1 *Second language writing in the twentieth century: A situated historical perspective*

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Existing historical accounts of studies in second language (L2) writing, which began to appear in the 1990s, usually begin with the 1960s and catalogue pedagogical approaches or emphases (e.g., Leki, 1992; Raimes, 1991; Silva, 1990).[1] It is not historically insignificant that many researchers see the 1960s as the beginning of the discipline, that they focus on pedagogical approaches or emphases, and that historical accounts began to appear in the 1990s because these accounts embody a set of assumptions about the disciplinary and epistemological status of second language writing. That is, these accounts tend to position second language writing as a subfield of second language studies and present the primary responsibility of second language writing researchers as the development of pedagogical knowledge in the service of advancing the field. Yet, a broader view of the history seems to suggest the limitations of these assumptions. Although it is true that writing issues began to attract serious attention from L2 specialists only in the 1960s, historical evidence suggests that L2 writing instruction did not suddenly become an issue in the 1960s (Matsuda, 1999). Furthermore, the rise of historical consciousness in the early 1990s seems to indicate that the nature of second language writing studies began to change around that time.

My goal in this chapter is to provide an understanding of the dynamics of the field of second language writing by considering its development from a broader, interdisciplinary perspective. Specifically, I will be examining how this academic specialty has been shaped by the interdisciplinary relationship between composition studies and second language studies. Understanding the historical context of the field is important both for researchers and teachers because our theoretical and pedagogical practices are always historically situated. Without knowing the context in which certain theories or pedagogical strategies developed, we will not be able to apply them or modify them in other contexts or in light of new theoretical insights. Without an understanding of the history, we may continue to use pedagogical strategies that are no longer appropriate for the changing student population or dismiss some useful ideas or practices for the wrong reasons. In other words, this historical chapter tries to enhance second language writing

teachers' understanding of the existing theoretical and pedagogical insights.

The genesis of second language writing issues

Writing was neglected in the early years of second language studies possibly because of the dominance of the audiolingual approach in the mid twentieth century. As I have argued elsewhere (Matsuda, 2001), however, the neglect of writing in second language studies goes even further back, namely, to the rise of applied linguistics in the late nineteenth century. Early applied linguists of that era sought to apply, quite literally, the findings of scientific linguistics – which has until fairly recently focused almost exclusively on spoken language – in the realm of language teaching. Reacting against the perceived dominance of "writing" in L2 learning (i.e., literary texts in such "dead" languages as Latin), the intellectual leaders of early applied linguistics in Europe – most notably, phoneticians Henry Sweet (1899/1964) and Paul Passy (1929) – argued that phonetics should be the basis of both theoretical and practical studies of language (i.e., linguistics *and* applied linguistics) and that the spoken form of language should take precedence over the written form. For the most advanced language learners, the use of free composition – or the production of extended written discourse by reproducing previously learned materials – was recommended as a more desirable alternative to then-traditional translation exercises. However, priority was given to spoken language because writing was defined merely as an orthographic representation of speech and because letter writing was considered to be the highest literacy need for most people.

The view of language teaching as an application of scientific descriptive linguistics – with a strong emphasis on the primacy of spoken language – became influential in many parts of the world. For this reason, writing did not become an important component of L2 teaching until fairly recently. The neglect of written language was most conspicuous in the United States between the 1940s and the 1960s, when the view of language as speech was institutionalized through the work of Leonard Bloomfield and Charles C. Fries.

The rise of L2 studies in U.S. higher education

Although U.S. higher education institutions began to enroll a significant number of international English as a second language (ESL) students starting in the late nineteenth century, the teaching of ESL did not receive serious attention until the 1940s. At this time, the potential threat of

totalitarianism coming into Latin American countries made the teaching of English to people from those nations a matter of national security for the United States, especially given their geographic proximity. To provide English instruction and develop pedagogical materials for those Spanish-speaking students, the English Language Institute (ELI), the first intensive language program of its kind, was created at the University of Michigan in 1941 with Charles C. Fries as its director. After World War II, the ELI expanded its scope to provide instruction for international students from other countries.

The curriculum at the Michigan ELI reflected the influence of Sweet's work as well as Fries's strong commitment to the application of descriptive linguistics (Allen, 1973). The production of extended written discourse was not one of the instructional goals of the ELI because Fries (1945), like Sweet, assumed that students would be able to write once they mastered the structure and sounds of a language. Although written script was sometimes used, it was usually to facilitate the learning of spoken language through the use of printed materials developed at the ELI. The ELI also provided professional preparation in the teaching of ESL, contributing to the creation of intensive English programs across the nation (modeled on the ELI) as well as the professionalization of the field of *teaching* ESL (hence TESL) in the United States and abroad. The teaching of writing, however, was not a significant part of the ESL teacher's preparation at least until the late 1950s.

In the context of foreign language teaching, this development was paralleled by the work of Leonard Bloomfield. Because of his strong commitment to the application of linguistics to the teaching of language – which was inspired by the work of Sweet (1899/1964) and Otto Jespersen (1904), among others – his pedagogy, which he had begun to develop as early as 1914, focused exclusively on spoken language. Parallel to these developments, reading had been the primary goal of instruction in the foreign language teaching community since the early twentieth century. Only in the 1940s was Bloomfield's *Outline Guide for the Practical Study of Foreign Language* (1942) adopted by the Intensive Language Program of the American Council of Learned Societies as well as by the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP).

Later, the ASTP Method – which was informed by Bloomfield's pedagogical work – and Fries's oral approach were consolidated to form what came to be known as the audiolingual approach; this became influential in both ESL and foreign language classrooms. However, the presence of an increasing number of international ESL students in higher education and required college composition courses led to the emergence of instruction in second language writing in U.S. higher education institutions.[2]

L2 issues in English departments

In English departments, which had been offering required first-year composition courses since the late nineteenth century, L2 writing instruction first became a serious concern. After World War II (1939–1945), the number of international students in the United States began to increase rapidly, especially at research institutions. Between 1940 and 1950, the number rose from 6,570 to 29,813 (Institute of International Education, 1961). No longer able to ignore the presence of non-native speakers, teachers and administrators of composition began to create special sections of freshman English courses. Although some institutions labeled these courses remedial, others considered them equivalent to composition courses required of native-English speakers and awarded ESL students college credit for such courses.

Reflecting the increasing recognition of the instructional problem, L2 writing instruction became a significant issue at annual meetings of the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC), which was established in 1949 as the primary professional forum at which teachers and scholars gathered to discuss the field. During the 1950s, ESL panels and workshops at CCCC were attended by composition teachers as well as ESL teachers. Many second language specialists at CCCC recommended the use of materials developed at the Michigan ELI because no other available textbooks for L2 learners were informed by linguistic perspectives. Although these materials were intended for the teaching of spoken language in intensive programs, they were targeted to L2 students, in contrast to available composition textbooks that had been developed for L1 students.

In the late 1950s, concern with L2 writing issues began to shift gradually from composition studies to second language studies. The professionalization of second language teachers, prompted by the creation of the Michigan ELI and other teacher preparation programs, led ESL specialists to argue that L2 students should be taught only by trained specialists (now that such training was available). As a result, many composition specialists of the time lost interest in ESL issues. By the mid-1960s, attendance at ESL sessions of CCCC had become so small that at the 1966 meeting the discouraged members of the ESL workshop decided not to meet there again. In the same year, a new organization was founded to serve the needs and interests of L2 specialists in general: TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages). Consequently, writing issues were divided into L1 and L2 components, and L2 writing issues came to be situated almost exclusively in second language studies – or more specifically, in the area of Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL). Thus, the *disciplinary division of labor* between composition studies and second language studies was firmly established.[3]

Second language writing as a subdiscipline of TESL

With the continuing increase of international students in U.S. higher education and the creation of the disciplinary division of labor between L1 and L2 composition, preparing international ESL students for required first-year composition courses became an important responsibility for ESL teachers in intensive English programs, which were usually external to college curricula.[4] In other words, the intensive English program began to assume a remedial role in relation to the composition program. When second language writing instruction became part of ESL programs in the early 1960s, however, ESL teachers were not specifically prepared for the new responsibility because their professional preparation, if any, focused almost exclusively on teaching the spoken language. It was clear to many that a pedagogy in second language writing was needed for intermediate ESL students who had completed the oral component of the program but who were yet not prepared for first-year composition courses. For this reason, second language writing emerged as a "subdiscipline" (Ferris & Hedgcock, 1998, p. 5) of TESL with a strong pedagogical emphasis. A number of pedagogical approaches were proposed, each representing a different conception of the nature of writing,[5] several of which are discussed briefly.

Writing as sentence-level structure

In response to the gap between the need to prepare ESL students for free composition – or the production of "an original discourse . . . about some given subject matter" (Erazmus, 1960, p. 25) – and the lack of writing pedagogy, ESL specialists attempted to extend the application of existing principles of second language pedagogy (i.e., the oral approach and the audiolingual approach) to the teaching of second language writing. Edward Erazmus, who at the time was a staff member of the Michigan ELI, attempted to reintroduce the use of free composition exercises as a way of developing fluency in writing. He also suggested the application of Kenneth Pike's tagmemics as an invention heuristic, and this later became influential in the field of composition studies. However, arguments for free composition exercises were dismissed as "naive traditional views" by those who, from the perspective of contrastive linguistics and a behavioral theory of learning, believed that "any free, random, hit-or-miss activity" should be "eliminated wherever possible, so that errors arising from the native-to-target language transfer can be avoided" (Pincas, 1962, p. 185). Instead, the use of controlled composition, an approach that focused on sentence-level structure, was proposed. Informed by a behavioral, habit-formation theory of learning, controlled composition consisted of combining and substitution exercises that were designed to

facilitate the learning of sentence structures by providing students with "no freedom to make mistakes" (Pincas, 1982, p. 91).

The limitation of controlled composition soon became clear, however, because sentence-level grammar exercises did not help students to produce original sentences, let alone free composition. For this reason, the use of guided composition, which provided less rigid structural guidance, was devised. In its broadest conception, guided composition "includes any writing for which students are given assistance such as a model to follow, a plan or outline to expand from, a partly-written version with indications of how to complete it, or pictures that show a new subject to write about in the same way as something that has been read" (Pincas, 1982, p. 102). Despite some efforts to provide empirical support for fluency over accuracy (e.g., Brière, 1966), a consensus seemed to have emerged that "composing – writing beyond the sentence – must be guided or controlled" (Slager, 1966, p. 77). Although the teaching of sentence-level structure continues to be a concern in many ESL writing classrooms, its place in writing pedagogy has been a controversial issue (see Ferris, 1999; Truscott, 1996, 1999).

Writing as discourse-level structure

Neither controlled nor guided composition provided adequate preparation for free composition, however, because both focused almost exclusively on sentence-level structures. Observing the discrepancy between students' ability to produce grammatically correct sentences and the ability to achieve "logical organization" as judged by native English speaking (NES) readers, Robert B. Kaplan (1966) argued that the problem stemmed from the transfer of L1 structures beyond the sentence level. He was especially influenced by composition specialist Francis Christensen, whose "Generative Rhetoric of the Paragraph" (1965) extended the analysis of linguistic structure to the level of the paragraph. Drawing on the principles of contrastive analysis and the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, Kaplan suggested that paragraph structures, like sentence structures, were language and culture specific, a founding principle of the field of contrastive rhetoric (discussed more fully in Chapter 9, this volume, by Connor). Kaplan's suggestion led to a realization that "writing is much more than an orthographic symbolization of speech; it is, most importantly, a *purposeful selection and organization of experience*" (Arapoff, 1967, p. 33).

The emphasis on "rhetoric," narrowly defined as the organizational structure, came to be conceived of as an intermediate step between controlled or guided exercises at the sentence level and free composition at the other extreme. In the 1980s, the development of discourse analysis and text linguistics in the United States and Europe provided various

theoretical and methodological frameworks for investigating written discourse systematically, and researchers began to examine structures of written discourse in various languages and their possible influences on L2 texts. Alternative explanations for L2 textual structures were also explored, and the notion of contrastive rhetoric came to be defined less deterministically. In recent years, contrastive rhetoric research has evolved into a field of research of its own, encompassing more than just the organizational structure of written discourse (see Connor, 1996, Chapter 9 this volume; Panetta, 2001). Yet implications of contrastive rhetoric research in the context of the second language writing classroom remain a point of contention (see Kubota, 1998; Leki, 1991; Matsuda, 1997).

Writing as process

Until well into the 1970s, the teaching of second language writing focused mostly on the features of L2 written text – orthography, sentence-level structure, and discourse-level structure – and the way L2 student texts deviated from the L1 norm. In the late 1970s and the 1980s, however, a number of developments in both composition studies and second language studies prompted second language writing teachers and researchers to consider factors other than properties of the texts themselves. In composition studies, the interest had begun to shift from textual features to the *process* of writing itself, with researchers from various philosophical and methodological orientations investigating the processes underlying the production of written discourse (e.g., Emig, 1971; Flower & Hayes, 1981).[6]

The notion of writing as process was introduced to L2 studies by Vivian Zamel (1976), who argued that advanced L2 writers are similar to L1 writers and can benefit from instruction emphasizing the process of writing. Rather than the view of writing as a reproduction of previously learned syntactic or discourse structures, the process-based approach emphasized the view of writing as a process of developing organization as well as meaning. Invention strategies, multiple drafts, and formative feedback – both by the teacher and by peers – also became important parts of writing instruction in many L2 writing classrooms. Although some L2 teachers – following Hairston (1982) and others in composition studies – enthusiastically promoted the process-based approach, characterizing its arrival as a paradigm shift (e.g., Raimes, 1983b), others warned against its uncritical acceptance (e.g., Horowitz, 1986; Susser, 1994). The applicability in the L2 context of pedagogical practices that had been developed for L1 writers also came to be questioned, and researchers began to examine L2 writing processes to see how they were similar to *and* different from L1 processes (for overviews

of L2 writing process research, see Krapels, 1990; Sasaki, 2000; Silva, 1993).

Writing as language use in context

The introduction of writing as process was paralleled by a development in second language studies – that is, English for Specific Purposes – which considered language and writing in the specific context of their use (see Johns & Dudley-Evans, 1991) as well as the development of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) (see Jordan, 1997), a major emphasis prompted by an increase of composition courses designed specifically for international ESL students in English-dominant countries. This movement was also fueled by the demand for writing instruction for a growing number of non-native English-speaking graduate students, particularly in the United States.

If instruction that was specific to the context of language use was to be provided, an understanding of the various contexts of writing first had to be developed. For this reason, EAP researchers began to describe various aspects of writing in relation to their specific context of use, including features of academic genre (for a review, see Johns, Chapter 8 this volume) and academic writing needs as well as tasks that are required in courses across the discipline. The reconceptualization of errors in light of their effects on a native English speaking academic audience has also taken place as part of this focus (see Frodesen & Holten, Chapter 6 this volume). As a result of these developments, ESL writing courses at many institutions were reconceived as preparation for writing in academic discourse communities rather than as remediation for required composition courses, although the ability of language teachers to provide domain-specific language instruction has been questioned by some teachers (see Spack, 1988).

The limitations of pedagogical focus

These pedagogical approaches, which were based on differing conceptions of writing, emphasize different aspects of second language writing, but they are by no means mutually exclusive. As Raimes (1983a) writes, few teachers are "so devoted to one approach as to exclude all others" (p. 11). Yet in the professional literature, these approaches have often been pitted against one another, resulting in "a rather unproductive approach cycle" that did not "encourage consensus on important issues, preservation of legitimate insights, synthesis of a body of knowledge, or principled evaluation of approaches" (Silva, 1990, p. 18). Further aggravating the situation was the lack of professional preparation opportunities in the teaching of L2 writing. Until fairly recently,

few post-baccalaureate professional preparation programs in TESL or related fields offered a course in second language writing. With few opportunities for professional preparation, teachers of L2 writing often relied on textbooks as their source of pedagogical knowledge coupled with their own classroom experience for most of their preparation in the field. Thus, textbooks and teacher "lore" (North, 1987) were their preparation. However, as Raimes (1986) has pointed out, "new theories and approaches are . . . often slow to find their way into practice" because of the influence of "the oppositions in the field" as well as "publishing and marketing demands" (p. 157).

ESL writing issues in composition studies in North America

While ESL writing pedagogy and research flourished in second language studies, ESL writing issues were conspicuously absent from composition studies for many years because of the disciplinary division of labor (Matsuda, 1998, 1999). Although there were some exceptions, ESL concerns were virtually nonexistent in composition studies between the mid 1960s and the late 1970s. In the meantime, the ESL student population in U.S. higher education continued to grow, as reflected in the annual Open Doors Reports issued by the Institute of International Education. The number of ESL writers was further increased by the advent of open admissions policies in the 1960s and the 1970s, which brought in numbers of immigrant ESL students who had previously been excluded from higher education.

Although the quantity of intensive English programs was also increasing, composition instructors in general continued to face the challenge of working with ESL writers because the number of institutions enrolling international ESL students far outnumbered those that offered special ESL programs. Even when ESL programs were available, L2 writers' "written accent" – L2 textual features that deviated markedly from L1 texts – would not often disappear after a few months of instruction. As a result, many international ESL students seeking a baccalaureate degree – in many cases after completing intensive language courses – were placed in basic writing courses before becoming eligible to enroll in required first-year composition courses.

The field of basic writing,[7] a subfield of composition studies, emerged in the 1970s as a result of open admissions policies at many urban institutions – most notably, the City University of New York (CUNY) – and brought a significant number of traditionally excluded groups of students to U.S. higher education. Although basic writing was concerned with all students who were enrolled in basic writing courses, its primary

focus was "native-born" rather than "foreign-born" students because of the differing needs of the two groups. Some institutions, such as Hunter College, created separate courses for NES basic writers and ESL students, but many institutions, because of the lack of resources, placed ESL writers into basic writing courses that were taught by teachers with little or no preparation in working with ESL writers. Thus, the placement of ESL writers in basic writing classes became a point of contention. Many argued that ESL and basic writers should be taught separately because of their differing needs; others – especially those who had background in both ESL and writing – argued that they could be taught together profitably.[8]

Contrary to popular belief that L1 composition influences L2 composition but not the other way around, some insights from second language studies have been applied to L1 composition studies as a way of addressing the needs of NES basic writers. For instance, Mina Shaughnessy, a pioneer in the field of basic writing, suggested that "many of the techniques developed in foreign language teaching seem to be applicable to basic writing" (1976, p. 162) because basic writers, "however different their linguistic backgrounds, are clearly colliding with many of the same stubborn contours of formal English . . . that are also troublesome to students learning English as a second language" (1977, p. 92). For this reason, a number of basic writing specialists suggested the application in basic writing instruction of theoretical and pedagogical insights from second language studies, including error analysis, vocabulary lists, and controlled composition. Shaughnessy (1977) also tried to improve writing teachers' attitudes toward basic writers by adapting "the view a teacher is more likely to have toward a foreign student learning English" (p. 121). As a result, "writing as a second language" came to the fore as a metaphor for characterizing the difficulties NES writers faced in learning to produce the type of formal writing required in higher education. However, the goal of these borrowed practices usually was to meet the needs of NES basic writers rather than to help ESL writers in basic writing programs (Matsuda & Jablonski, 2000).

Nevertheless, basic writing specialists, with their strong commitment to helping traditionally excluded students gain access to higher education, also welcomed the discussion of ESL issues in their publications. For instance, the *Journal of Basic Writing (JBW)*, established in 1975 and published by CUNY, has featured a number of articles concerning ESL writers. In 1985, the *JBW* officially announced the inclusion of ESL as a topic of interest, and articles focusing on ESL writing increased rapidly. The interest in ESL issues was so intense that in 1991 *College ESL*, also published by CUNY, was established as a journal that focused on "urban immigrant and refugee adults in college and pre-college settings" (editorial policy). The publication of this new journal was significant