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A first language in second language writing

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A Thesis

entitled

A First Language in Second Language Writing

by

Kevin Risner

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Master of Arts Degree in English

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May 2012

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An Abstract of
A First Language in Second Language Writing

by

Kevin Risner

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Master of Arts Degree in English

The University of Toledo
May 2012

This thesis examines ESL students' use of their L1 in their prewriting for practice exams for their ENGL1020 class at the University of Toledo. This study was done by reviewing teacher syllabi to see when prewriting (through instructors' lectures or student discussion on the topic) took place in the classroom environment before the first practice exam for the semester, by interviewing instructors to see if and when they lectured about the forms of prewriting, and by looking at practice exam prewriting documents to see when students pre-wrote and if they used their L1 during the practice exam. Through a lack of clarity in the procedure by the researcher and participating instructors, the results could not be analyzed quantitatively. Qualitatively, the results show that some students do language switch and use their L1 when prewriting. More research is needed to see what students and instructors believe is prewriting. There also needs to be more elucidation in survey material, more exposition for subjects as to what prewriting might entail, and additional care taken when compiling data for tabulation. This thesis also provides implications for future research studies and teaching – for study expansion; the comparison of ENGL1020 students' entrance, practice, and exit exams; and more incorporation of prewriting and the students' L1s into the UT ESL composition syllabus.

I dedicate this thesis to my family, my friends, and my colleagues – everyone who has helped me and supported me, not only throughout these past two years at the University of Toledo, but also throughout the two years I taught overseas in Turkey. Be it extensively or minutely, you all have aided in my growth as a writer, as a researcher, as a person. Thank you.

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I would also like to thank my parents who kept on telling me that I would indeed finish. Their guidance and their support have meant so much to me throughout my life – and my thanks, though heartfelt and eternal, cannot express my appreciation for their faith in my potential as an academic and as a person.

Lastly, I would like to thank Mary Assad, who has been helpful also in telling me I would indeed finish – being an inspiration to write continuously and furiously even when I thought I would not be able to eke out another word. She was an encouragement to me, my eyes when mine were blind, my inspiration when I thought that I had bitten off more than I could chew. My love and gratitude holds no limit.

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Chapter One

An Overview of Writing, Prewriting, and Language Switching

Introduction

This thesis seeks to examine the prewriting activities of students who use English as a Second (or Subsequent) Language (ESL) in developmental composition courses (namely ENGL1020) at the University of Toledo (UT), specifically when they take practice exams throughout the semester, leading to the end-of-semester exit exam. This exit exam is similar to the entrance exam the same students take before being placed either into ENGL1020 or the higher-level composition class (ENGL1110 for ESL); this other composition class is also solely comprised of international students whose first language (L1) is not English. This exit exam result is the main factor in whether or not ENGL1020 students will pass and be eligible for the ESL version of the ENGL1110 course the following semester.

In particular, this study looked at students' prewriting during a practice exam to see if they use their L1 when they pre-write before the final draft is completed. All exams are written in English, which is the target language (TL) for this class. I collected prewriting written on paper given to students during their exam time in the fall semester of 2011 and also for the first practice exam in the spring semester of 2012. The paper provided for the students is given so that they have the option to organize and formulate a passable essay – the final draft written in a blue exam booklet and turned in to the proctor/instructor of the exam. These documents were inspected to see if any languages other than English were used.

Additionally, I strived to find out how students use their L1 when prewriting by passing out a survey to all ENGL1020 classes during the 2012 spring semester. The questions in the survey asked when students use their L1, why they might use it, and whether they would prefer to use their L1 when prewriting (see Appendix D).

Thirdly, during the 2012 spring semester, I asked ENGL1020 teachers about their class instruction and whether or not they lectured about prewriting prior to the first practice exam and whether students verbalized their prewriting habits during class time. After collecting this data and inspecting instructors' syllabi, I aimed to see if there were a substantial number of students who did indeed use their L1 when prewriting for the practice exit exam, and if there were conversation within class time about prewriting and what activities instructors used to promote this practice. I aimed to see if the self-reported data from participants agreed with student writing behaviors. The original design of the study was to find a correlation between the data retrieved from the practice exams and how students described their prewriting behaviors; however, with a lack of clarity in the procedures provided for participants, results were not able to be analyzed quantitatively.

Review of class instruction and the intentions of the current ENGL1020 curriculum in relation to pre-writing activities and pre-writing during the placement exams will hopefully provide pedagogical implications related to how the ENGL1020 class is taught and what students in this class do and do not do during exam time.

I believe this information is important because ESL writing classes at UT do not seem to focus much on a student's L1, at least from my past experiences teaching ENGL1020 for a semester. As I noticed students using their L1 when prewriting the previous semester and talked with some students who said that they used their L1 during

the placement and practice exams in some form, I was inspired to look closer to see if prewriting in the L1 occurred in all ENGL1020 classes. If a student's L1 is indeed an important part of their writing process, then it may be a valuable skill for instructors to lecture on and bring up as a topic for class discussion, and also have students utilize it in classes and essays where the TL is not their L1.

An Overview of Writing in the University Context

Writing has become an essential activity in the university setting within the United States – no matter students' educational background or country of origin. Most classes at the university level will require some form of writing, the amount depending on the discipline. Though the genres of writing vary across academic disciplines, writing assignments and activities are given to students so that they might “enter into an ongoing discussion and... position themselves in relation to what the experts have already said” (Trimbur, 2011, p. 377). Therefore, all instructors and students must realize the importance of writing and its ubiquitous nature. Not only that, but many college students – both American and international students – also need to learn how to write academically. This sort of instruction may not have been given much attention in earlier education levels; developing Academic English, therefore, is of great importance.

With the number of international students studying in the United States, this significance cannot be downplayed. Hinkel (2004) mentions that 547,867 students were enrolled at colleges and universities in the US, according to Institute of International Education (IIE) information for the 2000-01 school year (p. 3). The IIE (2012) provides more up-to-date information for the 2010-11 school year: 690,923 international students are now enrolled at colleges and universities in the US. At the University of Toledo, there

are 1,454 international students out of the approximate 23,000 of total students attending UT. This is approximately 6% of the student population here (University of Toledo, 2012). Though the percentage seems small, the fact that there are over one thousand international students at UT – most of whom do not know English as their L1 – makes it important to inform them of the necessity of learning how to write effectively, for international students must also take an upper level composition course after ENGL1020 and ENGL1110 for ESL. This particular upper-level composition course is an integrated course where international students will be writing along with native English speakers (NESs); there may not be accommodations made to these students since English is not their L1.

Most ESL students have had little previous instruction in writing either in their L1 or TL, leading to a misunderstanding of what is most important to them and also what they think is important to instructors. Murray (1972) describes all writing as a “~~a~~ demanding, intellectual process... of discovery through language” (p. 3-4), an activity that is not static whether on paper or pixels. What all writers create can change depending on the time they are given to write and the resources at their disposal. Thus, it is in our best interests to examine international students’ writing processes and see what students can do before having them submit a final product in an environment much different than what they had in their home countries. Most students do not find writing important because they are not taught about it as a process, nor are they given projects, papers, and essay exams as a final assessment (Benson & Heidish, 1995). International students’ writing and what they think and feel about the activity becomes a challenge for instructors in the American university setting, particularly in composition classrooms

where the instructors do not know how to respond to students whose L1 is not English and who have a different notion of the writing process and what must be done at the end of a semester.

When talking about writing in the ESL context, there has been some discussion of second-language (L2) writing theory but not much within a larger discussion of writing theory and practice in a general sense (Cumming, 2001; Ellis & Yuan, 2004). Ferris and Hedgcock (2009) provide a history of theory and research in L2 writing, particularly summarizing how writing instruction moved first from a product-oriented approach in the 1960s, to a greater focus in – as Murray (1972) had mentioned – writing as a process, to recent hybrids of both writing as product and writing as process, known as a “post-process approach” to writing (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2009, p. 7). Faigley (1990) mentions theories of the academic writing process that have been looked at and discussed during the 1960s to the 1980s, elaborating on three major perspectives on composing: expressive, cognitive, and social (p. 38-39). He does not focus upon writing in the TL, but it is important to see how discussions of TL process writing have grown from these general composition theories. To end his brief synopsis, Faigley (1990) stresses receiving the knowledge of the writing process and showing the variant ways in which this process can travel to a finished product, for it does not seem as if American universities will be downplaying the importance of writing courses any time soon despite writing courses not being as prevalent elsewhere in the world (p. 50).

Process writing is lectured on quite often in composition courses at the university level, at least those solely directed toward the native English speaker (NES). However, as instruction on writing has evolved throughout the past decades with additional

approaches that stress importance on process as well as product, putting more weight on process than product –can be particularly damaging” to international students who are not informed about and educated underneath these more process-based models in their home countries (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2009, p. 7). There instead needs to be a balance between process and product approaches, giving international students knowledge about what is most important in composition classes. For these students, the idea of writing as a process could have been broached before they started attending university; this instruction may not have happened at all.

Writing, as it is for ESL students, can be a very demanding task requiring much contemplation and a variety of skills. When students write in a non-native language, the task becomes even more difficult (Chenoweth & Hayes, 2001; Leki, 1992; Leki, 1995). The cognitive demands that are required of ESL writers make the composition process even more problematic. They need to be adept at writing multiple drafts in the ENGL1020 and ENGL1110 classroom. After joining the ranks of NESs in Composition II, there will be an assumption that ESL students must learn in a similar fashion to those whose L1 is English already. Therefore, instructors have had to exercise caution when teaching ESL students in all levels of composition.

In the scope of UT, the product is what will decide whether or not students can pass ENGL1020, though the writing process has been stressed by instructors in the past as important. The final draft of a timed essay is ultimately what instructors will use to judge if students are able to advance to the ESL version of ENGL1110¹. However, one

¹The only other way that a student might be able to pass into ENGL1110 if s/he fails the final exit exam is if the professor feels the student’s writing in the exit exam does not mirror the work done in class. In this case, a portfolio review takes place and the practice exams are reviewed by multiple instructors.

must not forget that – as Murray (1972) mentions – writing is still indeed considered a process, no matter the language, no matter the individual’s mindset and previous instruction about writing, and no matter if one is writing in his or her first, second, or third language.

An Overview of Prewriting

Writing has been defined by Murray (1972) and by Faigley (1994) as a process, and it can be divided into stages as well. These stages are prewriting, writing, and rewriting. In more detail, Murray (1972) believes that prewriting is everything that happens before the first draft has been produced. Various tasks take place during this time – particularly selection of a subject, creation of the audience, and the form the writer will use (p. 4). Other researchers, such as Perl (1979), have described writing as recursive. She states that composing does not always happen in a linear manner; individuals can start prewriting, begin a first draft, and return to a similar or different manner of prewriting after that initial draft has been written. Not only that, but during the editing process, after a draft has been completed, there may also be more attempts at prewriting before additional revision takes place. Therefore, much consideration needs to take place on what exactly to include in the prewriting process. Another researcher on students’ prewriting activities define prewriting as: “anything a writer does to ultimately solidify a topic in which to write” (Poston, 2009, p. 4). Thereafter, Poston produces a list of oft-cited techniques a writer can use for prewriting – from note taking to formal outlining, from talking (to oneself or to others) to free writing, from making lists to blueprinting. Other studies have proclaimed that these forms of prewriting are valid and

should be counted as such in all writing contexts (Ellis & Yuan, 2004; Poston, 2009; Worden, 2009).

At the University of Toledo, students in ENGL1020 must write one draft during the placement, practice, and exit exams; for the placement exam, this one draft will decide which level they will be placed in the upcoming semester. All writing therefore done before this blue book draft can be considered prewriting if we take Murray's definition (1972); the other definitions of prewriting mentioned in this thesis are also still applicable, for I have witnessed these activities in previous ESL composition classes as well as during placement exams – including prewriting and revision of a draft that has already been started. Students taking these exams use methods of outlining and free writing as they write on the paper provided for them. Some forms of prewriting addressed by Poston (2009) cannot be done in placement exam settings (particularly talking out loud, since this activity is forbidden) while others might seem impractical given time constraints. Worden (2009) produces a definition that is the closest to what I adopt as a working definition of prewriting: “any writing that directly relates to answering the essay prompt but that is not itself part of the [final] essay” (p. 159). Therefore, writing that is not the final draft penned in the blue book will be considered as a form of prewriting, no matter the form, style, or language it is in.

The act of prewriting and organizing one's thoughts is immensely important for all writers no matter the language and the language level – even if some individuals may think it a waste of time. Researchers have elaborated on the benefits of prewriting. In particular, Poston (2009) and Worsham (2001) claim that prewriting is necessary since it helps motivate writers when a topic might cause confusion or if there is a block when

composing. It is a way writers can play with their ideas and experiment with their senses and past experiences. Connor and Kramer (1995) believe that prewriting is helpful because it can guide the writer in the organization of his or her thoughts and in the construction of a plan that will, in the end, answer the questions asked. This can involve summarization of a past event, the restatement of other people's beliefs, or the interpretation of information from other sources. Methods of organizing notes can produce a clearer path for the writer, especially if there is not much time to compose something, do extensive revision, and/or have others review the essay in this environment.

Language Switching

As has been mentioned, individuals will face additional challenges writing in their TL than they would when writing in their L1. The same holds true when they are prewriting, in all meanings of the word. Students often turn to their L1 throughout the prewriting process, whether for an in-class timed exam or a month-long or semester-long writing project (Murphy & Roca de Larios, 2010; Qi, 1998; van Weijen, van den Bergh, Rijlaarsdam & Sanders, 2009; Wang, 2003; Wang & Wen, 2002; Woodall, 2002).

Some of the aforementioned researchers have also used the term "language switching," the movement between a person's L1 and TL at specific moments before and during prewriting and writing a draft (Qi, 1998; Wang, 2003; Woodall, 2002). Language switching is relevant in the university setting since international students must negotiate and comprehend a large amount of information that they read in their TL during classes; and they will also have to organize their thoughts, construct ideas, and pre-write and write in their TL for the exams relevant to ENGL1020 (and of course this study). Wang

(2003) provides specific reasons why students switch languages when prewriting and writing in varying contexts. He states idea generation, lexical searching, and meta-comments as three main motivations to language switch. To put it simply, students will resort frequently to thinking in their L1 when deciding how to respond to the essay prompt; they will search through their database of words in their L1; and they will also think or talk to themselves whenever they are stuck on how to respond to a prompt, or are trying to organize their thoughts so as to make a solution clearer and a response more readily available.

Language switching appears to be an integral way for ESL students to deal with the extra challenges they must face in a place where their L1 is not the majority language used in writing. For most of their classes and outside of the classroom, they will need to communicate in an environment that is quite different from the environment in their native country. Furthermore, and more specifically and relevantly, students in ENGL1020 have an even greater challenge within the class (and at the end of the semester) as they write under time constraints and must produce an essay in two hours.

Worden (2009) has postulated that, despite some researchers' claims that timed essay exams have been a disservice to the writing process and prewriting in general, there still should be enough time for good prewriting to take place. This holds true even in UT's context, where prewriting can still be done for ENGL1020 essay exams, even with the time-limit of two hours for the entire exam. Drafts and outlines could occur, though not extensive. Not everyone will pre-write on paper, either. Cognitive processes, which are not directly observable, could also still occur inside the writer during a timed essay exam. At UT, students taking the ESL placement exam are given two hours to pre-write,

write, and revise before handing in their final draft. Within this time frame, the negotiation of languages they use might also be visible on the paper they are given – since it oftentimes could be much easier for students to formulate information at greater speeds with their L1 than with other languages they know, as previously discussed.

Additionally, the amount of confusion and the possibility of writer's block can rise when students – especially those with lower English proficiency – are writing an essay under time constraints. As international students are not writing in their L1 at UT, they will have to accommodate and put forth additional effort when it comes to the construction, planning, and composition of a finalized essay.

Implications for the ESL Writing Classroom

From the research already discussed, there seems to be a promotion of instruction that emphasizes the importance of “planning, information-gathering, revision, and editing of drafts of writing” (Cumming, 2001, p. 9). However, Leki (1992) stresses that the implications of this research on teaching about process writing in ESL classrooms will “fail to prepare ESL students for the demands of the academic essay exam with its single draft restrictions” (p. 7). Furthermore, Leki believes that two positions arise from this debate: whether instructors should or should *not* explicitly discuss and incorporate the process writing approach in the ESL composition classroom. She feels that this could be part of “a generalized initiation into the academic discourse community much like that provided for native English-speaking students or a more narrow and focused ESP/ EAP² approach” (p. 8).

² ESP = English for Specific Purposes; EAP = English for Academic Purposes

Likewise, Cumming (2001) does admit that there is not a unified perspective on learning to write in another language. The complexity of students' backgrounds and the classroom practices they have experienced for years combine in an environment where so many different perspectives merge and so many proficiency levels mingle. Knowledge about the students themselves, how they perceive their own writing and the idea of "writing" in general can help composition instructors in their very challenging task of teaching ESL writing to international students at the university level – both as a process and as a final product, and also as something that must be done in strained conditions, with deadlines and – in the case of essay exams – a time limit (Leki, 1992, p. 83).

Further discussion can be started about what writing is and how the process is perceived all across the globe. However, there needs to be discussion and consideration about how particularly the classroom will be affected by this influx of students from backgrounds where process writing does not get introduced and where writing altogether is not thought of as that important. Moreover, additional considerations need to be brought forth – about what instructors should discuss with students and what acceptable practices are within the classroom environment.

Lastly, I want to mention viewpoints about the use of L1 in teaching environments where English is taught as a foreign language (EFL). In this situation, there are many unspoken assumptions about how much students (and even instructors) should be allowed to use the L1. Many teaching approaches do not allow the use of the L1 in any respect; it is refused in most classroom environments (Blair, 1982; Larson-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). This could therefore stretch into the ESL classroom context under study. In the UT context, over the past decades the majority of international students use

Chinese and/or Arabic as their L1. A large collection of languages apart from the aforementioned two are used in the three ENGL1020 classes this semester. Therefore, the L1 might be used when students work in pairs or in groups – but this may happen rarely and only if students are interacting with someone with the same language background. In writing, which can be a more personal, individual task, prewriting could be done in one's L1. Still, the question remains if any instructors feel that this might not be conducive to strong ESL writing, that prewriting in one's L1 might hinder student improvement and possible passage into the next level of composition.

Introduction to the Current Study

As a bridge from the literature to the research question and my study, I would like to provide some additional background about the ENGL1020 composition class at UT and its goals and expectations.

As mentioned at the start of this chapter, ENGL1020 is the developmental composition course for ESL students at the University of Toledo. Students at this level are likelier to produce writing with more noticeable grammatical errors and unclear sentence structure than students in ENGL1110 for ESL, the higher level composition course. Lack of essay cohesion and issues with organization are more prevalent in ENGL1020 students; these errors tend to be more disruptive in meaning. The overall score on the exams are based on a judgment as to where the student belongs – either in ENGL1020 or ENGL1110 for ESL students.

The placement exam is a two-hour-long examination that will test student ability to create an essay on a specific prompt with minimal grammatical errors, and also the ability to produce a strong thesis with detailed supporting points. Trained scorers look at

these essay responses and holistically evaluate whether students should take ENGL1020 or ENGL1110. Throughout the semester in ENGL1020, students are taught various aspects of writing including prewriting in some form; they are also taught grammar, reading skills, and are given vocabulary to assist them in the future.

ENGL1020 students take three practice exams during the semester, similar to the placement exam they take at the beginning of the semester. Similar prompts and the two-hour-long time limit are implemented for these exams. Since the typical class period is only 75 minutes, a practice exam spans two class periods but equals a full two hours. The only difference between the practice exams and the entrance and exit exam is the break between starting and stopping the exam, a length of two days. Other classroom activities take place before the start of the exam on the first day and after students finish on the second day. At the end of the first class period, exam booklets and all prewriting done by students are collected and redistributed at the start of the following class time. No work is to be done outside of class.

At the end of the semester, students take an exit exam, which also mirrors the placement exam at the beginning of the semester. Scorers will look at these exams to decide whether or not students pass ENGL1020 or have to retake it. For all examinations, hard-cover dictionaries are allowed. For all exams – placement, practice, and exit – paper is provided by the instructor so that students have the option to pre-write and draft out their essays before composing the final draft in the blue exam booklet.

With the above information stated about ENGL1020, I would now like to provide the specific questions I wish to explore further in my study. These questions were created from the implications for teaching prewriting in the ESL context, mainly for ENGL1020.

I wonder if students are prewriting on paper before writing a final draft, especially in their L1; I also wonder how much time is given during class for instructors to lecture about prewriting (L1 or otherwise). As I considered what to research, other thoughts arose, mainly whether or not introducing and welcoming a student's L1 in the ESL classroom would be a positive decision. This class time spent on student discussion about the topic of L1 use when prewriting or writing in the TL may lead to further writing activities and more L1 use during the practice exams and, thereafter, the exit exam. Prohibition of the L1 during class time may lead to students thinking that the L1 will be forbidden on the placement exams altogether. I wonder if this assumption that no L1 is allowed is implicit, especially from many EFL teaching contexts where the L1 is indeed forbidden.

Research Questions

The current thesis study will hope to answer three research questions:

1. Do ESL students at the University of Toledo use their L1 when pre-writing for their practice exit exams in their 1020 class?
2. Do ESL students at the University of Toledo prefer to use their L1 when pre-writing for their practice exit exams in their 1020 class?
3. Do students expect that they will not be allowed to write in their L1 when planning their placement essay?

With the review of literature now complete and the research questions written, chapter two follows with a detailed look at methodology and data collection procedures.

Chapter Two

Methodology

Introduction

This chapter will examine the methodology of the study. The information below includes the multiple methodologies possible for this type of study and the ones chosen, the participants of the current study, the various data collection procedures involved, and finally the hypotheses that stemmed from the research questions described at the end of the previous chapter along with complications after data collection.

Past Research on Process Writing

There has been much research done on process writing, both in the realm of native English speakers (NESs) as well as non-native English speakers (NNESs). Since this thesis focuses particularly among NNESs in the university, I will review studies done for the ESL writing community; I will also discuss the methods used by these researchers, how these methods can be adapted into my study at the University of Toledo, and how some might not work well in this context.

There have been many studies on the various processes and contexts involved in ESL writing (see Cumming, 2001; Ellis & Yuan, 2004; Zimmerman, 2001). Other studies on process writing in the ESL context have focused on language switching during the pre-writing process (see Paiz, 2011; van Weijen, et al., 2009; Wang 2003; Wang & Wen, 2002) especially when provided with a writing prompt and given a particular time limit to complete the final product. Much of the previous research provides insight on ESL students' thoughts about prewriting. I would like to look at some of the physical evidence

of L1 use and explore options available, choosing the most helpful and beneficial methods for me in my current study of ENGL1020 at UT.

Types of Process Writing Methods

While examining process writing research in both L1 and TL contexts, I found five main types of methodology. Polio (2003) describes these five types of research: stimulated recall, talk aloud protocol (also known as think aloud protocol, but I shall be using the former term), interviews, text analysis, and observation. Stimulated recall is when students are videotaped during timed writing and thereafter interviewed about their writing processes as both the researcher and student watch the video together. Talk aloud protocol, in short, is a method where the subject verbalizes what he or she is doing, whether thinking or organizing or writing when prewriting or writing in general (p. 44, 47). Text analysis is the inspection of tangible artifacts, in this case writing, done by research subjects. Observations are the third-person investigation of subjects, their activities and interactions among other subjects. Interviews are direct interactions between researcher and subject, when the investigator asks questions and receives answers verbally or written down. Surveys stem from interviews and can be used as a substitute for them; surveys are written questions (instead of spoken by the researcher) that subjects answer to the best of their ability.

For my current study, I use text analysis, interviews of the instructors, and a survey handed out to ENGL1020 students (in the place of one-on-one interviews). By using text analysis of prewriting, I am given physical documentation of L1 use (or lack thereof) for the practice exams. Though students might not use the paper to pre-write, this lack of prewriting is useful when providing discussion for future research. With

interviews and surveys, I can receive thoughts from the instructors about how ENGL1020 is structured, what instructors say about prewriting and if students bring up the topic of prewriting in conversation in class. Additionally, I can compare self-reported data by students and see if there is agreement between their survey answers and how many did indeed pre-write for the first practice exam in the spring semester.

Three of the five methods will not be used for this study. Though talk aloud protocol has been done often in the past (Ericsson & Simon, 1984; Flowers & Hayes, 1986; Wang, 2003; Wang & Wen, 2002) and yielded valuable information regarding ESL prewriting and composition in general, it does not replicate real-world writing situations. Talk aloud protocols can be difficult for students with low English proficiency (Polio, 2003). Also, verbalizing thought processes can be forced for many people. For example, in Wang's (2003) study, he reminded participants to continue thinking aloud if they stopped verbalizing their thoughts. In another study, an actual buzzer sounded if the participants stopped talking (Wang & Wen, 2002). In the context of a timed written exam, such as the placement exams at UT, think aloud protocols will not work because students are in a group setting and must remain quiet.

Stimulated recall is a method that can help researchers learn how students develop prewriting documents right after task completion; however, for this study, I want to include all members of the class as participants to increase the study population. Further, because the examination is done in silence and in a large-group setting, this method is not appropriate and will only allow me to view the students writing from a distance. Thus, I have decided to focus on analyzing students' written texts, asking them about their

prewriting processes, and learning about instructors' approaches in the ENGL1020 classroom.

With discussion of the previous research methodologies complete and the methods of research described, I will now talk about the participants of this thesis study.

Participants

The following paragraphs describe the main participants of this study. All participants were anonymous; those discussed individually were assigned pseudonyms.

The first groups of participants were ENGL1020 students in the fall semester of 2011 and the spring semester of 2012. There are typically 16 open seats in each 1020 class offered. The number of ENGL1020 courses depends not only on the number of students that take the placement exam at the start of the semester, but also the number of students who enroll after the main examinations take place (during the first week of January in the spring semester, and in late August before the fall semester).

In the fall, there were two ENGL1020 composition classes offered with 14 students in one, 15 in the other. Since I taught one of the two courses (the class with 14 students), the composition course of 15 students was the only one used in the study so as to minimize bias and avoid conflict of interest. In the end, I was able to access two sets of prewriting documents of the three produced that semester; there were three practice exams taken by the ENGL1020 students. No face-to-face communication about the prewriting was done with students; no survey was distributed. Only my own inspection of prewriting documents took place to see if students wrote in their L1.

Three ENGL1020 composition classes were offered in the spring semester, each taught by a different instructor. Two of these instructors were teaching assistants, and one

of them was a full-time faculty member (of lecturer rank) who had taught ENGL1020 in the past. This was the first time teaching ENGL1020 for the two aforementioned TAs. The full-time lecturer will be called Amy. The TAs will be called Ben and Cara. In total during the spring semester, there were 40 students invited to participate in the study: 15 in Amy's class, 12 in Ben's class, and 13 in Cara's class.

Gender and cultural background were not taken into account for any of the students in this study, though I asked instructors to provide students' L1s. This information will be provided later on in this chapter.

Therefore, with the number of participants outlined, this chapter can now focus upon the data collected for this study.

Data Collection

As has been mentioned earlier in this chapter, I looked at various texts and analyzed them. This included syllabi provided by ENGL1020 instructors. I also looked at prewriting done by students both in the fall and spring semesters. I interviewed ENGL1020 instructors about the prewriting activities as well as when they lectured about the topic; lastly, I dispensed surveys to ENGL1020 students in the spring semester and collected their answers to these questions.

Text Analysis – Syllabi of Instructors. First off, to see how the ENGL1020 class was structured, I looked at and analyzed the ENGL1020 syllabus provided to all instructors in the English Department (see Appendix A). Second, I looked at a revised version of the syllabus used for Amy's ENGL1020 class (see Appendix B). In particular, I was checking for places where prewriting was mentioned and where it would be brought up during instructors' lecture times. This information could produce insight on

how much focus the current curriculum places on prewriting (in the L1 or TL) and the amount of time provided to inform students about it, show examples of prewriting, and elicit discussion through topics brought up at the start of the class – either at the start of the semester or in later months.

Interviews with Instructors. After the first placement exam took place during the spring semester, interviews were conducted with all three ENGL1020 instructors for this semester. I asked them questions about their classroom instruction practices, particularly if they have told students during lectures about prewriting and whether or not this topic arose within class time without the instructors' promptings. I also asked them about their thoughts on prewriting in general and if it is an asset for them and the ESL program at UT as a whole. Each interview took approximately 30 minutes to complete, with additional questions arising from the set list of questions asked to instructors (see Appendix C). Interviews will be elaborated upon in detail in the following chapter.

Text Analysis – Student Prewriting. To collect data for this study, I first obtained as many documents of prewriting as possible from the practice exams that took place in the fall of 2011. There were two ENGL1020 classes offered in that semester. Since I was instructor for one of the two classes, I could only view the other class's prewriting samples due to potential bias. There were 15 students in this particular class; the instructor offered two collections of practice exam prewriting for this study.

The prewriting here provided an introductory look at whether or not students used their L1 when prewriting on the paper given to them for their practice exams. For analysis, I separated exams into two categories – if the L1 was used at least once, or if the L1 was not used when prewriting. There was no mention – at least for this semester – of

students who did not pre-write in their L1, or another language, on paper before writing their final draft. That was of more importance when observing and analyzing texts in the spring semester because I wanted to see if there was agreement at all between the prewriting done and with students' survey answers; no surveys were distributed in the fall. This collection of data from the fall was presented to show evidence that a student's L1 was found in prewriting at this level, even if there were ENGL1020 students who did not use the L1 on paper.

After providing data from the fall, I looked at prewriting documents from the first practice exam during the spring of 2012, since only one practice exam will have taken place by February. As was stated earlier, there are three classes involved this semester (classes taught by Amy, Ben, and Cara). I looked to see if there was a prevalence of students' L1s being used during practice exam prewriting. I inspected texts to see if an L1 was present. The L1 may vary from prewriting example to prewriting example: most students this semester spoke Chinese and Arabic, but there were also students who spoke Persian, Marathi, Brazilian Portuguese, Spanish and others.

For the texts being inspected, I coded the data thusly: I gave students a zero (0) if they did not pre-write at all on the paper provided for them; I also gave students a zero (0) if they did not use their L1 – whatever it may be – when using the paper provided for them. Some students wrote on the exit exam prompt; this prewriting was acceptable. If they did not use the L1 on the exam prompt, they received a zero (0). Students were given a one (1) if they used their L1, even once, during the prewriting stage. With this inspection of the documents, I am looking simply to see if they use the L1, not particularly why or how much they are using their L1 during this process.

Survey of ENGL1020 Students. Not long after the first placement exam took place in all three ENGL1020 classes in the spring, the instructors were asked to distribute a survey to their students. This survey asked students about their prewriting activities during their first practice exam as well as future exams they will have to take this semester. Students were given 15 minutes to first read over a consent form that asked them if they would like to take part in the study. Students, therefore, had the option to agree to take part in the study and fill out the survey; they also had the option not to fill out the survey. After signing the forms, the students answered the questions asked on the survey (see Appendix D).

I looked at the answers to the survey questions and see if they agreed with the prewriting students did before composing the draft for the first placement exam. I particularly noted when students claimed to have used their L1 in the placement exam and if they said they typically used their L1 in the prewriting process.

With the data collection processes displayed in detail, I will – in response to my research questions – provide the alternative and null hypotheses I had hoped to test after accumulating all the data for this study:

Alternative Hypothesis

There is a correlation between the number of ENGL1020 students using their L1 in their prewriting and the number of students who say they do in the survey.

Null Hypothesis

There is not a correlation between the number of ENGL1020 students using their L1 in their prewriting and the number of students who say they do in the survey.

My original intention was to collect all the data (students' prewriting and answers to student surveys) and see if there was a correlation between student text and student response. A Chi Square test was to be used to calculate this data. As the number of participants in this study was so low, I would have turned to a Fisher's exact test to find how strong the correlation would have or would not have been. However, because of procedural issues, this path of analysis was made impossible. Explanation of this will take place in the following chapter, under results and limitations of the study.

Chapter Three

Results, Discussion, Limitations, and Implications

Introduction

With the participants and research methodology for this study established, I will now continue with the presentation of the research findings. Once the results and description of the syllabi, interviews, texts, and surveys are described, this chapter will offer a detailed discussion of these results – looking closely at what is done in ENGL1020 classes before the first practice exam. This chapter will also compare what prewriting students do during the practice exams and their answers to a survey distributed during a class time after the first practice exam. After that, the chapter will conclude with pedagogical implications for ENGL1020 instructors: how prewriting might be addressed in future classes; what the limitations of this particular study are in regard to the accuracy of the data and the respondents; and, lastly, what the avenues of future research are on prewriting for the ESL classroom, especially in the context of the University of Toledo. In the sections below, I will present data obtained from both fall 2011 and spring 2012 semester courses.

Syllabi of Instructors

To provide an outline of how the ENGL1020 classes began, I looked at syllabi by all instructors from the spring semester 2012. Both Ben and Cara (the TAs for ENGL1020 this semester) used the syllabus template provided by the English Department for ENGL1020 (see Appendix A); they used this syllabus as a baseline during this semester for ENGL1020. After the first unit is completed, they have more freedom choosing the topics since the template finishes after that first unit. The syllabus

constructed for ENGL1020 TAs does not place stress on the prewriting process in beginning weeks. Though there is no overt mention of “prewriting” in the syllabus *per se*, free writing is brought up briefly. This is the only form of prewriting outlined in the lesson plans before the first placement exam. This occurs at the start of week three of the semester; the first practice exam starts a week after that, during week four.

Next, explain to students what freewriting is (from p. 9), and ask them to follow the instructions under item 1 (Freewriting, p. 9) to do 10 minutes of freewriting about their experiences learning to read and write in their L1 and in English—and in any other languages they know. After 10 minutes, ask students to go through their freewriting and underline the ideas that will help them write a first draft. Then, have each student talk about their freewriting and what kinds of information they will include in their paper. If time remains, have students begin writing first drafts. Circulate, read what students have written, and engage them in conversation about how they’ll go about writing their paper.

Figure 1. Description of free writing in the original ENGL1020 lesson plan along with instructions on the free writing activity for that particular lesson

Despite the limited amount of prewriting shown in the syllabus and the lesson plans, there are sections that give the instructor time to lecture on the writing process, such as in Figure 1 when the autobiography assignment is introduced. This assignment follows the basic process writing template where students write a draft, bring it to class, do a peer review, and then do a revision after fellow students and the instructor comment on the draft. Apart from the information in the figure above, very little is mentioned on prewriting and it does not seem to be utilized much in the ENGL1020 classroom.

Amy, the full-time instructor, amended parts of the main syllabus (see Appendix B). Though much has been altered from the template, the main area of change in the syllabus that relates to prewriting and lecture on prewriting (and brainstorming in particular) is the “foundational prep writing” assignment. The main part of the description

of the writing assignment is the word “prep” – short for preparation or preparatory. This term can be interpreted as free writing and other tasks enforcing the idea of producing text, and organizing one’s thoughts on paper – especially after reading an assignment and trying to comprehend what was read. Amy elaborates more on “foundational prep writing” during the interview session.

After looking at both syllabi (see Appendices A and B) and the lesson plan for TAs teaching ENGL1020, the only mention within this document of prewriting in one’s L1 is the brief excerpt visible in Figure 1. However, this does not mean that prewriting in one’s L1 is rejected or spoken against within the classroom during instructor lecture or in class discussion. Nonetheless, there still may be an unspoken rule that students should refrain from writing out their L1 on paper, especially if students were taught at a school that forbade use of the L1 when writing or speaking. Again, this does not negate the possibility that any of the instructors will lecture about prewriting or that there will be actual time for discussion amongst students about the prewriting process.

Interviews with Instructors

Below is a chart that briefly touches on what each instructor taught in their own class. There is a description about what particular forms of prewriting each instructor focused on during lectures and whether or not L1 use was brought up during class time – especially when students would talk to the instructor about their writing process and what they do when prewriting.

<p>Amy's Class – Time is spent at the beginning of the semester lecturing students about prewriting activities, particularly brainstorming, outlining, and taking notes. Also – round table prep writing” is done during class and outside class. Students have to turn in all prewriting along with their final responses for Amy's to comment on. Students talk in class with Amy about what they read and write in response to the articles. No lecture on L1 use in prewriting. Instructor has seen L1 used in prewriting in past.</p>
<p>Ben's Class – During lecture time, there is talk about free writing; students are made to free write to express ideas for future writing assignments. Ben also lectured about outlines and brainstorming but did not phrase such as –otlining” and –brainstorming.” Prewriting in the students' L1 was not verbally recommended, but Ben explains to the students the L1 should be valued.</p>
<p>Cara's Class – She lectured on planning, free writing, and outlining. Stress is placed on organization and structure. There was no mention of prewriting with the L1. There was talk during lectures about the writing process in general; students should take 15 minutes to plan before starting to write. In an early lecture, Cara told her students that they should choose prewriting methods they are most comfortable with.</p>

Figure 2. Time spent on prewriting before the first practice exam in all ENGL1020 class in the spring semester 2012

During my interviews with all three ENGL1020 instructors in the spring semester, I asked if they brought up prewriting in class this semester before students took the first practice exam, even though little was mentioned in the syllabi. I also asked if the topic of prewriting arose without instructors' promptings. From what I found, prewriting – in some form of the definition – was taught through lecture format in all three spring semester classes; the manner and activities varied among the three classes.

Amy said that prewriting was a very integral part of her class. Students would answer questions about articles they read between class periods and turn in all their writing; sometimes these answers were even written during actual class time. Therefore, the time students were given to produce a final draft was limited in the latter situation. This sort of quick response writing – which Amy coined as ~~roundtable prep writing~~” – led to class discussion after students were given time to pre-write and craft a response to

what they had read. The “roundtable prep writing” assignments are given throughout the semester, but a verbal introduction from Amy happens in the first week of class.

Prewriting will continue to be a topic of discussion for the remainder of the semester; however, no verbal discussion between the students and teacher about the use of students’ L1s has taken place. Furthermore, Amy has not broached the topic during her lecture time as well – at least from what I learned during our interview time.

Cara lectured about many different prewriting activities such as planning, brainstorming, and outlining during class time. Specifically, she provided visual examples of outlining for students and talked about the importance she holds for structure and organization before the construction of a draft. Furthermore, Cara told students that these forms of organization were important and that students should use these methods in the practice exams and – in the end – the exit exam at the end of the semester. She responded yes to the first question I asked (“*Have you discussed pre-writing so far in your ENGL1020 classroom this semester?*”). She informed students in her lecture about the prewriting activities at their disposal and that people have different preferences when drafting and composing. She said they have to take ample time to plan, outline, and revise when they are in an exam. It was imperative to Cara for the class to be able to pre-write effectively before the first practice exam.

Ben responded yes to the first question of the interview, too. Elaborating further, he said that free writing was all he has brought up in lecture, though he then said that he explained what outlining and brainstorming were to his students. However, he did not use the terms “outlining” and “brainstorming”. Regardless, Ben had his students free write as an in-class activity as a way for them to produce information that would hopefully assist

them when they had their first placement exam, and also when they started their first class assignment. He stressed that it did not matter what they wrote, only that they should write as much as they could so they had something to work with in a future assignment.

All three instructors had similar beliefs about prewriting and the value of the activity, even in timed writing exams such as the practice and placement exams in ENGL1020. Amy believed that prewriting is a good academic skill to have, “an excellent strategy, a way to organize your thoughts” (personal communication, February 29, 2012). She brought up process writing and writing for an end product. She felt that even though the final product is stressed most in the exit exam for ENGL1020, it is still very important to teach prewriting and process writing as a whole. No matter what, there will be assessment given in any class. Lecturing about process writing – and this includes prewriting, in multiple forms – will help students realize the importance of it and can hopefully lead to their product being even better, even if this product is constructed in a small span of time.

Ben had a similar belief about the importance of prewriting, but he discussed students’ L1s in his replies to me. He believed that prewriting is indeed necessary, no matter the time limit, no matter the assignment. Also, though there was no discouragement to write in their L1, Ben felt it important “to value one’s L1 even when writing in their L2” (personal communication, February 27, 2012). As an instructor whose first language is not English, this embracing of other languages makes sense, that he would tell his students to value all languages even when they must write in English for this class.

Cara agreed that prewriting is a necessary skill to have, and that it had to be brought up by the instructors in the first week; additionally, she felt more prewriting activities needed to be integrated into the original syllabus at an earlier time. She also felt structure was very important in all writing, especially when students are not writing in their L1. Cara said that examples of outlines needed to be shown to students, that offhand discussion during class time would not suffice. Furthermore, stressing organization during class lecture during the first few weeks of the semester was important to Cara, so that students do well in the first placement exam as well as the later ones. However, she did not talk to her students about using an L1 when prewriting.

In conclusion, the interviews provided an interesting outlook of this semester's instructors' beliefs about prewriting and how they incorporate the topic into their lessons through lecture or classroom activities and examples. Amy's revision of the syllabus – due to her having taught this class in the past – incorporates a larger focus on prewriting and process-oriented writing when she leads the “round-table prep writing.” She also comments on what the students write for these round tables. Both Amy and Cara believed that instructors should lecture their students about outlining and brainstorming. Ben said the same thing about free writing and did lecture about “outlining” and “brainstorming” but not using those actual terms. Nonetheless, Ben felt that prewriting is indeed a necessary activity to do before writing a final draft; he also wound up being the only instructor who did talk about L1 use in prewriting, even though he did not encourage his students specifically to pre-write with their L1. The other instructors said they have seen students use their L1 when prewriting, but there was nothing additional found about the practice.

Results and Analysis – Student Prewriting, Fall 2011

With the syllabi of the ENGL1020 provided and analyzed, and with all three instructors' thoughts discussed, we can now look at the texts students provided for both fall and spring semesters of the 2011/2012 school year.

Only one class's prewriting samples were inspected in the fall semester. As was mentioned in the previous chapter, this class had 15 students. Amy, the instructor for this class (along with a class in the spring), had two of the three exams' prewriting documents available for me to inspect. I did not check to see which students pre-wrote in either case. After separating exam prewriting into two categories (if the L1 was used at least once or if the L1 was not used when prewriting), the following was found for both Exam 1 and Exam 2:

In Exam 1, five students did not pre-write, six students pre-wrote but did not use their L1 on the paper provided for prewriting, and four students used their L1 on the paper provided for prewriting. Therefore, if we were to separate students into two groups, those who used their L1 and those who did not, eleven students did not use their L1 and four students did. Percentage-wise, approximately 27% of students used their L1 in some fashion on the paper provided for them to pre-write.

In Exam 2, two students did not pre-write, eight students pre-wrote but did not use their L1 on paper provided for prewriting, and five students used their L1 on the paper provided for prewriting. Percentage-wise, approximately 33% of students used their L1 in some fashion on the paper provided for them to pre-write.

As a whole then, out of 30 samples of prewriting, there were nine instances of students using their L1 on paper. Because this data represents two exams written by the

same group of students and the students' names were not provided on the prewriting documents, I cannot tell if the same students used their L1 in both exams or if there was a variety amongst those who did and did not use their L1 during the exam.

Table 1

Results of prewriting for two practice exams for an ENGL1020 class, fall semester 2011

L1 Use in Prewriting	Exam 1	Exam 2
No written prewriting	33.3%	13.3%
Written prewriting, None in L1	40%	53.3%
Written prewriting, L1 present	26.7%	33.3%

With this preliminary data from the fall semester, 66.7% of students pre-wrote during exam 1 and 40% of those students did so using their L1. For exam 2, 86.6% of students pre-wrote, and 38.5% of those students did so using their L1. Therefore, a majority of students pre-wrote during each exam. Among those who pre-wrote, around 38-40% used their L1.

Results and Analysis – Student Prewriting, Spring 2012

In the spring semester, there were three ENGL1020 composition classes at the University of Toledo – labeled as Amy's class, Ben's class, and Cara's class.

In Amy's class, there were 15 students. However, only ten students had taken the exam by the time I obtained student prewriting. In Ben's class, ten of the 12 enrolled students had taken the exam. In Cara's class, 12 out of the 13 students had taken the exam. Therefore, 32 students had taken the first practice exam this semester.

Of the ten students in Amy's class, two students did not pre-write; eight students pre-wrote but did not use their L1; zero students pre-wrote in their L1 on the paper given

to them for prewriting. Of the ten students in Ben’s class, four students did not pre-write on paper; six students pre-wrote but did not use their L1; once again, zero students pre-wrote in their L1 on the paper given to them for prewriting. Of the twelve students in Cara’s class, nine students pre-wrote but did not use their L1; three students also pre-wrote and used their L1 for part of the prewriting process; zero students provided blank paper when turning in their essay to their instructor.

Table 2

Results of prewriting for the first practice exam, spring semester 2012

L1 Use in Prewriting	Amy’s Class	Ben’s Class	Cara’s Class
No written prewriting	20%	40%	0%
Written prewriting, None in L1	80%	60%	75%
Written prewriting, L1 present	0%	0%	25%

When compared with the class in the previous semester, there are very few instances of L1 use on paper when prewriting. Only three students did so; these students were in Cara’s class.

A majority of students in Amy’s class pre-wrote on paper. In her class, she used a modified syllabus and directly lectured students about methods related to brainstorming, outlining, and taking notes. In Amy’s class, student use of an L1 did not come up in student discussion time or during lecture. In Ben’s class, where he lectured on free writing as a way to pre-write, only four of the students did not pre-write. In Cara’s class, she told her students about the importance of structure and prewriting (free writing and outlining) when she lectured them, and showed them examples of such. All students

produced some form of written prewriting for the first practice exam. In addition, some used their L1 when organizing their essay.

Looking at syllabi and the different methods of teaching that each instructor used, a possible explanation for the amount of prewriting done and students' L1s found would be that students thought that prewriting would help them construct an exceptional final draft. Lectures by the instructor on prewriting (in an L1 or otherwise) for ESL students seems to help more than not. Ben did say that he had a discussion with his class, however, about how L1 writing should be embraced. He informed his students that this sort of composition class is not meant to degrade anyone's L1. Therefore, there seems to be a contradiction: if students had less time to write and pre-write, I wonder why they would not try to use their L1 to come up with better ideas when they needed to find a particular word in a response. Also, free writing in any language may have been a very difficult task for them, especially since they were given two hours to write the exam.

Receiving more information from the students themselves and hearing how they responded may help explain these issues more.

Survey of Spring Semester ENGL1020 Students

Table 3

Summary to the survey answers, spring semester 2012

Questions		Amy's Class	Ben's Class	Cara's Class
Question 1	YES	8	6	7
	NO	2	3	1
Question 2	YES	0	5	4
	NO	8	1	3
Question 4	YES	1	7	6
	NO	9	2	2
Question 5	YES	2	4	2
	NO	8	5	6

Out of the 32 students who took the exam, 27 students took the survey (See Appendix D). All students in Amy's class who took the exam filled out the survey (10 students), nine out of the ten students filled out the survey in Ben's class, and eight students in Cara's class filled out the survey. See Table 3 on the previous page.

Question one stated: *“In the practice exam, did you use the blank paper provided to plan your essay?”* In Amy's class, the numbers were similar to what I found. Eight students answered that they did pre-write; two said that they did not. In Ben's class, six students answered that they pre-wrote; three said that they did not. In Cara's class, seven students answered that they pre-write; one said that they did not. I found twelve instances of prewriting in Cara's class; no documents were blank. Only in this instance did the answers from the survey not match up to the written text I received. One wonders if the student who said that s/he did not pre-write simply forgot whether s/he did, or perhaps s/he had a different definition of prewriting from the researcher. Maybe the student did not understand the question.

Question two stated: *“If you answered yes to the question above, did you use your native language to write notes for part/all of the essay?”* In Amy's class, eight students answered yes to question one. All eight of these students answered no; there was no one who used their native language when writing notes for the essay. This coincides with prewriting I received and inspected. There were no instances of L1 use on any of Amy's students' prewriting documents. In Ben's class, six students answered yes to question one. However, five of the six students said they indeed used their L1 when prewriting, though there were no instances of prewriting on the documents I inspected for this class. Similar discrepancies were noted for Cara's class. Seven of her students answered yes to

question one. Four of the seven answered that they wrote in their L1. Three instances of L1 use on the prewriting documents were found.

There could be multiple reasons why the survey answers did not coincide with the prewriting documents. Perhaps students did not fully grasp the question; it is also possible that the question was formed incorrectly by the researcher. Instead of noting the various forms of prewriting that could have been done, I asked if they did “write notes” in their native language. Providing a complete list of what this entailed could have produced more accurate numbers.

Question three is different from the other questions. It stated: *“If you answered yes to #2, for what reason? Circle all that apply.”* To follow the flow of Table 3, I will exclude discussion of this question at the present and bring it up later on in this chapter.

Question four stated: *“Do you find using your native language before writing your practice exam essay helpful?”* In Amy’s class, one student said that using their native language was helpful before writing the draft of the practice exam; nine students said it was not helpful. First, the term “prewriting” was not used; therefore, students might interpret the question differently. Students may have felt that prewriting was indeed a beneficial part of the writing process. However, taking notes in an L1 before writing a draft of the essay answer might not have been something considered beneficial.

In Ben’s class, seven students said that using their native language was helpful before writing the draft of the practice exam; two students said it would not be helpful. These are not similar to Amy’s students’ responses. One might think that Ben’s lecture about the importance of one’s L1 in class and the students’ discussion about their L1s provided a positive belief about using one’s L1 before writing the draft of the essay.

In Cara's class, six students said that using their native language was helpful before writing the draft of the practice exam; two students said it would not be helpful. This is interesting because Cara did not lecture to her students about using one's L1 when prewriting, just that prewriting is a very important activity. Cara showed examples of outlines and notes one could write before drafting an essay. All students did pre-write on the paper they received during the practice exam, though not everyone used their L1. Still, students may have also included cognitive functions to be an important part of the prewriting process; this is not defined to its fullest extent in the question. When looking at why ESL students language switch when writing in the TL, reasons brought forth from Chapter One include idea generation, lexical searching, and meta-comments (Wang, 2003). All of these particular activities could have occurred as students considered what to construct on the paper for the practice exam.

Question 5 stated: *“If your instructor allowed you to write in your native language during your practice (or placement) exam to help you with your final draft, would you pre-write in your native language at all?”* In Amy's class, two students answered yes and eight answered no. In Ben's class, four answered yes, five no. In Cara's class, two answered yes, and six answered no.

In all three cases, more students answered no to this question. More students said they would not pre-write in their native language if the instructor said they could. The one thing I noticed after looking at my question and then the answers is the wording of this question. I mentioned *“write”* at the start of the question and then asked if students would *“pre-write.”* I have a feeling therefore that students might have felt confused at the question being asked, or they responded to the question literally. Since the instructor said

students could write, that does not mean the instructor said students could pre-write. In the end, this question could have produced many “no” answers due to the question itself being faulty and confusing. However, there is the possibility that students would only pre-write in their native language when they needed to – not simply due to instructor prompting.

With the four aforementioned survey questions elaborated on and answered (with question three discussed later), I will now proceed to further discussion about the research questions and seek to answer them.

Discussion

This section will begin by discussing how the results obtained may answer the research questions laid out earlier on in this thesis. These questions, again, are:

1. Do ESL students at the University of Toledo use their L1 when prewriting for their practice exit exams in their 1020 class?
2. Do ESL students at the University of Toledo prefer to use their L1 when prewriting for their practice exit exams in their 1020 class?
3. Do students expect that they will not be allowed to write in their L1 when planning their placement essay?

Research Question 1: Do ESL students at the University of Toledo use their L1 when prewriting for their practice exit exams in their 1020 class? The main issue at hand is seeing whether or not there are any ESL students who used their L1 when prewriting. According to the texts provided in the fall and in the spring, there were indeed students who used their L1 in some form when prewriting. In the fall, I found that, though not a majority, there were students who used their L1 when prewriting, 26.7% of

students for Exam 1 and 33.3% of the students for Exam 2 (see Table 1). In the spring, the number of students who pre-wrote in their L1 was small, especially in Amy's and Ben's classes where zero students used their L1 on paper. However, when compared with the survey, there seemed to be a discrepancy with students who said they did indeed use their L1 when prewriting and with what they did on paper. This could simply be the result of student forgetfulness, or possible fudging of the truth to make it seem as if they had to write a "correct" answer or guess what answer the researcher would have liked to see. Also, there is the possibility that the students' ideas of prewriting are different than the researcher's. They might see prewriting as everything they do before writing, whether inside the classroom or outside of it. Lastly, another reason could be that the question may not have been clear enough or it may have generalized prewriting instead of denoting what exactly prewriting is for the students taking the survey.

Originally, I had hoped to see if there would be a correlation between students' L1 use when prewriting and if students claim they use their L1 when prewriting. Below are the alternative and null hypotheses that were to be tested:

Alternative Hypothesis: There is a correlation between the number of ENGL1020 students using their L1 in their prewriting and the number of students who say they do in the survey.

Null Hypothesis: There is not a correlation between the number of ENGL1020 students using their L1 in their prewriting and the number of students who say they do in the survey.

I anticipated comparing prewriting documents with answers to student survey question two. Again, question two stated: *—If you answered yes to the question above, did*

you use your native language to write notes for part/all of the essay?" Therefore, only surveys that answered a ~~yes~~" to question one would be valid (see Appendix D).

In SPSS, I intended to place in one column all students who did not pre-write and those who did pre-write but did not use their L1 in one category (0), and I intended to place those students who did use their L1 at least once in their prewriting in another category (1). In another column, I gave students who answered ~~no~~" to the question *...did you use your native language to write notes for part/all of the essay?"* a 0. If they circled ~~yes~~," they received a 1.

With the information keyed in, I would have conducted a Chi Square test to see if this information correlated. As the participant number was so low, I would have inspected the Fisher's exact test result. However, the data retrieved did not tabulate accurately for there to be valid quantitative inspection of the data. Though 32 students took the first practice exam, only 27 of these students took the survey. Of those 27, only 21 answered ~~yes~~" to question one. Since 21 and 32 are not equal, I needed to have discarded all prewriting done by students who were not available to take the survey along with those who did not sign the consent form. However, because I was given access only to the scrap paper and not the blue exam booklets, I was unable to match up prewriting (as the majority of students did not write their name on the prewriting documents in my possession) to surveys and consent forms. Therefore, it was impossible for me to discard the prewriting documents of those who did not take the survey or did not sign the consent form so that they could take the survey.

Though in the end I was unable to test the data in a quantitative sense, I was able to look at the data qualitatively and make assumptions about what I saw. The

discrepancies already mentioned as a response to research question one will have to suffice for this particular study. Further discussion will take place under limitations and avenues for future research.

Research Question 2: Do ESL students at the University of Toledo prefer to use their L1 when pre-writing for their practice exit exams in their 1020 class? The results from question four and five of the survey will hope to answer this research question. For question four – *“Do you find using your native language before writing your practice exam essay helpful?”* – 14 out of the 27 students circled yes to this answer. However, for question five – *“If your instructor allowed you to write in your native language during your practice (or placement) exam to help you with your final draft, would you pre-write in your native language at all?”* – only eight students circled yes.

Both of these answers seem to deal with preference; students have more of a say in these answers, particularly as to whether or not they believe that using their L1 before writing their final draft will help them out. The interesting part of the survey results is that more students say that using their L1 is helpful, but if given the opportunity – overtly by the instructor as question five states, and by the low numbers of L1 use through the data retrieved – fewer students chose to use their L1 when prewriting. This of course does not seem to take into account any sort of contemplation or language switching as defined by previous researchers (Qi, 2000; Wang, 2003; Woodall, 2002); nor does it take into account what students consider prewriting, as it is not specified in concrete terms. Plus, the question itself is problematic. As was mentioned earlier in the chapter, the wording of the question could lead students to answer ~~no~~ simply because they would pre-write

without instructor prompting. The only physical evidence we can go by in the end are the prewriting documents used in the first placement exam.

Research Question 3: Do students expect that they will not be allowed to write in their L1 when planning their placement essay? This is more difficult to answer in a clear way. Considering that some of the survey answers did not coincide with the texts produced for the placement exam, it is difficult to know whether students understood the questions asked in the survey. It is also difficult to ascertain whether students chose answers that they felt the researcher would like to see instead of what they truly felt. Still, if we assume students will have understood question five, it seems as if few would listen to an instructor even if told they would be allowed to use their L1 if they found it to help them.

Students do indeed mention that they have used their L1 for various reasons, as prompted by question 3 (see Appendix D). Out of all the surveys inspected, six students marked that they used their native language ~~to~~ “translate the essay from [their] language to English,” six students marked that they used their native language ~~to~~ “help organize the essay,” five students marked that they used their native language ~~to~~ “express information more efficiently,” and four students marked that they used their native language ~~to~~ “understand the exam question better.” Therefore, there seems to be some yearning to want to use the L1, but students feel unsure – at least from these survey answers – to mention that they would indeed desire to use their L1 when allowed or simply doing so on the paper provided for them. This could be a residual feeling of apprehension about their native language being a part of the writing process when writing in another language. Since instructors will, in the end, look at their exam booklets along

with the prewriting they do, perhaps students will feel that writing anything in their L1 could count against them when the instructor is grading the placement exams – or when instructors are looking at the entrance and exit exams and are deciding if a student should pass or fail.

Limitations

Though the results are interesting and have shown me that what students and instructors believe do not always coincide – even between similar classes in the same semester – there are further limitations to this study that need to be made clear.

First, there is the likelihood that students may have erased their L1 when prewriting, possibly out of fear of being reprimanded or punished for using it in any fashion when in the ESL writing classroom. This particular feeling could have stemmed from an EFL teaching environment, which rejects the use of the native language within the classroom (Blair, 1982; Larson-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). In the present study, no documents showed erasure of L1, but there were times when the students' English was erased, or so it seemed. Some of the students erased a choice on the survey, where the majority of responses were yes/no, even for questions such as *“Did you use the blank paper provided to plan your essay?”* and *“If your instructor allowed you to write in your native language during your practice (or placement) exam to help you with your final draft, would you pre-write in your native language at all?”* – where the researcher assumed that there should not have been hesitation by the student. To be fair, the last question is rather complex, especially for students with remedial ESL reading and writing skills; this could have provided inaccurate information for the researcher.

Another major limitation to this study is the inability to use the Chi Square test. Originally, I intended to test the data and see if there might be a correlation between students who used their L1 when prewriting and the response by students who said they do. However, when acquiring the data, I did not ask the ENGL1020 instructors for both the exam and prewriting documents to be kept together. I also did not request for the consent form and survey to be kept together. After receiving the prewriting, I should have made scanned facsimiles of the entire texts (both booklets and prewriting), not just relied on instructors separating the prewriting documents. I should have then coded the prewriting documents with a number for each student and discarded the invalid documents after collecting all the surveys and consent forms. When I finally had all the documents necessary and discarded irrelevant ones, I would have been able to place the information into SPSS and tested the data. Ultimately, this discrepancy with the number of valid subjects for each method of data collection and the lack of forethought about these dilemmas that have arisen limited the results I could have achieved for this study – since I could not legitimately conduct Chi Square or Fisher exact tests.

Also, additional exams should be incorporated into the study instead of a single practice exam in a semester. The number of students enrolled in ENGL1020 cannot be controlled either; plus, the number of students taking the exam was fewer than the number enrolled. This will become problematic in future research studies, especially if quantitative testing is to be done.

Not only was the number of students quite low, but the unreliability of their answers also posed problems. The number of students who said they pre-wrote in their native language was higher than what was produced on paper before writing the final

draft. This could be because “prewriting” was not defined in the survey; it was left as a blanket statement. Describing what is included in prewriting (both external and internal activities) could have made the data less skewed than it had been. One could look at the instructors from this semester, all three of whom broached prewriting differently. Therefore, in the end, it was difficult to ascertain how students and instructors really, truly understood prewriting to be.

After talking with the instructors, Ben said he talked to the students in class about L1 use when prewriting. Though he lectured about this, there was no L1 use visible on any of his students’ prewriting documents. Amy and Cara both stressed the importance of prewriting in their classes. For Cara, she especially focused on planning and outlining for each essay assignment she introduced as well as before the practice exams. Neither Amy nor Cara stressed the importance or acceptability of using an L1 when prewriting. In the end, none of Amy’s students pre-wrote in their L1; Cara’s class was the only one that produced an L1 on the prewriting documents inspected.

Implications for Future Research

It would be intriguing to see the benefit of lectures on L1 prewriting for an entire semester. One could compare the product of the first practice exam (and the other two) with the exit exam at the end of the semester – to see if improvement was made and if this use of L1 aided in improvement. Considering the time frame of the current study, multiple semesters could be investigated to see how a variety of teachers lecture on prewriting, bring up the topic in group sessions, and comment on prewriting written during class time; observations could take place and more thorough interviews with instructors could be in order.

A fascinating side part of the study is the variety of instructors' methods of instructing prewriting (no matter the language) even though all three asserted it to be a valuable asset for ESL writers. All three instructors placed value on students using their L1 when prewriting if it would help them out with their final draft. Some TAs in the ESL program have been from other countries where English is not the L1; these instructors will be teaching ESL writing in their TL. Researching practices by the instructor and how international instructors, in particular, tackle the issue of L1 prewriting would be an interesting avenue to venture down in future studies.

Students' opinions on the use of their L1 in prewriting also varied from class to class. More research needs to be done to see if instruction about L1 prewriting and its acceptance within the classroom and in timed exam settings should be suitable procedure for the ESL writing curriculum, both at UT and perhaps in other universities with similar programs. This comes from the kind of concern that some instructors might not feel it necessary to lecture to students and talk in class time about these topics, as expressed by Leki (1995). What the ESL writing curriculum has is a good start – adding more instruction on prewriting into the current syllabus could be a nice step. That along with learning about students' needs and abilities, which Leki (1992) stresses is imperative when instructing international students on writing in a TL, can produce a healthy learning environment where all those present are open to a variety of cultures, languages, and methods of composing. Beginning-of-semester surveys already incorporated into the ENGL1020 curriculum about these topics have been a great asset to the program.

Lastly, it is important for those who research on this issue to follow stringent data collection procedures. This includes not only coding data accurately in case certain

documents become invalid, but also inspecting all documents and texts that could hold valuable information for the researcher. For example, though exam booklets were not included as part of the documents inspected by this researcher, prewriting could have occurred anywhere within the booklet where the final draft would be written. Anything written by students on the front or back covers or any other writing elsewhere within the booklet could be considered as prewriting since it not part of the final essay draft (Worden, 2009).

Implications for Teaching

Pedagogically, I wonder how much explicit instruction should really be given to prewriting. The original syllabus for ENGL1020 at the University of Toledo hardly covers prewriting or language switching before the first practice exam in the semester (see Appendix A and Appendix B), only with brief mention of free writing in the lesson plan as shown in Figure 1. Nothing else about students' L1s was mentioned apart from the possibility of students free writing in their native language. One might assume it is an unspoken rule that students need to focus only on writing and prewriting in the target language (TL). Perhaps this rule carried over from EFL teaching methods about rejecting the L1 altogether. With multiple studies showing that students language switch often (Qi, 1998; Wang, 2003) and through my study where students did produce written languages other than English, I think ENGL1020 instructors should make a point to embrace L1 use in prewriting (especially when students are having difficulties with composing the essays) and set aside time in class to talk with students about prewriting and have them practice frequently before the first practice exam, commenting on what the students pre-write about.

During my interviews, Cara vehemently believed that it was a good idea to include time to lecture on prewriting early in the semester; Ben also agreed that the ESL classroom is a place where students' L1s are embraced even in the United States, where most of the writing they do will be in English. Therefore, focusing even more on instructors' actions within the classroom apart from speaking to students – such as collecting prewriting, writing comments about the prewriting done, discussing the prewriting students have produced, and marking the usefulness of the prewriting by showing it to them – would all be assets to this area of research.

Process writing and prewriting is often taught at other levels of composition for ESL students, mainly in ENGL1110. Incorporating more prewriting exercises into the syllabus template and lesson plan for ENGL1020 would be beneficial apart from work on their out-of-classroom writing assignments. I think instructors should instigate discussion during class time, telling their students how they, as writers, pre-write and organize their thoughts. Instructors can also ask students what they do when prewriting, what particular methods they use or have used.

In the end, merging and keeping the post-process approach even in the ESL writing context is imperative, especially at UT. Though the opinions of students in this study are varied and the methods instructors have provided varied as well – there seems to be a commonplace view among instructors that prewriting (in any language) is a valued asset to ESL writing in developmental composition courses, that one's L1 should not be squashed or thought of as a blemish within the classroom. Any method that will help students improve their writing is important when we have such a diverse environment as the ESL writing classroom.

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Appendix A

Course Syllabus and Policies, ENGL1020, Template

Course Title: Writing and Grammar

Instructor:

Meeting Place:

Meeting Time: MW 11-12:15

Office:

E-mail:

Office Hours:

COURSE ELIGIBILITY. A student is eligible for ENGL 1020 only as a result of his/her score on the ESL Placement Test.

THE EXIT EXAM: At the end of the course, you will take an exit exam that is similar to the placement exam you took. You must pass the exit exam and complete all papers satisfactorily in order to pass the class.

TEXTBOOKS: *Sourcework: Academic Writing from Sources*, Second Edition (2012) by Dollahite and Haun

These textbooks are available at the campus bookstore. You will also use these textbooks for English 1110-ESL.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: In this class, you will learn to do the following:

- write practice essay exams in order to prepare for the exit exam at the end of the course
- write longer pieces and write more quickly (by gaining experience with writing)
- analyze assignments so that you understand what you are supposed to do
- show understanding of reading materials through your writing
- organize your writing and provide details and examples in your writing
- improve sentence structure problems, grammar problems, and punctuation problems

This course is also designed to help prepare you for English 1110, Composition I.

WHAT TO EXPECT: You will write two assignments at home, as well as three in-class practice exit exams. These practice exit exams are designed to be very much like the exit exam that you must pass at the end of the course. You will have two full class periods to write. At the end of the first day, you will turn in your unfinished essay to your instructor, who will return it to you to complete the following class period. *You may not take this practice essay exam home.*

You will not receive grades on your work. Instead, you will receive detailed feedback from your instructor on a standardized feedback form, during conferences, and in class. This feedback will help you know the strengths and weaknesses of your writing, and it will help you understand what aspects of your writing you need to improve in order to increase your chances of passing the exit exam.

Attendance at class sessions and at conferences is mandatory. Please have written proof of a university-excused absence if you are absent.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Caveat: This schedule is subject to change at the instructor's discretion.

Weeks 1-3: Begin Chapter 1, Autobiographical writing

Week 4: Practice exit exam #1, written in class

Week 5: Conferences about practice exit exam #1 (no regular classes)

Weeks 6-7: Finish Autobiographical paper

Week 8: Practice exit exam #2 (written in class), based on a reading about a controversial topic; introduction to basics of MLA style

Week 9: In-class discussion/feedback about practice exit exam #2

Weeks 10-13: Summary writing, about a source chosen by your instructor; continue work on MLA style and paraphrasing. Discuss plagiarism.

Weeks 14-15: Practice essay exam #3 (written in class), based on a reading about a controversial topic

Week 16: Conferences about Practice essay exam #3 (no regular classes)

Finals Week: ESL exit exam; time, date, and location will be announced.

PAPER FORMAT: Papers that are not written in class must be typed, double-spaced, with 12-point type size. Each page must have one-inch margins on top, bottom, and sides. For papers written out of class, please save copies of all of the drafts electronically.

GRADES: In order to pass ENGL 1020, **you must pass the exit exam**, and you must complete all papers in this class satisfactorily.

The grade you receive at the end of the course is either **–PS**” (pass) or **–NC**” (no credit). NC is not a passing grade, but it is not computed in your official grade point average (GPA). If you receive an **–NC**,” you must repeat this course and earn a passing grade before you take any other English course.

Characteristic weaknesses of **–NC**” writing include wordy, awkward, and unclear sentences, as well as errors in usage, grammar, and spelling. **–PS**” writing is free of serious and frequent problems of these types.

PORTFOLIO: *You are **required** to keep all of your practice exit exams and your other graded papers in a folder and to turn in this folder at the end of the term. You must also have your **feedback sheet** for each assignment stapled to the front of the assignment.*

This folder (your **portfolio**) will help you make note of your progress during the course and will be used in the case of an appeal of your final exam grade. (See **APPEALS OF FAILING FINAL EXAMS**, below.) So that your essays are not lost and the instructor can read them easily, do the following: On the first page, use a heading in the upper left corner with your name, the course number (ENGL 1020), your instructor’s name, and the date. (Please do not use a cover page.) On the top right corner of each page, please put your last name and the page number. Please staple your pages together. Be sure to give your papers a title.

ASSISTANCE: You may get help from your instructor during office hours.

Additionally, free help with writing is available at the Writing Center, which is located across from Carlson Library. Your instructor may require you to visit the writing center. You can contact the Writing Center by calling ext. 4939. (If you’re off campus, call (419) 530-4939).

APPEALS OF FAILING FINAL EXAMS: If you fail the final exam, but your instructor feels that your final exam is not representative of your work overall, the instructor will appeal your course grade *automatically*. The instructor will do this if your average on work s/he assigned is strong. All of the samples of your practice exit exams included in your portfolio will be examined by two instructors in the ESL Program, and their comments will be reviewed by the Director of ESL Writing.

ATTENDANCE. (Also see the University of Toledo Missed Class Policy.)

Your active participation in class as well as completion of all assignments will help you succeed and become a better writer. Therefore, it is essential that you attend all class meetings. If for some reason you must miss a class, it is important that you notify your

instructor in advance via e-mail or in person. If your class has individual conferences with the instructor, you must attend them.

Please come to class on time. If you are late, you may miss in-class writing assignments. If you do miss a class, it is your responsibility to ask your instructor what you missed and to provide your instructor with written proof of a university-excused absence if you wish to make up in-class work.

PLAGIARISM: Avoid plagiarism, which is the improper use of material from published sources or other students' work. In US universities, penalties for plagiarism are severe. Writers' facts or ideas belong to them, as does their way of expressing them. Therefore, if you put into your own words someone else's facts or ideas, you must acknowledge where you got those facts or ideas.

PEER REVIEW (GROUP WORK): You will be reading and responding to some of each other's papers to help each other improve your writing. On the days you do this, you must bring two copies of your typed, completed draft for your classmates.

LATE WORK: Exact due dates will be set by the instructor and are firm. Late assignments are strongly discouraged. Papers are due at the *beginning* of the class on the due date.

Appendix B

Course Syllabus and Policies, ENGL1020, Amy's Class

Course Title: Writing and Grammar, English as a Second Language

Instructor:

Meeting Place:

Meeting Time: MW 11-12:15

Office:

E-mail:

Office Hours:

COURSE ELIGIBILITY. A student is eligible for ENGL 1020 only as a result of his/her score on the ESL Placement Test. Please see the instructor immediately if you are a native speaker of English or if you did not take the ESL placement text.

THE EXIT EXAM: At the end of the course, you will take an exit exam that is similar to the placement exam you took. You must pass the exit exam and complete all papers satisfactorily in order to pass the class.

TEXTBOOK: You do not need to purchase a text.

Assigned readings and some handouts are on our course website on Blackboard. Access it through myUT.

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

- An active UT email account, checked regularly.
- Paper and writing utensil, every class for note taking and in class writing. NO ELECTRONIC DEVICES please. Ask if you want help translating. We will practice note taking on paper. You can transfer calendar notes to your device after class.
- Folder with two pockets to turn in a portfolio of your course work at the end of the term.
- Notebook/folder or your choice to save class notes, write your roundtable preparation and hold printed material from Blackboard.

CLASSROOM POLICIES:

- to maintain a professional atmosphere
 - arrive on time. If you must arrive late, do so unobtrusively. Realize that persistent late arrivals count as absences.
 - silence and pack away all cell phones and laptops. Remove ear buds. If you are on your phone or any other device, you are absent.
- (See excused/unexcused absence policy below)

COURSE OBJECTIVES: In this class, you will learn to do the following:

- write practice essay exams in order to prepare for the exit exam at the end of the course
- analyze complex readings and incorporate the ideas into your own writing
- write longer pieces and write more quickly
- analyze assignments so that you understand what you are supposed to do
- organize your writing and provide details and examples in your writing
- improve sentence structure problems, grammar problems, and punctuation problems

This course is also designed to help prepare you for English 1110, Composition One.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS: There are two types of writing assignments: practice exams written in class and paper assignments that you may work on at home.

Practice exams: You will write three in-class practice exit exams. These practice exit exams are designed to be very much like the exit exam that you must pass at the end of the course. You will have two full class periods to write. At the end of the first day, you will turn in your unfinished essay to your instructor, who will return it to you to complete the following class period. You may not take this practice essay exam home.

You will not receive grades on these practice essays. Instead, you will receive detailed feedback from your instructor on a standardized feedback form. This feedback will help you know the strengths and weaknesses of your writing, and it will help you understand what aspects of your writing you need to improve in order to increase your chances of passing the exit exam.

Paper assignments: You will write two major papers of about 4 pages each. These may be written and revised at home.

Check mark writing, attendance writing and roundtable prep writing: There is a great deal of 'attendance writing' and 'roundtable prep writing.' For these you receive a check mark for completion. They are meant to help you improve your reading / writing ability; they do not need to be turned in with the portfolio. Save these writings to help you review for exams and papers. There is no make-up of these writings. They are due the date announced. They are done both at home and in class.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Caveat: This schedule is subject to change at the instructor's discretion.

Weeks 1 : Introduce reading strategies and the discussion technique, the roundtable. Print assigned readings from Blackboard course site for discussion next week.

Week 2, 3 Reading/discussion of articles. Connecting articles with similar themes.

Week 4 Practice exit exam #1, written in class.

Week 5: Discuss practice exam #1. START PAPER 1 Start sentence structure work. (Clauses, run ons, fragments)

Week 6: Continue readings and discussion and work on sentence structure. (Overview of three ways to combine ideas: transitions, coordinators, subordinators) Continue work on PAPER 1

Week 7: Practice exit exam #2, written in class.

Week 7, 8, 9 Final draft paper 1 due. Discuss use of quoted and paraphrased material. Start PAPER 2, Summary.

Week 10; Practice exit exam #3, written in class

Week 10: Advanced discussion of subordination vs. coordination.

Weeks 11-13: Continue discussion of articles, review for exam,

Week 14 -Practice exam 4?

Week 15, 16 – review, revision

Finals Week: ESL exit exam; time, date, and location will be announced.

PAPER FORMAT: The two paper assignments must be in standard MLA format used in all UT Composition One classes- typed, double-spaced, with 12-point type size. Each page must have one-inch margins on top, bottom, and sides. Include the MLA style header of last name and page number in the upper right on each page. For papers written out of class, please save copies of all of the drafts electronically. You will be given space on our Epsilon course in the dropbox link.

GRADES: In order to pass ENGL 1020, **you must pass the exit exam**, and you must complete all papers in this class satisfactorily.

The grade you receive at the end of the course is either **-PS** (pass) or **-NC** (no credit). NC is not a passing grade, but it is not computed in your official grade point average (GPA). If you receive an **-NC**, you must repeat this course and earn a passing grade before you take any other English course. If you receive a grade of **-PS** (pass) your next course is the ESL section of Comp I, English 1110. (Sign up for an 800 section.) Characteristic weaknesses of **-NC** writing include wordy, awkward, and unclear sentences, as well as errors in usage, grammar, and spelling. **-PS** writing is free of serious and frequent problems of these types.

PORTFOLIO: You are **required** to keep all of your practice exit exams and your other graded papers in a folder and to turn in this folder at the end of the term. You must also have your **feedback sheet** for each assignment stapled to the front of the assignment. This folder (your **portfolio**) will help you make note of your progress during the course and will be used in the case of an appeal of your final exam grade. (See **APPEALS OF FAILING FINAL EXAMS**, below.) So that your essays are not lost and the instructor can read them easily, do the following: On the first page, use a heading in the upper left corner with your name, the course number (ENGL 1020), your instructor's name, and the date. (Please do not use a cover page.) On the top right corner of each page, please put your last name and the page number. Please staple your pages together. (This is standard MLA format, used in UT Comp 1 courses.) Be sure to give your papers a title.

ASSISTANCE: You may get help from your instructor during office hours. Additionally, free help with writing is available at the Writing Center, which is located across from Carlson Library. Several tutors are specialists in ESL writing. You can ask for their assistance. (Their names will be provided to you shortly.) Your instructor may require you to visit the writing center. You can contact the Writing Center by calling ext. 4939. (If you're off campus, call (419) 530-4939).

APPEALS OF FAILING FINAL EXAMS: If you fail the final exam, but your instructor feels that your final exam is not representative of your work overall, the instructor will appeal your course grade automatically. The instructor will do this if your average on work s/he assigned is strong. All of the samples of your practice exit exams included in your portfolio will be examined by two instructors in the ESL Program, and their comments will be reviewed by the Director of ESL Writing.

ATTENDANCE.

Every effort is made to provide you with instruction that will improve your ability to succeed in college work. Your consistent attendance will improve not only your writing skill on the final exit exam, but your ability to navigate future university coursework.

Although we have a course website, this is not a distance learning course. Most key material is covered in class, not in handouts or a text book and therefore cannot easily be made up. Furthermore, you must attend the practice essay exams in order to create a portfolio of work.

The instructor's schedule does not allow for private tutoring of missed material. Office hours are intended for students who are attending class and doing the assignments. Arrangements for making up work will be considered if written documentation is provided for an absence covered by the UT attendance policy. Such events include a

court date, a medical emergency in the family or student illness. If one of these unfortunate incidents affects you, please email the instructor as soon as possible and bring written documentation when you return. If you are claiming a religious absence, document that you must miss class to attend the actual observance or holiday ceremony.

If you find you must miss class and have no official excuse, do what you can to get notes from a classmate and keep up with the work.

Writing/discussion work from unexcused absences cannot be made up, but you should check with a classmate for notes. Check with the instructor to see if the material is on a handout on Blackboard.

PLAGIARISM & ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: Avoid plagiarism, which is the improper use of material from published sources or other students' work. In US universities, penalties for plagiarism are severe. Writers' facts or ideas belong to them, as does their way of expressing them. Therefore, if you put into your own words someone else's facts or ideas, you must acknowledge where you got those facts or ideas.

PEER REVIEW (GROUP WORK): You will be reading and responding to some of each other's papers to help each other improve your writing. On the days you do this, you must bring two copies of your typed, completed draft for your classmates.

LATE WORK: Exact due dates will be set by the instructor. Late assignments will be penalized or not accepted. Papers are due at the beginning of the class on the due date.

Appendix C

Interview Questions for ENGL1020 Instructors

1. Have you discussed pre-writing so far in your ENGL1020 classroom this semester?
2. If so, what did you talk about with your students?
3. Have you taught and/or discussed pre-writing in any form in previous composition classes? Was this a 1020 class or a different class?
4. Do you intend to teach pre-writing in your ENGL1020 classroom this semester?
5. Do you feel instructing your 1020 students about pre-writing will help them for their future placement and exit exams, or do you think it will not help? Why?

Appendix D

Survey for ENGL1020 Students

This questionnaire asks you to think about your writing process during the practice exam you recently took. Please read the questions and circle your choice.

1. In the practice exam, did you use the blank paper provided to plan your essay?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No

2. If you answered yes to the question above, did you use your native language to write notes for part/all of the essay?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No

3. If you answered yes to #2, for what reasons? Circle all that apply.
 - a) To translate the essay from your language to English.
 - b) To help organize the essay
 - c) To express information more efficiently
 - d) To understand the exam question better

4. Do you find using your native language before writing your practice exam essay helpful?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No

5. If your instructor allowed you to write in your native language during your practice (or placement) exam to help you with your final draft, would you pre-write in your native language at all?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No