

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

MODULE 2

By
JUNAID JALAL MALIK, MSc

Module 2 submitted to the
College of Arts and Law
of the University of Birmingham
in partial fulfillment of the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
Applied Linguistics

Centre for English Language Studies
Department of English
University of Birmingham
Edgbaston
Birmingham B15 2TT
UK

December 2009

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ABSTRACT

The development of writing competence for students appears to be a more remote concern for many English language teachers and educators when compared to oral communication. However, the ability to write appropriately and persuasively in English can be regarded as essential in contemporary life. This may be particularly true for both Japanese students who choose to spend several years outside their country in order to be educated in English language institutions in Anglophone countries and for those Japanese students who are enrolled in English language medium universities in their own country.

Often when teaching oral communication great emphasis is placed on the use of target English language only in the classroom. Reasons often given to defend this policy include the use of L1 in learning English causes unwanted language interference and extended “thinking-time” slowing down a conversation. However, this may not be the best policy when producing L2 writing, particularly in the early planning stage where the use of L1 might in fact reduce cognitive loads on L2 writers especially if the topic of the writing is linked to a writer’s L1 and may be best recalled in L1. This PhD study explores the questions and reservations regarding the optimum methods of planning an English essay by Japanese writers of L2 English, studying English in the UK and in Japan, with particular focus on the variables of language of planning and topic choice.

The present module discusses the purposes, aims, scale and scope of the entire PhD study. This includes the gap in current research literature and the need for the present study. The contexts and types of participant subjects are introduced. Research questions are outlined and a discussion is provided on how the inquiry will be carried out in terms of the stages of the experiment, ideology and paradigms. An in depth review of the literature relevant to the overall study is also given. It is hoped that the present module gives sufficient detailed background information for the entire study, which is essential for better understanding of the experiment instrumentation, data collection, analysis, results and discussion covered in module 3.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.0 THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY.....	4
1.1 The importance of L2 writing.....	4
1.2 Themes of previous research.....	5
1.3 Issues of L1 use and topic choice.....	7
1.3.1 Use of L1 in L2 writing.....	7
1.3.2 Topic choice.....	9
1.4 Planning: L1 interference vs. positive transfer.....	9
1.5 Gap in current research corpus.....	10
2.0 AIMS AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY.....	13
2.1 Aims and objectives.....	13
2.2 Scope, contexts and scale.....	14
2.2.1 Scope of the study.....	14
2.2.2 Context of the study.....	15
2.2.3 Scale and stages of experimental phase.....	17
2.3 Ideology and paradigms of inquiry.....	19
2.4 Research questions.....	21
3.0 REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....	24
3.1 L2 writing pedagogical approaches.....	26
3.1.1 Controlled composition.....	28
3.1.2 Current-traditional rhetoric.....	31
3.2 The process orientated approach.....	35
3.2.1 English for academic purposes and the criticism of the process orientated approach.....	39
3.2.2 What are the process steps?.....	43
3.2.3 Planning process and generating ideas through brainstorming.....	46
3.3 Writing research survey.....	50
3.3.1 The relationship of L1 composition process research to L2 writing process research.....	51
3.3.1.1 <i>Following the lead of L1 process writing research.....</i>	<i>54</i>
3.3.1.2 <i>Acknowledging the variation between L1 and L2 process writing.....</i>	<i>55</i>
3.3.2 The transfer of L1 in the L2 writing process.....	57
3.3.3 Translating student generated L1 text as an intentional process step in L2 Composition.....	63
3.3.4 Using L1 specifically in the planning step of L2 writing.....	69
3.3.5 Topic choice, topic knowledge retrieval and L1 use.....	76
SUMMARY OF MODULE 2 AND PLAN OF MODULE 3.....	80
LIST OF REFERENCES.....	84

INTRODUCTION

Module 1 of the present PhD study 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 are surveyed in some detail. 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 it is hoped a foundation for different contexts and attitudes can be 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, and reflecting my growing knowledge on L2 writing and overall themes of the PhD study, the first part of the present module (module 2) discusses the purposes, aims, scale and scope of the entire PhD study. This includes the gap in current research literature and the need for the present study. The contexts and types of participant subjects are introduced, as well as provisional research questions, and a discussion of how the inquiry will be carried out in terms of the stages of the experiment, ideology and

paradigms. The second part of this module reviews the literature relevant to the overall study. This starts off by outlining current and relevant actual pedagogical devices, approaches and orientations of L2 writing. The most relevant and important approach to the present study is the process orientated approach and therefore this is looked at in more detail. It should be noted this section builds upon, but is distinct and contrasts the discussion in module 1 where only the L2 writing *viewpoints* and *stances* taken by researchers (specifically built upon L1 composition theories) were outlined. The review of literature then goes on to survey writing research that has been carried out that is directly related to the experimental phase of the present study. In particular research investigating the relationship between L1 and L2 writing research, research detailing the transfer of L1 in the L2 writing process, research on intentional student translating of L1 in L2 composition, research investigating the use of L1 specifically in the planning stage of L2 writing and finally research on L2 writing topic choice and L1 use in topic knowledge retrieval are all reviewed and examined.

In module 3 detailed descriptions of the participant subjects will be given as well as discussing their backgrounds and placing them in context. The experimental phase will be discussed in depth and methodology, design and data collection procedures will be outlined. Instrumentation will be explained and analyses of data collected will be carried out. The results will be presented and discussed for the subject sample populations (L1 Japanese writers of L2 English) in the three 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 will be investigated and a discussion on whether the findings could be applied to broader L2 writing contexts will also

be examined. Finally conclusions and recommendations will be discussed including pedagogical implications as well as any limitations found in the study.

1.0 THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

1.1 The importance of L2 writing

It is often the case when English language teachers and educators think of the main professional challenges they must confront, the development of oral communication is the focus for both pedagogy and inquiry. By comparison, the development of writing competence appears to be a more remote concern. However, the ability to write appropriately and persuasively in English can be regarded as essential in contemporary life. For example writing is an indispensable skill for the thousands of international students who choose to spend several years outside their country in order to be educated in English language institutions (both private language schools and universities) in Anglophone countries. The same can be said for non-native English language students who are enrolled in English language medium universities in their own home countries.

Besides its importance in educational and scientific spheres, according to researchers such as Thatcher (2000) and Parks (2000), English writing also plays fundamental intercultural and trans-national roles in businesses, work places, and governmental activities across the world's geography. In the present global and technological world, it is writing in English, rather than simply speaking in English, that can open or close doors to individual, national, and international progress and advancement.

1.2 Themes of previous research

Much research has already been carried out on first language (L1) writing or native language writing, but research on second language (L2) writing is still a relatively recent phenomenon. Indeed the theoretical frameworks and research carried out, based upon those theories, in the field of L1 composition studies have greatly influenced the viewpoints and stances taken by many L2 writing researchers and instructors (Krapels, 1990; Zamel, 1984). These viewpoints consider the relative importance and value placed upon the key elements in writing, as defined by Berlin (1982), namely the writer, audience, reality and language used. The five major viewpoints that have emerged are those of the cognitivists, the expressivists, the social constructionists, the interactivists and the culturists. All five of these viewpoint and the theories that have shaped them have been extensively discussed in module 1 paper 1. It should be noted here that in the scope of the present study L2 writing refers to writing of English texts by writers whose first language (L1) is not English.

The viewpoints held by researchers and instructors of L2 writing have also influenced the actual pedagogical approaches developed for L2 writing. These approaches have included focusing on sentence-level instruction in the controlled composition approach and focusing on larger textual rhetorical patterns in the current-traditional rhetorical approach. Although vestiges of these approaches are still prevalent in many L2 English language classrooms, a paradigm shift occurred in the early 1980s (again somewhat influenced by trends in L1 composition research) where the spotlight moved away from focus on form of text products towards the processes and strategies that L2 English writers use to produce text. However many in the field have since felt the pendulum from product to process has swung too far

(Horowitz, 1986; Susser, 1994). The bone of contention is that by employing a pedagogical approach focusing solely on writing processes, both the function and the context of text produced were being neglected. Reid (2001) argues that in the actual L2 classroom the controversy between process and product is in fact a “false dichotomy”. Therefore although the majority of L2 English textbooks and research literature over the last two decades or so strongly favour a process oriented writing pedagogy, rudimentary teaching of formal textual accuracy especially in the revising and editing stages of process writing are still prevalent and common in classrooms (Caudery, 1995; Matsuda, 2003; Tangpermpoon, 2008). Zamel (1983) says in contrast to L1 composition, the L2 writing instructor (even considering the process-nature of writing) must by necessity look more closely at language accuracy of texts produced by L2 writing students. Indeed in the research corpus of L2 writing, one of the prime forms of evaluating the success rate of process strategies employed by L2 writers is by assessing the textual accuracy of the final texts produced via the process approach. Notable examples include Cohen (2000), Friedlander (1990) and Zamel (1983) amongst others.

Although many studies investigating the process strategies of subjects have used think-aloud protocols in qualitative case studies while the subjects were actually engaged in the writing processes, it has been difficult to generalise the findings beyond the immediate subjects studied. In contrast there have been many quantitative studies that have relied on assessing the success rate of student process strategies by assessing their finished written products. Often this has included evaluating linguistic accuracy. In fact, a well known L2 composition profile developed by Jacobs, Zingraf, Wormuth, Hartfiel and Hughly (1981) which has been, and is still often, used by many researchers devotes three of its five sub-heads to linguistic-specific assessment, namely vocabulary, language use and mechanics. The quantitative experimental

phase of the present PhD study will also focus on obtaining data on student process strategies by assessing their finished written products rather than think-aloud protocols. The reasons for this choice will be further explained in the task design section of module 3.

1.3 Issues of L1 use and topic choice

Research on L2 writing in the last 30 years (e.g. Hayes & Flower, 1980; Krapels, 1990) has supported the position that the process of writing in L1 is largely the same for writing in the L2. However while the L1 writing process includes producing content, drafting ideas, revising writing, choosing appropriate vocabulary, and editing text, writing in an L2 is a challenging and complex process in its own right involving all of these elements often chaotically mixed with second language processing issues. These L2 issues according to Bereiter and Scardinalia (1987) can overwhelm the writing process, even to the point of a complete breakdown of the process. Two of the issues most important to L2 writers are firstly that of L1 usage in the process steps and secondly the topic choice of the writing. The present study over the course of three modules examines these two important issues. Particularly, the use of L1 in the planning stages of L2 writing, and of the effect of culturally specific topic choices.

1.3.1 Use of L1 in L2 writing

The issue of whether teachers should use or encourage any use of L1 while teaching an L2 is a hotly debated one. Traditionally use of L1 in L2 writing, whether phonological (Lado,

1979), syntactic (Wardhaugh, 1970) or rhetorical (Kaplan, 1972) has been investigated as a form of interference, that is a source of errors in L2 writing. More recently Macaro (2001) describes the three positions teachers often take when confronting this issue. The “*virtual*” position where the teacher believes all teaching and learning should be in the target L2, the “*maximal*” position where the teacher agrees in principle with the virtual position but concedes begrudgingly that in real classroom situations some L2 will be used. Finally the “*optimal*” position is when a teacher believes that the use of L1 when teaching or learning L2 is beneficial. The question of which of these positions would be the most beneficial and conducive to the teaching, learning and practice of writing in L2 is of great interest.

While some studies (Cohen & Brooks-Carson, 2001; Woodall, 2002; Kobayashi & Rinnert, 1992; and Qi, 1998) have tried to answer this question to some extent, they have usually investigated the issue of producing a text in L1 and then translating it into the L2. However, very few studies have looked into the issue of pre-writing or planning in an L1 and then composing a text in an L2. Hayes and Flower (1983) define planning as a very broad activity that includes not only generating content, organising it, and setting up goals, but also deciding on one’s meaning, deciding what part of that meaning to convey to the audience, and choosing rhetorical strategies. It also includes the whole range of thinking activities that are required before one can put words on paper.

1.3.2 Topic choice

Along with L1 use in planning writing, the major problem of topic choice is also often faced by L2 writing instructors. The choice of topic for writing is integral to any instruction in L2 writing. Raimes (1991) suggests that in form-dominated writing pedagogy topics are usually assigned by the teacher. Whereas in process oriented pedagogy the student is often given a free choice of topic, using personal experience. The reality is that it is often not as clear-cut as that. As has been mentioned, in the actual L2 classroom, the pedagogy often employed is process orientated but focus on form is also required if not equally as important, especially in the form of assessment or practice for essays that occur in exams, be they institutional exams or exams such as TOEFL and IELTS. So although what Raimes (1991) says about topic choice and pedagogy may hold true for L1 composition, in L2 writing the issue is more complicated and often the student is given a topic that they must write about. What that topic should be, and in which form, needs to be considered, as well as notions of culturally relevant and culturally sensitive topics. How an L2 writer responds to an essay prompt and retrieves information about it is also of interest.

1.4 Planning: L1 interference vs. positive transfer

The possibility of a positive transfer rather than interference of L1 in L2 text production, especially in the planning stages, needs also to be seriously considered. The notion that L2 writers may be retrieving topic knowledge from their L1 while planning an L2 English text, but are forced to mentally translate into L2 English before they put pen to paper has been

discussed by Friedlander (1990) and Lay (1982). In doing so the L2 writers may in fact have unnecessary additional constraints and cognitive loads placed on them if they are required to plan and produce texts solely using L2 English without any help or scaffolding from written L1. Peterson and Peterson (1959) suggest that the amount of information that can be stored in short-term memory is very limited and prone to rapid decay. Therefore again any mental translation from L1 to L2 may constrain text production due to limitations in what information L2 writers are able to retain. It may well be that encouraging L2 writers to think about their knowledge of a topic, retrieve information from memory and produce a written plan in their L1 from which they can then produce an L2 essay text may be more beneficial for producing better texts with more content. This may especially be true if the topic is related to the L1 and knowledge of it was also acquired in the writer's L1. In module 1 paper 2 the issues of voice, identity, culture and ideology in L2 writing were explored. These are all factors that impact the L2 writer, even more so depending on the topic choice of L2 writing. The present study, in part, investigates the effects of cultural and ideological aspects of essay topics and retrieval of topic information especially in the planning stage of L2 writing and the possible positive or negative effects of using L1 in that planning stage.

1.5 Gap in current research corpus

To summarise, over the course of modules 2 and 3 the main issues investigated include the use of L1 when planning to write in an L2 and also the choice of topic for L2 writing. The focus will be on the influence of an L2 writer's first language on L2 writing, how topic information might be stored in their memory and how the writer might best access that

information. To date there have been very few studies in the research literature that have tried to investigate these issues in an interrelated and coherent fashion.

There is an acute dearth of studies directly investigating these issues. Related information is scarce in the flagship journal of the L2 writing field, “Journal of Second Language Writing” as well as in most ELT, cognitive psychology or composition related journals. In fact in the research reference book “A Synthesis of Research on Second Language Writing in English” recently published in 2008, authored by Leki, Cumming and Silva, which outlines in some detail the most significant and influential findings of published research on second language writing over the last twenty-five years, only four studies which investigate planning in L1/L2 are mentioned (p. 124), and only five studies on Topic choice/prompts (p. 135). None of these studies directly examine the issues the present PhD study hopes to investigate in an interrelated way. Only two studies by Friedlander (1990) and Akyel (1994), mentioned separately, have tried to investigate to some extent planning in L1 and topic choice in an interrelated way. These two studies are examined in the “review of literature” section of the present module. However neither of these two studies investigates the differences or similarities of L2 writing in the different contexts of home county L2 environment vs. Anglophone country environment, or the context of Japanese students. These two studies also show mixed and sometimes conflicting empirical results.

The present study therefore is motivated by the extremely limited number of previous related studies and lack of up to date research investigating the issue of L1 use in planning L2 writing with the effects of topic choice variables. It is believed the present study is the first of its kind

investigating these issues in the context of student Japanese L2 writers studying in Japan vs. studying in an Anglophone country.

2.0 AIMS AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

2.1 Aims and objectives

In terms of aims, the present study sets out to investigate whether planning in L1 Japanese about a Japanese topic or planning in L2 English about an English topic (i.e. a language and topic match condition) would enhance a Japanese L2 English writer's plan and final text in English. Also whether topic choice independent of language, or language choice of planning independent of topic choice (language and topic mismatch conditions) would have any impact on plans or resulting L2 English final texts. In other words does planning in Japanese or planning in English (regardless of the topic) enhance or weaken the plan or resultant English text. Or do certain topic choices for a text (regardless of whether they are planned in Japanese or English) enhance or weaken the plan or resultant English text.

	<u>Essay topic</u>	<u>Plan language</u>	<u>Final essay</u>
<i>Match condition</i>	L1 Japanese related	L1 Japanese	L2 English
<i>Match condition</i>	L2 English related	L2 English	L2 English
<i>Mismatch condition</i>	L1 Japanese related	L2 English	L2 English
<i>Mismatch condition</i>	L2 English related	L1 Japanese	L2 English

In this case what is meant by a Japanese topic is a topic that is culturally tied to Japan or the Japanese language or a topic that has been “experienced” in the Japanese language. Likewise for the English topic, the topic is one that is linked culturally to the English-dominant speaking world or a topic the writer “experienced” or acquired knowledge about in the English language.

2.2 Scope, contexts and scale

2.2.1 Scope of the study

The scope of the present study covers three different situated contexts. In all three situated contexts the subjects will be L1 Japanese writers of L2 English. The choice stems partly from my interest in Japanese learners of English. Having for a number of years taught many Japanese learners in the UK and also in a Japanese high school, I am currently an Assistant Professor of English at a Japanese University. In the various institutions I have taught in, more often than not pedagogical policies were employed that placed great emphasis on the use only of target English language in the classroom. These policies were usually based, I believe, on behaviourist models and communicative second language acquisition theories, such as Krashen's (1982, 1985) input hypothesis and Swain's (1985) comprehensible output hypothesis. Even though one may not agree with these theories, it is understandable that institutions applied these policies, based on the above mentioned theories, in aural-oral communicative teaching situations. Reasons often given to defend these policies were that if students use L1 in learning English, this would cause unwanted language interference and extended "thinking-time" required for speech production, thus slowing down a student's ability to hold a conversation. However, I found that these maximal target language policies were usually extended to teaching all English language skills including L2 writing. I was unsure if L1 interference would indeed hinder students in producing L2 writing particularly in the early planning stages of writing and hypothesised that L1 use might in fact reduce cognitive loads on students. Also the speed of text production in writing is different, often not

required to be so instantaneous as speech production in a conversation. Allied to the fact that it is relatively easier to revise and edit written text than speech, I believe the notion that L1 should not be used at all by students of English because its use slows down L2 production is questionable in the context of writing. Therefore it seems to be worth exploring the questions and reservations regarding these policies further and conducting research to investigate alternatives to them.

Another important aspect I found when teaching L2 English writing was the choice of topic. A problem often encountered by students was being told to write about topics that they often felt were not relevant to them or culturally sensitive towards them. A complaint I heard on more than one occasion was that the writing prompts in many English language textbooks, and indeed in exams, were “Euro-centric” and many of my Japanese students expressed difficulties in trying to come up with ideas to suit the topic provided. Again it seems worth exploring the topic choice and recollection of ideas in the planning stages of L2 writing. Of interest also is whether recollection of ideas in L1 or L2 has an impact on or is influenced by culturally influenced topic choices (See “review of literature” section in present module for related previous research).

2.2.2 Context of the study

As the present study is concerned specifically with L1 Japanese writers of L2 English the sample is naturally L1 Japanese writers of L2 English. However, by choosing three situated contexts this study investigates and provides insights into the three most common situational

realities that are prevalent for L1 Japanese writers of L2 English, that is to say the samples are from three situated contextual populations (see below). These three population groups are examined separately one by one in the first stage of the experimental phase of the study.

In the second stage of the experimental phase of the study, by comparing and contrasting the three different situated contexts and placing them in terms of their relative similarities, it is hoped that through an implicit theoretical gradient of similarity an increase in the external validity and scope for generalization of the results to an overall broader context and population (i.e. L2 writers other than Japanese L2 writers) can be achieved.

Therefore in effect by choosing three dissimilar situational contexts (see below) with relatively similar subjects (i.e. L1 Japanese writers of L2 English), insights into not only the particular situated contexts (in and of themselves) can be gained but by then looking at them together in terms of quantitative analyses, the threats to external validity can be reduced and an increase in proximal similarity (Campbell & Russo, 1998) can be amplified for the secondary aim of applying the data, results and findings to an overall broader context and population.

The three situated context groups are as follows:

- Japanese students studying general English in a private language school in the United Kingdom. (Group A)
- Japanese students majoring in English at a Japanese University. (Group B)
- Japanese academic “expert” writers of English. (Group C)

The first two groups (Group A and Group B) represent very common situational contexts for L1 Japanese writers of L2 English. It should be noted that in my experience most Japanese complete beginners or novice learners of English usually focus on aural-oral and reading skills in particular, but it is only at intermediate or higher levels such as young adult learners studying in Anglophone countries or at a Japanese university where the skill of L2 writing becomes of greater importance. The third group (Group C) is made up of L2 writers based on what Sasaki (2000) identifies as “expert writers whose professional work includes regularly writing English research papers while their life is anchored in Japan” (p. 265). It was felt that this third group, although not that of native speakers, possessed the writing ability that the other two groups (Groups A and B) potentially ultimately aspired to.

2.2.3 Scale and stages of experimental phase

The experimental phase (module 3) of the present study is carried out in three stages:

STAGE ONE (3 independent quantitative experiments)

Experiment 1. Investigate Group A (L1 Japanese L2 English writers studying in the UK)

Experiment 2. Investigate Group B (L1 Japanese L2 English writers studying in a Japanese University)

Experiment 3. Investigate Group C (L1 Japanese L2 English “Expert” writers “anchored” in Japan)

STAGE TWO (causal-comparative study - independent variable the situated context)

Group A vs. Group B

STAGE THREE (hermeneutic and qualitative case study)

Group C vs. Group A and Group B

In stage one of the experimental phase of this study the three situated contexts groups A, B and C are investigated in and of themselves separately one by one, with the major concern being looking at the planning of English essay texts in Japanese and English and the effects of topic choices on the texts for each situated context using quantitative analyses “where generalizability from the sample to the population is the aim” (Newman & Benz, 1998, p. 10). The population groups are confined to their specific situated contexts.

However, for the secondary aims of the study investigated in stage two, the variables between the first two population groups (group A and group B) are kept as similar as possible. That is the participants are of similar ages and English abilities, for both groups of students studying in an English language school in the United Kingdom and students studying English at a Japanese University. This is done, as mentioned previously, with the hope of comparing the findings quantitatively in a causal-comparative study in stage two between the Group A and Group B with the independent variable being the situated context.

For stage three the purpose of investigating group C is somewhat different with the aim being to contrast, complement and search for patterns rather than directly quantitatively compare with groups A and B. The aim is more exploratory and heuristic, looking to develop explanations rather than to test hypotheses. The main interest in the group C is the effect of planning in Japanese or English and of topic choice of “expert” writers of English, that is L1 Japanese writers of L2 English who have published academic articles in English. Due the fact that the variables of English ability and age in group C are not constant with groups A and B, this group is compared and contrasted with the first two groups using a more hermeneutic and qualitative approach rather than a purely quantitative one. This is done with the aim to

provide a basis for attributing broad similarities or differences in the different situational contexts to try and develop potential explanations of communicative functions and purposes of L2 English texts as well as planning practices for those texts, therefore providing a springboard for further investigation and studies.

2.3 Ideology and paradigms of inquiry

The main aim of the present study is to quantitatively investigate the effects of planning an English text in L1 or L2 and if the topic choice has any effect for L1 Japanese writers of L2 English in an Anglophone country setting, in a Japanese university setting, and for academic expert writers of English. The secondary purpose is to discuss the findings of the study as a whole with the aim of finding out if similar or differing results are to be found for these three contextual group sets of L1 Japanese writers of L2 English, and thus whether there could be grounds for some broad application of the findings and conclusions that could be applied to other Japanese L2 writers of English of different backgrounds, motivations and learning situations or even other L2 English writers who are not L1 Japanese.

The primary aims of this study of investigating the planning stage language and topic choice for L1 Japanese writers of L2 English in specific situated contexts can be categorised as being based on empirically quantitative experiments and are carried out in stage one of the experimental phase of this study. The secondary aims of finding relationships, patterns and contrasts between the differing contexts is also based on quantitative analyses to some extent (group A vs. group B) in stage two, but also includes hermeneutic, interpretive and

descriptive analyses (group C vs. groups A and B) in stage three. (See section 2.2.3 Scale and stages of experimental phase, of this module for descriptions of groups and stages).

Consequently by analyses of the cumulative results (collected in the three stages of the experimental phase) of the three situated contexts, this study as a whole relies on meta-analyses as described by Silva (2005), which he argues is the becoming the dominant form of research in the field of second language writing research. The ideology of the present study is one that moves away from a strict traditional positivist approach relying exclusively on knowledge based on actual sense experience data collection and with unchanging ontological categories. It also moves away from traditional completely known and complete epistemological theories of knowledge and from relying solely on axiological data quantities and values. That is to say rather than cold hard perceived “scientific” inductive methods of observations made to develop general principles, this study instead hopes to take an approach that Silva (2005), (building on the work of philosopher of science Karl Popper) calls “Humble Pragmatic Rationalism”. Silva explains;

Humble reflecting the limits of ones knowledge, and pragmatic in the sense of a pluralistic and eclectic approach that accommodates different world views, assumptions and methods in an attempt to address and solve specific problems in particular contexts. Given the complex nature of the phenomenon of L2 writing and the serious consequences that learning how to write in a second language often entail, I believe that humility and pragmatism are in order. (Silva, 2005, p. 9)

Contrasting from the positivist approach and instead using the “Humble Pragmatic Rationalist” approach, (which is somewhat related but different from post positivism or critical rationalism) the ontological aspects of this study assumes reality exists but can never

be *fully* known. The epistemological aspects assume that perceptual, cognitive and social filters preclude any *totally* objective or *absolute* knowledge. The axiological aspects regard the methodology as multimodal, involving an incorporation and integration of both empirical study and hermeneutic inquiry (Popper, 1966; O’Shea, 1991; Silva, 2005).

2.4 Research questions

The questions that this study endeavours to investigate and answer are given below. More detailed definitions of variables including what is considered better and/or effective will be given in the experimental design section in module 3.

1. Will L1 Japanese writers of L2 English studying at a language school in an Anglophone country plan for their writing more effectively, write better texts containing more content, and create more effective texts when they are able to plan in the language related to the acquisition of knowledge of the topic area?
2. What will be the effect of topic choice independent of language (a Japanese topic planned vs. an English topic), or language choice of plan independent of topic, (written planning in Japanese vs. written planning in English) on L1 Japanese writers of L2 English studying at a language school in an Anglophone country?
3. Will L1 Japanese writers of L2 English majoring in English at a Japanese university plan for their writing more effectively, write better texts containing more content, and

create more effective texts when they are able to plan in the language related to the acquisition of knowledge of the topic area?

4. What will be the effect of topic choice independent of language (a Japanese topic planned vs. an English topic), or language choice of plan independent of topic, (written planning in Japanese vs. written planning in English) on L1 Japanese writers of L2 English majoring in English at a Japanese university?
5. Will L1 Japanese “expert” writers of L2 English whose professional work includes regularly writing English research papers plan for their writing more effectively, write better texts containing more content, and create more effective texts when they are able to plan in the language related to the acquisition of knowledge of the topic area.
6. What will be the effect of topic choice independent of language (a Japanese topic planned vs. an English topic), or language choice of plan independent of topic, (written planning in Japanese vs. written planning in English) on L1 Japanese “expert” writers of L2 English whose professional work includes regularly writing English research papers?
7. What are the overarching quantitative and qualitative linguistic similarities, differences and patterns between the plans and resultant texts produced by L1 Japanese writers of L2 English in different situational contexts of study (Anglophone country vs. Japanese university) and what if any, is the effect that the language of planning and topic have on that relationship.

8. What are the overarching quantitative and qualitative linguistic similarities, differences and a patterns between the plans and resultant texts produced by L1 Japanese writers of L2 English in different situational contexts of study to those of L1 Japanese “expert” academic writers of English and what if any, is the effect that the language of planning and topic have on that relationship.

3.0 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The field of composition itself is relatively new. Matsuda (2006) states the specialised area of L2 English writing is even younger. This has meant there are many research areas that have yet to be fully investigated. As mentioned previously in the present module (see section 1.5 Gap in current research corpus) there is an acute dearth of studies directly investigating the issues of the use of L1 when planning to write in an L2 and topic choice and information retrieval for L2 writing along with the interrelation of these factors. This is not for want of extensive investigation and research in relevant journal articles or books. However the reality is that it is very difficult to find any up to date (certainly post 2000) research on planning L2 writing. The flagship journal of the L2 writing field, “Journal of Second Language Writing” as well as most ELT, cognitive psychology or composition related journals have very little information or any directly related comprehensive previous studies. It is also worth repeating that the research reference book “A Synthesis of Research on Second Language Writing in English” recently published in 2008, authored by Leki, Cumming and Silva, which outlines in some detail the most significant and influential findings of published research on second language writing over the last twenty-five years, mentions only four studies which refer to planning in L1/L2 (these focus on the patterns similar between L1 and L2 rather than directly investigating the benefits or disadvantages of using either), and only five studies on topic choice/prompts (most focusing on prompt rhetoric and student reference to prompts) in L2 writing. None of these previous studies directly examine as their primary aim the issues the present PhD study hopes to investigate in an interrelated way. However, those with some relevance to the present study will be discussed later in this review of literature.

As far as I know very few studies have previously tried to investigate planning L2 writing in L1 or topic choice and language coherently or in an organised way. However even the studies that have come close were all conducted over a decade ago and have not investigated the differences or similarities of L1 planning for L2 writing in the different contexts of home country L2 environment vs. Anglophone country environment but rather focus exclusively on one or the other. Furthermore none of these such studies exam the context of L1 Japanese writers of L2 English.

The fact that there is so little previous recent research literature directly focusing on the areas of L2 writing that are being investigated in the present study has meant that the approach of my literature review will be made up of three sections starting with a broad relevant historical outline of L2 writing approaches and orientations in the first section, then narrowing the focus on to specific details of pertinent research literature on process orientated writing in the second section. Then the third section concentrates on surveying previous studies of writing research that have been carried out with some direct bearing (even if as secondary aims rather their primary aim) to the issues investigated in the present study, in the contexts of L1 composition research, L1 transfer, and intentional L1 translation in L2 writing. The final part of the third section examines the small number of studies that have sought to look at planning L2 writing in L1 and other studies that have investigated topic choice in L2 writing.

3.1 L2 writing pedagogical approaches

Teachers of L2 writing need an understanding of what is involved in writing to be effective. Silva (1990) suggests that “coherent perspectives, principles, models and tools” (p. 11) are required for thinking about second language writing in general and English as a second / foreign language composition in particular, and for analysing and evaluating competing views. Silva (1990) goes on to say that since about 1945 the history of EFL composition can be seen as a series of pedagogical approaches or pedagogical orientations to L2 writing where particular approaches achieved dominance and then faded, but never really disappeared. The most influential approaches of this period began with controlled composition, changing towards the current-traditional rhetoric approach in the 1960s, and finally a shift to the process approach up to the present.

There is little doubt that L2 writing pedagogy development has been influenced by and parallels to some extent the developments in the teaching of writing to native speakers of English. However, distinct perspectives, models, and practices have been made necessary to allow for the unique context of L2 composition. In module 1 paper 1 the composition stances and viewpoints (cognitivism, expressivism, social construction, interactivism and culturism) of researchers and teachers in regards to L1 composition and L2 writing based upon L1 composition theory were outlined and discussed. Building upon module 1 paper 1 but in distinction to it what follows is a brief introduction and explanation of the three most common L2 writing *pedagogical approach methods* that are prevalent in L2 classrooms today. Namely the controlled composition approach, the current-traditional rhetoric approach and the process approach. These approaches are outlined chronologically, however it should be noted that all

three are, to different degrees, still very much in use in classrooms and are by no means mutually exclusive (Silva, 1990; Matsuda, 2003; Durst, 2006) and therefore an understanding of all three is crucial to the current study. Paul Kei Matsuda, one of the leading exponents and most influential internationally recognised researchers in the field of L2 writing, when discussing the importance of understanding the historical contexts of pedagogical approaches in L2 writing points out:

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 the 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. (Matsuda, 2003, p. 15)

The principal aim of the current study is to investigate the use of L1 and topic choice in the planning of L2 English texts. It is hoped the results found will allow insight into favourable pedagogical practices in regards to these variables, which could in turn have a direct impact on pedagogical approaches taken by L2 writing teachers. Therefore it is important to understand what are the historical and current L2 writing pedagogical approaches that are in use today. As will be shown (see Japanese language, educational contexts and motivation section in module 3), all the approaches outlined in the following section have some direct influence on the choices and strategies used by the L2 writers investigated in the current study and therefore I believe some mention, review and discussion of them is wholly relevant and fundamental to the study.

3.1.1 Controlled composition

Early on in the last century it was clear to many second language teachers that a pedagogy in L2 writing was needed to address the problem they felt with regards to a large majority of their students who had some form of oral competency but lacked basic composition skills. One of the first pedagogical approaches to try and fill this gap was the controlled composition approach. The renowned linguist Charles Fries' oral approach, which later on developed into the audiolingual method of second language teaching, is generally regarded as the theoretical modal upon which the controlled composition, also called guided composition, is based upon. Controlled composition is rooted to the notions, from structural linguistics, that language is speech and, from behaviourist psychology, that learning is habit formation (Silva, 1990). Therefore based on these fundamental notions and perspectives, it could be argued that writing was regarded as basically a secondary concern. That is to say, in effect the main purpose of writing was to reinforce oral habits. Fries (1945) himself, presents writing as almost an afterthought, declaring that "even written exercises might be part of the work" (p. 8) of a second language learner.

What form these written exercises should take place was a matter of debate. Initially Erazmus (1960) and Briere (1966) proposed that the writing exercises should be in the form of free composition, with ideas and discourse originating from the student. Thereby the student would be in control of the language, which in turn would be a means for extending and promoting written fluency. However, Pincas (1962) objected to this idea of free composition and instead promoted the idea that composition should be taught through "ideals of scientific habit-forming teaching methods" (p. 185). She developed this point by explaining that,

The reverence for original creativeness dies hard. People find it difficult to accept the fact that the use of language is the manipulation of fixed patterns; that these patterns are learned by imitation; and that not until they have been learned can originality occur in the manipulation of patterns or in the choice of variables within the patterns. (Pincas, 1962, p. 86)

At the time Pincas' opinion was decisively the one that gained major popularity over the free-composition ideas of Erazmus and Briere. Momentum was further gained with others such as Danielson (1965), Dykstra (1964), Moody (1965) and Paulston (1967) echoing the ideas of Pincas. Formal accuracy and correctness were thought to be the most important concerns in writing. This was to be achieved by the use of rigidly controlled programmes of systematic habit formation. These were designed to particularly avoid errors thought to be caused by L1 interference and to further positively reinforce correct L2 performance and behaviour. This habit formation was to occur particularly at the sentence-level structure of text. The method was to be a case of applied behaviourism in writing instruction.

The controlled composition approach was thus established. Rather than original ideas, style and organisation coming from students, they were encouraged to practice writing using discrete units of language which had already been learned. The methodology was primarily concerned with the reproduction and controlled manipulation of model sentences, which had been carefully constructed and graded for vocabulary and sentence patterns (Silva, 1990). This manipulation was to take the form of combinations, transformations, substitutions, completions and expansions of sentence structures already provided to students. This was the best way, it was felt, to avoid errors in writing, which were presumed to be related to L1 interference. Pincas (1982) claimed that through this approach and methodology students would be afforded "no freedom to make mistakes" (p. 91).

This methodology stemmed from earlier linguistic analysis research, which had primarily involved “contrastive analysis” of languages and “error analysis” of texts. Contrastive analysis included comparing structural differences in texts of two languages, for example English and French, with the aim to find which structures caused the greatest problems for L2 writers. Error analysis on the other hand, was where texts were examined to locate, count and then categorise patterns of error in written texts. The formal features obtained from this linguistic analysis research of lexical, structural, and error phenomena, (for example features such as words per t-unit and clause structures) were then used in the controlled composition classroom as a basis to measure accuracy, fluency and complexity of students L2 written texts.

Learning to write was then seen as an exercise in habit formation in controlled composition, and not a particularly important skill in and of itself to be learned. Rivers (1968) believed that “writing must not take precedence as a major skill to be developed” and the skill of writing was to be relegated to function as the “handmaid of the other skills” (p. 241) of speaking, listening and reading. She further went on to suggest that writing must be “considered as a service activity rather than as an end in itself” (p. 258).

The reader, who was usually the EFL teacher, was given the role of proofreader and editor. The teacher’s only real concern was with correct formal linguistic structures and features, not with the writer’s original quality of ideas or expressed content. The text became a collection of sentence patterns and vocabulary items, what Silva (1990) calls “a linguistic artifact, a vehicle for language practice” (p. 12). The usual writing context for controlled composition

was the EFL classroom and therefore there was little concern for the functional purpose of the text produced or for the reading audience.

Matsuda (2003) says the limitations of controlled composition have been shown by the fact that sentence-level grammar exercises do not aid L2 writing students to produce original sentences or any form of free composition. Matsuda is not alone in his criticism of the controlled composition approach. Silva (1990) claims even though this approach has been rejected by most researchers and teachers on a theoretical level and is ritually condemned in the professional literature (Truscott 1996, 1999), it is however still operative in many classrooms and to be found in many L2 writing textbooks.

3.1.2 Current-traditional rhetoric

Current-traditional rhetoric for L1 writers of English was created in the nineteenth century American university system. In 1874, Harvard University devised an entry essay that all potential new students were required to write in order to be accepted. It was soon discovered that many of the potential students in fact could not write very well. Therefore in 1885, on the recommendation of Adam S. Hill, Harvard University established composition classes, which all freshman were required to take. Young (1978) and also Berlin and Inkster (1980) characterise the current-traditional rhetoric paradigm as consisting of features including the analysis of discourse into words, sentences and paragraphs; the classification of discourse into description, narration, exposition and argument; the strong concern with usage such as syntax, spelling, punctuation; and with style made up of economy, clarity and emphasis. Young

(1978) goes on to say that these features emphasize the written product rather than the composing process, which is often in the form of an informal essay or a research paper.

During the 1960s there was an increasing awareness of L2 learner' needs with regards to producing comprehensive and extended written texts. This in turn led many to believe that the controlled composition approach and its accompanying exercises were clearly not enough to attend to the L2 writing students' needs. Writing was seen to encompass more than simply building grammatical sentences. The ability of L2 writing students to produce text with grammatically correct sentences but lacking a logical organization, which native readers could follow, was also a cause of concern with the controlled composition approach. Also the originality of free writing could not be ignored and a bridge between controlled writing and free writing was needed. This void was filled somewhat by the L2 writing version of current-traditional rhetoric. This approach combined the fundamental principles of the current-traditional paradigm from L1 composition instruction with the theory of contrastive rhetoric espoused by Kaplan (1966).

Kaplan (1966) himself had earlier given a reason for why he believed many L2 English writers' texts did not seem to be organised logically. He believed that L1 organisational pattern interfered in L2 writing. That is to say paragraph structures as well as sentence structures were language and cultural specific based on cultural thought patterns. In order to reduce confusion for L1 English readers, Kaplan believed that L2 English writing students should be taught the English rhetorical pattern of writing. This would be the basis of the contrastive rhetoric theory (For more details on different rhetorical patterns for different language types please refer to module 1 paper 2). In this theory Kaplan (1966) defines

rhetoric as “the method of organising syntactic units into larger patterns” (p. 15). He also suggested moving away from focusing just on sentence level structures to “more pattern drill...at the rhetorical level rather than at the syntactic level” (p. 15). He went on to say it was necessary “to provide the student with a form within which he may operate” (p. 20).

Silva (1990) explains that the main concern of the current-traditional rhetoric approach was the logical construction and arrangement of discourse forms. The main focus was on the paragraph. Attention and consideration was given to what were considered the key elements in a paragraph such as the topic sentence, support sentences, concluding sentences, and transitions. But also just as important was the diverse alternative options available for the development of the paragraph, such as illustration, exemplification, comparison, contrast, partition, classification, definition, and causal analysis.

The entire development of the written text as a whole was another important focus. This was achieved by an extension of the paragraph principles for larger parts of the written discourse. These larger structural parts of text were organised into units called the introduction, the body, and the conclusion. Also the discourse patterns or modes were normally formulated into narrative texts, descriptive texts, expositive texts, and argumentative texts.

In the classroom, the pedagogical aspect of the current-traditional rhetoric approach focused students’ attention on form. In the context of a given paragraph or longer text, students were often asked to choose the most appropriate sentence from among differing sentences. Or students were asked to read and analyse a model piece of textual discourse and then apply the structural knowledge that they had gained from that text to a similar piece of text that would

be original and composed by the students themselves. The most complex task types often involved providing students with a topic and then asking them to list and group facts thought to be relevant, and then to draw from these facts and lists topics and supporting sentences. From these the students were then expected to build an outline, and then using that outline write their final compositions (Arapoff, 1969; Kaplan, 1972; Taylor, 1976).

Basically the L2 writing version of the current-traditional rhetoric approach is focused on teaching students the ability of arranging sentences and paragraphs, that are seen as appropriate, into prearranged, prescribed and formulaic patterns. Therefore the skill of writing is then in turn regarded as a skill of identifying, internalising and being able to implement and put into practice these patterns using original textual discourse. That is to say the pre-made patterns should be filled with self-generated content. Despite the care given to provide students with a pre-arranged rhetorical and organisational pattern, which would be acceptable to most L1 English readers, often there is still confusion on the part of the reader. This is due to the strange and unfamiliar patterns of discourse that are sometimes invented by the L2 English writer trying to fit an original textual square peg in a round hole pre-fixed pattern. Allied to that, the text as a whole often becomes just a collection of complex sentences, paragraphs and larger structures of discourse each in turn implanted in the next larger structural form (Silva, 1990; Matsuda, 2003).

The context for writing in the current-traditional rhetoric approach is usually implicitly an academic one, with the teacher's judgment supposedly reflecting that of a community of educated native speakers. The practices of the current-traditional approach have been regularly and methodically attacked for a number of years now (Masuda, 2003). In the 1980s

the development of discourse analysis and text linguistics allowed the systematic examination of written discourse of many languages and the influences upon those languages. The contrastive rhetoric theory (as it was first formulated by Kaplan, 1966), a pillar of the current-traditional approach, came to be seen as overly simplistic and the definition of “rhetoric” as a narrowly defined organisational structure of writing became less deterministic. Despite this many believe the continual sway of the current-traditional rhetoric approach can still be seen clearly in many of the most well-known and popular current L2 writing textbooks (Hyland, 2003; Land & Whitley, 2006; Matsuda, 2003, 2006; Silva, 1990). Silva (1990) believes that “indeed...the current-traditional approach is still dominant in L2 writing materials and classroom practices today” (p. 15).

3.2 The process orientated approach

By the mid 1970s there was a growing dissatisfaction with the focus on orthography in L2 writing. That is the focus on teaching of sentence-level structures in the controlled composition method and discourse-level structures in the current traditional rhetoric approach. Up until this point the L2 writer’s text “product” and how little it seemed to deviate from a perceived L1 norm was used to gauge the success of an L2 writer. However, by the mid 1970s and early 1980s due to developments in both L1 composition and second language studies, many researchers and teachers of L2 writing began to consider factors other than the properties of the text products produced by L2 writers (Silva, 1990). A shift from textual features of a written product to the process of writing that produced that textual product began. Researchers from wide methodological and philosophical backgrounds such as Emig

(1971) and Flowers and Hayes (1981) started to investigate the principal processes necessary for the production of written discourse.

Along with the move away from product towards process, Silva (1990) points out that there was an underlying dissatisfaction with controlled composition and the current-traditional approach because many felt that neither approach sufficiently encouraged thought or its expression. It was felt that controlled composition found this goal irrelevant and the prescriptivism and linearity of current-traditional rhetoric did nothing to encourage creative thinking and writing. Many like Taylor (1981) believed it was precisely this linearity that was not necessarily the ideal way to teach L2 writing. He argued, “writing is not the straightforward plan-outline-write process that many believe it to be” (p. 5-6). Researchers of L2 writing once again began to look to L1 composition process research for alternatives and new ideas.

L2 writing as a process was first introduced by Zamel (1976). She put forward the notion that “L2 writers who are ready to compose and express their ideas use strategies similar to those of native speakers of English” (p. 203). Therefore these L2 writers could benefit from instruction that focused on the process of writing rather than reproducing previously learned syntactic or discourse structures. This process orientated approach would lay emphasis on writing as a process of not only developing textual organisation but also meaning.

In answer to Taylor’s (1981) earlier proposition, Zamel (1982) suggested the composing process was “...a non-linear, exploratory, and generative process whereby writers discover and reformulate their ideas as they attempt to approximate meaning” (p. 165).

With this shift in belief from product to process many felt that rather than hasty imposition of organisational patterns, syntactic or lexical constraints or other such controls, it would be preferable for teachers to provide guidance and intervention in the process of L2 writing. Organisational form would be determined by content, ideas, and the need to communicate. Raimes (1983) summed up the essence of this new notion by saying, “composing means expressing ideas, conveying meaning. Composing means thinking.” (p. 261).

Silva (1990) explains that in the classroom context, the process orientated pedagogical approach calls for,

...providing a positive, encouraging, and collaborative workshop environment within which students, with ample time and minimal interference, can work through their composing processes. The teacher’s role is to help students develop viable strategies for getting started (finding topics, generating ideas and information, focusing, and planning structure and procedure), for drafting (encouraging multiple drafts), for revising (adding, deleting, modifying, and rearranging ideas); and for editing (attending to vocabulary, sentence structure, grammar and mechanics). (Silva, 1990, p. 15)

The processes of planning strategies, multiple drafts and formative feedback have become important components of L2 writing instruction in many classrooms (Matsuda, 2003). Generally the arrival of the process orientated pedagogical approach has been hailed by those like Raimes (1983) as a positive paradigm shift in L2 writing pedagogy. It is an approach which views writing as a complex, recursive, and creative process or set of behaviours that is very similar in its general outlines for both L1 and L2 language writers. Hairston (1992) along with Silva (1990) believes that developing an efficient and effective composing process is an

important ingredient of learning to write in a second language. In this pedagogical approach L2 writers are taught the text is a product, which is of secondary concern, whose organisation and form are functions of its purpose and content.

The introduction of the process approach in L2 writing has prompted by far and away the bulk of L2 writing research in recent years, especially research on “the writer” and process “strategies” involved in L2 writing. Variables that affect L2 writers have been identified and addressed in the research corpus (Silva & Matsuda, 2002). A lot of this research has primarily looked at L2 writers with the focus on what extent their L1 proficiency transfers to their L2 writing, or the relationship of general L2 proficiency to L2 writing proficiency. Silva and Matsuda (2002) also point out the interest in current L2 process writing research into the possible connections between L2 ability and L1 writing experience and expertise, apprehension, gender, learning styles, learning and instructional backgrounds, L2 writers’ perceptions to writing instruction and the relationship of reading and L2 writing. They also point out the fact that research has moved away from the idea of writer variables being simple and relatively discrete to greatly intertwined and complex. In terms of research on writer processes a substantial body of research investigates L2 writing processes holistically, as well as studies that focus on sub-processes and elements of the writing process. Most of the studies look into drafting, revising and editing, although other elements such as translating, planning, backtracking, restructuring, formulating, monitoring and use of L1, code-switching and use of dictionaries have also been investigated (Krapels, 1990; Sasaki, 2000; Silva & Matsuda, 2002). Some of the important and relevant studies will be looked at in more detail later in this literature review. Although the process orientated pedagogical approach has been well and widely received in L2 writing classrooms and research literature, it also has its critics.

3.2.1 English for academic purposes and the criticism of the process orientated approach

In this section of the review of literature my aim is to outline some of the criticisms of the process orientated approach that have been made by early exponents of the English for academic purposes approach. It is therefore not a detailed explanation as such of the English for academic purposes approach, which encompasses more than just the skill of writing and therefore falls outside the scope of the present study, but rather a discussion of some of the perceived weaknesses of the process orientated approach for L2 writing that were raised and reacted to by those such as Horowitz (1986) who led the initial charge for the English for academic purposes approach. I will also briefly discuss the rebuttal of these criticisms by Johns (2003), Spack (1988) and White and Arndt (1994) amongst others.

Much of the criticism of the process approach in the research corpus has largely come from the proponents of an English for academic purposes approach, which Silva (1990) sees as more of a reaction to the process approach than an attempt to construct a new and distinct perspective on L2 composition. A major criticism is that the process orientated approach does not sufficiently address some key issues in L2 writing. Reid (1984) has suggested that the process approach overlooks and indeed neglects to consider variations in writing processes seriously enough. These variations, he argues, are due to differences in individuals, writing tasks, situations, the development of academic discourse schemata, language proficiency, the writer's level of cognitive development and also insights gained from contrastive rhetoric theory.

Another important criticism is the question of whether the process approach practically and realistically prepares L2 writing students for academic work. Horowitz (1986) contends that the process orientated approach taught to students “creates a classroom situation that bears little resemblance to the situations in which [writing] will eventually be exercised” (p. 144). Of course this is assuming that the L2 writer is a student who will use their L2 composition skills for writing in other academic subjects.

As Horowitz (1986) is a keen proponent of English for academic purposes approach he also proposes that a process orientated approach ignores certain types of important academic writing tasks, in particular essay exams. That is to say, what he sees as two core elements of the process orientated approach namely, “content determines form” and “good writing is involved writing”, do not particularly hold true in many academic situations.

Susser (1994) also mentions the dissonance of what is actually required by an L2 academic writing task and the “writing theories” of the process orientated approach. He complains that adapting L1 composition processes to L2 writing pedagogy in the form of process stages “not only violates what we know about the recursive nature of writing, it distorts a responsible pedagogy into a didactic one” (p. 35). He further goes on to contend that the gap between educational theory and practice has led to any process being labeled as a theory of writing, which is problematic in L2 writing where progress has often been measured by accuracy.

Horowitz (1986) also complains that the process oriented pedagogical approach “gives students a false impression of how university writing will be evaluated” (p. 143). Essentially, he objects to what he believes is the process orientated approach’s overemphasis of the

individual writer's psychological functioning and the negligence of the sociocultural context, which are according to him, a reality in academia. In effect, he believes the process orientated approach operates in a sociocultural vacuum. Again this criticism comes very much from those who are principally focused on L2 writing pedagogy in the context of an academic tool to help students (usually university students) build the necessary skills to be able to participate in English medium content classes. In the context of English for academic purposes the primary focus is on academic discourse genres and the range and nature of academic writing tasks (Swales, 1990). L2 writing instruction is meant to help students work effectively in the academic context. This pedagogical method aims to recreate as best as possible the conditions under which actual university academic writing takes place. Including examining and analysing academic discourse genres and writing tasks, studying appropriate materials for tasks, evaluating, screening, synthesising and organising relevant information from these sources and presenting the results in an acceptable form for the academic community, which is usually the university professor (Silva & Matsuda, 2002). With this focus on the production of standardized texts acceptable to English medium institutions of higher education it is no real surprise that the shift back to the "product" text leaves proponents of the English for academic purposes approach rather suspicious of "processes".

However, White and Arndt (1994) see the process orientated approach to writing as an "enabling" approach. They go on to say the goal of this approach is to nurture the skills with which writers work out their own solutions to the problems they set themselves, with which they shape their raw material into a coherent message, and with which they work towards an acceptable and appropriate form for expressing it. This encompasses setting the sociocultural theatre that they require, even including that of academic writing.

White and Arndt (1994) are also quick to point out that advocating the process orientated approach, is not a repudiation of all interest in the final draft product. On the contrary, the main aim is to arrive at the best product possible. They propose that what differentiates the process orientated approach from a product orientated one, is that the outcome of writing, that is the product, is not preconceived. A parallel can be drawn with the increased use of word processors over the last twenty years. As the name suggests, a text is composed by the processing of words through drafting and redrafting rather than starting with a preconceived product. The popularity of e-mail and mobile telephone SMS texting also echo this idea.

The criticisms leveled at the process orientated pedagogical approach have mainly come from those advocating English for academic purposes or English for specific purposes. However, these approaches themselves have been scrutinized and many such as Geisler (1994), Johns (2003) and Spack (1988) have questioned their “fuzzy” nature. They contend that students requiring L2 writing classes in universities, and indeed high schools, are in fact not yet considered initiates into disciplinary communities or professions. These students are involved in “general education” and are studying courses that give them a disciplinary overview or prepare them for life in university and modern society (Johns, 2003).

Academic English is not a single monolithic entity but certainly in most cases reoccurring factors such as genres, contexts and topic choice need to be considered and cannot be ignored. The current study investigates all these factors as well as the effects of language choice in the planning stages of L2 writing. A major point of investigation is that of topic choice and whether a topic that L2 English writers are more culturally aware of produces better essay plans and final texts. This kind of topic choice is a factor that Spack (1988), while criticising

the English for academic purposes approach, believes is of great interest especially when considering topics given to student L2 writers which have been drawn from student motivations and cultures rather than genres and values of the student's chosen academic disciplines.

The participants in the current study include Japanese students studying in a private language school in an English-dominant country, at a Japanese university and Japanese expert academic writers of L2 English. All of these contexts fall under academic English. However as will be explained in the section on participants and populations, these participants have been taught L2 writing mainly using the process orientated pedagogical approach which is still the prevalent (although not exclusive) pedagogical approach in many L2 writing classrooms today.

3.2.2 What are the process steps?

The notion of writing as a process suggests that writing is a series of actions and strategies carried out to bring about a desired product. In spite of this, recent research shows that the writing process is a far more complex one (e.g. Grabe, 2001; Sasaki, 2000, van Weijen, 2008). Rather than a simple act, the process of writing is made up of intricate steps and choices. There is not one "process approach" as often thought. Scott (1996) explains that most process writing models usually include some of (and in many cases all of) the steps of planning, generating ideas, organising, analysing, synthesising and revising. White and Arndt (1994) suggest a framework for teachers that tries to encapsulate the recursive rather than the

linear nature of writing. They place particular importance on planning activities that generate ideas, for example brainstorming that helps writers to tap into their long-term memory and answer the question, “What can I say on this topic?” Another process strategy is focusing or fast writing, also a planning activity, dealing with the overall purpose of the writing.

Structuring and organising processes may start in the planning stage with ideas of where to place information and in what order but are recursive in that they happen later on as well when deciding how to present ideas in a way that is acceptable to the reader. This could include experimenting with different types of text, having read suitable examples. White and Arndt (1994) also recommend drafting as the transitional process from writer-based thought into reader-based text. Multiple drafts may well be produced. Any changes or amendments from one draft to the next are influenced by feedback from the teacher or peers. The feedback process focuses initially on content and organisation, and then when these are acceptable, comments on language are given for final changes to be made for the final draft. Finally White and Arndt (1994) recommend periodically “standing back” and reviewing text produced. This should occur throughout the whole writing process over several drafts and aims to look at the text as a whole and asking “is this right?” and “are the overall aims and purposes for the text being met?”

White and Arndt’s (1994) model by their own admission is workable for L2 writers, but it is primarily proposed for L1 writers. The question of accuracy is an issue of importance especially for L2 writers using the process orientated approach. Zamel (1982) points out that even using the process orientated approach; L2 writers have given far greater consideration to the product than L1 writers due to attention to grammar and accuracy. This being the case,

Hewlins (1986) suggests a model for process writing specifically aimed at L2 writers. In her five-step model students are first asked to prewrite, which includes talking and brainstorming for ideas and vocabulary. Secondly students write a first draft writing straight through using only available vocabulary. Thirdly the students receive feedback from peers or the teacher. Fourthly students write a second draft where they revise and rewrite based on their peers or their teachers comments in stage three. Finally the students proofread along with peers, especially concentrating on errors.

Scott (1996) suggests that on the whole process orientated models for L2 writing are somewhat more prescriptive and linear than L1 process orientated models, following a prewrite-write-rewrite format. Barnett (1989), like Hewlins, proposes a model, which she believes, engages L2 writing students in the process of writing. Students are asked to make planning notes, then write a first draft without paying too much attention to grammar or vocabulary, then to write a second draft a few days later paying more attention to grammar and vocabulary, then lastly type a final draft to submit. The more prescriptive and somewhat more linear trends in L2 process writing models are something Scott (1996) believes “represents an initial attempt to view L2 writing as a process that involves more than manipulating grammatical structures” (p. 41).

There is clearly not one way of teaching L2 writing using the process orientated approach. It may vary depending on variables such as the context, situation, teacher or students. For example the process for L2 writing in an exam such as the TOEFL exam may not afford the time to be overly recursive or produce many redrafts. Also the process when writing an e-mail may again be very different from writing an essay. The use of L1 in the processes is also

another factor to be considered. Teachers in EFL contexts may design writing tasks to practice, evaluate and assess student grammatical structure proficiency and ability, rather than composing for communication. There are still many unanswered questions surrounding discrete writing processes and strategies used by L2 writers and the process orientated pedagogies that they are exposed to. There is a great need for more empirical research on L2 writing processes, especially processes in varying contexts and situations. The current study investigates at least some issues regarding the planning stage in regards to topic information retrieval and L1 language usage particular to the context of Japanese writers of L2 English.

3.2.3 Planning process and generating ideas through brainstorming

Writing is for the most part typically about organising information and communicating meaning, therefore generating ideas and planning are clearly crucial and vital parts of the writing process. Tompkins (1990) points out the importance of the planning stage in writing and believes for the best results in the writing process, 70% of writing time ought to be spent in prewriting and the planning stage. Idea-generating is particularly important as an initiating process, because often actually getting started is one of the most difficult and inhibiting steps in writing. The initial stages are when the writer is still attempting to discover a topic, identify a purpose and accumulate information. Deciding what to say about a topic, what to include, what to leave out, may be more difficult for many writers than actually determining how to say it. Therefore planning can be seen as a process of thinking before task writing, where writers start to form mental depictions and representations of topic knowledge that they will use for writing and how they will organise their writing. Even in later stages, idea-generating

continues to take place, so that the techniques used to stimulate ideas at an initial stage may still prove useful later on. However, in the present study the focus will be on the planning stage that is sometimes called pre-task planning. Although mental planning takes place in this stage, ideas, textual organisation and outline thoughts are also noted down on paper to form written plans. These plans are then usually expanded and used to help produce final texts.

One of the most important parts of pre-task planning is the generation of ideas. White and Arndt (1994) suggest that generating ideas involves drawing upon long-term memory, which consists of three main kinds of memory store:

- Episodic memory, which is devoted to events, experiences and visual and auditory images.
- Semantic memory, which is devoted to information, ideas, attitudes and values.
- Unconscious memory, which includes emotions and feelings.

In generating ideas, these different types of memory will be tapped according to the writer's purpose, and the kind of writing involved. Thus, the idea generating process for imaginative writing will be different from that involved in discursive writing. Imaginative writing will tap episodic and unconscious memories as part of the process of creating an imaginary world. Discursive writing, by contrast, will call upon semantic memory in which logically interconnected ideas will be important. Authors of essays, reports, proposals and other day-to-day types of writing will need techniques for getting into the subject and for bringing

to mind facts and information which can be organised in a variety of ways according to purpose and audience. The ways in which ideas and topic knowledge are recalled are very important in terms of topic choice for L2 writing, a factor which will be investigated in the current study.

Scott (1996) believes that both long-term-memory and task requirements are the two most important factors in idea generation. For L1 writers the ideas stored in long-term memory may be in the form of language or concepts and kinetic images. For L2 writers the issue is a little more complex, because they may not be able to consciously distinguish between long-term memory information on the topic and information on language expression. They may in fact give precedence to linguistic information such as grammatical structures over topic information during the idea-generating phase, leading to an obstruction of the flow of topic idea generation.

A previous study of note on idea generation was carried out by Caccamise (1987) and focused on the constraints imposed by not only long-term memory, and the writing task as Scott (1996) singles out, but also the constraints of topic familiarity, and the audience. Caccamise (1987) found that long-term memory imposes an internal constraint upon writers due to their pre-existing experience and knowledge of the world. She further explains that individual writers generate an idea relying on their knowledge base, after which they elaborate on the idea, then develop it in depth and in detail, this allows the individual to then form a cluster of ideas that are closely related. The individual writer then moves on to another idea and begins to form a whole new cluster of closely related ideas. Therefore the process is carried out recursively until the individual decides that all ideas related to the topic have been exhausted.

In regards to how writers approach a given topic, Caccamise found that familiar topics generated more ideas. For the constraint of the writing task, she found that when writers were given a specific topic they demonstrated a lower rate of ideas generation than when they were given a more open general topic. The rate being the number of ideas produced per minute. As for the final constraint of the audience, she found that writers felt inhibited by trying to decide which ideas generated from long-term memory were most fitting and appropriate for the intended audience. She further elaborates by suggesting that when a writer attempts to account for intended audience during the idea generation phase, this is done at the cost of the quality of ideas themselves. The reason being that knowledge of intended audience is not stored with subject matter. Therefore Caccamise recommends that a more efficient model for writing would require writers to generate ideas without initial regard for unfamiliar audiences. Then only later on these ideas would be recast for the needs of the intended audience.

One such unconstrained way long-term memory can be tapped for ideas more freely is brainstorming. Brainstorming is a widely used and effective way of getting ideas flowing and to assist in generating ideas at the initial stages of the process orientated approach to essay production. It should be noted that generating ideas through brainstorming and the comparison of information recall and plan production in L1 and L2 are key elements in the present study. The ideas generated may be ideas for actual content, or ideas for organising the content. Brainstorming involves thinking quickly and without inhibition so as to produce as many ideas as possible in a given area or on a given topic or problem. It is an especially productive means of generating ideas, including unique or unorthodox ones, which can eventually lead to an interesting piece of writing.

White and Arndt (1994) recommend brainstorming should be “free-wheeling, unstructured and non-judgemental” (p. 18). Attempts to structure ideas too rigidly during brainstorming could be inhibiting, and may limit the very creativity and productivity, which the technique is designed to promote, an idea that echoes those made by Caccamise (1987) to minimise constraints during idea generation. However, L2 writing students may also benefit by producing written plans from ideas generated through brainstorming. These plans, as Akyel (1994) suggests, could “consist of preliminary and tentative lists and notes to be organised for later use in writing of the [final product] composition” (p. 173). Such plans would preferably be in bullet point form rather than complete sentences and would include concrete details as well as rearrangement and organisation of the points. The question of which language is preferable when making plans (that is whether plans generated in L1 or plans generated in L2) to produce plans of greater length with more details and of better quality, is investigated in the present study along with whether the length and quality of the resultant final L2 texts produced are affected in any way. The question of topic choice is also investigated, especially whether recalling ideas about topics experienced in L1 or L2 and then making plans in the same language (language and topic match condition) or not (language and topic mismatch condition) has any affect on the number of ideas generated, length or quality of plans and the resultant final essay texts.

3.3 Writing research survey

Having reviewed and given outlines of the various L2 writing approaches and orientations with specific details on process orientated writing, this third section of the review of literature

is a survey of previous studies of writing research that have been carried out with some direct bearing (even if as secondary aims rather than their primary aim) to the issues investigated in the present study. First research investigating the relationship between L1 and L2 writing research will be discussed. Secondly research detailing the transfer of L1 in the L2 writing process will be reviewed, followed by looking at a few important studies on intentional student translating of generated L1 text as a process step in L2 composition. Then some studies investigating the usage of L1 specifically in the planning stage of L2 writing will be looked at and finally studies which address the question of topic choice, topic knowledge retrieval and L1 use will be reviewed.

3.3.1 The relationship of L1 composition process research to L2 writing process research

A fundamental question for language composition research has been how similar is L2 writing to L1 composing? Relative to L1 composing research, and indeed most L2 language research, L2 writing research is still a new field. Beare and Bourdages (2007) state that even though L2 writing research is still relatively in its infancy initial findings have suggested that both good and bad L1 general composing skills transfer from L1 to L2. A similar claim was made by Johnson (1999). Although Silva (1993) suggests “L2 composing is more constrained, more difficult and less effective” (p. 668). L2 writers in general may possess experience and knowledge of writing in their L1, which is a resource that should not be ignored and may be beneficial if used in the L2 writing process. However what also needs to be acknowledged is

L2 writers may also possess limitations in their L2 language knowledge and rhetorical organisation.

Krapels (1990) points out, “approaches to teaching L2 writing exist in plenty, supported by ardent, even evangelical, advocates and readily accessible materials” (p 37). The well known pedagogical approaches such as controlled composition, current-traditional rhetoric and the process approach have already been summarised in previous sections of this study. Likewise in module 1 the composition viewpoints and stances of researchers and teachers, based on theory, have been outlined and summarised. These varied approaches and viewpoints along with the plentiful number of second language composition textbooks available attest to the fact that L2 writing instruction is established and much of it follows theory. However, generally speaking most L2 writing pedagogy has not been based on theoretically derived insights acquired from L2 writing research. The reason for this according to Krapels (1990) is “until the late 1980s there was not much L2 writing research to draw upon in building theory or planning classes” (p. 37).

Nonetheless, many L2 writing specialists found guidance in L1 composition research, which according to Haynes (1978) has a history dating to the early 1900s. Therefore up until relatively recently L1 composition research and L2 writing pedagogy and research shared a very similar history and they have followed almost identical parallel paths. According to Krapels (1990) one of the most important points in L1 composition research, which had a profound and lasting effect on L2 writing, was the shift that occurred after the midpoint of the twentieth century. This was when L1 composition research in English speaking countries

moved away from focusing on studies investigating the effect of some pedagogical treatment on student writers' product texts to investigation of the process act of writing itself.

“The Composing Processes of Twelfth Graders” by Emig (1971) was a landmark study in L1 research. It was the first major study to investigate and tackle issues regarding the change in composition orientation from product to process. Importantly it also confronted issues regarding scientifically sound research methodology. Emig's study established the case study as the principal research design for conducting investigative research into the writing process. She used the case study approach to analyse the writing processes of eight above average high school senior students, who were not randomly selected. Emig met with her subjects four times and obtained data from “composing-aloud” audiotapes and interviews in which “each subject gave a writing autobiography” (p. 30), and each subject answered questions on his or her writing process for an individual piece of writing. She also collected the students' planning notes, outlines, and final written texts. Not only did Emig's study provide a sound research design for the investigation of writing processes, it also refined the development of what Voss (1983) calls “science consciousness in composition research” (p. 279). Krapels (1990) believes that this attitude and approach continues to be maintained by both L1 composition and L2 writing researchers.

Among L2 writing specialists, L2 process oriented writing research has lagged behind L2 process oriented writing theory and viewpoints (much of it being based on L1 composition theory) and actual practice in the L2 writing classroom. However, as early as the mid to late 1970s, Zamel (1976) and Raimes (1979) recommended dealing with L2 writing as a process in the L2 classroom and decreasing the focus on only achieving correctness and eliminating

surface-level errors in product texts. They both based their ideas on developments in L1 composition research. They promoted the idea that L2 teachers should learn from L1 composition theory, practice, and research and to utilise successful L1 composition pedagogical techniques in their own L2 writing instruction. From that point onwards many L2 writing teachers as well as research specialists have been conducting their own investigations of L2 writing processes and the use of process oriented pedagogy with L2 learners.

3.3.1.1 Following the lead of L1 process writing research

Matsuda (2006) points out that until relatively recently many L2 writing researchers adopted L1 writing process research designs, and their findings more often than not corresponded with those of their L1 counterparts. Jones and Tetroe (1987) concluded from their study on L2 writing that “second language composing, we would argue...is not a different animal from first language composing” (p. 55). This claim was recently reviewed by Littlecott (2008). Zamel (1984) famously stated, “research into second language composing processes seems to corroborate much of what we have learned from research in first language writing” (p. 198). It is telling that Zamel (1984) used the word “corroborate” because even as early as the mid 1980s it was acknowledged by some, but not most, in the field of L2 writing that although there was a strong relationship between L1 composition and L2 writing, there was still the need for L2 writing researchers not to blindly follow L1 composition research findings but be aware of them and then to investigate and test them meaningfully in and L2 context. More often than not L2 writing researchers and teachers followed earlier trends of relying on L1 composition research even in the new era of process orientated research.

There have been many explanations and theories as to why initially nearly all L2 writing process orientated research followed so closely L1 composition process orientated. Many studies such as Jones and Tetroe (1987) followed Emig's (1971) case study approach, which usually meant findings were based on very small samples (only six in the case of Jones and Tetroe's study). Kroll (1990) suggests that this led to premature generalisations being made. Also initially, as Littlecott (2008) points out, important research in L2 writing at the time was mostly limited to the three main areas of contrastive rhetoric, assessment research and English for specific purposes. Another contributing factor was that L1 composition research at the time generally paid little attention to L2 writing, instead focusing on the similarities between native and non-native writing.

3.3.1.2 Acknowledging the variation between L1 and L2 process writing

One of the first voices to acknowledge the difference was Raimes (1985, 1987) who after initially believing that L2 composition and L2 writing process were, to all intents and purposes, the same, went on to find that the act of L2 writing is indeed somehow different from that of writing in an L1, but that there is probably still a strong relationship between the two processes. Many of these differences have not yet been fully scrutinised in L2 writing process research. However, some studies have started to explore the differences between L1 and L2 writers. These studies have included investigating of the role of L1 use in L2 writing, the comparison of L1 and L2 writing processes, and have considered the effect and influence of L1 writing processes on L2 writing processes. A number of these studies relevant to the current study are reviewed later in the present module.

L1 composition process research has informed L2 writing, and has helped form a basis for L2 writing theory and approaches. However, Kroll (2006) points out recent and contemporary research has produced a large amount of new and sometimes contradictory information on L2 writing. Kroll (2006) goes on to argue, “we still have very little information on how people actually learn to write in a second language or how teaching may influence this” (p. 6). Wang and Wen (2002) claim that presently there is “no coherent and comprehensive theory or model of L2 writing that adequately explains learning to write or precisely how L2 writing should be taught” (p. 226). Silva (1993) and Grabe (2001) both suggest until a comprehensive theory of L2 can be developed L2 research and pedagogy will continue to be largely based on monolingual, mono-cultural, ethnocentric L1 composition process theories fixated on writing of North American native speakers in tertiary education. But even so L2 writing researchers must be careful not to let L1 writing studies totally guide or determine their investigations of L2 writing processes, because the research contexts are not the same.

It has been argued that the major similarity between L1 composition and L2 writing may well be the process patterns used to compose. As Silva (1993) points out, in particular they both employ recursive processes that involve planning and revising in order to develop ideas and also ways in which to express those ideas. Leeds (1996) further explains that the reason L2 writers can function in a similar way to L1 writers is because “L2 writers are able to discern goals, consider organisational possibilities and deal with concerns about gist” (p. 28). However, more recent research indicates that the relationship between L1 composition and L2 writing is a more complex one. Littlecott (2008) points out that there is a fundamental difference in that “unlike monolingual L1 writers, L2 learners can cognitively switch to another language” (p. 96).

If then as recent research suggests that L2 writing is more probably discrete and distinct from L1 composing and the direct transfer of all a writer's L1 composing skills and processes to their L2 writing does not always occur in a natural and instinctive way but rather depending on individual writers, types of writer, learning stage or context, then it is important to also consider the potential role of using L1 in the L2 writing process.

3.3.2 The transfer of L1 in the L2 writing process

Teachers of L2 writing, particularly in the context of EFL, have traditionally put emphasis on the need for their student writers to think and write as fully as possible, and more often than not totally, in English. This is based on the belief that any work done in L1 by L2 student writers will invariably impede acquisition of the L2 "target" language and will interfere or obstruct the generation of L2 structures. The usual reason given to lend weight to this argument is that interference is caused by incorrect transfer of structures and vocabulary from the student's L1 to their L2 writing. Arapoff (1967) went so far as to suggest that student L2 writers should stay clear of topics related to first hand experience because they may then translate from their L1 into L2 writing. The validity of Arapoff's suggestion (which in my experience I have seen many L2 writing teachers still holding on to as the "conventional wisdom" for topic choice) is investigated in the present study, where for L2 writers, not only are the possible positive effects for choosing a first-hand topic experienced in L1 considered, but also the possible positive implication of planning that topic in the writer's L1.

Despite the traditional views on avoiding L1 when writing in an L2, recently a number of studies (see below) have suggested that L2 writers usually do transfer some writing abilities as well as strategies from their L1 to their L2. However, these abilities and strategies may be positive or they may be negative. Another significant finding in recent research (see below) has been the facilitative functions of L1 usage in the L2 writing process. The following section of the present study will briefly review the literature on the transfer of L1 composing skills and strategies in the L2 writing process as it relates to the issue of using L1 in the L2 writing process.

Chelala's (1982) research was one of the early studies that examined the L2 writing process paying particular attention to the transfer of L1 to L2 writing. Chelala used the case study approach to investigate composing and coherence of two "professional" Spanish L1 women. Her subjects composed while at the same time providing think aloud protocols on four separate occasions and they were also interviewed twice. She used an established coding scheme to analyse her subjects think aloud protocol recordings and also analysed the coherence of their texts using previously developed methods. Chelala found several effective and ineffective behaviours used by her subjects. One of the ineffective behaviours she found was the use of L1 for prewriting and switching back and forth between their L1 and L2. This finding is of particular importance to the present study as it contradicts those of later studies focusing on L1 use in prewriting and the planning stage of L2 writing discussed in more detail in section 3.3.4 of the present module. Chelala's (1982) findings are particularly at odds with the findings of those studies by Lay (1982), Cumming (1987) and Friedlander (1990).

The use of L1 in L2 writing processes was also investigated by Martin-Betancourt (1986). She analysed compose aloud protocols recorded from her Puerto Rican college student subjects, and found that the L2 writing process was similar to the L1 process, with the exception of two composing behaviours. The exceptions were the use of more than one language and translating. Martin-Betancourt suggests that her subjects' writing processes were primarily concerned with solving linguistic problems and that L1 usage in their L2 writing only added to their problems, this was especially the case with vocabulary transfer, vocabulary translating and using false cognates. She also found a discrepancy in the amount of Spanish her subjects used. Some of her subjects relied heavily on Spanish even incorporating a translation process stage into their L2 writing, while others subjects used Spanish very infrequently.

Despite the somewhat negative results of L1 usage and L1 process transfer suggested in the findings of Chelala (1982) and Martin-Betancourt (1986), other studies have shown the positive influence of L1 use. Lay (1982) took into account and investigated the possible use of both L1 and L2 in her study of the writing processes of L2 writers. Her subjects were four adult, L1 Chinese students of L2 English. She analysed L2 texts they wrote along with the associated compose and think aloud tapes they produced. The subjects were also interviewed about their current thoughts on writing and also their own writing backgrounds. Lay found her subjects included and incorporated their L1 into their L2 writing processes. This served as an aid and not a hindrance to writing, since her subjects used L1 Chinese when they were stuck in L2 English, for instance to find a key word. Lay (1982) concluded that compared to essays without any L1 switches, "when there are more native language switches, the essays in this study were of better quality in terms of ideas, organisation and details" (p. 406).

Edelsky's (1982) longitudinal study endorses the assumption that L2 writers call on and utilise knowledge and strategies they have developed for writing in their L1. Edelsky's study was product text based rather than using think aloud or composing aloud protocols. Her subjects were young children in a bilingual program. There were a total of twenty-six first, second and third grade students. Over a period of one school year she collected four separate writing sample texts. She identified L1 knowledge formed "the basis of new hypotheses rather than interferes with writing in another language" (p. 227). Edelsky also indicated that fundamental L1 writing processes were also used by her subjects for their L2 writing. Therefore as suggested by Lay's (1982) study certain features in a writer's L1 writing process transfer to those same features in a writer's L2 process, and if it is not a full transfer there is certainly some reflection of the L1 in the L2 writing process.

Uzawa and Cumming's (1989) study compared the writing processes in L2 Japanese and L1 English of four intermediate L1 English Canadian learners of L2 Japanese. The subjects producing two individual essays, one in L2 Japanese and the other in L1 English. Both essays were on the same topic but the two essays were not translation equivalents. The essays were to also include historical information provided to the subjects. To begin with all of the four subjects reported that they used their L1 English considerably for generating ideas, searching for topics, developing concepts and organising information. Subjects 1 and 2 performed similarly on their essays but gave little verbal report about their writing processes in either composing language of English or Japanese. Both subjects produced essays with basically the same content information in their English essay and their Japanese essay. However their Japanese L2 essays were simplified semantically, lexically and syntactically. Subject 3, who had a lower proficiency level in Japanese than subjects 1 and 2, relied heavily on his L1

English essay in order to produce his L2 Japanese essay. He attempted to maintain the organisation and information from his L1 English essay while at the same time simplifying his L2 Japanese essay. Subject 4, who had the lowest proficiency level in Japanese of all the four subjects, was not able to produce a Japanese essay without the use of translation in order to complete the task. All the subjects reported that when they attempted to compose in L2 Japanese, they felt the need to limit the amount of information in the essay, to simplify the syntax and the vocabulary, and generally disregard questions about the audience. Uzawa and Cumming (1989) posit that allowing students at this level to use their L1 strategies and abilities as scaffolding tools may be useful and suggest that asking student L2 writers to try and think in L2 at lower levels may cause cognitive overload and actually result in weaker and possibly ineffectual writing.

Wang and Wen's (2002) study of sixteen L1 Chinese writers of L2 English investigated how their subjects used their L1 Chinese when composing L2 English and how the use of L1 Chinese was affected by L2 proficiency as well as the writing tasks. The subjects were asked to compose pieces of text in English, one narrative and the other argumentative. At the same time the researchers recorded think aloud protocols. Wang and Wen found after analyses of the subject think-aloud protocols that the L2 writers had both their L1 and L2 at their disposal when writing in L2 English. Further examination of the protocols indicated the subject L2 writers relied more on L1 when they were controlling their writing processes or generating and organising ideas, however they relied more on L2 when examining the task and for activities that required text generating. Another interesting finding, echoing the findings of Uzawa and Cumming's (1989) study, was that subjects with low L2 English proficiency levels were more inclined to translate directly from L1 into L2 throughout their L2 composing

processes. However, the advanced L2 English proficiency level subjects, although still largely relying on L1, seemed to use their L1 Chinese more strategically for idea generating, monitoring, and searching for vocabulary. Findings from both Uzawa and Cumming (1989) and Wang and Wen's (2002) studies seem to suggest that L2 proficiency may be an important factor in determining the focus of L1 strategy transfer and L1 usage in L2 writing.

Wolfersberger's (2003) study agrees that there is a link between L2 proficiency and L1 use and strategy transfer. In his study he found his three lower proficiency L1 Japanese students of L2 English transferred some L1 strategies to their L2 writing process, however, they struggled to utilise many other strategies that could have helped their L2 writing process. Wolfersberger concluded that when L2 writers are faced with a writing task that requires proficiency above their current level of L2, they then fail to transfer their L1 writing strategies at all to their L2 writing process. He goes on to suggest that L2 writers who are faced with writing tasks that are challenging should be taught compensation strategies from their L1 writing strategy base. Specifically he suggests teaching the use of L1 in brainstorming and idea generation, breaking down writing tasks into smaller chunks, and allowing student L2 writers to recognise and maintain a high tolerance towards errors in L2 during drafting that are temporary and can be corrected later.

It is obviously not easy to draw clear-cut conclusions given the contradictions between the findings of the studies reviewed here as well as the differences between individual writers. However what cannot be ignored from the pedagogical perspective is that there are certain implications regarding expectations of L1 transfer to L2 writing. It appears difficult to argue against the reality of L2 writers transferring L1 writing strategies to their L2 writing process

with sometimes negative but often positive effects and a number potential facilitative and cognitive load reducing functions of L1 use in L2 writing. Therefore many teachers acute fear of negative language transfer may in fact be counter-productive to their students' progress. Kobayashi and Rinnert (1992) have concluded, "given the demanding nature of second language composing processes, composition researchers and teachers have begun to acknowledge the positive role of first language in second language writing" (p. 185). They go on to say that research has shown that L2 writers use their L1 to "produce essays of better quality in terms of ideas, organisation and details...and to meaningfully link image to work" (p. 186). Although the research literature is often contradictory as to what way L1 should be used or encouraged practically as a potential pedagogical model or approach to L2 writing. The present study is motivated by the limitations of the previous studies in examining the potential use of L1 as an active pedagogical device especially in the particular sub-process of planning L2 writing and whether the choice of topic has an influence on its implementation.

3.3.3 Translating student generated L1 text as an intentional process step in L2

Composition

Contrary to the common-sense or traditional view many teachers and students of L2 writing hold (see use of target language in section 1.3.1 "Use of L1 in L2 writing" in the current module), some recent studies as reviewed in the previous section do indicate the positive facilitative functions of using L1 in the L2 writing process especially at lower proficiency levels. Studies such as Uzawa and Cumming (1989) and Wang and Wen (2002) found that student L2 writers do indeed rely on L1 usage during the L2 writing process. L1 was used in

various ways to scaffold the production of L2 writing. This included idea generation and vocabulary generation as compensation strategies and generally as a tool to reduce cognitive overload. However, in both studies this has been writer initiated rather than part of a teacher induced pedagogical device. Witalisz (2006) on the other hand suggests that when dealing with adult learners, “the writing teacher should take advantage of the learner’s writing competence in their L1 and enhance the transfer of their composing skills, even if it involves the use of L1, because this does not necessarily have to result in transfer errors” (p. 176).

One of the strategic behaviours regarding L1 use in L2 writing that teachers have most often viewed in a negative light has been the direct translating from L1 to L2. Again the greatest fear has been negative transfer especially of errors. Given the extreme fear shown by many teachers for any kind of L1 use in L2 writing, writing a text first in L1 then translating it into L2 would be almost unthinkable for most teachers as a viable pedagogical approach. However studies by Cumming (1990), Lay (1982) and Leki (1992) amongst others suggest that most L2 writers are already engaged in some sort of mental translation from L1 to L2. On the whole L1 mental translation was shown to allow more sophisticated thinking and reflection on the topic for writing. Cumming (1990) in particular found that L1 mental translation permitted the L2 writer to retrieve suitable lexical items and phrases as well as consolidate ideas and relationships between languages.

Building on the findings of studies such as Cumming (1990), Lay (1982) and Leki (1992) further research has been carried out to explore the strategies that are involved in not only mental translation, which occurs in the minds of the writers, but rather the strategies involved in producing L2 texts using full translation on paper of an initial draft in L1. A few studies

have investigated this with the view to explore whether a strategy of direct full translation could be used as a viable pedagogical approach for L2 writing. These studies have tried to answer the question of whether using preconceived full translation of a draft written in the L1 intentionally as a process step in L2 composition could be of benefit to the L2 writer.

According to Cohen (2000) some studies have indeed suggested that translating does produce positive results and some benefits in terms of organisation and complexity to the product L2 text, especially for students at the lower proficiency levels. One such study by Kobayashi and Rinnert (1992) investigated and compared L2 English texts translated from an initial L1 Japanese draft against L2 texts directly written in L2 English. The subjects in the study comprised of forty-eight fourth year university students with L1 Japanese and at two levels of L2 English proficiency. The subjects were divided into two groups and instructed to write two essays each. Subjects in the first group were asked to write their first essay in L1 Japanese and then translate it into L2 English. Subjects in the second group were asked to write their first essay directly in L1 English. The following day the two groups switched tasks and the subjects wrote their second essay on a different topic. The essays that were written by translating an initial L1 draft (translation mode) showed greater levels of syntactic complexity and organisation, as well as improved content and style as compared to the essays written directly in L2 English. The subjects that benefited most from the translation mode were those students at a lower level of L2 English proficiency. Those subjects at higher levels demonstrated less of an advantage by using translation. This contradicts Zamel's (1982) finding in a study which does not directly investigate translation from L1 in the L2 writing process, but nevertheless observed that the most proficient writer in the study used translation in her L2 writing process. Although this subject may indeed have been an anomaly as most

other subjects rejected the idea of translating, with one subject commenting “it would be like being pulled by two brains” (p. 201).

In Kobayashi and Rinnert’s (1992) study also, over two thirds of all the subjects expressed a preference for writing directly in L2 rather than translation from an L1 draft. One of the reasons the subjects gave for this preference was that when they wrote directly in L2 English they could convey ideas in an easier and simpler way by employing the use of words and structures, which were familiar to them in L2 English. Another reason was that when translating from an L1 draft they found it difficult to translate and express meanings that were more subtle in nature, especially expressions of nuance. Some of the subjects also stated that they preferred writing directly into L2 English because they felt it was more beneficial for them to think in English when writing in English. The subjects that preferred the translation mode reported that by translating from an initial L1 draft they could develop their ideas more easily as well as express their thoughts and opinions on the topic more clearly. They went on to say that lexical selection was also easier with the aid of a dictionary, and had the added advantage of allowing them to acquire new vocabulary in the process. In spite of the preferences that the subjects expressed for writing directly in L2 English or using the translation mode, Kobayashi and Rinnert’s (1992) overall findings based on the results obtained suggest that translation as an intentional process of L2 writing may well be beneficial especially for students at lower proficiency levels. It should be noted however that Kobayashi and Rinnert themselves did report a potential confounding variable in their own study. When subjects completed a retrospective questionnaire report, one of the questions asked was how much mental translation from L1 Japanese they were doing while composing directly into L2 English? Just under 90% of the lower proficiency level subjects, and over

50% of the higher proficiency level subjects admitted to using Japanese more than half the time when they were supposed to be writing directly into L2 English. Therefore the direct L2 writing mode was in fact not as direct as the description suggested.

Ali's (1996) study, cited in Cohen & Brooks-Carson (2001), replicates the Kobayashi and Rinnert (1992) study with L1 Arabic students of L2 English. Unlike the finding of Kobayashi and Rinnert (1992) study, Ali found that rather than the translation mode of composing L2 English by translating an initial L1 Arabic draft, students who wrote directly in L2 English produced better final essay texts. The subjects were sixty L1 Arabic university students. Each subject wrote three essays, one in L1 Arabic, one directly in L2 English and one translated essay from L1 Arabic to L2 English. The essays were written in normal class hours and the topic was chosen out of four possible topics. Each essay was analysed and writing ability was measured using holistic ratings. The texts produced writing directly in L2 English were overall rated higher than those texts produced by translation from initial L1 Arabic drafts. Therefore, direct writing in L1 English was rated more positively and more beneficial in this context of Arabic university students rather than employing an intentional translation process as a pedagogical device.

Cohen's (2000) study investigated the strategies L2 student writers use when they compose directly in L2 and when they compose in L2 via translation L1, particularly in the context of essay writing as an assessment task. His subjects were thirty-nine learners of L2 French at intermediate level with varying L1s including English and Spanish. Each subject produced two essays. The first essay was produced via translating an initial L1 draft. The texts were analysed using six trained and calibrated raters who holistically rated the texts using various

multitrait scales. Four of the raters had native competency in the L1 of the translated texts they would rate and two other raters had native French ability. The results showed the majority of subjects, over 60%, produced better texts when directly writing in L2 French across the entire multitrait rating scales. The rest of the subjects produced higher rated texts using the translation mode. The rates reported that there was no major difference in the grammatical rating scales between the direct L2 mode and the translation mode. However, the direct L2 mode essays did rate lower in regards to scales of transitions, clauses and expression. Similar to Kobayashi and Rinnert (1992)'s study Cohen found that the subjects indicated in retrospective verbal reports that they thought in their L1 and used mental translation even when they were writing directly into L2 French. Therefore Cohen concludes the two writing tasks were essentially not distinct in nature. However he does go on to say that since the study was intended to simulate typical classroom L2 writing that direct writing may well be better than translating especially for writers under time constraints.

Cohen and Brooks-Carson (2001) suggest that on the whole, available research on the effects of using translation as an intentional process in L2 writing advocates the translation approach only to enhance text cohesion and syntactic complexity. L2 writers' ranges of expression may also be enhanced using the translation approach owing to the fact that writers would probably also attempt to use a wider range of vocabulary and phrases, on par with the expressions used in their L1 drafts. Cohen and Brooks-Carson (2001) go on to say that one of the areas of deficiency in using the translation approach may be that syntax and grammar would be negatively affected when translating as L2 writers would probably have to use grammatical structures other than the ones they are proficient or feel safe with. "Safe" grammatical structures they would have used to be in control while directly composing in L2. Although

this suggestion has not been verified by the research literature to date, Cohen and Brooks-Carson (2001) believe the L2 writers would more than probably reduce their circumlocution and avoidance strategies when using the translation approach.

There may be no conclusive evidence in the research literature to suggest that direct translation of an entire initial L1 draft as an intentional step in the process of L2 writing improves or is advantageous for L2 writing. In spite of some of the potential or possible benefits, many teachers and students (Akyel, 1994; Johnson, 1985; Zamel, 1982) alike remain, and I believe this is still the case, highly cautious or opposed to the idea of the direct translation approach or indeed any use of L1 in the direct generation of text in L2 writing process. The present study investigates a possible alternative to the use of L1 and translation, whether mental or on paper, for text generation in and of itself. That is the potential positive use of L1 and L1 translation to aid topic idea generation, long-term memory information retrieval and organisation during the sub-process of planning L2 writing.

3.3.4 Using L1 specifically in the planning step of L2 writing

Given that the studies reviewed so far indicate that L1 use and L1 writing strategies transfer to L2 writing with possible positive effects, the present study explores and tries to identify under which situation could using L1 be of more benefit than using L2 for writers of L2. Especially in regards to retrieving topic knowledge from memory and whether retrieving information in L1 and mentally translating can cause an overload on short-term memory resulting in lower content quality of resultant final product texts or whether retrieving information in L1 actually

lowers cognitive overloads by allowing recall in the language certain information was experienced and stored in. In any case, the present study focuses on investigating the switches to L1 that occur in the topic retrieval and idea generation stages of process writing, which generally tend to primarily occur in the initial planning stages of L2 writing, and whether these could be used as a pedagogical device to enhance quality and content of texts produced by L2 writers.

The use of L1 in the L2 writing process is still overall a relatively unexplored area of research. Fewer studies still particularly focus on the use of L1 in only the planning stage of writing in an L2. Planning could include singularly, or a combination of, brainstorming to generate ideas, taking notes, drawing charts or simple initial drafts.

Not many recent studies have investigated the complex issue of L1 use in L2 planning, whether as an individual student strategy or as an intentional pedagogical device. One recent study that has looked at the use of L1 in L2 planning is Beare and Bourdages, (2007). However by their own admission their study “ focuses on generating strategies used by skilled bilingual writers (Spanish/English)...having achieved a proficiency level similar to L1 writers and can not be considered L2 learners” (p. 151). To be directly relevant to the current study, the review of research in this section will focus on those studies where the subjects have been L1 student writers of L2.

Some such studies, which comment on findings on the use of L1 during the planning stage of L2 writing, are Cumming (1987), Hirose and Sasaki (1994), Jones and Tetroe (1987). These studies although primarily not intending to investigate planning L2 texts in L1, nevertheless

yielded findings on L2 writer use of L1 in the planning stage of L2 writing. Most of these findings occurred through analysing subject reported think-aloud protocols given while carrying out this stage of the L2 writing process. Other studies such as Akyel (1994) and Friedlander (1990) have analysed directly experimentally treated product plans and resultant product essays to see the effect of using L1 in the planning stages of L2 writing.

Cumming (1987) in his study found that his six L1 French Canadian adult subjects all used their L1 French to generate ideas and plan content for their L2 English text tasks regardless of whether the topic was related to L1 French or L2 English. These tasks were personal, expository, and academic. Cumming used think aloud protocol recordings, observation of subjects while they wrote, subject questionnaires on their personal and educational backgrounds, L2 proficiency test scores and holistic evaluation by independent raters on the subjects' L1 writing ability to gather data. Cumming noticed that the low-proficiency writers used their L1 to generate ideas constantly. However, the high-proficiency writers used their L1 to generate ideas and also to generate content. Furthermore the high-proficiency writers used their L1 French to check style, especially for diction and L1 reference strategies. In fact overall Cumming found that the high-proficiency writers in his study did most of their thinking in L1 French, which agrees with Zamel's (1982) study where the most proficient L2 writer used the most L1, but contrary to the findings of Johnson (1985).

Hirose and Sasaki (1994) also concluded the opposite of Cumming (1990). Although the main aim of their study was to investigate the possible relationship between student L2 proficiency, L1 writing ability and L2 writing quality, in which they found significant correlations. They also found that the less-proficient of their nineteen L1 Japanese university student writers of

L2 English subjects used L1 far more than the more-proficient writers for generating ideas and planning content during prewrite planning. The less-proficient writers actively used translation as a strategy to generate ideas and content.

Jones and Tetroe's (1987) study focused on six L1 Spanish speaking writers of L2 English preparing for graduate study. They analysed think aloud protocols produced by their subjects paying particular attention to the subjects L1 and L2 planning behaviours. Data was collected longitudinally over a six-month period. Jones and Tetroe found the amount of L1 use in their subjects L2 writing varied greatly. They also noticed, "some decrease in [writing] performance" (p. 53) when their subjects planned their writing in L2. This they reasoned was because composing in an L2 required the use of potential "cognitive capacity" that would otherwise be used for different tasks when writing in L1. They believed that often L1 was used in L2 planning and composing as a compensation strategy when the subject had a deficiency in L2 vocabulary. They also found "that the quality, though not the quantity, of planning transfers from L1 to L2" (p. 56).

The studies surveyed so far point to some potential for a positive effect resulting from L2 writers using their L1 while generating texts in English. As indicated if L2 writers are retrieving topic knowledge in their L1, and they are then forced to translate into L2 English either before they write down any text or notes or while they are planning their texts, additional and unnecessary constraints will be imposed on their composing. In fact, it would in all probability cause them to use up too much of their short-term or working memory store (i.e. an overburdening cognitive load). Peterson and Peterson (1959) state that the amount of information that can be retained in short-term memory is quite limited and decay of

information is quite rapid. Therefore any mental translation can constrain text production by limiting what writers are able to retain. It may be preferable to encourage L2 writers to think about their knowledge of a topic and produce a written plan in their native language and then translate or compose into L2 English. The plan could consist of points, phrases, or even sentences, which would then include information retrieved from memory on the subject of the essay, but already put down on paper, that is retrieved and written in the writer's L1. Two studies have sought to investigate the use of L1 in planning as an intentional pedagogical strategic tool.

Friedlander's (1990) study investigated the applied use of L1 in planning for L2 writing. The subjects were twenty-eight L1 Chinese students studying in an American university. Data was collected from short essay responses to two letters. The responses to the letters were planned in either L1 Chinese or L2 English and then the final essay text was written in English. Qualitative and quantitative analysis revealed that when the writers planned in L1 Chinese on an L1 Chinese cultural topic and in L2 English on an L2 English cultural topic, (called the match condition) their plans and final essay texts were rated considerably higher than when they wrote in the mismatch condition. The subjects' plans and final essays were both longer in length when language and cultural topic was matched. Friedlander found that when the subjects planned in L1 for a topic they had experienced or dealt with in their L1 Chinese they were able to generate more ideas that were more varied. He also concluded findings that the choice of topic had an effect on the quality of plans and final essay texts. However language as an independent variable on its own without linking to topic did not show any effects on length or quality of either plans or final essay texts. Friedlander admitted that the context of twenty-eight L1 Chinese students at an American university was a very

specific context and configuration, therefore his findings could not be generalised to all types of students or all contexts.

Akyel's (1994) study followed closely that of Friedlander (1990) however the findings were somewhat different. Akyel's subjects were seventy-eight Turkish L2 English students at two different proficiency levels, intermediate and advanced, studying at a Turkish university. Each student wrote essays on three topics, a Turkish bound topic, a British/American bound topic and a neutral topic. The subjects were divided into two groups. The first group planned their essays in L1 Turkish; the second group planned their essays in L2 English. Again like Friedlander's (1990) study the plans and essays were analysed qualitatively and quantitatively. As can be expected, due to language proficiency overall the advanced students produced better plans and essays than the intermediate level students. However, Akyel found that the language used for planning did not affect the quality of the plans for the advanced students writers for any of the three topics. But the lower-proficiency intermediate student writers using direct L2 English for planning produced higher quality plans and essays for both the Turkish and the British/American culturally bound topics. For both intermediate and advanced student writers there were no significant differences in the final essay texts due to planning in either L1 Turkish or L2 English. These findings contrast greatly with Friedlander's (1990) study.

Although the above studies have provided insights into the possible use of L1 in planning L2 writing, either as independent writer strategies, or as potential pedagogical devices, the overall picture that emerges is still not clear. Undoubtedly some students do use L1 in the planning process, but the research provides conflicting results as to at what proficiency level

this occurs. Friedlander (1990) and Akyel (1994) reached opposing conclusions to the benefits of planning in either L1 or L2. This conflict may be due the differing contexts and type of students in the two studies. L1 Chinese students studying in an American university, versus L1 Turkish students studying at a Turkish University (English dominant country versus L1 dominant environment). The aims of the present study builds upon all the research reviewed here with particular emphasis on both Friedlander (1990) and Akyel's (1994) studies.

The present study touches upon what Friedlander (1990) and Akyel (1994) sought to investigate. However, the present study tries to bridge the gap between Friedlander (1990) and Akyel' (1994) two studies, in that the subjects are drawn from both those studying in an English dominant country context and those studying in an L1 "home" country, (in this case Japan). The present study also expands on other areas not covered by Friedlander (1990) and Akyel's (1994) studies with significant improvements based on knowledge gained in the field since their studies were carried out almost 20 years and 15 years ago respectively. The scope, contexts, methods, major design, instrumentation and data analyses improvements are fundamentally different (detailed in the relevant sections of task design and data collection in module 3) and therefore constitute an original study that is hoped will be beneficial in increasing new understanding and further insight in the research field of L2 writing with regards to L1 usage in planning and topic choice.

3.3.5 Topic choice, topic knowledge retrieval and L1 use

The contrastive rhetoric theory (Kaplan, 1966; Connor, 2003) suggests that culture greatly influences writing. The relationship between topic choice for L2 writing (see module 1 paper 2), L1 and L2 culture, and topic information retrieval and language is of great interest. The question of whether the topic choice and prompts elicit more L1 use in the L2 writing process, and the potential positive or negative effects of this usage is also of interest to the current study. Some research has suggested that students use more L1 in their L2 writing process when given a topic culturally bound to their L1 (Burtoff, 1983; Johnson, 1985; Lay, 1982). Moragne e Silva (1989) in her study found more L2 writers referred back to prompts in L1 rather than L2 suggesting long-term memory may be stronger in L1 than L2. Others have argued that for this very reason L2 writers should not be asked to write on topics related to their L1 as it induces transfer of errors from L1 to the resultant L2 text (Arapoff, 1967).

Galvan's (1985) ethnographic study, cited in Krapels (1990), investigated the cultural and linguistic factors in writing processes paying particular attention to the topic of the text. His subjects were ten Spanish speaking doctoral students of education. Data was collected from interviews, direct observations, and assessments of writing skills as well as levels of bilingualism and biculturalism. Galvan observed that his subjects' L2 writing strategies were influenced in general by both their L1 thinking and culture and also their L2 thinking and culture. He suggested pauses and doubts that occurred during his participants' composing processes were caused by the movement between two languages and two cultures.

In Johnson's (1985) study, L2 writers themselves believed that using L1 when writing in an L2 was an unwise strategy for advanced L2 learners. Even though all six of her subject L2 writers believed this to be the case, Johnson found that they still relied quite heavily on their L1 for generating ideas when they were asked to write about an L1 culture related topic. The disdain for using any L1 for L2 writing by advanced L2 learners (particularly in the planning stages) was echoed by Turkish L1 writers of L2 English in Akyel's (1994) study. They gave reasons such as "Why should I write a plan in Turkish if I am not going to write the composition in Turkish?" and "Translating from Turkish doesn't leave me much time for reconsidering what to write" (p. 178). However, again in practice the students relied on their L1 when writing about a culturally bound Turkish topic.

Another study that agreed with this finding was Burtoff's (1983) study on Arabic, Japanese, and English native speaker discourse strategies. The study investigated ninety product composition texts by first year college students. Burtoff found the writers arranged their compositions according to the writing prompt or topic. The more culturally bound the topic was, the more difference there was in the discourse structures in terms of L1 usage between the three groups of writers.

Lay (1982) investigated and compared the use of L1 and L2 in L2 writing. Her primary results suggested that when L2 writers employ L1 switches they produce essays of better quality. However the study also brought to her attention that "certain topics induce more native language switches" (p. 406). Lay claims that use of the L1 is more likely with specific topics, mainly topics related to L1 (Chinese in the case of her study) experience, that is topics studied or acquired in the writers L1 background. Lay also points out that the L1 may aid

topic search and generation of ideas on topics that are unfamiliar to the L2 writer. Lay's findings indicate that in regards to topic choice, L2 students writers may well be able to plan more easily for their L2 texts with one less constraint on writing if they write about topics acquired in L2 settings.

In regards to topic choice Friedlander's (1990) study (detailed in the previous section) suggested that for his L1 Chinese subjects attending an American university planning is improved on topics where they use the language the topic was experienced in and that translation from L1 Chinese to L2 English seems to aid writers rather than hinder them when the knowledge bound to the topic is in their L1 Chinese. These findings were contrasted by Akyel's (1994) study of L1 Turkish writers of L2 English studying at a Turkish University where no significant difference was found in resultant L2 texts whether planned in L1 or L2. However, Cumming (1990) believes that L1 allows L2 writers to access suitable vocabulary and phrases and to combine ideas from both L1 and L2. L1 also allows the writer to think about the topic in a more sophisticated way.

The current study aims to investigate if topic choice (culturally bound or experienced in L1 or L2) does indeed affect the quality, length and number of ideas generated in a plan for an L2 essay and also if the resultant L2 essay's quality or length is affected in any way for L1 Japanese writers of L2 English in various contexts. The relationship between language used to retrieve and plan on paper and topic choice is also investigated. The question of whether planning an essay on an L1 Japanese culturally bound topic produces a better plan in L1 Japanese or whether the plan would be better planned directly in L2 English is investigated.

The same is investigated for an L2 English topic. Not only are the plans analysed but also the resultant L2 essay products.

SUMMARY OF MODULE 2 AND PLAN OF MODULE 3

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. In the first part of module 2, a detailed discussion on purposes, aims, scale and scope of the entire PhD study is given. This includes the gap in current research literature and the need for the present study. The types of participant subjects are introduced as well as in which situated contexts they are investigated. These three situated contexts are described as:

Group A (L1 Japanese L2 English writers studying in the UK)

Group B (L1 Japanese L2 English writers studying in a Japanese university)

Group C (L1 Japanese L2 English “expert” writers “anchored” in Japan)

The reasoning behind the choice of the three stages of the experimental phase of the study is also described in detail. Stage one consisting of three independent quantitative experiments on each of the three groups of subjects. Each of the experiments aims to investigate separately for each of the three contexts (groups A, B and C) whether planning in L1 Japanese about a Japanese topic or planning in L2 English about an English topic (i.e. a language and topic match condition) would enhance a Japanese L2 English writer’s plan and final essay text in English. Also whether topic choice independent of language, or language choice of planning independent of topic choice (language and topic mismatch conditions) would have any impact on plans or resulting L2 English final essay texts. In other words does planning in Japanese or planning in English (regardless of the topic) enhance or weaken the plan or

resultant English essay text. Or do certain topic choices (regardless of whether they are planned in Japanese or English) enhance or weaken the plan or resultant English essay text.

Stage two is a causal-comparative study where the independent variable is the situated context (UK vs. Japanese University). Only groups A and B are compared and contrasted quantitatively due to both groups having similar variables such as age and English proficiency. This cannot be said for group C, which is made up of L1 Japanese “expert” proficiency L2 English writers of varying ages. Therefore stage three of the experimental phase is described as a hermeneutic and qualitative case study comparing and contrasting group C with groups A and B.

The details and designs of the experimental tasks and data collection procedures are described fully in module 3. However, a list of eight research questions as well as a detailed discussion of how the experimental inquiries will be carried out in terms of ideology and paradigms are given in module 2. “Humble Pragmatic Rationalism” is introduced as a viable alternative framework and ideological paradigm for the way in which this study will be carried out, rather than the more traditional strict traditional positivist approach. This is based on the use of meta-analyses of the cumulative data collected both quantitatively and qualitatively in the three stages of the experimental phase.

An in depth review of literature is also given in module 2. The dearth of previous studies on planning L2 writing with the use of L1 and the related aspects of topic choice is mentioned. The literature review is divided into three sections starting with a broad relevant historical outline of L2 writing approaches and orientations in the first section, then narrowing the focus

on to specific details of pertinent research literature on process orientated writing in the second section. Then the third section concentrates on surveying previous studies of writing research that have been carried out with some direct bearing (often as secondary aims rather than their primary aim) to the issues investigated in the present study. These studies include research on L1 composition, L1 transfer in L2 writing, and intentional L1 translation in L2 writing. The final part of the third section examines the small number of studies that have sought to look at planning L2 writing in L1 and other studies that have investigated topic choice in L2 writing.

Module 3 details the participant subject populations as well as discussing their backgrounds and placing them in context. All three stages of the experimental phase are discussed in depth and methodology, task design and data collection procedures are given. Specific details of why certain design choices were made are explained as well as details of a pilot study. 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 each of the three different context groups 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 overall study.

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