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Backgrounds in L1 literacy and attitudes toward text in an ESOL writing classroom

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Backgrounds in L1 literacy and attitudes toward text in an ESOL writing classroom

by

Lia Margaret Plakans

A thesis submitted to the graduate faculty
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Major: English (Teaching English as a Second Language/Applied Linguistics)

Major Professor: Roberta J. Vann

Iowa State University
Ames, Iowa
1997

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Graduate College
Iowa State University

This is to certify that the Master's thesis of
Lia Margaret Plakans
has met the requirements of Iowa State University

Signatures have been redacted for privacy
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Robert Butler deserves much gratitude for keeping me on task and in Ames for the three years I needed to finish. Simply put, I could not have done this without him.
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Objectives

A great deal of research has attempted to define the dynamics of second language literacy development; however, researchers have readily acknowledged the complexity of reading and writing in a second language. Questions about the influence of first language literacy and second language proficiency on second language reading have been prevalent in second language acquisition research for some time (Clarke, 1979; Cziko, 1980; Carrell, 1991; Bernhardt & Kamil, 1995). Less frequently, researchers have asked about the relation between first language literacy and writing in a second language (Carson, Carrell, Silberstein, Kroll & Kuehn, 1990; Hedgecock & Atkinson, 1993). This latter question about second language literacy has guided my thesis research. The intention of this study is to look at whether students' L1 backgrounds in literacy development and attitudes/preferences in reading are related to their writing in English.

Second language acquisition theory has often been informed by research in first language acquisition, and my research presented here is guided by a previous study which was conducted with native English speakers. The study I am partially replicating was conducted by Daane (1991), who considered literacy backgrounds and attitudes toward text of native English speakers in a college composition course in relation to the writing they did in class. I also looked at literacy backgrounds and attitudes towards text in relation to the writing my students did in an ESL composition class; however, my students were non-native English speakers. My research methodology adheres to the paradigm of qualitative research, more specifically practitioner research, where my classroom is the setting in which I seek to gain instghts into the development of L2 literacy. Through a qualitative analysis of students' journals, compositions, and interviews, my thesis explores individual differences in literacy
background/attitudes, and investigates whether they are manifested in students' writing in English, and, if so, how.

**Background on the issue**

I became interested in student differences in literacy background/attitudes when I taught reading for university-level international students. In my second semester of teaching the course, when the majority of my students were Malaysian and Indonesian, I found that in teaching certain reading skills, particularly making inferences and determining author's opinion versus fact, these students had great difficulties. Curious about these events, I went to two English teachers who are Malaysian. I interviewed them informally about their experience teaching reading in English and the attitudes and practices toward reading in Malaysia. There were three main points which I found particularly interesting in their characterization of Malaysian English language learners. First, they told me that in Malaysia it is uncommon for parents to read to preschool-aged children; reading is learned when children enter school (at age seven). Secondly, according to these Malaysians, in Malaysia people tend not to read for pleasure as they do in the U.S. The third point which caught my interest was these two teachers' comment that in the schools, although they are trying to make reforms, texts are used only to convey factual information. According to these teachers, students do not know how to use text "creatively."

To further investigate this question I turned to my writing classroom. In the fall of 1995, I was assigned to teach an intermediate composition class for university-level international students. At this time I was also involved in a seminar on action research, and I developed this issue into a research project by introducing reading responses as a way to encourage students' interaction with text. As part of my study, I had students keep a dialogue journal with me in which they wrote about their educational background, family history and preferences in relation to reading. I looked at all students' entries, but particularly at those of
the Malaysian students because of my previous impressions and the interview with the Malaysian teachers. I also conducted several interviews with three Chinese Malaysian students. I found that several of the students liked reading, but only newspapers and magazines, not novels; however, among the students there were differences in which topics they read in these periodicals. All three students suggested that they only valued "useful" reading, and that their teachers had told them that reading was important because it would give them information. I looked at students' compositions and journal entries, particularly at their expression, to see any change occurred the semester as they were introduced to interacting more with text through reading responses.

What I found significant in this analysis was the close relation I noticed between what students liked to read and their writing, especially in content and style. One student liked reading underground Malaysian newspapers because the regular papers were controlled by the government and didn't allow criticism of its policies or of the country's condition. He found that in the underground papers he could read arguments and opinions. This student's writing was usually political; he chose topics such as the conditions of immigrant workers and the political structure in Malaysia. Another student confessed that he liked reading magazines which had color pictures like National Geographic. His writing was full of description and adjectives. One entry in his journal described him walking through his parents' house, going room to room detailing everything. It was as if he were writing a picture.

These observations were fairly holistic and general; however, this research led me to three important realizations: 1) differences did seem to exist among students' attitudes and backgrounds in L1 literacy development, 2) looking at one culture may be misleading because as Street (1992) has suggested, trying to develop "inventories" of the literacies of cultures creates the potential for overlooking culture as a process and individuals' "notions of self", and 3) I wanted to look more closely at the interaction between students' backgrounds/attitudes and their writing.
Summary of thesis content

In this chapter I have introduced the focus of this project and my personal experiences with students' second language reading and writing development which motivated this study. Chapter Two reviews literature pertaining to the issues of literacy theory, reading and writing connections, and second language literacy development. Chapter Three presents the methods followed in my research and outlines the procedures undertaken. Chapter Four provides the results of the data collected from six students in my ESL writing classroom in relation to their literacy development, attitudes towards text, and my analysis of their written English. Finally, Chapter Five summarizes the understanding gained by this study, projecting the implications of the research, acknowledging limitations, and suggesting possibilities for future research in this area.
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Much research in the field of second language acquisition has addressed issues concerning L2 literacy and influencing factors, particularly L1 literacy (Clarke, 1979; Cziko, 1980; Alderson, 1984). These studies have concluded that L1 reading can affect L2 reading, but a certain threshold of proficiency in L2 language abilities must be reached. Also the transfer seems to differ among cultures and language backgrounds. My research sought to discover if L1 reading also influenced L2 writing. The areas of L1 reading I considered were students' backgrounds in literacy and their attitudes and preferences toward reading. To pursue my question of literacy several other questions also need to be answered: 1) What influence do cultural practices and beliefs have on an individual's performance, attitudes, and preferences in reading? 2) How might such literacy practices be related to second language literacy? 3) How might attitudes and preferences in reading affect L1 writing? 4) What prior research has investigated the connection between L1 reading and L2 writing? and 5) How might my research add to these prior studies in L1 and L2 literacy?

The influence of cultural practices and beliefs on L1 literacy development

The understanding of first language literacy has developed a great deal through research and theory. An important strain of such research has sought to acknowledge the importance of cultural practices in influencing literacy behavior. One current theory of literacy, advanced by Street (1984), has been termed the "ideological model." It considers literacy practices as social events existing within a culture (p.2). This model for understanding literacy presents two important principles for research. One, Street claims is that "literacy practices" are the key for understanding literacy. "Literacy practices" include, "not only the event (of literacy use) itself but the conceptions of the reading and writing process that people hold while they are engaged in the event" (Street, 1992, p.3). Essentially, this principle means that events in which literacy
is used do not exist in isolation but are influenced by one's preconceived notions of literacy. This point connects to Street's second principle which promotes the description of the social context of literacy practice. He warns against the description of "cultural inventories of literacy"; instead, he proposes seeing the process of culture and considering, "the associations between cultural conventions, literacy practices, notions of self, person, and identity and struggles over power" (p.5). Street's theory of an ideological model for understand literacy supports the implications that L2 literacy is affected by L1 culture and community, but also requires recognition of individual differences.

Some researchers have looked at concrete examples of cultural background in relation to literacy development in education. Greene (1993) did a thorough analysis of the background of children in a Navajo reservation school to try and understand low success levels in literacy. She found that factors such as a parent's level of traditionalism and living in a rural hogan instead of government-provided housing, played a role in how reading and writing were fostered in the home (which she equated with success academically). Greene promotes the notion of discovering students' "cultural ecology" to better understand their needs in literacy development. The work of Heath in the Carolina Piedmont communities (1982, 1983) applies as well. In her ethnography, she found that there were certain factors in the home that were part of literacy socialization that could lead to success or lack of success in school. She described literacy events (for example, bedtime story reading) and the "rules" of interaction during such events as being crucial in literacy development and overall academic capabilities. These researchers support the idea that certain events and community-based factors are involved in literacy development.

A case study conducted by Fishman (1992) looked at the attitudes towards text in a student's culture in relation to a portfolio of his literacy skills (including reading comprehension exercises, a composition, and a letter written to the researcher). The student studied was from an old Order Amish family. Fishman found in this student's literacy
portfolio that his reading comprehension exercises were answered with inappropriate brevity, if at all; his composition was for the most part copied from a social studies textbook; and the letter written to the researcher had more voice than did the composition. Fishman explains that to understand this child's literacy development an ethnographic understanding of the Amish must be considered. Some points of the Amish worldview which she felt were necessary to understand were: 1) all text was believed to be true (for example, the Bible), 2) the mode of instruction in Amish classrooms is modeling, 3) accuracy matters more than appearance, 4) time is valuable and 5) the group is more important than the individual (1992, p.70). Fishman claims these are important in explaining the student's brevity of response, plagiarism, and lack of innovation in writing. Attitudes toward text are encompassed by the worldview which Fishman suggests connects culture and literacy. Fishman's research led her to conclude:

What students know about the world, what they believe is possible, what they consider useful and important, and how they have experienced learning and literacy in the past bears directly on how they will grow as literate individuals in the future (1992, p.75).

The influence of L1 literacy practices on L2 literacy

As mentioned before, some researchers have considered whether development of L2 literacy is related more to first language abilities or to second language proficiency. This research has shown that a threshold exists which learners must reach in second language proficiency to have first language transfer. These studies have looked mainly at comprehension of reading in the second language rather than writing (Clarke, 1979; Cziko, 1980; Alderson, 1984). However, in 1990 Carson et al. conducted a study to look at the relation between L1 and L2 literacy in three areas. They correlated L1 reading to L1 writing, L2 reading to L2 writing, L1 reading to L2 reading, and L1 writing to L2 writing with two groups of participants: Chinese learning English and Japanese learning English. In this study, they recognized that students have two sources available for them to develop their literacy skills: literacy skills and knowledge of literacy in their L1 (interlingual transfer) and input in
from literacy activities in the L2 (intralingual input) (Carson et al. 1990, p. 246). Their study concludes that interlingual transfer occurs; however, the transfer varies among students depending on their first language educational background or first language experiences. Because Carson et al. measured interlingual transfer by ascertaining the highest level of education attained as well as by assessing L1 literacy skills through a cloze reading passage and an essay written in the students' first language, few conclusions could be drawn about the dynamics of the L1 literacy or education experiences. Also the authors attributed variation to be due to cultural difference; however, these differences were not definable from the data collected.

This correlation between L1 culture and L2 literacy has been expanded by others in relating a more broadly defined development of L1 literacy to L2 reading. In a paper titled Culture, literacy, and L2 reading, Parry (1996) reported on her experiences as an EFL teacher of reading in Nigeria and China. These first-hand teaching experiences filled the gap left by Carson et al. concerning interlingual transfer. Parry discovered that as a teacher she needed to understand the students' backgrounds in literacy to know what their needs were. For example, her Nigerian students spoke among them 24 different languages with English as the school language and the lingua franca. On the other hand, although many mutually unintelligible dialects of Chinese exist, her students in China did not use English as the school language, nor was it a part of the code-switching that occurred outside of her classroom. Additionally, she described aspects of their language training in school, such as the Nigerian students not using translation in reading English or the Chinese students' focus on memorization written characters before reading. Parry believed that these factors contributed to the tendency of Nigerian students to use more top-down strategies when reading for comprehension while the Chinese had a more bottom-up approach. By learning what strategies students had learned to use through their culture, Parry suggested that,

teachers will be far better equipped to play their part in the enterprise if they try to look not just at what their students say they do or even at what they actually
do, but at what the have been taught to do through, as Heath (1983) has put it, their own communities' "ways with words" (p.688).

Continuing the theme of the effect of culture and the community on L2 literacy development, a study by Bell (1995) attempted to elaborate on the connection between L1 literacy and L2 literacy with a narrative self-study of her own development in Chinese literacy as a native English speaker. In her study, Bell found that her background in English literacy development and her tutor's background in Chinese literacy development were very different and that difference affected her progress in learning to read and write in Chinese. For example, Bell described her frustration in learning only four new characters a week because her tutor was not satisfied with the "balance" in her strokes. Later, Bell realized that her assumption was that she was gaining literacy to read, whereas her tutor's background in Chinese literacy development had led her to associate literacy more with writing. In her conclusion Bell stated, "We need to explore our own assumptions and recognize that much of what we used to consider an inherent part of literacy is actually culturally imposed" (p.702). This study is important not only in supporting the differences which exist among cultures, but in suggesting the implications such differences have for teachers of the English language. Additionally, if a culturally-specific understanding of literacy can be attributed to an instructor, then such a perspective may also be held by students.

As evidenced in these studies, theory in second language acquisition is starting to recognize the influence of community and culture on second language literacy development; however, this potential relation has been developed in more depth by researchers in first language literacy development.

The influence of L1 reading attitudes and practice on L1 writing

Fishman (1992) demonstrates attitudes towards reading and preferences in text can be considered part of a culture's world view and the individual's socialization into a community; additionally, in Fishman's study, these factors were seen to influence writing. Other
researchers in L1 literacy have studied the issue of a connection between reading and writing (Eckoff, 1983; Daane, 1991) and discovered that such a dynamic exists. In fact, this relationship is well enough established that models for practice have been proposed (Tierney and Pearson, 1983; Smith, 1983; Greene, 1992) to exploit reading for improved writing development.

Eckoff's (1983) study clearly showed that children's writing contained features of their reading texts. By looking at the writing from two second-grade classes, one using Basal B a simplified text typical of basal texts and one using Basal A which was closer in style and complexity to literary prose, Eckoff found that the two classes differed in several areas of writing: linguistic structures, format, and style. The differences between the writing in the classes mirrored the differences between the basal readers. Eckoff concluded that what children read has an impact on their development as writers. Daane (1991) also looked at reading and writing connections, but her participants were adult college students. In her study, Daane decided to explore the connection between students' reading and writing by asking students to describe, in their journals, their literacy development, and then she examined the text they wrote for the class. She focused on four students, two who she termed as readers and two who were non-readers. Daane discovered that connections seemed to exist between the reading backgrounds of these students and their writing in her composition course:

This exercise revealed notable parallels between their reading histories and their present writing performance. Students who reported early pleasure in reading and continued exposure to literature produced texts which were markedly different in syntactic and semantic complexity, structural and narrative forms, and the use of imaginative language as compared with the text produced by students who reported early frustration and infrequent or no continued exposure to literature (p.185).

The influence of L1 reading on L2 writing

Although second language acquisition researchers have acknowledged the possible influence of community on L2 literacy development, support for a connection between L1
reading attitudes and L2 writing is lacking. Two researchers have done quantitative studies which explore the question of this relationship (Janopoulus, 1986; Hedgcock & Atkinson, 1993); both found no significant correlation between L1 reading attitudes and preferences and L2 writing. The study by Janopoulos (1986) correlated the amount of time spent reading for pleasure, not specifying what type of material was read, with students' scores on a one-hour writing sample. His results showed no correlation, which he suggested may be due to the dissimilarity between the L1 and the L2 of the participants, the majority of whom were Asian. In 1993, Hedgcock and Atkinson published an article which compared two of their earlier research studies. One study, explored the reading-writing relationship for native English speakers; the other examined the relationship of L1 and L2 reading to L2 writing of non-native English speakers. These researchers found that L1 reading and writing frequency and genre-preferences (since elementary school) were highly correlated to students' performance on an L1 timed measure expository-writing test (the participants in this study were native-English speakers taking an English composition final exam). However, Hedgcock and Atkinson found no significance in the L2 writers' performance on a placement exam composition and their L1 or L2 background in reading. The authors suggest two possible explanations:

The contrasting results reported here suggest, at most, that extensive exposure to written texts—whether L1 or L2—may have little impact on nonnative writing proficiency of the type measured here, or at least, that such impact is difficult to measure using the present methodology (p. 332).

These two studies suggest that there is little relation between preferences and attitudes towards reading in an L1 and writing in a second language.

Connections to my thesis

This review of literature in L1 and L2 literacy development has revealed a strong tradition in research connecting community and culture to literacy development and practice. This strain of research is stronger in L1 literacy theory than in L2; however, a number of researchers suggest that this connection needs more attention (Carson et al., 1990; Grabe,
In research on first language literacy, some connections have been found between how a community perceives literacy and the attitudes toward and preferences of members of the culture have in reading; this perception has also been connected to writing in a first language (Fishman, 1988, 1992; Daane 1991; Heath, 1982, 1983). However, this same connection has not been supported by research in second language literacy. In the Hedgcock and Atkinson article (1993) on reading and writing connections for native and non-native speakers of English, they suggest that, "only through further research featuring direct comparisons of native and nonnative literacy development will an adequate understanding of the complex nature of L2 literacy be achieved" (p.332). Through my replication study I have attempted to contribute to this understanding.

I have chosen to replicate Daane's (1991) study which looked at the relation between the reading and writing of native English speakers in a college composition course. By collecting students' journal entries on their reading histories and their compositions written in her class, Daane analyzed the possible connections between reading and writing in the students' first language. In replicating her study, I am looking at an L2 context to examine what, if any, connections might exist between L1 reading background and preferences and L2 writing. I plan to use Daane's methods to gain information which might reveal connections missed in prior research (Janopoulus, 1986; Hedgcock & Atkinson, 1993) or which may support the hypothesis that there is no significant connection between L1 reading and L2 writing.
CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

This study did not take place in one specific setting, a single room or building; however, the main context was the course I was teaching in the spring of 1996: an intermediate academic writing class for international students at a midwestern land-grant university. Since I was the teacher as well as the main researcher, my study can be considered practitioner research. Recognizing this dynamic is important because it requires acknowledgment of my role and subjectivity in the study. Anderson, Herr, and Nihlen (1994) provide a definition of practitioner research:

"Insider" research done by practitioners, using their own site as the focus of their study. It is a reflective process, but is different from isolated, spontaneous reflection in that it is deliberately and systematically undertaken, and generally requires some form of evidence to be presented to support an assertion (p.2).

Practitioner research does not prescribe a specific methodology for conducting research; however, in researching my question about second language literacy, I used qualitative methodology. Although traditionally second language acquisition research has utilized primarily quantitative measures for discovery, the important contributions of qualitative research in educational and sociolinguistic research has led the field of SLA to acknowledge it as a valid way of understanding and gaining knowledge (Davis, 1995). Numerous researchers have effectively used this methodology to understand questions in the field of literacy (Fishman, 1988, 1992; Heath, 1982, 1983; Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988; Daane, 1991; Bell, 1995; Parry, 1996).

In this chapter, I shall define first, the methods of data collection and second, the analysis which I have employed to pursue my research. Although I shall explain the two areas separately, during my research they were intertwined and overlapping (see Table 3.1). My data consisted of students' journals and compositions and my interviews with the students. As I collected and analyzed my data, my question became more focused. Then, I collected more data. In the last stage of my research, I conducted a final analysis and concluded this study by
Table 3.1 Data collection and analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage One</th>
<th>Collected two journal entries on literacy development and attitudes/preferences in reading from 14 students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coded above journal entries for readership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reflected on and analyzed collected data in methodological appendix/teaching journal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Narrowed number of participants to six</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interviewed the six participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage Two</td>
<td>Collected journal entries (9) and first and final drafts of compositions (8) from six students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Re-coded reading history journals of six participants for patterns in literacy background and reading attitudes/preferences for within case analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coded interviews for within case analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage Three</td>
<td>Analyzed writing (journal entries, first and final drafts of compositions) of the six students across cases for development, genre/topic choice, and revision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reflected on data and analysis in relation to research questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage Four</td>
<td>Narrowed focus to four students for writing up final analysis of research questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conducted follow-up interviews with four participants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

reviewing what I had attempted in my research and how I might answer the questions guiding my research. Through this process, I further divided my main research question into two questions:

1. What were my students' L1 literacy development and attitudes/preferences in reading?
2. What were possible relations of the factors uncovered in answering question one to my students' writing in English?
Participants

Because the participants were students in my class, I had no control over the range of ethnicity or differences in literacy development; these factors were determined by who registered for the course. The students in my class came from a variety of countries and cultures: Malaysia, Indonesia, Taiwan, China, Korea, and Kuwait. I gave all students an informed consent form explaining the nature of my research and asking for voluntary participation, and fourteen chose to participate (see Appendix A for informed consent form).

Then, I collected two journal entries from each student about their background in reading. The first entry was a response to the following prompt.

Write about your history of reading in your first language. Who taught you or how did you learn? Did someone read to you when you were a child? What do you remember about reading at home and at school? Add anything you can think of about the topic of reading. I know this is a difficult topic; it will require a lot of thought.

In the second entry, I collected students' responses to questions I asked about their initial journal entry. My questions were not uniform but rather related to each student's previous writing specifically. Some sample questions follow:

How do you feel about reading?
What do you like to read (in English and in your first language)?
What books are in your dorm room/apartment?
What do you like to read?
What do you think is important to read?
Write about anything that enters your mind about reading.
How often do you read?
Why do you read?
Narrowing participant number

After collecting these two journal entries, I began looking at all 14 students' writing, but later I focused on six students as Daane (1991) had done with four students in her study whom she categorized as nonreaders and readers. According to Daane, nonreader students were those who claimed not to read very much or only read newspapers and magazines. "Readers" would be those who not only read regularly and liked reading, but who had had positive early reading experiences which included parents' encouragement and an early interest in reading. For my own analysis, I developed a third category highlighting events/preferences which I felt were important to my questions but didn't necessarily fit in the other two categories (for example, details about literacy development in English or explanations of the school system in the student's country). Then I read each student's journal and color-coded statements which related to the aforementioned three categories (readers, non-readers, and significant information). Four of the 14 only handed in one journal entry either because of absences or misunderstanding. After coding all of the journals, I re-read them, comparing the students and seeking a range in readership. To narrow the number of participants in my study, I chose students who seemed to have a number of responses in the two categories reader and non-reader (most students had responses which belonged in both categories, however, often one was more prevalent). In addition to this variation, I chose not to include graduate students (two of the fourteen), so that the ages and education level of the participants was less variable. I also decided to balance the genders in my study. Lastly, I chose students from different countries; my motivation was to investigate the backgrounds of students from different cultures. Using all of these criteria, I narrowed my number of participants from fourteen to six (see Appendix B for sample journal entries).

These six students, from Indonesia, Kuwait, Malaysia, Korea, and Taiwan, became the central participants in my study as my research continued (see Table 3.2 for student information). Their first languages were Indonesian, Arabic, Malay, Korean, and Chinese
Most of the students were in business-related fields (Business, Finance, Marketing); however, one was in Communications and another in Hotel and Restaurant Management. (Pseudonyms were used for all participants in this study.)

Data collection

One important aspect of data collection in qualitative research is triangulation, which essentially means using several sources to collect data (Anderson et al., 1994, p.31). In my study, for example, I achieved triangulation through interviewing participants, conducting follow-up interviews, collecting journal entries, and collecting multiple drafts of formal compositions. These data both informed the first part of my question about the nature of students' backgrounds in reading and provided data for analysis on the connection between this information and student writing. Through these varied sources, I sought insights into the dynamics of L2 literacy while maintaining a dependable process of data collection.

Table 3.2 Student information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>First Language</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>College Major</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lydia</td>
<td>Indonesian</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohammed</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosdiana</td>
<td>Malay</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julius</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Hotel and Restaurant Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shu-jen</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Interviews

In addition to collecting journals and compositions, I conducted interviews with six of my students and later did follow-up interviews with the four who became the focus in my final analysis. The main purpose of these interviews was to add depth to the information I gained from journal entries about background and attitudes/preferences towards text. Because the participants were students in my class, we had already developed a student-teacher relationship; however, I used informed consent procedures to assure students that their participation in the study would not alter their grade in the course or my perception of them as students (see Appendix A for informed consent form). Before the interview, each student had a fifteen-minute conference with me in which we discussed drafts of papers, interviews which were assigned for a paper assignment, and general concerns or questions that they had about the course. These conferences were informal, and I felt that during this time we built trust in one another which gave students the confidence to speak honestly with me and allowed for in-depth interviews. I assured students that their identities would remain confidential through the use of pseudonyms in my research.

During the interview, I questioned each student individually and followed a course prescribed by their input before and during the interview. The nature of the questions was semistructured. I began each interview with what Spradley's classification would consider a grand tour question (Anderson et al., 1994, p.119): tell me your family history. This question served to open the discussion between us and allowed the participant to begin setting up emic perspectives on the topic of the interview. I followed the response to this question with some mini-tour questions which built upon what students said in their journal entries; for example, I asked one student, “In your journal you wrote that you learned to read at your nursery school. How did they teach you to read there?” Interviews also included example questions, “What sort of writing assignments would you have (in school)?” and experience questions, which usually had to do with literacy development; for example: “Could you tell me
your education history?" or "How did you learn to write?" (see Appendix C for a transcript sample).

I recorded the interviews by audio-taping and later transcribed each interview except for one in which the student asked not to be recorded. For this unrecorded interview I took notes and verified them with the interviewee. My transcriptions of the interviews only included verbal language and did not include nonverbal behavior. I organized the transcription from top to bottom which assumed speaker turn-taking chronologically down the page (Ochs, 1979). For the purposes of this study such basic transcription seemed sufficient.

Later, I conducted follow-up interviews with four students who were the focus of my final analysis in Chapter Four: Lydia, Mohammed, Kim, and Shu-jen. These students were chosen based on their attitudes toward text; these four students, in relation to the six were on either extreme of disliking reading or being highly interested in reading. For the purposes of this study, I termed the first group "non-readers" (Lydia and Mohammed) and the latter group "readers" (Kim and Shu-jen). In the follow-up interviews, I asked students to read portions of the reading backgrounds/attitudes analysis which I had written using their previous interviews and journal entries. This reading allowed students to verify that the factual information was accurate. Also, I asked students to comment on parts of the analysis which they felt needed more elaboration. This format led into my questions about some areas where I was uncertain of what had been said or where I felt patterns were emerging. I integrated the information gathered in these follow-up interviews with the data collected previously. These follow-up interviews were audio-taped and transcribed in the same manner as the initial interviews.

Journals

The journal assignments which I collected included free topic entries, in addition to the first two on students' reading backgrounds (see "participants" section). Students had the freedom to choose any topic on which to write a one-page journal entry (see Appendix D for journal assignments). At the beginning of the semester, I created a list in a brainstorming
session during class about potential topics; however, there was no requirement to use these topics. I collected approximately one journal assignment per week, a total of ten for the semester. (Not all students handed in ten; however, none handed in fewer than eight). These journal entries were informative because the free choice of topics allowed me to gain access to information about students' topic/genre selection which I might not have had access to through formal compositions or prescribed topics for journal entries. For example, I found some students chose to regularly write personal narrative entries about their problems in school or weekend activities, while others wrote in a more evaluative style, reporting on external issues like capital punishment or environmental pollution. These choices of topic/genre may not have appeared in the formal compositions in this course.

**Compositions**

I collected first and final drafts of four compositions assigned over the course of the semester (see Appendix E for composition assignments). I chose to collect multiple drafts because, in teaching, I commented on organization, expression, and content on students' first drafts; therefore, I felt that the final drafts had more of my own input in it than the students' first drafts. However, I still collected final drafts to see what changes students made in revision, an area in which where Daane (1991) had found connections between reading and writing.

**Methodological appendix/Teaching journal**

The process of qualitative research is characterized by shifts, refocuses, and reorientation of the original research questions as the exploration of data directs. To follow this process effectively, a researcher needs to invest time and effort in data analysis and consideration completing data collection. There are several ways to make sense of this process. In my research, I chose to write a methodological appendix/teaching journal.

In this document, I kept notes on my research process as well as my own reflections on what I saw as I looked at the data. My initial reformulation occurred after collecting the first
journal entries on students' backgrounds. I chose to do the next reflection after I had collected the first three compositions and had completed the first round of interviews with the participants. At this time, I asked myself two questions which are relevant during this process of practitioner research: 1) were the questions still answerable and worth asking and 2) were the data-gathering techniques working. After acknowledging these questions and answering them in the affirmative, I chose to continue with my project.

Other researchers in literacy have noted that as teachers of L2 literacy, we bring our biases about learning literacy into the classroom (Heath 1983, Bell 1995, Parry 1996). Therefore, my teaching journal/methodological appendix tried to reflect on my own attitudes and assumptions about text. Qualitative practitioner research recognizes the subjectivity of research, and the need to acknowledge it (Peshkin, 1988). My journal functioned not only to record the path of my research, but also to remind me of my own biases in relation to this project. Most of my teaching journal/methodological appendix will not appear explicitly in this thesis report. Its purpose was to guide my research process; it exists, implicitly, in the path my project followed.

**Collaboration**

A crucial part of practitioner research is collaboration. Collaboration is necessary to practitioner research because the role of teacher/researcher requires critical and reflective dialogue with other practitioner researchers (Anderson et al., 1994, p.32). I included collaboration as part of my study in several ways. Most importantly, the students in my class were collaborators by an introduction to my research and invitation to give their own input and ideas on the topic. Of course, my committee and major professor were collaborators on my thesis by reading and critiquing my research. Finally, I had a peer collaborator in my field, TESL (Teaching English as a Second Language), who was also working on a qualitative thesis project. Although my topic differed from my peer's, we read each other's work, maintained a dialogue journal about our projects, and offered an outside perspective on each other's
research. Through these various collaborations, my research evolved though input from others.

Data analysis

My analysis of data in this study was not linear but could better be characterized as spiraling. In the manner of practitioner research and qualitative methodology, I analyzed and repositioned my questions as I reflected on collected data. By continuously analyzing the data as I collected it and keeping my journal, I was forced to focus on the data and its implications throughout the study. From this process, I gained an understanding of my students' backgrounds in literacy development and attitudes/preferences in reading, as well as a possible connections of these characteristics to their writing in English. To give this description of my process of analysis more coherence, I have divided it into four stages (see Table 3.1). My analysis could be called an interactive synthesis (Huberman & Miles, 1994), which means to understand my questions I used both within-case analysis (looking at each student's case individually) and cross-case analysis (looking for patterns by comparing student's cases).

Stage one

As described previously, I began my analysis with all students' journal entries about their literacy development and preferences in reading. I coded all entries with three categories based on whether the students were describing literacy events which supported "readership" or "non-readership" and with a third more broadly defined category of significant information. These categories were adopted from Daane's study (1991) in which she based readership on students' own definition of their history and attitudes toward reading.

After this analysis, I narrowed the number of participants to six and returned to collecting data and interviewing the students chosen in this step. These interviews served to elaborate on the previously written journal assignments and to maintain triangulation, in other words, to reconfirm the information the students provided in the journals.
Stage two

In my next stage of analysis, I re-coded the reading prompts of each student and looked at interview transcripts for the purposes of within-case analysis or case-study of each student. Although the dichotomy of "reader" and "non-reader" worked well to narrow my study, I did not find this categorization gave me a full picture of my students' literacy development and attitudes/preferences towards literacy. (In order to write up the results of this study in a cross-case format, I returned to the categories of "reader" and "non-reader" using students' attitudes to define readership). I discussed the problems of the earlier coding with my peer collaborator, who suggested an alternative coding method. To do a more exhaustive coding for patterns in each student's background, I began coding by writing a two- to three-word description after each sentence; for example, "age began reading", "parents bought books", "parents read magazines", or "dislikes reading" (see Appendix B for sample journal entries). My collaborator coded one student's journal entry to exemplify this method and to enable me to compare my coding with his. This coding was very specific, but, unlike the previous coding it kept me from imposing categories and allowed the students' own description to define my understanding of their reading background. I followed this method of coding for the two journal entries and the interviews.

Then, to analyze the students' backgrounds and attitudes toward text, I returned to the descriptors and looked for patterns within each student's journal entry. I found patterns such as parent involvement, preferences in reading, and students' perceptions of their purpose for reading. I also looked for patterns in students' interviews. This analysis gave me an in-depth understanding of each student's background in literacy development and attitudes/preferences in reading.
Stage three

After I analyzed students' reading backgrounds I turned to their writing to seek connections to the coded categories I had determined in stage two. In this section of my analysis, I looked to see if the dynamics of the six students' literacy development and attitudes toward reading were connected to their writing. In analyzing writing there seemed to be infinite possibilities as to what I could focus on. I did an initial reading of all the writing by each of the six students. In this reading I formed general impressions as to where I saw potential connections between reading and writing. Based on these general impressions, I decided the scope of this study would consist of what I had found in my previous observations and some areas which Daane (1991) had found connected to her students' reading characteristics: development, genre/topic choice, and revision.

I examined each of the journal entries and compositions, focusing on these three areas. I read each piece of student writing three times. The first time I looked at development; I did a word count for each journal and composition, and wrote a description characterizing each student's development. In the second reading, I focused on genre/topic choice in free topic journal entries. For each journal, I wrote a descriptor of both the genre (narrative, description, etc.) and the topic or title (for example, surviving the semester or deserts). Lastly, I focused on the first and final drafts of each composition by looking at what changes each student had made at the word level, sentence level, and paragraph level.

From these data, I wrote index cards characterizing each student in each area. These cards were then used in stage four to compare the student's writing in relation to their literacy background and attitudes toward reading in order to answer the question of possible connections between the two areas.

Stage four

Although the first three stages brought me to a better understanding of my two original questions, I needed to continue my process a bit further. Therefore, in stage four I began
looking at the students across the cases. I used the within-case analysis on attitudes toward reading to create a readership scale from nonreaders to readers. Then I looked at the writing of the students comparing them along this continuum to look for relationships between their readership characteristics and their writing in the three areas I focused on. The results of this analysis appear in Chapter Four.

To increase the reliability of my data, this stage I conducted follow-up interviews with four students whom I had chosen to spotlight in my final analysis (see interview section for details on student selection). I felt I needed more data on these students to fully understand their reading background and attitudes, and also I wanted to be sure that the data I was using for analysis was accurate. (My concern came from the fact that none of the interviews or writing used in this study was in the student's first language). Lastly, in stage four I wrote my thesis.

**Validity and reliability in qualitative research**

Qualitative researchers agree that the measures of reliability and validity used in quantitative research are not transferable to qualitative research. However, issues of standards are needed to measure the integrity of such research. How research is pursued and written about can depend on a researcher's discipline (sociology, anthropology, education, etc.), theoretical paradigm (postpositivist, feminist, cultural studies, etc.), and type of qualitative research (action research, ethnography, oral narrative, case study, etc.). Ways of measuring the reliability and validity of qualitative research have been defined by researchers in these varied categories (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983; Wolcott, 1987, 1990; Bogdan & Biikien, 1992; Huberman & Miles, 1994; Altheide & Johnson, 1994; Anderson et al., 1994; Hammersley, 1994; Athanases & Heath, 1995; Chamot 1995). Since my research falls in the category of practitioner research, I have implemented the standards set by others in this field.
In practitioner research a number of "types" of validity assure standards in research (Anderson et al. 1994). There are numerous methods used to meet these requirements; Table 3.3 details the measures to accommodate these validities in my study. Process validity was maintained through triangulation in my data collection. I used a methodological appendix and teaching journal to give my study catalytic and local (also called "democratic") validity. Collaboration with a peer researcher and the time spent discussing my findings with my major professor contributed to critical reflection on my study (catalytic validity). Finally, in writing up the results of my research for a thesis, I gave my study local validity by explaining the applicability of my findings to the original context and outcome validity by ending the spiral of research.

Table 3.3 Validity in practitioner research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Validity</th>
<th>Definition (Anderson et al. 1994)</th>
<th>Implementation in my study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Process Validity</td>
<td>Dependability of data collection process</td>
<td>Triangulation of data through journals, interviews and compositions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catalytic Validity</td>
<td>Recognition of the process and reformulation of focus during research</td>
<td>Methodological appendix/teaching journal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogic Validity</td>
<td>Maintenance of a critical and reflective dialogue with others during research</td>
<td>Collaboration with peer practitioner research and discussion with major professor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Validity</td>
<td>Applicability of results from research to the context studied</td>
<td>Methodological appendix/teaching journal. Thesis Chapter Five</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome Validity</td>
<td>Resolution of the research through completion of the process</td>
<td>Writing up research for thesis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In my study, I have used a number of strategies to maintain reliability in my data and my analysis. Again, there are numerous ways qualitative researchers achieve reliability in research. First of all, in writing my thesis I have tried to give a clear report of my research moves throughout my study, so that those reading my research could follow my logic and determine the value and generalizability of my research. The reliability of my data was confirmed through my students' follow-up interviews in which they verified the accuracy in my reporting of their literacy background and attitudes/preferences in reading. In addition, I have tried to offer a balance of participants in analyzing both nonreaders and readers for relations between reading background and writing. Lastly, my collaboration has served to check for inconsistent reasoning in my analysis.

As a novice researcher, I found it difficult to sort through the many different definitions of reliability and validity offered in qualitative research. However, by writing out the procedure I have followed and supplying data samples for readers, I hope that others can find my research informative and transferable. Altheide and Johnson (1994), in an article title, "Criteria for assessing interpretive validity in qualitative research," support this belief by stating, "How a researcher accounts for his or her approach, including the routine sources of problems, is key for evaluating the work substantively and methodologically" (p. 490).

**Preview of Chapter Four**

In the next chapter, I will present my analysis of the research questions proposed in this study. First, I detail what I discovered about literacy development and the attitudes and preferences in reading of the six students in my study; this description is followed by data from four students to exemplify the findings across the six. Next, I analyze how these findings might relate to the writing of these students. Lastly, I summarize what these results reveal about reading and L2 writing connections.
CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Revisiting the questions

At this point it is important to return to the questions this study sought to answer: 1) what are my students' backgrounds in literacy development and their attitudes toward text and 2) what possible relations exist between these factors and their writing in English. In my final analysis, which is presented in this chapter, I will give a cross-case summary of my findings based on the six participants in my study. To further exemplify these findings, I will present data from four students who were on either side of the readership continuum (non-readers and readers). In response to the first question I will give within-case descriptions of the four students to show their backgrounds in literacy and attitudes toward reading.

To answer the second question, I used the analysis of the first to conduct a cross-case analysis by comparing the writing of the nonreaders and the readers. I chose to analyze their writing in the areas of development, genre/topic choice, and revision because these were areas where either I had noticed patterns previously or where Daane (1991) had found connections in her study. This chapter will present the results and analysis of the background in literacy, attitudes and preferences in reading and the possible relations of these factors to L2 writing of six students: Lydia from Indonesia, Mohammed from Kuwait, Rosdiana for Malaysia, Julius and Kim from Korea, and Shu-jen from Taiwan.

Literacy development and attitudes toward reading

Cross-case analysis

The first question of my study has to do with understanding my students' backgrounds in literacy and attitudes toward text. In analyzing the journal entries and interviews conducted with the six students who were the focus of my study, I found several themes which kept appearing and seemed to mark differences among the students according to their attitudes toward reading. These categories were the nature of parental involvement and what students
considered to be their purpose for reading. Table 4.1 summarizes my findings in these two areas, plus the attitudes I used to develop the readership scale on which the comparison was made. The comparisons were made along a continuum of sorts which is the organizational logic of the Table 4.1. I placed students on the table by their own definition of their readership. Two of the students described themselves as being active readers who enjoyed reading. Two students, termed non-readers, explained that they did not like to read and did not read very often. Another two students fell in-between these two groups because one liked to read but did not read very often, and the other was indifferent about reading and also did not read very often. From these descriptions I established a continuum of three levels: readers, non-readers, and those in-between. I found that although parental involvement was described by all six students in their literacy development, there were differences between the nature of that involvement and students’ readership. The nonreaders described parental involvement which focused on trying to perfect their children's reading skills, rather than stimulating interest in reading. In contrast, the parents of those students categorized as readers tended to encourage interest in reading and learning but did not focus so much on perfection of skills.

All students in my study suggested that reading was important to them for the purposes of getting information. However, at least two of the students who were readers also valued reading for the purpose of improving their writing.

Other researchers have also found that these areas of literacy development and reading attitude/preferences are important in understanding the overall literacy of an individual (Heath 1982, 1983; Fishman 1988, 1992; and Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988). In addition, some research has looked at the relation of family, education, culture and community with literacy and has also found that parental involvement is a relevant dynamic in development. Several researchers in composition theory have suggested that purposes and utilization of reading by students can be related to their skill in writing in their first language (Smith, 1983; Tierney & Pearson, 1983).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Attitude/preference toward reading</th>
<th>Purpose for reading</th>
<th>Parental involvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-readers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lydia</td>
<td>Disliked reading, especially novels. Read textbooks &amp; magazines</td>
<td>To gain information</td>
<td>Taught letters by parents, given books and told stories Made to read aloud to prove reading ability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohammed</td>
<td>Read when necessary. Thought reading was unimportant in his country. Read newspapers &amp; magazines</td>
<td>For functional reasons example: reading customs forms on airplane</td>
<td>Taught reading and writing in English by mother; assigned readings monitored by reading aloud, drilling and copying models</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosdiana</td>
<td>Lacked interest in reading Read textbooks, newspapers &amp; romance novels</td>
<td>To gain information and knowledge</td>
<td>Learned to read at school, parents bought books but had no time to read to her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Readers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julius</td>
<td>Loved reading Read fiction &amp; newspapers</td>
<td>To have something to discuss</td>
<td>Was not read to by parents, but they encouraged his desire to learn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim</td>
<td>Loved reading Read novels about social situations, the human condition, &amp; historical novels</td>
<td>To answer philosophical and cultural questions, and to improve writing</td>
<td>Taught reading through workbooks by mother but who did not blame him for wrong answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shu-jen</td>
<td>Enjoyed reading Read history books, novels, newspapers and fiction</td>
<td>For knowledge, to improve reading skills, and to learn how to write better</td>
<td>Told stories by parents and grandparents, who bought books, but did not force reading. Later they encouraged reading as a hobby</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Within-case analysis

Within-case descriptions for four of the six students illustrates these patterns further. These four were chosen because they were on the extremes of reader and non-reader levels on Table 4.1.

Lydia: The minimal reader

Lydia was born in a city on the island of Java in Indonesia. Her parents owned a bookstore and raised four children: three sons and one daughter. Both of Lydia's parents read magazines every morning and her mother often read political books. According to Lydia, her parents told her stories about legends which were common in Indonesia, but they didn't read books to her. Lydia was taught to read by her parents as a younger at home. She learned by memorizing letters, a method which was later continued in her school. When she was learning to read, her parents monitored her reading carefully to make sure she was not just looking at the pictures in the books, but developing her reading skill. She described this in her journal.

My parents taught me how to read letters when I was five years old. They bought me some book which have some picture and I have to read loudly for them. I'm still remember when my mother bought me a comic book and I only saw the picture. She was very angry when lied to her (about having read the book).

In school Lydia learned to write in Indonesian by memorizing letters from a chart, and later she had courses where full-length compositions were assigned. Lydia said that the only reading that she did in school was in textbooks.

Lydia expressed a strong dislike for reading and writing in her interview, by stating, "I don't like reading. I just don't like reading novels. Writing...I don't like it very much."

However, she read magazines in both Indonesian and English on basically the same topic, business; her choice of English magazines were Fortune, Glamour, and Reader's Digest.

Additionally, Lydia felt reading was important to gain information, particularly knowledge for school. She also saw the importance of reading in communication; in her
interview she mentioned this: "I think the most important thing is that I get some information. So that if somebody talked with me, I could understand it."

_Mohammed: The functional reader_

Mohammed was from the capital city in Kuwait where his parents and his three-month-old sister still lived. His father worked in the Ministry of Defense and his mother was a teacher of Arabic. Both of his parents were readers; his mother would read many different kinds of Arabic books while his father preferred books on military topics.

When he was growing up, Mohammed's first teacher was his mother who taught him to read and write in both English and Arabic. First, he was instructed in letters by drilling of the alphabet. The instruction was followed by later assignments in which he was to read ten pages of a book per day. Some books which Mohammed read were _Cinderella_ and _Aladdin_.

In an interview, Mohammed elaborated on the interaction with his mother after his completion of this routine reading assignment.

"My mom she came to me and she want me to like read it in front of her. Like I mean she check the spelling and how to pronunciation. For example when I read the word "went" I said like "want" and she said like "Went...w-e-n-t..went"

At times his mother even pressured Mohammed, which he recalled in his first writing lesson when his mother asked him to copy what she had written:

When the first time, when I have the pen, I were afraid I mean like..she, my mom said go ahead write.... I remember something she told me, "If you don't write exactly what I wrote, I'm gonna don't gonna buy for you a bicycle." Because my sport is a bicycle.

Mohammed went to an English kindergarten before starting public school. Both he and his parents believed that this early beginning in English literacy caused difficulties for him when he began attending the public school where instruction was in Arabic. Mohammed described his father's reaction in his journal, "My father always angry on me. He wants me to be the best student in my class." Due to his difficulties in school, Mohammed was sent to
school in England where his father had received his higher education. Mohammed completed his high school education in England before coming to the United States for college.

Mohammed did not like reading or writing; however, he felt reading was more useful in his life. In his interview he responded:

I hate writing...in my opinion...because reading...more important because I mean...for example when you go somewhere or someplace...or like if you want to do something or to make or to buy something...you read the instructions...Or read this paper to know what you want.

Mohammed no longer read in Arabic, only English because he said it was easier for him. In English he preferred to read magazines and newspapers like McCall's, The Washington Post and The New York Times.

Mohammed read mainly to find information of a very functional nature. He felt that reading was crucial in the United States because of the need to pay bills; in an interview, he contrasted this with his own country, Kuwait.

Because I mean in America everything is like if you want to send bills or you want to work you gotta read. But in my country no. You should, for example if you have a telephone bill you should pay at the company. They'll tell you what the amount is or they just give you a paper and you sign your name.

Kim: The reflective reader

Kim came from a family with two brothers, one sister, and two parents. He spent the first part of his life in a small town in South Korea which was not accessible by car. Later, his family moved to a larger city in the same area so that his father could complete his medical studies, and eventually Kim's family relocated in Seoul. Kim's father was a doctor of Asian medicine, particularly Korean. His brother was also a doctor, and his sister was studying medicine in Beijing, China. His other brother worked for a corporation, and his mother was a nurse for his father's practice.

Like the other parents of students in this study, Kim's mother, who had been a teacher before marrying his father, helped him with his reading and writing before he went to primary school. According to his journal, "The first step of my reading was made by my mother. She
was an elementary school teacher when she was single. So she tried very hard to teach reading and writing before school entrance." She also read books to him and told him, "tales and stories about long time ago." She taught him letters and counting; however, Kim felt that his mother had had less time to spend with him than she had with his brothers and sister because she had become a nurse for his father when Kim was born. Nevertheless, Kim said, "I have learned by my mother. She teach me. If I don't know about something, she teach me all through the night." He described his mother teaching him using workbooks, and if he made a mistake, "she always didn't blame. If I broke something...she always say it's okay. It can be rebuilt again."

He experienced a great deal of difficulty with reading and writing in primary school. He felt that his lack of success was due to two factors; one was his lack of enthusiasm for school and studying. Secondly, at that time it was common to have about 60 students in a classroom and teachers were thus limited to the amount of help they could offer students who were struggling. Kim said that usually teachers tried to teach at the speed and level of the middle ability in the class, so that high achievers and low achievers were left out. Therefore, Kim's trouble reading continued and caused him problems at middle school.

Because of the attention given to preparing for college exams, middle school and high school held little interest for Kim. He found memorization and the practice of solving problems quickly uninteresting. However, it was during this time that he discovered his interest in reading. For Kim, the time during high school was filled with uncertainty. In order to understand the social, political and personal changes going on in his life at the time, Kim turned to books for the answers. In his journal he wrote:

When I was middle school student, I had surrounded many problems... Everything looked like question marks... Most of questions started from "why". So I had to find myself. I started read every kinds of genre. Still I could not find any answer. But reading is the important part of my life.

Kim frequently read for pleasure, both in his first language and in other languages. In fact, Kim studied English literature at college; he also belonged to an extracurricular reading
club. In his interview, he explained this group, "Any kind of topic we can talk. For example, French revolution, if I get a topic for French revolution the members read about the French revolution and we talk about it. It's very helpful for all of us."

Kim seemed to prefer reading novels on many topics by writers from various countries. In his journal he wrote:

If I read various stories more and more, my thinking and solution become more various. I like every kinds of novel. Especially Korean novel contain with aspect of society. When our society become more complex, novel as poet are more pressed. My favorite foreign novelist is Albert Camus and Dostoyevski. They wrote deep reasonal and anitreasonal aspect of human psychology.

Also when in college Kim wrote for the school newspaper, kept a diary, and attempted to write a children's book for a contest.

Kim valued writing highly, as he emphasized in his interview, "Nobody can live without writing. All the time I must express myself exactly. If I can't there's a lot of problems is lost or mistake. So, writing exactly my feeling, my opinion is important."

The importance of reading for Kim was both in information-gathering and for writing. He stated this succinctly in his interview: " Reading is important because it can give you lots of information, and if you don't read you cannot write." Also the need to improve his writing was very important to Kim. In his interview he criticized his writing as being unstructured and driven by enthusiasm.

I recognize that writing is not just writing... I have to study about construction..arrange ..all the vocabulary's real meaning. Write is not just you write beautifully or you using many new words. It's not writing. You cannot write easy and everybody can understand this sentence. I have recognized that it is really difficult. I just write by myself like drunken guys drove by himself. My writing is like that.

Through reading and guided instruction Kim hoped to learn "write."

**Shu-jen: The avid reader**

Shu-jen grew up in the country south of Taipei in Taiwan. For the first thirteen years of her life, she lived with her two brothers, mother, father, and grandparents (her father's parents). Her father was a businessman, and her mother was a homemaker. When she turned
thirteen, her family, except for her grandparents, moved to Taipei, where Shu-jen completed junior high, high school, and college.

While Shu-jen's parents did not read books to her, they sparked her interest through oral story-telling and provided access to books in the house, "My reading background was mostly built in the school. But if my parents were not develop my interests through story, I would probably hate to reading the books while I was very young." Shu-jen was told two kinds of stories when she was growing up: historical and fairy tales, both of which had the purpose of teaching her about life. In her journal, she described further her parent's involvement.

My parents do not like to force us to read the books that we do not like to read. They felt if they force us to read the books we do not like to read, we were not happy to do it. We will hate to study and read the books.

Shu-jen began reading instruction in kindergarten. She described the method of teaching as memorization. First, students were taught to memorize characters and later whole articles from textbooks, "the teacher also asked us to memorize whole article on textbooks and write it down without the books." However, this method of learning to read did not transfer when Shu-jen reached primary school. She explained that she found the books in her school harder and more complicated. "I remembered that I complained about the school all the time and felt uncomfortable with the homeworks." In her interview she explained these problems as not understanding new characters (in Chinese) and new vocabulary when she read. Shu-jen's parent's involvement in her literacy development became very important at this time; their response to these problems was recorded in her journal.

My parents encouraged me and tried to help me. They sometimes bought the books I like and wanted me to develop reading hobby. I really develop my reading hobby by reading a lot of novel, especially romance and science fiction.

Essentially, Shu-jen attributed her interest in reading to her parents, and held, "thanks to my parents, I enjoyed reading very much and still persisted till now."
Shu-jen was most interested in reading about history, an interest which began before she read when her mother told her stories. She also read novels and magazines, which she mentions in her journal.

Through interesting stories in novel, I felt my imagination been inspired and began like to read books very much. In addition to novels, I began to read other field of books such like magazines and professional books. I received a lot of knowledge from this kind of books that you could not learn from the textbooks.

Shu-jen read to gain information, and she added that reading was important to improve her writing. She explained her reading practice in her interview.

What I write is from reading. Yes, especially now that I am learning to write in English. But I feel that the composition class all you can teach is avoid the grammar mistake and how to editing a paper, those skills. But how to write a sentence you have to read a lot of source. Okay, when you want to use...when you want to express your meaning you can remember "last time I read a newspaper they describe this and they used the verb focus on or something." So I have to memorize when I want to say focus on.

Summary

These results summarize the patterns that I found between readers and non-readers when I looked at the data collected across these cases. The readers described parental involvement which was supportive and nuturing while the non-readers told of literacy events in which their parents stress perfecting skills. All students valued reading for gaining information; however, the readers also described reading to improve their writing. Although I conceived and prescribed the categories, their development was founded on the students' own words and self-analysis. Other researchers have found these patterns in readership to have an impact on writing in L1 (Heath, 1982, 1983; Fishman, 1992; Daane, 1991; Hedgcock & Atkinson, 1993); however, whether this impact extends to an L1 reading-L2 writing connection is less clear (Carson et al., 1990; Hedgcock & Atkinson, 1993; Janopoulos, 1986; Bell, 1995). The next stage in my analysis sought to find out if these characteristics had connections to the writing of these students.
Writing connections

In this section, I will describe my analysis of possible connection with the six students' backgrounds in literacy and attitudes toward reading to their writing. Many factors affect writing in a second language, for example, age, L2 experience, L2 proficiency, etc. This study explores whether L1 reading background may be another factor in this pool. To analyze these possible connections, I have chosen to replicate a study conducted Daane (1991) in which she looked at the relation between the reading and writing of native English speakers in a college composition course. Her study concluded that:

This exercise revealed notable parallels between their (her students) reading histories and their present writing performance. Students who reported early pleasure in reading and continued exposure to literature produced texts which were markedly different in syntactic and semantic complexity, structural and narrative forms, and the use of imaginative language as compared with the test produced by students who reported early frustration and infrequent or no continued exposure to literature.

Of course, my study varies from Daane's (1991), in that I looked to see if such relations existed for students writing in a second language.

I found that literacy development and attitudes/preferences did seem to have an impact on students' writing in their second language in some areas, but not as universally as Daane (1991) had suggested. I also found that in students' writing development and genre/topic choice varied in relation to their readership. The readers in my study tended to develop their ideas more in writing than the non-readers did. Additionally, like Daane (1991), I found that some of the readers' journal topics closely related to their preferences in reading and that they were able or willing to use more variety in genres. Perhaps, the variation of interlingual transfer (literacy skills and knowledge of literacy in L1) could be explained by the variation in the background and first language experiences as Carson et al (1990) suggest. In contrast to Daane, who saw connections in the amount of revision (readers revised more), I discovered the readers and nonreaders varied in the extent to which they revised. There did not seem to be a pattern in this variation between the readers and the non-readers.
To describe my analysis of the students' writing, I will again focus on the four students who were on the extremes of the readership scale (see Table 4.1). I will discuss the characteristics of each group, nonreaders (Mohammed and Lydia) and readers (Kim and Shu-jen), in the areas of development (based on both journal entries and compositions), topic choice/genre (journal entries), and amount of revision (a comparison of first and final drafts of compositions).

**Fluency in production/development**

In my study, I considered fluency in production/development to be the amount of detail given on a topic, number of examples used to illustrate the ideas presented, and the depth to which the topic was explored. I found that the non-readers in my study tended to develop their ideas less in writing than the readers.

Development was not an area mentioned by Daane in her findings, however Fishman (1992), in a case study about an Amish student's literacy, noted the influence of community on development in writing.

**Non-readers**

Non-readers tended to write only the minimum required for each assignment. Although word count is not the only measure of development, I found it interesting to note the differences between the readers and non-readers (See Table 4.2, average word count for compositions and journals) in the amount they wrote for each composition.

The writing of the non-readers rarely used elaboration or examples. They followed the composition assignments exactly, without additional information. The following two pieces of writing exemplify the nonreaders' style of development. These are the first two paragraphs from Lydia's and Mohammed's third paper assignment which was:

```
Summarize the kinds of assignments and writing required in your major program of study. You will make this summarization based on one interview with a professor in your department. Basically, you will write questions, conduct an interview, and draft a paper summarizing your findings. This assignment should help you apply what you have learned in
```
Table 4.2 Development word count

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Average (mean) word count for compositions</th>
<th>Average (mean) word count for journal entries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lydia</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohammed</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shu-jen</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>370</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I took these samples from first drafts in which students were required to have already revised material, organization, and expression but not correctness.

**Lydia**

Based on my interview with my accounting professor, I found that writing is important in my major program of study. On my accounting class, we have a writing assignment at the end of this semester. On this assignment, we have to obtain an annual report for a retail or manufacturing firm which can be found in the library or we may write to the company and request the annual report.

We have to calculate all the ratios and compare with the average ratios for the industry which is available in the library. The content of the analysis is based upon the analysis of the financial ratios and discuss what we can find in the world-wide web. On this assignment, material, grammar, and correctness are important because most of the points are based on the analysis.

Lydia's writing was very fact-driven and informative. She fulfilled the assignment, but added little as far as personal style or interaction with the reader.

**Mohammed**

Journalism majors are required to complete Journalism 201 and 202. I interviewed **** who is one of the professor in Journalism 201 and 202. I asked Professor *** about the content of his courses.

There are 10 assignments assigned during the course of semester. Each one is given a commentary and should be rewritten. In other words, students actually write 18-20 assignments. In journalism 202, students are not expected to rewrite as much because of the experience they picked up in 201.
Like Lydia, Mohammed kept closely to the assignment prompt, and wrote a straightforward informative paper. The writing of the non-readers is not necessarily underdeveloped, but differs from that of the readers.

**Readers**

In contrast to the non-readers, the two students in the reader group wrote compositions which were longer (Table 4.2). However, it is important to note that Kim's journal entries were the shortest of the four. Possibly he gave the reason for this in his interview when, in an answer to a question about how he wrote in his journal, he said, "Journal...to speak frankly I always write the journal 20 minutes before class." (The other six students were also asked this questions and none mentioned anything similar to this but may have been less frank.) The amount of development of the readers is most evident when comparing them with the non-readers. The readers tended to develop compositions beyond what was required. They seemed to acknowledge their readers by providing background information, posing questions, and giving examples. The contrast with the readers and non-readers can be seen by the first two paragraphs from the same assignment taken from Kim and the first paragraph of Shu-jen's paper.

**Kim**

Starting with 96' spring semester, I became the student of College of Business in Iowa State University. In spite of majoring in business, I do not have much information about business. If somebody asks me about my major, what is business? Or what are you going to study? I just can say that business means managing system and information, that's all.

When I decide to change my major from literature to business, I really want to know about what is managing people and society and why? Still, I do not know what kinds of fields are there and, what kinds of state-of-the-art and future are there. Through the interview, I had an advantageous chance to challenge to my major business.

Kim's first two paragraphs establish his voice and the reasons for writing the paper. He has attempted to go beyond the basic prompt for the assignment.
Shu-jen

In order to make a sound business decision, the manager or the owner of the company needs the accurate information from this event to aid them properly. Marketing research is one of the helpful techniques that focus on collection and analyzing data from consumers. The course (Marketing Research) primarily discusses about how consumers decide to purchase a product, degree of brand loyalty exhibited toward the product, and using statistical analysis to give the relevant information. "The objective of this course is to familiarize students with research terminology and tools." said ****, instructor of the marketing research. He wants students to learn how to do the research in marketing field, and the purpose of projects is helping students to practice the knowledge they learn from this course. Students are able to develop a questionnaire, manage issues they investigated and use/analyze for addressing the managerial issue. Thus, the project assignments primarily consist of statistics techniques and data processing that are more like technical papers.

Shu-jen's approach is less introspective than Kim's, yet she develops her thesis more than Mohammed or Lydia.

The difference in development between the readers and non-readers seems to be more than quantity; however, sometimes, the readers over-developed and became wordy, just as the non-readers may not have developed their writing enough to make their ideas clear.

Genre/topic choice

My description of genre/topic choice was based on students' choices on free topic journal entries. I found that students' topic choice varied within the two categories (reader and non-reader) as well as within each group. Daane (1991) also observed such variation of topic choice in her study. She described the topics chosen by a "reader" in her study as "Every paper he wrote had a mythic or fabulistic quality; his lone analytic piece, and analysis of worldwide manifestations of machismo, was crowded with archetypal characters" (p.187) She attributed this topic choice to the writer living vicariously through books.

In my study, I found that the readers had stronger connections between what they read and what they wrote in there free topic journal entries and used more variety in genre style. Logically, those who did not read much would have fewer texts to connect to. Additionally, there may be the variable of interlingual transfer which differed between the readers and the non-readers. Table 4.3 gives the students' preferences in reading, the genre description, and
the free journal topics on which they wrote. From this table, one can see that the students who read infrequently or read only magazines and newspapers tended to write only autobiographical narratives or very detailed description of daily events. In contrast, students who did more varied reading wrote in more varied genres, or in styles closely related to their preferences in reading.

**Non-readers**

Lydia's first journal entry was a description of Bali, Indonesia. After this entry, she never wrote another journal entry in this style. Lydia wrote very detailed descriptions of her daily schedule or autobiographical narratives about her life in her journal. This entry is typical of those written by Lydia.

I saw movie on Friday at Carver 1. They showed Ace Ventura II. I was so happy because I didn't saw it in the fall. I didn't want to see on fall because I thought that it would be showed in Carver and that was true. I cam at 7:20 pm although the movie started at 8:00 p.m. When I came, all the sit was full and I was so lucky that there was two chairs were empty.

Ace Venture which was starred by Jim Carrey was a very funny film. In this story, he acted as a pet detective. Actually, I didn't like this film because I hate Jim Carrey's face. Although his acting was very amazing, I didn't like his face when he was acting. I was impressed by his face's acting. I heard from news that he learned how to act by act in from of mirror everyday. The movie overed at about 10:00am and I went home by bus.

Mohammed, also a non-reader, had entries varied more in genre than Lydia’s. Most entries were narrative, though some were descriptive. Mohammed's descriptive entries were informative and completely without personal opinion. For example, in his journal entry entitled “Deserts” he wrote:

The size and location of the world’s deserts are always changing. Over millions of years, as climates change and mountains rise, new dry and wet areas develop. But within the last 100 years, deserts have been growing at a frightening speed. This is partly because of natural changes, but the greatest desert makers are humans.
Table 4.3 Reading preferences and genre/topic choice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Preference</th>
<th>Type of writing for free topic</th>
<th>Topic/Title (if student has given the writing a title it is in quotation marks)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lydia</td>
<td>Textbooks, Magazines</td>
<td>Autobiographical and Daily Narrative</td>
<td>Lydia's history as a swimmer Seeing a movie: <em>Ace Ventura</em> Going to an Indonesian welcoming party Working at the Union catering service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Seeing a movie: <em>Heat</em> Going to Indonesian Night 1996 Lydia's high school Going roller kating with her boyfriend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohammed</td>
<td>Newspapers, Magazines</td>
<td>Autobiographical Narrative</td>
<td>&quot;My Father&quot; &quot;How I Learned&quot; &quot;Spring Break&quot; &quot;The Change&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Descriptive</td>
<td>&quot;Deserts&quot; &quot;Restaurants in the US&quot; &quot;Hawaii&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(these three journal entries appear to be copied entirely from another source)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim</td>
<td>Novels about social situations and the human condition</td>
<td>Reflective Narrative</td>
<td>Surviving the semester Analysis of a dream The experience of travel Understanding a spring festival Going to Las Vegas Being homesick for Korea Preparing for exams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shu-jen</td>
<td>History books, Novels, Fiction, Newspapers, Magazines</td>
<td>Autobiographical Narrative</td>
<td>&quot;My First Week in America&quot; &quot;Snow Storm&quot; &quot;Chinese Party in Ames&quot; &quot;One Unforgettable Part Time Job&quot; &quot;Weekend Party&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Descriptive</td>
<td>&quot;Hong Kong at Night&quot; &quot;The Chinese Moon Festival&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluative</td>
<td>&quot;Recreation&quot; &quot;A Student's Life&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
By comparing these descriptive entries with Mohammed's other writing during the course of the semester, it seems likely that he was using an outside source to either model or borrow text for his journal. This contrast can be seen in an expository journal entry about change in Kuwaiti society (the last entry of the semester).

The cultural in our country almost the same here in the United states because we have in our country American school and public school they teach the student English everyday. The political in Kuwait different than America. In Kuwait they using constitutional government.

In his interview, Mohammed explained that he often looked at the newspaper or listened to the radio to get ideas for his journal writing.

Although the journals were dialogic, in that I always responded to student's writing as a reader only (I did not grade journals or make error corrections), both non-readers seemed not to be aware of their audience. Lydia chose details of her everyday life, and Mohammed often borrowed from other authors, thus using other's abilities to acknowledge their audience. This may be due to their not being readers, and not considering a reader's need to be engaged. Another possibility shown by a narrow choice of topics and plagiarism might be lack of confidence as writers. Additionally, both Mohammed and Lydia stated a dislike for writing during their interviews, and this aversion could be the reason for writing only on what is closest (daily narrative) or not writing at all by copying from someone else.

Readers

Kim wrote mostly reflective narratives in his journal entries. These narratives differed from those of Lydia in that, often, they were filled with internal philosophical thought and dialogue. Kim's journal writing seemed to most closely reflect his preferences in reading. He mentioned in his interview he liked writers who explored topics about human psychology. I found this exploration in his journal through his analysis of his own actions and thought. For example in an entry at the beginning of the semester, Kim wrote:

I want to change my feeling and condition. All through the week I just think about how can I survive in this semester and what it the best way to think positively. All of my friends who live in my country said to me, "you're and
optimist." After I came here, I just plan and worry about something what will happen one minute, one hour, or a day later. I have lost my decision that I had concluded before I come here. I know what am I have to do in my new environment. Sometimes I act like millionaire, I am very scared about something to lose. Even if I have had a big money, estate, and respectation. But I don't have anything.

Shu-jen's entries at the beginning of the semester were more often narrative. An example from an early entry (Snow Storm) follows.

I was born in a tropical country and there was no snow in winter at all. I wanted to choose a very special place. The first choice was "Snow in winter." It means the place must have snow in winter. It sounds a little bit crazy. My friends told me that I could not acclimate the very cold weather in winter. They tried to persuade me to change my mind. I thought it will be a new feeling in different environment. When I was a young child, I only saw snow on television or on calendar. It aroused my curiosity to experience the snow. Finally, I was luck that I could attend the school where had snow in winter. My parents prepared a lot of winter clothes for me, they afraid that I could be freeze in a very cold weather. They told me that if I could not bear the cold weather, I could go back home or transfer to another school. I thought I could make it if I want to that.

The entry continues for a page and a half describing a winter storm Shu-jen experienced in 1996. This style of personal narrative differed from that of Lydia because it was more developed and gave the reader more personal history.

Later in the semester Shu-jen's entries became less personal and more like evaluative exposition. In her last entry she wrote about "A Student Life"

A student's life is in preparation for the real battle of life. It is also full of variety and interest. One of the most important parts of a student's life is to get as much knowledge and sound mind--training as he can. His main business in school is to learn. He has to read the books he is taught in classes. He has to do the homework set to him. Another part that forms a student life is the school discipline. At school there are strict rules to be kept. He has to learn to submit to these rules or he should get punished. This strict discipline is very good for him.

This entry and others like it had a deliberate message to the reader. Shu-jen seemed comfortable writing about a variety of topics and using different genres to express herself.

Amount of revision

I determined amount of revision in my analysis by looking at the first and final drafts of compositions. I looked at what was changed, added, deleted or moved from the word-level to
sentence-level to paragraph-level. In contrast to Daane’s study (1991), I found a lot of variation in the amount and type of revision across student compositions (see Table 4.4). Daane remarked about one of her non-readers, “Even after repeated urgings toward revision, Paul was unwilling or unable to alter his text, and his third draft remained just as wooden and repetitive as the first” (p.185). Unlike Paul, most of the six students did revise on all three levels (word, sentence, and paragraph) in at least one of their papers. The amount of revisions varied from paper to paper for each student. Based on these findings, I concluded that amount of revision on projects in this class was not related (at least according to my classifications of students) to reader or non-readership patterns for these students. Another possible factor for my inconclusive findings in this area may be my comments as a teacher on the first-draft which direct students toward specific revisions of their writing.

Summary

After discussing the results of my analysis, I must return to my two questions and ask what was learned from these results. In this chapter, I described patterns that had emerged from my analysis and connected these findings to what had been discovered in prior research in the field of literacy and second language acquisition. In my first question, I asked what were my students’ backgrounds in literacy development and attitudes/preference toward text. I found that the students who described themselves as non-readers had different parental involvement than those who were interested readers. In addition, all students valued reading as means to acquire information, but the readers also described using reading to improve their writing.

The second question I asked was what possible relations exist between the factors found in question one and my students’ writing in English. My answer to this questions was that there seemed to be possible connections between these six students’ backgrounds in
## Table 4.4 Revisions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Paper Number</th>
<th>Revisions made</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Lydia    | 1            | **Word level:** changed noun to pronoun  
**Sentence level:** re-worded, added sentence  
**Paragraph level:** added conclusion |
|          | 2            | **Word level:** changed modal, added transition,  
**Sentence level:** rephrased thesis statement, added topic sentence, added clauses |
|          | 3            | **Word level:** added name of interviewee  
**Paragraph level:** added paragraph to body, added conclusion |
|          | 4            | **Word level:** changed verb  
**Sentence level:** changed word order, changed comma to period, added sentence to conclusion  
**Paragraph level:** revised conclusion |
| Mohammed | 1            | Did not hand in a first draft |
|          | 2            | **Word level:** added transitions  
**Sentence level:** added a thesis statement  
**Paragraph level:** reorganized paragraph in body, added paragraph in body |
|          | 3            | **Word level:** changed sentence subject, added transition  
**Sentence level:** rephrased topic sentence, deleted topic sentence  
**Paragraph level:** combined paragraphs in body, added conclusion |
|          | 4            | **Paragraph level:** added introduction |
| Kim      | 1            | Completely rewrote the paper (wrote two drafts on the same topic "Differences", but each draft unlike the previous one) |
|          | 2            | Did not hand in a first draft |
|          | 3            | **Word level:** added joining word, changed transition  
**Sentence level:** added sentence to body and to conclusion |
|          | 4            | **Sentence level:** added topic sentence, changed topic sentence, reworded sentence  
**Paragraph level:** reorganized paragraph in body |
literacy development and attitudes/preferences toward text and their ability or interest in developing their writing and use of genres in writing. Having identified these patterns, I will proceed to another level of analysis to fully answer my question. This discussion of the implications of my findings will be presented in the next chapter.
CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Implications of results

Like many qualitative studies which are hypothesis-generating, my study does not conclude with a grand theory but rather with possibilities for interpreting the results of the data analysis. Following the qualitative research tradition, the generalizability of my research will be in the hands of my readers; as Lincoln and Guba state regarding the application of one's qualitative research to the work of other researchers:

The best advice to give to anyone seeking to make transfer is to accumulate empirical evidence about the contextual similarity; the responsibility of the original investigator ends in providing sufficient descriptive data to make such similarity judgments possible (Anderson et al., 1994, p.33).

My intention has been to provide a clear picture of what I found and how I found it so that this study may be transferable and replicable to some extent.

One implication of this research is that students' attitudes towards text and background in reading be considered in the ESOL classroom. If there is no L1 reading and L2 writing relationship, as the research of Hedgcock and Atkinson (1993) suggests, then writing teachers and second language acquisition researchers need not be concerned with students' L1 literacy in light of their development and attitudes or preferences. Based on the results of my study, I believe that there is a connection between L1 literacy and L2 writing. I found possible relations between parental involvement, attitudes, and purposes for reading and students' ability or desire to develop their writing and manipulate genre and topic choice. Possibly, this relationship is deeper than the surface patterns and categories revealed in my study. I believe that the relationship between the L1 reading and L2 writing of the students in my study was influenced by the differing levels of experience, interest, and confidence. This cycle of influence has been described by others in L2 reading development (Nuttal, 1982), but I believe that it also describes the connection between L1 reading and L2 writing for my students.
First of all, the nonreaders had less experience with reading than the readers. The readers apparently gained experience in reading because of their interest in reading rather than just reading when necessary for information. Interest and experience were thus closely related. The students' interest and experience were obviously part of their reading background. Parental involvement and attitudes may have played a role in creating interest and experience for these students. The more experience the students had with reading, and reading a variety of genres, the more likely they were to develop their writing beyond what was assigned and to use a variety of genres/topics. For the non-readers, their lack of interest in reading probably led to their lack of experience with reading and writing.

The non-readers seemed to lack confidence to write or develop their papers any more than the assignment required. Also, they chose either to write narratives, which may be considered a universal genre (Hatch, 1992, p.165), or they plagiarized. I believe that the non-readers had less confidence in their ability to write than the readers; this may be attributed to their different levels of literate experiences. Level of confidence may be related to parental encouragement and attitudes/purposes for reading and be affecting or be affected by interest and experience. In addition, the non-readers seemed to show more confidence in their writing ability, based on the extent to which they developed their writing and on their manipulation of genre and topic choice.

In summary, the background in reading and attitudes/preferences toward text appeared to affect my students' levels of experience, interest, and confidence. These three factors could be seen in my students' development and genre/topic choice in their English writing in my class. Therefore, the hypothesis generated by this study is that connections do exist between L1 reading and L2 writing.
Limitations

Although I was able to achieve most of the "validities" proposed by practitioner research (process, catalytic, dialogic, local, outcome), my research had its limitations. One criticism might apply to the means by which I gained information about students' backgrounds in literacy and attitudes toward text. My methods were based on students' self-reporting: journal writing and interviewing. Obviously, these data were influenced by students' memories and perceptions of events and abilities in English. I did not have any means to support this data with observation of the contexts or practices they were describing. A second limitation in this study was in the analysis of students' writing. Because there are infinite aspects of writing which I could focused on, I choose only three: development, genre/topic choice, and revision. Certainly, this is not a complete picture of students' writing, and a full answer to the reading and writing connection needs to entail all dynamics of student writing. Of course, my choice was not random, but based on patterns I had seen and Daane (1991) had reported. Nevertheless, a more detailed study could delve deeper into all aspects of students' writing. Both of these limitations can be attributed to the logistics of my research situation and the scope of a thesis project. I propose solutions and alternatives in research which would overcome these limitations in the next section of this chapter on recommendations for future research.

Recommendations for future research

The scope of this study was somewhat limited and opens many possibilities for future research. First of all, looking at literacy development and practices has and will continue to be an area of much research. Because of logistic constraints, my only data in this area came from students' self-reporting. Observation of development and practice in the students' home countries would offer a very interesting and much richer description of their L1 literacy development. Other realms of influence in literacy development could also be analyzed in more
detail. For example, I think religion may be a particularly significant aspect of some students' countries and cultures which could well influence attitudes toward text and preferences in reading.

In analyzing writing, the possibilities for future study seem endless. Certainly, other areas of writing should be considered, for example: voice, expression, and use of metaphor. My study only focused on three areas, two of which seemed to connect with the reading backgrounds and one which did not. Also different kinds of writing could be used in analysis. My study focused on journals and compositions, but texts such as reading responses or letters could add to the data collected. Looking at more aspects and kinds of student writing could provide a more in-depth picture of the connections between reading and writing.

From the hypotheses I have generated, action research could be taken by another practitioner in order to understand how to improve an ESOL writing classroom. Action and practitioner research are similar, but the focus in the former is on making a change in the practitioner's environment (the assumption is that the change is positive) and following what impact the "action" has. I would like to see action taken to help students who lack confidence, experience and interest in literacy in the second language classroom. How to attempt this is not so clear. One possibility might be to increase interest in reading which would provide confidence-building provide experience. Possibly, reading responses or intensive reading in the writing classroom would be actions to take. However, whether creating interest, experience, and confidence in literacy is needed in the L1 or L2 or both would also need to be addressed in such a study.

Certainly, there are many avenues for further research from the hypothesis I arrived at and from the limitations my research posed. I think that both quantitative and qualitative methodologies can continue to inform the questions of L1 reading and L2 writing connections. Teachers, researchers, and teacher-researchers should focus such questions in the context of the language classroom.
Contributions of my research to teaching and research

In spite of the limitations of this study, it is important to recognize contributions to teaching and research. My purpose for undertaking this study was multi-faceted: I wanted to experience practitioner research and the process it entails; I wanted to determine if knowing my students' backgrounds in literacy would give me valuable information to facilitate learning; and I wanted to add to the body of research in L2 literacy.

In experiencing and writing about practitioner research, I have made a contribution to both the fields of research and to teaching. My research contributes to teaching in that I supply a model for others to conduct research in their own classrooms. Currently, action research and practitioner research are increasing in popularity in the field of TESL (Freeman, 1996). As more practitioners attempt such research, more models will be needed to exemplify how the process may be completed. I feel it is important that those undertaking research in their classrooms understand the responsibility to complete such research thoroughly and with integrity. As Andersen et al. (1994) said when defining practitioner research "...it (practitioner research) is deliberately and systematically undertaken, and generally requires some form of evidence to be presented to support an assertion" (p.2). I have attempted, in reporting the spiraling process of my research, to show others how this may take shape. This explication of my research process also contributes to the field of research. Often published research, both quantitative and qualitative, excludes the debate and confusion that the researcher goes through to arrive at a finished product. By elaborating on my research process in Chapter Three, I hoped to show my difficulties and decisions, to give the reader a sense of what I went through to arrive at my results.

My second purpose in this study was to contribute to pedagogy by determining if knowledge of my students' backgrounds in literacy development would provide information to facilitate learning. I believe my data supports this; the results of my study showed that
knowing more about my students' backgrounds would inform my teaching. As Bell (1995) pointed out in her study, as teachers, we have certain prescribed notions about literacy which we bring with us into the classroom. These notions encompass ideas about literacy development, purposes for reading, and our own attitudes towards reading. My study has shown that these notions are also carried by students and may differ among them and between them and the teacher. Having the knowledge of students' backgrounds and attitudes toward text could be useful to instructors in avoiding unwarranted assumptions and unlikely expectations. I feel that further research in this area focusing on confidence, experience and interest in reading and writing would give teachers insight in how to help students writers in certain aspects of their writing. Possibly, by restoring confidence, providing experience, and stimulating interest in reading in our students then, maybe, writers whose backgrounds have not supported them in these ways can still build their writing skills. Heath concluded in her study (1982, p.121), that such factors (students' backgrounds in literacy) should be considered in the curriculum of the classroom, particularly by becoming aware of the expectations of these students in the classroom. In Daane's article (1991) she concluded:

If we expect students to evolve as writers, we must be very sure they are immersed in print. Only through reading will they acquire the schema that will enable them to replicate the textures, rhythms, structures, and logic of good writing in a variety of genres (p.188).

Although reading and writing connections did appear in my class, I would not generalize Danne's findings to my research. In fact, the literacy development of my readers was not characterized by being immersed in print, but rather through a supportive interaction with parents during literacy events. Interestingly, the non-readers did mention being around plenty of reading material; for example, Lydia's parents owned a bookstore. Therefore, I don't feel that my findings conclude that to improve my students' writing they must be immersed in print. Another reason I hesitate to generalize from Daane (1991) was because I looked at specific aspects of student's writing, but did not do a rating of poor or good writing, thus I cannot state that good readers made good writers. I believe that although my students were all in an
academic writing course, what their varied disciplines consider "good" writing may well be different. Therefore, I cannot assume that development or genre manipulation are necessarily required of the kind of writing they will be doing in English.

In addition, I hope that my research contributes to the understanding of L2 literacy. Although, as mentioned before, my research generates hypotheses rather than theories, by looking at the dynamics of L1 literacy development in relation to that of L2, I am helping to fill in the gap suggested by many in the field (Grabe, 1991; Carson et al., 1990). This study provides a model for using qualitative methodology to consider the reading-writing connection for English language learners in an area where prior research had been quantitative and had suggested that few connections between L1 and L2 literacy exist (Janopulos, 1986; Hedgcock & Atkinson, 1993). My research suggests that extensive and intensive data collection may lead to a different conclusion.
APPENDIX A. INFORMED CONSENT FORM

TO: Students of 101B section B  
FROM: Lia Plakans

I am conducting thesis research in TESL (Teaching English as a Second Language)/Linguistics. My project will look to see if relations exist between ESL students’ first language reading background and their English writing. The purpose of this study is to consider if first language reading might be an issue for English language writing teachers. As students in a course on English composition, I would like to invite you to participate in my study.

Your participation would mean allowing me to use your journal entries and first/final drafts of paper assignments as documents to analyze for my thesis. Since these written documents are already assigned as coursework, what I need is your permission to include them in my research. Also, I may need to conduct short interviews about your background in reading or reading materials in your country.

This research will be taking place throughout the spring semester, and will conclude with finals week. If at any point during the semester you wish to withdraw from the project you are free to do so. Also, if there are particular parts or pieces of writing you do not wish to have included in my study please let me know. I assure each student confidentiality and will be using pseudonyms in my writing.

Because I am your teacher and not just a researcher, I want to assure you that your choice to participate or not participate will in no way affect your grade or my perception of you in this class. Please make the decision you feel most comfortable with.

Finally, I would like to invite your input into my research as it progresses. I will be writing my thesis this summer, so if you would like to see a copy of my thesis or hear about my findings please let me know.

If you would be willing to participate in my study please sign your name below and return this paper to me.

Yes, I will participate in Lia Plakans’ thesis research.

----------------------------------------------------------

(name)
APPENDIX B. JOURNAL ENTRIES

Journal entry 1 and 2 from Lydia

My parents taught me how to read letters when I was five years old. They bought me some books, which have some picture and lessons. I have to read loudly for them. I'm still remember when my mother bought me a comic book and I only saw the picture. She was very angry when I lied to her. Everynight my father read me a story until I slept. Parents read.

I like to read comic since I was a child. I subscribed Donald Duck, Smurf, Asterix, etc. Actually I don't like to read a book, especially novel usually. I only like a short story. I have tried but I can't. Now I subscribe magazine such as Fortune and Glamour. I try to read fortune because I want to get information about business. I want to read for information.

My parents read magazine every morning and usually my mother bought a political book. When I was twelve years old, I could choose a magazine which I want to subscribe. I choose a teenager magazine (like seventeen). I liked that magazine very much because that magazine gave me some informations about coping, sports, fashion, beauty, and gossip. I think the most important thing is that I got some informations. So that if somebody talked with me, I could understand it.
Journal entry 1 from Kim

The first step of my reading was made by my mother. She was an elementary school teacher when she was single. So she tried very hard to teach reading and writing before school entrance. All of my brothers and sister who were learned very fast. But in my case, I was very late to learn reading and writing.

Although I became a senior student in elementary school, I had very complicated in spelling water. But my reading habit was changed step by step. When I was high school student, I had surrounded many problems. My father and brother got a serious disease in the same time. And everyday, every university and every labor institution made a demonstration. Everything were looked like question marks. So I had had many questions about our history and situation. Most of questions started from: Why? So I had to find myself, I started to read every kind of genre. Still I could not find any answer. But reading was the important part of my life. I read very
I like novel because the story is always consist of human story. I thought that all problems around me is caused by people. Sometimes, my reading was the cure of all my problems. And problem is not limited by myself. I read various stories more and more. My thinking and solution become more various. I read various novel to find what I could see others had some press. I like every kind of novel. Especially Korean novel contain with our aspect of society. When our society become more complex, novel and poet are more pressed.

My favorite foreign novel is Arisbert Camus and Dostoyevski. They wrote deep, rational and antirational aspect of human psychology again human condition.

Anyway, still I love reading novel because all the time of my life's problems will not be disappeared, I need to love.
Interview with Shu-jen April 10, 1996

(Talked for two minutes about weather and Shu-jen’s travel plans and new apartment)

Interviewer: The first one is I wanted to ask you is to tell me your family history, if you had brothers and sisters, what your parents do and where you are from.

Shu-jen: Including my birthplace?

Interviewer: Sure.

Shu-jen: Okay my birthplace Tauyun, is south of Taipei, not south of Taipei the city, but is locate on the Taipei..down of Taipei and I have brothers, two brothers one is elder, one is younger.. My father now he has a factory in mainland China. Yes, because now Taiwan and mainland China they have economic relationship only, so Taiwan’s businessmen can run their business in mainland China, because that have the cheap labor.

Interviewer: I had heard that.

Shu-jen: My mother now is working in my family, housewife, and I have a pet, a dog, history...I don’t get it, history?

Interviewer: Well maybe you could tell me like, were your grandparents in Taiwan?

Shu-jen: Yes, they now live in Tauyun. My grandfather is farmer..yes but now is retirement, but he feel now he feel like he..now he still raise some vegetable himself. He feel he need some exercise so now he is continue to doing the rest of vegetables. But he now is seventy two years old.

Interviewer: Really?

Shu-jen: My grandmother is fat (laughter) is fat, and yes is the housewife

Interviewer: Did you always live in this same town?

Shu-jen: No, our family, because when my father was young he cannot afford the house..apartment for us, so we living with the grandparent..grandmother, so at that time both
my parents was working, so we living grandmother and grandfather until I was thirteen. So
my junior high school and we moved to the Taipei and ..yeah when I was thirteen we moved to
Taipei my junior high study was in Taipei, but my primary school was study in Taujung. At
that time we study the, how do you call? The language, different from Mandarin, the native
language from my parent's parents, from my grandmother.
Interviewer: Oh, so your grandparents taught you Taiwanese. You didn't learn this in the
school there?
Shu-jen: Yeah they cannot speak. They just understand a little Mandarin, but they cannot
speak and they cannot read.
Interviewer: So the writing is different than the Mandarin Chinese? Do they use characters as
well?
Shu-jen: Yes, but they change the sound.
Interviewer: Okay, so the writing is the same?
Shu-jen: The characters? The letters is the same but we use the different character in the
different languages.
Interviewer: Okay, so the characters are the same but they mean different things?
Shu-jen: Yeah, yes!
I: Interesting, very interesting.
Shu-jen: Yeah and I studied junior high school, college in Taipei, for my first place.
Interviewer: Were the schools different when you went to Taipei?
Shu-jen: Yeah...sure.
Interviewer: How were they different?
Shu-jen: You know the country kids (laughter) not so fashionable. They just very hard study
and in Taipei, the kids, just like New York or Los Angeles they dress very well. They can see
a lot of things. Yeah, so they more...they act more grown-up, adult, yeah they understand
many things than we growing up in the countryside
Interviewer: Was it hard to switch for you?
Shu-jen: Oh at first time, I feel that I don't like Taipei's kid because I am from Tauny, but half semester...yeah I feel the strange. They like to get a group and talking...like...not...I mean...they a real hard to get along with each other, always criticizing, "those girls are lalalala" or "that girl is..." (laughter) and they like to ...they like to do...some between the boys relationship, is complicated than the country kid.
Interviewer: More complicated than in the country. I imagine that is true here too, those differences. Do you remember when in school you started writing longer papers like essays or compositions?
Shu-jen: In junior high school we have the Chinese class, but not the English.
Interviewer: Right not English.
Shu-jen: We start to study the composition and ...but I think the Chinese composition is totally different from English.
Interviewer: How is it different?
Shu-jen: Like we don't have topic sentence. We don't have main idea. Main idea is our topic, but first is introduction, second is body, the is the organization is the same. When we describe, conduct sentence, we don't like...the..the English..we ...we like more...ah...more describes...more ah..art, classical.
Interviewer: More of classical..is that what you are saying or more adjectives?
Shu-jen: Yes, yes...yeah we
Interviewer: Less direct maybe than English?
Shu-jen: I think the Chinese..Of course we learn Chinese..to write Chinese is easier for me. If you write the answer..the English essay I feel is more like the..is more..like you give the evidence..you .. you give the evidence you have to think about topic sentence each paragraph, but whenever, I do the Chinese essay I just write the what I want to talk in the introduction and
then I explain. But I can put my opinions inside, so probably is the difference...at the final...at
the final I just..I include this information and I give a conclusion.

Interviewer: Are the writing assignments different from what we do in 101B, like what would
be a writing task that you would have had?

Shu-jen: We have the composition class for two hours. At that two hours we have to finish a
paper, and the teacher will give us the topic and everyone..she ..she just tell us how to express
the style because the Chinese we focus on the style a lot and that the description and not just
say essay we have to write a form..She just said, "The most important thing in your life, you
have to write in the like novel"

Interviewer: Like a narrative?

Shu-jen: Yes.

Interviewer: I see, I see and this is in junior high school that you are doing this?

Shu-jen: And composition...and we have homework, but because our paper is one square one
square, not like English typing, so we have to write a lot but take home homework about one
page about 1,000 characters but we have to do about two page and probably have six or seven
paragraph..

Interviewer: Every night?

Shu-jen: No, No no...for a week..a week..or one month.

Interviewer: Interesting, do you think reading is important?

Shu-jen: Yes, course.

Interviewer: Why?

Shu-jen: What I write is from reading. Yes, especially now that I am learning to write in
English. But I feel that the composition class..all you can teach is ..avoid the grammar mistake
and how to editing a paper..yeah those skills. I mean just skills, but how to..how to write a
sentence you have to read a lot of source. Okay when you want to use...when you want to
express your meaning you can remember "ahh..last time I read a newspaper they describe this
an they used the verb focus on or something because our vocabulary is not enough for me. So, I have to memorize when I want to say focus on...when I want to say something is important. I have to use the focus on when I want to change the time I have to say "at that time..." or something, I have to remember that! So, sometimes...sometimes.. I will forget something so I make a note.. so I can look...look...

Interviewer: Look for it in reading?

Shu-jen: Yes, but actually, when I was reading the English. first in my mind is the Chinese, and I translate, "okay, so I can use this" and sometimes I use the vocabulary not correctly.

Interviewer: That happens to a lot of people.

Shu-jen: Yeah, but my...many sometimes I wrote down the dictionary, but probably I never see the character...but (laughing) I cannot..I don't know the which the equal word for something...it difficult for me.

Interviewer: Yeah, and do you think writing is important?

Shu-jen: Yes.

Interviewer: And why?

Shu-jen: Both of important! Writing...I can say..it can show your level..you learning level because you read less you cannot express very well. And you have narrow ideas. And writing can show what you learn...what you learn from this course. And basically I will say it will show your levels of study.

Interviewer: And what do you find most difficult about writing in English?

Shu-jen: Writing.difficult. Well, like I say the vocabulary and sometimes grammar. And sometimes is hard sometimes I feel hard because I always think in Chinese..hard to translate..some is easy, but so I have to give up some ideas. And one difficult.is construct sentence using the variety vocabularies. And some..I read somebody's other paper. They just construct the simple sentence. I will feel that is the primary school student writing.

Interviewer: Well, like you said showing the level...
Shu-jen: Yes, Yes! The writing difficulty.

Interviewer: Do you have any difficulty writing in Chinese?

Shu-jen: Right now, of course not, because my composition so is very good.

Interviewer: My next question what is, and don't think about what I have said in class but your own personal experience. when I hand you a paper assignment, a formal out-of-class paper assignment, what process due you go through in writing that? What do you do? (laughter) and just don't worry about what I have said in classes..that's irrelevant.

Shu-jen: Write a paper..I first computer and I will think about the topics and analyze the topic..whats the idea I want to express and I will think about what I going to say on first paragraph...and second paragraph. But sometimes I will get a new idea..when I write..when I write a paper. My step is I seldomly write down.

Interviewer: You do it mostly on the computer then?

Shu-jen: Yes, and finally I will look at the last I will look at the whole paper...and think, not of grammar or spelling but think this flow and fluency, and there look at fluency and every idea connects to next idea and..writing English sometimes feel...because on some topic I don't have particularly sense.so at that I will feel I have no expression.(both laugh)

Interviewer: That happens..that happens..

Shu-jen: But in some topics when I was interesting or I have a lot of information I can contribute many, many ideas.

Interviewer: Yeah, how about when you write in your journal..how do you write in your journal?

Shu-jen: Journal..first..I feel the most difficult for me is to think about topic. I don't know what to...what to chose the topic or what going to tell. Ah..journal just...the same as I writing the paper but it shorter, shorter than when I writing a paper. Of course, the paper is more important so I will use complete sentence a lot. I will look, focus, on vocabulary. In journal, sometimes I just type it. Interviewer: Is there..those are my only questions that I have. Is
there anything else about your reading or writing that you think would be important for me to know?

Shu-jen: Because I don't..I like to learn English..so sometimes I will not lose interest in English. But I look the other students..for me, only...only can decrease my interest in it..reading..when I met the difficulty in reading...I think that that's all.
APPENDIX D. JOURNAL ASSIGNMENTS

This explanation appeared on a handout entitled "Course components".

Journals and reading responses

Approximately every week you will hand in your journal (a spiral notebook) with two entries in it; each entry should be approximately one page long and contain your ideas about a topic. One entry each week will be on a topic you choose. The second topic will be a response to some reading which I will assign. The readings will be short, but the responses will require you to think about an issue and give your own opinions about it (not just summarizing the reading). These readings will also be topics for class discussion.

When I respond to your journal, I will comment only on the content. You need not worry about grammar or spelling in your journal. Journal writing is an opportunity to let your ideas flow from your head onto the paper without being hindered by correctness. Such writing builds fluency and allows you to write about what interests you.

This explanation appeared on a handout entitled, "Journal and Reading Response Assignment" 1. The journal entry-- As usual you have a free choice of topics to write about in your journal. I have been responding to your entries, and sometimes I ask questions. You do not have to answer these questions, but they can be part of your next entry if you wish. Two weeks ago we discussed possible topics for journal writing. Here is the list of suggestions we came up with:

- food
- family
- lost/found
- home country
- sports
- commercials/advertising
- different cultures
- weekend activities
- sales
- friends
- crimes
- movies
- work
- death
- weather
APPENDIX E. COMPOSITION ASSIGNMENTS

Paper Assignment #1

Describe and explain a custom or tradition in your country/culture that is not familiar to most Americans.

- Remember that out-of-class assignments must be done on a computer and double spaced.

- Work through the process approach, starting today with in-class prewriting. Then write and revise before your first draft is due and again before peer review. Finally, make sure you edit before handing in your final draft.

- Hand-in a first draft on September 18. I will read your draft focusing on organization, content, and material. After I return your draft, revise and edit it and bring two copies to class on September 23 to exchange for peer review. We will have time in class for peer review on September 25.

- On September 27 your final draft is due. In your composition, I will look for:

  --organization: correct use of paragraphs
  overall structure of the composition

  --material: thorough development of the main idea of the composition
  use of examples and details to clearly illustrate your points

  --correctness: no fragments, comma splices, or run-ons
  correct sentence structures

  --expression: variety in sentence structures (compound & complex)
  variety in vocabulary
Paper Assignment # 2

Identify what you consider to be the invention or discovery that has brought about the most far-reaching and lasting changes in our century. Explain the reasons for your decision.

- Remember that out-of-class assignments must be done on a computer and double-spaced.

- Again, we will work through the process approach on this paper. We will start with brainstorming in class. You should hand in a first draft (which should be your paper through the revision stage) on March 6th and bring a second draft for peer review on March 18th. The final edited paper is due on March 20th.

- We will have conferences on March 7-8 in which we will discuss your paper and any questions you are having about it or the class.

- In your final paper I will look for the same features as your first paper plus any we have worked on since the last paper. Those features are as follows:

  organization: use of paragraphs and topic sentences
  overall organization of the composition
  a clearly stated thesis statement

  material: thorough development of the main idea in the composition
  use of examples and details to clearly illustrate your points

  correctness: no fragments
  correct verb forms
  correct sentence structures
  spelling

  expression: variety in sentence structures (compound and complex)
  variety in vocabulary
  effective introduction
Paper Assignment #3

Summarize the kinds of assignments and writing required in your major program of study. You will make this summarization based on one interview with a professor in your department. Basically, you will write questions, conduct an interview, and draft a paper summarizing your findings. This assignment should help you apply what you have learned in this class and what you will learn in your future composition classes to the specific needs of your field.

The first step in this paper is to conduct an interview which involves three steps:

1) Setting up an interview. This interview should be with a professor in your major field of study. Make sure you make an appointment with the person you want to interview; when you make the appointment introduce yourself and explain the purpose of your interview. I would recommend setting up your interviews by Wednesday, October 23.

2) Writing interview questions. Spend some time this week writing your interview questions. Please bring a list of these questions to your conference, and we will perfect them. Your questions should focus on the topic; here are some suggestions.
   - kinds of writing required in courses in your major
   - frequency of writing and importance of writing
   - types of guidelines and time limits given for writing
   - amount and type of homework expected
   - other skills important for specific courses
   - any advice professors could give you about the importance of content, organization, expression and grammatical accuracy in writing.

3) Conducting the interview. Conduct your interview in a friendly, courteous manner. Make sure you arrive on time, re-introduce yourself and your purpose, and express your appreciation of the professor’s time. Take some notes during the interview, but do not bury your nose in your paper. After you finish the interview you can go back to your notes, fill in the missing information and make sure you understand them.

- We will spend some time in class on Wednesday, October 30, discussing how your interviews went, any problems which you experienced, and what you learned.

- Your interview notes will function as your prewriting for this paper. Organize your notes and use them as material to write from. A first draft of your paper is due on Monday, November 4.

- After you revise this draft, bring two copies for a peer review exchange on November 8. We will have time for in-class peer reviewing on November 11.
The final draft will be handed in on **Wednesday, November 13**. Because this paper involves more work than the other assignments, I am weighing it more heavily (175 points).

In your final paper, I will look for the same features as the previous papers, plus any we have worked on since. Those features should be as follows:

**organization**: paragraphs and topic sentences used appropriately
- overall organization of the composition
- clearly stated thesis statement
- good use of transition words to maintain cohesion

**material**: thorough development of the main idea in the composition
- examples given to illustrate ideas

**correctness**: no fragments
- correct verb usage
- correct sentence structures
- agreement
- no run-ons or comma splices
- correct word order and word form
- spelling
- punctuation

**expression**: variety in sentence structures (compound and complex)
- variety in vocabulary
- effective introduction and conclusion

*Adapted from Improving the Grammar of Written English: The Editing Process*, Beverly Benson and Patricia Byrd, Heinle and Heinle, 1989.
Paper Assignment #4

Choose a topic you have written about in your journal to write on for this paper. You will need to use what you have written in your journal and develop it into a cohesive, well-organized paper. Make sure that the topic you choose can be made into a clear thesis or main idea for your paper.

- Remember out-of-class assignments must be done on a computer and double-spaced.

- As always, we will work through the process approach in your paper. You already have a brainstorm of ideas in your journal. Before Friday you should look through your journal entries and choose a topic. You should hand in a first draft of this paper on Wednesday, November 20 (this will be your paper through the revision stage). On Wednesday, December 2, bring two other drafts for peer review exchange, and an in-class peer review will be held on Friday, December 6. The final edited paper is due on Monday, December 9.

- In your final paper, I will look for the same features as the previous papers, plus any we have worked on since. Those features should be as follows:

  **organization:** use of paragraphs and topic sentences
  overall organization of the composition
  a clearly stated thesis statement
  good use of coherence devices

  **material:** thorough development of the main idea in the composition
  use of examples and details to clearly illustrate your points

  **correctness:** no fragments
  correct verb forms
  correct sentence structures
  agreement
  no run-ons or comma splices
  parallelism
  correct word order, word choice and word form
  correct use of prepositions
  spelling
  punctuation

  **expression:** variety in sentence structures (compound and complex)
  variety in vocabulary
  effective introduction and conclusion
REFERENCES


