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New Ideas in Writing

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KATHLEEN ANN KELLY, Northeastern University

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Publication: January 1990
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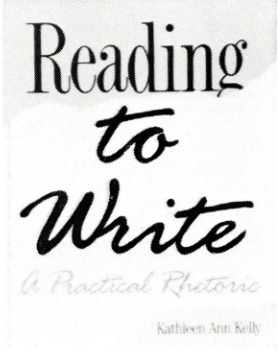

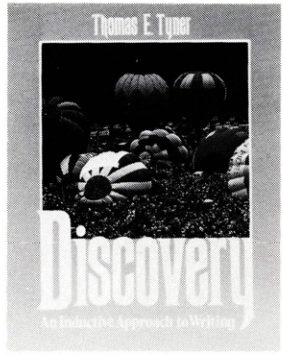

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The *Journal of Basic Writing* publishes articles of theory, research, and teaching practices related to basic writing. Articles are refereed by members of the Editorial Board (see overleaf) and the Editors.

The *Journal of Basic Writing* is published twice a year, in the spring and fall. We welcome unsolicited manuscripts and ask authors to consult the detailed "Call for Articles" in this issue. Subscriptions for individuals are $8.00 for one year and $15.00 for two years; subscriptions for institutions are $12.00 for one year and $23.00 for two years. Foreign postage is $5.00 extra per year. ADDRESS: Journal of Basic Writing, Instructional Resource Center, The City University of New York, 535 East 80th Street, New York, NY 10021.

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JOURNAL OF BASIC WRITING

VOLUME 9 NUMBER 1 SPRING 1990

CONTENTS

CALL FOR ARTICLES

We welcome manuscripts of 10–20 pages on topics related to basic writing, broadly interpreted.

Manuscripts will be refereed anonymously. We require four copies of a manuscript. To assure impartial review, give author information and a biographical note for publication on the cover page only. One copy of each manuscript not accepted for publication will be returned to the author, if we receive sufficient stamps (no meter strips) clipped to a self-addressed envelope. We require the new MLA style (*MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers,* 1984). For further guidance, send a stamped letter-size, self-addressed envelope for our one-page style sheet.

All manuscripts must focus clearly on basic writing and must add substantively to the existing literature. We seek manuscripts that are original, stimulating, well-grounded in theory, and clearly related to practice. Work that reiterates what is known or work previously published will not be considered.

We invite authors to write about matters such as the social, psychological, and cultural implications of literacy; rhetoric; discourse theory; cognitive theory; grammar; linguistics, including text analysis, error descriptions, and cohesion studies; English as a second language; and assessment and evaluation. We publish observational studies as well as theoretical discussions on relationships between basic writing and reading, or the study of literature, or speech, or listening; cross-disciplinary insights for basic writing from psychology, sociology, anthropology, journalism, biology, or art; the uses and misuses of technology for basic writing; and the like.

The term "basic writer" is used with wide diversity today, sometimes referring to a student from a highly oral tradition with little experience in writing academic discourse, and sometimes referring to a student whose academic writing is fluent but otherwise deficient. To help readers, therefore, authors should describe clearly the student population which they are discussing.

We particularly encourage a *variety* of manuscripts: speculative discussions which venture fresh interpretations; essays which draw heavily on student writing as supportive evidence for new observations; research reports, written in nontechnical language, which offer observations previously unknown or unsubstantiated; collaborative writings which provocatively debate more than one side of a central controversy; and teaching logs which trace the development of original insights.

Starting with the 1986 issue, a "Mina P. Shaughnessy Writing Award" will be given to the author of the best *JBW* article every four issues (two years). The prize is $500.00, courtesy of an anonymous donor. The winner, to be selected by a jury of three scholars/teachers not on our editorial board, will be announced in our pages and elsewhere.

EDITORS' COLUMN

We are delighted to report that the copious flow of manuscripts, mentioned in this space in the last issue, continues unabated. Topics related to the teaching of writing to non-native speakers of English appear to be particularly popular, so much so that we welcome the advent of a new journal—also published by The City University of New York—focused on this area. An announcement and call for papers for CUNY ESL appears elsewhere in this issue.

There is one aspect of the wealth of submissions that we feel we must comment on. This is the tendency towards ever more pages given over to statistical tables and graphs. Although quantitative documentation is certainly necessary in some instances, we have to admit to an uneasiness about evidence and arguments that cannot be expressed in direct, simple English prose. *JBW* is, above all, a journal of *writing*, and the texture as well as the content of the articles it presents should reflect that fact.

If there is a theme to this issue, it is that many researchers and practitioners within the field of basic writing are returning to topics generally considered outside the scope of the "new paradigms" that have emerged in recent years. Thus this issue contains articles on handwriting, acquainting basic writing students with library resources, and approaching ESL literacy through literature. Another theme to emerge is the strengthened view of writing instruction as a complex of interrelated activities and not as a list of isolated skills.

In the first article, Linda Meeker describes the steps taken over the past four years at Ball State University to reshape its developmental writing program as an integration of listening, speaking, reading, thinking, and writing, with an accompanying shift in the public perception of the program through changes made in the titles, course and catalogue descriptions, text selections, and syllabi.

Following Linda Meeker, Jacqueline Costello argues for the reading and writing of narratives, along with the sharing of

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freewritten responses to and questions about narratives, as a useful way for ESL composition students to work on reading comprehension, rhetoric, and relevant grammatical structures, while they are also developing analytic skills necessary for other college courses.

In the third article, Donald McAndrew studies differences in the overall fluency and syntactic structures of fast and slow handwriters. Fast handwriters are able to bring more moments of attention and engagement to their writing, which emerges more richly modified and syntactically complex. Slower handwriters have less time for such opportunities. The study ends with some speculations about the effects of scribal fluency on composing, both for traditional college students and for basic writers.

Making a fundamental distinction between the rhetorical and syntactical strengths of ESL writing students, Barbara Kroll discusses the implications of considering these two components in making more careful placement decisions. She goes on to suggest a curriculum based on improving these particular writing skills.

Boyd Koehler and Kathryn Swanson present the results of a three-year study in new methods of teaching fundamentals of bibliographic instruction to basic writing students. The principal elements of the plan include active collaboration between a librarian and an English professor; working in small groups of similar abilities; individualized instruction; a Library Hunt Exercise preceding a hands-on approach to library materials; using an online computerized library catalog; and in-depth feedback sessions.

In the final article, Kyle Perkins and Sheila Brutten show that for both native and non-native language users, the teaching of writing is best approached as a holistic entity with the focus on meaning, function, and purpose, and not as a set of separate skills.

Bill Bernhardt and ***Peter Miller***

Linda Hanson Meeker

PRAGMATIC POLITICS: USING ASSESSMENT TOOLS TO (RE)SHAPE A CURRICULUM

In 1963 Braddock, Lloyd-Jones, and Schoer concluded that teaching formal grammar had no effect on the quality of their students' writing. Hillocks in 1986 reported in his meta-analysis that subsequent research urges a stronger conclusion, that there is a negative correlation between teaching formal grammar and improving students' writing skills. Yet 25 years after Braddock, Lloyd-Jones, and Schoer's study, Trimmer's survey reveals that many basic writing programs still place inordinate emphasis upon discrete grammar instruction. Not all the teachers who insist on teaching formal grammar as the bedrock of writing skills are uninformed or unaware of the research, however; many are teaching in programs that employ competency testing in grammatical skills. The very presence of such a test at the conclusion of a course implies that the skills it presumes to test are important and that instruction time should be devoted to such skills. Coordinators and directors of such basic writing programs can at best appear ambivalent when we endorse grammar-skills workbooks as texts, uphold grammar

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Linda Meeker, coordinator of the Basic Writing Program at Ball State University, is a member of the graduate faculty in Composition and Rhetoric, and assistant chair of the English Department. She has used computers in her writing classrooms since 1981, regularly examining computers' impact on students' writing, their composing behavior, and the classroom environment, aided in part by grants from Digital Equipment Corporation and AT&T. She and Barbara Weaver are codirectors for one of the fifteen sites participating in the National Project on Computers and College Writing.

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competency testing, and simultaneously urge teachers to place grammar instruction in the context of writing instruction. If we are ever to create a positive public and legislative perception of basic writing courses—as developmental rather than remedial; as a complex integration of listening, speaking, reading, thinking, and writing skills rather than as a simplistic parceling of grammar, sentence construction, and paragraph construction—we must reshape the public messages we send. Primary among those messages are assessment tools: course title and catalog descriptions, program descriptions, text selection, and even the leanest syllabi will reflect the values inherent in a program's assessment tools.

Old Program

When I became Coordinator of the Basic Writing Program at Ball State University in the Fall of 1985, I inherited a smoothly running program. The approximately 1100 students we were serving each year (27% of the incoming class) were identified by SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) verbal scores of 360 or below, TSWE (Test of Standard Written English) scores of 36 or below, or ACT (American College Test) English scores of 15 or below. The course itself, ENG 099, was publicly described in *The Writing Program,* a booklet containing syllabi, departmental placement and grading standards, information about tutoring and manuscript preparation, and sample student essays for all four courses included in the General Studies Writing Program. The published syllabus described ENG 099, Fundamentals of English Composition, as "a remedial course in expected, basic competencies in writing, designed to prepare students to do the college level work required of them in ENG 103 and subsequent courses both in the English Department and at Ball State University in general." It focused on "the fundamentals of English Composition, with special attention to the problems of grammar and mechanics." Requirements for course credit included three "C" level essays written in class at the end of the quarter and competency level scores on spelling and language skills tests. Although the specific course objective was "to improve the students' writing abilities so that they will be successful in ENG 103" (*success* being defined as earning the required minimum grade of C), a description of the course content appeared weighted toward grammar and mechanics (9 items listed) and sentence construction (5 items listed). "Paragraph construction" and "theme writing" warranted but a single listing each, although a separate listing of requirements did include a diagnostic and final theme, four short papers (frequently interpreted as single paragraphs of 150–200

words), and three regular themes (300 words) as well as the pre- and post-language skills tests and pre- and post-spelling tests. The required texts were either the departmental favorite, Fawcett and Sandburg's *Evergreen: A Guide to Basic Writing,* which concentrates on paragraph development through rhetorical modes, or Sieben and Anthony's *Composition Five: Skills for Writing* which, although trying to integrate reading and writing, conveys by 2 to 1 bulk the message that grammar, mechanics, and spelling are more important than the reading skills and writing instruction offered in each chapter.

By assuming responsibility for the program, I was assuming responsibility for the message that instruction in basic skills constituted instruction in basic writing, and that made me uncomfortable. As a teacher in the program, I had not shouldered such responsibilities. When I had reluctantly walked back into a basic writing classroom in 1979 after avoiding such teaching assignments for six years, I was determined that I would make a significant difference in my basic writers' proficiency with language—not the demonstrable difference that our testing of discrete subskills could reveal but the difference that is gauged by a writer's ability to respond effectively to a variety of writing tasks in a variety of contexts. Even a class limited to 18 students (currently 15) would inundate me with paper and demands for time if I individualized their instruction the way I did for occasional weak students in my regular classes. Yet I would not forego journals, or the graduated writing assignments that prompted students to discover a variety of writing contexts, or written responses to their peers' writing, or the production of texts that exceeded the lengths required by the program and suggested by our textbooks. My classroom was process-driven. I could not in good conscience spend time on formal grammar instruction with students for whom such an approach to writing had not been successful. There was little reason to assume that in just one more term these students would magically integrate the declarative knowledge necessary for grammar and the procedural knowledge of sentence combining and construction necessary for writing if the two were taught separately to prepare students for exams. So, as I devised and borrowed methods for handling the paper load, I relegated any grammar instruction that was not related to individual students' writing to recommended but optional CAI (Computer Assisted Instruction) grammar modules on our university mainframe computer. And aside from one class discussion about the linguistic patterns evident in the errors students had made on the spelling pretest, I made spelling improvement the students' responsibility as well.[1] My

students' scores on the posttests for spelling and language skills did not drop off as I had feared they might; the spelling scores, in fact, improved so that I rarely had students earning scores below 90. I became comfortable with my compromise with the stated objectives for the course; but when I assumed responsibility for the program, I could no longer sanction the discrepancy.

Working with the basic writing faculty, I sought first to shift their attitudes toward the course and their basic writers. The basic writing faculty at Ball State University are a select group of experienced writing teachers whose flexibility in responding to individual students' differences initially recommended them for basic writing assignments. But the remedial, basic skills image so long associated with the course and inherent in the course description and assessment procedures proved difficult to shatter. Interfering, too, were vestiges of Ball State's infamous "limiter system" of grading writing (a single "serious" error limited an essay grade to a C in a regular writing class, 2 to a D, 3 to an F). In faculty workshops we discussed the relationship between the competency requirements and the stated objectives, tinkering with the stated objectives so as to emphasize a whole-process approach to writing. Without immediately altering the assessment tools, I wanted the individual faculty members themselves to recognize that their considered judgments were the final measure of a student's writing proficiency and potential for success in ENG 103. By consensus we raised the cutoff scores required to certify competency in spelling and language skills to convey the message to students that we were looking for more than minimum competency, but simultaneously I was encouraging faculty not to teach to the tests, not to dictate spelling words each week, not to spend time teaching formal grammar. We altered our criteria for selecting textbooks, eliminating first the spiral bound or tear-sheet workbooks that reinforced instruction in discrete subskills, then the texts with reams of blank pages to be filled in a linear writing sequence. The available textbooks, however, while responding to the terms *basic writer* and *developmental* rather than *remedial,* still reflected a basic skills mentality. Clearly, the smoothly running program contained a number of incompatible demands on teachers and students alike. The program had to be redefined.

The Climate for Change

The climate in which I sought to alter the program was determined by legislative demands at the least for accountability and at most for the elimination of remedial courses at the university

level,[2] a dean and a provost whose orientations were quantitative, and a program with a successful track record: for ten years our graduates had been averaging a C+ in ENG 103, a full half-grade higher than students placing initially in this first of two required writing courses. That track record, projected into the future, could satisfy demands for accountability. So why tamper with success? Because the basic writing teachers who were committed to empowering their students, to providing academic outsiders the tools for succeeding in an academic community, found themselves serving a schizophrenic master: public perception of the course allowed them some flexibility in writing instruction, but it *demanded* instruction in grammar and spelling. Pedagogically, the formal grammar instruction was unsound. Publicly, we were perceived as teaching students to produce correct texts. Politically, then, we needed quantitative data both to demonstrate the irrelevance of formal grammar instruction to writing improvement and assessment, and to shift the public perception of the course from "remedial" (only one step more enlightened than "bonehead English") to "developmental," not different in type from our required writing courses. The course did not belong in the profile of "remedial" courses the legislature was seeking to eliminate from university level education. Our public messages had to change.

The fullest public message was the course description in *The Writing Program* pamphlet that each student was required to purchase. The stated goal of the course was to teach students to write. If we were to consider the description to be articulation of what it means to teach students to write, the lists of grammatical and mechanical teaching objectives suggested it meant providing students instruction that would lead them to master discrete skills. By contrast, I saw teaching students to write as encompassing full composing processes; Flower and Hayes' and Sondra Perl's work had made apparent the complexity of our task. Our goal was to enable students to understand their own composing processes and thereby take ownership of their texts, to generate text marked by both focus and amplitude, to see and act on what Shaughnessy calls the "intelligence" of their mistakes, and to revise and edit effectively to demonstrate awareness of audience and purpose. The conflict was aggravated by our assessment practices: the diagnostic and final testing in language skills and spelling encouraged both students and instructor to see those skills as independent from the skills necessary to revise and edit the essays composed during the term.

The competency tests I inherited were established to satisfy two goals: to assess competency in the skills areas tested, and to predict

success in the subsequent courses, ENG 103 and 104, both of which require a grade of C for credit. The second goal, however, contains inherent questions about the first and about the assumptions underlying the selection of skill areas to be tested. The very assessment process sends messages to students and faculty about the relative importance of the skills being tested and about the emphasis to be placed on those skills during the term. The language skills tests required recognition, identification, and correction of errors in grammar and mechanics; the spelling tests required students to master 100 of the most frequently misspelled words in English. Inevitably, the assessment process prompted instructors to "teach to the test," in our case by providing units on grammar and spelling discrete from the writing units.

Students' scores on their language skills tests, however, frequently were inconsistent with their essay grades, placing instructors in a dilemma about giving the students credit for the course. Our policy ultimately was to rely upon the students' essay grades and performance during the term to determine whether the student would succeed in ENG 103; but by making the cutoff score on the language skills test flexible, we essentially undermined the stated requirements and sent out an ambivalent message to both faculty and students. To resolve those problems, I began to look at the data we had and the internal and external expectations for the course.

Data for approximately ten years indicated significant correlations for both spelling scores and essay grades with subsequent course grades; language skills test scores showed no such correlation. The data suggested our competency testing components were not actually measuring competencies required in subsequent courses. Requiring competency testing that bore no relation to success in subsequent courses could only have a negative impact on instruction in ENG 099, on the students' expectations as they progressed into ENG 103 and 104, and residually on their assumptions about the writing competency exam they would face as juniors or seniors.

The politics of accountability, however, both at the institutional and at the state legislative levels, made dropping the language skills tests a dangerous proposition; our competency testing must yield easily quantifiable results. Like the IRS, administrators and legislators must see the numbers. Despite the weight of research on formal grammar instruction,[3] my own experience and classroom research, and studies of assessment practice,[4] I could not immediately abandon the objective testing. Changing the form and emphasis of the tests, then, appeared to be an alternative that could

reduce the amount of formal grammar instruction in the classroom and yet provide the program with an assessment tool that would satisfy both the need for program accountability and for a more relevant measure of students' ability to use the language with conventional accuracy.

To provide justification for altering the language skills tests, we had the precedent set by the Educational Testing Service when they scrapped a model similar to ours a number of years ago (Diederich, *Measuring Growth*). But the models used by the TSWE suggest that students can at least recognize where an error is located and can recognize appropriate corrections from multiple choice options. To determine, then, whether any part of our test format was valid and worth retaining, first we needed to evaluate the two components of the test, recognition and correction, which measured students' ability to identify errors with terminology and then to correct errors. Looking separately at the two skills measured on our language skills test, I questioned whether either component of our language skills test, recognition or correction, would correlate significantly with subsequent course grades. I assumed that we would find no significant correlation between identification of errors and subsequent course grades, but I was less sure about correlations between editing ability and subsequent course grades.

Competency Criteria Study

With support during the latter stages from The Center for Teaching and Learning and from the acting Dean of Sciences and Humanities, I began gathering data. The subjects of this study were students enrolled in the basic writing course, ENG 099, from Autumn 1985 to Spring 1987. The two-and-a-half years' accumulation of data in this study included students' SAT verbal and math scores, TSWE scores, high school rank, scores on pre- and post-spelling and language skills tests, final three essay grades (used as a single average for the analysis), grades in ENG 099 and the subsequent ENG 103 course, and language skills test scores divided into recognition and correction components. In addition to providing us the predictive value of SAT and TSWE scores and high school rank for placement, the analysis allowed us to examine earlier correlations between performance on spelling and essays and subsequent course grades, and to judge formal grammar instruction separately from instruction in revision and editing on the language skills test.

Results

I used two methods, multiple correlation models and regression tests, to examine the data with SPSS-X, a statistical analysis program available from Digital Equipment Corporation for their VAX computers. My goal was to determine the degree of correlation between the individual competency components and students' ENG 103 grades; in other words, I wanted to know how accurately students' scores on the language skills and spelling tests and their grades on their final three papers in ENG 099 would predict their final grade in ENG 103.

First, to examine the various components' contributions to an accurate prediction and to keep from inflating the probability of error, I created four different multiple correlation models. Since previous data had indicated that the essay average score and the spelling posttest score show a significant correlation with ENG 103 grades, I entered those two variables in the first equation with the dependent variable of ENG 103 grades. I added the language skills test score in the second equation, and the recognition and correction subscores of the language skills test in the fourth equation. The third equation included all the variables but the language skills test score. As the earlier data suggested, the essay average score correlated most significantly (see Figure 1). In other words, ENG 099 essay grades can predict ENG 103 grades; we cannot, however, claim such predictive value for scores on the other competency components.

In the second method, regression tests using backward elimination revealed that recognition of errors (identifying errors with terminology) had least relevance to success in ENG 103. Remaining variables contributing least to the model were removed by SPSS-X in the following order: spelling posttest, language skills test (both recognition and correction components), and correction of errors (see Figure 2). The language skills tests explained so little of the variance in ENG 103 grades as to be negligible in effect as a predictor of students' success. In fact, the set of skills represented by the recognition and correction subscores was negatively related to students' success in ENG 103 (see Beta columns, Figures 1 & 2). Most of our basic writing faculty had been devoting at least twelve hours of instruction each quarter to a set of skills that proved to have no predictive worth to the program.

The elimination of the spelling score in Step 2 (see Figure 2) puzzled me. Since the previous ten years of data had consistently demonstrated a significant correlation between the spelling score and ENG 103 grades, despite shifts in the cutoff score, I examined the degree of improvement between pre- and posttests on spelling

FIGURE 1

MULTIPLE CORRELATION

Dependent variable: ENG 103 grade

	VARIABLES	Beta	Sig T
Equation 1:	Essay Average	.135906	.0000*
(Signif F = .0000)+	Spelling Post	.034140	.2984
	(constant)		.0000
Equation 2:	Language Skills	.033360	.3393
(Signif F = .0000)+	Spelling Post	.027329	.4159
	Essay Average	.125323	.0003*
	(constant)		.0001
Equation 3:	Correction	-.012230	.9248
(Signif F = . 0001)+	Spelling Post	.036449	.2682
	Essay Average	.140575	.0000*
	Recognition	-.029509	.8191
	(constant)		.0000
Equation 4:	Language Skills	.050458	.1712
(Signif F = . 0001)+	Recognition	-.003776	.9769
	Spelling Post	.026438	.4328
	Essay Average	.127458	.0003*
	Correction	-.050784	.7017
	(constant)		.0001

*Indicates significant correlation.

+Indicates that the equation itself is significant.

FIGURE 2

REGRESSION TESTS, BACKWARD ELIMINATION

VARIABLE REMOVED	VARIABLES	Beta	Sig T
Step 1: Recognition	Language Skills	.050612	.1652
(Signif F = .0000)+	Spelling Post	.026358	.4324
	Essay Average	.127559	.0002*
	Correction	-.054500	.1042
	(constant)		.0001
Step 2: Spelling Post	Language Skills	.056570	.1128
(Signif F = .0000)+	Essay Average	.132322	.0001*
	Correction	-.054968	.1011
	(constant)		.0000
Step 3: Language Skills	Essay Average	.150891	.0000*
(Signif F = .0000)+	Correction	-.039345	.2198
	(constant)		.0000
Step 4: Correction	Essay Average	.144843	.0000*
(Signif F = .0000)+	(constant)		.0000

*Indicates significant correlation.

+Indicates that the model itself is significant.

and found it to correlate with the ENG 103 grades. In other words, the degree of improvement basic writers demonstrated in mastering

the list of 100 words is one of the predictors of their success in the subsequent writing course.

The analysis, then, provided us two conclusions important for assessment: it validated the earlier correlations noted between performance on spelling and essays and subsequent course grades; and it confirmed that there was no significant correlation between the language skills testing and subsequent course grades. These findings concur with the conclusions Hillocks reaches on the relationship between teaching formal grammar and teaching writing.

Effects

The timing for this study was fortuitous since our recent switch to semesters created an atmosphere for positive, cooperative change. As a result of this study, an earlier study proposing a five-step formula using TSWE scores and high school class rank for placing students in Writing Program courses was approved by the department and, with additional impact studies, is university policy for students matriculating in Fall 1989 and thereafter; course objectives have been redefined and published in *The Writing Program* pamphlet; text choices reflect the new objectives; new assessment tools are in place; and through in-service workshops and informal consultations with basic writing faculty I am already seeing efforts to reduce the negative effects of isolated grammar instruction.

New Course

To strengthen the credibility of our Basic Writing Program, we are relying not only on the data we can present but also on published material that shapes the perception of the course as an integral, respectable component of the Writing Program. In *The Writing Program* pamphlet, the course content description now recognizes grammar and mechanics as "editing skills" within the writing process, and the stated objective of the course, "to improve the students' writing abilities so that they will be successful in ENG 103," has been expanded to articulate criteria for judgment that parallel those for ENG 103 and 104:

> In this course students should
>
> a. begin to acquire habits of accuracy and clarity in composing sentences and paragraphs

b. understand and practice the organizational concepts of focus and development in writing essays
c. understand and practice the narrative, descriptive, expository, and persuasive forms of writing
d. demonstrate understanding of the integration of reading and writing processes
e. understand and practice informal methods of research
f. develop editing skills regarding grammar, mechanics, and English usage appropriate to various contexts

The criteria that the basic writing faculty developed to select texts in the Spring of 1988 even more clearly mark a departure from teaching discrete subsets of skills. To be selected, texts had to demonstrate "an integration of reading and writing processes, with specific attention to audience"; treat writing as a "goal-directed process," rhetorical "modes as generative strategies and organizational aids," and "grammar as part of the revising and editing process, not as an end in itself"; include suggestions for "informal research"; and as "desirable but not essential," include instruction on word processing. The three texts chosen and reaffirmed for 1989–90 were Anson and Wilcox's *Writing in Context,* McCleary's *Writing All the Way,* and Tyner's *Writing Voyage.* For the first time, an optional reader was selected as well, Presley and Prinsky's *The World of Work.*

Most significant, however, is a redefinition of the course in terms of our assessment tools:

> Competency requirements reflect classroom emphasis on an integrated writing process. Components for competency assessment are given the following weight:
>
> 60% portfolio of three fully revised essays to be graded by the classroom teacher and adjudged at the C level or above.
>
> 25% a fifty-minute writing sample to be graded holistically by at least two other ENG 099 faculty.
>
> 15% a 90% performance level on the final test in spelling.
>
> A student must achieve 75% to receive credit in ENG 099.

The portfolio requirement clearly articulates an endorsement of the process-driven classroom. Guidelines for the basic writing faculty expand that endorsement to include peer response and collaborative writing as means of empowering student writers, of

enabling them to take ownership of their own texts. Awareness of an audience for their writing, of their roles as both writers and readers, and of their own writing processes is integral to the course objectives that we see matched by the portfolio component of assessment. For the portfolio students are encouraged to select their best writing based upon self-evaluation, peer evaluation, and teacher response. Each portfolio includes not only the student's three fully revised essays but the drafts with comments by peers and teacher. It is on the portfolio that the weight of competency assessment rests; and it is with the classroom teacher that the final assessment of a student's writing competency remains.

The basic writing faculty do not function in a vacuum, however. The vitality of the program emerges as we work with the writing sample each term in a collaborative effort that is providing an invaluable opportunity for faculty development. All faculty teaching in the Basic Writing Program are involved in the one-day grading sessions at the end of each term so no teacher reads papers from his or her own students, and each benefits from hearing colleagues' judgments about proficiency levels.[5] All papers receive at least two readings; a third is warranted if raters disagree by more than one point on a six-point scale. The results are not binding on the teachers since the competency components are weighted, so the faculty have a positive attitude toward the writing sample that they convey to their students. Both can recognize that the variability in a writer's production of text means that no single measure of writing could be used to certify competency. The training-and-grading sessions not only ensure interjudge reliability in holistic scoring, then, but they also reinforce whole-process instruction and encourage program-consistent evaluation of the portfolios.

Faculty are involved as well in developing the topics for the writing sample so that we draw on their experience and prompt writing that is consistent with instruction. The format for the writing prompts requires students to respond to a situation, evaluate information, and act. They are provided a specific rhetorical context, audience, and purpose in order to approximate real rhetorical situations as closely as possible. Classroom preparation, however, will already have included discussion about the academic, "*real* rhetorical situation" that Hoetker urges us to acknowledge (387), so students will be fully aware of a primary audience beyond their classroom. Despite Brossell's findings that prompts with "moderate information loads" produced essays with "a higher mean score and a greater mean length than essays written" in response to prompts with "low" or "high" information loads (172), this first year we followed Odell's guidelines and the example

of the National Assessment of Educational Progress: we provided students the full rhetorical situation in the writing prompt. This next year we anticipate studying the effects of various levels of rhetorical "information load" in classroom writing sessions so that we can better determine the optimum information load for our writing sample prompt.

The spelling test remains among our assessment tools not as a deterrent to credit but as a component of the evaluation over which students can have control. Circumstances may work against their satisfactorily passing the writing sample, but with an acceptable portfolio and motivation to pass the spelling test, they can still earn credit in the course.

The examination of our assessment criteria has prompted fruitful, continuing program evaluation. Specifically, it has provided us information useful for our goal of creating more accurate and relevant tools for competency assessment, tools that must reflect the objectives of ENG 099, function reliably to place students for success in ENG 103, provide data to satisfy the need for institutional accountability, and begin to reshape the public perception of the course itself.

Notes

[1] See Kristine Anderson's "Using a Spelling Survey" for an effective method of tying spelling to a whole writing process.

[2] Between accountability and elimination of remedial courses was a compromise position that recognized the state's lack of a junior or community college system and that yet would reduce the state's investment in remedial programs at the university level by designating a single institution to provide such programs. Ball State University's commitment to provide advising and tutoring support in University College for students who are underprepared or who have not declared a major would have made Ball State the likely candidate for such designation and ensured continuation of the Basic Writing Program. See Gail Stygall's "Politics and Proof in Basic Writing" for further discussion of the political climate surrounding basic writing programs in the state of Indiana at the time of this study. For an excellent perspective on the national political context for basic writing programs, see Andrea Lunsford's "Politics and Practices in Basic Writing."

[3] For reports of research and the continuing controversy over formal grammar instruction and its alternatives, see Bartholomae; Bowden; Connors; Daiker, Kerek, and Morenberg; DeBeaugrande; D'Eloia; Hartwell; Hillocks "Responses" and "What Works"; Kahler; Loban; Maimon "Measuring" and "Words Enough"; Matsuhashi; Mellon "Issues"; Mulcahy;

Neuleib; O'Hare; Shaughnessy; R. H. White; Whitehead. For an especially balanced and sensible approach to grammar instruction for writers, see Neuleib and Brosnahan.

[4] See Braddock; Brossell "Current Research"; Brown; Diederich *Measuring Growth* and "Problems and Possibilities"; Godshalk, Swineford, and Coffman; Lathrop; Mellon *National Assessment;* Presley; Thompson; Edward M. White.

[5] See Jon Jonz, "Using Pooled Judgments," for similar collaborative assessment procedures.

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Jacqueline Costello

PROMOTING LITERACY THROUGH LITERATURE: READING AND WRITING IN ESL COMPOSITION

As those teaching them soon discover, ESL composition courses present a variety of challenges to students and instructors alike. Non-native speakers need special schooling not only in grammar and syntax but also in the cultural assumptions of the American academy and in the rhetorical conventions of English discourse, which often differ markedly from their native patterns of composition. Now that universities across the country have reinstated the traditional requirements that were largely abandoned during the turbulent seventies, we are confronted with yet another responsibility in ESL writing classes—to prepare these students for the often alien concepts that structure the typical liberal arts course.

To provide our non-native speakers, who come from widely divergent linguistic, cultural, and educational backgrounds, with the tools necessary for meeting these liberal arts requirements, we must design composition courses that combine reading, writing, grammar, aspects of American culture, and methods for developing the analytic skills expected in upper-level courses. As a number of scholars have argued, making literary texts a component of the ESL curriculum provides multiple opportunities for addressing these

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various concerns. Povey, and Marquardt observe that literary texts offer both elegant examples of linguistic forms and insights into the culture from which they spring. McKay explains that "reading necessitates the ability to interact with a text by decoding the language and comprehending the concepts presented" (530), while the exploration of literary texts not only "constitutes real content" (Gajdusek, 229) but also acts as a stimulus for writing and exposition (Spack, 1985). Moreover, discussion of a literary work with readers from diverse backgrounds is a lesson in cultural relativity that heightens cultural awareness and sensitivity (McGroarty & Galvin, 1985).

Despite the growing body of research attesting to the benefits of incorporating literature into our ESL syllabi, literary texts have apparently not enjoyed the resurgence of attention we might expect (Gajdusek, 227). One explanation for this failure is that the ordinary problems of reading literature are unavoidably compounded for ESL students. There is, for example, the common tendency to translate a work into their native language: I have seen whole pages of textbooks covered with a word-by-word decoding that makes it impossible for a student to sense overall meaning or to segment passages into smaller units of specific information. Furthermore, many of these students bring an understandable anxiety to their reading assignments, and the cultural assumptions that dictate a given piece may arouse unconscious resistance and hostility, further impeding their comprehension. To take one such case, some of my Asian students have had initial difficulty with Sherwood Anderson's "Unforgotten" (entitled "Discovery of a Father" in some anthologized versions) because Anderson's criticism of his father made them profoundly uncomfortable: in their cultures, one would not publicly express disapproval of one's parent. Moreover, many students from non-Western cultures are perplexed by the existential quest for self that informs so much of our twentieth-century literature. In their worlds, the self derives significance not in the quest for an autonomy to be found in some nebulous realm beyond the boundaries of culture but from its place in the group, and the harmony of this group supersedes individual notions and needs. Additionally, students from preindustrial nations may be profoundly inhibited in their approach to literary interpretation because, until recently, texts in their societies were exclusively sacred documents (Osterloh, 78). Indeed, our insistence on originality and analysis is perturbing to many homogeneous groups, and our celebration of open-mindedness and relativistic thinking is apt to collide with the values of a fundamentalist community (Bizzell, 453).

Linguistic and cultural handicaps notwithstanding, my own experience has consistently demonstrated that literature is an invaluable adjunct to ESL composition, especially when teaching units are built on reading selections that are contemporary and challenging. And as reading comprehension improves, so does mastery of grammar, rhetoric, and Western culture. Students who are reading literature must go beyond the simple gathering of information from a piece of writing in the target language. They are asked to analyze the literary selection not only for its content but also for its aesthetic qualities and its relevance to their own lives.

Because many of us in composition share Ross Winterowd's belief that narrative is the "deep structure" of language and culture (165–66), that is, because the formal and informal narratives we produce at once reflect and shape our perceptions of reality, narrative literature seems a natural component of the ESL curriculum. As Kermode argues, human beings depend on narrative to create an illusion of order: "To make sense of their span they need fictive concords with origins and ends, such as give meaning to lives and to poems" (7). However different the backgrounds of our students may be, storytelling is common to all cultures, all times.

For these reasons, short stories and autobiographical essays may be the most productive way to launch a semester's work. Because stories told by a first-person narrator convey a strong sense of immediacy and authenticity, I most often begin with selections such as Sherwood Anderson's "Unforgotten," Delmore Schwartz's "In Dreams Begin Responsibilities," Tillie Olsen's "I Stand Here Ironing," and excerpts from Russell Baker's *Growing Up,* Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior,* Jamaica Kincaid's *Annie John,* and Richard Rodriguez's *Hunger of Memory.* As Oster contends, "Stories told from a single, limited point of view or through the eyes of one character make excellent vehicles for demonstrating the extent to which limited knowledge or an emotional stake in the events colors a character's vision" (85). Narratives like these also encourage students to explore their own pasts and compare their experiences to those of the characters they read about, to consider ways in which they might structure their memories, and to discover how much content they already have.

Moreover, each of these selections highlights a crucial question: how can we comprehend all the implications of an event, an emotion, even a conversation at the same time as it is unfolding before us? The answer, Freud contends, is that we cannot. Rather than making sense of an experience while in the heat of living it, we discover meaning after the fact, in the calm of recollecting it. Freud

calls this psychological process *nachträglichkeit,* translated as "belatedness," "deferred action," or "deferred revision," which explains the way in which an individual revises experiences, impressions, and memories at later dates to accommodate subsequent experiences or new stages of development. To cite a literary example, the narrator of Anderson's "Unforgotten" presents a portrait of his father that changes quite powerfully at tale's end, and the altered impression of the father is occasioned by a single significant event, an event that *rewrites* much of what has preceded it. By foregrounding this idea that all interpretation is belated vision/revision, I hope to convey to my students the inherent instability of meaning(s)—in life and in art—and thus urge them to rethink, reread, rewrite.

Although my introductions to the readings are deliberately minimal, ensuring only that students have sufficient background knowledge of textual content, preinvolvement can be generated quickly by asking the class to speculate about a provocative title or by reading a brief excerpt aloud and discussing the expectations it arouses. To illustrate the way a typical unit unfolds, I will take our study of Tillie Olsen's "I Stand Here Ironing" as representative. I begin by reading the opening and the penultimate paragraph aloud:

> I stand here ironing, and what you asked me moves tormented back and forth with the iron.
>
> "I wish you would manage the time to come in and talk with me about your daughter. I'm sure you can help me understand her. She's a youngster who needs help and whom I'm deeply interested in helping."
>
> "Who needs help." . . . Even if I came, what good would it do? You think because I am her mother I have a key, or that in some way you could use me as a key? She has lived for nineteen years. There is all that life that has happened outside of me, beyond me. . . .
>
> I will never total it all. I will never come in to say: She was a child seldom smiled at. Her father left me when she was a year old. I had to work her first six years when there was work or I sent her home and to his relatives. There were years she had care she hated. She was dark and thin and foreign-looking in a world where the prestige went to blondness and curly hair and dimples, she was slow where glibness was prized. She was a child of anxious, not proud, love. We were poor and could not afford for her the soil of easy growth. I was a young mother, I was a distracted mother. There were the other children pushing up, demanding. Her

younger sister seemed all that she was not. There were years she did not want me to touch her. She kept too much in herself, her life was such she had to keep too much in herself. My wisdom came too late. She has much to her and probably little will come of it. She is a child of her age, of depression, of war, of fear.

The class then jots down observations about what they have heard. Based on these observations, what can they infer about characters, plot, structure, and style? This prereading exercise gives students a sense of what is to come and directs their attention to the story's essential components, helping them to approach the text in a more sure-footed manner.

As Culler reminds us, "To read is always to read in relation to other texts, in relation to the codes that are the products of these texts and go to make up a culture" (17). So reading a story, an essay, a poem, a play, invariably involves an encounter with these interdependent codes of language, art, and the culture to which they belong. Obviously, this encounter differs for each individual, and the reader's own history may strongly affect his or her particular experience of the text at hand. To prompt students to express their own responses, associations, and difficulties, I ask them to do focused freewritings on specific aspects of a work before I have any opportunity—intentionally or otherwise—to color their readings. Their particular preconceptions and resistances to the cultural assumptions of a given text are likely to emerge in these informal writings. Reading their reactions aloud enables students to confront their respective cultural biases, to reflect upon the diversity of their responses, and to see how much they have, in fact, understood—despite their frequent protest to the contrary. They quickly observe that no two readers notice all the same details, raise identical questions, or echo exactly each other's interpretation. As the following excerpts from one group of student responses to "I Stand Here Ironing" suggest, each reader brings to a text his or her own repertoire of experiences with literature, life, and culture:

- Emily's story is a story of many separations.
- What really attracted me was the way the author brought the past into the present.
- I loved the way the story was written, but I think it is not very original. Let's remember "La Petite Madeleine" de Proust. By eating la petite Madeleine, Proust remembers his past and his youth.
- Emily was a child who was born in the wrong place, at the

wrong time. She was every girl who needed adults and warmth and the companionship of friends.

- The style is like an ancient Greek dramatic monologue, but here, as a contemporary story, there is not a *deus ex machina.*
- Ironing is probably the only time when the mother "totals it all," talking to herself because there is no other time or person for her.
- At first, I wondered if an American could have this delicate affection and indirect expression of love for her children. But after I finished the story, I realized the essence of humanity was the same all over the globe.
- The story comes from a book called *Tell Me a Riddle.* It seems like a riddle, like the mother is trying to find the answers to the riddles of her life. And Emily is another riddle she can't solve.
- The author makes her readers think further by ending the story with a question and a plea.
- In the beginning of the story, the author uses a flashback technique illustrated by the mother while she is ironing her daughter's dress. This allows the author to introduce the mother's present ideas regarding her past actions towards Emily. The author successfully uses both the main character and the image of the iron moving back and forth to represent the memories of the past in the present.
- In the end, the story is condensed in one paragraph to explain the mother's treatment of the child, which was influenced by the time in which she lived and the problems she had to solve.

In addition to freewriting about various aspects of the text, students compose four or five questions about the work, and these questions often provide the foundation for an entire discussion period. Although many non-native students are self-conscious about their English and understandably reluctant to speak impromptu in class, they are usually quite willing to read aloud from their notebooks. Because discussion of a work flows largely from their own questions and informal writings, the class is far less teacher-centered and students respond accordingly.

Having students compose questions about a text serves yet another essential purpose. Asking questions in class is an integral part of the Western academic tradition, but to students from Asian cultures, for example, doing so may raise disquieting possibilities. Because they prize group harmony rather than individual expression, their cultures naturally discourage calling attention to oneself

by speaking out. Furthermore, if others think their question stupid, they lose face. Even more intimidating, if the teacher cannot "answer" the question, they cause her to lose face, an unhappy situation that reflects most negatively on the instigator. But a genuine spirit of inquiry can mitigate these fears: because every member of the class prepares questions about each of the readings, this practice become more familiar and less threatening. At the same time, students come to understand that the purpose of these questions is not to find the right answers but to approach a text from as many vantage points as possible. They also learn that the most interesting questions have no single answer. Here, for example, are some of the questions my students raised about "I Stand Here Ironing":

- Why is "She was a beautiful baby" repeated twice in the beginning of the story?
- Who is the "you" the mother is speaking to?
- Why does the narrator ask herself so many questions? Why doesn't she answer these questions?
- Why did the mother neglect her daughter so many times?
- Where does Emily's gift for comedy come from?
- What is the significance of the title?
- Why is the mother ironing while she tells the story?
- Why does she compare her daughter to the dress she is ironing?
- What does she want for her daughter?

The class is then assigned a second reading of the text and additional freewritings both to promote close reading and to help them realize that each reading of a given work is a new experience, a *different* reading, however subtle that difference may be. As McConochie remarks, "Writing assignments that prompt rereading and reflection help students to extend their understanding and thus their literary pleasure" (125). They come to see that one often cannot determine, in a first encounter, what elements of a particular work are significant. They learn that just as good writers revise their prose, so good readers are rereaders, who return to the text not to find out what happens but to discover how the author makes it happen. These subsequent readings commonly lead to a revision of earlier impressions, even as they suggest new answers and raise new questions.

The goal of these activities is not some privileged knowledge of the "true meaning" of a particular work, for that would reduce both the work and the reading to a single standard and purpose. Rather, I hope that students will become *active* readers who are engaged in a

recursive process: readers who are discovering the relationships between reading and writing, between literature and other forms of discourse, and who are beginning to see literary structures as elegant examples of common patterns of organizing experience. As Fish advises, the literary work should not be approached as an object whose properties the reader tries to apprehend with certainty, but rather as an experience of the reader, so that false starts, hesitations, errors, and changes of mind are not assumed to be the predictable failings of ill-equipped students but part of the experience, and thus part of the meaning, of that text (17).

Student responses to and questions about "I Stand Here Ironing" also create an opportunity to present relevant literary terms—narrator, point of view, imagery, dramatic monologue, rhetorical questions, and so on. Notebook exercises such as recasting part of a selection from a different point of view or filling in a "gap" in the story not only allow students to apply what they have learned but also foster imaginative and sympathetic involvement in the text. For instance, one student observed, "This story is something more than six typed pages. Once you read it, you get so involved with it that you read it over and over again. It wakes you up by troubling you," while another comment anticipated the writing assignment yet to come: "I was reading the story and I had two pictures in my mind. The speaker telling the story of her life and me telling the story of my life." These informal writings reveal their difficulties with vocabulary and syntax as well, which makes further contextualization possible, and they can be encouraged to use new vocabulary and syntactical patterns in both their notebooks and their essays. A number of students remarked on the rich, metaphorical language and frequently complex sentences of Olsen's narrator and clearly strove to incorporate original imagery in the essays generated by this story.

Our discussion of the reading is followed by a consideration of relevant grammatical structures. Since most narratives are written in the past tense, an examination of the differences among the past tenses and a review of those modals that express habitual past action are often in order. Because the students will probably be modeling their own personal narratives on the literary sample, they find the grammar pertinent. Indeed, every member of the class commented in some way on the time shifts in "I Stand Here Ironing": they realized that the author's skillful handling of the then and the now contributed significantly to the story's effect and admired such mastery—which made a review of verb tenses especially appropriate. Sentences culled from the story served as models for an analysis of the present perfect, past perfect, conditional, and subjunctive tenses:

Present Perfect

"She *has lived* for nineteen years. There is all that life that *has happened* outside of me, beyond me."

"You must *have seen* it in her pantomimes."

"I *have edged* away from it, that poisonous feeling between them . . ."

"But because I *have been dredging* the past, and all that compounds a human being is so heavy and meaningful in me, I cannot endure it tonight."

The class quickly noted that the present perfect expresses an action that began at some time in the past, continues into the present, and may or may not extend into the future. As practice with this tense, I asked them to write in their notebooks about some of the strangest and most interesting experiences they *have had* in the time they *have been* in this country.

Past Perfect

"You didn't know her all those years she was thought homely, or see her poring over her baby pictures, making me tell her over and over how beautiful she *had been*—and would be, I would tell her—and was now, to the seeing eye."

"Where does it come from, that comedy? There was none of it in her when she came back to me that second time, after I *had had* to send her away again."

"Months later she told me she *had taken* pennies from my purse to buy him candy."

"Now suddenly she was Somebody, and as imprisoned in her difference as she *had been* in anonymity."

Students observed that the past perfect tense points to one past time that preceded another past time and is commonly used to express time that came before a specific event in a past narrative. They also noticed that this tense often appears in sentences that have dependent clauses, and that the verb in the main clause is usually in the past tense. Their notebook assignment was to write about a memorable summer using both the simple past and the past perfect. (When I was seven, I started swimming lessons. After I had conquered my fear of putting my head under water, I was ready to learn. . . .)

Conditional and Subjunctive

"If I write my letter nicly [sic], I will have a star."

"Even if I came, what good would it do?"

"Except that it would have made no difference if I had known."

Students worked together to distinguish the different meanings in each of these three types of "if" sentences and to develop guidelines for using the conditional. As a follow-up exercise, the class was given a selection of "if clauses" to complete, all drawn from song titles and aphorisms ("If I were a rich man," "If wishes were horses," "If ever I would leave you," and so on).

Finally, the formal writing assignment is designed to help students to internalize the literary aspects of the story by drawing on such devices and techniques in their own texts. "I Stand Here Ironing" leads to a dramatic monologue in which students recall and reflect on a period in their pasts. Following Olsen, students also begin their texts in the present ("I sit here drinking coffee . . ."), shift to the past, and return to the present once again. The more ambitious writers may try to weave back and forth from present to past as Olsen does. Whatever structure they favor, they are asked to imagine that they are speaking to a specific silent listener as they contrast what they once were, once thought, to what they now are, now think. This assignment encourages them to rediscover—indeed, revise—some aspect of their own pasts, and to reflect upon the extent to which that past has dictated their present. In addition to the practice with tenses and the implied cause/effect analysis, they have the opportunity to incorporate a number of literary techniques into their own repertoire: quoting characters, using questions for transitional purposes and repetition for emphasis, creating a controlling image, ending with a rhetorical question, following a circular structure.

Each unit culminates in reading the papers aloud, with students responding to each other's writing with the same kind of observation and attentiveness that they applied to the professional sample. They are usually proud of their work and eager to make good papers even better through revision. Most important, they have learned that reading and writing are reciprocal activities, each commenting on and enriching the other.

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Donald A. McAndrew

HANDWRITING RATE AND SYNTACTIC FLUENCY[1]

The scribal act, the physical act of writing, of moving the pen or pencil across the page so as to form decipherable words without great effort, is fundamental to the development of writing skills. Mina Shaughnessy, in her ground-breaking book on basic writing, echoes this when she characterizes basic writers as still struggling with the motor-mental coordinations that have long ago become unconscious for more practiced writers. As long as the mechanical processes involved in writing are themselves highly conscious, slow, or even labored, writers are not likely to have easy access to their thoughts.

Donald Graves, in a review of handwriting research significant for its brevity, states, "It is at the point of speed that we have underestimated the contribution of handwriting to composing" (398). Graves states that research with young writers shows that one reason they compose less effectively is because of the slowness of their handwriting, and he calls for research that attempts to uncover the connections between handwriting and writing. David Bartholomae, studying college-age writers, also finds that, even for writers of this age, "one constraint is the difficulty of moving the hand fast enough to translate meaning into print" (263), and he also calls for research into the nature of this handwriting constraint in composing.

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The body of research on handwriting, the scribal act, has been very carefully reviewed by Eunice Askov, Wayne Otto, and Warren Askov surveying the research of the 1960s, and Michaeleen Peck, Eunice Askov, and Steven Fairchild surveying the 1970s. Nowhere in the 141 studies reviewed is a direct connection between handwriting and writing examined. Judy Rice did find that handwriting rate was a significant predictor of general language achievement. And Lawrence Rarick and Theodore Harris did examine the relationship of handwriting speed and legibility, finding that, generally, increased speed led to decreased legibility except for the best handwriters who wrote legibly no matter what the speed. But neither of these studies looked directly at actual writing, rather they examined handwriting as a separate scribal process removed from the context of writing.

The body of research on writing also has examined the connection of handwriting and writing only slightly. Ellen Nold found that for children and inexperienced writers, the burden of the motor task of forming letters may overwhelm the limited capacity of short-term memory, interfering with the more global concerns of content and meaning. Sharon Pianko established the slower pace of basic writers. Her remedial and traditional groups produced approximately the same number of words per minute, but the traditional group paused twice as often as the remedial group. The remedial group, therefore, used a greater amount of time to physically write the same number of words. Pianko judged the remedial group's pieces as showing little concern for content, for getting the idea across to the reader. Brian Monahan found that effective writers did, indeed, concentrate on content, realizing that it was necessary to write fast to keep from losing thoughts. Less effective writers concentrated more on penmanship and were less able to transcribe quickly and effortlessly.

Linda Flower and John Hayes, relying on insights from cognitive psychology, explain this situation as one where the task of recording in visible language interferes with the more global processes of planning, generating, and organizing ideas according to goals established in the given writing situation. In an earlier article, Flower stresses that writing is an activity that places an enormous burden on short-term memory, constantly threatening to overload it. She states, "It is easy to see how the limits of short-term memory can affect a writer's stylistic control. For an inexperienced writer, the complex transformation of the periodic sentence—which would require remembering and relating a variety of elements and optional structures such as this sentence contains—can be a difficult juggling act" (281–282). The difficulty of this juggling act is greatly increased

when attention is additionally overloaded with concern for the motor skills of handwriting itself.

Colette Daiute agrees with Flower positing the "memory constraint hypothesis" that errors in sentence structure are most likely after sequences that could be expected to burden short-term memory. This hypothesis seems even more reasonable when the writer is not only experiencing all of the usual problems of writing but also is draining limited attention for the scribal act. The writer who must concentrate on handwriting simply has less attention for composing available from the outset. Daiute echoes psycholinguists (Miller; Sokolov) who emphasize the limited ceiling of short-term memory and its powerful influence as a real bottleneck in language activity. Marilyn Sternglass argues that the example of the most inhibited writer would be that of the writer whose attention is concentrated on the spelling of a single word. But, extending Sternglass, the most inhibited writer would be the one recording, letter by letter, the spelling of that single word, writing with great labor and attention, the writer absorbed in the motor activity of handwriting.

B. K. Britton, R. D. Westbrook, and T. S. Holdredge, investigating cognitive capacity and its engagement in language-processing activities, would describe the slow handwriter as a writer who has less capacity available for the primary task, in this case actual composing, because the secondary task, handwriting, requires more storage and more effort. These slow handwriters, cognitive psychologists (Neisser; Norman and Rumelhart) would argue, have not had the practice needed to develop the refined schemata necessary for reducing the attention given to handwriting. They suggest that this development of refined schemata is essential if handwriting is to reach the automatic level necessary for reduction of the cognitive capacity required during fluent composing. Until this happens, the portrait of the slow handwriter writing is one of a deliberate pace that absorbs attention, diverting it from the higher order concerns that produce pieces rich in content and varied in structure.

In the present investigation, a first attempt was made to study handwriting speed and its relation to one feature of written products. Specifically, this study examined the relationship of handwriting speed to the syntactic complexity of the finished product. The central research question of the study was: will the pieces produced by writers who have a slow handwriting speed be syntactically less complex, showing less embedding and branching, than those of writers who write more quickly? To write complex sentences with a variety of clausal and nonclausal modifiers

requires that a writer manipulate a number of separate linguistic bits, translating them from ideas generated, storing one or more in full or reduced form in short-term memory as others are recorded by hand. If this very act of recording by hand requires attention, not to mention a *large* amount of attention, then the attention available for storage of ideas and linguistic bits becomes less. The resultant syntax should be less complex because the writer is unable to store those things that create complexity.

Method: Subjects, Materials, and Procedures. To examine the relationship between handwriting speed and syntactic complexity, the syntax of writers identified as having a fast handwriting speed and of writers identified as having a slow handwriting speed was examined. Since the work of Shaughnessy, Pianko, and Monahan, discussed above, would suggest that basic writers could be expected to have a slower handwriting speed, and, by implication, traditional college writers could be expected to have a faster handwriting speed, subjects for the study were college students chosen from four sections of English 100, Basic Writing (SAT Verbal $\leq$ 350), and four sections of English 101, College Composition. From the 152 students in these eight sections, the thirty fastest and the thirty slowest handwriters were identified using the highest score on any one of the four tests described below.

The materials for the present investigation consisted of four tests of handwriting rate and a persuasive writing task, all completed by all subjects.

In the 141 handwriting studies reviewed by Askov, Otto, and Askov and by Peck, Askov, and Fairchild, only seven directly dealt with handwriting speed. The handwriting speed was usually estimated by having students copy a passage that was presented on the overhead or chalkboard. These researchers, in reality, measured copying speed not handwriting speed, because writers were forced to look back and forth from the original to their copied version and because the original was not necessarily written in a syntax and lexicon appropriate to the writers.

Since these studies did not have an agreed-upon method for measuring handwriting rate, except for this copying rate which was judged to be invalid, four tests were constructed according to the following guideline—the maximum handwriting speed should be estimated in a situation that comes close to real writing but that does not call for actual composing and its additional complexities.

The first test was based on Kellogg Hunt's "Aluminum" passage, a paragraph of very short sentences about the making of aluminum. Students were directed to first combine the short sentences into longer ones. When all were finished, they were asked to copy the

new paragraph. Here the students were copying a passage that was cast in syntax that was individually representative of the writer, much like actual writing, because the writer had just created the new syntax.

The second test asked students to write out from memory the Pledge of Allegiance. Writers were familiar with the material and would be transferring something from the mind to paper, again much like actual composing.

The third test asked students to copy the *Star Spangled Banner* which was printed at the top of a sheet. The fourth test asked them to recopy it as fast as they could. In both of these tests, students were familiar with the material, and in the fourth test, since they had copied it once already, they were also familiar with the scribal requirements of the passage. Both of these again seemed closer to the situation of actual composing.

All students also were asked to write a piece of writing in response to a persuasive task because research (Crowhurst and Piche; Perron) has shown persuasive discourse calls forth the most complex syntax.

The four speed tests were given during a 30–40-minute segment of class during the second week of the semester. For all four speed tests students were asked to write legibly enough so that they could read it, believing this was the standard of legibility for actual composing. For each speed test, students were timed until the first person finished, and, then, all writing stopped. The total letters produced in each situation were counted and divided by the elapsed time to produce a rate score in letters per minute. A student's highest score on any of the four tests was the score used to identify the thirty fastest and thirty slowest handwriters.

During the third week of the semester, students had two class periods (2 hours) to write in response to the persuasive writing task. William Smith has reported that students use their fastest handwriting rate when they are prepared to write about a topic. For this reason during the beginning of the first class of the two classes used for writing, students discussed the task in small groups and then did a 10-minute "freewrite" about the task to help them prepare for actual writing.

The pieces of writing of the thirty fastest and thirty slowest handwriters were then analyzed for eighteen direct or derived syntactic variables: (1) total words, (2) total clauses, (3) total T-units (independent clauses with all modification), (4) words per T-unit, (5) words per clause, (6) clauses per T-unit, (7) number of left-branched (pre-subject) structures, (8) total words in left-branched structures, (9) number of right-branched (post-predicate)

structures, (10) total words in right-branched structures, (11) number of medial embeddings (between subject and predicate), (12) total words medially embedded, (13) total free (movable in T-unit) modifiers, (14) words in free modifiers, (15) percent of words in free modifiers, (16) percent of words left-branched, (17) percent of words right-branched, (18) percent of words medially embedded.

Results: Handwriting Speed and Syntax. The assumption that basic writers would be characterized by a slower handwriting speed was shown to be true for only some basic writers. Half of the thirty fastest handwriters were basic writers and almost half, thirteen of thirty, of the slowest handwriters were traditional writers.

Results of a multivariate analysis of variance of the syntactic data indicated that basic writers wrote significantly different sentences ($p<.002$). Basic writers produced significantly fewer words ($p<.0001$), T-units ($p<.0001$), and clauses ($p<.0001$) than traditional college writers. However, the length of their T-units and clauses, as calculated by words per T-unit and words per clause, were not significantly different. Neither was the number of clauses per T-unit, the subordination ratio. It would seem then that basic writers simply write fewer T-units, but these T-units are just as long and contain subordinate clauses of the same length and at the same frequency as traditional college writers. Basic writers in this study, as has been observed frequently, showed a striking lack of overall written fluency; they simply wrote less. However, further analysis of the structure of their T-units indicated that this was only part of the truth.

Significant differences in the structure of their T-units were noted when left-branched and right-branched structures were examined. Traditional college writers produced approximately twice as many left-branched structures ($p<.001$), and these structures were almost twice as long as those of basic writers ($p<.001$). Traditional college writers also produced almost three times as many right-branched structures ($p<.02$), these structures were three and one-half times as long as those of basic writers ($p<.02$), and they made up a significantly higher percentage of the total words in the piece ($p<.05$). These striking differences demonstrate that basic writers and traditional writers wrote decidedly different types of T-units, especially in the right-branched position, a position established as characteristic of mature syntax. Traditional college writers wrote more than basic writers and wrote it in the more complex syntactic patterns associated with mature writers.

The differences in the syntactic patterns of traditional and basic writers were frequent and striking, but what of handwriting speed?

The multivariate analysis of variance for handwriting speed indicated that it did not have a significant effect on any of the eighteen syntactic variables. However, handwriting speed did approach significance as a main effect for total words ($p<.07$), total T-units ($p<.09$) and number of right-branched structures ($p<.09$). This fact coupled with what looked like some interesting patterns among the cell means led to the use of post hoc Helmert mean contrasts to see if these mean patterns were statistically significant.

The cell means for total words, total T-units and total clauses showed a statistically significant pattern, namely traditional college writers who were also fast handwriters produced more words ($p<.0001$), more T-units ($p<.001$), and more clauses ($p<.001$) than any of the other subjects whether they were also traditional college writers or fast handwriters. These traditional/fast writers also produced significantly more left-branched structures ($p<.009$), and significantly more right-branched structures ($p<.02$) and words in right-branched structures ($p<.03$). In fact, traditional college writers who were also fast handwriters finished higher on fourteen of eighteen measures when compared to traditional college writers who were slow handwriters, although the differences were statistically significant only for the six measures just mentioned. This same pattern, an advantage to the fast handwriter, was also present in the basic writers for fourteen of the eighteen variables, although none of the differences reached statistical significance.

Discussion. Slow handwriters reach the limit of full attention or engagement and remain at that level, dutifully recording a sentence that shows few of the characteristics of mature syntax. During the same amount of time, the fast handwriter has quickly recorded a syntactic chunk and, in so doing, has temporarily "emptied" attention or engagement, making it available again to focus on another unit, either a new T-unit or a part of a developing T-unit.

The fast handwriter is able, therefore, to bring attention and engagement to bear more frequently while writing. These moments when attention is temporarily emptied give the fast handwriter more opportunities to write more T-units and/or more richly modified T-units. The slow handwriters' slower scribal rate simply allows fewer of these opportunities to occur. Fewer opportunities mean less complex syntax because these opportunities are the moments when the exact words of the syntactic unit just recorded fade to, as Daiute suggests, long-term storage, a deeper, semantic level storage, freeing short-term storage, or attention to work, with a new or continuing unit. The more frequent temporary emptying of short-term memory that characterizes fast handwriters may be a

factor that gives composing a rhythm—available capacity frequently develops, attention then frequently refocuses.

In summary, this study supports the body of research that describes the differences in syntax of basic and traditional college writers, confirming previous research that indicated differences in overall fluency and differences in the use of left- and right-branching structures. This research also makes a first attempt at clarifying the speculations about how handwriting speed is related to composing, supplying at least some evidence that there is an advantage to having a fast handwriting speed, for traditional college writers for sure and quite possibly for basic writers. Finally, instructionally, this study would imply that teachers of writing should encourage traditional college writers to write rapidly when they draft their pieces. Encouraging this scribal fluency has been advised for basic writers, but this study concludes with empirical support for also recommending this to traditional college writers. Scribal fluency seems to allow for a maximizing of syntactic fluency, and it is, therefore, something that should be encouraged in all students.

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Barbara Kroll

THE RHETORIC/SYNTAX SPLIT: DESIGNING A CURRICULUM FOR ESL STUDENTS

Any college writing teacher who has read even a moderate number of essays can attest to the fact that writing proficiency exists on several different planes independently. For example, one paper can provide insightful commentary on a substantive topic while replete with problems in spelling and punctuation. Another paper can exhibit a wide range of sentence structures, flawless syntax, adherence to mechanics, yet lack development and support of its central thesis. Still another paper may be hard to read because it lacks a sense of purpose and shows no awareness of audience yet seems to be about an unusual personal experience which the reader is most curious to learn more about. In fact, empirical data from native writers of English show that the level of a student writer's proficiency in one component of writing does not necessarily correlate with his or her proficiency in a different component. For example, George Hillocks discusses the repertoire of knowledge bases that a writer has, e.g., knowledge of lexical, syntactic, and rhetorical forms, and then reviews the findings of several first language studies comparing syntactic features and quality of writing

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in *Research on Written Composition* (63–76). These studies illustrate that performance in one area can differ from performance in another.

Such variation in performance is perhaps more extreme for students of English as a second language (ESL). They must operate not only within a complex system of discourse and rhetorical rules that they have had limited exposure to but also according to an entire linguistic system (English) that may be but partially mastered. Even error-free prose by an ESL student often has a very non-native quality about it, as Andrew Cohen observes in his work on helping ESL student writers improve, and as Robert E. Land, Jr. and Catherine Whitley observe in their analysis of the evaluation of ESL essays in regular composition classes.

Cohen has identified a teaching tool known as "reformulation," which is accomplished in a two-stage process. Using an essay written by an ESL student as the starting point, a native speaker first corrects the syntactic and mechanical problems. In the second stage, the native speaker uses the corrected version as the starting point to rewrite the essay, maintaining the ideas of the non-native speaker but recasting them into language and phrasing that a native speaker would use. The second stage is necessitated by the fact that essays with no surface language errors frequently violate other principles of discourse, as Cohen observes. Similarly, Land and Whitley's research suggests that "even when an ESL writer produces an error-free composition in English, a hidden agenda leads the evaluator to find fault with other formal features" (285). This work further supports the claim that writing proficiency in one sphere may be different than writing proficiency in another sphere.

Placement Implications

ESL placement procedures, however, do not take into account variability in different aspects of written performance in assessing student writing. At many universities where there is more than one level of writing course available for ESL students, those entering the program (or completing one of the levels) may be asked to write an essay which forms all or part of a placement procedure to determine which course in the sequence they will be assigned to. These essays are usually then scored by teachers in the program using either a global holistic scale (often with a six-point range) or a more detailed set of scoring guidelines, such as the widely used 100-point ESL English Composition Profile (developed by Holly Jacobs et al.), which has raters assign differentially weighted separate sub-scores in the five categories of content, organization, vocabulary, language

use, and mechanics. Typical holistic scores are derived by asking readers to rate the essay as a whole for adherence to principles spelled out in a set of written guidelines, or rubrics; many rubrics ask readers to factor in such issues as content, organization, and language features at each of the points along the scale, so that no essay will receive a high score that does not show at least a fair amount of control in all three of these areas. While the sub-scores in the English Composition Profile can provide information on student performance in different aspects of writing, the total score provides no more than a general sense of writing competence much as the holistic score does.

A significant problem which neither one of these scoring procedures addresses is the possibility that two essays with quite different characteristics may be assigned the same overall score because of the nature of the scoring system used. For example, a score of "3" on a typical six-point scale can result from weak ability to address the topic at hand and difficulty in finding an appropriate way to structure an essay, or it can result from very weak syntactic control which interferes with comprehensibility of an otherwise well-structured argument. Similarly, a score of, say, 65–70 on the English Composition Profile may result from loss of 10–12 points in content and 7–10 points in organization together with a loss of 2–3 points each in the areas of language use, vocabulary, and mechanics, while another essay scoring 65–70 may have lost 25 points in the areas of language use, vocabulary, and mechanics, a few in organization and a few in content. What this means is that a paper which is weak in some ways and strong in others may receive the same middle-range score as another paper which has both weak and strong points *regardless of how similar or different the areas of strength and weakness are.*

In fact, because the empirical evidence to claim that a writer's grammatical accuracy (which we can also call syntactic accuracy) often exists independently of his or her organizational and discourse competency, we should be concerned with what this means in terms of essay assessment in general. At the 1989 Conference on College Composition and Communication, for example, Mary Kay Ruetten gave a paper discussing characteristics of essays that had been inconsistently scored on placement exams at the University of New Orleans. In most cases, the discrepancies were caused when papers showed clear control over either rhetoric or syntax and noticeable weakness in the other area, which led the raters to difficulty in assigning a holistic score.[1]

Separating Components of Writing

In this paper, I discuss the implications of considering different components of writing separately, which could serve to avoid the scoring problems described above. Nor should we overlook the fact that in addition to problems in scoring which may be present at the placement stage, curriculum problems can also arise when teachers try to address all possible writing problems in the same writing class. (This is certainly true in teaching native English speakers as well.) In the conclusion to his article reviewing the history of the apparent obsession English composition teaching has had with grammatical accuracy, Robert J. Connors points to the great challenge of trying to strike a balance in teaching between what he calls "formal and rhetorical considerations." He goes on to say that, "We [college English teachers] may spend the rest of our professional lives investigating how the balance between rhetoric and mechanics can best be struck" (71).

Rather than "balancing" these components of writing, I would like to propose that we separate them in working to establish curricula for ESL students. I am most concerned with ways to help students achieve what can be termed "rhetorical competency" and "syntactic accuracy." After examining how these terms function to describe different aspects of ESL student writing, I will address the question of how we might structure a curriculum which would offer appropriate options for all students of writing by taking into consideration both their strengths and weaknesses at any given entry point.

Defining "Rhetoric" and "Syntax"

I am using the term "rhetorical competence" to refer to the writer's ability to present an essay that exhibits all or most of the following qualities:

1. The essay limits and focuses on the topic in a manner appropriate to its overall approach and length.,
2. The essay remains focused on the topic throughout.
3. The essay creates and uses paragraphs effectively.
4. The essay maintains a consistent point of view.
5. The essay sequences ideas in a logical manner.
6. The essay uses coherence and cohesion devices appropriately and as necessary.

It is possible to label essays which adhere to all or most of these guidelines as "plus" rhetoric (+rhetoric) in the sense of a kind of

control over discourse structure. Essays which fail to adhere to most of these guidelines can be labeled "minus" rhetoric (−rhetoric). According to Kathryn Fitzgerald, the grading criteria for placement essays at the University of Utah focus on rhetorical properties quite similar to the ones identified above. She argues that the rhetorical problems of basic writers are as fundamental to their difficulties in college writing as their syntactical and mechanical errors, and thus should be specifically addressed in their basic writing courses. However, while the labels above give us significant information about some of the characteristics of a specific written product being evaluated, these labels do not tell us anything about whether or not the essays conform to the guidelines of standard edited English. That is to say, some essays which may be deemed well-constructed from a rhetorical point of view may exhibit frequent, elementary, and/or distracting errors at the level of sentence grammar and sentence construction. Essays which exhibit these problems can be referred to as "minus" syntax (−syntax), while those essays that more or less adhere to the patterns of standard edited English may be labeled "plus" syntax (+syntax). For the purposes of this discussion, then, syntax refers to facility in using the grammatical system of the language.

Varieties of Student Writing

Given the split between rhetoric and syntax, ESL students (not unlike native-speaker writers) fall into one of four general categories of writer based on the relative strength of their syntactical and rhetorical skills. We can use these categories to schematize the type of writing produced by students as follows: (1) +rhetoric/+syntax; (2) +rhetoric/−syntax; (3) −rhetoric/+syntax; and (4) −rhetoric/−syntax.

Skipping over the category of +rhetoric/+syntax, exemplified in any well-written, well-structured successful paper, let us take a look at three essays which illustrate the other categories. Sample Essay #1 is a +rhetoric/−syntax paper.

Sample Essay #1

The Great Transformation

> China is an ancient country. It is famouse in the world because of it's culture for thousands of years, it's vast territory (and) rich natural resouces and large population. But as it is a multiracial country, and it is devided into northern

and southern parts by Young-tze River naturally, it was disunited untill 1949 when the People's Republic of China was established. From that time on, China has been getting richer and richer. Now, everything has been enormous changed in China.

As everybody knows that China has being a famous agricultural country from long long ago. But the strange thing was that there were thousands of farmers sufferring from starvation every years. They grew rice, wheat and vegetables just for the rulers who were living in luxury, but not for themselves or their country. Now, the situation is completely different. The rulers were elected by the people who include various races and farmers. They do everything according to the benefits of the people, especially the farmers who is the ninety per cent of the population in their country. The farmers are no longer poor as they have an integrated organization of allocation which is called people's commune and they have a very complete system of demand and supply. Not only they do agriculture in their farms, but also do industry. In this way, the farmer's life are improve in a high speed.

China was a very poor country in industry (before 1949.) They could not create even a nail. But now, as we know, they have their manmade satellites, and they produce nuclear weapons, aeroplanes, vassels, atomobiles and so on without any foreign aid. Now, every big cities and small towns are industrialized except rural areas.

China is no longer poor and silent. It has being awakening, and getting stronger and stronger.

This paper was written in response to a fairly open-ended topic asking students to write about a significant change in their country. It is relatively well-organized and shows the writer's awareness of how to structure an essay using both chronology and supporting detail effectively. The writer focuses on tracing through some general changes in China since the establishment of the People's Republic, and he skillfully uses the conclusion to strengthen the assertion made in the introduction that there have been enormous changes in China.

In fact, two readers gave this paper scores of 5 and 6 on a six-point scale after being specifically trained to rate essays according to a holistic scale that assigned scores without reference to syntactic features. (The scale is taken from Kroll [1982], and reprinted as Appendix A.) Unlike a scoring guide that amalgamates

rhetoric and syntax, such as the scale used to rate the TOEFL's Test of Written English,[2] this scoring guide identifies properties of organization and coherence solely, or what we might call rhetorical and discourse competence. It says nothing about language control or competence. In that area, Sample Essay #1, which is 303 words long, contains a total of 28 errors—not including spelling—in such categories as sentence structure, singular vs. plural, word form, word order, verb tense, and so forth. The total number of errors averages one to every 10 or 11 words. One error every ten words means that the writer could string together just a few words or phrases before the next breakdown in language control led to yet another error. While few of the errors serve to interfere with one's ability to read and process the essay, they do add up to a kind of "foreign accent" in writing that marks this paper as the work of a non-native speaker. Such a high frequency of error renders this essay "−syntax."

In contrast to Sample Essay #1, Sample Essay #2 is an example of an essay which merits the polar opposite descriptors of −rhetoric/+syntax. This paper was written by an Iranian student asked to discuss the implications of a quotation by Mark Twain about the differences between education and schooling ("I have never let my schooling interfere with my education").

Sample Essay #2

Do Let Your Schooling interfer your education

Hopefully through our schooling we will all gain a great deal of practical knowledge that we can apply to any future profession that we may choose. If one is fairly intelligent and displays a certain amount of discipline, this can be easily done. However, first one must know what it is that they really want to do with their life. Where do I fit into societie's space? What kind of lifestyle do I want? What will make me happy? These are all questions we ask ourselves daily, and these can only be answered through our own education.

Somebody once said: "No man is an island." To me, to live is to love and understand people. One can spend all of his time in school and never have to relate to people. But when that person goes out into the world, he may be the last to find a job, friends, or on to love.

I have learned only through my personal experiences how to communicate with people. Diplomacy and the handling unexpected situations are most important in any profession

and this can only be gained by an awareness that comes from knowing different types of people.

I love sports. They can relieve many frustrations and tension and teach one how to relax. But most important, they should teach many people how to accept losing gracefully. This to me is very important when dealing with all phases of society.

School is a wonderful place to educate oneself. There are many different types of people with different directions, and as long as I continue to explore I am sure that I will have gained more knowledge than I had hoped for in school.

Unlike Sample Essay #1, this essay cannot be summarized easily because the paper seems to lack a clear central focus. Every paragraph seems to set out in a new direction,[3] and in some cases it is quite difficult to see how the topic of a particular paragraph relates to Twain's quote at all. While the writer does use the conclusion to refer back to points made in the introduction, the middle part of the essay seems random rather than planned. In fact, this essay received holistic scores of 1 and 2 from the same two raters using the scoring guide shown in Appendix A, putting it close to the bottom of the scale. But the essay, which had about 20 words fewer than Sample Essay #1, had only 8 errors in its 282 words, averaging out to one error every 35 words. This merits the label, "+syntax." Thus the contrast between these two papers is highlighted in the assignment of "plus" and "minus" features to the two major categories of rhetoric and syntax. The first paper scored very well for organization and coherence features while displaying more than three times as many syntactic errors as the second sample, where weakness was in the area of organization. In fact, despite the greater facility using the grammatical system of the language evidenced in Sample Essay #2, the essay as a whole might seem harder to read than the previous essay because, as Sarah Freedman has pointed out, readers tend to focus on higher order principles, such as content and organization, before focusing on language issues in an essay.

Lastly, Sample Essay #3 illustrates writing which can be characterized as −rhetoric/−syntax. The topic for the diagnostic writing task set for the writer of the following essay (and which was addressed to graduate students only) asked students to discuss some of the major contributions made by their field of study to human knowledge.

Sample Essay #3

[No Title]

There are thousands of languages in the world. Some of them are unknown for the majority of the people, because they are not too common. For example: All the dialects using in Africa. Others are known, but almost nowbody pay attention to them, because they are not fairly common. They are only used in theirs countries of origin. As an example of these, are: German, Dutch, Italian, Portuguese.

Among all these languages in the world, there is a group, which is more common, and everybody is interesting in them. These languages are very important for a professional or businessman, because everyday they are treating with people all over the world. Between these languages, we have Spanish and English, which are the most used.

Spanish is very popular, because all the Latin American countries, except Brasil have it as their language. It is also the second Universal language. English is the most important of all these languages, mentioned before. It is the Universal one, and it is used in almost all the countries as a common language, between the businessmen and scientifics and any professional, who are dealing with people from differrent countries. English nowadays is necessary for any carreer in order to have success in it. Even in many countries, English is teaching as a second language to all High school students.

While it is clear that the writer, a Spanish-speaking student, is extolling the virtues of both Spanish and English, it is not at all clear what her major field of study is; and, in fact, it does not appear that she addresses the question at hand. Even ignoring that as an issue, this essay still lacks a sense of focus, purpose, or audience. It seems to provide a collection of miscellaneous facts about languages without establishing why the author is recounting the information. Had she been able to turn this into a response to the question as posed, she might have been able to create a focus that is lacking here. As it is, this paper received two scores of 2 on the scale shown in Appendix A, slightly above the score the two readers assigned to the overall rhetorical properties in Sample Essay #2. At the same time, the essay has 22 errors in its 222 words, averaging out to about one error every 10 words, a similar proportion to the error/word ratio found in Sample Essay #1. Thus, this essay typifies the writing of students who have trouble controlling either rhetoric or syntax, and hence their writing can be labeled −rhetoric/−syntax.

Making Curriculum Decisions

Having illustrated a range of student performance in the area of rhetoric and syntax, I would like to consider how a writing curriculum could be designed that would offer courses for students who have problems in English exemplified in the sample essays presented above. I suggest that students who produce writing similar to Sample Essay #1 and Sample Essay #2 would be unlikely to profit from being in the same kind of writing course or doing the same kind of classroom practice in order to work on their individual problems in writing and to move forward. But as Ann Raimes noted in her study of two levels of ESL writers at Hunter College, "When placement decisions are made solely on the basis of a holistic analysis of one piece of writing, students with very different needs will be placed in the same course, which may not be appropriate for all of them" (461). In fact the writer of Sample Essay #3 might also be assigned to that same middle-range/intermediate class because while she also has deficiencies in writing it is apparent that she is not without some knowledge of English writing.

However, placement procedures *can* identify which students need to learn rhetoric and which students need to learn syntax simply by scoring their placement essays separately for these two categories. A scoring guide similar to the one shown in Appendix A can be designed to assign a +rhetoric or −rhetoric rating, and a tabulation of major and/or minor syntactic violations can be made simply by counting the actual occurrences of errors. (One might need to keep in mind the proportion of errors to error-free parts.) A syntactic "interpretation" scale could also be drawn up to assign a +syntax or −syntax rating based on the number of errors in proportion to the length of the essay with cutoff ranges keyed to the levels of a particular program. If the students can be identified in terms of their writing strengths and weaknesses, then appropriate courses can be offered which place heavy emphasis on either rhetoric or syntax and do not particularly focus on the other.

I propose that a writing program designed to process students in this manner would have a total of four course offerings. One class would focus on essay stylistics and would be for students who fall into the +rhetoric/+syntax category but who are not yet judged proficient enough to have fulfilled a school's writing requirement. Such students would already be familiar with standard discourse patterns and typical English essay organizational preferences which are shaped by content, audience, and purpose. They would also be the type of competent writers who do not produce many errors in syntax. However, they would probably benefit from a class which

improved their ability to produce the caliber of discourse required in an academic environment. For example, George E. Newell and Phyllis MacAdam argue in "Examining the Source of Writing Problems" that topic-specific knowledge plays a key role in a student's ability to successfully complete a given assignment. And a course that offered a clear content-base and the integration of reading and writing might be the most appropriate approach in ways that Ruth Spack calls attention to. The course I am describing for this population is similar in many ways to a typical freshman composition class when students must meet rigorous requirements for entrance to that level. Such being the case, the so-called stylistics component I am proposing can be offered as a parallel course for freshman composition with enrollment restricted to ESL students, or ESL students can simply enroll in regular sections of freshman composition to fulfill this requirement. Following completion of such work on stylistics (whether in a separate or integrated class), these students would be exempt from further required writing courses.

The second class in the program I am proposing would be a class in what we might call modern rhetoric, and here I think it advisable, though not absolutely necessary, to restrict enrollment to ESL students only. This class could present both "traditional" concepts, such as the modes of organization (e.g., comparison and contrast, and classification), varying the levels of generalization in an argument, focusing on a topic, and providing sufficient supporting detail to meet reader expectations while also presenting its material in a process-centered classroom. Writers need to acquire composing skills they can call upon for each new writing situation, so that they leave the course with a set of strategies to be invoked based on the situation for writing. The goal of learning "rhetoric" in this way is to train students to produce reader-based prose that considers audience and purpose as basic to fulfilling a writing goal. Such training should not foster an obsession with adhering to strictly defined formal properties; rather students need, as Raimes suggests, a classroom which allows students to work with "specific content to generate ideas, plan, rehearse, write, rescan, revise and edit" (461). At the end of such a course, students would have the repertoire of process skills needed to generate appropriate responses to essay tasks, and their written products would reflect control over a full range of rhetorical strategies. If proficient in syntax, students completing the rhetoric course could then enroll in the stylistics (or regular freshman composition) course.

The third class would focus on syntax, and because of the different types of problems native and non-native students have

with syntax, such a course is best restricted solely to ESL students. I do not think, however, that ESL students can benefit from a syntax course unless they have control over rhetoric first so that the course can present syntax as a tool for controlling written language rather than as an object of study. Students who produce writing similar to Sample Essay #1, which shows a fair amount of complexity in terms of vocabulary and content, have usually been through several years of English classes and have had multiple exposures to the rules of grammar. Yet, despite their language study backgrounds, they still are not able to produce prose which is not heavily marked with error. Therefore, when I suggest these students need a course in syntax, I am not advising that they enroll in a class which offers the usual method of providing heavy doses of grammar rules and exercises for practice. Rather, we must explore alternative approaches to traditional grammar lessons if we want to help students at that level to improve, a sentiment echoed by Thomas Friedmann in claiming that "Correctness in grammar . . . can be learned—if the teaching methodology duplicates the learning process" (225), and if the teaching is applied to the students' own work. What we are really after is training students to notice the ways in which sentences or pieces of sentences can break down, providing them with a repertoire of self-monitoring skills and strategies. This is best done through having contextual writing to look at, writing which has been produced by the students and which they have a vested interest in improving. If their writing already shows rhetorical control, they can more easily focus their attention on problems in linguistic control. Here it is quite possible that in a quarter system or with severely underprepared students, there would be need for two terms of syntax. So I am saying that there would be a total of four course offerings: stylistics, rhetoric, and two syntax courses. The chart on page 52 summarizes the entire curriculum.

Figure 1 indicates how the profile of a student determines which course the student is to be (next) placed in, either at placement (shown as "placement profile" on the chart) or after completing one course in the curriculum (shown as "placement after class" on the chart). For example, in this type of writing program, students whose placement essays are similar to Sample Essay #3 could first be placed in the rhetoric class, shown as Sequence D. While in such a class, breaches of syntax can be ignored in the interest of having the student focus on improvement of the ability to develop a personal composing process, present an argument, marshal evidence, consider the reader's needs, find an appropriate voice, and so on. After successful completion of such a course, that student would then fall into the "+rhetoric/−syntax" category and can go on to a

SEQUENCE	PLACEMENT PROFILE/ PLACEMENT AFTER CLASS	CLASS TO BE COMPLETED	PROFILE AFTER CLASS	CYCLED TO SEQUENCE
A	+rhetoric +syntax	STYLE (or EXEMPT)	+rhetoric +syntax	EXEMPT
B	+rhetoric -syntax	SYNTAX (1) SYNTAX (2) (optional)	+rhetoric +syntax	A (or EXEMPT)
C	-rhetoric +syntax	RHETORIC	+rhetoric +syntax	A (or EXEMPT)
D	-rhetoric -syntax	RHETORIC	+rhetoric -syntax	B

FIGURE 1: Structure of Curriculum

class focusing on syntax, which is shown as Sequence B. At the same time, the rhetoric class would also include other students who already have control over syntax, e.g., those who produce writing similar to Sample Essay #2. Then, those students whose profile would be +rhetoric/+syntax at the completion of the course could be cycled into the stylistics (or freshman composition) course if not judged ready for exemption on the basis of program criteria.

The curriculum I propose is designed to alleviate the problem of placing students into classes which may only partially address their needs in terms of two key components of writing. If we are willing to evaluate students based on a separate consideration of their rhetorical and syntactic skills, we can stream them into a workable sequence of courses that would help them improve in their area(s) of weakness and lead them to mastery over writing in general.

Appendix A

SCORING GUIDE FOR ORGANIZATION AND COHERENCE FEATURES

- A 6 paper is a top paper. It does not have to be perfect, but it will do all *or most* of the following well:
  - –clearly limit the discussion to something which can be reasonably handled in a short essay
  - –follow through on what it sets out to do

–stay on the topic throughout the essay and in each paragraph
–effectively use paragraphs to break up the topic into unified parts
–maintain a consistent point of view
–sequence ideas logically within paragraphs and in the essay
–use overt markers/transitions artfully to signal relationships between and within paragraphs
–use reference markers appropriately

- A 5 paper is a less consistent version of the 6 paper. It will be distinctly above average, but will have noticeable slip-ups. The paper may do one of the following:
  –begin discussion without stating or implying overall topic
  –omit a conclusion where called for
  –present the argument in unbalanced proportions to a clearly stated thesis
- A 4 paper shows adequate but undistinguished control over both paragraph structure and essay structure. It is an upper-half paper which shows organizational competence and general coherence, but does one or more of the following:
  –relies heavily on juxtaposition to show relationships rather than spelling them out
  –uses overt transitions in inappropriate ways
  –fails to adequately develop a major point of the argument
- A 3 paper is a lower-half paper. It may show either clear ability to set up the major building blocks of an essay OR clear ability to construct a unified, coherent paragraph, but it will *not* show clear competency in both areas. It may be a paper that shows weak abilities in both areas. Reasons for assigning a 3 include:
  –noticeable introduction of irrelevant ideas
  –failure to provide a clear sense of purpose
  –underdevelopment of main ideas
  –shifting point of view
  –use of transition signals in mechanical or heavy-handed way
  –some inconsistencies in argument
- A 2 paper shows some minimal ability to organize a paper, but is rather poorly presented. It may do some of the following:
  –go around in circles
  –have little or no connection between parts either stated or implied
  –use transitions that don't work in context
  –assume the validity of statements which are never developed
- A 1 paper show little or no skill at setting up major sections of the paper and developing paragraphs. It may stray and wander from the topic or it may simply never get beyond the most superficial

statements so that there is no sense of awareness of expository conventions.

Notes

[1] A full discussion of a range of other issues in the assessment of ESL writing is provided by Sybil Carlson and Brent Bridgeman in their article "Testing ESL Student Writers."

[2] For example, the "6" level scoring criteria begin: "Clearly demonstrates competence in writing on both the rhetorical and syntactic levels" (*TOEFL Test of Written English Guide,* 29).

[3] Insights from the field of contrastive rhetoric raise the possibility that this particular style might stem from a discourse pattern in Farsi, the speaker's native language. For a recent review of the field, see William Grabe and Robert B. Kaplan's article on contrastive rhetoric.

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Boyd Koehler
Kathryn Swanson

BASIC WRITERS AND THE LIBRARY: A PLAN FOR PROVIDING MEANINGFUL BIBLIOGRAPHIC INSTRUCTION

Background and Population Profile

Although it is quite certain that the students who find themselves together in a class of basic writing (called Developmental Writing where we teach) comprise one of the most diverse groups of learners imaginable in a college setting; their diversity ends with an absolutely unanimous response to certain words. If Developmental Writing students hear the words "library," "library instruction," or—worse yet—"bibliographic instruction," their eyes become glazed, their minds slow down or completely shift gears, and inwardly (or outwardly) they groan, "Oh no, not *that* again!" In response to those groans, we have worked for the past seven semesters to construct and refine a way to help Developmental Writing students learn—and enjoy—the fundamentals of bibliographic instruction.

Boyd Koehler is associate professor and librarian at Augsburg College in Minneapolis, MN. He has a special interest in bibliographic instruction for both international and developmental writing students and currently chairs the Twin Cities library network's (CLIC) Task Force on Bibliographic Instruction.

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Our first task in this project was to define our audience. The diversity already noted makes establishment of parameters difficult, of course, but a generally consistent population profile of our Developmental Writing classes emerged. About one-third of the class are non-native speakers (NNS) of English, with vastly differing backgrounds and intentions.

Among the other two-thirds of the class, the native speakers of English, parameters are also difficult to establish. Some of the students have histories of failures in English; others have never regarded English, and especially writing, as something important to learn; still others come from high schools, sometimes in very small school districts, where teachers faced with 150 students each day have minimized the number of papers they assign students. Many of these students have often learned that just managing to turn in *something* has been acceptable. Thus, even the most basic of Donald Murray's concepts, i.e., viewing writing as a process, a task for discovering what we know, are new and somewhat suspect to many incoming Developmental Writing students.

Which students must be tested for placement in Developmental Writing is determined by the academic dean's office on the basis of their scores on a standardized test, PSAT, ACT, or SAT. Students who are Developmental Writing candidates are required to write an essay during their summer orientation days on campus. Topics are assigned and tests are monitored and holistically evaluated by members of the English Department.

On the basis of these evaluations, roughly fifteen percent of all incoming first-year students are required to enroll in Developmental Writing. Common problems displayed by these students include the inability to generate a text within the prescribed time constraints, difficulty finding a focus for the text produced, lack of specifics to substantiate what is stated to be the focus, lack of organization, and difficulty with mechanics/grammar of standard English.

Once in Developmental Writing, students receive concentrated help in mastering concepts of prewriting, finding a focus, developing and organizing the content, and editing the product to meet general standards of correctness. One of the difficulties, however, is that while Developmental Writing students are working on their assigned paragraphs (and then, eventually, short essays), they are concurrently being asked to produce lengthy term or research papers in at least one of their other courses. Analysis of our library reference statistics over the last few years indicates an increase in the number of students asking for help in researching topics in religion, psychology, sociology, and history for the explicit purpose of producing a substantial paper.

The varying requirements in these content area courses are particularly stressful for Developmental Writing students because of their typical lack of research skills. Not only are Developmental Writing students expected to find a topic and focus it, they are also being asked to consider the topics in terms of library resources. These students then not only have to struggle to write and edit a paper with reasonable content, specifics, and data, but to turn in the effort complete with correct documentation. All too often, in desperation, students find the first encyclopedia they can, the one source besides a dictionary with which they are acquainted, and copy as much material as they think will convince their professor that they have done research. This type of research usually ends miserably with students receiving poor grades, professors berating high school teachers and colleagues who teach composition, and no one quite understanding what went wrong.

Underlying Premises

For many years, we listened and felt intermittent guilt and anger as our colleagues wondered aloud why their students could not "write anymore." On dark days, we knew these professors were referring to the encyclopedia-based research that students had produced out of frustration and desperation, and we felt somehow *we* should have done something more effectively. On brighter days, we thought that perhaps there was something we could do to make the entire research process more satisfactory to both students and our grumbling colleagues.

It seemed reasonable to us to team-teach: a professional librarian and an English professor working together on ways of teaching the basics of bibliographic research to Developmental Writing students. Our collaboration was founded on several important assumptions. First, we considered the affective components of our students' learning and thought that introducing a person actually identified with the library on campus would help to allay students' very real fears. In other words, once students had worked with the librarian, future interaction would be enhanced.

Another important assumption was that a "hands-on" approach is the most effective learning strategy for recognizing an index and a card catalog, for reading and deciphering a bibliographic citation, and for actually locating periodicals and books. We wanted our students to learn by doing—by handling reference materials, by typing on the computer, by searching through the periodical shelves, and by walking through the book stacks. Whether it be through standard bibliographic instructional material, research and

documentation vocabulary, or the search itself, we wanted active and involved students who received immediate feedback. For example, we knew that discussing periodicals and periodical guides without the physical objects actually in the students' hands wasted everyone's time. To tell students that their papers must have a *bibliography* was pointless when they were still struggling to decide if we really meant *biography.* And explaining the steps in a search for materials also was futile without the presentation of real tasks.

Review of the Literature

Professional library literature is flooded with articles on bibliographic instruction for mainstream college students. But there is little said about library instruction for basic writers—a unique group, we felt, that merits unique strategies and considerations. The handful of articles appearing in the literature on this topic agrees with us and expresses several recurring themes or areas of concern prerequisite to successful instruction.

Attention to attitudinal barriers and creation of a non-threatening environment are paramount, according to most of these writers, for those students who may otherwise feel disenfranchised or programmed for failure. Josey, for example, underscores the importance of confidence building in students; he calls for librarians who are empathetic, yet who avoid the posture of "missionary zealots" with attendant patronizing airs (436–7). Breivik, who wrote a major treatise on the library's critical role in educating "disadvantaged" students, also assigns high priority to the nurturing of self-confidence and self-esteem (40).

Abandonment of the traditional lecture-tour approach may be critical in setting the stage for encouraging positive attitudes toward the library, according to several writers. Concerned with intimidation and alienation of DW students, Lolley and Watkins caution librarians against this method:

> Developmental students are different. In all probability, many have no attitude at all concerning the library. However, one excellent way to establish a negative attitude in a student who is deficient in reading, writing, listening, spelling, speaking, and grammar is a boring tour and a lecture on bibliographic entries, cross references, periodical indexes, microfiche cards, and the Oxford English Dictionary! (25)

Breivik goes so far as to say, with the help of comparative studies, that not only is the lecture-tour method repellent to DW students,

but that it nets "less favorable results than no library instruction at all" (59).

Immediacy, relevance, and individualization must characterize the library instruction that replaces the lecture-tour method, according to several writers. Breivik writes that such instruction must be "closely related to students' immediate classroom needs" (67) and geared to the "real-life situation" (69). The NCTE 1986 statement of policy on "Racism and Bias in the Teaching of English" corroborates Breivik's mandate in calling for "topics and materials that connect the students' experiences with the classroom." Lunsford, in outlining characteristics of the best assignments for basic writers, recommends using students' "own contexts" as bases for exercises and follow-up assignments (96). More specifically, Wright prescribes topics such as abortion, pregnancy, child care problems, and unemployment as vehicles for instruction to "disadvantaged" students (2884–5). Ramey, in her library orientation work at Georgia State University's Division of Developmental Studies, believes in a hands-on/discussion approach in the classroom setting to orient students to materials in various formats (i.e., *The Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature,* periodicals, books, reference tools), thereby heightening relevance and sustaining interest (127–30). Workbooks, in which students complete multiple-choice exercises focused on specific library resources, are one commonly accepted version of the hands-on approach endorsed by Markman and Leighton. But even though the workbook method allows students to work at their own pace, Markman and Leighton encountered fairly widespread hostility among students with this approach:

> . . . the medium [the workbook] may have seemed inappropriate to college students who, outside the classroom, use computers and other high-tech equipment in their studies. To this technologically minded student population, workbook activities may seem rudimentary and parochial. (133)

In order to achieve the best of all worlds—one where issues of immediacy, relevance, and individualization are addressed—library instruction must incorporate computers to reach basic writers more effectively and sustain their attention. "Computer allure," as Madland and Smith call it (53), is especially powerful for these students with their reading difficulties and nonprint preferences. They found, in their recent work with a Computer-Assisted Instruction program, that computers were overwhelmingly the

"preferred method of instruction" (chosen over videotape watching, listening to a librarian's presentation, and reading a textbook) (62).

Determining a Strategy

In evolving a BI strategy for DW students, we incorporated the concepts and strategies found in the literature to the extent possible given staff and financial constraints. More specifically, we:

1) attempted to ensure a nonthreatening environment by allowing classes to work in small groups of four students headed by student interns and by offering continuous encouragement, feedback, and diplomatic "monitoring" of exercises;
2) rejected the lecture-tour approach in favor of a modified workbook approach which presented basic research strategies for carrying out an actual, hands-on search for both books and periodical articles;
3) used the online computerized library catalog in the workbook exercise, thereby catering to DW students' preference for computer instruction;
4) individualized instruction by assigning unique search names and topics to each student and linking both names and topics to areas of current relevance, such as child abuse, AIDS, Reaganomics, abortion, and drug abuse. Also topics of immediate and very practical day-to-day relevance to college students such as date rape, the changing drinking age, student privacy, and financial aid legislation were included.

However, we departed from, or expanded upon, strategies delineated in the literature in several areas. Unlike most of the writers, we employed presearched (and tested) names and topics from the card catalog and various major periodical indices to 1) ensure a successful first search experience for the students who might be easily discouraged or turned off by "no hits" and 2) avoid the pandemonium characteristic of spontaneous student self-selection of author, title, and subject.

In addition, we attempted to apply the ability-grouping concept to our bibliographic instruction effort. Students with relatively high pretest scores were given more difficult exercises than those students with lower pretest scores. Related to this ability-grouping experiment was the pairing of specialized periodical indices with the students' declared majors. This pairing was undertaken to pique the students' interests and to prepare them for future specialized research in their majors.

Finally, unlike previous research, we sought in-depth feedback

from our Developmental Writing students—an expanding population seldom heard about in the professional library literature. Rather than speak for them, we solicited their responses to our instructional efforts in an attempt to personalize evaluation.

Pretesting for Readiness (Phase I)

Each class of Developmental Writing students over a seven-semester period was asked to complete a "Library Use Worksheet" one week prior to their in-library practicum (Phase II). This 19-item exercise was administered by the professor and scored by the librarian.

The worksheet was constructed with several underlying assumptions in mind:

1) Most student research needs are met through the use of books and periodical articles
2) Students must become conversant with certain key library vocabulary (e.g., bibliography, periodical, article, publisher, call number, catalog card, index) in order to locate and document resources and to understand the research process
3) Examples employed must be drawn from issues that are of current interests and relevant to students' lives so as to enhance learning
4) Brevity, directness, and design simplicity are critical considerations in devising printed exercises in order to sharpen visual appeal
5) Exercises should *teach* as well as *test* students by interspersing broad research strategy-related concepts with objective test items

The third assumption bears elaboration. We religiously avoided the abstract, bland, or unfamiliar examples characteristic of many library exercises. All too often, librarians resort to the first examples that pop into their heads for exercises. They kill any potential learning opportunity by using what students may perceive as highbrow literary figures, remote concepts of abstract art or philosophy, or highly technical scientific terms to serve as a vehicle for transmitting research principles that are, by themselves, only of marginal interest to students. For example, librarians—who are often former English majors—may well assume students share their interest in Ibsen's symbolism. Thus, students may be required to research the staging of Old Ekdahl's Garret in *The Wild Duck* rather than explore Gina's and Hedvig's humanity and relationship with their husband/father. Still other librarians might choose to have students focus on Monet's use of light in his paintings rather than

on recent government restrictions of Pell grants. As a result, students wade through exercises designed with only sophisticated or elite students in mind and, becoming turned off, miss the whole point of such exercises. Their stereotypes of libraries as stuffy and irrelevant become only further confirmed.

The fourth assumption implies the use of short, direct, and crisp questions that avoid the idiomatic expressions warned against by Ball and Mahoney (164). While we would use idioms and occasional clichés in exercises for mainstream students, we steered away from these because of their potential confusion for Developmental Writing students.

Of the nineteen items in the worksheet, the first eleven were designed to measure facility in reading a catalog card facsimile and asked students to identify joint authors, book title, publisher, publication date, pagination, call number, and subject headings.

The second set of eight questions focused on *The Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature* and was preceded by a general instructional comment on the concept behind periodical indexes. A reproduced partial column of entries and cross-references from *The Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature* served as a reference point for questions calling for identification of bibliographic components (i.e., article author and title, periodical title, volume, pagination, and date) and recognition of related subject headings for research enhancement. Trick questions were avoided.

In-Library Practicum: A Hands-on Experience (Phase II)

With the pretests scored, we allotted a one-hour class period to a "Library Hunting Exercise." Prefacing this practicum was a brief pretest review. During this ten-minute session, scored pretests with corrected answers were returned to the students for their perusal. To ensure understanding, the librarian went through the correct answers and added clarifying comments where students had encountered common difficulty. Questions were invited, and then the practicum booklets were distributed according to pretest scores, an experiment that will be described in detail later.

These booklets incorporated five carefully delineated steps (see Table I). The first three steps involved searching for a book by its author, title, and subject and gave students the option of accomplishing these searchers either in the old card catalog or the new online computerized catalog (CLICnet). In order to measure progress following the pretest, each of these first three steps called for bibliographic description of each book identified through the catalog card or the online screen. In order to guarantee a successful

Table I: LIBRARY HUNTING EXERCISE

STEP 1

FINDING BOOKS

A. Using either the card catalogue or the CLICnet computer terminal, locate:

Any book by_____

(If you use the computer terminal, type in:

••• FA + Author's first and last names)

(FA = Find Author)

B. Before you go on to Step 2, record the following information below about the book you just located:

Title of book:_____

Publisher:_____

Publication Date:_____ Place:_____

Call Number:_____

NOW YOU'RE READY FOR STEP 2.

STEP 2

A. Using either the card catalogue or the CLICnet computer terminal, locate:

A book with the title_____

_____

(If you use the computer terminal, type in:

••• FT + Main words of title or
••• FXT + Exact title as it appears above)

(FT = Find Title
FXT = Find Exact Title)

B. Before you go on to Step 3, record the following information below about the book you just located:

Author:_____

Publisher:_____

Publication Date:_____ Place:_____

Call Number:_____

NOW YOU'RE READY FOR STEP 3.

pioneer research experience (most admitted never having been in the library before), all authors, titles, and subjects given in the booklets (different for each student) had been presearched online, in the card catalog, and on the shelves by the library staff. Too many

Table I (continued)

STEP 3

A. Using either the card catalogue or the CLICnet computer terminal, locate:

A book on the subject_____

(If you use the computer terminal, type in: ••• FS + subject)

Note: You may have to experiment with different word combinations to get a response from the terminal. If you get too many items, you can cut down the number by typing in: ••• AT AUG (At Augsburg Library only)

B. Before you go on to Step 4, record the following information below about the book you just located:

Author:_____

Publisher:_____

Publication Date:_____ Place:_____

Call Number:_____

NOW, USING THEIR CALL NUMBERS, FIND ALL THREE BOOKS ON THE LIBRARY'S SECOND FLOOR.

STEP 4

FINDING PERIODICAL ARTICLES

A. Go to the Index Table section of the reading room and locate a recent volume (last ten years)
of:_____

B. Use the above index to find *one* periodical article on the subject of

_____

C. Use the grey spindle to determine if Augsburg owns the periodical you need. If we do, go to the red stacks and find your particular issue. If not, try the process again—until you're successful.

D. Now, after you have found the article, record the following information:

Author:_____Name of periodical:_____

Title of article:_____

Date of periodical:_____Pages:_____

NOTE: FOR ANYTHING YOU DID NOT FIND—BOOKS OR PERIODICAL ARTICLE—ASK FOR A CLIC FORM AT THE FRONT DESK AND FILL IT OUT FOR ANY MISSING ITEM.

NOW YOU'RE READY FOR STEP 5

Table I (continued)

STEP 5

SAMPLE BIBLIOGRAPHY

Johnson, Christine. Going All the Way. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1986.

Maland, Jeanne. "The Importance of Going to College." Education Digest (June 1985): 10-15.

Following the above model entries for both books and periodical articles, construct a bibliography of the materials you found and ordered through CLIC. Make sure the final list is arranged *alphabetically by author's last name.*

YOUR BIBLIOGRAPHY

NOW BRING YOUR MATERIALS AND THIS BOOKLET TO THE FRONT DESK BEFORE YOU LEAVE THE LIBRARY. THANK YOU!

times, we have witnessed students "strike out" on their first search and never return to the library again. "Why doesn't this library ever have a darn thing we need!" they'd complain. "Why are books we want never on the shelves?" they'd ask, upon leaving the library.

As anticipated, most students gravitated toward the online system (as opposed to the card catalog) to complete their author, title, and subject searches. They found it difficult to move from the basic computer commands laid out in the booklets, to transmitting properly spelled authors, titles, and subject headings through the computer keyboard. Because most college students—not only DW students—are afflicted with a penchant for misspelling, we knew it

was critical to closely monitor their work at this point. When these misspellings elicited a "no holdings" response from the system, we (or other librarians assisting with this project) quickly stepped in to prompt students to double-check spelling of search names and terms in the booklet. We observed, with interest, that those students forced to use the card catalog (there weren't enough computer terminals to accommodate everyone simultaneously) also had difficulty with spelling but managed to stumble onto correctly spelled names or terms on "neighboring" cards without assistance. The implication is clear: any computer-based library instruction—or library reference work in general for that matter—must allow for sufficient staff to provide critical intervention.

The remaining segment of the first three steps, the retrieval of three books from the stacks, was unproblematic for students.

Locating periodical articles was the focal point of Step #4. With the concepts of individualized instruction, currency, and practical relevance in mind, we asked students to find an article written during the last ten years, using one of four major periodical indices *(Readers' Guide, Business Periodicals Index, Social Sciences Index,* and *Education Index)* on presearched topics of possible immediate interest. To prepare students for future research, periodical indices were geared, whenever possible, to a student's major (determined in advance). A sociology major, for example, was assigned *Social Sciences Index,* while a student in accounting searched *Business Periodicals Index*; those with undetermined majors used *Readers' Guide* for their search.

Ability-grouping was attempted in Step #4 by varying the difficulty of the subjects chosen for students and subsequently coordinating the difficulty level with pretest scores. Some subjects, like "Nicaraguan foreign relations with the U.S." or "Reagan's economic policy," entailed terminology manipulation as well as cross-referencing. These were assigned to students with pretest scores above 60%. Other subjects chosen, like "child abuse" or "AIDS," were more direct, one-step searches and were given to students who scored below 60% on the pretest.

The application of the ability-grouping concept was predicated on our desire to avoid boredom (a common student reaction to BI), enhance cognitive learning, and ensure a uniform finishing time. Where ability level had been disregarded with previous classes, the "better" students finished their searches much ahead of the other students and made disparaging remarks about the assignment's "lack of challenge." "We had this stuff in grade school," students would say.

Upon identification of an article in an index, students were directed in Step #4 to retrieve the periodical containing the article.

Step #5 was a culmination of the first four steps, calling for compilation of a bibliography of items retrieved in the preceding steps. If items were missing, students had to rely on the bibliographic data recorded in each of the earlier steps for this compilation. Such an exercise, it was hoped, would have direct transfer value to other courses requiring documented papers. Step #5 was prefaced with a sample bibliography in order to acquaint students with correct form and punctuation, in accordance with MLA style.

Posttesting: Measuring Progress (Phase III)

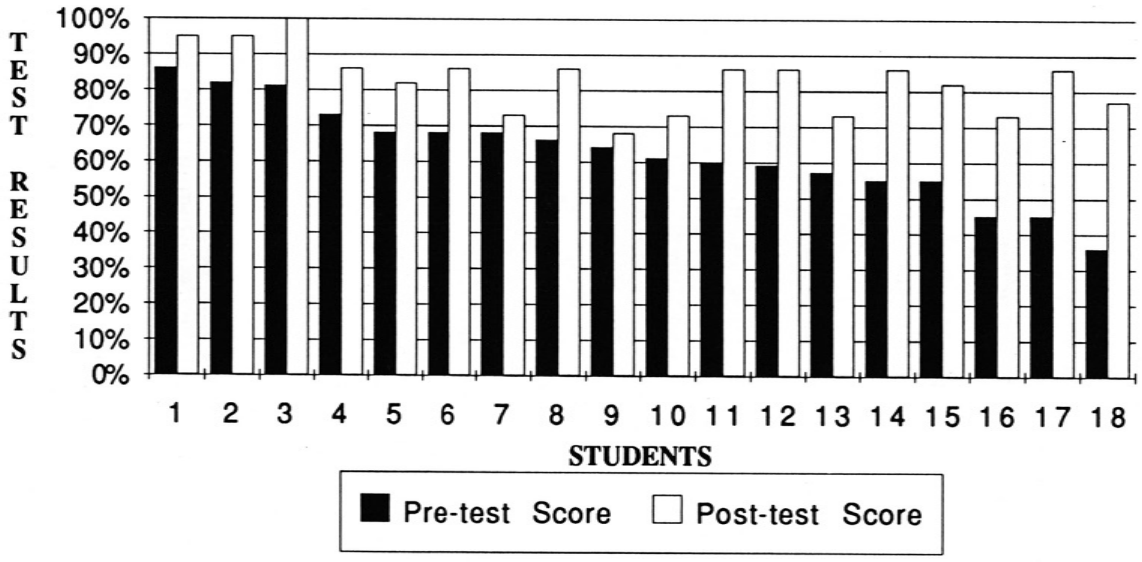
In order to discern measurable progress after the hands-on exercise in Phase II, a posttest was designed and administered to students during the third of three class periods devoted to our instructional sequence. The posttest, like the pretest, entailed nineteen questions regarding a catalog card facsimile and sample entries from *Readers' Guide.* Though specific example content was different from the pretest, both tests were structurally (i.e., in terms of question wording, format, and answer type) identical in order to provide maximum test validity.

Results, Evaluation, and Conclusion

Most DW students in all seven classes over the three-year period demonstrated marked improvement in their comprehension and application of basic research skills and concepts during this three-phase BI sequence. The mean pretest score for all classes was 62% correct, and the mean posttest score for the classes was 78% correct. (Table II reflects individual improvement for the Fall, 1988 class.) In the intervening practicum, Phase II, student performance improved dramatically, many students almost doubling their pretest scores.

The main problem area for students in the pretest occurred with identifying component parts of a catalog card facsimile (e.g., joint author, title, subject headings, complete call number, and bibliographic note) but was not nearly so troublesome in either Phases II or III. Deciphering periodical index entries was not as problematic for students in any of the three phases. The only recurrent difficulty was in distinguishing pagination (they often confused pagination with volume number) and dates. Students were gratifyingly able to

TABLE II
A COMPARISON OF PRE- AND POST-TEST SCORES
(FALL 1988 CLASS)



sift through a number of index entries and critically select appropriate articles.

Interestingly enough, the mean score in the intervening hands-on phase in the library was 88% correct. For many students, their score in this phase exceeded their posttest score. Even though the hands-on exercise introduced new material and new situations (i.e., the online catalog, actual retrieval of items from the library stacks, and the need to compose a four-item "real" bibliography), students responded very favorably to the opportunity to actually use the computer terminals and indices and handle the books.

Though score increases were, in themselves, encouraging, the long-term attitudinal changes alluded to in our original goal statements were even more gratifying. (Table IV presents actual evaluation-form statements along with mean student rankings of our BI sequence.)

Increased confidence was one indisputable result of instruction, as reflected in responses to Statement #8, "I will be able to use the library more confidently as a result of this presentation." One freshman student, who graduated from a large inner-city Minneapolis high school, elaborated in her comments: "It's definitely easier to use the library now. It makes me smile and gives me satisfaction to find something, and I'm so proud to know my way around the library."

The hands-on approach was an important factor in building student confidence, indicated partly by the 3.6 mean ranking (on a 4.0 scale) of Statement #7. Written comments support this conclusion. "In high school, I had used only the basics—not even the *Readers' Guide*—and was embarrassed about this," reported a freshman from another large inner-city Minneapolis high school. "I had never used a computer catalog, only the card catalog; the staff would find periodicals for you. Then in college, they assume students know how to find material; kids are scared to ask and embarrassed they don't know," she added.

The theory that the lecture-tour approach must yield to a hands-on approach was given further credence in our "experiment." "You must learn a little and practice a little—the librarian could talk for a whole hour, but until you practice, this doesn't mean anything," remarked a sophomore student from South Korea. "I learned bibliography and footnoting practices from actually using the periodical indexes," he added. "Because I was absolutely library illiterate, the big thing was the computer catalog which I'd never touched," observed a Canadian sophomore.

Transfer value was another pattern noted in student comments.

Table III
Profile of Mean Scores
for three-phase BI sequence

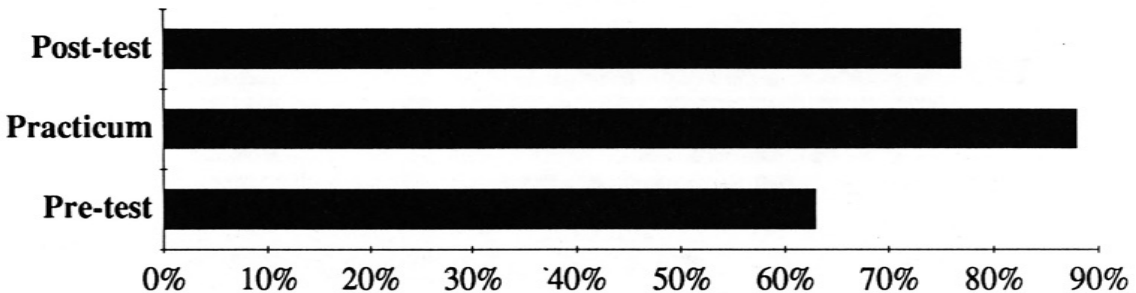
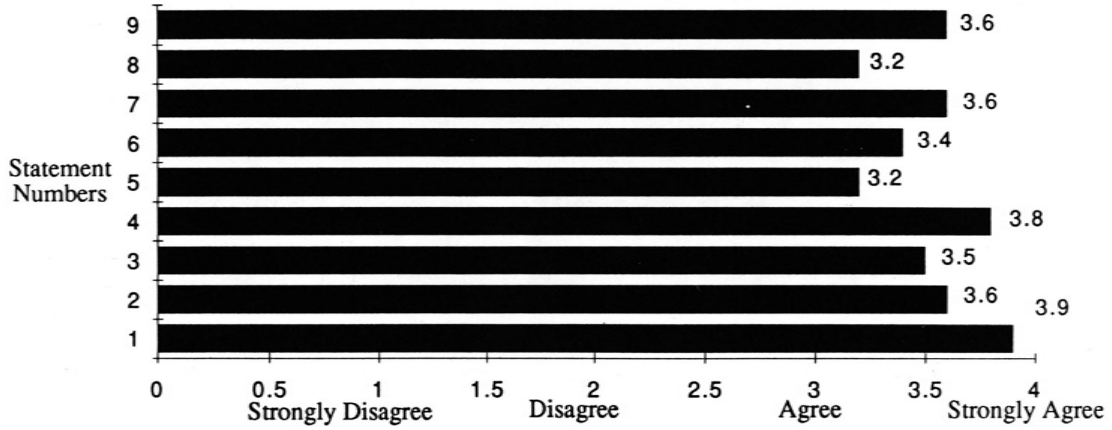


Table IV LIBRARY INSTRUCTION EVALUATION
Average Rating



STATEMENTS ON EVALUATION FORM

1. The librarian seemed to know the subject matter presented.
2. The librarian's goals for the session were clear.
3. The librarian gave explanations that were clear and to the point.
4. Questions were invited during and after the presentation.
5. The written exercise on library skills *before* the librarian's visit was useful in letting me know what I needed to know about the library.
6. Going over the exercises in class was helpful.
7. The trip to the library and the worksheet on *actual use of materials* was helpful.
8. I will be able to use the library more confidently as a result of this presentation.
9. If I need library research help again, I 'd feel free to ask this librarian for help.

"What I learned about tracking periodicals in the library from the indexes to the stacks has really helped me in my religion class; I'm glad I know this procedure now," attested another sophomore. "I have been able to use the *Social Sciences Index* for my courses in Asian history and social work," said the South Korean student.

Traditional interpersonal barriers between student and librarian as well as stereotypes were also eroded in this instructional sequence. Statement #9 on the evaluation form, "If I need help with library research in the future, I would feel free to ask this librarian for help," elicited a mean ranking of 3.6.

Thus, although our populations of students in basic writing were diverse, their overall responses to our phases of bibliographic instruction were not. Without exception, our students made progress—attitudinally, behaviorally, and cognitively—as we guided them through the steps of a library search. Affectively, students' confidence levels were raised as they realized that they actually could learn a bibliographic system and succeed in finding materials on their own. Principles of collaborative learning played an important role in our exercise as students discussed tasks, shared information, helped each other with specific assignments, and praised each other's accomplishments. They reported positive responses to the library and to library personnel and stated that they would be much more confident in subsequent trips to the library because of instruction received in Developmental Writing.

Students were rewarded at several stages during the learning process and, ultimately, with success in finding actual materials at the end of their searches. They were able to complete the steps from beginning to end of the task provided and, in fact, read the periodical article or book chapter they had found at the end of their search. Using students' own contexts not only was beneficial, again as affective inducements to the task, but also as cognitive frameworks into which students could more readily integrate new material learned regarding the library. Thus, from exposure to advance organizers in the classrooms prior to library visits, to the posttest follow-up measures, students responded that they felt they had learned the basics of a bibliographic search.

Thus, with this procedure and exercise, we believe we have made considerable and significant progress toward our goal of helping our Developmental Writing students learn research basics, showing them that the library is another place where they can be successful as independent learners, and reinforcing the usefulness of the library as a ready source for relevant and current information. We expect to see our students using more effectively and enjoying

more fully any library resources they may encounter because of our work in Developmental Writing.

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WRITING: A HOLISTIC OR ATOMISTIC ENTITY?

The marked shift in writing instruction from a focus on writing as a set of separate, sequential tasks to a focus on writing as a holistic gestalt prompted the empirical study reported in this paper. We sought to determine whether any prerequisite relationships existed between five analytical components of ESL composition, namely content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. Our rationale was that if we could discover evidence of prerequisite relationships between the analytical components, then the results could be used to support the view that writing is a set of separate tasks to be acquired. If, on the other hand, we could detect no evidence of prerequisite relationships, then those results could support the notion that writing is a holistic entity which can't be meaningfully partitioned into components. Our analyses indicated that (1) only one prerequisite relationship (which could have occurred by chance) existed in the data set and that (2) only one latent structure (construct) underlay the data. We conclude by offering citations from other researchers who argue against teaching writing skills in isolation and by offering three approaches to the teaching of writing which acknowledge the interrelation of composition skills.

As we indicated in the previous paragraph, there has been a

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paradigm shift in practice, research, and theory in the first- (native) and second- (non-native) language composition communities. Hairston, Hillocks, and Burhans, among others, noted that in the first-language field the traditional paradigm was characterized by the following attributes: a product orientation; a focus on usage and style; a linear view of the writing process; and a preoccupation with expository writing. On the other hand, the new paradigm includes the following traits: a process orientation; a focus on strategies for discovery and invention; a recursive view of the writing process involving a variety of plans and subprocesses; a discrimination among the aims and modes of discourse including both the expressive and the expository modes.

In the second-language field the traditional paradigm was also characterized by a product orientation; a linear view of the writing process; and a view of writing as a set of sequential, separate tasks. The new paradigm in the second-language field also includes a process orientation; a focus on strategies for discovery and invention; a recursive view of the writing process; the notion that language is learned as a whole rather than by a sequence of separate components; and a focus on meaning, function, and purpose (Horning; Raimes, 1983a; Zamel).

The prevailing view is that writing is a process of creative discovery which involves the dynamic interaction of content and language (Taylor) and further that writing is probably learned holistically, not through the lockstep mastery of a series of separate skills (Falk). The rate at which instructional practice in second-language composition has managed to keep pace with theory has been slow (Raimes, 1986), but second-language composition methodology texts and composition course books are beginning to reflect a general agreement that there is an interdependence or interrelation among, for example, content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. Further, different approaches to the teaching of writing in ESL classes now suggest that various writing skills should be taught as a gestalt, and not as separate, but dependent entities.

The purpose of our research was to examine the writing of 110 undergraduate foreign students enrolled in a basic composition course for any evidence of interrelation among the five analytical components. Further, did any prerequisite relationships exist among the various components, suggesting that success or mastery of one component skill was a prerequisite for success or mastery of a different component skill? Our rationale for conducting this research was that there is a paucity of data from second-language composition research illustrating the interrelation of composition

skills. If our data analysis showed evidence of unidimensionality among the different analytical components, then we could offer empirical support for the notion that learning to write in a second language is a holistic enterprise. If, on the other hand, our data showed evidence of multidimensionality among the components and further that prerequisite relationships existed among the components, then we could offer empirical evidence that second-language writing should be taught as the lockstep mastery of a series of separate skills.

Subjects

The subjects for this research were 110 undergraduate foreign students enrolled in Basic Composition for Foreign Students. Native languages represented included Arabic, Portuguese, Japanese, Luganda, Greek, Malay, Chinese, Tamil, French, Igbo, Indonesian, Korean, Urdu, Gujarati, Spanish, Twi, Bengali, and Farsi. These students were placed into the course on the basis of their graduation from an intensive English program (noncredit) or by normal university placement procedures.

Materials and Procedures

During the first two weeks of a fifteen-week semester the subjects wrote descriptive essays in class under test conditions; working time was forty-five minutes.

The Jacobs et al. ESL Composition Profile was used as the scoring rubric for the holistic evaluation of the essays. Jacobs et al. described the Profile as follows:

> The Profile form contains five component scales, each focusing on an important aspect of composition and weighted according to its approximate importance for written communication: content (30 points), organization (20 points), vocabulary (20 points), language use (25 points), and mechanics (5 points). The total weight for each component is further broken down into numerical ranges that correspond to four mastery levels: excellent to very good, good to average, fair to poor, and very poor. These levels are characterized and differentiated by key words or "rubrics" representing specific criteria for excellence in composition.
>
> Unlike some holistic evaluations in which readers base their judgments on a single first impression of the quality of a composition, readers using the Profile in effect do five

> holistic evaluations of the same composition, each from a slightly different perspective on the whole. This is an important difference since, as we have noted, readers sometimes tend to value only one aspect of a composition when using a purely impressionistic approach, yet it is only through a writer's successful production, integration, and synchronization of all these component parts of a composition that an effective whole is created. (31)

The average Profile holistic score for this subject pool was 65.50 with a standard deviation of 10.52 which falls into the fair writing ability proficiency stratum defined by Jacobs et al. (1981) as follows:

> Proficiency Evaluation: Will probably experience great difficulty completing writing requirements in subject matter courses. May be unable to compete fairly with native writers of English. Look at Profile to identify areas of strength and weakness.
>
> Undergraduate Placement Recommendation: Should have at least one preparatory course in composition before taking college-level English courses or subject matter courses that require much writing. (66)

After the papers had been scored by two trained readers, the continuous scores (for example, 0–30) for each paper for each of the five components were converted to dichotomous scores (1 or 0) at three different mastery levels: 90%, 75%, and 50%. Table 1 presents the cut scores for the three different mastery levels. At the 90% mastery level, if a paper received a score of 27 or higher for content, that paper received a dichotomous score of 1 for content. Conversely, at the same mastery level, if a paper received a score of 26 or lower for content, that paper received a dichotomous score of 0 for content. It was necessary to transform the data from continuous scores to dichotomous scores for the analysis which followed.

Table 2 presents an interpretive guide for the three different levels of mastery utilized in these analyses.

Ordering Theory

Ordering theory is an approach to fundamental measurement which seeks to identify both linear and nonlinear prerequisite relationships among test items, tasks, skills, or components (Airasian and Bart; Bart and Krus; Bart, Frey, and Baxter). In the context of this research, Gagne's definition of *prerequisite* is employed: "a capability of prior learning which is incorporated into

Table 1

Cut Scores at Different Mastery Levels

Component	90%	75%	50%
Content	27	23	15
Organization	18	15	10
Vocabulary	18	15	10
Language Use	22	18	12
Mechanics	5	4	3
Total	90	75	50

new learning. The previously learned entity actually enters into the newly learned capability, becomes and remains a part of the behavior which results from the events of learning" (268). The second step in an ordering-theoretic study is to determine whether the identified prerequisite relationships are statistically significant, or whether they occurred by chance alone. Bart and Read's statistical test was developed for this purpose.

Three different sets of dichotomous scores generated from the five analytical components were submitted to the ordering-theoretic analysis (one set from the 90% mastery level; a second set from the 75% mastery level; and a third set from the 50% mastery level). For each of the three analyses a contingency table was constructed for each of the 20 ($5 \times 5 - 5 = 20$) component pairs, and a zero tolerance level was established. In this context, zero tolerance means that if, for any component pair generically labeled AB, a single occurrence of a failed/passed (01) response pattern was found, the prerequisite relationship that success on component A was necessary for success on component B was disconfirmed for that component pair (0 indicating a "fail" by the cut score criterion; 1 indicating a "pass" by the cut score criterion).

Results

The results indicated that only one significant prerequisite

Table 2
Criterion-Referenced Interpretive Guide
Levels of Mastery

Mastery Level	Writing Characteristics/Criteria
90%	Writer communicates effectively. Ideas are expressed clearly and fluently, with an obvious sequence to their development in support of the central theme. Vocabulary, sentences, and mechanics work effectively to convey the intended ideas and shades of meaning.
75%	Writer achieves minimal communication. Main ideas are apparent but may not be carefully organized to develop the central theme; supporting details may be incomplete or minimal. Incomplete mastery of some criteria for vocabulary, language use, and mechanics limits the writer's effectiveness, although the flow of ideas is not seriously impeded.
50%	Writer communicates only partially. On the whole, ideas are barely discernible and there is little of any elaboration in support of the central theme. Lack of mastery in most of the criteria for vocabulary, language use, and mechanics severely restricts the flow of ideas (Jacobs et al. 1981, p. 65).

relationship was found: at the 50% mastery level, success on the organization component was necessary for success on the language use component. To paraphrase the finding, we can say that at the 50% mastery level there was no occurrence of a writer receiving a 0 for organization and a 1 for language use, and this prerequisite relationship was significant at the .05 level.

Because the composition research community has experienced a shift in focus from an emphasis on teaching separate skills to an emphasis on the composing process as a gestalt, we did not posit in

advance any tentative prerequisite relationships. Our study was an exploratory one to determine if any prerequisite relationships existed. As we mentioned previously, from the separate analyses only one significant prerequisite relationship was identified, and therefore, we sought to find an explanation.

A data set can fail to yield various prerequisite relationships for at least two reasons: (1) the measurement scale is unreliable; and (2) only one latent structure underlies the data.

We can immediately discount the first possibility because the internal consistency reliability estimate for the ESL Composition Profile as utilized by the two trained raters was .839. Thus, we found the measurement scale to be internally consistent, and consequently, to show no evidence of multidimensionality in a small data set such as the one utilized in this study. Of the 20 component pairs examined in the three separate analyses, only one significant prerequisite relationship was discovered, and we could reasonably expect this number to occur by chance alone.

To obtain some estimation of the latent structure underlying the data, we submitted the continuous scores to the Pearson product-moment correlation procedure. All the correlation coefficients reported in Table 3 are significant at the .01 level for a one-tailed test. We also submitted the dichotomous scores to a phi correlation analysis and found similar results. An inspection of Table 3 suggests that the five analytical components are all highly interrelated, indicating that one latent structure underlay the data, thereby accounting for the absence of prerequisite relationships.

Implications

The lack of prerequisite relationships and the interrelation of analytical components indicate that for this sample of ESL composition students, writing ability was learned as a whole rather than as a series of separate components. In terms of pedagogy, as Falk has noted, it would be artificial to provide work on isolated facets of composition because the writing student is involved with all facets of language during the composing process. These aspects interact with each other, as the correlation matrix shows. What writing teachers need to do is to provide opportunities for the student writers to use language in actual contexts, where communication is the goal, so that they can internalize the necessary writing patterns and principles. The focus in the new paradigm is on function, meaning, and purpose.

Various studies have shown that instruction on specific components can have a negligible, or worse, a negative effect on

Table 3
Correlation Matrix

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Content	1.00	.709	.550	.544	.279	.835
2. Organization		1.00	.439	.507	.325	.762
3. Vocabulary			1.00	.809	.441	.842
4. Language Use				1.00	.537	.882
5. Mechanics					1.00	.536
6. Total						1.00

r = .2540, p .005, df 108, one-tailed test
r = .3211, p .0005, df 108, one-tailed test
Correlation coefficients of .2540 and larger are significant at the .005 level for this sample size; correlation coefficients of .3211 and larger are significant at the .0005 for this sample size.

writing ability. For example, Braddock, Lloyd-Jones, and Schoer found that formal grammar instruction had little effect on writing improvement. Elley et al. noted that grammar study did not produce a significant difference in student writers' control of mechanics. Adams reported a study which showed that an increased emphasis on correctness leads to a decrease in the quality of student writing. Raimes (1983a) claimed that a concentration on grammar, language use, and mechanics can inhibit the flow of writing and can lead students to concentrate on the written product and not on the writing process.

The results of this study and other research indicate the need for an approach to writing which recognizes that so-called "separate skills" are actually highly interrelated and further that writing is more than the sum of its parts. Three such approaches which meet these criteria have been advanced by Raimes (1983b). The Grammar-Syntax-Organization Approach leads "students to pay attention to organization while they also work on the necessary grammar and syntax. This approach links the purpose of a piece of writing to the forms that are necessary to convey the message. . . .

The Communicative Approach stresses the purpose of a piece of writing to the forms that are needed to convey the message" (8). With the Process Approach student writers "explore a topic through writing, showing the teacher and each other their drafts, and using what they write to read over, think about, and move them on to new ideas. . . . The writing process becomes a process of discovery for the students: discovery of new ideas and new language forms to express those ideas" (10–11).

In summary, we have noted a shift in writing instruction for both first- and second-language learning. Instead of focusing on writing as a set of sequential, separate tasks, the new approach stresses writing as a holistic gestalt with a focus on meaning, function, and purpose, with an awareness of the interrelation of composition skills.

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NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

New Book Award: The *Journal of Advanced Composition* announces the W. Ross Winterowd Award for the most outstanding book published each year in composition theory. The award will be presented annually at the CCCC convention during the meeting of the Association of Teachers of Advanced Composition. The first award will be given in Chicago in 1990 for the best book published in 1989. **Send nominations to:** Gary A. Olson, Editor; Journal of Advanced Composition; Dept. of English; U. of South Florida; Tampa, FL 33620–5550.

Call for Articles: The City University of New York's Office of Academic Affairs and its ESL teaching community announce a new scholarly journal, *College ESL.* This journal will provide a forum for exploring concerns regarding the education of English as a second language (ESL) students, specifically urban immigrant and refugee adults in college and precollege settings. *College ESL* invites articles supported by research and theory on these subjects: Current instructional practices in ESL and related disciplines; innovations in curriculum and pedagogy; research studies; teacher education and training; culture, history, sociology, and anthropology of ESL populations; relevant ethical, legal, and political issues. The first issue will be published in Fall 1990. Submissions deadline for that issue has passed. **For guidelines,** contact: Editor, *College ESL,* Instructional Resource Center, CUNY, 535 East 80 Street, New York, NY 10021.

Call for Articles: The *Journal of Teaching Writing,* now in its eighth year, is a refereed journal for classroom teachers and researchers in the field of teaching writing. Published semiannually, in late Spring and Fall, *JTW* offers articles on the theory, practice, and teaching of writing across the curriculum—from preschool to the university. Each issue covers a range of topics, from composition theory and discourse analysis to curriculum development and innovative teaching techniques, and includes articles by such well-known authorities as Kenneth Bruffee (Brooklyn College, CUNY), Nancy Sommers (Rutgers), John Stewig (U. of Wisconsin at Milwaukee), Vera Milz (Way Elementary, Troy, MI), Elaine Maimon (Queens College, CUNY), Harvey Wiener (CUNY), Marilyn Sternglass (City College, CUNY), Helen Schwartz (U. of Indiana), Richard Gebhardt (Bowling Green State U.), and others. Submission of articles is encouraged from educators on all levels, in all disciplines. Subscriptions are $8.00 a year for individu-

als, $15.00 for institutions (ISSN 0735–1259). **Inquiries:** *JTW,* IUPUI, 425 University Blvd., Indianapolis, IN 46202.

April 20–21, 1990: East Central Writing Centers Association will hold its Twelfth Annual Conference, "Bridging Learning Communities," at Indiana State University. Keynote Speaker will be Douglas Hunt (U. of Missouri-Columbia) discussing "The Mythology of Discourse Communities." **For information,** write Brenda Ameter, Peter Carino, or Coralyn Dahl, Dept. of English, Indiana State U., Terre Haute, IN 47809.

April 22–24, 1990: The New York College Learning Skills Association will hold its Thirteenth Annual Symposium on Developmental Education at the Nevele Hotel, Ellenville, NY. The keynote speaker, Ira Shor of The College of Staten Island, CUNY, will discuss "Critical Learning for Self and Social Change." Four Pre-Symposium Institutes will be given on April 22nd (1) David Bleich, U. of Rochester, "Collaboration and the Study of Literacy." (2) Richard Grey, Montclair State College, "Self-Esteem: Our Students, Ourselves." (3) Edwin Ellis, U. of South Carolina, "Teaching Learning Disabled College Students." (4) Anne Bradstreet Grinois, Parkland College, and Wendy Paterson, State University College at Buffalo, "CAI: The Thrill is Back!" **For registration,** contact Kathleen Schatzberg-Smith, Ass't. Dean of Instruction, Rockland Community College, 145 College Rd., Suffern, NY 10901 (914) 356–4650, Ext. 261 or 210.

June 1–3, 1990: A conference on "Computers and College Writing: Curriculum and Assessment for the 1990s," will be held at the Vista International Hotel in New York City. Sponsored jointly by The City University of New York and the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, this conference culminates several years of effort by CUNY's National Project on Computers and College Writing. The event is designed for administrators and teachers of college writing programs to showcase the fifteen project sites and will provide a forum on the use of computers in the writing classroom. **For further information,** contact Dr. Max Kirsch, Project Director, National Project on Computers and College Writing, The City University of New York, Office of Academic Computing, 555 West 57th Street, 14th Floor, New York, NY 10019, (212) 542–0320.

June 25–29, 1990: 19th Wyoming Conference on English, "Who's Teaching What to Whom and Why?" will be held at the University of Wyoming, Laramie, WY. Invited speakers are Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (Cornell), Sandra Gilbert (Princeton), Susan Gubar (Indiana), Gerald Graff (Northwestern), Jasper Neel (Waterloo), Richard Sterling, and Marcie Wolfe (both of Lehman College, CUNY). **For information,** contact: Tilly Warnock, English Dept., U. of Wyoming, P. O. Box 3353, University Station, Laramie, WY 82071–3353.

July 11–14, 1990: Penn State Conference on Rhetoric and Composition to be held in State College, PA, will present papers, demonstrations, and workshops on topics related to rhetoric or the teaching of writing—on composition, rhetorical history and theory, basic writing, technical and business communication, etc. Among the featured speakers are: Walter Beale, Lester Faigley, Linda Flower, Winifred Horner, Kathleen Jamieson, Lee Odell, and John Trimbur. **Inquiries:** John Harwood, Dept. of English, The Pennsylvania State U., University Park, PA 16802 (BITNET: JTH at PSUVM).

October 5–6, 1990: The University of Louisville will present a professional writing conference, "Business Communication: Within and Across Organizations," cosponsored by its Dept. of English through a Bonnie Endowment and its School of Business. **Inquiries:** Dr. Beth Boehm or Dr. Geoffrey Cross, U. of Louisville, Dept. of English, Bingham Humanities Bldg., Louisville, KY 40292.

November 9–11, 1990: The National Testing Network in Writing and The City University of New York will hold the Eighth Annual NTNW Conference on Writing Assessment, "Multiple Literacies and Strategies for Assessing Them," at the Vista International Hotel in New York City. Topics to be explored in panels, workshops, and forums include new models of writing assessment, classroom evaluation measures, assessment of writing across the curriculum, computer applications in writing assessment, research on writing assessment, certification of professional writing proficiency, and writing program evaluation. Deadline for proposals *was* March 30, 1990. **For information,** contact: Karen L. Greenberg, NTNW Director, Dept. of English, Hunter College, CUNY, 695 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10021.

CALL FOR ARTICLES

The Instructional Resource Center of The City University of New York's Office of Academic Affairs and the ESL teaching community announce a new scholarly journal, ***College ESL***.

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The first issue is scheduled for publication in Fall 1990. Contact: Gay Brookes, Editor, ***College ESL***, Instructional Resource Center, Office of Academic Affairs, The City University of New York, 535 East 80th Street, New York, NY 10021.

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