

**COMPOSING IN L2 ENGLISH: A STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF L1 OR L2
PLANNING AND TOPIC CHOICE**

MODULE 1

**PAPER 1:
L1 COMPOSITION AND L2 WRITING VIEWPOINTS:
PEDAGOGICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL STANCES
DEVELOPED THROUGH THEORY**

**PAPER 2:
UNDERSTANDING ISSUES OF VOICE AND IDENTITY
EXPERIENCED BY L2 WRITERS OF ENGLISH**

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OUTLINE OF THE PhD STUDY

The overarching aim of this PhD study (in three modules) is to investigate whether planning in L1 about an L1 related topic or planning in L2 about an L2 related topic (language and topic match conditions) enhances L1 Japanese writers' final essay texts in L2 English. The study also investigates whether topic choice independent of planning language, or planning language independent of topic choice (language and topic mismatch conditions) have any impact on plans or resulting L2 English final essay texts. This investigation takes place in various common contexts in which L1 Japanese writers of L2 English operate. The design of the study and methods used to collect, analyse, discuss and compare data are done both quantitatively and qualitatively, that is empirically and also hermeneutically.

The study is divided into three modules as follows. Module 1 focuses on the theoretical foundations that need to be explored and understood for a better insight into what is involved in L2 writing. In module 1 paper 1, theory that has influenced the viewpoints of instructors and pedagogy in L2 writing is surveyed. This includes the influence and close relationship of L1 composition theory to L2 writing research and pedagogy. The different viewpoints and stances taken by theorists, researchers and instructors of L1 and L2 writing are explained in detail. These viewpoints are looked at through the shared elements present in all writing, namely the writer, reader, reality and language. By exploring these viewpoints a foundation for different contexts and attitudes is gained which is invaluable for the overall study. Module 1 paper 2 focuses on an important issue that is often overlooked in L2 writing, that is the issue of an L2 writer's voice and identity. This includes the influence of L1 language and culture on L2 writing. This topic is addressed in module 1 paper 2 to set the scene for the aims of the

whole PhD study, which is to investigate the use of L1 and L2 in planning an L2 text and whether cultural topic choice has any influence on the resultant L2 text. The important matter of L2 writer anxieties and struggles faced when trying to write in certain contexts or on certain topics is also discussed in module 1 paper 2.

Building on the theoretical foundation in module 1, module 2 discusses the purposes, aims and scope of the study as well as reviews the literature relevant to the overall study. Whereas module 1 discusses L2 writing viewpoints and stances taken by researchers built upon L1 composition theories, the literature review in module 2 covers the actual pedagogies that are prevalent in L2 writing. Relevant past research focused on L2 writing planning and topic choice are also reviewed. Descriptions of the participant subjects are given as well as discussing their backgrounds and placing them in context.

In module 3 methodology, design and data collection procedures are outlined. Instrumentation is explained and analyses of data collected are carried out. The results are presented and discussed for the subject sample populations (L1 Japanese writers of L2 English) in the different contexts investigated (students in the UK, students in a Japanese University, and published academics who are “expert” L2 English writers). Any patterns or relationships found between the contexts are investigated and a discussion on whether the findings can be applied to broader L2 writing contexts is also examined. Finally conclusions and recommendations are discussed including pedagogical implications as well as any limitations found in the study.

MODULE 1

PAPER 1:

**L1 COMPOSITION AND L2 WRITING VIEWPOINTS:
PEDAGOGICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL STANCES
DEVELOPED THROUGH THEORY**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Historically speaking L1 composition theories developed much earlier than their L2 writing counterparts. Haynes (1978) records that L1 composition theory has a history dating back to the early 1900s. Accordingly research based on these L1 composition theories also began much earlier than L2 writing research. It is then, not at all surprising that both L2 writing theory and research have been influenced by and have also extensively borrowed from L1 composition theory and research. Johns (1990) goes as far as to say that at least up until the 1990s, L2 writing research was heavily based upon L1 writing theory and no coherent or complete separate L2 writing theory had been developed. Krapels (1990) also notes that L2 writing researchers have often adopted L1 composition research designs, and “more often than not their findings have concurred with those of their L1 counterparts” (p. 38). A point that is echoed by Zamel (1984) who says “research into second language composing processes seems to corroborate much of what we have learned from research in first language writing” (p. 198).

It should be noted that much of L1 composition theory initially developed in the early part of the twentieth century. This mainly occurred in the context of college level English writing classes in the United States. However, in the late 1950s and early 1960s large numbers of foreign students began to enter higher education in the United States. It was then that many L1 composition teachers began to perceive differences in writing between L1 and L2 students. This brought about an upsurge in interest of writing practices of non-native speakers of English, which in turn developed into a significant sub-field of research into approaches to writing English as a Second Language (ESL). More recently L2 writing in other contexts have

been of immense interest to theorists and researchers alike. Especially in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), which already has an established history in language studies.

The following discussion to some extent surveys the main stances taken in L1 composition pedagogical theory, which predate but still significantly influence L2 writing theory and practice. However the main focus will be L2 writing pedagogical stances (or teacher viewpoints), which will be reviewed in the light of these L1 composition theories. The view or stances taken by teachers of L2 writing, by in large, can be seen as resonating with the views of teachers of L1 composition which have in turn been formulated upon L1 composition theory. That is not to say that the viewpoints are exactly the same, however the scope of this study will focus on the similarities of these viewpoints and they will be discussed in a framework of elements that are inherent to both types of composition, namely the writer, reader, reality and language. Other underlying factors and themes that shape pedagogical viewpoints and are important in L1 composition and L2 writing will also be discussed. These include process versus product, academic discourse community acceptance and initiation versus preparation for life, and power of the established elite versus empowerment of the less privileged.

Despite the acknowledgement of differences existing between L1 composition and L2 writing, the question of how teachers of both view the core component related aspects or essential elements inherent to all types of composition remain very similar. Berlin (1982) mentions the 4 elements that make up the composing process.

- The writer (who is the “knower”).
- The audience (who shall be referred to as the “reader”).
- Reality (or truth).
- Language (that is to say the source of the language in written text).

In this survey these elements will be looked at in turn as components of five major composition viewpoints of researchers and teachers of writing, which are based largely upon L1 composition theory, but also with significant reference to L2 writing stances. These viewpoints are those of cognitivists, expressivists, social constructionists, interactivists and culturists. Johns (1990) classes the cognitivists, and expressivists as both adherents of the process approach. Although both cognitivists, and expressivists do indeed place emphasis on the writing process and agree much on their ideas of reality and language use, the two hold radically different views on how the writer should go about this process as identified by Faigley (1986), and as such will be discussed separately. It should also be noted that the view of interactivists and culturists may be difficult to distinguish for some, and indeed there is undoubtedly some overlap. However, the distinction in the following survey focuses on the pedagogical nature of the interactive viewpoint compared to the ideological stance of the culturists.

2.0 COGNITIVISM

2.1 Writer

Cognitivists to a large extent base their beliefs on the cognitive process theory of Flower and Hayes (1981). This theory focuses on the cognitive “universals” in the writing process. That is to say, learning to write is regarded as identifying and internalizing organisational patterns such as planning, drafting and revising. Cognitivists see writing as problem solving. The two key words in cognitivist discussions are “thinking” and “process” (Johns 1990). Cognitivist teachers require the student writer to plan extensively. This planning includes defining the problem, placing it in context, making it operational, further exploration into its parts, thinking of alternative solutions, and arriving at a well-supported conclusion (Johns 1990). It is these steps that are considered the higher order “thinking” skills outlined by Flower (1989). Once the plan is established using these steps, it is then, followed by the writer translating that plan into initial writing drafts, revising and editing. This is the writer’s “process” step of planning that Flower (1989) espouses and Johns (1990) identifies when discussing the cognitivist view.

The cognitivists feel the writer should not focus on the product of composition, but rather on the process of arriving at that product. Flower and Hayes’ (1981) theory was based on their extensive research using think-aloud protocols and other techniques which revealed that writing was not a linear process with the writer sitting down to write and finishing with a complete product in one linear or formulaic undertaking. But rather the process was complex, multi-layered and recursive. This of course has implications for the writer and how he or she composes. Flower and Hayes are not alone in their belief of the cognitive process of writing.

Their model has been confirmed to some extent in research carried out by Spack (1984), Zamel (1983), Raimes (1987), Krapels (1990) and Friedlander (1990). Raimes in particular compared L2 writers' composing process with those of L1 novice writers and found that both had much in common.

So it can be seen that the mental processes the writers goes through are considered to be of great importance to the cognitivists. Berlin (1988) explains "For cognitive rhetoric, structures of the mind are in perfect harmony with the structures of the material world, the minds of the audience, and the units of language" (p. 480).

Durst (2006) notes that discussions of the writing process particularly of cognitive views have dominated writing literature and influenced the modern L2 writing classroom up until recent times. Lauer (1970) remarks that most L2 writing teachers (along with ESL and EFL teachers in general) prepare student writers to write using prewriting activities and invention. Johns (1986) goes on to say that these very teachers require several drafts, individual revision and peer group revision, as well as delaying the student writer's feeling of wanting sentence correction until the final stage of editing.

Therefore the cognitivist writing teacher is not focusing on the products of their student writer. Instead their aim is to produce good writers who "not only have a large repertoire of powerful strategies, but they have sufficient self-awareness of their own process to draw on these alternative techniques as they need them, In other words, they guide their own creative process" (Flower, 1985, p. 370).

2.2 Reader

The issue of audience or the reader is of major concern to cognitivists. Kroll (1978) explains that even though the primary concern for cognitivists is the writer's cognitive structures and the processes the writer navigates through to produce text, it is also important to understand how a sense of audience is structured in the writer's mind. This issue of the reader is therefore complicated. Flower (1979) in her research found the cognitive shift from "writer-based" to "reader-based" a major factor in the failure of many college writers to be successful in their writing classes. She goes on to recommend that student writers need to consider and appeal to their readers' interest and needs, in order to be successful and established writers. Berlin (1987) goes as far as to say the cognitivist view is in fact "transitional" when regarding the reader, and probably more akin to the interactivist view than the expressivist view, both of which are discussed later in this study.

2.3 Reality

As can be seen by now the cognitivist view is heavily predisposed upon the writer, and therefore it should be of no surprise that cognitivists see that "reality and truth reside in the writers mind" (Johns, 1990, p. 31). Berlin (1982) contends that the cognitivist view of reality mirrors the Platonic view where "truth is not based on sensory experience since the material world is always in flux and thus unreliable. Truth is instead discovered through internal apprehension, a private vision of the world that transcends the physical" (p. 771).

This very internal truth hypothesis is cause for the many criticisms leveled at the cognitivist view. Bizzell (1982) contends that the cognitivists have a lack of concern for the social environment in the creation of the text. She takes particular umbrage with the fact that

cognitivists all too readily believe that “the universal, fundamental structures of thought and language can be taught” (p. 216). Durst (2006) believes that the limits of the cognitivist view have already been reached and even Flower (1994) herself has continued to expand on her earlier research by further explaining the social aspects and dimensions of writing. Therefore some of the criticism can be seen to be tempered by the fact that even the most stringent of cognitivists concede that cognition and context must work in some kind of tandem and not be mutually exclusive (Leki, Cumming & Silva, 2006).

2.4 Language

As the cognitivist view focuses on the writer, so it would seem to correspond to the views of Miller and Judy (1978) who suggest, “form and language come from content – and are a result of what the reader wants to say” (p. 15). In other words, the language of composition is the writer’s own language, based on prior knowledge. The focus of the cognitivist is not so much on the pedagogy of language itself but how that language was chosen and the processes that were carried out.

3.0 EXPRESSIVISM

3.1 Writer

Expressivism although reaching its peak in the late mid twentieth century has its roots much earlier in the beginning of the same century (Johns 1990). Although the expressivist view may predate the cognitivist view, it was particularly in the late 1960s and early 1970s when the popular trend in teaching writing began to favour individual expression of honest and personal thought. Berlin (1988) explains that writing was thought to be an art or a creative process in which self-discovery was as important as the self-discovered and expressed product. Murray (1980) developed a five-step “expressivist” process for writing, namely collecting, focusing, ordering, developing and clarifying. Murray suggests these processes be combined with free writing, brainstorming or mapping and applying them to any composing problem. Both Murray’s processes and Flower and Hayes (1981) processes are seen as non-linear, however it may be fair to say that more relative importance is placed on the recursive nature of the processes in the cognitivist view.

Expressive writing pedagogy is where the teacher avoids directives, instead facilitating students in writing fluency using classroom activities designed to empower the writers over the writing act and taking power over their own prose. The writer is encouraged to find their personal voice. Activities such as journal writing and personal essays are designed to encourage self-discovery. Where students can “first write freely and uncritically” and “can get down as many words as possible” (Elbow, 1981, p. 7). Elbow (1973), who is arguably the leading exponent of the expressivist viewpoint, goes on to advocate giving value to the student writer’s individual voice. Indeed it is the expressivists that ought to be credited for

their contribution in the widespread use of journals in the modern L1 and L2 writing classroom, especially to produce topics for essays (Sullivan & Van Becker, 1982; Urzua, 1986).

There are of course many critics of the expressivist view, which may be understandable when supporters such as Elbow (1981) talk about the act of writing as a kind of “magic” that anyone who believes in their “tale” can do (p. 369). One of the main criticisms is, as Williams (2003) notes, that writing is also a social tool for an audience and not just a tool for self-actualization. Also as Ramanathan and Atkinson (1999) point out the individual voice of the writer may not be conducive in a culture (such as in Japan) that downplays individual expression and rather values more membership of a larger community.

3.2 Reader

The expressivists counter the criticisms laid on them of over indulging the writer’s individual personalized prose and apparent lack of appreciation of the reader by stating, it is the writer themselves who “creates an audience that conforms to the writer’s text and purpose” (Nystrand, 1986, p. 61). Ede and Lunsford (1984) agree and go on to explain that, “the audience in written discourse is a construction of the writer, a created fiction” (p. 160). In terms of pedagogy, teachers who believe in expressivism usually expect their students to write honestly for themselves. As Johns (1990) notes the expressivist teacher, who in the classroom setting is in fact the de-facto primary audience, wants his or her students to write knowing “others may appreciate and critique their writing as long as the central purpose for producing text is to provide an avenue of creativity and individual expression” (p. 30). Elbow (1981)

sums up the expressivist view by saying “ the goal of writing should be to move towards a condition in which we don’t necessarily need an audience to write and speak well” (p. 190).

3.3 Reality

A view of reality is one of the key elements in composition theory and research. The expressivist view of truth and reality follows the broadly the view of the cognitivists. That is, reality resides in the writer’s mind, what Berlin (1982) calls the internal truth of the expressionist or Neo-Platonists. Miller and Judy (1978) go on to say that for expressivists the nature of all good writing is personal, no matter if it is an essay or a letter. Therefore the very same criticisms leveled at the cognitivists by Bizzell (1982) amongst others, of neglecting “external truth” and social contexts can very well be applied to expressivists.

3.4 Language

With regards to language, expressivist teachers generally encourage students to break out of pre-existing formats and writing styles with less focus on grammar and rules. This has been criticized for not being practical in application with the added difficulty of harnessing overly emotional or inappropriate writing particularly in the context of cross-cultural writing (Ramanathan & Atkinson, 1999). That being said, the expressivists agree with much of what the cognitivists believe to be true about language. This is understandable as both focus upon the writer and the writing process. Again also like the cognitivists, the expressivists hold true that the language of composition is the writer’s own language, based on prior knowledge, experience and creativity. Baker (2008) believes this has great implications in not only teaching composition to mixed university classes of students whose L1 is being used for

composition and students who are composing in their L2, but even for students whose L1 may be considered to be non-mainstream.

4.0 SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION

4.1 Writer

The social constructionists believe that the act of writing is a social act (Bruffee, 1986), and can only take place within a specific context for a specific audience. Whereas, the cognitivists and expressivists see the writer and his or her individual mental process as the originator of text, the social constructionist see this idea of the writer as an “individual” to be fictional. They contend that a person only exists as a member of a group, community or society (Santos 1992). Trimbur (1989) goes on to explain that “there is nowhere else the individual can be: consciousness is the extension of social experience inward” (p. 604).

Bruffee (1986) defines social construction definitively and succinctly as follows:

Social construction assumes that the matrix of thought is not the individual self but some community of knowledgeable peers and the vernacular knowledge of that community. That is, social construction understands knowledge and authority of knowledge as community generated, community maintaining symbolic artifacts. (p. 777)

This group of knowledgeable peers and authority of knowledge the writer is writing for are often called the “discourse community”. A good example would be the academic discourse communities, which have particular standards, rules and practices, which must be followed in order for the writer and his or her text to be accepted. Swales (1990) has outlined a detailed definition of a discourse community. In his definition he mentions the agreement of a set of common goals, mechanisms for participation and intercommunication among its members, a shared genre or genres, specific vocabulary and a threshold of members with expertise. The

writer then has to deal with this matrix in order to become an accepted member of the discourse community.

There are those such as Bruffee (1986) who believe this is of major benefit to the L2 writer as they have a standard context and structure to write in, thus reducing cognitive load and errors. While others such as Bizzell (1987) bemoan the fact that novice L2 writers must develop “multiple-literacies” and learn extra cultural and discourse repertoires that their L1 counterparts do not have to learn. Therefore they become as Bizzell coins the phrase, “outsiders”. She goes on to say L2 student writers should not be forced to acquire these extra literacies instead it is the discourse communities which must adapt to except the culture of the students. Many social constructionists may see this as unrealistic and feel the reality is that because discourse communities do not readily change, the writers must change themselves and adapt.

4.2 Reader

In the eyes of the social constructionists the reader is considered all-powerful (Johns, 1990). The reader is a knowledgeable expert and a member of a discourse community. It is the reader who has the power to accept or reject the writer’s text as coherent, acceptable, and adhering to the conventions of the target community or not. Therefore the writer must have knowledge of the readers’ expectations, beliefs and attitudes (Ede & Lunsford, 1984). A good example of this is the teacher who grades papers, it is the teacher who sets the agenda and expected tone, and furthermore is usually also the one who accepts or rejects the student’s text.

4.3 Reality

Social constructionists regard exclusively social what cognitivists and expressivists regard as individual. Therefore in some respects denying the very idea of individuality. Weiner (1986) notes that if this is the case then cognition will also be seen as socially based and knowledge will also have to be socially justified and would be dependant on social relations rather than reflecting reality or specifically the individual writers reality. Then as Santos (2001) says, objectivity may be undesirable as it is impossible to achieve due to the naturally subjective nature of anything social.

Swales (1990) notes that this view of social reality can be clarified somewhat by understanding genres of particular discourse communities. Johns (1990) gives the example of academic discourse communities establishing their own realities through their own conventions of writing, for example developing a hypothesis, data collection methods and conventions, and analysis of data.

4.4 Language

For the social constructionists language does not reside in the minds of individuals, instead, "...it should be considered as originating from and constituted in the community" (Santos, 1992, p. 162). Newcomers must be initiated into the language and particular discourse of the discourse community. This is due to the fact that writing is seen to be a social construct, in which particular form, structure, function, and meta-language are already understood by the community members. Therefore Bizzell's (1987) "outsider" such as the novice writer, may be severely restricted in what language they can use. Johns (1990) complains that L2 writing students then often have difficulties in not fully understanding context for language use, but

must still learn to “talk like engineers” for example as a requirement from academic faculty. Therefore, subverting or compromising their own language and voice for the requirements of the target discourse community.

5.0 INTERACTIVISM

5.1 Writer

The interactive view of composition sees the writer as an interactant involved in dialogue with the audience (Bakhtin, 1973). As Johns (1990) explains, the text produced is what the individual writer creates through a dialogue with another conversant. In essence this means both the writer and the reader take responsibility for text coherence.

As such the interactive view can be seen as a middle ground between the process orientated cognitivists and expressivists on the one hand, who generally believe composition issues forth from the individual mind of the writer, and on the other hand the social constructionists who believe, as Bruffee (1986) says, that writing is primarily a social act and can only take place in a specific social construct or for a specific discourse community who set the agenda.

The interactivists believe in the individual writer's right to form the text but also do not deny that writing is often placed in a social "context". It should be noted as Santos (1992) points out, "social context" is very different from the idea of "social construct". Understanding social context requires the writer not to adhere to some rigid framework of conventions or meta-linguistics, rather it asks the writer to be responsible towards the reader. Hinds (1987) actually defines English as a "writer-responsible" language and goes on to say "the person primarily responsible for effective communication is the writer" (p. 144). However, Hinds further explains that this may not be true for all languages. He gives the example of Japanese, Korean and ancient Chinese, where the communication process requires the reader to

understand what the writer intends to say. In effect these language can then be seen to be “reader-responsible”,

The interactivist L2 English writing teacher who believes that English is indeed a “writer-responsible” language usually require students to lay out and make clear to the reader their topics, organization, arguments and transitions. Meyer (1977) calls this “pre-revealing” where the writer must pre-reveal the form and content of their text in the first few paragraphs of their text. Connor and Farmer (1990) go on to say that this is not enough, and the writer must also provide generalizations at appropriate points in the discourse and develop and maintain topics in an accessible manner for the reader. Singer (1986) adds that the organisation of the discourse must be in a manner familiar to the reader, appropriately cohesive and information should be directly explained and clarified by the writer.

5.2 Reader

Johns (1990) contends that audience theory in L1 composing literature has been mostly neglected in L2 writing pedagogy. However the model of reader and text interactivity which is a common feature of reading theory, research and pedagogy in the ESL and EFL context can be “extended to create a middle ground in a theory of audience in writing” (p. 30). Carrell (1988) proposes the idea of reader schemata. Readers have both formal and content schemata, which once the reading process begins are activated. These reader schemata along with the content, argument and organisation of the text once matched lead to text comprehension and coherence. This idea of reader schemata is corroborated by research in the L2 writing classroom by Hillman and Kessell (1986). However, Ede and Lunsford (1984) best sum up

the model in an ideal situation being a balance of writer creativity resourcefulness and vision with the equally important but different reader creativity, resourcefulness and vision.

5.3 Reality

The interactivists believe it is up to the writer and the reader to negotiate and agree upon what is reality, since they hold true that reality and truth reside in both the writer and the reader. Although it may not be as simple as it sounds. The writer may start off by attempting to establish what is reality through their text, then the reader who possess their own reality, within their own schemata of content and form, either accepts the writer's argument or story, or modifies it through comprehension. So in this case as Johns (1990) explains the writer tries to convince or at the very least appeals to the reader their version of reality. If the reader accepts this appeal, both writer and reader can agree upon the reality straight away. However if the reader is not convinced then the writer's version of reality may be rejected and the rapport between writer and reader may be lost. This is of vital importance because as Ewald (1986) suggests, the aim of the writer should be to remove any suspicion by the reader that they have a lack of understanding, and also to increase communication both ways between writer and reader and to recognize shared goals.

5.4 Language

As the name suggests the interactivist view believes both writer and reader schemata interact and form a consensus on what is suitable and appropriate language for the text. It should be noted this differs from the social constructionist view, where it is the reader or specifically the discourse community that dictates what is appropriate language or not.

The interactivist view espouses negotiation between writer and reader. This naturally entails concessions to be made by both parties. The writer must take into account the reader's language ability and background. This does not suggest the writer "dumb down" their text in the case of reader language limitations, rather with this knowledge, the writer can initiate a process of reader schemata modification. The writer leads the reader by composing the text in a manner, which gradually revises the reader's schemata and helps comprehension. One way this may be done is by extensive explanations and operational definitions rather than assuming shared knowledge of meta-language.

6.0 CULTURISM

6.1 Writer

Berlin (2003) calls teachers of English “gatekeepers, influencing decisions about who will succeed to higher levels of education and greater degrees of prosperity” (p. 189). He also goes on to say that college curriculum programmes and by extension those who produce and teach them encourage the development of a certain kind of graduate and therefore a certain kind of person. The English departments where L1 composition theories often evolved were seen as not being politically neutral (Van Dijk, 1985; Hairston, 1992).

In turn, student writers from so called “non-mainstream” backgrounds which include non-native speakers or students of non-standard dialect English (Matsuda, 1999), or “outsiders” as Bizzell (1987) calls them, are often required to follow the dominant culture of the classroom. Also the teacher’s political, ideological or cultural emphasis may be forced upon the student writer (Santos, 2001). The multicultural demographic reality of a writing classroom is often not reflected in the tasks, atmosphere or expectations that the student writer faces (Servino, Guerra, & Butler, 1997).

The culturist viewpoint, or cultural situated learning viewpoint, focuses on the non-mainstream student writer if they are in an L1 dominated composing classroom, or indeed an L2 student writer in an ESL or EFL writing class, and places them in their own cultural situation whether they are non-native speakers, speakers of non-standard dialect or from different socio-economic backgrounds. The emphasis is to give voice to the writer’s own cultural, political and ideological background. This is not too dissimilar to the expressivist

view. However, in the case of expressivism the writer is encouraged to express their individual voice and is led to do so pedagogically, whereas in the culturist stance, the writer composes from their own cultural viewpoint and is such, more of an ideological issue (Williams, 2003). Giddens (1979) notes that learning cannot be understood simply as an internal process in which an individual's mind acquires and stores knowledge for future use in any context. Rather human learning is situated and is structured by interaction of people dependent also on environment. This view can be seen to extend to the composition process by culturists.

Hairston (1992) goes on to propose a complete de-politicization of composition. She advocates that the composition teacher is providing a skill-building course not a content course. Therefore, it is not appropriate that the composition classroom be a platform for forcing political ideology of the teacher or institution onto students. She argues that writing classes should be simply about writing, developing the art of writing, critical thinking, and other elements of composition. Anything other than that being taught in composition classes should be seen as apprehensible.

The culturist viewpoint encourages the writer to compose in a voice that may not have been heard by the dominant culture of the classroom. This is seen as a power equalizer, allowing the inclusion of such voices that have not been heard thus offsets privileging one culture over others. These "other" cultures include diverse religious, social or gender voices (Ramanathan & Atkinson, 1999; Smitherman, 2003; Canagarajah, 2002a).

Santos (1992) notes that to some extent the L1 composition literature that points towards this viewpoint can be seen to have borrowed from linguistics and applied linguistics literature of which L2 writing is a branch. Santos believes that due to the scientific nature of L2 writing research being carried out mostly by linguists or applied linguists whose methodology has “at its foundation an idealized adherence to neutrality and objectivity”; it has managed to stay “aloof from ideology” (p. 165). She goes on to agree with Hairston (1992) who finds the political nature of many L1 composition instructors, coming from a humanities background, to be over-bearing (indeed in Hairston’s case distasteful) and unaccommodating to differing views. Instead she extols the seemingly impartial view of L2 writing research (which in turn influences L2 writing pedagogy) carried out by linguists and applied linguists who are “unprejudiced by value judgments about the linguistic system, its speakers [or writers] and, by extension, the sociopolitical circumstances attached to the system” (P. 166). The view of Santos has been criticized by Benesch (1993, 1994) and Servino (1993) who both believe that even L2 writing instruction is ideologically biased. Both Benesch and Servino have argued that neutrality is in fact a myth, and those like Santos who believe otherwise are pandering to a current political status quo. This, Benesch (1996) goes on to say, has a negative impact on students’ interests, educationally and materially, in a form of social injustice.

6.2 Reader

Although social constructionists may argue that they are in fact creating a cultural context, which all writers can operate in on an equal footing, and providing an audience that all writers can compose for and with who they can achieve coherence, cohesiveness and understanding. The reality is that non-mainstream or L2 writing students may not see themselves as part of that cultural context ideologically or politically. Santos (2001) explains it is this very

relationship between self and society that lies at the heart of the matter. The reader in the culturist viewpoint is invited to experience something new, another culture, to sensitize themselves to influences outside of themselves. Stewart (1990) argues that this is something valuable and should be encouraged, rather than the “groupthink” mentality of social constructivism, which Sledd (1987) sees as self-serving for its adherents, without addressing the needs of society.

6.3 Reality

The culturist view of reality can be contrasted with the reality of the discourse community propounded by the social constructionists. The culturists believe that non-native or non-mainstream student writers should not have to totally conform to the cultural background or reality of an academic disciplinary community of which they were never a part of creating. Ramanathan and Atkinson (1999) have talked much about cross cultural differences and student anxiety of having to subvert themselves or compromise their L1 personality to be an accepted member of the community. Benech (2001) presents a “rights analysis” which allows students to challenge what is required by the community and to be part of its ongoing development.

Hairston (1992) believes one of the reasons for many composition classes lacking cultural or ideological sensitivity, is what she calls the “radical left’s” influence especially in L1 composition classrooms which are housed in university English departments. This she believes is a hotbed where many radicals of academia reside. She fears that students are captive audiences who easily come under the political or ideological sway of their professors.

This may be in agreement to please and be accepted by the teacher but may just as likely be to get a better grade.

Hairston also argues reality must first of all focus on student composition not outside literature. This, she goes on to say, must be done by writing teachers staying within their expertise of teaching writing and not politics. For this to occur teachers of writing must allow students to write about what they know and care about, and making sure student writers do not feel their reality is not acceptable because of the political viewpoints or desires of the teacher.

Hairston posits that the student composition does not have to be totally expressive and personal, as the expressivists suggest, but rather involve argument, exposition and encourage cross-cultural awareness. Themes for writing should be those, which are a reality to the student. These could include family, community rituals, familial or gender roles, cultural myths and cultural tensions. The reader can then contrast these topics with their own cultural context. Thus, allowing the writer to write something unique that will resonate with their reader, leading to discovery of others and themselves. The teacher does not presume to own the truth, rather the class is student-centered and students bring their own reality and truth. These truths may change with time but Hairston (1992) sums up by saying:

We can create a culturally inclusive curriculum in our writing classes by focusing on the experiences of our students. They are our greatest multicultural resource, one that is authentic, rich, and truly diverse. Every student brings to class a picture of the world in his or her mind that is constructed out of his or her cultural background and unique and complex experience. (p. 194)

6.4 Language

The idea of linguistic or language imperialism (Phillipson, 1992) is not new, but the culturists' view of writing highlights its somewhat nefarious impact in composition. "Language diversity", which has been overlooked in the past in the writing classroom, needs to be taken into account according to culturists.

Students writing in L2 are usually forced to write in not only an alien culture but also the linguistic nuances that accompany that culture (Valdes, 2006). The culturists viewpoint urges instructors of writing to pay extra and due attention to this fact. Focusing on trying to alleviate the trauma and anxiety that L2 writers feel about having to cross linguistic and cultural boundaries. This includes how L2 writers see their linguistic ability in relation to L1 writers and the power relationship that is often perceived (Currie, 2001). Belcher and Hirvela (2005) give the example of academics writing in L2 English being forced to play the role of Ginger Rogers to their L1 peers' role of Fred Astaire "doing everything Fred does but in high heels and backwards" (p. 201).

Canagarajah (2006) suggests language literacy and practice may depend on factors such as cultural beliefs, genres and styles of communication, which in turn affect the attitudes and processes of composing. This he goes on to say is not to give undue importance to ideas of Kaplan's (1966) contrastive rhetoric (see module 1 paper 2), which highlights the cultural differences in composing, but rather in the culturist viewpoint it is the attitudes towards that difference which are important. Again highlighting the ideological stance the culturists take in contrast to the pedagogical interactivists.

Rejecting the “conversion” approach to idiomatic language, structure and use, which supposes a deficiency in L2 writers, the culturist view takes a relativist attitude towards language. L2 writers are not required to distance themselves from their L1 language discourse structures and replace them with perceived superior L1 (in most cases English) based discourses. Instead they are allowed to “shuttle” between L1 and L2 settings. The culturist teacher may feel that this will go somewhat towards alleviating the loss of confidence and alienation that many L2 writers experience (Zamel, 1995). This sense of linguistic alienation in composing is highlighted in the example case of Virginia, a Puerto Rican woman in Casanave’s (1992) study who left graduate school because the conflict she felt between her own identity and values, and those of the discourse she was expected to adopt to be accepted in the academic community she one day hoped to work. Another example is the fear and anxiety of a Chinese graduate student (Currie, 2001) of losing his Chinese identity through a continual perceived need to culturally alter his composition discourse personality in an American University.

Valdes (2006), sums up by saying that although multiculturalism and diversity are fashionable words in many professional pedagogical meetings, the discussion rarely goes beyond “celebrating” cultural differences. In order for writing instructors to be effective towards L2 writers they will need extensive knowledge and understanding of the backgrounds of their students. This may requires a paradigm shift in not only pedagogy but also ideology.

7.0 CONCLUSION

The viewpoints that many teachers of L1 composition and L2 writing have on the best way to teach writing are varied, but to some extent these variances do corroborate within the prism of writing itself, whether teaching L1 writers or L2 writers. This can be seen due to the fact that many of these viewpoints emerged from the same root of L1 composition theory and were often attested to in the L2 writing setting by research in that context.

Some instructors favour a focus on the writer and the process of writing itself, such as the cognitivists and the expressivists. The cognitivists promoting the internalisation of organisational process patterns of writing such as planning, drafting, editing and revising, whereas the expressivists concentration is on allowing student writers to have a free individual voice to tell their individual story.

Others focus on the audience as defining the protocols, language, truths and conventions such as the social constructionists, who view writing aimed at particular discourse communities. Others yet, prefer a negotiation between writer and reader. This includes the interactivists who encourage a pedagogical stance that is collaborative in nature. Then there are the culturists who reject the stringent unilateral social constructs advocated by the social constructionists on ideological grounds, preferring to let student writers compose in a multicultural setting where anxiety of L2 language and L1 identity loss are hoped to be minimized.

Although the focus of these viewpoints may be varied, all of them acknowledge that an understanding of the essential elements of composition mentioned by Berlin (1982), those of writer, reader, reality and language, must be taken into account and any one of them cannot be ignored totally. But because the worldviews of the parties with vested interest, that being theorists, researchers and teachers (dare it be said also the learners) differ greatly in regards to the essential elements, a single viewpoint that all can agree on is difficult to achieve. Another reality is that viewpoints change due to circumstances and particular historical periods and may even overlap in some certain situations. However, it would be hard to deny that all of the pedagogical and ideological viewpoints mentioned in this survey can still be found in the modern L1 composition and L2 writing classrooms, and the minds of instructors, even today.

TABLE 1. L1 COMPOSITION AND L2 WRITING VIEWPOINTS DEVELOPED THROUGH THEORY:

	WRITER	READER	REALITY	LANGUAGE
<i>Cognitivists</i>	Writer focuses on processes not only the product of composition. Planning, drafting, revising are important.	Sense of audience is structured in the writer's cognitive mind.	Reality resides in the writer's mind.	Language form and content are a result of process patterns, stemming from prior knowledge.
<i>Expressivists</i>	Writer is empowered over the writing act. Writer writes honestly, freely and uncritically.	Reader may appreciate and critique text, however the central purpose is not the reader but rather the writer's avenue for creative individual expression.	Internal truth resides in the writer's mind.	Self-discovery leads to individual voice. Language expressed using less focus on grammar and rules.
<i>Social Constructionists</i>	Writing is a social act therefore the writer is not an individual, but rather a member of group or community.	Reader is all powerful, knowledgeable expert who is a member of a discourse community.	The discourse community sets reality. It decides what is acceptable and what is not.	Rules of language form, structure, function and meta-language are originated and constituted by the discourse community.
<i>Interactivists</i>	Writer is an interactant in a dialogue with the reader.	Reader uses schemata to understand text. This schemata may be modified by interacting with the writer through the text.	Writer appeals to the reader his or her version of reality. Reader either accepts, rejects or may come to accept through the writer's application.	Both writer's and reader's schemata interact to form a consensus on what is suitable and acceptable language.
<i>Culturists</i>	Writers compose in a voice that is culturally acceptable to themselves, without having to distance themselves from their L1 discourse structures.	Reader is invited to experience something new, another culture, to sensitize themselves to influences outside themselves.	Reality emanates from the writer's cultural background. Themes, which are a truth for the writer.	Linguistic and cultural nuances are not enforced but rather variety is acceptable to reduce L2 writer anxiety.

MODULE 1

PAPER 2:

**UNDERSTANDING ISSUES OF VOICE AND IDENTITY
EXPERIENCED BY L2 WRITERS OF ENGLISH**

By
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The issue of voice and identity in writing and how it particularly impacts on L2 writers of English is an important one. Often it has been overlooked, possibly owing to an unsaid implicit expectation of L2 writers to conform to L1 identity and voice norms. Another reason may be the difficulty in defining what the terms actually mean in an agreeable way. What cannot be overlooked however are the concerns and difficulties many L2 writers of English face with regards to identity and voice. In this study it is hoped to bring to attention some of these issues and their background. Also examples of the struggles faced by L2 writers, students and established writers alike, particularly in the context of English academic writing will be highlighted. It is hoped by understanding and acknowledging some of these issues, a less rigid and more culturally aware view of L2 writing, and in particular L2 English composition, can be worked towards and a future writing pedagogy can be based upon.

2.0 INDIVIDUALITY IN WRITTEN VOICE

Stewart (1972) suggests that principally in the written context, the one factor separating all humans is their individual authorial voice. Elbow (1981) describes voice in writing as that which “captures the sound of the individual on the page” (p. 287). Bowden (1995) describes Stewart and Elbow’s definitions of written voice as part of the social and educational reactions born in the counter-culture movements of the 1960s and 1970s, which gave birth to the expressivist school of writing. The expressivist goal being orientated towards producing text through self-exploration, honesty and humanism.

Bowden (1995) explains that the expressivist view of written voice focuses on being authentic and personal and it is made up of three characteristics. The first is that written voice should be connected to the inner-self, *vis a vis* “inner voice”. The second is the premise that oral communication holds dominance over written communication. That is to say, one may express one’s own unique inner-self more easily in speech than in writing. Writing is then seen, according to some expressivists, as a lower form of speech with voice trying to emulate oral tone and what Elbow (1981) calls the lack of “sound and texture” (p. 288) in text. The third characteristic is that of written voice favouring a literary style. Elbow (1981) when giving examples of what is personal written voice often cites texts from literary works. Trimbur (1994) complains that in terms of pedagogy, students who display skill in composing self-revelatory personal essays are at a distinct advantage with the expressivist teacher, even though it may have been a created authorial voice persona having to conform to teacher expectations. The very situation the expressivist ideal seeks to avoid.

3.0 SOCIAL ASPECTS OF WRITTEN VOICE

The traditional expressivist view of voice has often been the most pervasive in the academic English context. Indeed Canagarajah (2002b) and Ramanathan and Atkinson (1999) suggest, rather unhappily, it is the expression of individuality and uniqueness of the writer that is the most important aspect of written voice in Western countries such as the U.S. and Britain. However, the definition of written voice as being a unique individual's expressive potential has been criticized by many, including those holding social constructionist views (see module 1 paper 1). But the idea of written voice itself cannot be ignored and alternative definitions have been formulated. Situational written voice is one such alternative. Ede (1989) describes situational written voice as wearing different clothes for different occasions. So a writer's voice would employ a strong personal voice when writing a personal essay. But when writing a report the writer would employ a more formal public tone. This resonates with the idea that people in general have many "masks" or personalities that they swap around all day everyday, depending on the social or cultural setting, and so being subjective in writing is to be expected. Foucault (1980) describes the nature of people at their core is to have multiple rather than unitary personalities.

Mikhail Bakhtin, the Russian literary critic and linguistics scholar, can be credited with being one of the first theorists to try and define the concept of voice. Bakhtin (1986) suggested that language is made up of utterances, and that these utterances are dependent on the perspective, values and nature of the person who produces it. Bakhtin called this metaphorical concept "voice". Although Bakhtin's concept was primarily concerned with oral language, Wertsch (1991) posits that it equally "...applies to written as well as spoken communication, and it is

concerned with broader issues of a speaking subject's perspective, conceptual horizon, intention and world view" (p. 51).

Like Ede (1989), Bakhtin (1986) believed the voice of an individual is made up of many or multiple voices due to the fact that all utterances or texts (i.e. produced language) are responses to an "other". That is to say a dialog, with the "other" in this case being previous utterances or text. He goes on to say that therefore all utterances or text contain borrowed or appropriated language. In other words language is made up of a "collage" of borrowed language from other users, and therefore a writer's voice is multiple, reliant on social factors and complex.

Ivanic and Camps (2001) also agree that voice can indeed be social and this aspect must not be overlooked in the L2 writing context. Prior (2001) goes on to suggest that voice can be both individual and social simultaneously owing to the fact that discourse is fundamentally situated, indexical and historical. This idea of voice being part of a social environment and not only existing in isolation is one that Stapleton (2002) points out as important in the context of L2 writing. Matsuda and Tardy (2007) go on to say that voice is seen as an important element especially in the postmodern era where the recognition of diversity in society is a key foundation.

To summarise then, the traditional model of written voice (based largely on the expressivist school of composition) sees it as the expression of the individual. Whereas the Bakhtinian model believes voice to be collaborative between the writer and the audience and as such

socially influenced, then there are those like Prior (2001) who believe voice can be both individual and social at the same time. In any case the issue of voice is a complex one.

4.0 DIFFICULTIES OF RESEARCH ON VOICE

Whether individual, social or a mixture of both, Atkinson (2001) still bemoans the fact that voice remains “a devilishly difficult concept to define” (p. 110). Research on voice in writing has been limited due to, as Stapleton (2002) argues, the often indefinable and vague qualities that are attributed to voice. Even Elbow (1999) himself concedes that the intrinsic meaning of voice is difficult to pin down, saying it is “a dimension of text that is rhetorically powerful but hard to focus on: the implied and unspoken meanings that are carried in the text but are different from the clear and overt meaning in the words” (p. 336). Vollmer (2002) also acknowledges that research on voice is difficult due to “the slipperiness of some of the concepts set forth by sociocultural theory” (p. 2). She goes on to say that the problems are compounded by the fact that there is still little agreement on what is actually meant by voice, identity, the self or culture.

Matsuda (2001) has attempted to give voice an operational definition, which he believes could be a basis for more empirically orientated research on written voice for L2 writers. He suggests “voice is the amalgamative effect of the use of discursive and non-discursive features that language users choose, deliberately or otherwise, from socially available, yet ever changing repertoires” (p. 40). Matsuda clarifies that “discursive” features include form and content. Textual form consists of sentences structures, organisation, transition device usage and word choice. Textual content includes topic choice, examples chosen and argumentative strategies. Non-discursive features include, formatting choice of font type and size, use of margins, punctuation marks, and blank spaces between words, lines, paragraphs and block quotes.

However, even with an operational definition such as Matsuda's (2001), the research on L2 writers' voice that has taken place has tended to be qualitative in nature with many ethnographic biographical or autobiographical case studies being carried out and almost invariably in the context of English academic writing. This is perhaps owing to the still elusive and not easily agreeable definition of what voice actually is. Notable examples of case studies include, Casanave (1992), Fox (1994), Hirvela and Belcher (2001), Leki (2001) Li (1996), Lu (1998) and probably the most well known being Shen (1998). Even so, there have also been some notable attempts to carry out quantitative studies on L2 writers' voice. Some researchers have tried to elicit pedagogical focus by attempting to identify linguistic features of a writer's voice. These include Hyland (2001, 2002a, 2002b), Ivanic and Camps (2001), Matsuda (2001), Prior (2001), Russell and Yoo (2001) and Tang and John (1999).

5.0 VOICE AND IDENTITY

As shown in the previous section of this study, the issue of written voice in L2 writing is difficult to define. This is often compounded by the fact that traditionally researchers in the field often use the term “writer voice” interchangeably with “writer identity”. Also creating definitions, which fail to properly distinguish between the two. Examples include Hyland (2001) using the term “authorial presence” and the use of “authorial identity” by Hirvela and Belcher (2001). Although strongly related, it is this author’s belief that voice and identity are not always the same thing in the context of L2 writing.

Written voice is inherently found in the format and text of an L2 writer defined as best as possible by Matsuda (2001) and Ramanathan and Atkinson (1999). That is to say, voice is constructed by the linguistic and rhetorical resources that an L2 writer uses (Vollmer 2002). Whereas identity although expressed in the text within an L2 writers voice, would also include how the L2 writer sees themselves outside of the text or how they position themselves socially in multiple ways. This is especially true of the writer’s L1 identity (real self identity) in relation to their L2 writing identity (discourse identity). The factors that must be considered include sociocultural aspects, audience expectations, genres as well as individuality. Therefore it would be fair to say that although an L2 writer’s voice is often shaped by their identity when writing in L2, that identity may be different from the writer’s L1 identity. Furthermore the writer’s L2 identity may be totally different from their L1 identity constructed to produce an L2 voice or it may be a hybridization of the writers L1 and L2 identities. Some researchers such as Canagarajah (1993), Currie (2001) and Spack (1997)

have recognized these differing identities within an L2 writer and the dichotomy of “real self identity” and “discourse identity”.

6.0 CULTURAL IDENTITY AND VOICE IN WRITING

Cadman (1997), Casanave (1992), Fox (1994), Hinkel (1999), Ramanathan and Atkinson (1999) have all claimed that an L2 writer's cultural identity can restrain the production of individualized voice that is often required when writing in English. Especially in the typical English dominant setting of academic writing where the individual voice is valorized and championed (Ramanathan & Atkinson, 1999). This may not be the case in the L1 culture of an L2 writer of English.

Satfire (1992) has compared voice in text to individual "style", being almost without words, rather something in between the words. Ramanathan and Atkinson (1999) counter this by saying individual voice in writing most certainly involves some linguistic communication. They go on to say that in "native" English or English-dominant countries such as the U.S. or Britain, voice is where individuality is championed and represents linguistic behaviour, which is "clear, overt, expressive, and even assertive and demonstrative" (p. 161). Whereas for many people of varying cultures around the world this view is not shared. Many cultures, which are not English-dominant, do not have the same linguistic model for voice. In fact they may hold views that are exactly the opposite, and are a reflection of their own cultural identity. For example they may base their communicative interaction on a model where the written voice (and indeed oral voice) is represented in a "subtle, interpretative, independent, non-assertive and even non-verbal character" (p. 161).

Fox (1994) echoes much of what Ramanathan and Atkinson (1999) describe as the differences between the notion of written voice in English-dominant countries and that of

voice in other countries and cultures. Fox suggests that the written voice model where individuality is most prized, is in fact in the “world-minority” and it is the other more non-assertive model of voice as described by Ramanathan and Atkinson (1999), which is a “world-majority”.

An example of this second model of voice often cited is the case of Japanese writers, where what is left out of a text is often more valued for what it does not directly express, rather than the overt. There have been many studies carried out researching this aspect of the Japanese communicative model including Hara (2001), Hinds (1987), Ito (1980), Kobayashi (1996), Loveday (1982) amongst others. It is interesting to note in regards to voice in the written context, what is left out is comparable to the oral context in Japanese where silence is the “norm” (Ishii & Bruneau, 1994). This is a model of communication, which is shared in China and much of Asia according to Fox (1994), Harklau (1994) and Shen (1998) and even by some North American Native Indian tribes (Crago, 1992; Scollon & Scollon, 1981).

7.0 CULTURAL IDENTITY AND CONTRASTIVE RHETORIC

Kaplan's (1966) pioneering study in contrastive rhetoric was one of the first pieces of research to try and explore the issue of L1 cultural identity of writing and how it interferes in L2 English writing. Kaplan described how English native-speaking audiences often found L2 English writing at times illogical, ambiguous and sometimes incomprehensible relative to L1 English writing. He points the finger at the encroachment of L2 writers' L1 rhetorical patterns, based on cultural identity, in their English text. These non-English L1 rhetorical patterns, which include organisational structure that mirrored the writer's perceived cultural identity, were often difficult for native English reading audiences to understand. Kaplan's (1966) study investigated over seven hundred L2 English compositions by various writers and tried to find the differences and patterns of L1 and L2 idiosyncratic rhetorical forms.

Kaplan established five diagrams of differing linguistic identity characteristics, which he called "cultural thought patterns". The five patterns described were English, Semitic, Oriental, Romance and Russian. According to Kaplan, English speakers write using a linear structure and support their theme with specific details. Kaplan then describes and contrasts the rhetorical thought patterns of the other languages. Semitic learners compared to native English writers were found to employ considerably more coordination words and write as a series of parallel constructions that were usually coordinated rather than subordinated. Oriental learners (which Kaplan uses to mean Asian learners specifically Chinese and Korean) displayed a somewhat illogical structure as seen by native English writers, usually encircling the topic. Romance learners often drifted away from the main themes and provided seemingly irrelevant descriptions according to native English writers' expectations.

According to Kaplan, Russian learners too often digressed from the main theme in a zig-zag fashion between extraneous and relevant material. All of these rhetorical patterns Kaplan believed stemmed from the L1 cultural identities of the L2 writers of English.

Kaplan's initial contrastive rhetorical model has been frequently criticized (Connor & Johns, 1990). It is often targeted as being overly simplistic, ethnocentric, static and is negatively characterized as being a movement associated with structural linguistics and behaviourism. Another major criticism has been that the native English pattern, it seems, is shown to be the only acceptable norm, with any other pattern deviating from it often being labeled illogical or erratic. Also the fact that many languages were omitted in the study has been a cause of concern for many. However, Panetta (2001) and Conner (2002) have attempted to revise Kaplan's original model and bring it up to date and in line with the current models of cross-cultural research. What cannot be denied is Kaplan's models did indeed make cognizant the need for understanding the influence of L1 culture and identity on the production of L2 English writing.

8.0 VOICE AS SELF-REPRESENTATION OF IDENTITY

Although it has been argued in this study that writer voice and writer identity are not synonymous, it is acknowledged that there is a strong relationship and even an interdependence. Vollmer (2002) suggests that a writer's identity construction is an essential component to written discourse and the text of an L2 writer gives evidence of participation in a given culture. In the case of academic English writing this has often meant being able to give clear and forceful expression of opinion or an ethereal rhetorical quality that conveys the writers uniqueness via written voice (Canagarajah, 2002b; Leki, 1992; Ramanathan & Atkinson, 1999). Ivanic and Camps (2001), in line with Bakhtinian thinking, however state that the view of voice is not tied exclusively to the individual but rather the writer can use voice via lexical, syntactic, organisational and material aspects to self-represent their own sociocultural identity. Prior (2001) agrees by saying the "romantic notion of voice as the expression of an autonomous individual are not the only notions available to us" (p. 62).

However the research literature suggests, at least in the academic English writing setting, that L2 writers of English still feel the need to mould an identity that conforms to and favours the dominant individualistic Anglo-American model of voice. A model that may be at odds with their own L1 Identity. Those L2 writers of English who have shied away from projecting an authoritative voice or assertive discursive identity have faced serious consequences, such as total rejection of texts (Canagarajah, 2001; Fox, 1994; Johns, 1991) or as in the case of Starfield's (2002) study, they have even been accused of plagiarism. Therefore, L2 writers of English whether students or established writers, have tended to fall into three groups of coping strategies. The first group feel they have had to hybridize their L1 identity or real self

with an English discourse identity. The second group have resisted, which at times has led to giving up trying to write in English rather than losing their past identity (Currie 2001). The third feel that they have had to completely adopt an English discourse identity to be accepted and in due course have totally lost (or experienced near total loss of) their L1 real identity (Canagarajah, 2001; Currie, 2001; Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000; Shen, 1998; Vollmer, 2002).

There are many autobiographical and biographical case studies in the research literature relating the confusion, adjustment and at times capitulation to an L2 identity and individual voice that many L2 writers of English felt was expected of them in their compositions. At this point it would be pertinent to give some examples. One such example is of Keizer (2004) an L1 Dutch speaker, who complained that writing in English involved a “circus performance” in order to have his ideas accepted. He also felt he had to erase some of his L1 identity and psyche in order to produce a voice acceptable in English, lamenting “Writing in English felt to me like trying to plough stretches of marble, an ungainly procedure ruining some pretty nice material” (p. 66). Kamanai (2000) an L1 speaker of Hindi compares not just the Hindi written voice but also the English written voice she was using in India, to be very different to written voice she was expected to use when she arrived in the U.S., “in America I was expected to come clean on information, feelings, ignorance, speculations, judgments largely taboo in India and considered bizarre (p. 100). Brintrup (2000) a doctoral student from Chile and an L1 speaker of Spanish tells of the advice she was given to be a more effective and efficient writer when she arrived in the U.S., “forget everything you learned in the past and start again” (p. 15). She felt surprised and discontent with this advice, bemoaning “ why this necessity of washing my mind? I felt like something had been taken away, like my skin and my verbal conception of the world” (p.15). Carla (Fox, 1994), also from Chile and studying in

the US, felt anxious about returning back to her native Chile fearing “I thought, if I adopt this American writing style, what might become of me on my return? Will I be shunned by my own students? Or even worse will I look down on my own people so much that I deny them their ways of communicating, their language, the way they write? (p. 72).

Instances of L2 writers of English that have resisted the loss of their L1 identity include Virginia, a young Porto Rican woman with L1 Spanish, studying in an American graduate school (Casanave, 1992). Virginia felt very torn between the two worlds of her L1 real identity and the L2 English discourse identity she felt she was expected to adopt and voice she was expected to project, that of middle-aged white male professors. The struggle eventually led to her leaving academia in favour of pursuing goals she felt were more attuned to her own identity and values. Spack (1997) in her longitudinal study of Yoko, a Japanese undergraduate student at an American university, shows the enduring commitment to keep hold of an L1 identity despite still in the process of developing English writing skills. Yoko confidently asserts:

...certainly there are certain things I don't want to get used to or be Americanized...And while I'm adjusting to a new, American culture, I want to be myself and be confident for what I am, because I believe that no culture is right or wrong or better than the others. (Spack, 1997, p. 15)

Some have responded to the fear of not having their compositions accepted in the academic English setting by foregoing much of their L1 identity and voice. Currie (2001) relates the repositioning of identity that Lui, a master's student, felt was necessary for him to write in English. Lui explained how at first he experienced difficulty in “accurately interpreting the

expectations in producing a voice which my reader wants to hear from the text". He goes on to say how he overcame his initial difficulties by producing text specifically aimed at the academic English discourse community and his realization that the voice he must employ and identity he must adopt come from "...understanding my status in the new community...I am one in a less powerful position, the one who wants to get into the academic community and obtain my degree from my powerful reader" (p. 32). Lui felt it was "not in a powerless student's interest to rock the boat" and concludes by saying, possibly wryly, "It seems that now I know the way of singing, and the readers are beginning to show their acceptance of my voice" (p. 32).

Pavlenko and Lantof (2000) relate the case of Eva, a Polish L1 speaker, who eventually came to see herself as a bilingual writer, but ultimately as losing her Polish language and even identity to English. Eva explains how after years of English composition her "inner voice" of Polish which she once used to create composition had "...atrophied, shriveled from sheer uselessness. Its words don't apply to my new experiences" (p. 165).

Canagarajah (2001), a well established research scholar in the field of second language writing, originally from Sri Lanka, describes how he spent years identifying and then learning how to use American English discourse conventions. This he did to the point of replacing his original Tamil L1 identity and voice in writing with an American English one. When he then applied this style, voice and identity to a composition he wrote in Tamil for a Sri Lankan academic community, he was met with strong criticism and negativity. He explains that his writing had seemed overconfident and pompous:

My cocksure way of beginning my essay – announcing my thesis, delineating the steps of the argument, promising to prove my points conclusively – had left a bad taste in the mouths of local readership. They said this excessively planned and calculated move gave the impression of a “style-less” mechanical writing. (p. 32)

Canagarajah actually felt compelled to thank his Sri Lankan colleagues for bringing to his attention to what he came to recognise was complete submission to the American discourse style along with its issues of identity and voice. He then expresses regret at the lengths he had gone to in order to suppress his “ethos and feelings” towards his earlier journal articles and the strategy he had used to “write myself out of my texts” (p. 36).

9.0 THE CASE OF FAN SHEN

Probably the most well known and oft cited studies in the research literature on voice and identity of an L2 writer of English in an academic context is that of Fan Shen (1998) first published in 1989 and titled “The Classroom and the Wider Culture: Identity as a key to Learning English Composition.” The case of Shen has been deemed important for providing compelling evidence for the acceptance of differing identities of writers across cultures, and the implications that has on written voice. Shen’s account has been consistently cited to make cognizant and support this notion by a variety of subsequent studies including, Atkinson (2001), Cadman (1997), Currie (2001), Hirvela and Belcher (2001), Matsuda (2001), Ramanathan and Atkinson (1999) and Wu and Rubin (2000). Therefore it is useful to examine and discuss Shen’s case in a little more detail.

Shen (1998), an immigrant from the People’s Republic of China to the U.S., grew up in Maoist era China. After his relocation to the U.S. he enrolled in the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. This he explains is when his struggles with English composition began. Shen describes how he had to redefine his Chinese self and identity, which eventually necessitated having to create a new English self as dictated by the rules of English composition. He talks of the confusion of approaching writing in English from his Chinese cultural background but finding that writing in English in fact redefined his ideological and logical self. Ideological identity, which he also calls identity of the self, he explains is the system of values he consciously and unconsciously acquired from his sociocultural background. Logical identity, which he also calls identity of the mind, is what he identifies as “the natural way I organize and express my thoughts in writing” (p. 123). Therefore it can be seen that Shen’s idea of his

logical identity is based on Kaplan's (1966) contrastive rhetoric theory and cultural thought patterns.

Shen's first struggle came when he encountered his teachers' persistent encouragement to "just be yourself" and "just write what *you* think" (p. 124). He complains that in retrospect this was not clear or useful advice for him, and he suggests it not being so for most students from China, Korea, Vietnam, or India. His complaint is that "be yourself" is often construed by students from such countries as meaning either "forget your cultural habit of writing" or "write as you would write in your own language" (p. 132). But in fact he was to find out that neither meaning was meant by his teachers. Shen concluded that what it actually meant was that "I had to accept the way a Westerner accepts himself in relation to the universe and society" (p. 124). He also concluded that the rules behind "just write what *you* think" were based on the Anglo-American principle of protecting and promoting individuality and private property. Something he felt was clear to those who had been raised with these values, but was completely at odds with and contradictory to the cultural, ideological and logical identity which he formed for himself growing up in Maoist era China.

Shen focused on what he believed would allow him to write in a way his teachers were suggesting, and that he believed was learning to use the first person singular. The first English composition paper he received back from his teacher when he had initially arrived in the U.S. had comments such as "Why did you always use 'We' instead of 'I'?" and "Your paper would be stronger if you eliminated some sentences in the passive voice" (p. 123). He responded by explaining that the image of "I" or "myself" that he initially held in his Chinese identity was not that of his American teachers.

In China “I” is always subordinated to “We” – be it the working class, Party, the country or some other elective body. Both political and literal pressure and literary tradition require that “I” be somewhat hidden or buried in writings and speeches; presenting the ‘self’ too obviously would give people the impression of being disrespectful of the Communist party in political writings and boastful in scholarly writings. (Shen, 1998, p. 124)

Shen then explains that the word “I” in Maoist era China was synonymous with “individualism” which was another word with negative connotations, both words projecting a meaning of selfishness. This he says meant that he had always had to show modesty when writing in Chinese even dispensing brilliant ideas so as not to compete with or try to outshine the names of ancient or modern figures of authority. This at times even led to what Shen calls “reverse plagiarism” (p. 125), where in middle school he would attribute some of his thoughts and ideas to literary or political “experts” when he could not find suitable quotations to back up his argument.

With this backdrop then, Shen went about creating a new discourse identity that would allow him to project a voice which he felt would be greater appreciated by its intended audience. An identity that would allow him to implement an Anglo-American voice with an assertive, confident and aggressive “I” (p. 127). This new identity did not come easily and required doing such things as imagining himself being reborn in a new body with its head upside down. “Crawling out of a humble, timid, modest Chinese “I” and creeping into an immodest and even pompous English “I”” (p. 125). This led to intentionally and overtly trying to show his individuality and to “glorifying” the use of “I” by using the first person singular pronoun as much as possible. Also to increasing the use of phrases such as “I think”, “I believe” and “I see” and “deliberately cut[ting] out quotations from authorities” (p. 125)

Another aspect, which Shen found difficult was not just changing how he envisioned himself, but also how he perceived the world. The paradox of truly being “myself” which he felt was the key to being a successful English writer was “not to be my Chinese self at all” (p. 125). He claims his logical identity was also transformed. Shen explains how in Chinese writing, the surrounding forest is cleared before the real target is attacked. Echoing Kaplan’s (1966) paper on contrastive rhetoric, Shen describes how Chinese writing is Confucianist in nature and starts by stating conditions of composition “how, why and when the piece of writing is being composed. All this will serve as a proper foundation on which to build the house” (p. 128). This Shen asserts opposes the linear “straight-line Western approach” (p. 128). He therefore felt it necessary to reposition his written voice from an inductive Chinese one to a more deductive English one.

Changing his usage of the first personal pronoun and also the logical organisation of his English writing were strategies Shen used to build his new identity. He believes in the end it worked to some extent in gaining acceptance of his writing. However it is telling that he was, and indeed is, not totally comfortable with his new identity, describing it as “a shadow of myself” (p. 125).

Although Shen’s (1998) autobiographical study may be described as just “one man’s musings” (Stapleton, 2002, p. 180) he does indeed eloquently express in depth the considerable difficulty and frustrations faced by many writers of L2 English in regards to voice and identity, and in particular of students writing in English (Canagarajah, 2002b;

Casanave, 1992; Fox, 1994; etc.). This is probably why his study is still so often cited in the research literature.

10.0 CONCLUSION

This study has endeavored to describe and highlight some of the issues of voice and identity in the context of writing and in particular of academic English writing. Although there are many definitions of what voice or identity actually is or should be, and they are difficult concepts to agree upon, what cannot be denied is that they do impact on L2 writers of English. The dominant view in many academic English settings is that voice should project an identity of individuality, uniqueness and assertiveness, a view that may have its roots in the expressivist school of writing. More recently a sociocultural model for identity and written voice has emerged with studies such as Ede's (1989) and Ivanic and Camps (2001) basing their views on Bakhtin's (1986) model of dialogic voice.

Also Kaplan's (1966) contrastive rhetoric has tried to build models of rhetorical patterns that writers of L2 English employ from their L1 cultural backgrounds, often leading to misunderstanding and rejection by native English audiences. Although often criticized as being ethnocentric, nevertheless it would seem that Kaplan's motives were more egalitarian. Bringing to the attention of native English writers the idea that their way of organising English texts is not the only way. Another important notion that many L2 writers of English would like to impress on native writers of English is that of the existence of an L1 cultural identity and voice, which often greatly differs from Western ideals. The frustrations and difficulties that many L2 writers of English have experienced in trying to reconcile between their real voice and identity and their authorial voice and identity were explored in this study with particular attention paid to the compelling and often cited case of Fan Shen (1998), an

L1 Chinese writer of L2 English. Also the multiple fears of not having text accepted, being accused of plagiarism and loss of L1 identity are touched upon.

There are also of course many pedagogical implications for the issues of identity and voice in L2 writing. Indeed some researchers such as Canagarajah (2001), Matsuda (2001) and Ramanathan and Atkinson (1999), have tried to tackle the subject. However, it is outside the scope of this study to go into detail the suggestions they give and indeed the rebuttals (Stapleton, 2002; Stapleton & Helms-Park, 2008) that have questioned the relevance and acceptability of their suggestions. It was the aim of this study to highlight and bring to attention the often-overlooked problems and fears faced by many L2 writers. It is hoped that in the near future the academic community will address the dearth in research of this important and indeed essential aspect of L2 writing and its accompanying pedagogical issues.

SUMMARY OF MODULE 1 AND PLAN OF MODULE 2

Module 1 paper 1 describes the five main viewpoints and stances taken by many researchers and instructors of writing. These are cognitivism, expressivism, social constructionism, interactivism and culturism. These viewpoints vary according to the relative importance placed on the elements of writer, reader, reality or language. To some extent these variances of viewpoints occur within the two main frameworks of composition instruction, teaching L1 writers or L2 writers. Many of these viewpoints emerged from the same root of L1 composition theory and were often demonstrated in the L2 writing setting by research in that context.

Theorists, researchers, teachers and learners may differ greatly in regard to the essential elements, and a single viewpoint is difficult to achieve. However all acknowledge that an understanding of the essential elements of composition mentioned by Berlin (1982), those of writer, reader, reality and language, must be taken into account and any one of them cannot be ignored totally. These viewpoints may change due to circumstances and particular historical periods and may even overlap in certain situations. Nevertheless, all the pedagogical and ideological viewpoints mentioned in module 1 paper 1 can still be found in the modern L2 writing classroom and the survey will give a foundation for better understanding of different contexts, attitudes and motivations in L2 writing, which will be invaluable for the overall PhD study.

The second paper in module 1 describes and highlights some of the issues of voice and identity in the context of writing and in particular of academic L2 English writing. The

dominant view in many academic English settings of an assertive voice that projects an identity of individuality is compared and contrasted to the Bakhtinian sociocultural model for identity and dialogic voice. The difficulties of defining what voice or identity actually are, and the overall impact of voice and identity on L2 writers of English are also discussed.

Kaplan's (1966) contrastive rhetoric is explained in some detail in regards to L1 language and the interference or influences of cultural thought patterns on L2 writing. This has direct implications for the overall PhD study which aims to investigate the use of L1 and L2 in planning an L2 English text and whether cultural topic choice has any influence on the resultant L2 text. Finally module 1 paper 2 highlights, with examples, the frustrations and difficulties that many L2 writers of English have experienced in trying to reconcile their real voice and identity and their authorial voice and identity. This includes a discussion of the multiple fears L2 writers experience of not having their text accepted, being accused of plagiarism and undergoing loss of L1 identity.

Module 2 builds on the theoretical exploration and research developed in module 1 of L2 writing viewpoints and L1 language and cultural influence on L2 writing especially the impact on voice and identity. Module 2 discusses the purposes, aims and scope of the overall PhD study. Contrasting yet building on the discussion in module 1 of composition stances and viewpoints, a review of the literature is carried out in module 2 which this time includes outlining current and relevant pedagogical approaches in L2 writing. The most relevant and important approach is the process orientated approach as the focus of this study is the planning stages of L2 writing and therefore is looked at in more detail. This is followed by a broad survey of L2 writing research that has been carried out which is also relevant to the

present study, specifically research on the planning stages of L2 writing and topic choice are reviewed. Finally descriptions of the participant subject samples and populations are given as well as a discussion of their background and placing them in context.

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