williams and Carol Severino in their introduction to a 2004 special issue of *Journal of Second Language Writing* dedicated to the writing center and L2 writers, an issue focusing on “the increasing use of WCs by L2 writers, especially the growing generation 1.5 population in the U.S.” (170).

Third and finally, Rafoth and Bruce restrict the book’s audience to “peer tutors working in a campus writing center who assist college students learning to write in English as a second language” (xiii). The notion that those who tutor ESL students are peers is erroneous, and it is a notion of which tutors should be disabused as soon as possible. (For more research on this important matter, see “Triangulation in the Writing Center” and “What’s the Difference?”) Many “peer tutors” have no experience as language learners, have never traveled overseas, and have very limited exposure to and interaction with second language learners, either immigrant or international. As one of Blau et al.’s tutor participants stated, “If we were peers, we’d have no problem editing” (23). Several authors in the volume suggest that tutors working with ESL writers need a good deal of additional training, including, one would assume, the reading of this book as a guide. I could not agree more, and I recommend relevant chapters of *ESL Writers* to writing center administrators and tutors for two purposes: (1) as readings for an ongoing “learning to tutor” workshop or credit-bearing course and (2) as a reference for tutors who find themselves in particular difficulty as they work with second language writers.

**Works Cited**


Thonus/ Review of ESL Writers: A Guide for Writing Center Tutors


Contributors, WPA 30.1–2

Patricia Friedrich is an assistant professor in the Department of Language, Cultures, and History at Arizona State University where she teaches linguistics, rhetoric and composition, and ESL courses. Her research interests include the politics of English, attitudes toward English, the spread of English and other themes encompassing world Englishes. She has authored articles in such journals as *World Englishes, English Today*, and *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*. She has also coedited a special issue of *World Englishes* centered on South America. Currently, she is working on a book focused on the English language and peace.

Maria Fruit is a graduate student in the Department of Linguistics at the University of Iowa. As a student of linguistics and an advocate of interdisciplinary work, she teaches ESL courses in linguistics, and she teaches speech and composition in the Department of Rhetoric. Recently, Fruit joined the staff of that department’s writing center, where she tutors native and non-native English writers. Her thesis, in progress, addresses generative second language acquisition; she is investigating properties of L2 acquisition and L1 attrition in European Portuguese. Her research interests include theoretical syntax, language acquisition, classical rhetoric, and L2 writing pedagogies.

Kristine Hansen is professor of English at Brigham Young University, where she has directed the English composition program and the WAC program. She teaches courses in advanced writing, history of rhetoric, and research methods in composition and rhetoric. Her research interests center on the rhetoric of the social sciences, the relationship of rhetoric to epistemology, and the high school-to-college transition of student writers. She has published articles in *CCC, WPA*, *Research in the Teaching of English*, and *English Journal*, as well as several chapters in edited volumes. With Joseph Janangelo, she coedited *Resituating Writing: Constructing and Administering Writing Programs* (Boynton/Cook-Heinemann, 1995). A member of the WPA Executive Committee from 1994–97, she currently serves on the editorial board of *WPA: Journal of the Council of Writing Program Administrators*.

Tamara Burton Lamm received a bachelor’s degree in English and a master’s degree in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages from Brigham Young University. She has worked as a writing center tutor and supervisor for mainstream and international students, and he has taught freshman composition to mainstream students. In that setting she perceived the need in her university for a multicultural, interdisciplinary approach to writing,
one that specifically focused on the needs of second language writers. She designed the curriculum for a freshman composition course for international students, which she currently teaches.

**Kate Mangelsdorf** is professor of English at the University of Texas–El Paso, where she directs the PhD program in rhetoric and composition. Her latest book is *Discoveries*, a basic writing text from Bedford/St. Martin’s coauthored with Evelyn Posey. Her research specialties are Generation 1.5 writing, second language writing, and basic writing.

**Paul Kei Matsuda** is the director of composition at the University of New Hampshire, where he teaches various writing courses as well as graduate courses in composition studies. Founding chair of the CCCC Committee on Second Language Writing and the Symposium on Second Language Writing, Paul has coedited several books, including *On Second Language Writing* (Erlbaum, 2001), *Landmark Essays on ESL Writing* (Erlbaum, 2001), *Second Language Writing Research* (Erlbaum, 2005), and *Second-Language Writing in the Composition Classroom* (Bedford and NCTE, 2006). His work appears in a wide variety of publications in composition studies and second language studies.

**Jessie Moore Kapper** is an assistant professor of English at Elon University in North Carolina. She coordinates Elon’s Professional Writing and Rhetoric concentration and teaches additional courses in TESOL. She also chairs TESOL’s Second Language Writing Interest Section. Her research explores the interdisciplinarity of second language writing and the integration of academic service-learning projects in undergraduate coursework.

**Christina Ortmeier-Hooper** is a Ph.D. candidate in Composition Studies at the University of New Hampshire, where she teaches first-year composition, ESL, advanced composition, and teacher education courses. She is the founding chair of the Second Language Writing Interest Section at TESOL and serves on the CCCC Committee on Second Language Writing. She has published in *TESOL Journal* and has coedited *Second-Language Writing in the Composition Classroom: A Critical Sourcebook* (with Paul Kei Matsuda, Michelle Cox, and Jay Jordan). Her dissertation examines the academic writing development and identity negotiation of high-school second language writers residing in the United States.
Contributors to WPA 30.1/2

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**Ana Maria Preto-Bay** holds a Ph.D. in instructional psychology and technology in second language acquisition. During the past fifteen years, she has worked with international students and students of various ethnicities at Brigham Young University. She has taught writing in the intensive ESL program and the English composition program for most of that time. Her work with second language writers has inspired much of her work and research in L2 academic literacy acquisition and curriculum and program design. A native of Portugal, Preto-Bay is now working on foreign language writing instruction and program development in higher education.

**Gail Shuck** is assistant professor of English and coordinator of English Language Support Programs at Boise State University. Her research interests include the politics of second language writing, discourse analysis of everyday talk, and the construction of language identity and ownership among multilingual speakers and writers. In addition to her publications in *Language in Society* and the online journal *The Reading Matrix*, Shuck has conducted an examination of discursive means for connecting language and race in native English speakers’ talk about nonnative English speakers, which is scheduled to appear in the fall 2006 issue of the *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education*.

**Candace Stewart** recently left her position as coordinator of the Student Writing Center at Ohio University to serve as the director of composition in the English Department at that university. She teaches undergraduate writing courses and graduate courses in pedagogy, rhetorical theory, and research methods. Her current research interests include graduate teaching assistant preparation, WAC-oriented writing center pedagogy, and materialist theories of rhetoric.

**Robert D. Stewart** is a graduate student in applied linguistics and TESOL at Ohio University. He has taught English in the United States and abroad since 2001, including preacademic intensive ESL at Ohio University. His research interests include second language writing and German dialectology. He is currently studying in Leipzig, Germany.
Christine Tardy is an assistant professor in the Department of English at DePaul University, where she teaches courses in writing and teaching English as a Second Language. Her research interests are in second language writing, genre studies, and ESL teacher education. Her work has appeared in Written Communication, Computers and Composition, and Journal of English for Academic Purposes.

Terese Thonus is associate professor of linguistics at California State University, Fresno. A graduate of Indiana University, she taught English as a second language, tutored in the Writing Center, and served as editorial assistant for the journal Studies in Second Language Acquisition. She has taught in Thailand and the United States and trained teachers for the British Council in Brazil. She is currently teaching and researching ESL methods, second language writing, and oral discourse analysis with an emphasis on tutor-student interaction in writing centers. Her recent publications have appeared in The Writing Center Journal, Journal of Second Language Writing, and Assessing Writing.
Announcements

Call for Nominations for WPA Executive Board Members

WPA will hold elections for three Executive Board members this fall. We will be saying thank you and goodbye to Executive Board members Rebecca Moore Howard, Martha Patton, and Susan Miller-Cochran, whose terms end in June 2007, and invite nominations for three Executive Board members to replace those rotating off. The Executive Board oversees the WPA, its events, and its activities, creates policies and procedures for its management, and engages in special projects and initiatives. The new Board members will serve for three years, with terms beginning in July of 2007.

Nominees for the Executive Board should have a demonstrated commitment to the work of the Council and a background in writing program administration, and should be willing to attend Board meetings at the CCCC and at the WPA summer conference. Self-nominations as well as nominations of others are welcome. To be considered, a nomination should include all contact information, a C.V. (attached or posted on a listed website) or a description of the nominee’s work as a WPA, and a statement explaining why the nominee makes a strong candidate for membership on the WPA Executive Board. If possible, please secure the nominee’s permission before submitting the nomination.

All nominators and nominees must be current members of the Council of Writing Program Administrators. Nominations are reviewed by the WPA Nominating Committee, which creates a slate for vote by the membership.

Please send your nominations to the Chair of the WPA Nominating Committee, Joe Janangelo (jjanang@luc.edu) by November 15, 2006.

This fall WPA will also elect a new Vice-President. Nominees for Vice-President make a six-year commitment to WPA, first serving as vice-president for two years, as president for the next two years, and as immediate past president for a final two years.

The nominating committee chooses Vice- Presidential candidates from among recent Executive Board members.

Nominating Committee members are Joe Janangelo, Susan Miller-Cochran and Chris Anson.
WPA Book Award for 2004-2005


The Council of Writing Program Administrators has established this award as part of its efforts to develop and promote an understanding of writing program administration as intellectual work of depth, sophistication, and significance. The Awards Committee employed the following criteria for selection:

1. The book addressed one or more issues of long-term interest to administrators of writing programs in higher education.
2. The book presents outcomes of the intellectual work of one or more writing program administrators.
3. The book discusses theories, practices, or policies that contribute to a richer understanding of writing program administration work.
4. The book shows sensitivity toward the situated contexts in which writing program administrators work.
5. The book makes a significant contribution to the scholarship of writing program administration.
6. The book will serve as a strong representative of the scholarship of and research on writing program administration.

Members of the Award Committee were Lauren Fitzgerald (Yeshiva University), Gregory Glau (Arizona State University), and Stephen Wilhoit, Chair (University of Dayton).
Announcements

Change the Media Message about our Work:  
Join the WPA Network for Media Action!

The Network for Media Action provides a space wherein those interested in changing the public conversation about writing and writing instruction can converse, share resources, and find support in publicizing the positive facets of the work we do. This group is committed to developing media messages that can accurately portray the goals and methods of writing instruction, illustrate the crucial importance of a literate public, and foreground the efforts of writing programs in providing high quality instruction in writing. Recent efforts include the formation of message frameworks, which provide us with cogent statements of issues like plagiarism, machine scoring of writing, high-stakes testing, and the role of grammar instruction—all issues that often become issues for the media.

To participate in the initiatives of the NMA, or to find out more information on this work, visit our site on Digital WPA (http://wpacouncil.org/nma) or contact Linda Adler-Kassner (Linda.Adler-Kassner@emich.edu) or Dominic Delli Carpini (dcarpini@ycp.edu).

WPA at MLA 2006  
Philadelphia, PA

The Council of Writing Program Administrators will sponsor two panels and a social at the 2006 MLA Convention in Philadelphia.

WPA at MLA Panels:  
On the occasion of WPA’s 30th anniversary, two WPA-sponsored panels at the Modern Language Association meeting in Philadelphia will focus upon diversity issues. The panels will look back at our efforts at inclusion over the past thirty years and discuss the great potential that increasing diversity provides for us, both as an organization and within our writing classes. The first panel, “Moving toward Inclusion: Thirty Years of the Council of Writ-
ing Program Administrators,” chaired by Shirley Rose (who will also act as a respondent), will be held on Friday, December 29th, 1:45–3:00 p.m., in Room 307 of the Philadelphia Marriott. Presentations include:

- Chris Anson, North Carolina State University: Drawing in, Reaching Out: The Problems and Prospects of Internationalization
- Joe Janangelo, Loyola University, Chicago: Why Diversify?
- M. Elizabeth Sargent, University of Alberta: On the Trail of the Outcomes Statement: Increasing the Work of the WPA in Canada

The second panel, entitled “Challenges of the Future: Foregrounding Diversity in the WPA Palette” and chaired by Dominic Delli Carpini, will be held on Saturday, December 30th, noon to 1:15, in Room 302 of the Philadelphia Marriott. Presentations include:

- Juanita Comfort, West Chester University: Framing Diversity Issues for College Writers: Listening to a Multi-Vocal Writing Program
- Wendy Olson, Washington State University, Pullman: Writing Programs, Diversity, and the Knowledge Economy: Some Implications
- Ellen Strenski, University of California, Irvine: Electronic Equity or Exclusion: Four Campus Digital Divides
- Jonathan Alexander, University of Cincinnati and William Banks, East Carolina University: Queer Eye for the Comp Program: Towards a Queer Critique of WPA Work

WPA Social
CWPA, the Philadelphia Area Writing Program Administrators (PAWPA), and Temple University will be sponsoring a social event at MLA on the evening of Friday, December 29 at the Hilton Garden Inn in Philadelphia. More information on the event will be provided on Digital WPA http://wpacouncil.org and WPA-L. All WPA members and friends are cordially invited.
Announcements

New WPA Executive Board Members
Three new Board members began their terms on July 1, 2006: Joe Marshall Hardin (Western Kentucky University), Rita Malenczyk (Eastern Connecticut State University), and Carol Rutz (Carleton College). We look forward to working with these colleagues during their three-year terms of service.

Our three retiring Executive Board members are Lauren Fitzgerald (Yeshiva University), Greg Glau (Arizona State University), and Raul Sanchez (University of Florida). We thank them for their fine work.

WPA Regional Affiliates
In the last few years, WPA has welcomed four US regional affiliates:

- Carolinas WPA (CWPA, founded informally in 1999 and formally in 2003, with about 75 members; see http://facstaff.elon.edu/peeples/cwpa/index.htm),
- Michigan WPA (founded in 2001, with about 25 members; see http://writing.msu.edu/miwpa/),
- Mid-America WPA (MAWPA, founded in 2004 with about 40 members; website in the planning stage), and
- Philadelphia Area WPA (PAWPA, founded in 2000, with about 45 members; see http://www.english.udel.edu/pwpa/).

Groups wishing to become affiliates of WPA should send a letter to the WPA Executive Board requesting affiliation and providing basic information such as the group’s name, a roster of officers, an estimate of membership, and a list of schools represented by members. The Executive Board will consider the application and communicate a decision to the group.

WPA Affiliate Status with AACU
In March 2006, the Council of Writing Program Administrators renewed its affiliate status with the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U). Our affiliate status with AAC&U aligns us with an organization that focuses on addressing issues of assessment, civic engagement, diversity, general education, globalization, integrative learning and educational outcomes. AAC&U was formerly the Association of American Colleges (AAC).
2006 WPA Research Grants Awards

Winners of the 2006 WPA Research Grants were announced at the WPA CCCC Breakfast in Chicago, March 23, 2006. The winning proposals were for the following projects:

“Does it Transfer? Tracing FYC Students’ Rhetorical Practices across Multiple Mediums”

Jenn Fishman, Mary Jo Reiff -- Co-Principal Investigators
Bill Doyle, Casie Fedukovich, Hiie Saumaa, Stacey Pigg -- Project Researchers
University of Tennessee-Knoxville
$2000.00

“Are We Making it Harder? A Comparison of Online and Paper Based Writing Instruction Focusing on Subjective Cognitive Workload”

Lisa Emerson
Massey University, New Zealand
$1098.87

“Reformist Opportunities: A Study of Writing Program Partnerships”

Diana George, Kelly Belanger (Department of English)
Marie Paretti, Lisa DuPree McNair (Department of Engineering Education)
Virginia Tech
$1997.00

Research project results will be presented on posters at the 2007 WPA Breakfast at CCCC. Research reports or articles resulting from the research projects are submitted to our journal WPA: Writing Program Administration for first consideration.
A Writer's Reference
Sixth Edition
Diana Hacker

Still the most widely adopted college handbook, A Writer’s Reference, now in its sixth edition, remains the easiest reference tool for college writers to use and to understand — within and outside of the composition class. In the tradition of Hacker innovation, A Writer’s Reference — both the print handbook and the companion Web site — will be available with flexible content to suit the needs of your students and your course. You can finally have your handbook your way.

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