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Writing from Sources and Learners of English for Academic Purposes:
Insights from the Perspectives of the Applied Linguistics Researcher,
the Program Administrator, and the Classroom Teacher

Robb Mark McCollum

A dissertation submitted to the faculty of
Brigham Young University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

Writing from Sources and Learners of English for Academic Purposes:
Insights from the Perspectives of the Applied Linguistics Researcher,
the Program Administrator, and the Classroom Teacher

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Doctor of Philosophy

This dissertation investigates the challenges faced by learners of English for academic purposes (EAP) when required to complete writing assignments that use source texts. In order to address this problem, I explore the issue from the perspectives of applied linguistic researchers, writing program administrators, and classroom composition instructors. These three perspectives are highlighted in distinct articles that build on one another to create a more complete understanding of the challenges that EAP students face when writing from sources.

The first article contains a literature review of relevant studies that explore the reading-to-write construct. Experts suggest that unintentional plagiarism, or patchwriting, can be attributed to a lack of cultural and linguistic competence. In order to address these limitations, researchers identify several reading and writing subskills that are integral to success in academic source writing. The literature review concludes with recommendations for teaching and testing contexts.

The second article details a rater training evaluation study that resulted in unexpected, but welcomed, recommendations. Teacher-raters provided feedback that influenced how the institution made use of benchmark portfolios to train teacher-raters as well as inform students about writing achievement standards. The increased use of benchmark portfolios also helped to clarify classroom and program standards regarding citation, attribution, and anti-plagiarism policies.

The final article is a practical guide for classroom composition instructors. I outline a recommended curriculum for teaching source writing to EAP students. The guide incorporates the findings of the literature review and the evaluation study into a collaborative and iterative pedagogical model. This recursive approach to EAP writing instruction helps students to diagnose and develop the advanced literacy subskills required for successful source integration into their writing.

As a set, the three articles demonstrate that effective solutions to instructional issues can be developed when a problem is approached from multiple perspectives. Indeed, linguistics-based research, program administration, and teacher experience can be combined to produce a model for writing instruction that acknowledges principles of second-language advanced literacy and accounts for learner struggles as students develop source writing skills.

Keywords: writing from sources, advanced literacy, reading-to-write, writing instruction, second language writing, ESL, EAP, plagiarism, patchwriting

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This work is dedicated to my family. I appreciate their love, encouragement, and beautiful, smiling faces. Thank you, Kimberly, Samuel, and Elinor.

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DESCRIPTION OF STRUCTURE AND CONTENT

This dissertation explores the challenges that English as a second language (ESL) learners deal with when they are expected to complete writing assignments that involve source material. This work contains three journal-ready articles that explore this issue from multiple perspectives. In this section, I include an introduction to the issue of source writing and a description of each journal-ready article.

Plagiarism is a commonplace concern in both academic and professional contexts. Media coverage in recent years provides examples of prominent writers (Jaquith, 2009; Marshall, 2009) and educators (Associated Press, 2009; Hamp-Lyons, 2010; Jaschik, 2009; Stripling, 2008) whose works have been accused of plagiarism. News reports are not kind to the accused plagiarists, and feedback from online readers suggests that the public is likewise offended by plagiarized writing. These reactions suggest that plagiarism is considered egregious behavior by the North American public. Howard (2007) asserts that this societal aversion to plagiarism is especially strong in academic communities. She explains, for example, that many English-medium universities have strict anti-plagiarism policies that carry penalties for the use of another author's words or ideas without proper attribution. Penalties for plagiarism can range from a failing grade on a writing assignment to institutional expulsion (DeVoss & Rosati, 2002). Yet even with such strict punishments, student (and even instructor) understanding regarding plagiarism and citation standards is not always clear (Plakans, 2010; Wolfersberger, 2007). Such has been my own experience as a writing program coordinator and composition instructor.

Over the past several years, I have worked as a university writing instructor, first as a part-time graduate student, and then as a full-time program coordinator and teacher trainer. During that time, I have witnessed a range of issues related to plagiarism in student writing. Although I have

encountered the occasional case of intentional plagiarism, most plagiarism I have encountered is unintentional. My experiences, supported by several research studies, suggest that unintentional plagiarism in university writing courses results from a misunderstanding of citation standards or from a lack of language skills (Hinkel, 2002; Pennycook, 1996; Shi, 2004; and Wheeler, 2009). Both types of inadvertent plagiarism can happen to native English-speaking (NES) and ESL students alike (Hyland, 2009; Johns & Mayes, 1990; Mateos, Martin, Villalon, & Luna, 2008; and Wheeler, 2008); however, research suggests that second language writers are more likely to encounter difficulties with unintentional plagiarism when writing from sources due to limited cultural and linguistic exposure when compared with native-English writers or even with their more proficient second language peers (Cumming, Kantor, Baba, Erdosy, Eouanzoui, & James, 2005; Keck, 2006; and Yu, 2008).

Because much of my university teaching has been with ESL students, I am particularly interested in studying how researchers, administrators, and instructors can help ESL students improve their writing so as to avoid the problems associated with source writing. My work in the field of Instructional Psychology and Technology (IP&T) has strengthened my understanding that student success is much greater when these three facets of education cooperate to solve learning challenges. Each role—researcher, administrator, and teacher—focuses on particular aspects of language acquisition. Due to their particular duties, each responsibility deals with a different aspect of the learning process and the questions that arise from that context. Individually, they investigate problems within their scope, but when researchers, administrators, and instructors combine resources and share ideas, they are able to address and provide more powerful and far-reaching solutions (Dappen, Isernhagen, & Anderson, 2008; Gearhart, Herman, Novak, & Wolf, 1995; Haswell, 1998).

In order to solve the challenges that ESL students face when writing from sources, I propose that researchers, administrators, and teachers can work together to solve this problem.

Through my study, I intend to demonstrate how the shared knowledge and experience of researchers and practitioners can build a better understanding of the challenges inherent in writing from sources. I also aim to generate classroom solutions that help ESL students achieve academic success through the development of advanced literacy subskills.

This work explores the issue of writing from sources by ESL students in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) contexts from three related perspectives: the applied linguistics researcher, the writing program administrator, and the classroom teacher. The following three chapters approach this issue from each of these perspectives and build upon this shared knowledge in order to develop an approach that addresses a practical, instructional concern. The first of these articles is a literature review that synthesizes research about advanced literacy skills and asks the question, “What is advanced literacy and how does it differ from basic reading and writing skills?” In this article I provide evidence suggesting that unintentional plagiarism among EAP students is due in part to under-developed literacy subskills including reading comprehension, paraphrasing, and synthesis. Ultimately, I propose that EAP writing programs can better address plagiarism problems by diagnosing and treating language proficiency issues including helping students to develop these advanced literacy subskills. This article is expected to be submitted to the *Journal of Second Language Writing*, which deals with both theoretical and practical concerns related to second language literacy.

The next chapter is an article that details a writing program evaluation that studied the effectiveness of rater training practices. The results of the evaluation were found to have positive implications for improved training procedures but also led to positive *washback* in classroom teaching. *Washback* in language testing refers to the influence that an assessment has on classroom teaching and learning (Messick, 1996). The positive influence exerted on the learning environment came in the form of benchmark portfolios. One of the results of the program evaluation was the recommendation to make exemplary benchmark portfolios available to teachers from the beginning

of the semester in order to help them better prepare their students for the quality of writing at their course level. This led to an improved understanding among students (and instructors) regarding the language proficiency and citation practices required in academic writing. The integration of both good and bad portfolios in the classroom helped facilitate classroom discussion about institutional standards regarding writing from sources and plagiarism, and the article concludes with a plan of action for program administrators. This case study is intended for submission to *Assessing Writing*, an academic journal which publishes both empirical research as well as instructional narrative pieces such as this one.

The final article in this dissertation outlines a model for teaching research writing to EAP students in a university composition course. The purpose of this final paper is to consolidate the findings of the previous two articles into a practical pedagogy for EAP writing instructors. Based on the investigations of the preceding studies, I came to the conclusion that unintentional plagiarism among EAP learners results from two issues: language proficiency limitations and cultural misunderstanding regarding academic writing and citation practices. In the third article, I outline a curriculum for a writing course that addresses these two issues. Using a recursive model, I demonstrate how a collaborative pedagogy exposes students to models of academic writing that help them assess their own effectiveness in language and the proper use of sources. Through this model, in addition to self-assessment, students receive feedback from their peers and their instructor, which helps them to correct and prevent source writing problems by developing advanced literacy skills. This final article has already been accepted for publication in a book that deals with writing pedagogy in higher education. The edited collection focuses collaboration in composition classes, and my article is the only chapter in the book that discusses how a collaborative environment positively influences English as a Second Language learners. The book is titled *Collaborative Learning and Writing: A Critical Sourcebook* and is expected to be published in 2012.

In developing this dissertation, I felt it was important to include all three articles in order to demonstrate a secondary goal of this dissertation: the argument that advances in instructional methods are best achieved through collaboration. One of the concerns in the field of education, including language teaching, is how researchers and administrators can have a positive impact on classroom learning (Borg, 2007). McNamara (2002) and Everton, Gallton, and Pell (2002) discovered that, although classroom practitioners acknowledge the positive influence that research and evaluation studies can have on classroom pedagogy, teachers often feel that published research is too theoretical, impractical, or inaccessible for classroom application. Although I acknowledge these concerns, I submit this three-article dissertation to demonstrate that research, administrative, and teaching efforts can be cooperative in helping address a practical concern such as unintentional plagiarism with source writing. If my dissertation were only to include two articles, it would omit one link to this important chain of collaboration among researchers, administrators, and teachers. It is my hope that this triad will positively influence EAP writing at the theoretical, the administrative, and the instructional levels. I also hope that this work demonstrates how professionals in all three levels of education can act as a team in the field of Instructional Psychology and Technology to solve educational issues such as source writing by EAP learners.

ARTICLE 1: A Synthesis of Research into English for Academic Purposes Writing from Sources

Article Abstract

In this article, I synthesize research about advanced literacy skills and ask the question, “What is advanced literacy and how does it differ from basic reading and writing skills?” I provide evidence suggesting that unintentional plagiarism among English for Academic Purposes (EAP) students is due in part to under-developed literacy subskills including reading comprehension, paraphrasing, and synthesis. Ultimately, I propose that EAP writing programs can better address plagiarism problems by diagnosing and treating language proficiency issues including helping students to develop these advanced literacy subskills.

The Problem with Writing from Sources

There are many different terms to describe the task of responding in writing to a source document. Some researchers use the term *integrated writing* (Cumming, Kantro, Baba, Erdosy, Eouanzoui, & James, 2005; Sawaki, Stricker, & Oranje, 2008), some use *intertextuality* (Moody, 2007) or *hybrid writing* (Mateos, 2008), some use *reading-into-writing* (Hyland, 2009) or *reading-to-write* (Ascenion Delaney, 2008; Kim, 2008; Plakans, 2009), and some simply use *research writing* (Kwan, 2008). Whatever the term, the task of writing from sources has a presence in university-level course work (Howard, Serviss, & Rodrigue, 2010).

Campbell (1990), Carson (2001), Harklau (2008), Gebril (2009) and Plakans (2009) insist that most academic writing involves responding to sources. For example, Pecorari (2003) and Kwan (2008) indicate that most graduate students are required to write from sources as part of thesis and dissertation writing, and Wette, (2010), Keck (2006), and Schuemann (2008) point out that undergraduate students are also frequently required to synthesize source texts with their own ideas into reading-to-write assignments in both general education and discipline-specific courses. In fact, when discussing the presence of source writing in academic education, Howard et al. (2010) claim that “writing from sources looms large” in university coursework and that even during the first year of college, students are required to complete assignments that involve “research writing, critical reading, analysis, and argument” (p. 178).

Not only does writing from sources play a prominent role in academic coursework, but it has also become an important component to writing assessment. Hyland (2009) explains that reading-to-write assessment tasks are often used in college admissions and placement exams in order to help stakeholders make decisions about general academic preparedness and placement in university writing courses, and Cumming et al. (2005) explain that such integrated writing tasks are now a standard component of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) which is used by many

US and Canadian universities in admission decisions about international, English as a second language (ESL) applicants. One of the motivations behind these tasks, as Gebril (2009) explains, is that integrated writing test items are designed to place examinees on equal footing related to the prompt such that all examinees can respond to the task using the information in the provided reading. These types of writing assessments have gained popularity, as Plakans (2008) and Gebril (2010) attest, because such tasks increase assessment authenticity by simulating real university writing tasks in which students must use both reading and writing skills.

The increased use of writing from sources, both as a component of coursework and as a form of assessment, has revealed the challenges that such tasks hold for students. Researchers interested in the topic of writing from sources highlight a common problem that students have with these tasks: plagiarism. Integrated writing tasks pose a plagiarism problem for students that is generally absent from independent writing tasks. In other words, when students are asked to write from personal experience or opinion, as they do with independent tasks, they do not have problems with plagiarism; however, when students are asked to complete integrated reading-writing assignments in which they have to respond to, summarize, or synthesize one or more sources, they frequently encounter plagiarism issues due to their misuse of source material (Shi, 2004).

Numerous researchers have found that when students are asked to complete integrated reading-writing tasks, they frequently copy portions of the source texts into their summary (Cumming et al., 2005; Plakans, 2008; Song, 2008; Yu, 2008). Howard et al. (2010) report that in their study involving integrated reading-writing assignments, nearly all student writers, both native English speaking (NES) and ESL, struggled to demonstrate adequate summarizing and paraphrasing skills to meet the expected level of academic quality. Instead of appropriate use of source information, the students' were deemed to have created *patchwriting*, a term, also used by Oulette (2008), that is used to describe incomplete or incorrect quoting, paraphrasing, or other use of source

material. Oulette agrees with Schuermann (2008), who points out that some university instructors refer to this action as *cut-and-paste* writing strategies. Other researchers found more severe forms of verbatim copying from source texts (Cumming et al. 2005; Plakans, 2008; Song, 2009; Yu, 2008). Unfortunately, this misuse of source information is usually considered plagiarism by most university instructors and can carry serious consequences including a failing grade or even expulsion depending on the perceived severity of the misuse (Oulette, 2008).

Applied linguistics researchers tend to make a distinction between intentional plagiarism and unintentional plagiarism. As the labels suggest, the distinction between these two categories of plagiarism rests with the writer's intent or understanding regarding the plagiarist act. A student guilty of intentional plagiarism knowingly uses words or ideas from a source and does not provide attribution or other appropriate signaling to the reader that such material is borrowed; the intent is to deceive the reader into accepting the borrowed material as the student's own (Bloch, 2001). On the other side, unintentional plagiarism occurs when students use source content in unacceptable ways, but remain ignorant of the standards that would prohibit such behavior; these students do not intend to cheat, but do not understand the rules governing source use in academic writing (Wolfersberger, 2007).

Due to the negative consequences that student face as a result of accusations of plagiarism, numerous researchers have tried to identify the cause behind unintentional plagiarism (Keck, 2006; Plakans, 2009; Shi, 2004; Wolfersberger, 2007). The rationale is that if researchers can better understand the causes of unintentional plagiarism, they may be able to support classroom learning so that student can avoid this problem in their writing. This review of the literature focuses on identifying the causes of plagiarism resulting from students' unintentional misuse of source texts. A synthesis of research suggests two interrelated causes of unintentional plagiarism among second language (L2) writers: cultural issues and linguistic issues.

Cultural Issues

Some have suggested that patchwriting among L2 writers can be attributed to different cultural expectations (Ramanathan & Atkinson, 1999) due to the national background of a student. Proponents of this view suggest that, for example, in some Asian countries, the view of textual ownership is very different from a Western one, and so students from Asian countries who study in Western universities borrow phrases and sentences from source documents without proper attribution because such practices are legitimate in their countries. However, more recent research suggests that this interpretation may be oversimplified and misleading. Wheeler (2009) investigated how patchwriting was perceived by first language (L1) writers at a Japanese university. The study suggests that, contrary to commonly held opinions about Japanese ESL students and plagiarism, Japanese students recognized L1 patchwriting issues as plagiarism and as an improper use of source material. Bloch (2001) found similar results into his investigation of academic writing in China. Even though Asian writers are thought to hold different standards when it comes to source attribution, the Chinese academics on Bloch's study were just as offended as Western academics were when faced with the plagiarist works of colleagues; the Chinese academics called for investigations and punishments similar to those employed in Western universities. These investigations suggest that the intercultural cause of L2 plagiarism may not be an adequate explanation for patchwriting problems.

Oulette (2008) proposes that, rather than simply attribute L2 patchwriting to differences between countries, the cultural disparity may have more to do with differences between educational experiences, understandings, and expectations. In other words, ESL writers may in fact struggle with plagiarism when studying at US universities, but this may be due to their lack of experience with writing in higher education (in any language) just as much as it may be due to their inexperience as English language writers. Oulette suggests, then, that expectations as to what constitutes plagiarism are as much an issue between national cultures as it is within a single national culture. He argues that

“while all cultures may disapprove of ‘stealing’ words and ideas from source texts, what actually constitutes inappropriate textual borrowing may still vary both across and even within cultures” (p. 258). This interpretation of academic culture as the cause of patchwriting is supported by the research of Howard et al. (2010) who found that even NES students struggled with research writing tasks. In their study, domestic and international students alike had problems knowing what information or ideas needed to be cited, how to complete a citation, and how to reword or summarize ideas from the original source. Even though L1 writers had fewer problems than L2 writers, the NES first-year university students still had an undeveloped sense of the cultural expectations of academic writing. Hyland’s (2009) study delivers similar conclusions: even though the L1 group performed better than the L2 group on reading-to-write tasks, there was a great deal of variation within each group, and Hyland attributes a portion of that variation to the fact that students in both groups had varying grasps of the culture of academic writing and the requirements for source attribution.

This unfamiliarity with academic culture involves multiple facets. First, there are the norms of textual ownership and the balance between the author’s own voice and the role of source material. Abasi, Akbari, and Graves (2006) detail how ESL writers in graduate school vary in their ability to successfully integrate source material into their writing. Less experienced writers had more difficulty engaging with and questioning source texts and tended to view “their role as writers as one of reproducing or transmitting” the words and ideas of the authors from their readings (p. 114). Thus, Abasi et al. suggest that a major component of textual plagiarism is a student’s lack of understanding regarding their role as research writers and the balance of authority between their own words and ideas and those of source texts. Gu (2008) also found that plagiarism concerns could be traced to issues related to misunderstandings about academic writing culture. In addition to a weak perception of self as a writer, the ESL students in this study were unsure about the rules

governing the ownership of knowledge; they struggled to differentiate what aspects of a source document required attribution. As such, their summaries often included statements that would be considered plagiarism. Hyland (2009) likewise found that students expressed confusion about what ideas required attribution and what statements were considered common knowledge and were exempt from referencing.

The second factor related to academic writing culture is a more mechanical issue. Students demonstrate difficulty employing the norms of referencing and citation practices when writing from sources. Even as students in each of these studies began to gain a sense of the conceptual demands of source attribution, they all struggled to apply that concept to proper referencing (Abasi et al., 2006; Gu, 2008; Hyland, 2009). Shi (2004) found that students' inexperience with citation practices led them to inconsistently tag source material in their writing which would result in cases that university instructors would deem plagiarism. Howard et al. (2010) found similar problems with fragmented, incomplete, incorrect, and inconsistent citations in student writing assignments. Hyland (2009) suggests that a lack of clarity and instruction by writing teachers is a factor in students' struggles with referencing; he claims that students are often confused about what citation style to use and what types of information need to be included in a citation, and this is what results in students' improper citation practices, which leads to scrutiny from their college professors.

Linguistics Issues

Although a lack of familiarity with the culture of academic writing plays a role in L2 writers' plagiarism problems, another, and perhaps greater, factor is language proficiency. Numerous reading-to-write studies find that there is a relationship between general language proficiency and successful completion of integrated writing tasks. The degree of severity of a student's patchwriting tends to correlate with the writer's level of target language proficiency. For example, in their study of integrated writing tasks on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), Cumming et al.

(2005) found that those examinees whose overall English language proficiency was higher had fewer instances of verbatim copying from source texts in their written summaries when compared to less proficient examinees. Plakans (2008) found a similar pattern in her study of reading-to-write assessments. She reported that L2 examinees scored much lower than their native language (L1) counterparts on integrated writing summaries. This trend is reported by other studies that compare the performance of L1 and L2 writers on integrated reading-writing tasks (Keck, 2006; Shi, 2004). In highlighting this difference between L1 and L2 writers, it should be emphasized that patchwriting is not a problem unique to L2 writers (Acension-Delaney, 2008; Britt & Aglinkas, 2002; Howard et al., 2010; Hyland, 2009; Moody, 2006), but the problem of patchwriting is more pervasive when students write in their L2 as compared to their L1 (Shi, 2004). In recognizing this disparity between L1 and L2 writers, researcher have attempted to explain why L2 writers struggle with these tasks even more than L1 writers.

Insight into this issue comes from a variety of studies including Singh's (2006) investigation into the summarization skills of ESL writers. What Singh learned was that, although students claimed to understand the source material, their summaries suggested that not only did they struggle to with writing skills, but they also had trouble with their reading skills. Other studies found similar problems: when students complete tasks that require them to use sources, their responses indicate that not only may some students struggle with the demands of academic writing, but they may also have difficulties with academic reading that precludes them from successful completion of the task (Abasi & Akbari, 2008; Howard et al., 2008; Oulette, 2008; Plakans, 2008; Song, 2009; Yu, 2008). Therefore, in order to complete reading-to-write tasks, students need more than simply good writing skills; Scarcella (2002) claims that such tasks require *advanced literacy*, a construct which can be defined as university-level reading and writing skills. The development of this construct, according to Scarcella, is both a cultural and a linguistic journey: writers need to understand the patterns and rules

of research writing in English-medium universities and be able to apply those standards to their own work. Additionally, students must develop the receptive (reading) and productive (writing) language subskills required to interpret and create academic texts. This study aims to uncover and better define the construct of advanced literacy as it relates to writing from sources. After providing a framework for conceptualizing this construct, I offer a synthesized list of recommendations for classroom teachers that will help them to improve their use of reading-to-write tasks in both pedagogical and testing contexts.

Investigations into Advanced Literacy Subskills

There is still much debate in the field of language education as to which (and even if) distinct subskills exist in second language reading and writing (Grabe 2001; 2008). Grabe suggests there are several factors that determine whether distinct, measurable subskills are in use when a learner completes a particular task. This is to say that a learner's level of education and language proficiency are related to the degree that researchers are able to validate the presence of separate reading and writing subskills involved in an academic assignment. For example, when dealing with a group of low novice users of a language, a measurement tool will not indicate any difference in ability between advanced literacy subskills since the learners have zero ability related to all subskills when completing a reading-to-write task. As such, because all of these advanced literacy subskills lie beyond the ability of that particular learner population, a researcher would conclude that these subskills are all the same construct. In the same way, if a similar instrument were delivered to a group of high intermediate learners, they would show greater variation among the advanced literacy subskills involved in the task (and thus validate their existence as distinct, measurable constructs), but the examinees would perform uniformly well on more basic literacy subskills (such as sight word vocabulary recognition). These results would lead researchers to conclude that basic literacy skills are

a unified construct, but advanced literacy skills are a set of separate subskills. The presence of any set of subskills is dependent on the learning context.

Task Complexity

When dealing with the context of EAP learning, there is ample evidence to suggest multiple subskills are involved when students are required to write from sources. The first group of evidence comes from studies that compare student performance on tasks of increasing complexity. Several researchers compared student performance on independent and integrated tasks. As part of the validity studies for the internet-based TOEFL (iBT), researchers compared examinee performance on a variety of skill area tasks including listening, speaking, reading, and writing as well as tasks involving more than one skill (Chapelle, Enright, & Jamieson, 2008). The research team found that most skill area tasks had similar difficulty levels among examinees except for integrated writing tasks which were far more difficult than all other tasks including the independent writing tasks. This suggests that there are additional literacy subskills at work when students complete integrated writing tasks as opposed to independent writing tasks. Shi (2004) compared student performance on two reading-writing tasks. In one task, the students summarized the assigned reading, and in the other, students were asked to write an opinion essay on the reading's topic. Most students refrained from interacting with the source text for the opinion essay, and as a result had fewer problems with patchwriting and also produced more acceptable work. However, the students' summaries contain a much higher level of verbatim copying and other forms of unacceptable patchwriting. Shi determined that the summary task was fundamentally different from the opinion task in that it required students to utilize a different set of literacy skills. Similar differences in performance by task are reported by Cumming et al. (2005) and Plakans (2009) in their studies that examined independent versus integrated writing tasks. In all of these cases, the researchers concluded that

student performance on these tasks suggest that learners employ different subskills when writing from sources as opposed to writing from opinion or personal experience.

The differences in performance are also present when learners perform multiple reading-to-write tasks at varying levels of complexity. Although they investigated the effect of task complexity on L1 writers, Mateos, Martin, Villalon, and Luna (2008) found that students performed better on a summarizing task, involving one source text, than on a synthesis task in which they were required to integrate information from two sources. Ascension-Delaney (2008) also discovered that as reading-to-write task complexity increases, student performance decreases. In her study of L1 and L2 writers, students completed two tasks that involved writing from sources: a summarization task and a response essay. In the former, students were required to create a summary of a source text, and in the latter, students had to integrate their own opinions with the ideas from the source text. Consistent with the results of Mateos et al., the second task was more difficult for students than the straightforward summarization task. Students encountered greater difficulty in completing a response essay as they had to balance their own voice with the author of the source text while clearly attributing borrowed ideas. Not only was the more complex task more challenging overall, but as with Mateos et al., the second task produced greater variation in average score than the summarization task. Ascension-Delaney's work supports the conclusion that as a task increases in complexity and dependency on source material, EAP students show greater variation in their ability to complete the task. These researchers suggest that this variation is a result of different subskills that are at play when students are asked to engage with source texts and produce a synthesized piece of writing, and since not all EAP students have achieved an adequate level of proficiency in advanced literacy subskills, their ability to complete the task varies.

Learner Language Proficiency

Differences among learner performance on reading-writing tasks have also been attributed to general language proficiency. In their study of writing tasks for the iBT, Cumming et al. (2005) found that examinees with lower overall English language proficiency produced writing that was of a lower quality than more proficient examinees. Differences in writing quality were found as measured by numerous factors including text length, grammatical accuracy, syntactic complexity, vocabulary breadth, and argument development. However, another trend was found specifically in regards to integrated writing tasks: more proficient examinees integrated source text into their writing using summarization or synthesis more effectively than their lower proficient peers whose writing contained higher levels of patchwriting or verbatim copying, and, among the writing of the lowest proficient group, whose writing often avoided any reference to the source material. The work of Cumming's team suggests that more proficient learners have access to a wider range of literacy subskills that enable them to perform better on these tasks.

Plakans (2008) studied how L2 writers approached opinion and integrated tasks. Although both groups used less planning when conducting opinion writing, there was a greater difference among the learners' processes on the integrated tasks. More proficient and experienced writers used more interactive and iterative processes, meaning that they referred to the source text more frequently as they wrote, and re-read and revised their own writing more than the less proficient writers. These different approaches suggest that as learners become more proficient in a language, the more likely they are to employ a tailored set of subskills when accomplishing a specific writing task.

Plakans (2009) further investigated the types of strategies learners use when completing integrated tasks. She found that less proficient learners used more bottom-up and other compensatory strategies when conducting synthesis tasks involving two source texts. The lower level

learners employed more word- or sentence-level strategies and were less effective at analyzing and integrating the two readings when compared with more proficient learners. In contrast, the group of more proficient learners (as identified by a comprehensive English language test) used more global, goal-setting, and metacognitive strategies as they completed the synthesis task. The more proficient group also performed better at the synthesis task and were better able to utilize the readings to develop an argumentative paper. Plakans's results further support the hypothesis that the difference in task completion between higher and lower level learners can be attributed to the groups' varying mastery of advanced literacy subskills.

Another example of the achievement gap between higher and lower level learners comes again from Ascension-Delaney (2008). In addition to comparing task type, she also investigated the influence of educational experience and language proficiency on task performance. She concluded that "cognitively demanding reading-to-write tasks . . . require more linguistic resources and academic experience with the task to enable reader-writers to express and structure content that satisfies the task requirements" (p. 146-147). All of these studies lend weight to the presence of multiple subskills in reading-writing tasks as evidenced by learners' linguistic ability.

Skill Divisibility Studies

Another form of research can be used to support the presence of multiple subskills within advanced literacy. These studies aim to test hypotheses about language ability based on models of skill or subskill relationships. For example, Song (2009), investigated the degree to which ESL listening and reading contain various subskills, or whether they each function as a unitary comprehension skill. Based on a review of literature, Song identified three important comprehension subskills and prepared reading and listening assessments that included these three item types: main idea comprehension, specific detail comprehension, and inference. Then, using structural equation modeling, Song tested various skill-subskill models to determine which model was the best fit for

the examinees' data. The results indicated that, as far as listening is concerned, there is evidence to suggest that three distinct subskills are involved, but as regards reading, only the inference subskill was distinct (based on variance tests) from the main idea and specific detail subskills. In other words, the data showed that there was sufficient variance among examinees' performance on all three types of listening items to suggest that each listening item type represent a distinct subskill; however, examinees performed equally well on both the main idea and specific detail item types, suggesting that these are not separate subskills, even though together they are distinct from the reading inference subskill. Song explains this result by suggesting that the test population consisted of EAP university students who are more proficient in reading than they are in listening. Thus, for this population, there is evidence to suggest three distinct subskills in listening ability, but only two reading subskills (inference and general comprehension). Song summarized these findings by stating that the presence of language subskills is dependent on "test takers' L2 proficiency as well as the characteristics of the test administered to them" (p. 435).

Another skill divisibility study was conducted by Sawaki et al. (2008) using data from the TOEFL. They were interested in determining whether evidence supported a multicomponential view of English language ability, based on examinee performance on a multi-skill test battery. Additionally, they wanted to investigate whether integrated tasks (involving listening and reading with either speaking and writing) identified more closely with the receptive skill constructs or the productive skills. Using confirmatory factor analysis, the research group tested five different skill-subskill models. Although they found that the integrated writing task identified with the writing skill more than with the reading and listening skills, the team indicated that their analysis suggests that other, unidentified language subskills may be involved in the completion of integrated tasks. This acknowledgment of additional subskills is supported by the following studies which attempt to more

clearly define exactly what advanced literacy subskills are involved in the completion of integrated writing tasks.

More than Reading and More than Writing

As researchers attempt to understand the challenges of writing from sources, they conclude that reading-to-write tasks involve skills beyond reading comprehension and writing ability. Like Sawaki's team, other researchers have found that reading ability is not always an effective predictor of success with writing from sources. Ascension-Delaney (2008) found that student performance on reading-to-write tasks was only weakly correlated with student scores on reading assessments, suggesting that other skills were involved in the task. Kim (2008) also compared student performance on integrated tasks with measures of reading comprehension; although the analysis suggested a relationship between these skills, Kim concluded that "when a student has a good understanding of source texts, the student is likely to summarize the texts well; however, understanding of the texts is just one of the skill components required for good summary" (p. 146). Yu (2008) arrives at a similar conclusion. In a comparison of general reading comprehension and summary writing, Yu discovered that, although better readers tended to produce better summaries, reading-to-summarize appears to require a different subset of skills than general reading comprehension.

Although Yu found that reading ability was a mild predictor of summarization skills, no such relationship was found between basic writing and summary writing. This disparity between basic writing ability and the skills required for integrated writing tasks has been noted by other researchers. Ascension-Delaney (2008) reported that research data suggest that writing from sources involved a different skill set than writing without background reading. She claims that the completion of reading-to-write tasks require both reading and writing, as well as a set of subskills that involve the interaction of these literacy skills. Plakans (2009) reinforces these claims with her study of

composition processes on independent and integrated tasks. She proposes that “there is evidence of a potential construct for reading and writing” that involves the interaction of these skills when writing from sources (p. 578). She, like Ascension-Delaney, suggests that a reading-to-write construct exists which is unique from, or perhaps beyond, independent reading and writing ability. Plakans suggests that this integrated writing construct is dependent on reading ability, writing ability, and language proficiency, but involves additional advanced literacy subskills.

Identification of Advanced Literacy Subskills

Given the increased evidence towards the presence of specialized reading-to-write subskills, many language education researchers have attempted to identify and classify these skills. In a general way, Kwan (2008) describes the act of writing from sources as an interaction of reading, writing, collecting, and connecting. She implies that, in order to complete research writing assignments, students must employ advanced literacy skills that extend beyond reading and writing: collecting and connecting represent literacy subskills that involve reading and writing but also involve analysis and synthesis skills. Kwan also states that the processes students employ to complete such tasks are recursive, complex, and interdependent.

This supports the view of Plakans (2008) when she concludes that students employ a different process when writing from opinion than when writing from sources: they spend a greater proportion of their time balancing their own words with the concepts and arguments of the source which involves a back-and-forth cognitive process between the source text and the student’s own writing. Plakans identifies reading-to-write to write subskills which she classifies into two major groups: writing and preparing to write. In the first group, she includes general writing ability as well as source writing skills that can be further defined as paraphrasing, quoting, and summarizing. In the second group, she includes planning (of content and organization), reading the source text, and

positioning oneself as a writer within the task and topic. Thus, we can see that although Plakans indentifies reading and writing as essential skills when writing from sources, there are also additional subskills that students need to complete the task.

Singh (2006) also analyzed learner processes when writing from sources and identified nine separate subskills needed to complete a summarization task including superordination, selection, reproduction, and combination. This list reveals the interactive nature of reading and writing when conducting a summary: not only do learners need to comprehend the source text, but they must also employ high level linguistic and cognitive skills in order to present that comprehension in their writing. It should also be noted that Singh's list, though detailed, only focuses on summarization tasks and does not even account for the additional subskills required for synthesis writing tasks involving two or more source texts.

Numerous other studies offer additional subskill lists; rather than summarize each study with its own list of subskills, I offer a synthesis of this research by classifying the subskills into related categories. The criteria for identifying relevant subskills involved three decisions. First, does the subskill relate to English for academic purposes in university-level contexts? I wanted to focus on studies that dealt with the subskills involved in university-level academic tasks, so my synthesis excludes research into general English or even occupational English studies. Second, does the subskill relate to an advanced literacy task? With this question, I excluded subskills that dealt with introductory literacy skills such as character/letter recognition, since this skill falls below the literacy threshold for the target group of learners. On the other hand, word recognition remains relevant since EAP learners are still continuing to expand their academic vocabulary. Third, does the subskill relate to integrated reading-writing tasks? Here, I wanted to ensure that the subskills were those that related to tasks where writers had to incorporate source material into their own writing.

In developing this list, I acknowledge that many of these skills require both reading and writing skill interaction; however, I used the term *reading-primary* to identify those subskills where reading plays a more prominent role, and the term *writing-primary* to identify subskills where writing is more prominent. It should also be recognized that this list synthesizes subskills that relate primarily to EAP learners at the university level; the list would necessarily be different if it were gathered from studies that focused on a different learner population. Overall, as regards advanced literacy for EAP writers, researchers identify four categories for reading-primary subskills and ten for writing-primary subskills. The reading-primary subskills are (a) task understanding, (b) text-level understanding, (c) sentence-level understanding, and (d) word-level understanding. The writing-primary subskills are (a) basic writing, (b) academic rhetorical knowledge, (c) time management ability, (d) ability to identify relevant content, (e) paraphrase writing, (f) summary writing, (g) synthesis writing, (h) attribution writing, (i) citation writing, and (j) revision writing. A chart that summarizes these subskills and identifies the studies from which they are drawn can be found in the appendix.

Reading-primary Subskills

Before I detail the reading subskills, it is important to recognize the cognitive nature of these subskills; academic reading is not simply a case of recognizing words in sentences, but it a complex cognitive task that requires students to keep information in memory and compare those ideas with currently known concepts, as well as with additional new information (Carson, 2001). As I explain the four reading-primary subskills, I also attempt to indicate some of the cognitive requirements of the subskill mastery.

Task understanding, or task representation, is a subskill that has been identified by Wolfersberger (2007) and Plakans (2008), who describe it as a learner's ability to read instructions, and, as Wolfersberger puts it, it is how learners form "an understanding of what skills, products, and processes the task requires and make a plan of action that will lead to a written product that

appropriately fulfills the writing task” (p. 73). In other words, task understanding can be seen as the first step in completing a reading-writing assignment. However, it is more than a step in a process and is viewed as a distinct subskill by Wette (2010), who claims that it is a specialized reading skill that involves interpreting written instructions to uncover the task requirements. In fact, Plakans suggests that this subskill is so important that many learners may fail to complete the assignment simply because they have difficulty comprehending the task based on the written prompt.

The second reading-primary subskill category is *text-level understanding*. Once learners develop a sense of the purpose for reading, they often focus on identifying the main topic or argument of the source text. Wette (2010) suggests that this subskill, in itself, could be said to contain sundry subskills including reading for main idea and identifying argument structure. Other researchers would add discourse or genre familiarity to this category (Hyland, 2009; Oulette, 2008), and background or disciplinary knowledge about the readings’ topics (Howard et al., 2010). Howard et al., along with Abasi and Akbari (2008), Gu and Brooks (2008), and Singh (2006), suggest that text-level understanding is a crucial skill when writing from sources since many students fail to read the entity of the source texts and misinterpret the true intent of the authors’ work. When students select to only read isolated phrases, they are more likely to make mistakes in their representation of those ideas and thus lower the quality of their writing product.

A more narrow form of reading comprehension is *sentence-level understanding*. Just as with all the other reading-primary subskills, sentence-level understanding is heavily dependent on target language proficiency. Within this subskill category is the ability to differentiate whether specific ideas are stated as fact or opinion (Hyland, 2009). When learners are not able to understand the specific sentences of a source document, even if they comprehend the gist of the text, they are more likely to resort to patchwriting including large amounts of quoted or verbatim-copied text (Abasi & Akbari, 2008; Howard et al., 2010). They are also more likely to incorrectly paraphrase or summarize specific

ideas, since they struggle to comprehend these details (Wette, 2010).

The last reading-primary subskill is *word-level understanding*. Vocabulary recognition is an important aspect of writing from sources and is essential to both the reading and the writing aspects of the task (Plakans, 2008). Wette (2010) explains that, especially when academic, discipline-specific research is involved, learners will struggle to successfully complete the task if they do not know the relevant academic and esoteric vocabulary. Hyland (2009) suggests that this is especially problematic for L2 learners whose familiarity with uncommon words and phrases tends to lag far behind their L1 peers. Hyland also suggests that both sentence-level and word-level comprehension are subskills that are most likely to result in plagiarism complaints against L2 writers; since L2 writers are more likely to have accented writing (vocabulary and grammar that appears non-native), university instructors are more likely to recognize a shift in writing style when these students copy sentences or phrases from source texts. Researchers suggest that, even though L1 learners are also guilty of patchwriting, instructors are less likely to identify L1 plagiarism because L1 writers have a better command of the target language grammar and vocabulary, which helps to mask their patchwriting activities (Hyland, 2009; Howard et al., 2010).

Writing-primary Subskills

In addition to vocabulary knowledge, there are several subskills that are crucial to the writing aspects of integrated tasks. The first of these subskills is *basic writing*, which involves an understanding of discourse- and paragraph-level organization, as well as the ability to manipulate and experiment with vocabulary and grammar (Plakans, 2008; Wette, 2010). It is this foundational skill that many independent writing tasks aim to measure, yet studies indicate that this skill alone is insufficient when writing from sources (Cumming et al., 2005; Plakans, 2008).

Another important writing-primary subskill is *academic rhetorical knowledge*. Learners must also possess an understanding of academic rhetorical patterns that goes beyond basic writing. Writers

must learn the conventions of genres of academic writing, such as argument and response, as well as the more specific genres of various disciplines (Hyland, 2009; Wette, 2010). As part of this subskill, Wette explains that writers must gain a sense of their position towards the content and develop a work that demonstrates an awareness of the reading audience. In essence, this subskill suggests that EAP writers must possess the ability tailor their writing to a particular context instead of a more basic writing skill that does not demand such adjustments.

Abasi and Akbari (2008) highlight the importance of *time management skills* in the completion of integrated reading-writing tasks. They point out that patchwriting frequently arises as a coping strategy for students who run out of time to complete an assignment and resort to a misuse of source texts in an effort to meet the demands of an integrated assignment. Such students have not taken the time to carefully read source material; neither do they take time to paraphrase or summary properly. Because of their limited linguistic knowledge in the target language, second language writers must plan more time to complete reading-writing tasks in their L2 as compared to their L1. Both Plakans (2008) and Hyland (2009) found that planning both before and during the reading-writing process was an important skill attributed to successful L2 writers. When learners are realistic about the time demands of an assignment and plan accordingly, they are more likely to produce an acceptable work that involved writing from sources.

The next set of subskills relates directly to the ability to ability to incorporate source material into writing. The first of this set is the *ability to identify relevant content*. Several of Singh's (2006) summary subskills relate to this ability: writers must be able to differentiate between major and minor content and then determine what information is relevant to the integrated writing task. Ascension-Delaney (2008) likewise highlights this ability as an important component of the reading-to-write construct. She explains that in order for writers to be successful at such tasks, they need to "read with a writing goal in selecting information from the source that can help them write their

texts” (p. 148). Singh (2006) argues that, even when L2 learners feel they understand the source, they often do not know what material to retain, and so they quote long passages of the source without the ability to distinguish between pertinent and irrelevant content.

Following the identification of relevant content, learners need to possess *paraphrase writing* and *summary writing* ability. Several researchers make a distinction between these subskills explaining that paraphrasing involves the ability to rephrase source ideas in sentences that are fairly equal in length to the original, using synonyms and structures selected by the learner (Wette, 2010). Summary writing, on the other hand, is more dependent on superordination, selection, and deletion so that the target writing is more concise than the source (Shi, 2004; Singh, 2006). Writers who lack proficiency in these subskills are likely to resort to verbatim copying from the source, because they lack the linguistic resources to relay source language in alternate forms (Keck, 2006). At the same time, lower level learners who strictly follow the command to “use your own words” end up with paraphrased or summarized writing that is unintelligible to the reading audience (Abasi & Akbari, 2008). Thus, in order to avoid accusations of plagiarism and yet still produce meaningful writing, students must develop paraphrase and summary subskills.

The subskill of *synthesis writing* is essential when learners are required to incorporate more than one source into their writing. Synthesis involves the ability to combine or extrapolate ideas into statements of support or refute in relation to other authors (Shi, 2004). Plakans (2008) and Hyland (2009) argue that synthesis involves critical thinking skills such as the ability to evaluate and compare source text arguments, and Hyland would suggest that the ability to distinguish fact from opinion is crucial here. Even when writers only work from one source document, they still need to engage in synthesis writing when they are required to go beyond simple summary and respond to the reading (Ascension-Delaney, 2008). In these situations, they need to compare how their own stance relates to the information presented in the assigned reading (Wette, 2010).

When blending source ideas with their own thoughts, writers need to have control of the *attribution writing* subskill. Gu and Brooks (2008) suggest that, in its more basic form, this subskill requires that students understand what types of knowledge and information require attribution; Wette (2010) elaborates, stating that it involves determining what is common knowledge and what is attributable content. Beyond this, Wette suggests that attribution involves the ability to differentiate one's own writing from the source material. So in one sense, attribution is the ability to distinguish one's own writing from the content of the readings, but, as Oulette (2008) and Plakans (2009) indicate, it is also the ability to interject a sense of authority in one's writing and assert oneself within the discourse community that involves the source authors. As Moody (2007) suggests, it is the ability to respond to and critique arguments while clearly communicating the source of the borrowed content and the writer's own contributions.

In contrast to this more cognitive subskill, citation writing can be viewed as the technical ability to follow accepted conventions that mark attribution throughout the text (Gu & Brooks, 2008). Wette (2010) explains that it is not enough to be familiar with general citation practices but that writers must learn the citation conventions of their specific disciplines. Hyland (2009) points out that this relatively simple technical skill can prove very challenging to writers who are not used to the concept of attribution, and even those who recognize the importance of acknowledging sources often fail to consistently cite their writing. Shi (2004) explains that, with citation, the writer should include statements that introduce and contextualize the borrowed content in order to place it within the writer's own argument. As such, citation is not simply a mechanical skill but is also dependent on linguistic ability.

The final writing-primary subskill is one that is relevant to many types of writing and not just reading-to-write tasks; however, *revision writing* is a subskill that becomes much more important when writing from sources, given that the process is so dynamic and recursive as writers switch between

source texts and their own (Howard et al., 2010; Mateos et al., 2008). It is a task that demands frequent re-reading (both of the source material and of the writer's own work) and revising (Plakans, 2008), during which the author makes decisions about deletion, addition, and substitution (Oulette, 2008).

Pedagogical Implications

Having outlined the necessary components involved in reading-writing tasks, I now outline how researchers suggest that this information can be used to improve classroom teaching and learning. First, researchers stress that teachers and administrators make a distinction between plagiarism and patchwriting with the view that the latter is not an intentional abuse but rather a misuse of sources (Howard et al., 2010). In fact, Howard's team suggests that patchwriting even happens among university faculty who work with unfamiliar or difficult texts, and this understanding should encourage instructors to take a more sympathetic stance towards students who patchwrite. Oulette (2008) suggest that patchwriting be seen as a transitional strategy for language learners and that instructors take a "developmental perspective" on the presence of patchwriting in their students' work. Experts suggest that patchwriting is evidence that learners are being asked to complete tasks that are beyond their linguistic ability (Gu, 2008; Schuermann, 2008; Plakans, 2009) and that instructors can lower students' affective filter by being more lenient on the linguistic demands of integrated tasks in the early stages of writing (Abasi & Akbari, 2008). This mindset, then, focuses less on punishing students and more on supporting them as they gain the subskills necessary to complete the task appropriately (Shi, 2004).

Not only should instructors differentiate between patchwriting and plagiarism, but they should also raise this awareness among students. Keck (2006) recommends that instructors present students with examples of both good and poor textual borrowing in order to help students

differentiate between acceptable and unacceptable writing practices. Shi (2004) supports this approach and suggests that it can help clarify classroom plagiarism standards so that students and instructors have concrete examples from which to establish a shared understanding of plagiarism. Several other researchers lend their support to this practice and propose that classroom discussions about plagiarism, provided that these discussions include contextual models, can help to clarify institutional academic honesty policies for students, teachers, and administrators (Moody, 2007; Oulette, 2008; Schuemann, 2008). Teachers should monitor student progress, and when patchwriting does occur, instructors should address it with formative feedback that helps students recognize, identify, and correct the problem (Moody, 2007; Schuemann, 2008).

Kwan (2008) suggests that teachers should monitor students' reading progress in addition to the students' writing. She suggests that this can help advisors to identify problems with reading comprehension and address this concern before misunderstanding results in inaccurate or plagiarized writing. Schuemann (2008) proposes that, during such meetings, instructors can discuss complex or unfamiliar source vocabulary and phrasing with students in order to clarify passages that have the potential to result in plagiarism or patchwriting. Because proficiency in reading is crucial to success when writing from sources, Ascension-Delaney (2008) and Singh (2006) suggest that instructors do more to integrate the teaching of academic reading and writing. They point out that the teaching of reading and writing in isolation is insufficient in helping students understand how these subskills work together in the completion of integrated tasks.

Experts also provide advice about designing reading-to-write tasks. Moody (2007) recommends that instructors carefully select topics that will require students to write original papers instead of copying papers written about generic topics. Despite the difficulty of writing from sources, experts do not advise against eliminating source writing from EAP curricula. Hyland (2009) insists that, so long as instructors provide ample support and discussion, assigning such tasks helps

students to learn the requirements of academic writing and the levels of development that are required for university-level work. Ascension-Delaney (2008) agrees and cautions against avoiding integrated writing tasks simply because they are difficult. She defends this position when she writes, “Obviously, professors cannot postpone assignments until their students have a perfect command of academic English or have appropriated the literacy practices of their discourse communities. It is mostly through engaging with the assignments and their requirements that students can appropriate the language and the literate practices of their discourse communities” (p. 278-279). A commitment to source writing is also endorsed by Abasi and Akbari (2008), provided that instructors ensure that learners are given sufficient time to master foundational subskills before moving on to more complex tasks. These researchers recognize the challenges that L2 students face in completing reading-to-write tasks, but they insist that it is imperative that instructors include these tasks in their EAP curricula in order to ensure that learners develop the relevant subskills that will prepare them to complete such tasks in other academic contexts.

Assessment Implications

Because integrated reading-writing tasks are not just an instructional tool, but are also used to assess student writing, researchers also offer their recommendations when using these tasks in testing contexts. When designing an assessment, Ascension-Delaney (2008) recommends including multiple reading-to-write tasks in order to include a representative sample of items that give a better indication of student ability. Gebril (2008) recommends likewise; he conducted generalizability studies on integrated writing assessments, and his conclusion supports the use of at least two reading-writing tasks in order to gain a more accurate reflection of students’ advanced literacy skills.

Experts also encourage test makers to consider how the assessment will be used within the learning context. For example, some researchers offer advice to those who plan to use reading-to-

write assessments for diagnostic purposes. Plakans (2009) explains that by pre-assessing learners' advanced literacy, instructors can learn which subskill training students need in order to successfully write from sources. In doing so, Song (2009) suggests that test designers determine what subskills need to be tested, and ensure that the diagnostic assessment involves specific, and isolated items that will provide feedback on these subskills in order to help instructors and students understand which subskills need the most instructional attention. Hyland (2009) points out that sometimes it is difficult to determine whether students are using the intended subskills to complete an integrated task; in such cases, Hyland recommends the use of interviews to better understand the process that learners use to complete the task. This echoes the method used by Plakans (2008; 2009) in her attempts to uncover the process learners used to complete reading-to-write assignments.

Whether integrated tasks are used for diagnostic or evaluative purposes, Song (2009) and Gebril (2009) propose that reading-to-write assessment, in conjunction with the more common independent writing tests, can result in positive washback to classroom teaching and learning. Educators state that washback can also influence writing rubrics: Hyland (2009) suggests that citation and attribution skills be added to evaluation tools, and Kim (2008) recommends that rubrics help students and instructors differentiate among the various reading-primary and writing-primary subskills. Gebril (2010) reinforces the idea that integrated tasks are a highly authentic form of writing in academic contexts, and that by including such tasks in assessments, both teachers and students will be more motivated to gain proficiency in the required subskills. Song (2009) suggests that one positive result of integrated testing washback is that it can help a university reading-writing curriculum, such as first-year writing programs, to better define its purposes and expand its commitment to diagnosing and teaching advanced literacy subskills. Though Song cautions that test users recognize the artificiality of timed writing tests that limit learners ability to employ authentic reading and writing processes; so long as stakeholders recognize this limitation, timed assessments

can be helpful when seeking insight into learners' ability to use advanced literacy skills under time constraints.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have sought to synthesize research about source writing by EAP learners. I emphasized the role that source writing plays in academic contexts, and explained the challenges that such tasks pose for all university students and for L2 learners in particular. EAP writers face two main issues when completing reading-writing integrated tasks: linguistic limitations both as readers and as writers, and cultural misunderstandings due to a lack of familiarity with the conventions of English-medium university study. I then provided a list of reading and writing subskills that are essential for source writing yet exist in developmental stages for most university-level L2 learners. After explaining this list of subskills, I summarized the implications that relevant research offers for teaching and testing contexts.

By synthesizing relevant applied linguistics research and identifying the particular subskills that relate to reading-to-write tasks, I hope to raise awareness among stakeholders that writing from sources is a complex skill that involves more than basic reading and basic writing ability. Educators can use this information to diagnose student ability in these subskills and design instruction and assessments that encourage the development of language, technical, and critical thinking skills that will help students avoid plagiarism and develop advanced literacy in order to cope with the demands of university study.

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Appendix

A synthesis of advanced literacy subskills

| Subskill | Other names or related subskills | Sources referenced |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| Reading-primary subskills | | |
| Task understanding | Task representation | Plakans (2008); Wolfersberger (2007) |
| Text-level understanding | Main idea; gist; argument structure; discourse/genre familiarity; background knowledge; reading speed; general comprehension | Abasi & Akbari (2008); Gu & Brooks (2008); Howard et al. (2010); Hyland (2009); Oulette (2008); Singh (2006); Wette (2010) |
| Sentence-level understanding | Differentiate fact/opinion; specific ideas | Abasi & Akbari (2008); Howard et al. (2010); Hyland (2009); Wette (2010) |
| Word-level understanding | Vocabulary recognition (of academic and discipline-specific) words | Hyland (2009); Plakans (2008); Wette (2010) |
| Writing-primary subskills | | |
| Basic writing | Discourse- and paragraph-level organization; ability to employ grammar/vocabulary; foundational writing skills | Cumming et al. (2005); Plakans (2008); Wette (2010) |
| Academic rhetorical knowledge | Familiarity with academic genres; knowledge of argument and response; audience acknowledgement | Hyland (2009); Wette (2010) |
| Time management ability | Brainstorming and drafting skills; planning; reflection; | Abasi & Akbari (2008); Hyland (2009); Plakans (2008) |
| Ability to identify relevant content | Differentiate between major and minor content; selection | Ascension-Delaney (2008); Singh (2006) |
| Paraphrase writing | Reproduction; rephrasing; substitution | Abasi & Akbari (2008); Keck (2006); Singh (2006); Wette (2010) |
| Summary writing | Deletion; reduction; concision; superordination | Keck (2006); Singh (2006) |
| Synthesis writing | Integration; combination; invention; incorporation; extrapolation; comparison; | Ascension-Delaney (2008); Hyland (2009); Plakans (2008); Shi (2004); Singh (2006); Wette (2010) |
| Attribution writing | Differentiate between common knowledge and attributable statements; differentiate own voice from source writers; authority assertion; critique | Gu & Brooks (2008); Moody (2007); Oulette (2008); Plakans (2009); Wette (2010) |
| Citation writing | Referencing; contextualizing; source acknowledgement | Gu & Brooks (2008); Hyland (2009); Shi (2004); Wette (2010) |
| Revision writing | Refinement; proof reading; editing | Howard et al. (2010); Mateos et al. (2008); Oulette (2008); Plakans (2008); Singh (2006) |

ARTICLE 2: A Shared Understanding of Writing Standards Through Program Evaluation

Article Abstract

This case study-style article details a writing program evaluation that studied the effectiveness of rater training practices. The results of the evaluation were found to have positive implications for improved training procedures, but also led to positive washback in classroom teaching. Washback in language testing refers to the influence that an assessment has on classroom teaching and learning (Messick, 1996). The positive influence exerted on the learning environment came in the form of benchmark portfolios. One of the results of the program evaluation was the recommendation to make exemplary benchmark portfolios available to teachers from the beginning of the semester in order to help them better prepare their students for the quality of writing at their course level. This led to an improved understanding among students (and instructors) regarding the language proficiency and citation practices required in academic writing. The integration of both good and bad portfolios in the classroom helped facilitate classroom discussion about institutional standards regarding writing from sources and plagiarism, and the article concludes with a plan of action for program administrators.

Plagiarism Standards in Writing Programs

Despite the fact that many higher education stakeholders agree that plagiarism is an offensive act, exactly what constitutes a plagiarist act can vary among administrators, instructors, and students within a single institution (Pecorari, 2001). Teachers and other school leaders may clearly state that plagiarism is wrong and that such acts will be punished, and student may agree with these terms, but problems arise when it is revealed that students (and even fellow teachers) have differing impression about what textual borrowing practices are acceptable and which are not (Schuemann, 2008; Wheeler, 2008). School officials may encounter difficulties enforcing anti-plagiarist consequences if there is no clear consensus within the institution about the concrete nature of plagiarist versus non-plagiarist works.

This article describes how an intensive English language program (IEP) in the United States was able to begin resolving this issue thanks to an evaluation study that was conducted as part of the IEP's writing program. Although the evaluation was intended to provide feedback on the rater training program, it resulted in unexpected but positive changes that helped to uncover and resolve discrepant views about the nature of plagiarism among the IEP's various stakeholders. This article serves as a case study that details how program evaluation can provide valuable insight into a writing program and pave the path for improvement. This case study also offers suggestions for program administrators who already recognize the need for greater institutional consensus regarding appropriate textual borrowing practices and want advice on specific actions that can lead to clearer standards regarding citation use and anti-plagiarism policies.

Program Background

A formal evaluation study can serve to canvass the opinions of stakeholders in language education settings. This feedback can provide valuable insight into program and classroom

administration which can lead to improved student learning and more efficient administrative procedures (Genesee & Upshur, 1996; Norris, 2009). In language performance testing, the feedback of raters can be used for a variety of purposes such as the improvement of score reliability (Elder, Knoch, Barkhuizen, & von Randow, 2005; Weigle, 2002), or the use of rating rubrics (Barkaoui, 2010; Lumley, 2002).

The administrators of our university-preparation IEP determined to conduct an evaluation of our rater training program after reading about similar evaluations in relevant journals (Knoch, Read, & von Randow, 2007; Elder, Barkhuizen, Knoch, & von Randow, 2007). Previously we had conducted an investigation into the scoring-related validity of our writing portfolio end-of-semester exam, and saw potential for improving our rater training procedures (McCollum, 2006). However, prior to making changes, we first wanted to evaluate the existing rater training program in order to learn from our raters what they considered to be the relevant strengths and weaknesses of the training.

The IEP uses portfolio-based assessment as a source of information for assessing students' proficiency and for assigning grades in writing courses. The writing portfolio consists of both process samples (written over the course of the semester) and timed samples (written during exam week). The week before finals, raters are asked to read and rate a selected batch of example portfolios. Then, the day before rating begins, raters attend a calibration meeting to discuss their ratings and ensure that the group is consistent in applying the rubric to example portfolios. Our previous scoring-related validity study indicated that this rater training process is generally effective at producing acceptable inter- and intra-rater reliability which reduced the need for triple ratings and increased the administration's confidence in the writing portfolio scores. However, no previous study had investigated how raters perceived the training, nor did we know what aspects of it they would recommend improving.

Summary of Evaluation Plan

The program administration believed that the next step in program improvement would be to conduct an evaluation study of the current rater training program. I consulted with the primary stakeholders of the rater training program: the teachers who also served as writing raters. I informed them that we were considering making some technological upgrades to the rater training materials, but before investing in the improvements, we felt that it was important to first learn from the raters how effective the current training program was. The elements of the evaluation that are most relevant to this case study include two areas: first, the training's effectiveness in preparing raters, and second, the raters' facility in using the training materials. Thus, the evaluand was quite narrow in focus: the training procedures that take place during the week prior to end-of-semester portfolio rating. The evaluation team wanted to learn whether raters felt that the training program was working well in its current form, and whether raters had any suggestions for its improvement. The evaluation was to be considered successful to the degree that it resulted in viable recommendations for further improving the rater training program.

Participants

Participants for the study included teacher-raters over the course of one calendar year (three semesters). The IEP faculty consists of three primary groups: (a) full-time faculty, (b) part-time MA TESOL graduate students, and (c) part-time adjunct instructors. Since the majority of raters are part-time instructors, there is considerable turnover in the rater population from one semester to another. The evaluation team, consisting of two full-time faculty members and one student intern, decided to conduct the evaluation over a period of 12 months in order to gather opinions from a broad range of raters and to ensure that no one cohort dominated our evaluation. Over 25 different raters participated in the study in one form or another.

Data Sources

Raters provided data from three primary sources: (a) surveys, (b) calibration meetings, and (c) follow-up interviews. The surveys were forms that contained Likert scale and open-ended questions about the degree to which they found the training to be effective, and how they felt prepared following the training. The survey also invited raters to provide any other comments about the training program.

During calibration meeting, I took notes on raters' concerns and ideas. Then, about three weeks after exam ratings were complete, at the beginning of the following semester a student intern conducted follow-up interviews with ten raters who volunteered to share additional feedback on their training experience. These semi-structured interviews reviewed the criteria from the surveys through open-ended questions that encouraged raters to share concerns and suggestions about the training procedures. A copy of the questions used in the survey and semi-structured interviews can be found in the appendix.

Evaluation Results

The data from the surveys did not reveal any surprising results; still, this feedback confirmed important aspects of the training. We learned that raters believe that the training program was effective. The raters are unified in their understanding of the purpose of the training; they support the need for training and calibration and they believe that it will lead to improved inter- and intra-rater reliability. Raters reported that they found the in-person calibration meetings and the online training materials to be effective and user-friendly components of their training.

Unexpected Results

Open-ended questions from the survey revealed two unexpected themes. First, when asked to provide comments about the effectiveness of the calibration meetings, several raters expressed concerns about the preparedness of their peers. For example, one rater wrote, "Just have everyone

come on time and prepared,” and another wrote, “Make people fill out their ratings online and then bring it to the meeting so that we have all the scores and we can make sure that everyone does it.” These comments suggest that raters feel that the effectiveness of the training program is weakened when their colleagues have not read and rated the online benchmarks prior to the calibration meetings. Another unexpected issue emerged from the suggestions section of the survey. Some raters indicated a preference for beginning the training process earlier in the semester. Both of these themes, rater preparedness and earlier training, were further explored through the calibration meeting observations and the follow-up interviews.

In the calibration meetings, only a minority of raters arrived late. However, many of those who came late, and even some who arrived on time, had not completed the online benchmark ratings prior to the meeting. Their lack of preparation appeared to annoy the other raters who felt that their unprepared peers would not be able to fully contribute to the calibration discussions. Thankfully, despite this frustration, the raters were able to put their differences aside and conduct a collegial calibration meeting.

The raters’ collaboration during these meetings revealed another valuable insight. When teachers worked together to discuss their benchmark ratings, experienced raters took the lead to explain and justify their ratings and offered advice to the novice raters. These experienced raters were able to help new raters understand how to apply the grading criteria to the benchmark portfolios, and helped explain why a novice rated a portfolio too high or too low. As a result, the raters trained one another with minimal administrative intervention.

The follow-up interviews echoed the themes that had been raised in the surveys and calibration meetings. First, several raters were worried that some of their peers are not prepared for the meetings; one rater suggested that the raters who were late for the meetings were those who need the training the most. The concerned raters suggested that this could compromise the reliability

and validity of scores given that the ill-prepared raters may be using the rubric differently from the others. Since most raters, including new raters, do not review the rubric until rater training, those who miss the meetings or do not prepare for them are less likely to be prepared for live ratings.

Another concern raised in the interviews related to the online materials. Some raters suggested that reading benchmarks on the computer screen can be hard on the eyes, and that these electronic copies are not easily referenced during the training meeting. These raters suggested distributing paper copies of the benchmark portfolios both before the meeting, for raters who would like to start training earlier in the semester, and at the calibration meeting for the reference of all raters. Another suggestion builds on this idea; nearly all raters suggested that training could start several weeks earlier in the semester by informing raters of their assignment and providing them with the self-training materials.

Answers to the Evaluation Questions

Based on these results, we were able to answer the original evaluation questions. First, how prepared do raters feel following their training experience? Survey data suggests that raters have a high sense of preparedness following their training experience. They have a common understanding of the purposes of the program, and they feel that the training activities are effective at meeting those goals. The interviews confirm that raters feel prepared for their task, but revealed that many of them harbor concerns about some of their peers who do not fully participate in the training. Second, how comfortable do raters feel with training procedures and materials? Raters indicated that they feel that both the online and in-person training materials were easy and comfortable to use, though some raters expressed minor difficulty with reading on a computer screen and suggested that paper copies could solve this issue.

Recommendations

Feedback from raters indicated that they felt most strongly about issues which addressed the preparedness of the raters and the nature of the rating materials. As a result, the evaluation team offered recommendations for improvement which we hoped would enable raters to better prepare themselves for future rating sessions. However, we did not anticipate the way in which these changes would have a positive washback affect to the classroom by helping teachers and students become better aware of program standards for writing portfolios.

The first recommendation involved providing raters with access to training materials near the beginning of the semester. Raters offered several reasons in support of this action. They felt that early access would help them be better prepared for the rating rather than waiting for the last moment and having to complete the training during an otherwise already busy time for the teacher-raters. Additionally, they were encouraged by the possibility of using the rating materials to help them with their classroom teaching and grading. The more they had access to the benchmarks, the more likely they would be to teach their students the appropriate level standards for writing.

The raters also felt that if they could receive feedback on their ratings, and gain a better sense of their severity/leniency, then they would be better prepared to rate at the end of the semester as well as be more accurate in their teaching and grading. Some raters even suggested that they would like the opportunity to rate even more benchmarks than are typically assigned during rater training. If more portfolios were made available, these raters felt that they would be better prepared for rating and teaching responsibilities.

The opportunity for raters to begin training earlier in the semester would be facilitated through improved online training materials. Raters suggested that the online materials would facilitate their independent training and give them the freedom to start training earlier in the semester even if other raters were not prepared at that time. They commented that an online system

could even provide them with automated feedback that could tell them the accuracy of their sample ratings in comparison to the benchmark scores, and a few raters suggested that a meeting could be held near the beginning of the semester in order to demonstrate and explain the online program. Moreover, some respondents suggested that the use of the online training component would enable the writing program administrators to monitor raters' progress and ensure that all raters completed the training and submitted adequate practice ratings prior to the calibration meeting.

Finally, raters also provided suggestions regarding the calibration meeting near the end of the semester. They indicated that all raters should come to the meeting prepared to discuss their sample ratings. The respondents also asked that printed paper copies of the benchmark portfolios (or digital copies on a laptop computer) be available to raters during the calibration meeting so as to facilitate discussion about each benchmark portfolio.

Based on these suggestions, the evaluation team proposed four major actions to improve the quality of the rater training program. The four actions, their sub-points, and the justification for those actions are summarized in Figure 1. These four recommendations are based entirely on feedback from numerous raters over a period of three semesters. The suggestions represent a variety of rating and teaching experience among the raters and can be considered a fairly good indication of the most common concerns regarding the rater training program. In synthesizing these comments, we strove to provide a cohesive set of recommendations that were complimentary and addressed the most important issues raised by this evaluation.

Recommendation Benefits to Stakeholders

In the semester that followed the formal evaluation of the rater training program, we made plans to begin implementing the recommendations resulting from the evaluation. Funds to make technological improvements to the online system were limited and would have to be held off for the

near future; however, program administration was able to immediately implement the recommendations that involved providing teachers with benchmark portfolios at the start of the semester. Therefore, at the first orientation meeting for writing instructors, the writing skill area coordinator demonstrated how teachers could access the library of benchmark portfolios and could use those benchmarks to gain a more concrete sense of how the level objectives translated into student writing ability and end-of-semester exam ratings.

| |
|---|
| <p>1. <i>Design an internet-based rater training program that contains:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>A short explanation of the rating process,</i> b. <i>Several benchmark portfolios for each writing class level, and</i> c. <i>An interface for comparing practice ratings with official rating and justifications.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>New raters desire to review rating procedures on their own outside of the training meetings.</i> • <i>Raters desire to get additional rating practice aside from the calibration meeting.</i> • <i>Raters desire to get feedback on their ratings in comparison to the program standards.</i> |
| <p>2. <i>Hold a rater meeting at the beginning of the semester in order to demonstrate the online program and to allow raters to begin familiarization with the standards as early as possible.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Some raters are nervous about technology and want an in-person tutorial.</i> • <i>New raters could learn from discussing ratings with more experienced raters.</i> • <i>Teachers desire to apply rating standards to their teaching right from the start of the semester.</i> |
| <p>3. <i>Encourage all writing teachers to use the online program to review the benchmarks and apply those standards to their teaching and grading.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Raters want to ensure their grading standards are in line with classroom standards.</i> • <i>Teachers want their students to be prepared for the writing final exams.</i> |
| <p>4. <i>Require all raters to read and rate a prescribed number of portfolios before the calibration meeting (submitting their scores to the online program).</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Raters complained that some peers were unprepared for meetings.</i> • <i>Raters wanted reminders and accountability for their calibration preparation.</i> |

Figure 1. Program recommendations based on rater training evaluation.

Benefits to Teachers

Teachers began reviewing the portfolios on their own, and this led to instructors' increased confidence in teaching, assessing, and responding to student writing. Because teachers had read the benchmark portfolios, they had a better sense of what to expect from their students, and they also developed a shared sense of understanding regarding the types and quality of student papers. It also helped teachers better understand the end-of-semester rating rubric as they could see how it applied to the benchmark portfolios. The ability to review the sample papers was especially useful to instructors who were new to teaching writing or new to teaching a particular proficiency level, as it helped them to understand what to expect from their students.

The discussions were not confined to the classroom. Teachers, especially those teaching the same level of students, would discuss the benchmark examples and share advice about how to teach students how to avoid common pitfalls. In doing so, the instructors built a shared understanding about textual borrowing standards. As a result, early access to the benchmark portfolios helped teachers not only in their early preparation for rater calibration at the end of the semester, but it had the advantage of helping instructors to feel better prepared and more unified in their teaching and grading of writing throughout the semester.

Benefits to Students

Less than a month after the beginning of the semester, teachers approached the writing coordinator asking permission to share the benchmarks with their students. The teachers explained that students would ask for example papers that could serve as models for the types of writing they were being required to produce. Instructors wanted authentic examples of ESL student writing, and the benchmarks would fulfill this need. The writing coordinator allowed the use of benchmark portfolios in classes as a teaching tool with the provisions (a) that student author names were removed from the portfolios and no other personally identifiable information was contained in the

papers, and (b) that teachers only shared portfolios whose authors were no longer studying with the IEP. In this way, portfolios could be used as a teaching tool without infringing on the privacy of students' grades as revealed through the portfolios' ratings.

In the following months, instructors brought sample portfolios into the classroom to share with their students. In many cases, instructors would ask students to read over the examples papers, and then class discussions followed in which students and teachers would highlight the strengths and weaknesses of individual papers and how the authors implemented the writing concepts that were being learned. After a few sessions such as this, several instructors reported being pleasantly surprised to learn that students became highly effective at guessing the benchmark ratings of the sample portfolios, even prior to group discussion. These instructors felt that students had become very adept at recognizing the level of quality in the sample portfolios and could provide accurate ratings along with justifications for their scores. This phenomenon has also been observed by MacBeth (2010) who recommends that instructors expose students to both weak and strong models of writing. So, just as access to the benchmark portfolios helped instructors gain a stronger sense of program standards, the same was true for students who learned to recognize the qualities of good writing through exposure to sample papers.

Among higher-level classes in which students were required to write from sources, greater exposure to benchmark portfolios sparked classroom discussion about attribution and citation. Instead of abstract discussions about avoiding plagiarism, teachers and students now had numerous sample papers that exemplified both good and problematic textual borrowing practices. In these discussions, papers containing plagiarism proved very useful. Teachers were able to highlight problems such as near copies, weak paraphrasing, absent quotation marks, or missing citations in order to help students understand common errors. Stronger papers could then be used to model

correct source writing practices and help students better understand how teachers (and US universities) tend to view plagiarism.

Benefits to Program

In addition to helping individual teachers and students improve their sense of appropriate writing quality, the sharing of benchmark portfolios also had an important effect on the writing program as a whole. To understand this development, some additional background on the writing program would be helpful. Prior to the implementation of the evaluation recommendations, the IEP had adopted a zero-tolerance approach to student plagiarism. This meant that any portfolio found to contain plagiarism would receive a failing grade which could affect the student's ability to progress to the next class level, and could even result in the student's dismissal from the program. This uniform approach to plagiarism caused fear in many students and even frustrated teachers who felt that it was too harsh in many instances. All instructors gave anti-plagiarism warnings to students at the beginning of the semester, and assumed that students understood the rules. However, inevitably, at the end of the semester, raters would find cases of unintentional plagiarism in students' portfolios.

Not only was this disappointing to administrators who wanted to ensure that students learned the expectations of university-level writing, but the IEP leadership was dismayed that teachers had not caught these problems before the students submitted their portfolios. Even more distressing was the fact that not all raters agreed whether a portfolio contained plagiarism, or whether that plagiarism was severe enough to warrant a failing grade. To resolve these disagreements, the writing coordinator had determined that portfolios containing plagiarism would be investigated more closely. Those portfolios that contained large amounts of undocumented copying would be subject to a failing grade, but those portfolios in which the plagiarism appeared to be the result of poor citation practices or weak paraphrasing/summarizing skills would be penalized by a lower (but not a failing) grade. The justification for the two-tiered approach to plagiarism

scoring was the rationale that second language writers may suffer from language, cultural, and academic limitations that cause them to commit unintentional plagiarism (Abasi & Akbari, 2008).

Still, even though program administration used this system as a way to judge the severity of plagiarized portfolios, the two-tiered penalty for plagiarism was not well understood by teachers and students. Moreover, there was no consensus regarding what constituted plagiarism since some instructors were more lenient than others (by allowing students to submit papers with minor plagiarism problems), and some raters were more vigilant than others (by discovering more instances of plagiarism when grading portfolios as compared to other raters). Shi (2004), describing these discrepant views of plagiarism within writing programs explains that “[t]here is honest confusion among students as well as disagreements among teachers about what constitutes plagiarism” (p. 172); Gu and Brooks (2008) agree with this assessment stating that universities suffer from “a lack of consensus on the definition of plagiarism” (p. 338). Gebril (2009) in discussing the grading of both independent writing and integrated reading-writing tasks, suggests that raters had greater difficulty in consistently and accurately rating the integrated tasks due to a lack of unclear standards on how to grade students’ use of source material. Prior to the implementation of the evaluation recommendations, program administrators at our IEP, like those in the studies described above, did not yet have a satisfactory solution to the discrepant interpretations and attitudes towards plagiarism in the writing program.

The widespread sharing of benchmark portfolios brought about a remarkable improvement to the plagiarism problems. Because instructors and students were able to review samples of student writing which had been graded by end-of-semester raters, classes were also exposed to portfolios that contained plagiarism which had been discovered by raters. These benchmarks, which represented lower ratings at the respective skill levels, contained highlighted passages and printed copies of the original material that had been plagiarized. By comparing the two works, readers could

see why the rater determined that the passage was plagiarized and petitioned that the portfolio be given a lowered grade.

The presence of these poor examples of student writing sparked discussion between teachers, and among teachers and their students. These conversations helped to build an institutional awareness of plagiarism and a shared understanding of what constituted plagiarism according to program administration. As a result, there was less confusion, mystery, and discrepancy regarding the nature of plagiarism and the penalty for such. So in addition to improving rater preparedness, classroom teaching, and student understanding of good writing, the implementation of the evaluation recommendations also contributed to solving an on-going issue by clarifying program standards regarding plagiarism and attribution.

Conclusion

The evaluation of the rater training program was originally conceived as a means to canvass stakeholder opinions regarding the training process. However, the feedback from raters resulted in recommendations that broadened the scope of the training program to the sharing of benchmark portfolios with teachers and students from the beginning of the semester. This action had a positive influence on teachers' ability to understand level objectives and apply grading rubrics to their students' work. Students also benefited from reading sample portfolios as it provided them with models, both good and poor, that they could review in order to see the implementation of the writing skills that they were learning. Lastly, the recommendation to freely disseminate benchmark portfolios opened discussion between teachers, raters, students, and administration regarding the nature of plagiarism and appropriate measures for avoiding and penalizing it.

It is our expectation that this study has demonstrated the value of conducting periodic program evaluations that involve feedback from relevant stakeholders. We encourage other writing

program administrators to involve teachers, students, and others, who have an interest in the success of the program, in studies that investigate the effectiveness of teaching, testing, and other aspects of the writing program. The involvement of stakeholders can increase their interest and confidence in the quality of the program, and administrators can gain valuable insight from those who interact with the program in various other roles.

Additionally, we hope that readers will be able to see how such evaluations can lead to unexpected but highly valuable recommendations. Although we primarily set out to gather raters' opinions about the effectiveness of the training program, we also gained important insights into teacher-rater experience beyond the end-of-semester training. Our evaluation revealed that raters wanted to start the training process earlier in the semester in order to reduce their workload during finals week and in order to improve the connection between instruction and assessment. Together with the stakeholders we developed a list of recommendations that addressed the training program as well as the way in which benchmark portfolios can be used throughout the IEP.

Finally, we share our experience as a demonstration of the value of sharing benchmark writing samples with all stakeholders of a writing program. We learned that by making the benchmark portfolios available to teachers and students, it helped both groups to become better aware of level objectives and gauge their own effectiveness in meeting those objectives. Others have likewise shown the value of examining model papers or portfolios for teacher training (Andrade, 2007; Dempsey, PytlíkZillig, & Bruning, 2009), and with students (Brown, 2005; Lundstrom & Baker, 2009). Additionally, the use of these writing samples as models in class sessions encouraged students and their instructors to discuss citation, paraphrasing, and summarizing skills. This helped clarify institutional standards regarding plagiarism and appropriate use of source documents. We learned that by reviewing both good and poor examples of source-based writing, as a program we developed a shared understanding of good writing. We encourage other writing programs to

consider the benefits of conducting evaluation studies which can bring about unexpected, positive recommendations and improve understanding among stakeholder groups.

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Appendix

Questions guiding evaluation of rater training program

Questions on rater survey:

- What do you perceive to be the purpose of rater training?
- How effective is the training at meeting this purpose?
- How comfortable do you feel with rater training?
- What parts of the training are most useful?
- What suggestions do you have for improving the effectiveness of the training?

Questions for semi-structured interviews:

- Based on your experience in recent semesters, what do you think is the purpose of the rater training program?
- How do you feel about this purpose? Do you think that rater training meetings should accomplish other purposes as well or instead?
- What are the strengths of the rater training program?
- In what ways could the rater training program be improved?
- What other suggestions, comments, or concerns would you like to share about the rater training program?

**ARTICLE 3: A Cumulative Model for Teaching Source Writing to English for Academic
Purposes Students**

Article Abstract

This article outlines a model for teaching research writing to EAP students in a university composition course. Based on the research of EAP writing studies, it is suggested that unintentional plagiarism among EAP learners results from two issues: language proficiency limitations and cultural misunderstanding regarding academic writing and citations practices. In this article, I outline a curriculum for a writing course that addresses these two issues. Using a recursive model, I demonstrate how a collaborative pedagogy exposes students to models of academic writing that help them assess their own effectiveness in language and proper use of sources. Through this model, in addition to self-assessment, students receive feedback from their peers and their instructor which helps them to correct and prevent source writing problems by developing advanced literacy skills..

Background

As an instructor of composition to both native English speaking and English as a second language learners, I am constantly striving to develop a model for academic writing that helps students learn the skills and language that will prepare them to be successful with written assignments in their future courses and careers. This article details the classroom activities and teaching techniques that I have synthesized from my experiences with students and fellow teachers. I propose a model for academic writing that helps students focus on learning the language of academic research while participating in a collaborative research community. This model, the Cumulative Writing Model (CWM), demonstrates how instructors can help students diagnose and improve their weaknesses with source writing by taking a recursive approach to learning. This method is inspired by the work of Ascension-Delaney (2008), Plakans (2008), Wette (2010) and Howard, Serviss, and Rodrigue (2010) who suggest that learners of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) are best able to cope with the challenges of integrated reading-writing tasks when they are explicitly taught the subskills of advanced literacy and when they are given the opportunity to identify and improve areas of difficulty. This article outlines how the CWM can prepare students to be effective consumers and creators of research-based writing.

A Solution to the Challenges of Teaching Research Writing

Developing proficiency in argumentative academic writing is an important skill for university success (Pennycook, 1996; Wolfersberger, 2007). This ability requires multiple subskills including the ability to analyze, synthesize, summarize, paraphrase, and cite (Britt & Aglinkas, 2002; Chapelle, Enright, & Jamieson, 2008; Singh, 2006) and, as Harklau (2008) and Howard et al. (2010) have pointed out, this ability is not readily achieved by all college-age students. Both Keck (2006) and Yu (2008) have observed that this struggle to attain advanced literacy is even more difficult for second

language writers. In addition to grappling with the modes and standards of university-level academic writing, studies suggest that non-native writers are also faced with linguistic and cultural challenges that impede their ability to write from sources (Ascension-Delaney, 2008; Campbell, 1990; Hyland, 2009; Wheeler, 2008).

This article outlines how a recursive and collaborative classroom approach to composition can address the challenges facing college-age writers. Over the past several years, I have refined a model for teaching research writing that encourages students to work together as they learn the essential skills of academic writing. I have used this model with a variety of student groups, and I have found that it is especially beneficial to English as a Second Language (ESL) learners. My approach is based on models of research writing as proposed by Bullock and Goggin (2010). They suggest that research writing can be broken down into a sequence of smaller tasks including (a) finding sources, (b) annotating sources, (c) synthesizing sources, (d) developing an argument, (e) creating an outline, (f) drafting, and (g) revising. The CWM, the model that I use, follows this basic procedure, yet instead of proceeding through these steps only once, the CWM repeats the research writing process multiple times in a single semester. With each iteration, collaboration is key to helping students improve their ability to accomplish each step and increase their confidence in research writing. This recursive approach is based on the work of Schuermann (2008) and Abasi and Akbari (2008) who argue that students should be given the opportunity to refine their skills in less complex writing tasks before moving on to more complex assignments.

Two elements differentiate the CWM the most from other approaches to first-year writing: the model's focus on a single rhetorical pattern, and its collaborative nature. First, the CWM reduces the number of organizational patterns that students must learn during the course of one semester. In a typical first-year writing class, students may be asked to learn three or four different genres such as critique, personal narrative, argumentative essay, and research report. Although teaching multiple

writing genres is a valid approach in a composition course, there are other goals that may deserve priority in a research-writing class for English language learners; researchers have suggested that lexical, grammatical, and anti-plagiarism concerns are especially relevant to non-native English language writers (Evans, Hartshorn, McCollum, & Wolfersberger, 2010; Lee & Chen, 2009; Plakans, 2008; Nakamura, 2010; Storch, 2009). These learners would benefit more from explicit English language instruction that helps them to appropriately integrate sources into their research writing. This is why the CWM limits the types of writing required of students in order to help them hone the skills necessary to complete a research paper writing assignment. Because of this, the CWM is most effective in a writing program that (a) requires students to develop research writing from sources, (b) provides opportunities for students to learn other writing genres in other courses, and (c) understands that some students, such as non-native English language users, benefit from explicit instruction in the language and conventions of academic communication.

The second characteristic that separates the CWM from common writing frameworks is that the CWM thrives on collaboration among course participants. The CWM is designed to encourage students to learn from one another as they read and share source material, prepare outlines, revise drafts, and offer their own writing as background reading to their peers. These collaborative activities help students to develop both written and oral communication skills as they share their writing processes and products with one another. Through the CWM's collaborative activities, students increase their audience awareness and their realization that research writing involves participating in a wider community of learning.

A Basic Outline for the Cumulative Writing Model

The CWM is based on accepted approaches to research writing. But, true to its name, the *Cumulative* Writing Model repeats this process multiple times during a course, increasing the

complexity with each iteration. This approach gives students and instructors the opportunity to diagnose and treat specific areas of weakness or challenge related to the students' reading or writing skills. The CWM also helps students to teach and learn from their peers as they collaborate more deeply with each iteration.

Students begin by writing a simple problem definition paper on an assigned topic. Then, when students submit their problem paper to their instructor, they also share their writing with peers who can use that paper as a source document for the next assignment. The second paper is a causes paper that summarizes a problem and then investigates possible causes. Students can use peers' first papers in helping to write about the problem, but then the students must add to the issue by synthesizing material about the causes. Once again, in addition to submitting their assignment to the instructor, students also share their causes paper with their classmates. In the final iteration, students will have both problem papers and causes papers, authored by their peers, as background source materials for writing the final assignment. The solutions paper requires students to go beyond describing a problem and its causes to investigating potential solutions. Because students rely on both the bibliographies and the research writing of their peers, students provide one another with feedback on their research writing. This collaboration can lead to improved communication skills and better research papers.

A visual summary of this process is shown in Figure 2. A student, Kimberly, is assigned Topic A for her first paper. She and other students who are also writing about Topic A share relevant sources with one another but write their own problem papers on that topic. (At the same time, other students are writing about Topic B and Topic C.) For the second assignment, Kimberly is assigned to Topic B. She has access to all the sources that Topic B students used for the first assignment, and she also has a copy of each of their problem papers. She can use all of these materials to help her summarize the problem, but she will need to collaborate with other Topic B

students in order to find sources to help her write the causes aspect of the second assignment. Once she has completed the causes paper, she will move onto the final assignment: the solutions paper. Now she is writing about Topic C, and she will have several problem and causes papers as background sources. She will also have an extensive collaborative bibliography from peers who previously wrote about this topic. However, she and her Topic C peers will need to find additional sources that will help them write the solutions part of this final assignment. By the end of the course, she will have written three research papers of increasing complexity on three different topics. In the section that follows, I provide a more detailed description of each stage of the CWM and how skill development improves, and how collaboration increases, with each iteration.

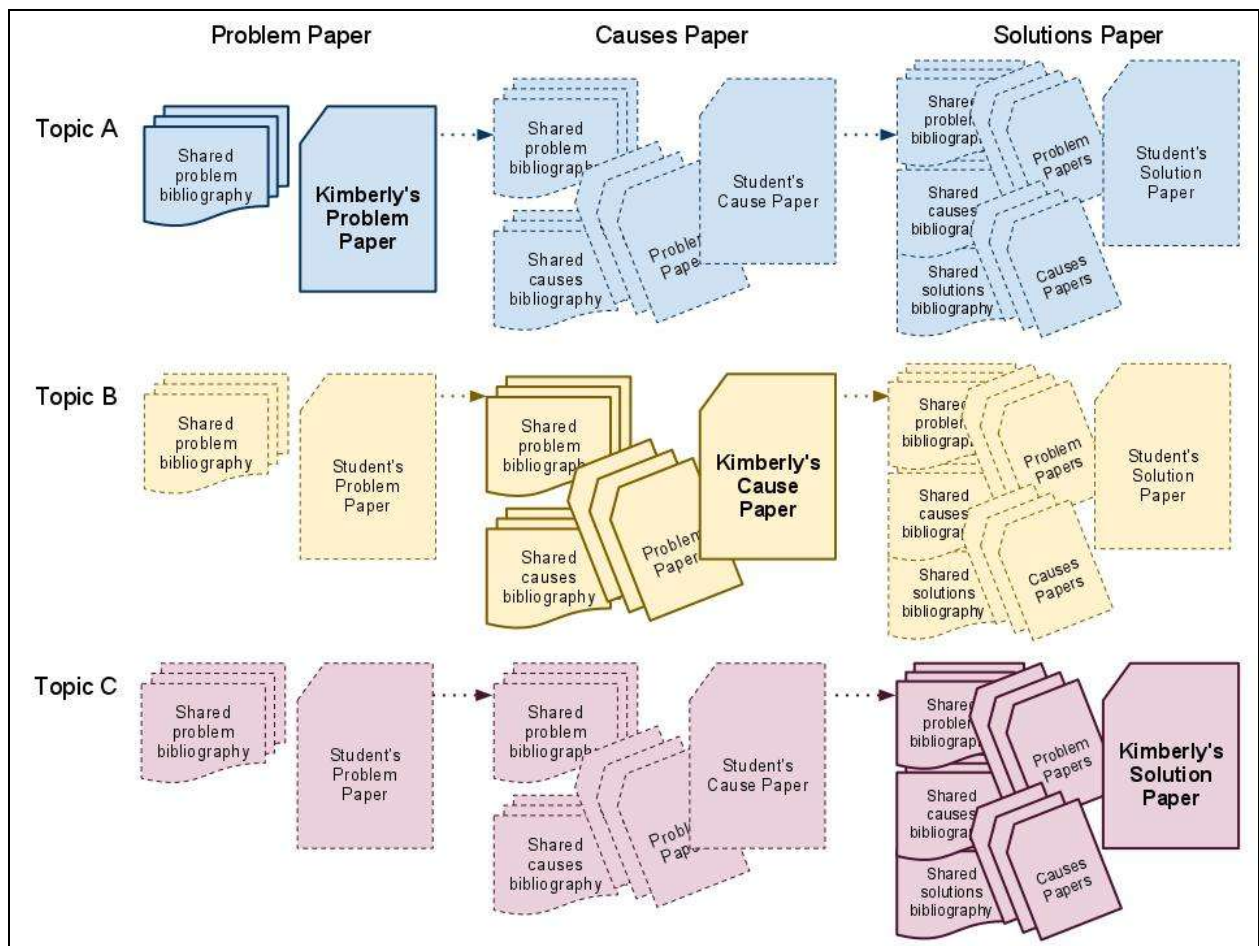


Figure 2. The CWM process.

Determine Research Topics and Collaborative Groups

Whether a course follows a pre-specified theme or whether a teacher allows students to select their own research topics, the CWM works best when students write from a limited number of research topics. There is an increased sense of community when there are fewer research topics. With fewer options, students are more likely to take an interest into peers' papers, and fewer topics means that more students are working on any given topic and can share resources with others. The limited number of topics also means fewer content areas and related vocabulary to compound the linguistic load for ESL learners.

I recommend selecting four topics: one topic for the practice paper, and then three others for the cumulative assignments. As the instructor, I select the topic of the practice paper, generally something related to study skills or university life. For example, one semester our class wrote the practice problem paper about university general education requirements; another semester, we investigated the problem of online civility. These topics were of interest to all class members since they already had experiences and opinions about these issues. This helped raise their interest in the assignment and motivated them to seek out what others had to write about these issues.

Although I decide the practice paper topic on my own, I invite the class to propose possible topic areas for the following papers. We begin this discussion as students are completing their practice papers. As we begin evaluating topics, I notice that students sometimes need help determining appropriate topics, and the following steps can help. First, I ask them to brainstorm a list of current events or news stories. I then model how a news event can serve as a catalyst for developing a research topic. For example, a prominent news story one semester involved a devastating earthquake. In discussing this news event in class, I helped the students see that many possible research topics could stem from that story: How effective were emergency services in responding to the crisis? How did government officials coordinate relief efforts? How could

construction efforts have been improved in order to minimize the impact of the quake? With each question, one or more possible problem papers exist.

My students and I have found that browsing the front page of a major newspaper or viewing news media internet homepages can help identify current events that would translate to appropriate research topics. Once we have a good list of potential topics, the students vote to determine the three official topics. Each student gets three votes from among the approved list (voting can take place in class by raised hands, or online by survey or email messages to the instructor), and the three most popular topics become the official course topics. Figure 3 displays an example of brainstormed topics and student votes (from a class of 15 students); the highlighted topics have the most votes and were the topics students wrote on that semester.

| TOPIC | VOTES |
|---|-------|
| Culture shock and international students | 2 |
| <i>Equality issues for women in the workplace</i> | 8 |
| Earthquake emergency preparedness | 6 |
| Economic recovery from recession | 3 |
| Food shortages in developing nations | 5 |
| <i>Internet freedom and censorship</i> | 9 |
| <i>Civil unrest and political defiance</i> | 12 |

Figure 3. List of potential research topics.

I inform students that they will probably get to write about at least one of their preferred topics, but that they probably will have to write about at least one topic that they dislike. Still, I tell them that I will try to show them how to develop an interest for all three topics by participating in collaborative research writing. I assure them that writing about a topic that does not interest them is actually an important research skill since during their university study, and in their careers, it is likely

that they will be assigned to work on projects that do not match their personal preferences. If they can learn to enjoy writing about a topic that is of little initial interest to them, they will increase their chance of success with such experiences in the future. I have found that the collaborative nature of the CWM helps students to discover a previously unknown interest in an assigned topic as they explore the issue through small group discussions.

When I first used the CWM, I allowed students to select any topic from a list of ten for each of their papers. However, I quickly found that this resulted in some students who were the lone researchers for some topics, and other large research groups for more popular topics. Neither option was particularly effective for collaborative learning and participation: lone students lost out on collaborative feedback, and large groups had too many students to allow for individualized feedback to all participants during a single group session. So, in subsequent semesters, I have evenly assigned students among the three most popular topics to ensure that there are reasonably-sized research groups at each stage of the semester. Students rotate among the three topics so that each student writes about all three topics by the end of the course, which means that there is a relatively equal number of source papers in any given topic for assigned students in the next iteration.

Model the Research Writing Process with the Practice Paper

Some students in my first-year writing courses have never written an academic paper before, let alone a research paper in their second language. Before assigning them to work on their own papers, I take the first few weeks of the course to model the research writing process. During this time, I select a topic that is of general interest to my students (such as the debated value of general education programs) and together we read a variety of related articles. I select these articles for their relevance to the topic and for their readability. I look for academic or news sources that are written for non-expert audiences so that the content and language are more accessible to ESL learners. I demonstrate in class how I found the sources, and we even take time to discuss less-than-worthy

sources and why they might not be relevant to our research. For example, I encourage students to consider criteria in evaluating their sources such as academic merit, timeliness, expertise of author, evidence of bias, and so forth. I have found that it is useful to ask students to generate a list of source types that they might use for a research paper, and then as a class we evaluate their relative strengths and weaknesses.

Figure 4 shows a source mapping grid that I use to help students understand the appropriateness of particular sources. As students brainstorm possible research sources, for example, an encyclopedia article or a newspaper report, we discuss the evaluation criteria and then

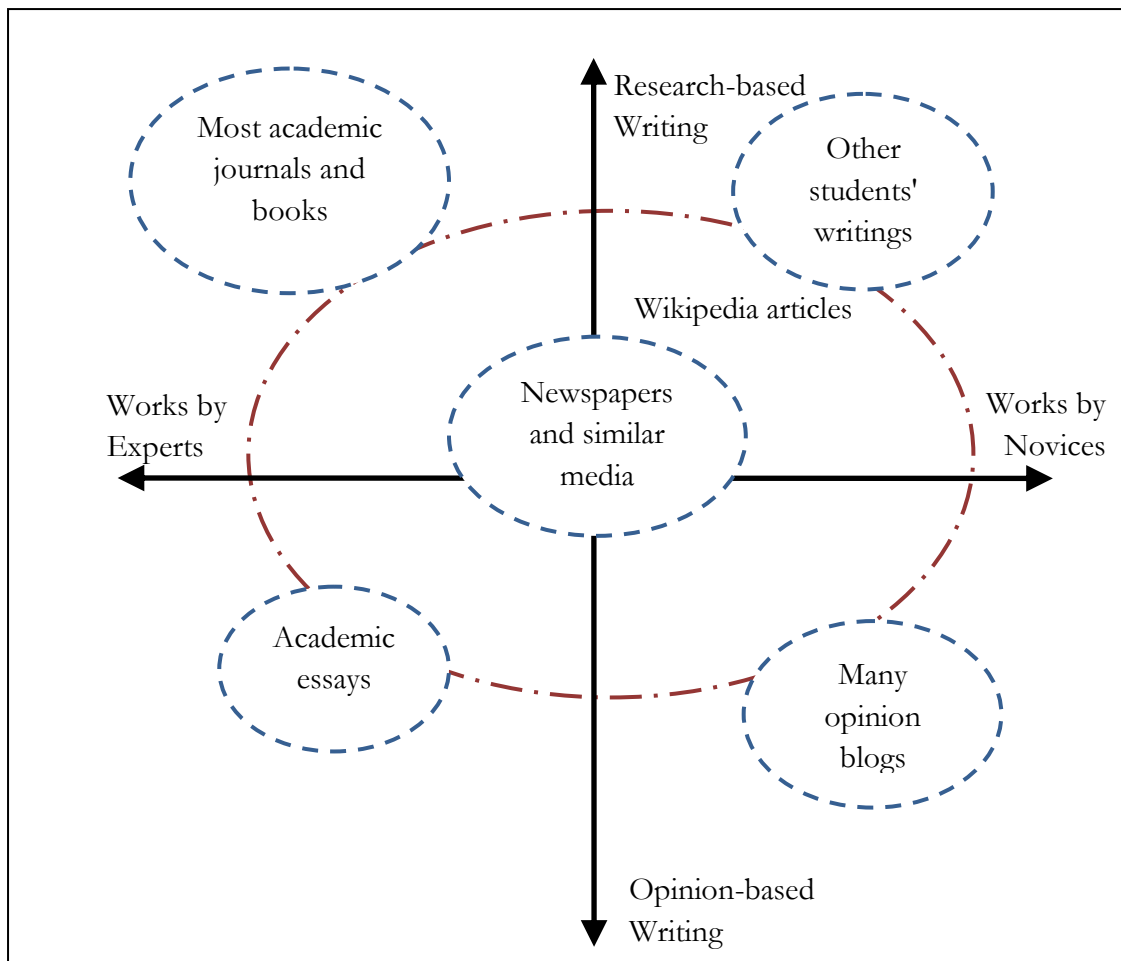


Figure 4. A source mapping grid.

place it on the grid. I explain that over the course of their academic study, they want to become comfortable relying primarily on sources from the upper-left quadrant; however, I explain that these sources contain the most challenging and esoteric language of all possible source texts. I encourage students to try using one or two sources from this quadrant, and then to use other, more approachable texts (such as news articles or the writing of other students) for their remaining sources. The grid mapping and discussion proves to be an effective method of helping student understand why popular internet sources (such as Wikipedia or personal webpages/blogs) may not be appropriate sources for academic research writing, though such sources may function as a springboard to other sources if they contain bibliographies. This explicit discussion about appropriate sources is supported by researchers who state that many composition students are unfamiliar with the practices of English-medium academic writing and do not know how to differentiate among good and poor sources (Kim, 2008; Kwan, 2008; Schuemann, 2008).

Once we have a foundation of articles on the topic (usually four or five), we then read and summarize them as a class. I try to model effective strategies for creating an annotated bibliography: in addition to a reference citation and short summary, each entry also includes an explanation of the source's relevance to the research topic along with at least one quote or paraphrase that could be used in the paper. The completed annotated bibliography is then posted to a shared location (such as a course management system or a class wiki) so that all class members can access the entries and articles. The sharing of bibliographies enables me, as the instructor, to evaluate how well the students are able to follow citation conventions. When I see common errors, I can discuss them in class in order to help students understand that adherence to citation practices is an important aspect of research writing, and that failure to do so can be considered plagiarism by some university instructors and administrators. Discussions about citation practices is supported by researchers who claim that many students find these conventions to be confusing, yet most college professors take

for granted that students have already mastered this skill prior to the students' arrival in content area courses (Keck, 2006; Shi, 2004).

An annotated bibliography serves another purpose; it functions as a diagnostic tool to help instructors determine whether students comprehend the source material. Several researchers have noted that when students conduct research writing tasks, they only consult texts at the sentence-level and thus fail to understand the overall purpose of the source or even misinterpret and misrepresent the author's statements (Howard et al., 2010; Wette, 2010). I ask students to complete an annotated bibliography that includes a citation, a summary of the source's main idea(s), a statement that explains how this main idea relates to the student's own paper, and one or two statements from the source that the student may quote or paraphrase during the drafting stage. These annotated bibliographies are much more detailed in comparison to annotated bibliographies required in many composition courses, but I find that the greater detail helps writers to diagnose and address important reading subskills that can have a remarkable impact on the students' work in later stages of the writing process.

Following our creation of an annotated bibliography, we spend time exploring effective writing processes. The first-year writing program at my institution takes an argument-based approach to research writing, and I model pre-writing strategies using a synthesis matrix (see Figure 5) in order to demonstrate how to collect relevant evidence for an argument paper. The matrix can help students organize relevant information from numerous sources into an organized set of notes that they can use to, first, determine a thesis statement, and, second, generate an outline for their paper. The synthesis matrix can also help students to visualize their dependence on source documents and determine whether their research suffers from bias or a lack of perspective; in other words, if a student's research relies too heavily on one author or even one type of source, this will be reflected

in the research matrix and so the student (or a peer or instructor) can consult the matrix to determine whether additional research is necessary in order to gather sufficient evidence.

After I have completed a research matrix with my students, I then model how I would use the information in the matrix to determine a thesis statement and an outline. For most supporting claims in the outline, I reference at least one of the articles from our matrix. This helps students to see how claims are strongest when supported by appropriate sources. Figure 5 demonstrates how a student can adapt an outline from a problem paper research matrix.

At this point, students are now ready to do some independent work. I instruct them to write a draft based on our shared outline. During this drafting phase, we spend class time discussing sentence and paragraph formation including ways to introduce sources and effective topic sentences. In a matter of days, students will have produced a short research paper (about 3-4 pages in length) based on three or four source documents. I conclude the modeling process by discussing a citation page and proper research paper formatting. The finished product builds students' confidence in writing from sources, and it also serves as another diagnostic tool for the instructor. Not only am I able to evaluate students' linguistic skills, but I am also able to determine how well they integrated source material into their writing. I take note of common problems and use this information to guide my lessons in the next unit. In all, I only take the first two weeks of a typical fifteen-week semester course for the practice paper modeling. This leaves about thirteen weeks for students to repeat the process with three different topics.

| Synthesis Matrix for Practice Problem Paper | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| Topic: Online Civility | | | |
| Source | Problem | Effects/Consequences | Other comments |
| Hampson, R., Leinward, D., & Marcus, M. B. (2010, October 2). Suicide shows need for civility, privacy online. USA Today. Retrieved from http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2010-09-30-rutgers-suicide-sex-video_N.htm?loc=interstitialskip | Invasion of privacy, lack of respect Dangers of internet (cyber-bullying and online humiliation) | Harassment, suicide/death (para.6) Stricter laws regarding privacy and internet use? (para. 26) More sensitivity and internet safety training (para. 27) | Raises awareness of online civility problems to mainstream America (esp problems with youth) |
| Shirky, C. (2011, January-February). Cleaning up online conversation. Harvard Business Review. Retrieved from http://hbr.org/web/extras/hbr-agenda-2011/clay-shirky | Bad online interactions, lack of civil conversation | Businesses are troubled by bad public discourse and the potential effect on business image (para. 4) | This article focuses mostly on causes and solutions, with only a bit about the effects |
| Snell, G. F. (2010, February 6). Much ado about commenting. HighTalk. Retrieved from http://hightalk.net/2010/02/10/much-ado-about-commenting/ | Backlash against commenting and Web 2.0 interactions | Many businesses are considering removing commenting features from their sites due to offensive comments from users (para. 5) | Another article from the business perspective on the problem |
| West, R. (2010, Fall). Improving online civility. McKay Today. Retrieved from http://education.byu.edu/news/magazine/civilityonline/ | Online civility has declined with the advancement of Web 2.0 technologies that allow user interaction | Most citizens feel that civil discourse has declined (para. 3) Internet users publish offensive statement behind the "shroud of anonymity" (para. 4) | Also focuses mostly on causes and solutions. Takes the perspective of social responsibility |

| Practice Problem Paper Rough Outline |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Hook (story about online bullying - Hampson et al) b. Identification of issue c. emphasize seriousness of problem d. Thesis statement: The decline of online civility effects not only our online interactions, but has extended to real world interactions and has negative consequences for individuals, businesses, and communities. 2. Interactive, participatory nature of Internet <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Web 2.0 technologies (Shirky, Snell, and West articles) b. Anonymity online (Shirky, Snell, and West articles) 3. Effects on businesses <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Commenting sites (Shirky and Snell) b. Good versus bad web design for social participation 4. Effects on individuals and families <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Spending too much time online distracts from healthy interactions (West) b. Users exposed to uncivil language (Shirky, Snell, West, and Hampton et al) c. Harassment and cyber bullying (Hampton et al) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. suicide and criminal actions 5. Effects on communities <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. New laws and policies (Snell, Hampton et al) b. Increased awareness of the dangers of online use (West, Hampton et al) 6. Conclusion <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Summarize main effects and restate thesis b. Suggest the need to learn more about source of problem in order to solve it |

Figure 5. A research matrix and corresponding outline for a problem paper.

Begin with the Problem Paper

Now that students are familiar with the basic process of writing a research paper, they are ready to experiment with the process in small groups. Each student is randomly assigned one of the course topics and begins locating sources. I usually serve as a coach, helping students conduct library and internet research as modeled earlier. Each student is required to find at least two relevant sources and then add them to the group's shared annotated bibliography. This means that in a group of four students working on the same topic, each student will eventually have access to eight potential sources. I provide students with class time to present summaries of their sources to their group members, and students often use this time to help one another understand the issue and the position that various authors take. I find these group discussions to be a valuable use of class time, not only because it helps foster a positive classroom atmosphere, but it also helps ESL learners practice their oral language skills and gain clarification, through peer or instructor feedback, on the group's source texts.

Each student is then required to select at least five texts from the group's bibliography for analysis in that student's synthesis matrix. After reading and analyzing those sources, students use their matrix to develop their thesis statements and outlines. For the problem paper, a typical thesis statement involves persuading the reader that the chosen issue is a pertinent problem that deserves attention. The outline will contain supporting evidence that indicates why the issue is a concern, and what is currently happening (or will happen in the future) if nothing is done to address the problem (such as the negative effects or consequences).

During the drafting process, I continue to discuss principles of good writing and effective research methods, but I also reserve a portion of each class for small group discussion. Students meet in research teams and discuss sources and arguments with their peers. Inevitably, students diverge in their approach to the assigned topic due to their personal interests, experiences, and

selected sources; however, group collaboration helps students to receive feedback from peers who are studying the same general topic, and so these sessions prove useful in helping students understand the articles they read and improve the quality of their arguments. Other times, I place students into partnerships with representatives from the other topic areas. This provides them with an opportunity to present the most current version of their outline or draft to a classmate who is less familiar with the topic and will help them see whether their explanations are sufficient in communicating their ideas; these discussions are useful in helping students determine whether their explanations, definitions, and arguments are appropriate for the target audience: peer students at the university.

These small group meetings not only provide students with feedback that will influence their writing, but these interactions also help English language learners to practice their oral communication skills. In this way, the CWM helps students develop their presentation and argumentative skills in print and in speech. At the conclusion of the problem paper, students will have written a paper that is about 5-6 pages in length based on research from five or six sources. When students submit their final draft to the instructor, they also make a copy (print or electronic) available to their classmates.

Build Onward with the Causes Paper

With the second assignment, students move onto a new topic. Their classmates who wrote about this topic for the problem paper have left them with several valuable documents: a list of annotated sources and several problem papers. The new group can begin by skimming through their classmates' papers. I then provide class time for students to ask the authors questions about their papers. Readers frequently ask for clarification of the authors' statements, and very quickly authors learn the importance of good writing since their audience is physically in front of them demanding clarification for any confusing aspects of the paper. It is through this negotiation that students learn

that academic writing really is about building upon the work of others and joining the academic conversation (Graff & Birkenstein, 2010).

Once students have a good background on the problem, it is now their responsibility to research the causes of the problem. Just as they did with the problem paper, students are required to contribute at least two entries to the shared group bibliography. Then, each student selects a total of seven or eight sources to synthesize; a few of these sources will probably be references from the problem bibliography but the remainder of the sources will be used to analyze the causes aspect of the paper. A thesis for this paper aims to convince the reader which causes have had the greatest influence in creating the identified problem. In general, the causes paper will include a short summary of the problem and then expound on and evaluate possible causes. The final draft is typically about seven or eight pages long.

With the second iteration of the CWM, I spend even more time discussing proper citation practices. Now that students are potentially citing their classmates' problem papers in their causes papers, they are more attuned to the rights and responsibilities of appropriate referencing. Students are now more attentive to summarizing and paraphrasing strategies, and they are more diligent with quotation procedures since they expect their classmates to quote them correctly as well. At this point, I prepare sample papers, taken from previous student work or gathered from the internet. As a class we evaluate these papers for examples of paraphrasing, summary, and quotation in order to point out good, bad, and best practices. Oftentimes, students learn at least as much from an example of poor source use than they do from a model exemplar. By this point in the CWM, students are learning that research writing is more than just summarizing what others have said; instead, they begin to see that synthesis allows them to create a new argument that builds upon the work of other writers. Because students have the opportunity to discuss their drafts with their peer groups and with those who wrote problem papers on the same topic, they begin to better understand how

academic writing is akin to participating in an academic discussion where authors debate issues through an analysis of evidence.

Complete the Process with the Solutions Paper

The final assignment is the culmination of several iterations of research writing. Students move onto a third research topic and now have a collection of both problem papers and causes papers related to their topic. They also have more than a dozen annotated bibliographic references related to their issue. As with the previous iteration, they first take time to peruse the literature that their predecessors have produced, and they take time to interview the authors. Then, they add to the bibliography through the addition of sources that provide information about potential solutions to the problem. With the inclusion of their own entries, students will select 9-10 sources to help them analyze the issue with their synthesis matrix.

During this reading and analysis stage, students are apt to note questions about their topic that they want to ask their peer predecessors. Fortunately, the matrix can become a powerful tool for peer collaboration, especially in the later iterations of the CWM. Figure 6 displays a work-in-progress research matrix for a student named Samuel. He has begun researching his solutions paper on the topic of Plagiarism among ESL Students. He has indicated that two of his current sources come from his classmates' previous papers (Lin and Hernandez) and three others were sources that classmates had used when writing those assignments. Samuel has also noted that he is still looking for a few more sources since his current sources do not provide enough information about solutions to the problem. His notes (in the far right column) include questions he will ask his classmates when he goes to class next week. He hopes that they will be able to provide him with the suggestions for additional sources. He may also learn of a few sources from peers who are likewise writing a solutions paper on this topic. As a graphic organizer, not only does the research matrix help Samuel

to record his reading notes, but it also helps him know what information he needs to ask his classmates during collaborative sessions.

The thesis statement for a solutions paper will likely argue that one solution (or a combination of solutions) is the best resolution to the identified problem. The paper will include a summary of the problem and an explanation of its primary causes, but the bulk of the assignment will focus on evaluating possible solutions and making a final recommendation that addresses the problem that was first introduced in a classmate's paper, several weeks ago. The final draft of the solutions paper is typically about 9-10 pages in length.

| Synthesis Matrix for Samuel's Solution Paper | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| Topic: Plagiarism in ESL Writing | | | | |
| Thesis statement: Punishment is not an effective way to stop plagiarism among ESL students; instead, administrators and instructors need to do a better job of teaching students how to properly use source materials. | | | | |
| Source | Why is this a problem? | What are the causes? | What are the solutions? | Other comments |
| Crane (2007) *This was one of Ping's sources | Students are getting expelled | Bad references | Expulsion, but not effective since it's not stopping the rate of plagiarism | This is not a good solution. Does Ping read about any better solutions? |
| Heller (2008) *I got this source from Danny's paper | Students are failing classes; teachers are frustrated | Copied passages and plagiarism misunderstandings | Failing grades – but just leaves everyone with a bad attitude | Also a bad solution. Does Danny have any other ideas? |
| Lin (2011) *This is Ping's Problem Paper | Students fail, get expelled, drop out | --- | --- | I should ask Ping more about her paper. |
| Hernandez (2011) *This is Danny's Problem Paper | Percentage of ESL students in US universities is increasing, so plagiarism will increase unless problem is solved | Different expectations between students and professors about what is acceptable | --- | I need to ask Danny more about these "expectations." What kind of things did they not agree about? |
| Naimova (2009) *This article came from Rini's Causes Paper | --- | Linguistic limitations (poor paraphrasing) and cultural differences (citation rules) | Better education. More practice. Discuss good and bad examples | Ask Rini how she found this article. Maybe she can help me find at least one more article. |

Figure 6. A work-in-progress research matrix.

By this point in the CWM, students have repeated the research process multiple times. However, the change in topic and the added complexity of each iteration keeps students engaged and motivated to finish the final paper. Additionally, because they have used the same kinds of academic language (i.e., verbs to introduce sources, and transition and summary phrases) with all three iterations, they have had many opportunities to diagnose, develop, and demonstrate their growing command of academic English in a variety of topic areas. Students have also increased their ability to use effective research writing strategies, and they have learned how to tackle a large research assignment by approaching it as a series of steps or subskills. I always find it encouraging to see that students, who, at the beginning of the course, were intimidated at the prospect of writing ten-page research paper, have the confidence and the skill to write a complex research paper from sources.

Moreover, the CMW can effect valuable changes in student ability due to the model's collaborative nature. I have found that students can improve their ability to write convincing and clear arguments thanks to the feedback of peers who will challenge weak evidence or vague statements. Additionally, students will improve their ability to communicate orally, given that the CMW uses class time for group discussion and author-reader interviews. Writers will gain experience defending their work in spoken English as they discuss their sources and their own papers. The collaboration also helps students to better conceptualize the goal of academic and research writing: shared knowledge. As students work in subsequent research groups, they pass on their research to peer groups who build on that work and eventually offer solutions to the original research problems. In the CMW, collaboration is not simply a convenient technique to make learning more enjoyable; rather, it is an essential component to developing better writing and better writers.

Solicit Feedback from Students

Throughout the CWM, but especially at the end of the process, instructors should encourage their students to share their thoughts about the learning process. Students should be encouraged to evaluate the strategies that their instructor models, and they should decide which techniques work best for them. I let my students know that they do not have to adopt any strategy that they do not like; however, I require them to employ my suggested strategies throughout the semester in order to determine their effectiveness. Then, if they still do not like those strategies at the end of the semester, they never have to use them again.

At the same time, I respect students' opinions and have improved the quality of the CWM based on student feedback - both the positive and the negative. For example, one year, student midterm feedback helped me realize that students loved vocabulary building exercises (and they wanted more of them), but students also let me know that they would like their peers' papers posted to a shared internet folder so that they could access the files from their own computers outside of class time. I was able to adapt the remainder of the semester (and subsequent offerings of the course) to this feedback and tailor class sessions to my students' interest, needs, and goals. As instructors seek out the opinions of their students, not only do they show that they value their students' experiences, but they also model good metacognitive reflection by showing the importance of continually working towards improving an academic process - just as students should work to refine their individual research writing process. Moreover, this teaching attitude demonstrates to learners that collaboration between students and instructor is an important factor for a healthy learning community.

Collaborative Activities for use with the Cumulative Writing Model

Peer review and group discussion are common collaborative activities for the writing classroom, and when employed effectively, they can be powerful tools in helping writers hone their skills (Feagin, Strenski, & Singer, 2005; Lundstrom & Baker, 2009). I often employ peer review activities during the CWM process along with many other collaborative classroom activities. The following are a list of activities that help build a sense of cooperation among writers. Most of these activities can be used at various stages of the CWM.

Speed-interviews

This activity, inspired by speed-dating, encourages students to share oral drafts of their writing with their peers. Students are formed into pairs and are usually given a set of questions to help them learn about their peer's research topic. Students are given a time limit to interview one another (often just a few minutes each), and then students rotate into new partnerships. The process is repeated several times which helps writers to gain multiple perspectives on their work while also better refining their explanations with each new partnership. As students are interviewed, they discover which aspects of their paper need greater clarification or support. For example, interviewers may ask writers why they should care about their partner's research, and this encourages writers to return to their drafts, post-interview, to improve their relevancy. Likewise, an interviewer may be confused by the terminology in a writer's explanation, prompting the author to better define terms. The purpose of speed-interviews is to help writers evaluate their current draft by orally defending their composition to a peer.

Vocabulary Games

As Graff and Birkenstein (2010) point out in their guide for first-year writing students, the language of academic argument is foreign even for native speakers of a language. This is especially

true for ESL writers who conduct research writing; they benefit from explicit instruction of academic vocabulary and phrases (Coxhead, 2000). Vocabulary games can be a great way to review and enhance vocabulary learning. In addition to playing charades, drawing/pictionary, circumlocution, and other word guessing games, my students also enjoy playing a written form of the telephone game. In this pass-along writing game (McCollum, 2009), students are required to write a sentence using target words or phrases from a vocabulary list. Then, the paper is passed on to a peer who must draw a quick image to represent the written statement. The second student folds back the original sentence, and passes the drawing on to a third student who must create a new sentence (using target words or structures) based on the previous student's drawing. Play continues in this manner for 3-5 iterations at which point students reveal all sentences and drawings to see whether the meaning of the original sentence was preserved or altered through the process. This writing game employs multiple social vocabulary learning strategies as highlighted by Pavicic Takac (2008) which can help writers expand and retain academic words.

Online Resource Sharing

One of the challenges of research writing is time spent on source finding. As part of the CWM, I try to reduce the amount of time students spend locating sources so that they can increase the amount of time spent writing and revising. By having students work in topic groups, they can also pool source material. At the start of a unit, I require students to gather two relevant sources for their topic and create a detailed annotated bibliography. Then, students post their bibliography to a shared folder on a school server or a class wiki. Once all students in the topic group post their two citations, each participant has numerous relevant sources in a fraction of the time it would take to find them without the help of the group. Moreover, the sharing of these sources encourages students to choose high quality articles since they know that their group members will evaluate and critique those selections. The shared sources also help with peer review activities, since students can

discuss the articles with their group and seek clarification from others who have read the same articles. Additionally, once the class has moved onto subsequent phases of the CWM, writers can refer to the repository of shared sources to help them learn about their newly assigned topic.

Reading Model Papers

In a writing class, students often need to develop both their micro-language (vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics) and their macro-language (rhetorical patterns, organizational techniques, transitions). Sometimes it can be difficult for students to make the connection between the micro-language lessons and large writing assignments. In order to help students bridge this gap, instructors can provide students with model papers that exemplify the structures, styles, and patterns that students are required to produce. Instructors can assign groups to read through these exemplars and locate examples of the types of micro- and macro-language structures that are being studied. As students read these model papers, we see how other writers employ language to solve rhetorical tasks. They can then employ those structures in their own writing. This approach is supported by the work of Keck (2006) and Moody (2007) who indicate that the reading of model assignments helps students, instructors, and even administrators to clarify curricular standards and improve expectations about the quality of writing necessary for successful task completion.

Practice-rating Benchmarks

An extension of reading model papers is providing students with the opportunity to evaluate those peer-level models according to a relevant rubric or grading scheme. Although a rubric is an important element to a standards setting program (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010), even a well-written writing rubric can be ambiguous to interpret and apply without the help of benchmarks (McTighe & O'Connor, 2005). By providing students with the opportunity to read and then practice-rate various example papers (ranging in quality from poor to excellent), instructors are

encouraging students to discuss how the rubric is represented in actual papers. In their small groups, students teach one another to recognize the strengths and weaknesses of these anchor papers, and then can, very quickly, become accurate at assigning the appropriate rating to a sample paper. The purpose of practice-rating is to help students to internalize the qualities of the grading rubric, so that they become better aware of course expectations. As a result, students are in a better position to improve their own writing, and they are also more accurate in assessing the quality of their own writing and thus anticipating the grade they will receive for their own work. Practice-rating demystifies the grading process, and helps students to feel more confident in both the scoring rubric and in their own ability to achieve a desired grade.

Live Writing with Feedback

The more that students will be required to write from source material, the more feedback they will need on their paraphrasing, summarizing, and quoting skills. Although most instructors already provide written feedback on student drafts, I have found that students respond well to immediate oral feedback on live writing exercises in the classroom. For this activity, each student finds a space at one of the classroom chalkboards (or students can take turns, if board space is limited). In step one, students write a sentence or paragraph related to their research topic such as a definition or explanation, and then add their name and year to the statement in simple citation format (such as *written by Shuai Li, 2011*). In step two, students rotate one space along the board so that they are facing a peer's writing. Then, depending on the desired skill, students are instructed to paraphrase, summarize, or quote the statement in front of them, making sure to properly cite the original author. Upon students' completion of the task, I then read aloud each citation with the class and discuss strengths and weaknesses. For example, the students and I assess whether a summary is concise enough, whether a quotation is properly punctuated, or whether a paraphrase is in danger of plagiarizing the original author. Variations on this activity include requiring writers to perform

additional rhetorical tasks such as agreeing or disagreeing with the original statement. In this way, students better develop not only their language skills, but are also gaining experience in building an academic, written conversation. These written conversations are especially effective when the original authors orally dispute the way in which their statements are used by the subsequent writer, which then encourages improved clarification on behalf of both the original author and the source user. Live writing activities can help students to better compose their own ideas and to use the words of others more responsibly. Furthermore, this collaborative activity helps students to feel more comfortable sharing their writing with others, since both classmates and the instructor can see the students' live writing and provide immediate feedback on their use of language.

Adaptations of the Cumulative Writing Model

Every institution has particular goals for its composition courses. Teachers are encouraged to select aspects of the CWM that would benefit their students, and then to adapt those techniques to meet the expectations of their programs. For example, although I use a problem-solution paper with my students, the CWM could function equally well with a variety of different writing genres. The key is to find a logical way to break the final paper's structure into a few smaller papers so that students can practice with the sub-structure before writing the final paper. Also, although I have developed the CWM with ESL learners in mind, the model may prove just as effective with other groups for whom it would be useful to break down a complex writing task in smaller, cumulative stages.

Whatever the specific needs, the key to successful implementation of the CWM is to reduce the cognitive demands on students by helping them to learn the aspects of composition that instructors feel are most important through successive iterations of increasingly complex writing

tasks. As teachers model effective strategies, students will see how a once seemingly daunting task is actually within their capabilities as they develop their writing skills through cumulative assignments.

Better Writing and Better Writers through the CWM

The CWM can be an effective model for writing pedagogy for numerous reasons. This approach lessens the emphasis on learning new genres of writing, and instead allows more time for language instruction and for group collaboration. The greater attention to vocabulary and structures makes this model particularly useful for ESL populations who may need additional exposure to the forms and conventions of academic English. Instead of moving from one writing style to another, in the CWM, students can experiment and receive feedback on their ability to employ effective research writing language. Additionally, the collaborative nature of the model contributes to oral language development as well: by working in groups and discussing their sources and papers, students can improve their ability to explain and defend their arguments in speech and conversation.

The collaborative aspect to the model helps students to understand how academic research is a continuous progression of learning, sharing, and building upon the work of others. As students read the work of their peers, as source material for subsequent assignments, they carry out discussions about meaning, purpose, and the implications that previous texts have on future assignments. This approach helps students to better conceptualize the nature of academic research: participation in academic (written) conversations (Graff & Birkenstein, 2010). This happens as students see how a topic develops over the course of a semester from problem paper, to causes paper, and finally solutions paper with student collaboration and interaction at each step of the process. As learners work together, they improve not only their written assignments, but they also become better writers.

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OVERALL DISCUSSION

This dissertation has focused on exploring the challenges associated with writing from sources. I first became interested in this issue as a result of my experiences with plagiarism in the writing of EAP students. I wanted to understand why students' writing contained improperly cited sources, poorly paraphrasing, and verbatim copying from source texts. Because source writing is such a crucial aspect of university education in North America, I could not simply remove reading-writing assignments from the EAP program curriculum. I needed to find a solution that would help students, teachers, and my fellow program administrators to avoid plagiarism-related problems in academic writing.

I began to explore the issue from a research perspective, from an administrative stance, and through the lens of classroom practice, and I discovered the complex nature of unintentional plagiarism by ESL writers. I began to question my classroom practices, our institutional policies, and even my understanding of language acquisition. By approaching the issue from multiple perspectives, I was able to better understand not only the causes associated with unintentional plagiarism, but I was also able to better evaluate possible solutions to the problem.

Article 1 summarizes my experiences approaching the issue from the perspective of an applied linguistics researcher. I analyzed studies that dealt with EAP programs, and I synthesized their findings into an article that clarified the problem and its primary causes. I learned that the definition of plagiarism itself is complex and, I found that most applied linguistic researchers recommend making a distinction between intentional and unintentional plagiarism when deciding what actions to take in response to plagiarism (Acension-Delaney, 2008; Wette, 2010). In fact, in many cases, unintentional plagiarism is better defined as patchwriting and as a misuse of sources rather than an act of academic dishonesty (Howard et al., 2010; Schuemann, 2008). I learned that problems with source writing are a result of both cultural and linguistic limitations due to students'

unfamiliarity with the language and conventions of English-medium university study (Abasi & Akbari, 2008; Hyland, 2009).

Drawing from the work of experts, I also developed a list of relevant reading and writing subskills that are essential when writing from sources. I learned that even though many EAP students have basic reading and writing ability, those skills alone are insufficient when learners are faced with the task of responding to source material (Ascension-Delaney, 2008; Singh, 2006). In such cases, students must gain proficiency in advanced literacy skills that allow them to analyze and synthesize assigned readings with students' own ideas in order to create a dynamic work that balances the source material with the author's own writing (Oulette, 2008). In this article, I also compiled recommendations from EAP experts on how instructors and administrators can use integrated reading-writing tasks more effectively in classroom and testing contexts.

In Article 2, I explained what I learned about this issue from the perspective of a program administrator. I summarized a rater training evaluation that I conducted in my role as an EAP writing coordinator. The results of the study revealed many unexpected, but welcomed, insights into the role of instructional policy and practice in relation to source writing.

Teacher-raters expressed a desire to have better access to benchmark portfolios which resulted in program-wide discussions about plagiarism and patchwriting standards. These discussions helped to clarify administrative and classroom policies on source writing quality. Such discussions can reduce disparity in writing standards among separate writing classes and between the standards of classroom grading and program-wide, end-of-semester portfolio grading. Teachers also lobbied for permission to use benchmark portfolios in the classroom with their students. These activities proved successful in that students were able to self-assess their own writing, and instructors were better able to define both good and poor examples of effective source writing using the benchmarks. The use of model papers in this way is recommended by experts including Moody

(2007). As students and teachers discussed the quality of model papers and related those examples to program rubrics, plagiarism moved from being an abstract, academic concept to being an issue that students could understand. As such, instructors were better able to respond to questions about attribution and citation thanks to the benchmark samples.

The final article in this series consolidates the research from Articles 1 and 2 into a practical application. I wanted to apply the concepts of the literature review and program evaluation into a useful curriculum for composition instructors. Using the reading findings from the two previous articles, along with my own classroom teaching experiences, and the advice of peer teachers, I presented the Cumulative Writing Model (CWM) for EAP writing classes. This model attempts to address the concerns raised by researchers who assert that plagiarism and patchwriting are a result of L2 writers' linguistic and cultural limitations. The CWM incorporates the recommendations presented in the two previous articles by providing students with plenty of opportunities to practice source writing while receiving continuous formative feedback on their progress.

This model addresses some of the common concerns of university-level writing programs, and instead focuses learner activity on recursive assignments that increase in complexity. Students begin with simplified research writing, but slowly progress towards complex papers that seem far less daunting when approached step-by-step. The CWM also involves a great deal of collaboration and discussion among students and their instructor in order to help students diagnose and improve the specific subskills that they need in order to complete source writing tasks. In order to foster discussion about citation standards and proper use of source material, teachers introduce sample papers, and students share their work with one another in order to receive feedback on how effectively they are able to synthesize source texts into their arguments. This approach supports the recommendations by Wette (2010), Plakans (2008) and others who argue that explicit instruction in

reading-to-write subskills is essential to EAP student success with such tasks both in the composition classroom and beyond as students apply these skills in content courses.

These three articles address the issue of EAP source writing as well as exemplify the partnership that can exist between language teaching researchers, administrators, and instructors. As all three groups of educators cooperate to clarify and solve pedagogical problems, their combined perspectives help develop solutions that are more theoretically sound, more institutionally cohesive, and better tailored to the classroom than the solutions that any single group could develop on its own (Everton, Gallton, & Pell, 2002). It is my hope that this dissertation accomplishes this goal and that these three articles will help EAP professionals in research, administrative, and teaching roles to better understand and address the challenges that EAP students face when writing from sources.

As a whole, this dissertation serves to better clarify the cause of plagiarism and source misuse among EAP students. It examines the concept of plagiarism and the reasons applied linguists offer for pervasiveness of plagiarism among non-native English writers compared to their native counterparts. Rather than view plagiarism as an act of academic dishonesty, I propose that educators learn more about the process and intent of their students in order to determine whether the suspected plagiarism is actually patchwriting, a valid and common practice in second language writing development (Howard et al., 2010).

In order to help address the problem of plagiarism and patchwriting, I have offered two major solutions. The first involved approaching the issues from an administrative standpoint; in Article 2 I explained how writing programs need to engage in a dialogue between teachers, administrators, and students regarding the appropriate use of sources in academic writing. These discussions need to be accompanied by concrete models of both effective and poor samples of student writing. When these stakeholder groups discuss these examples, plagiarism becomes less

abstract and more mutually understood so that institutions can achieve consensus on the appropriate use of sources in academic writing.

The second solution to the problem highlighted in this dissertation came in the form of an instructional plan to meeting the linguistic and cultural needs of EAP writers. The instructional model included in Article 3 addresses many of the concerns raised in Articles 1 and 2; namely, that students struggled to locate appropriate source material, that they often could not understand source texts, that they did not get enough opportunities to focus on their language development, and that they did not understand how or did not feel responsible to cite sources properly. Using the instructional model proposed in this dissertation, writing teachers can develop a classroom environment and routine that helps students develop the cultural and linguistic awareness that is required for effective source writing.

Readers are encouraged to examine their own educational contexts involving academic writers in order determine the degree to which these issues and recommendation are relevant to their situation. It should be emphasized that this study has been limited to university-level English as a second language learners, and so many of the writing tasks types may be specific to that population. However, it is also possible, as pointed out by Howard et al. (2010) and Hyland (2009), even native-English writers grapple with the challenges of writing from sources, so many of these concepts may be relevant for other academic writing populations. I hope that other researchers can further examine how my proposed solutions can positively influence programs, teachers, and most importantly, student writers.

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