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Writing in English as a Foreign Language within Higher
Education in Vietnam: an investigation of the genres,
writing processes and
perceptions of ten Vietnamese students.

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**A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education**

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“This is going to be the most important year of your life”

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Cám ơn rất nhiều.

Declaration

The work in this thesis was developed and conducted by the author between October 2013 and September 2017. I declare that, apart from work whose authors are explicitly acknowledged, this thesis and the materials contained in this thesis represent original work undertaken solely by the author. I confirm that this thesis has not been submitted for a degree at another university.

M. Evans

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ABSTRACT

Increasing numbers of Vietnamese students write in English as a foreign language for university and employment purposes. This research study explored the writing of ten higher education students in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. In the first of its kind in Vietnam, the study establishes the types of writing or genres, in English, that participants had undertaken over their life course. Although participants reported a significant standardisation of genres at lower levels of education, they had been expected to produce a wider range of genres at either undergraduate or MA level, or for employment purposes. This included the need to write for research, science and business purposes. Participants were generally ill-prepared to take on these writing challenges. The findings indicate that a form of genre needs-analysis and genre pedagogy at undergraduate level could be implemented to support English language teachers and students to scaffold writing activities and to help prepare graduates for the type of writing expected of them within MA-level courses and employment.

The participants valued assignments and writing that helped them to develop their thinking; they appreciated learning to write in a way that would be useful for employment and academic study and were motivated by gaining high scores and receiving positive feedback from teachers. Having the opportunity to write about familiar topics in a more creative way was also highly regarded. Participants felt they had experienced challenges when they first engaged in critical thinking, when they had to brainstorm for ideas and when they wrote introductions. During writing activities, participants positioned themselves and their arguments as Vietnamese citizens with a sense of pride and loyalty to their national identity. Participants were audience aware and used only material that would be deemed socially and politically correct within Vietnam.

Many features of the sociocultural context played a role in the genres participants had written, the writing processes they engaged in and their perceptions of writing activities. The prevalence of English as a lingua franca and international research-writing conventions were evident. Traditional teaching approaches and grammar-based assessment and testing practices

within Vietnam also featured significantly in participant's experiences of writing in English. These structural forces, as well as other historical, cultural and political realities presented themselves more evidently than personal or idiographic in the writing experiences and writing processes of the participants.

List of Abbreviations

| | |
|-------|--|
| ASEAN | Association of South East Asian Nations |
| BAWE | British Academic Written English Corpus |
| CEFR | Common European Framework of Reference for Languages |
| CHC | Confucian Heritage Culture |
| CLT | Communicative Language Teaching |
| DRV | Democratic Republic of Vietnam |
| EAL | English as an Additional Language |
| EAP | English for Academic purposes |
| EFL | English as a Foreign Language |
| ELT | English Language Teaching |
| ESL | English as a Second Language |
| ESOL | English to Speakers of Other Languages |
| EMI | English medium instruction |
| GTM | Grammar Translation Method |
| ICT | Information and communication technology |
| L2 | Second language |
| MOET | Ministry of Education and Training |
| NNS | Non-native speaker/s |
| SFL | Systemic Functional Linguistics |
| SLW | Second language writing |
| SLA | Second language acquisition |

Introduction

Personal background

Before this PhD project I worked as a teacher of Psychology and Sociology in the UK. I taught many learners who were using English as an additional language (EAL). I felt the profession viewed and reacted to EAL (and international) students within a deficit mindset. EAL learners were often viewed in terms of the challenges they posed in the classroom, the learning barriers they experienced, and the problems that teachers had to deal with when teaching these types of students. Yet in my own classroom, I recognised advanced language learners who could speak up to five languages, almost fluently, by the age of 14 or 15. I was amazed at the pace of language-learning. I felt there was an unhelpful imbalance in the general perceptions or discourses around EAL learners.

I also recognised however that students' written tasks were significantly less developed than verbal proficiency. This pattern generally applied to 'home' students as well as EAL students. The students were motivated and hoping to enrol on university courses within two years-time. During class activities and discussions, they displayed the types of evaluation and critical thinking skills that would serve them well at university level but the strength and structure of their expressions were not evidenced as coherently in their writing. I wanted them to develop their critical thinking skills and be able to translate these into the type of writing they could be required to produce in the future. I began to read about language learning on a theoretical and practical level. I used these experiences in the classroom and focused on how I could help students to become better or 'good' writers and, hopefully, reach their goals within higher education. I undertook classroom-based research with the support of an MA supervisor. This period signalled the beginning of a different journey as I became increasingly interested in teaching English for Academic Purposes (EAP) with students learning in English (as a foreign language) in the UK and overseas.

The international spread of English meant there were plenty of English Language Teaching (ELT) opportunities overseas. The Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) in Vietnam had initiated an ambitious ELT development programme that was creating news headlines in the region. This was the initial spark that led me to explore Vietnam in more detail. From a regional perspective, I recognised that Vietnam had a unique historical relationship with English language learning and teaching compared to other countries in South East Asia. Although Vietnam had experienced colonisation, like other Asian countries, it had never been governed by an English-speaking state (Bolton, 2008; Thinh, 2006). With this historical background in mind, Vietnamese students are now obliged to learn English at all levels of education (Harmen et al., 2010). For those students working towards an academic career, the ability to write in English is often a key determinant of their success within the academy within Vietnam and internationally (Bolton, 2008; Curry and Lillis 2004; Huong and Fry, 2004, 2011; Pham, 1999). I decided to explore this area in more detail through this research project. Having established a research topic (English language learning and academic writing) and a research context (Vietnam), I began a review of relevant literature.

My approach to the literature

Using seminal texts, edited volumes (Doughty and Long, 2008; Kroll, 1990, 2003; Leki et al., 2010; Silva and Matsuda, 2012) and journals related to second language learning, second language writing (SLW), English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and ELT in Vietnam; I found that over a 10-year period, the major contributors and key research agendas had remained relatively constant. Having undertaken an extensive literature mapping exercise, I started to recognise where my research might fit in and became aware of the key historical debates within SLW research and more recent EAP developments. When I had reached a level of saturation, there were clearly areas of under and over-representation that helped me to refine my focus. It was possible to combine learning from the SLW literature with the context-specific information I had gathered about the status of writing for university purposes in Vietnam. I could identify some features of EAP in Vietnam that could be

explored more fully in a way that would, hopefully, lead to useful findings for Vietnamese students, their teachers and the second language writing community. I was beginning to form a visual conceptual framework to show how several threads were being pulled together in my mind. The literature review chapter in this thesis presents an interpretation of the literature in a way that shows how the research questions were refined.

Global English: some implications for Higher Education students

The majority of English-language users today can be regarded as ‘non-native speakers’ (NNS) of the language (Bloommaert, 2010; Braine, 2013). English has been the number one Internet language for many years now (Statistica, 2015) and the dominant language of academic publications (Lillis and Curry, 2006). It is being used as the global lingua franca (a language used by non-native speakers to communicate with one another) in business, science and trade (Canagarajah, 2007; Crystal, 1999, 2012; Seidlhofer, 2002). This has created an increased demand for English language teachers internationally (Crystal, 2012) and has resulted in the creation of linguistic varieties of functional ‘Englishes’ (Crystal, 2013). This is a dynamic time for the English language and we can no longer say that English is owned by native English speakers (Crystal, *ibid*). How people are currently learning English and using it for various purposes is of particular interest to those invested in language learning.

The spread of English, combined with the internationalisation of Higher Education, has led to a situation where university students in non-Anglophone contexts are increasingly required to graduate with a level of English proficiency (Lillis and Curry, 2006, 2010; Nunan, 2003). This internationalisation refers to the process whereby universities and departments share research outputs and outcomes internationally and aim to attract and recruit international students and employees. International competition exists between higher education institutions, but international research and other productive collaborations also feature within this agenda.

As part of this agenda, many students learn in English-medium institutions or enrol on English-medium degree courses (Dearden, 2014; Nunan, 2003). They are also using international literature, published in English, for their studies and university assignments (Flowerdew, 1999, 2002; Lillis and Curry, 2006). The challenges faced by students writing university assignments in English as a second or foreign language have been well documented in SLW and EAP (Lillis and Curry 2006, 2010; Flowerdew, 2002; Tang 2012). The barriers for academics writing in EFL have also been documented in more critical approaches. The term critical is being used here to refer to English language teaching approaches or other studies that encourage students and practitioners to question or challenge existing or dominant assumptions and power differences in the (English) language learning area. Challenges of writing in English as a foreign language are not simply language related (Canagarajah, 1996; Curry and Lillis, 2004; Tang, 2012). Some academics (and students) do not have access to resources such as journal subscriptions and other materials required to produce publishable materials (Curry and Lillis, 2004). For other scholars, the international domination of the English language has been seen as a remnant of a post-colonial power that serves to subordinate and oppress 'others' (Canagarajah, 1993, 1996, 2002, 2014; Lillis and Curry 2006, 2010; Pennycook, 1994; Phillipson, 1996; Ramanathan, 2005; Flowerdew, 1999, 2002).

Writing for university is a complex process of becoming a disciplinary member (Hyland, 2004a); often accompanied by transitions in identity (Cho, 2014; Hyland 2002a, 2002b; Nguyen, 2008b; Park, 2013) and the development of particular linguistic skills (Hyland 2004a; Durrant, 2014a; Nesi and Gardner, 2012) that are applied uniquely to each piece of writing or text (Hyland, 2004a; Swales, 1990). The term linguistic broadly refers here to language and language features. Linguists who study language scientifically at different levels or from different perspectives are a diverse group, and include sociolinguists, psycholinguists, structural linguists, and comparative linguists. Linguistic analyses can be based on individual words, phrases, whole sentences, sections of texts and whole texts. Researchers tend to be interested in how language is used to express meaning for different purposes by different writers, for different audiences. Applied linguistics is a broad

interdisciplinary field invested in understanding language learning and application to real-life. Applied linguists have explored language teaching, assessment, and different applications of language research.

Within this disciplinary umbrella, many EAP researchers have investigated writing conventions across departments, sometimes in collaboration with subject specialist faculty members (Candlin and Hyland, 2014; Nesi and Gardner, 2012; Racelis and Matsuda, 2013). Most EAP courses have been designed to initiate second language writers into the writing practices of the 'academy' (Hyland, 2004a, 2004b) and research has focused on the writing processes used by students and their experiences of accessing academic discourse communities (Byrnes, 2002; Canagarajah, 2011; Devitt and Reiff, 2014; Gebhard et al., 2013; Manchón and De Larios, 2007, Manchón, 2011, 2012; Ramanathan and Kaplan, 2000). The term discourse here broadly refers to the types of topics, approaches and discussions that have been valued by members of a disciplinary or interdisciplinary community.

Within studies of higher education, researchers have been interested in the types of texts or genres that students are required to produce, how they are assessed and the nature of feedback given for written pieces (Ferris, 2010, 2014; Lee 2017; Nesi and Gardner, 2012; Swales, 1990). Amongst other factors, students' sociocultural background and their expectations of assignment writing have been found to influence their approach to studies and written assignments (Flower and Hayes, 1981, Hayes and Flower 1983; Manchón and De Larios, 2007; Manchón, 2012; Oxford, 1990; Plakans, 2008).

Writing in English for university purposes in Vietnam

English has been the official language of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) since 2009 but it had been used as a shared language or lingua franca across the region for at least ten years prior to the official ASEAN Charter in 2007 (Kirkpatrick, 2010). Many Southeast Asian countries have made English a compulsory curriculum subject from secondary level,

while Singapore has opted for full English medium instruction (EMI) in all educational institutions (Kirkpatrick, 2010). Unlike Brunei, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Myanmar and Singapore, Vietnam is not a former British colony. The country has been colonised by China, France and Russia and these languages had taken educational precedence at different times. For over one thousand years, Vietnam was governed by a series of Chinese dynasties: the Han, Eastern Wu, Jin, Liu Song, Southern Qi, Liang, Sui, Tang, and Southern Han (Van, 2007). At certain periods during these years, Vietnam was independently governed under the Triệus, Trưng Sisters, Early Lýs, Khúcs and Dương Đình Nghệ but their triumphs were only temporary (Van, 2007).

The French took control of Vietnam from 1859 – 1954. When French colonisation had ended in the country, Vietnam was reported to be a divided nation; with HỒ Chí Minh's communist Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) government ruling the North from Hanoi and Ngô Đình Diệm's Republic of Vietnam, supported by the United States, ruling the South from Saigon (Thinh, 2006). Russian and Chinese were the favoured foreign languages in the North which was said to be allied with the former Soviet Union. In the South, French and English were encouraged, probably due to affiliation with the US in that region (Thinh, 2006; Van, 2007). Appendix 1 provides information about the current Vietnamese alphabet, tones and pronunciations for readers interested in how to pronounce the Vietnamese words in this thesis.

Prior to, during and following the Vietnam War (1954 – 1975), English language teaching in schools had been reported to have been encouraged and prohibited with equal vehemence (Do, 2006; Le, 2007; Thinh 2006; Van, 2007). The presence of English speaking (US) military, missionaries and other workers led to huge changes in the South (Van 2007). ELT mushroomed, free English textbooks were said to have been introduced in schools and Englishspeaking TV channels, radio and other media became widespread (Van, 2007). During this time, some Vietnamese teachers received English language training in New Zealand and Australia (Thinh, 2006). Later, during

the country's National reunification, the extent to which colonial culture and English textbooks were abolished has been debated (Thinh, 2006). In the South, free English textbooks were reported to have been banned or discouraged, and the generation of English language teachers who had been trained by US and Australians were said to have attended re-education camps; where they were encouraged to partake in political training using Marxism and Leninism and to denounce the foreign decadent cultures (Thinh, 2006; Do, 2006; Sagan and Denney, 1982). According to Thinh (2006: 21) thousands of English language teachers fled as *'boat people'* and hundreds of foreign language teachers from the North were sent to the South to deal with the shortage.

The 2015 cohort of students are likely to be the children and grand-children of those who were encouraged to learn either Russian, French or English; depending on their location and experience during the 1960s - 1980s. Those from the North may have a different perspective of learning English than those from the South. Learning English in order to be part of the resistance to the US war effort (in the North) or to communicate with the US military (in the South), could have led to a different view as to the purpose or potential use of English. For those in the South, they may be relatives of the scores of Vietnamese people who were reported to have been executed after the Vietnam War, due to their association with anti-communist bodies, including the US (Thinh, 2006). They, or their relatives, might remember when ties with Britain and Australia were severed during the Cambodian War for example (Thinh, 2006). During this time, ELT training programmes ceased and were generally not available for the next six years, at least (Do, 2006; Le, 2007).

Following serious post-war economic decline, the Vietnamese government launched a campaign for political and economic renewal in 1986, known as *Đổi Mới*. Re-education efforts were stated to have been phased out, and political and economic compromise was initiated (Van, 2007). Vietnam opened its doors to globalisation, business markets and the internationalisation of education (Thinh, 2006). As part of this agenda, English became a compulsory subject in secondary school. In the late 1980s Vietnam needed to prepare itself again to interact and compete internationally (Nguyen and Nguyen, 2007). By

2017, many secondary level learners have become motivated to develop English to access university, find better jobs after graduation, or to study at postgraduate level either in Vietnam or English-speaking countries (Thin, 2006). Others are reported to have studied it because they have had to (Nguyen and Gu, 2013). The influence of Russian as a foreign language was progressively replaced by English ; which has become the preferred foreign language at all levels (Loc, 2005 in Nguyen and Nguyen, 2007:165; Ngoc and Iwashita, 2012).

In 2008, the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) initiated ‘Decision 1400’ or ‘Project 2020’ to improve foreign language teaching across Vietnam so all learners can use English (and other foreign languages) competently in their work and communications by 2020. In 2012, the English proficiency all English language teachers across 30 provinces was assessed using Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) guidelines. The MOET stipulated that all secondary and primary level English language teachers should reach level B2 (for primary and lower secondary school teachers) which is equivalent of an IELTS score of between 5.5. and 6.5, however only 3-7 % of teachers reached this level (Ngoc and Iwashita, 2012: 28; Nguyen, 2013a). Due to these teacher attainment results, the quality of ELT had been under the spotlight. MOET had prioritised the need for better ELT training (Dang et al., 2013, Manh et al., 2017; Pham, 2001) and consequentially most ELT research had focused on teacher practices, perceptions or pedagogic interventions (Baurain, 2013; Hiep, 2000, 2001; Ngoc and Iwashita, 2012; Nguyen, 2002; Pham 2010; Thin 2006; Tomlinson and Dat, 2004), rather than a focus on learner views.

Structure of the thesis

Chapter 1 summarises the features of second language writing literature and similarities between this literature and English Language Teaching research in Vietnam. The conceptual framework of the study is explained in relation to the influence of the ‘sociocultural turn’, genre-related research within and outside

of Vietnam, and existing cross-cultural insights. The final theme focuses on English language learner perceptions. The literature is summarised and used to trace how the research questions were derived from the literature. The second chapter describes the epistemological framework and case study design of the study. It describes how the pilot study led to the final methods of data collection, data analysis and validation approaches. Chapter 3 reports on the findings in relation to each case across cases. The cross-case analysis outlines the findings in relation to each of the research questions in order. The penultimate chapter discusses the findings in relation to existing literature. A number of research, pedagogical and methodological recommendations are made throughout the chapter with potential implications for second language writing researchers, and different stakeholders engaged in English language teaching and research within Vietnam. The thesis concludes with a summary of the research and thesis structure. It reflects on the strengths and limitations of the study as well as the implications and recommendations made.

Literature, conceptual framework and research questions

Introduction

This chapter begins by describing some features of the themes found within second language writing literature and explains why English is being defined as a foreign, rather than second language in Vietnam. The next section considers how English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistic research from, or about, Vietnam reflects the international discourses. Four main literature themes and research domains are chosen to form the basis of the study's conceptual framework and these are justified within the remainder of the chapter. The chapter has been written in a way that traces the literature reviewing process and it offers a synthesis of the literature themes that have influenced the direction of the research. This is a strategic attempt to avoid an all-encompassing review of the literature that was analysed from broad bodies or language learning and teaching. Instead, the chapter is designed to show how the literature review process formed the threads of argument that underpin the core concepts of the study, with particular attention on those that will become ongoing features throughout the thesis. Based on this decision to use a quasi-narrative approach to this chapter, it includes only the literature that informed the research up until the point of data collection in 2015. There is a concern that using work published following the data-collection phase would appear inauthentic because this later literature could not have influenced the earlier decisions made about the scope or focus of this study. Instead, reviews of more recent literature are reserved for the second half of the thesis. The discussion chapter returns to the earlier literature in this chapter but it also draws on the most up to date research available at the time of writing. The four main themes are SLW processes, texts/ genres, perceptions, and the role of the sociocultural context within these areas. There are other significant themes discussed that do not feature within the conceptual framework. This reasons for this decision-making are also explained in this

chapter. Based on the gaps and opportunities in the literature, the final section of this chapter summarises how the research questions were created.

SLW literature has been dominated by a focus on English language from a North American or Australian perspective

An overarching feature of SLW literature is that it has focused on the English language as opposed to other ‘second’ languages. Most of the literature has been written by or about learners of English in North American or Australian contexts. A second feature is that most studies have been set within Higher Education contexts rather than lower levels of education or the workplace.

Second language writing is reported to have received increasing attention following World War II (WWII) due to increasing numbers of immigrants in US institutions (Leki et al., 2010). First language (L1) composition techniques were some of the first strategies used to support second language writers. The term composition has mainly been used to refer to writing and writing processes in first languages. There was also a dissatisfaction with the efficacy of existing audio-lingual approaches to language learning more generally at the time (Kroll, 2003). These are language learning technique based on repeating and reinforcing language structures/ patterns/ phrases with the support of visual and audio aids. The grandparent disciplines of L1 composition studies and Applied Linguistics were Rhetoric and Linguistics. The terms discipline and disciplinary are used here to refers to fields of study, knowledge, expertise and skills of people within subject domains. Broad branches of disciplines exist e.g. scientific disciplines can include Physics, Mathematics, and Chemistry. Rhetoric and Linguistics disciplines can be traced back to Ancient Greek interests in public speaking, and linguistic investigations as to whether language is based in nature or nurture; as well as the study of grammars (Silva and Leki, 2004: 2). Composition scholars interested in the study of writing recognised it as a cognitive and sociocultural process (Robinson and Ellis, 2008) where ‘rhetoric’ came to be understood as the generation of knowledge within discourse communities. Anthropological and sociological ideas adopted

by North American composition researchers have led to a closer consideration of multilingualism, communicative competence (Silva and Leki, 2004: 6), functional analyses of discourse and later linguistic studies of genre (Firth and Wagner, 2007; Swales, 1990). Communicative competence refers to a person's knowledge (and ability) to understand and be able to use language and different features of language appropriately for different communication tasks/ needs.

The relationship between L1 learning, Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and SLW learning continues to be explored within SLW literature (Arabski, and Wojtaszek, 2010, 2011; Duff and Talmy, 2011; Maxwell-Reid, 2011; Méndez Lopez, 2011; Ortega, 2013; Tarone, 2015; Wang, 2003). Following the contentions of the 'Basic Writing' courses of the 1970s (which were mainly designed for English speakers entering HE), there has been recognition that ESL/EFL students should not necessarily be taught within 'remedial' English classes but rather supported by qualified ESL teachers who understand that SLW is perhaps linked to, but not the same as L1 writing (Hyland, 2007, 2015). At the same time however, genre studies and EAP/ ESP (English for Specific Purposes) literature has suggested that academic writing across university disciplines poses an equal challenge to 'native speakers' (Hyland, 2004a). This issue has implications for classroom teachers who may be teaching both L1 and L2 learners together; while attempting to prepare learners to engage with the dominant discourse practices they will experience within their respective disciplines in academia (Hyland, 2015). Discourse levels of analysis are used to label the way texts can be analysed as a whole, rather than at grammar level. It is possible to analyse a text in order to find the values and priorities of the author and his or her community.

In this project, the term EAP is being used to refer to teaching and research undertaken with students who are learning and using English for High School or University purposes. EAP is taken as a form of English for Specific Purposes where students are required to develop specific skills required for study purposes. For some, EAP has been seen to be a branch of more general ELT (Dudley-Evans and St John, 2009), where learners develop language skills

for everyday communication, but there are other important differences between the two. Martin (2014) suggested that teachers that have trained to teach English as a Foreign or Second language often struggle to make the transition to EAP teaching because of the shift from working with a syllabus designed to support general language (and grammar) development, to one which supports academic skills development. Additionally, EAP practitioners are more likely to require a level of subject knowledge and be required to tailor materials to meet the disciplinary subject needs of their students. Finally, EAP work is heavily invested in developing student autonomy and critical thinking skills, which may not always be the case with general EFL teaching.

The specific focus on writing within EAP literature has been dominated by North American and Australian research. Research has tended to focus on learners enrolled in U.S universities, as either English as Second Language (ESL) International students (defined as students within Higher Education who are studying in a university in a country other than their 'home' country); or immigrant or 'Generation 1.5' learners (referred to here as U.S-educated English language learners whose parents or grandparents emigrated to the U.S from another country) (Leki et al., 2010; Matsuda et al., 2003). Since the 1990s, more studies from Europe and other countries, where English is not the first language, have been undertaken, but these have not been the majority (Hinkel, 2011; Leki et al., 2010, Matsuda et al., 2003). It has been suggested that this focus on English will continue to increase alongside the spread of Global English. Linguistic studies of English as the international lingua franca of science, technology and business seems to support this assertion (Flowerdew, 1999; Kirkpatrick, 2010; Nickerson, 2005).

Atkinson et al. (2015), Kubota (2013), Silva and Matsuda (2012) acknowledged the limiting nature of the term 'second' language, given the complexity of contexts and fields of enquiry within SLW. Silva and Matsuda (2012), suggested we should focus on the multilingual, multicompetence, and reconstituting nature of language writing internationally. Multicompetence refers to the knowledge that people have of more than one language and how language knowledge and abilities are connected. Within Southeast Asia at least,

multilingual composition has often taken the form of a regional mother tongue language, a national language and a foreign language like English (Kirkpatrick, 2010). According to Kachru's model of English language use, English can be classed as a foreign language rather than a second language in Vietnam because it is not a traditional English base like the USA or the UK; the country has not been colonised by an English-speaking nation and English is not the medium within the main institutions (Kachru, 1986 cited in Crystal, 2012: 60; Kachru, 1997).

The lack of availability of English outside compulsory English language classes in Vietnam means that learners have had limited opportunity to use the language in a natural manner. The term 'learning' is also used purposefully here to reflect the conscious learning of the language compared to 'acquisition' models of language that have been associated with first language (L1) learning processes in children or innate theories of language learning exemplified by Chomsky's Universal Grammar (DeKeyser, 1994, 1997; Dörnyei, 2009; Yule, 2006:163). So, the learning element of the concept refers to the strategies and processes that have been deployed by Vietnamese individuals undertaking an endeavour to learn English.

Student attitudes towards language learning and the writing processes that learners engage in, are complex and related to the sociocultural context in which the language has been learnt and used (Bayley and Langman, 2011; Hyland, 2002b). Language socialisation theorists have rejected the idea that language can be decontextualized. Watson-Gegeo and Nielsen (2003) and others (Hulstijn et al., 2014; Huynh, 2014) have suggested that the cognitive aspects of language learning are affected by the social and cultural features of the language learning environment. They claimed that humans have mental social and cultural models embedded in L1 and L2 learning activities and these underpin the '*cultural frames*' we create, including '*academic notions about teaching and learning, our assumptions about what constitutes science and how language works*' (Watson-Gegeo and Nielsen, 2003). It can be argued that, during the academic writing process in English, Vietnamese students will cognitively refer to the socialised cultural frames created during their educational and language experiences within

Vietnam. They may also translate these cultural frames into the academic expectations and rhetorical requirements of the genre of writing in their specific disciplines. Here, the types of texts that are produced become significant because they represent the fusion of a) the personal perceptions of writing, which are socioculturally defined by the individuals' context, b) the cognitive processes embedded in the writing activity to produce a text and c) that is accepted by members of an academic community or audience (Watson-Gegeo and Nielsen, 2003). Cognitive processes here refer to the way in which the brain or mind performs action or tasks.

Language socialisation theorists have used the idea of '*communities of practice*' and '*legitimate peripheral participation*' (Eberle et al., 2014; Flowerdew, 2002; Lave and Wenger, 1991) where the L2 learner moves from beginner to advanced, based on their movement from participation on the edge of the community to full expert participation over time and by taking on different roles within the community. Communities of practice are linked by shared learning in some way. The community can be small and purposeful or it can be larger and formed more organically by shared interests for example. International communities of practice can exist as is the case for many international research communities. Issues of access and negotiation become important where '*social and linguistic identities are rewarded or discredited, and taught together with accompanying sociopolitical behavioural values and expectations*' (Peirce, in Watson-Gegeo and Nielsen 2003; 163). In relation to negotiation of identity in writing, Canagarajah (1993) investigated how L2 writers had undertaken this endeavour in post-colonial contexts. The role of community contexts and access have also featured within EAP literature, where researchers and teachers have used genre-analyses to uncover the types of writing tasks that L2 university writers are required to undertake and the types of texts they are required to produce (Hyland, 2004a, 2004b, 2015).

The conceptual shift from 'learners' to 'users' is an important one and can be used at this juncture to highlight more critical approaches to Global English more generally. The spread and multifaceted use of English has called into question the ownership or legitimacy of 'native-English'. Phillipson (1992), Pennycook (1994) and Flowerdew (1999, 2002) highlighted the barriers faced by

ESL/ EFL writers including having to compete in English rather than their L1 and being discriminated against by native speaker journal editors and publishers. Canagarajah (1999) however, indicated a resistance amongst Sri Lankan learners who were using English as a forum to express their postcolonised voices. More recent studies have also explored how EFL researchers can devise tactical plans and make informed choices regarding their international versus local publication strategies (Liu and Tannacito, 2013). There is evidence to suggest the acceptance of English is not necessarily a passive acceptance of writing in English but rather a very active and pragmatic process of using, adapting and perhaps progressing English language use across contexts (Canagarajah, 2006a; Kubota, 2013).

Other writers have been critical of the dominance of English language to the detriment of other languages (Canagarajah, 2006a, 2006b, 2014; Kirkpatrick, 2010, Pennycook, 1994). There has been a lack of attention paid to the status of other second or foreign languages that are reported to have been squeezed out of local, academic and business communities. This is particularly applicable to countries identified within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Kirkpatrick (2010). Here, regional languages may be being undermined by accepting English as the first foreign language and implementing English-medium education, as has been the case in Singapore (Kirkpatrick 2010: 3). For writers like Kirkpatrick (2010), the risk of languages becoming extinct is a real threat of Global English and therefore it is essential to understand how the richness of the world's languages are being maintained or neglected at this point in time. The Vietnamese government, like other governments, has responded to this threat by introducing ethnic minority language programs to encourage groups to continue to use the 86 languages of Vietnam. Kinh is the main or official language in Vietnam but the other languages are used by groups living in the far north of Vietnam, close to the Chinese border and by other ethnic minority groups in Vietnam (Nguyen and Dinh, 2008).

The review so far has summarise themes within SLW literature and has defined that the study is of English as a foreign, rather than a second language. The themes that have been summarised above will be discussed in some depth later

in this chapter and within the discussion chapter. The next section of the literature review not turns to relevant literature within Vietnam or in relation to ELT in Vietnam.

ELT literature in Vietnam: some resemblances

ELT literature and research trends in Vietnam seem to be a reflection of the evolution of ELT literature themes internationally and appear to follow the flavours initiated largely by North American and Australian influences, as described above. These have included discussions about pedagogy (defined as teaching and learning approaches, methods and interventions) and how grammar-translation methods (GTM) have attempted to shift to a more communicative agenda and sociocultural scene which recognises the importance of context and language learning journeys (Kroll 2003; Nguyen, 2014a; Phan, 2004). GTM is an approach to foreign language learning that involves reading and studying grammar and other features of language, then practising them and translating them into the first language and vice versa. Where Vietnamese English language teachers have undertaken and published research, including theses; they have often been enrolled as international students within American or Australian universities, or working with an international counterpart (Luong and Nguyen, 2008; Nguyen 2014).

A review of articles published in the Vietnam National University (VNU) Journal of Foreign Studies, indicated that established contributions from EFL and Applied Linguistic fields have been evident in the work of Vietnamese lecturers, teachers and MA students. There appears to have been an influence from studies of Semantics and Contrastive Rhetoric, as well as more critical approaches to EFL. While most articles within the VNU Foreign Studies journal have been written in Vietnamese, approximately 5% have been published in English with a smaller number published in Russian (Luu, 2013), French (Nguyen, 2008a) and Japanese (Đỗ, 2015). With the exception of an increase of articles written in English, the number of articles published in other foreign languages appears to have been constant since 2005. There appears to have been an overrepresentation of semantic and pragmatic-type studies with a narrow focus

on specific language features as well as a tendency towards publications of literature reviews rather than primary research studies.

The history of ELT has been relatively well-documented within ELT literature in Vietnam (Dang et al., 2013; Denham, 1992; Do, 1999; Hiep, 2000; Huong and Fry, 2002, 2004a; Le, 2007; Pham, 1998, 1999; Tran, 2002; Utsumi and Doan, 2008; Van, 2007). These have explained how ELT has been intermittently in and out of favour within the country for political and economic reasons (Do, 1999; Le, 2007). Some literature has been concerned with the status of and changes to government policies relating to ELT (Huong and Fry, 2004; Lam, 2011; Nunan, 2003; Thinh, 2006) with more recent explorations of teaching English to Vietnamese ethnic minority groups (Jones et al., 2014; Lavoie and Benson, 2011).

The impact of globalisation and the internationalisation of higher education have also featured within the literature (Duong and Chua, 2016; Hayden and Khanh, 2010; Hoàng, 2013; Kelly, 2000; Lam, 2011; Pham, 1999; Trần, 2014; Welch, 2011a, 2011b) with some considerations of the influence of ‘Vietnamese’ or ‘Confucian heritage’ culture (Harman et al., 2009; Hiep, 2000; Huong, 2008; Nguyen, 1989; Nguyen, 2015; Pham, 1999; Pham, 2011; Pham, 2012; Phan, 2009) and the role of social ‘context’ on ELT in Vietnam (Dang, 2010; Canh, in Choi and Spolsky, 2007). This has clearly reflected the sociocultural turn within ELT more generally. Some researchers had started to explore how English medium instruction has affected learners in higher education and impacted on teacher training (Dang et al., 2013; Hamid et al., 2013; Manh, 2012), as well as issues related to native and non-native teachers of English; which has been a contentious issue in Vietnam (Võ, 2014; Wilkinshaw and Duong, 2012).

Many articles have been concerned with the impact of global English on Higher Education in Vietnam (Hoàng, 2013; Nguyen, 2011; Nguyen, 2008a) with limited discussion regarding the implications of this at secondary (Hoàng et al., 2013) and primary levels (Nguyen, 2007; Pham, 2013). Nguyen et al.

(2016a) had explored how the experiences of learning English in primary school classrooms is at odds with language education policy in Vietnam. Nguyen (2008a) used Crystal's (2012) work to summarise the reasons why English has become a global language, followed by a critical assessment of the impact on Vietnamese (educational) culture (Nguyen, 2008a: 265). Nguyen (ibid) shared concerns that young Vietnamese people regard traditional beliefs and behaviours as '*backward*' and they are '*losing their identity*' (Nguyen, 2008a: 265). When referring to unequal access to English learning opportunities, he claimed that people strive to gain qualifications in English in order to compete in the workplace but this leads to a distortion or unfairness, where those with English qualifications but lower ability or less quality, have been promoted above other, (presumably) more able personnel. Nguyen (ibid) also alleged that the English qualifications available do not necessarily equate to better English proficiency, and claimed many graduates '*can hardly produce correct and meaningful English sentences or utterances*' (Nguyen 2008a: 265). While these anecdotal comments should be treated with caution, they do offer insight into a perspective of EFL in Vietnam that has been influenced by more critical approaches.

This sociocultural theme has been evidenced within articles written from an overtly critical perspective of communicative language teaching (CLT) (Do, 2006; Khoa, 2008,) and this is a reflection of the international discussions publicised by writers such as Canagarajah (1993; 1999) and Pennycook (1994). CLT is based on interaction between learners and their teachers using the target language to discuss daily topics and work with real-life and authentic communications situations. Within the Vietnamese context, Khoa (2008) discussed the imperialist features of CLT and Cao (2013) later explored the ideological perspectives within American values which had, arguably been instilled within ELT in Vietnam. Khoa (2008) resounded the work of other writers such as Ellis (1994, 1996) with claims that several barriers impede the implementation and usefulness of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) across Vietnam. Misinterpretations of CLT as well as a teacher-centred learning culture are reported to have been two reasons why CLT may have been resisted in schools and universities. Cao (2013) stated that American culture

and values have been embedded in the English language syllabus and textbooks and suggested, in line with other ‘Critical EAP’ positions, that these values should be made explicit in teaching.

Võ (2014) outlined how key cultural differences of native English teachers in Vietnam created barriers to effective teaching of Vietnamese students, especially a lack of understanding of how students perceive group discussion or debate. Võ (2014: 64) revisited the discussion about differences between ‘individualistic’ and ‘collectivist’ societies and what this can mean for native English teachers in Vietnamese classrooms. Based on the premise that individualistic cultures value autonomy, self-expression and a focus on personal goals (whereas collectivist cultures value group cohesion and interdependence); Võ (2014: 64) suggested that the types of topics and the expectations of ‘Western’ teachers mismatch the Confucian culture in which students have become accustomed to. This culture is said to be supported by the family and other social institutions, and can manifest itself as communication or uncertainty-avoidance by students within the classroom (Võ, 2014). By this, Võ (2014: 65) means that, in unfamiliar or unstructured learning situations or when students are not confident about having the correct answer, they have tended to avoid communication and rely on the expertise of the teacher. Võ (2014:70) asserted that teachers should consider reducing the amount of group work and encouraged ‘Western’ teachers to learn more about Vietnamese culture and refrain from ethnocentric perspectives.

Hoàng (2013) reiterated the fact that English is now the first choice of foreign language for over 90% of school level students and Higher Education students. Hoàng (ibid) raised concerns about unrealistic proficiency expectations being placed on Vietnamese graduates and questioned the effectiveness of CLT and other ‘*foreign-designed*’ teaching models that have been used within Higher Education. Hoàng claimed that English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses have been dismissed by the state university in Hanoi and only non-English medium courses are offered. Since the time of writing however, courses taught in English medium and ESP courses have become increasingly available in Vietnam. Hoàng

(2015) reflected on the process of collaborating with Macmillan and Pearson publishing houses in order to produce new English language textbooks for all primary and secondary school children across Vietnam, as part of Project 2020. Hoàng wrote about his commitment to providing context/ culturally appropriate textbooks in Vietnam while acknowledging the need for international assistance to reach the English standards expected or required by Project 2020.

Over-representation of studies of Higher Education

Within the SLW literature, there has been an admitted lack of attention paid to secondary level SLW within North America, Australia and especially EFL countries (Faltis and Wolfe, 1999; Leki et al., 2010, Matsuda et al., 2003). Leki et al. (2010) have suggested this may be because other issues i.e. those to do with identity and agency, have appeared more important in the case studies within secondary schools. Identity and agency refer here to the ways in which L2 writers actively engage and negotiate what and how they write based on their L1 identities and the processes of developing an L2 (writing) identity. In addition, because secondary school students vary widely in terms of background education, predispositions, and interest in literacy, they are often difficult to compare and this may have deterred researchers. This explanation seems rather weak given the variety of learners found at all levels of education, including tertiary level. It does not convincingly explain why secondary level has been omitted so evidently.

ELT in higher education has dominated the Vietnamese literature too with far fewer studies focusing on lower levels of schooling, although some studies have considered the policy changes relating to teaching English at primary level. (Nguyen, 2011; Nguyen and Nguyen, 2007; Pham and Kohnert, 2014). Tran (2014) suggested this could possibly be because researchers have more access to participants within Higher Education and ELT researchers at college or high school level have been less research-oriented. Due to the focus on tertiary education of ELT literature in Vietnam, general implications for Higher Education and challenges faced by students have been discussed by other Vietnamese writers (Duong, 2009; Nguyen, 2008b).

More recent SLW journal articles have highlighted the need for research '*crossing the boundaries of secondary and tertiary education*' (Harklau, 2010) and expressed value in creating '*longitudinal portraits*' to shed light on individual's secondary learning experiences. Although Harklau was referring to Generation 1.5 students living in the US, the same could be applied to secondary level students in EFL contexts. In terms of under-representation; there have been a limited number of studies focusing on social, professional and workplace SLW too. There has been an unmet need for research into the SLW transitions individuals engage in from secondary to university level in various ESL and EFL contexts globally. The lack of information about secondary-level students in Vietnam and more generally, means it would be valuable to explore secondary-level experiences of learning English and learning to write in English, even in a biographical manner, as an alternative to working directly with secondary level students who are likely to have limited experiences of writing in English, and have low language proficiency.

SLW themes

SLW researchers have been typically interested in writing processes, pedagogy, writing tasks and the implications of these, the written products or texts that writers create, and assessment/ proficiency tests. Genre studies have also been used to understand the types of texts created either for English for Academic purposes or for writing outside the academy. English for specific academic purposes (ESAP) and how to address plagiarism have also been recurrent themes. Some studies have focused on the influence of sociocultural contexts, and the feelings, attitudes, and perceptions of learners and teachers. Other studies have been concerned with individual differences in the features of writing or have been invested in understanding 'writing identities' (Ha and Burain, 2011).

There is significant overlap or union of many of these demarcations. For example, it has often been the case that 'pedagogy' research has been discussed in relation to a particular group of learners or a targeted type of writing task. An example of this is Chen and Su's (2011) exploration of the

impact of genre-based instruction on the context, organisation and vocabulary use in summary writing undertaken by Taiwanese students. On the same line, pedagogy themes have often been explored with process approaches, especially those using qualitative analyses that are concerned with how changes occur, or the variety of ways that learners have engaged with a teaching and learning intervention. For example, Hwang et al.'s (2011) study into '*the use of a multimedia web annotation system and its effect on the EFL writing and speaking performance of junior high school students.*' Despite the coming together of different disciplines and themes, there has been less research combining investigations of SLW processes, end-products/ texts and student perceptions. These aspects of academic writing have rarely been explicitly integrated in a way that explores the potential relationship between each element holistically. Similar to the studies on pedagogy or testing, studies in this area have tended to focus on one or two aspects at a time. Some studies have explored for example, how students or teachers perceive particular SLW processes, or how SLW processes impact on the nature and quality of the end-products or texts that L2 writers produce.

Conceptual Framework

Different research fields have been combined to create an integrated model and conceptual framework (Figure 1) that responds to gaps in existing research from the topic literature (second language learning and writing in English and the context literature (ELT in Higher Education in Vietnam). The framework is visually demonstrated in Figure 1. This position has been directly influenced by a process of literature synthesis which is deconstructed between pages 29 and 61. The framework is an interpretation of how existing SLW research themes within, and outside Vietnam, have informed this project. These themes will now be discussed in detail.

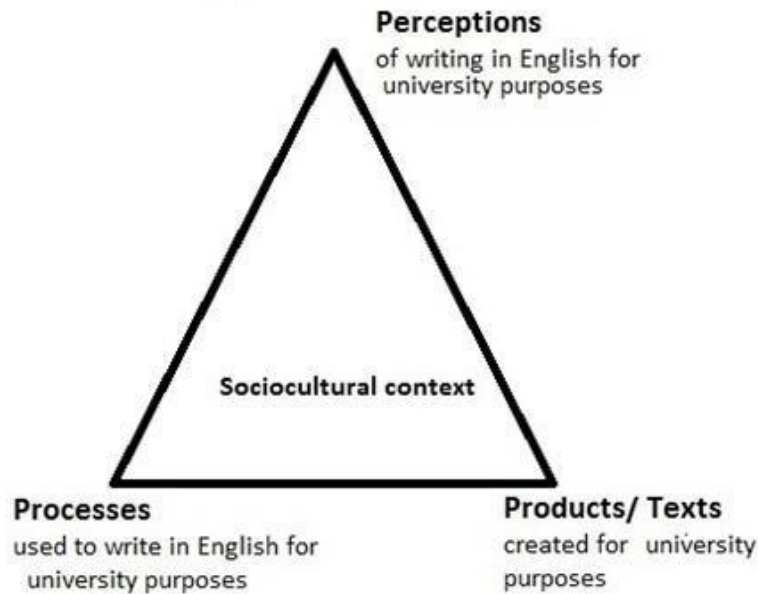


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Theme 1. SLW Processes

SLW processes have been a major theme within SLW but few studies have explored SLW processes used by Vietnamese university students.

Process-related research has been valuable in understanding how L2 writers engage in various writing processes and strategies. Research findings have had important implications for SLW pedagogy, cross-cultural understandings of writing in English for different purposes and how individual differences impact on writing behaviour and motivations. This section outlines why it would be helpful to have these sorts of insights about the writing processes of Vietnamese writers and this information could have the potential make a positive contribution to SLW literature and ELT pedagogy in Vietnam.

Traditionally, studies of SLW processes were developed from work on first language (L1) composition. These earlier studies had implications for developing theories of L2 composition (Johns, in Kroll, 1990). Key topics have included; revision and editing, writer perceptions, the extent of L1 use, techniques in text generation, the extent and nature of backtracking, issues of

fluency and pausing, and the use of topics and prompts. Idea generation has been explored, as well metacognitive strategies, goal setting, and writing experience (Carson and Kuehn, 1992; Leki et al., 2010; Manchón and De Larios, 2007; Silva and Leki, 2004; Vo Thanh et al., 2014).

Other L2 composing studies have focused pre-writing, written feedback, peer review, conferencing and dictionary use (Polio, in Kroll, 2003: 44). Research questions have aimed to understand the difference between good and poor essays, (Belcher and Braine, 1995) how students have interpreted feedback, and whether learners revise in the same way in their L1 and L2. Others have aimed to understand whether two groups of writers have different writing processes. Polio (in Kroll, 2003: 46) suggested that these approaches are generally more qualitative and less experimental compared to textfocused research, although experimental methods have been used too. Talk aloud protocols have been popular in ‘process’-orientated research.

There have been some discussions about processes and strategies that can be deemed to be successful and unsuccessful composing behaviour (Krapels, in Kroll 2003:38). Via case study approaches using think-aloud or composingaloud techniques, there is evidence to suggest that a heavy focus on rhetorical concerns can be detrimental to ideas. A lack of composing, rather than linguistic competence, has been identified as a key issue in L2 writing (Raimes, 1991; Zamel, 1982). From this research, it has been suggested that teachers should support L2 writers to engage with ideas first and to revise at discourse rather than linguistic or sentence level. SLW process studies focusing on the writer have investigated reader-writer interactions and the idea of writing for audiences. Other approaches have highlighted how the knowledge and language of the writer are not just individual traits but part of a discourse community which poses particular access problems for ‘basic’ writers (Raimes 1991; Zamel 1982,).

In terms of the relationship between L1 and L2 composition processes, findings may appear to be contradictory or inconsistent (Krapels, in Kroll 2003: 39). There are been reported similarities between the composing

processes used by L1 and L2 'skilled' and 'unskilled' writers, with varying degrees of L1 writing processes transferred to or reflected in L2 writing; but differences in these composing processes have been evidenced too. One intervening factor has been described as the role of culture-bound topics for example, and researchers have been interested in how L2 writers respond to different topic types. More quantitative, contrastive rhetoric approaches have been deployed here (Bloch et al., in Belcher and Braine, 1995). Findings have indicated that, when writing about or within culture-bound topics, students tend to use more L1 than writing in other topics. In other L2 writing however, L1 is used mainly for vocabulary, but also to support some organisational and stylistic strategies (ibid). Much of this research has been case study based and has focused on a variety of writing tasks which makes direct comparisons difficult. In addition, Krapels (in Kroll 2003) claimed there has been an overrepresentation of females in these studies and suggested that researchers should consider using ethnography to gain more insight into L2 composing. This view is also supported by Watson-Gegeo (2004) and Zamel (1987). As L2 writers are thinking, negotiating participants they can create new meaning via writing processes. Recent research in this area has continued to use a range of largely qualitative approaches to understand how SLW writers negotiate with texts and tasks, and create new understandings for themselves and others (Bunch and Willett, 2013; Byrnes, 2013; Gebhard et al., 2013; Ramanathan and Atkinson, 1999). It would be cross-culturally valuable to better understand how Vietnamese writers negotiate with different writing tasks based on their own background and motivations.

Second language acquisition researchers have been interested in the way SLW process research explores '*reformulations, vocabulary learning, collaborative metalanguaging, planning and corrective feedback*' (Ortega 2012a). The metacognitive acts of L2 writing have been of interest to SLA researchers are said to support L2 language development because they require learners to identify gaps in knowledge or skills and assesses the interaction between explicit and implicit knowledge (Ellis, 2005; Schoonen et al., 2003). The time allowed to complete L2 writing within research and teaching and the '*permanence*' or availability of the writing allows L2 writers to consider gaps and edit their writing using a range of implicit and explicit

knowledge(s) which attracts more cognitive attention and helps them to develop their L2 language (Ortega 2012a). A shared feature of these studies is the agreement that academic writing is socially constructed in nature and involves a process of 'meaning making' as students produce texts. A study of Vietnamese student writing would make a contribution to our understanding of some of the processes and meaning-making used by higher education students.

The Sociocultural turn within Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Writing

Watson-Gegeo (2004) discussed L2 learning, use and production as an '*embodied*' experience within which cognitive anthropologists have established a dependency on social, cultural and political influences, rather than an innate experience suggested by Chomsky's Universal Grammar (Ellis, 1998). Cultural variables in addition to gender, ethnicity, social class and socio-historical processes are said to be inseparable from language structure, use and acquisition. Studies of L2 writing within Vietnam or about Vietnamese writers have not explored how a range of cultural variables or other factors could influence the writing behaviours of individuals during different writing tasks. Instead, some studies have focused on the influence of Confucian Heritage Culture (CHC) at the expense of other possible socio-cultural influences. A case study approach that allows for consideration of these factors could possibly help to explore this area further.

Another feature here is the influence of post-colonial and more critical approaches in SLA. Based on the late 1970s criticisms of positivist assumptions about reality and limited pedagogical implications of conventional SLA research, there has been recognition that cognition originates in social and political contexts. Mental social and cultural models become embedded in our L1 and L2 language learning and these underpin our 'cultural frames' including '*academic notions about teaching and learning, our assumptions about what constitutes science and how language works*' (Watson-Gegeo and Nielsen, in Doughty and Long 2003: 163). This sociocultural dependency has also been reflected in SLW research (Hyland, 2002b; Karlsson, 2009; Swales, 1990) on writing genres within academia.

Cognitive anthropologists have shown how differences in language impact on thinking and cultural models of behaviour. These cultural models exist below the surface level of linguistic morphology and syntax but language users make them conscious (Atkinson, 2002; Watson-Gegeo, 2004). Morphology refers here to the way words are formed and how the meanings of words change using morphemes (the smallest element in a language), prefixes and suffixes (e.g. *in*, *come*, *-ing*, forming *incoming*). Vietnamese students writing in English are likely to be cognitively charged with historical, social and cultural understandings of English and experiences of English Language Teaching and this project aims to ascertain to what extent and in what ways various aspects of the sociocultural impact on their writing in English (Research Question 4).

Language socialisation theories have also used the work of Lave and Wenger (1991) on ‘communities of practice’ and ‘legitimate peripheral participation’ where the L2 learner moves from beginner to advanced based on their movement from participation on the edge of the community to full expert participation over time and taking on different roles within the community. Here, issues of access and negotiation become important (Carter et al., 2009; Peirce, 1995). It would be worthwhile to consider to what extent, and how these influences may have impacted on the experiences of L2 writing of individual learners in Vietnam in a more holistic and exploratory way than existing approaches. The term holistic is used here to refer to multi-factorial or multi-dimensional analyses that are taken together to better understand the whole or entirety of the phenomenon.

In relation to methodological concerns ‘SLA-SLW ‘interface research’ has shown how textual evidence or products of writing are limited when it comes to revealing composing processes and the nature of attention given to language during L2 writing (Ellis, 2006; Ellis et al., 2014; Ortega, 2012a; Robinson, et al., 2012). Hanoaka and Izumi (2012) found that one fifth of learners’ writing did

not show traces of problems they faced during the writing phase. Think Aloud protocols that aim to capture where cognitive attention is given during L2 writing can be used to overcome this problem. By combining participant verbalisations, records of their observed writing activities and the products of writing tasks (including plans and notes), it is possible to interpret these insights to create a picture of what L2 writers think about and do during various writing tasks.

The sociocultural context of Vietnam: A framework for studying L2 university writing

Based on the discussions above, the sociocultural concept is being used to refer to the social, cultural, economic and historical circumstances of the participants. The research aims to identify which aspects of the social, cultural, economic and historical influence can be evidenced within the perceptions, writing processes and types of texts created by the participants. The context of the case study can be viewed from different levels or perspectives which each contribute to a fuller understanding of the historical, social and economic situation of the participants. From an international perspective, the participants had been learning English as a global language within the 'expanding circle' (Kachru, 1997, 2006). In this context, English is a foreign language rather than a second language which means participants are likely to have had limited access to English outside the classroom. There are also socioeconomic benefits or pressures of being able to use English well for study and work purposes. More critically, concerns about the linguistic dominance of English indicates that participants could hold negative or resistant attitudes towards English (Canagarajah, 1999), or may face sociocultural and material barriers preventing them from accessing English academic discourse communities (Pennycook, 1994, Curry and Lillis, 2004). These critical issues are also found within regional perspectives. From an ASEAN perspective, Fitzpatrick (2010) considered how the dominance of English often leads to the undermining and detriment of national or regional native languages.

From an economic perspective, Vietnam has only relatively recently been exposed to international influences. Unlike other ASEAN countries, Vietnam's modernisation agenda only began fully in 1986. This agenda has increased the need to learn English for business purposes. Tourism and service sector work continues to create a demand for proficient English language users. The opportunity to work with foreigners using English is said to have increased dramatically since the 1980s. In addition to opportunities to study overseas, these factors indicate that there is has been an economic and development motive to learn English for study and work purposes. This element of the context could be particularly poignant for the students involved in this study.

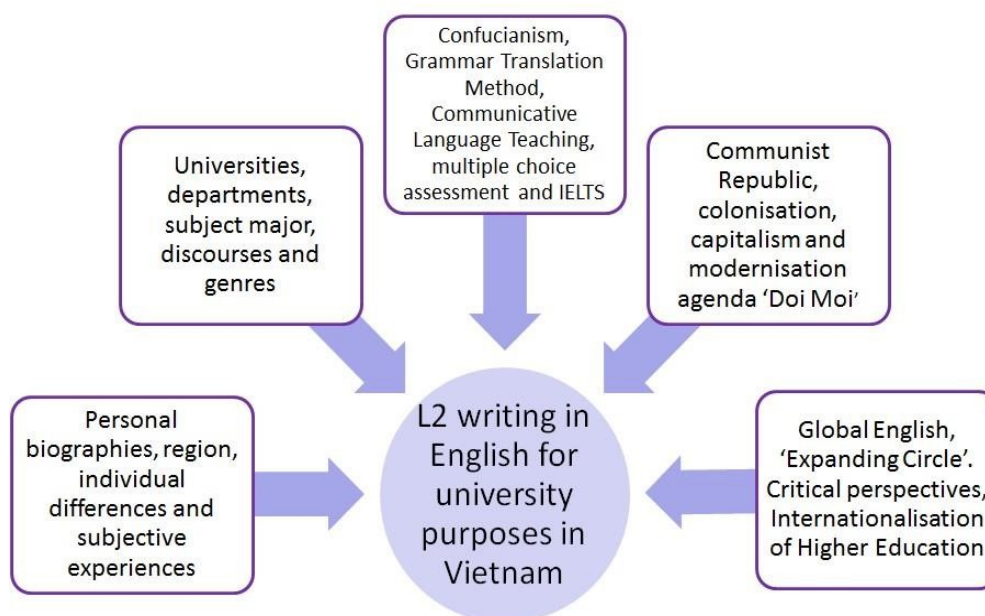


Figure 2. Sociocultural context of L2 writing in Vietnam.

Moving from an international to a national perspective, Vietnamese students are likely to share experiences of learning to write in English as a foreign language within the Vietnamese state or national education system (see Figure 3) with its reported heavily standardised curriculum and entrenched didactic methods of teaching and learning at lower level education institutions (Ellis, 1994; Ellis, 2010; Le, 2007).

Vietnam National Education System

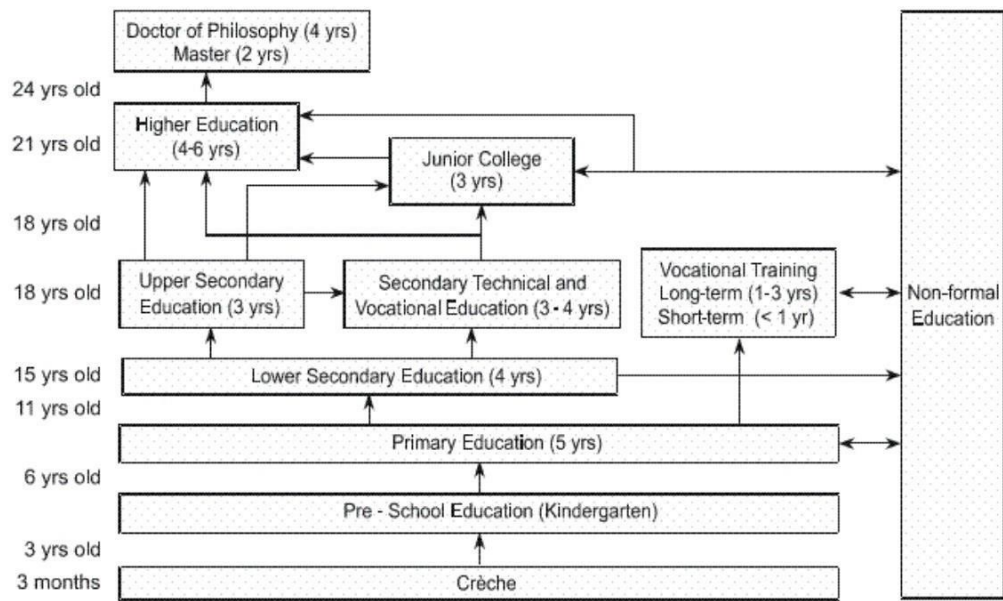


Figure 3. Diagram of Vietnamese Education System (MOET, 2008).

English language textbooks have been written and prescribed by the Ministry of Education and Training within the government structure and literatures has stated that these have been relied on almost exclusively within the classroom. End of semester tests, high school exit exams and university entrance exams (in English) are reported to be standardised multiple-choice formats (Ngoc and Iwashita, 2012; Nguyen, 2007). This level of standardisation would indicate that there may be a level of similarity in experiences of learning to write in English from a national educational perspective.

From a Higher Education perspective, the type and status of the universities where students study could also be an important part of the sociocultural context. There are 4 broad types of universities in Vietnam. These include specialised universities focusing on a single area of study (law, transportation, economics, engineering, fine arts...), national and regional multi-disciplinary universities including Vietnam National University (VNU), open universities in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, international Universities (Vietnam-Germany, Vietnam-America, Vietnam-France, Vietnam-Japan, Vietnam-Russia) and branches of foreign universities such as RMIT in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City.

The experiences of students enrolled within a specialised university or within a Vietnamese National University may be different or similar to those attending a foreign or international university. From an academic writing perspective, the influence of subject disciplines and majors is most pertinent when exploring academic writing genres based on the assumption that genres differ based on individual subjects and levels of study (Gardner and Nesi, 2013). The medium of instruction is also an essential component of the writing experiences of students and one student was selected purposefully based on their experience of undertaking a university degree in English Medium.

On a micro level or from a more individual perspective, it is necessary to understand the context of students' English learning history, their biography or their personal narrative. This includes where and why they started to learn English and to write in English, how their attitudes towards the language and writing may have developed or changed over time based on social or other influences across the life course to date. The impact of key influencers such as family, friends or teachers can play an important role in the context of English language learning as well as motivations for learning and experiences of using the language. Insight into these more personal elements of writing experiences contribute to the uniqueness but possibility of shared realities for individuals. Hitchcock and Hughes (1995, cited in Cohen, et al., 2011: 315) suggested that hallmarks of case study research includes a combination of richly describing and analysing events of a case simultaneously, providing a chronological narrative of events that is concerned with understanding actors' or groups of actors' perceptions of the events.

Exploring writing processes in Vietnam

Process-approaches to SLW are rare within literature about Vietnamese writers. Nguyen (2015) used a repeated measures design to ascertain the effects of two task types (a graph description and argumentative essay) on learners' writing performance. Luong and Nguyen (2008) explored how Vietnamese students studying in Australia manage academic writing tasks. They focused on one learner and used interviews, stimulated recalls and an analysis of the first draft of one assignment to find out the students' perceptions of the assignment and use of problem solving strategies. The student had difficulty guiding or focusing his reading for the assignment and struggled to write the introduction because he was confused about what he was supposed to include in the assignment. Having changed the topic to fit with his reading, he is reported to have revised at discourse level rather than syntax level. Luong and Nguyen (2008) described how the student displayed characteristics of a skilled L2 writer rather than the unskilled writer he should have been (based on his L2 and L1 writing experiences). It was suggested this discrepancy was based on the concept or operationalization of 'skilled writer' used within the study. However, while they accepted that one of the key features of skilled/ unskilled writers is the amount of attention paid to revising at sentence level, they had no 'real-time' evidence to make the claim that the student did indeed spend less time revising at sentence level, and the material used is limited to the first draft only. The explanation for this limitation was that the student undertook final revisions with a friend, and there was no further exploration of it within the research; other than to comment on the significant amount of grammatical and vocabulary errors that sometimes impeded meaning. While the research avoided the artificiality of concurrent think-aloud protocols, the lack of insight into the actual composing process undermined the extent to which it was possible to claim which actions occur at what time during the writing process. More recent research indicated that particular features of writing processes occur at different stages (Manchón, 2012) and so it may be that Luong and Nguyen's study was evidencing the

writing behaviours at that particular stage rather than describing the writer in himself.

Based on limited literature in this area, there is scope to better understand the writing behaviours of Vietnamese students. This endeavour could reveal crosscultural insights into the features of writing that postgraduates pay attention to and the decisions they make when producing assignments for university purposes. Depending on the methodology used, this approach has the potential to show what participants regard as good or successful writing and to what extent they are concerned with linguistic, rhetorical or ideational matters in their writing. Participants could also raise points related to their perceptions of the audience and their relationship to the intended readers of their assignments. A process approach could also consider if, and how, L1 is used in writing for university purposes and how students engaged in understanding tasks and topics. It can also highlight writing features that are particularly challenging or how ideological or historical influences might play a role in writing behaviour and decisions. The writing process methodologies and approach to data analysis used in this project are detailed in the methodology chapter.

Theme 2. Genres, Products and Texts

Defining and assessing genres

A significant amount of SLW literature has been dedicated to understanding writing genres. Hyland (2002a) described genres as ‘*abstract, socially recognised ways of using language*’. Nesi and Gardner (2012: 21) suggested this definition did not shed light on the different ways genres have been ‘*operationalised in research and teaching contexts*’. Swales (1990: 58) described genre as “*a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes*”. Swales pointed to the ‘structured’ and ‘conventionalised’ nature of genre in relation to their ‘*intent, positioning, form and functional value*’ (Swales, 1990, cited in Bhatia, 1993: 13). The crucial element of genre is the communicative purpose, this is what provides the internal structure of the genre; although other factors

such as the content, form, intended audience and medium could also be considered key influences. Martin (1992, cited in Nesi and Gardner, 2012: 11) stated that genre is *'the system of staged goal-oriented social processes through which social subjects in a given culture live their lives'*.

Bhatia (1993: 22) suggested there are a number of factors at play when creating genre texts. The first factor positions the *'genre-text in a situational context'* which means understanding a writer's background knowledge of the genre and discipline, as well as their experiences and training by professionals within the community. The second aspect considers the writer's experience working with existing literature and then considers the role of the writer, their audience, their relationship and their goals. The historical and sociocultural position of the discourse community is also important, as well as the linguistic traditions of the genre (Bhatia, 1993, 2008) Finally, the topic or subject is also considered in relation to the text (Bhatia, 1993).

Johns (in Kroll, 2003: 195) discussed the role of genre in ESL/ EFL composition instruction. Here the understanding of genre by applied linguists and others, has referred to the social nature of oral and written discourse, including the functions or purposes of texts, as well as the roles and relationships of readers and writers. This part of genre theory explores texts and social practice; and aims to answer which genres are most valued, which characteristics can be found consistently within genres, and how genre influences teaching in specific cultural contexts (Johns, in Kroll 2003:195). They are concerned with how our perceptions of genres are influenced by factors such as culture-specific uses of language or semantic categories. Another significant North American contribution to this field has been 'The New Rhetoric' which has involved a focus on the ideological, social and physical surroundings in which genres are produced. Genres are seen as dynamic and the schematic or social knowledge needed to understand genre is tacit; and not easily discussed explicitly even by those who use genres successfully. It is not possible to tell, from the literature on Vietnamese students, to what extent their perceptions of genres are influenced by sociocultural factors. This gap in literature suggests it would be valuable to

explore how Vietnamese perceive written genres and whether and which parts of the sociocultural context play a role in their perceptions.

The term 'family' is used by Swales (1990, cited in Nesi and Gardner, 2012: 25), and Martin and Rose (2008, cited in Nesi and Gardner, 2012: 25) referred to a 'family resemblance' among members of a genre or in the way they '*share a central function or are involved in the same disciplinary context*' (Nesi and Gardner, 2012: 25). For Martin and Rose (2008: 142 cited in Nesi and Gardner, 2012: 25), members within a genre family such as 'descriptive reports', 'classifying reports' and 'compositional reports'; may have different staging but they share a '*classifying and describing function*' (ibid). Nesi and Gardner's classification (2012) however has focused on central functions and key stages that are shared. Their genre family labels came from an analysis of the assignments within the British Academic Written English (BAWE) corpus but were inspired by labels used within different discourse communities and other literature on written academic genres (Nesi and Gardner, 2012: 26). The BAWE corpus was collated as part of a project called, '*An Investigation of Genres of Assessed Writing in British Higher Education*'. The BAWE project was funded by the Economic and Social Research Council and includes 3000 good-standard student assignments totalling 6,506,995 words.

Bhatia admitted that '*it may not always be possible to draw a fine distinction between genres and sub-genres*' however sub-genres tend to have different communicative purposes and so can be used to distinguish between them (Bhatia, 1993: 14). Writers engage in a period of training to understand the lexico-grammatical and discourse features of genres. Within this thesis, the lexico/ lexical or lexis elements of writing refer to words and vocabulary. Lexical density is the analysis of words that give meaning or context (mainly nouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs). Lexis refers to vocabulary and lexicon refers to a collection of words.

The task of completing successful writing of specific genres is often very challenging to non-specialists or those unfamiliar with the particular genre in a

subject field. There are thus linguistic, cognitive and sociological factors at play in the writing (Bhatia 1993: 16). Based on these notions, it would be reasonable to suggest that Vietnamese students also go through this training process and there are likely to be linguistic, cognitive and sociocultural factors involved in this process. The literature about L2 writing in Vietnam however, does not offer much insights into which types of linguistic, cognitive and sociocultural factors play a role at which stages of the writing process. There appears to be a need to better understand the specifics as to which factors are related to writing for university (and other purposes) and how/ in what ways? The findings would make a valuable contribution to cross-cultural L2 writing literature

Studies of texts/ genre in Vietnam

Within Vietnam, there has been an apparent lack of research into the range or types of genres that university students are expected to produce for university, within different subject majors. Studies have tended to focus on how to improve students' performance in writing specific genres, like argumentative essays or recount texts, rather than a mapping of genre written by different types of students (Lap and Truc, 2014; Luu, 2011a; Nguyen and Miller, 2012). It would be useful to know which genres students are being asked to write in subject disciplines to ensure they are prepared to undertake different types of writing for different purposes. Vietnamese researchers have started to use genre-approaches in some individual classrooms or with some selected groups (Luu, 2011c). These have generally been found in English major groups or within English and another subject (as a joint degree programme).

This research appeared to be based on the assumption that it is obvious what types of texts students should be taught to write within their subject majors. Literature has not revealed whether any needs-analysis has been undertaken to inform writing curriculums and the types of writing students have been taught to write. One study found that students felt they had been unprepared to undertake to types of writing that was required of them following graduation (Nguyen and Miller, 2012). It would be helpful to know the types of texts that individual students, from different subjects, have completed for university

purposes and how they engage in producing them. Following the examples of existing genre studies, these can be used to contribute to a needs analysis that can be used to inform potential pedagogies that could be helpful for Vietnamese higher education students. An investigation of student genres could also contribute to cross-cultural understandings of genre and whether features of the Vietnamese sociocultural context impact on the writing of particular genres or how certain moves are written by Vietnamese L2 writers.

Genre approaches to teaching

A major contribution to genre studies and teaching comes from the Sydney School. This stemmed from Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics which (Halliday, 1971, 1990), in turn, stemmed from the twentieth century Prague and London Schools of applied linguistics (Johns, in Belcher and Braine, 1995). Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics' (SFL) is echoed in the research focus on exploring the linguistic choices and features selected by individuals to create social meaning in a specific context (Halliday, 1971, 1990; Kecskés and Agócs, 2013). The attention here has been on the functions of the language and texts that are being created and it is deemed feasible to explore aspects of the context in relation to '*field*', '*tenor*' and '*mode*' or the why, what, who and how of the communication (Halliday and Hassan, 1985). This approach has considered how these choices are made within various genres like reports or narratives for example. Another area of interest has been the ways in which language is organised within a culture. An important aim has been to help develop learners' cultural capital and to support them to enter academic life. Key methodological approaches include needs-assessments and pedagogical scaffolding strategies.

An ongoing debate about genre pedagogy is whether it is appropriate to teach general academic skills or subject-specific academic skills. Some have claimed there are enough shared conventions in all forms of writing to justify general EAP classes (De Chazal, 2014; Flowerdew and Peacock, 2001). An academic word list (AWL) (Coxhead, 2000) and an academic vocabulary list (AVL) have been created (Gardner and Davis, 2013). Johns (in Kroll, 2003) suggested most

expository texts share some features; like the way arguments and vocabulary must be explicit, or the way writers should give maps or signposts. Others have been more critical of any general academic features or word list due to the disciplinary differences in high frequency terms and because there are difference in the words read by students and words that students write within their assignments (Dudley-Evans and St John, 2009; Durrant, 2015, 2016). Durrant found significant differences in the words within the AVL compared to words within the BAWE corpus of student writing. Other critics of EAP have argued that it is ‘assimilative’ because it has encouraged students to take on genres unquestioningly, when they should question the hegemonic nature of these powerful texts (Benesch, 2001). These writers believed there should be ‘critical pedagogy’ focusing on political, historical and economic concerns within SLW in academia.

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and ESAP (English for Specific Academic Purposes) has been an international movement since the 1960s. ESP/ESAP approaches have included needs assessments, but also discourse analyses (Paltridge and Starfield, 2017; Swales, 1990; Johns and Dudley-Evans, 1991). Swales’ (1990) ‘move’ analysis, was based on the SFL premise that texts are divided into elements (or stages in the Sydney School model) that serve functions for writer and audience. Rather than identifying elemental or broad genres, ESP relates texts to specific communities that use genres. ESP is equally suitable for adults wanting to learn about specific language registers and discourse communities so they can progress in their work and study e.g. business, science and technology (Basturkman, 2016). Gardner (2016) reported how a genre approach was used to teach Business, Economics and Engineering students how to write within their disciplines.

Studies of writing tasks include EAP and ESP studies about the nature of the tasks at university level (Hyland, 2004a, 2007). Trinh and Nguyen explored argumentative essays (2014). Within Vietnamese-published literature, Vũ (2015) considered whether an ESP course should be specific or general. A few studies have investigated English for police students (Lê, 2015) or ‘businessmen’ (Nguyen, 2010). EAP-type studies have investigated written genres such as

Business-related texts (Vo, 2014), emails (Nguyen et al., 2015), or theses (Nguyen and Pramoolsook, 2014, 2016). These case studies have been intervention-focused or more narrowly exploring rhetorical functions within specific genres, arguably at the expense of or at least lacking in their consideration of sociocultural contexts. Process-oriented approaches and the use of writing portfolios (Duong et al., 2011; Phuong et al., 2015) have also featured in the literature in addition to the role of voice and identity in academic writing (Alagozlu, 2007; Ha and Baurain, 2011;). In her study of motivation and achievement of police students in Ho Chi Minh City, Lê (2015) found that over 500 students at the Peoples' Police University were motivated to learn English to pass the graduation exam, rather than learning English for personal pleasure or gains. EAP and ESP syllabi and instruction have used the findings of 'task analyses' to meet the practical needs of the L2 writers. Genre studies have explored the types of texts that L2 students/ users are required to produce (Hyland, 2004b). Contrastive rhetoric studies have used finished texts or products in order to compare writing elements across disciplines and contexts (Durrant 2014a; Alsop and Nesi, 2009). This has been a wellresearched field with significant implications for our understanding of EAP and ESP, as well as cross-cultural understandings of writing genres more generally.

Analysing student genres

Analyses and classifications of university student writing genres have been notoriously complex to undertake and difficult to compare. This is due to inconsistencies in the categories and disciplinary labels given to text-types within disciplines and across the academy in various contexts (Gardner and Nesi, 2013). They are also 'occluded' because they are less publicly available than published academic writing for example (ibid).

In their review of classifications and definitions of academic text types, Römer and O'Donnell (2011) found, '*little consensus on what counts as central types of student writing or on how listed categories ought to be defined*'. Researchers have attempted to classify various types of texts written at all levels of education, from primary school tasks to material published by established academics. These classifications vary in terms of the types and number of sources used to

classify texts. The classifications have had different implications within particular contexts. Studies have been used to trace the writing development of students over time as well to inform syllabus design of composition courses, courses of English for academic purposes and language testing courses such as IELTS and TEFL. In first language studies, genre findings have allowed for crossdiscipline analysis of expectations of student writing (Hardy and Friginal, 2014; Nesi and Gardner, 2012). This means that a study of the genres written by Vietnamese higher education students could also inform academic writing modules and assessment frameworks.

Corpora are collection of texts that are often used within genre studies. Smaller scale analyses of genre using student coursework (Granger and Paquot, 2013; Hewings, in Ravelli and Ellis, 2004: 64; North, 2005) have been applauded for the disciplinary genre insights found but have often been seen as limited in relation to their ability to make meaningful cross-disciplinary analyses due to their focused attention on different linguistic features (Nesi and Gardner, 2012).

Römer and O'Donnell (2011) collected a total of 829 student assignments from proficient, advanced-level students whose work had been awarded an A grade. These formed the Michigan Corpus of Upper-Level Student Papers (MICUSP). They were drawn from four academic divisions, 16 disciplines and four levels of higher education study. Students volunteered their assignments, uploaded them and selected a predefined text type or classed it as 'other' text type if it did not fit with any of the others. The text type options available for students were, 'Response paper', 'Research proposal', 'Literature Review', 'Term paper', 'Case study', and 'Technical/ Lab report'. From a random check of papers from the database, it was ascertained that students' self-categorisation of texts were not very reliable. This finding is echoed in other work (Alsop and Nesi, 2009: 76).

Unsworth (2000: 245) explained how The Australian 'Write it Right' study created a typology of genres within school history writing. These included, 'chronicling history' with included 'autobiographical, biographical and historical recount' text types, and 'reporting history' which included 'descriptive' and 'taxonomic' reports and for

example. The social purpose of the text types were considered and the '*generic structure, discourse semantic and lexico-grammatical features*' were described for examples of the genres. Halliday and Martin (1993, cited in Unsworth, 2000: 251) undertook a similar analysis for secondary school science writing and found 12 genres with identifiable stages.

Paltridge examined 11 Exegesis within Art and Design MA degrees, using 'textography' (Paltridge, 2004, in Ravelli and Ellis, 2004: 85). This type of 'Ethnography of writing' involved asking key participants (like students, teachers and examiners) about the assignment's role, purpose and discourse community expectations. Paltridge (in Ravelli and Ellis, 2004: 86) and Wong (2005) found that students' perceptions and understanding of audience, influenced what and how they wrote. They consider the reader's '*knowledge conventions, genre and register*' even if they may not use these terms themselves. They think about who will read it, how they will react to it and how they will evaluate the writing (Paltridge, in Ravelli and Ellis, 2004: 87).

Paltridge stated that '*Rather than simply comparing surface level features of a text with a prototypical example of the genre, we should also examine the processes through which writers and acquire genre knowledge*' (Paltridge, in Ravelli and Ellis, 2004: 87).

Paltridge suggested that the 'political and historical' processes that have influenced genres should be made explicit (ibid). In order to fully grasp the purpose and sociocultural contexts of genres Bazerman (1988, in Paltridge in Ravelli and Ellis, 2004: 89) advised us to '*go beyond the text*' in an ethnographic manner.

Nesi and Gardner (2012) aimed to establish a '*university-wide classification of student assignment texts*'. They undertook detailed analysis of the BAWE corpus assignments, they interviewed tutors, analysed course documentation and ascertained the university and national expectations of student writing in order to '*obtain a more rounded view*' of what students thought about the purposes of their assignments. They focused on assignments rather than tasks. The assignments within the BAWE corpus were for accreditation purposes, they were thus high stakes and read by academics. They tended to show highly standardised formats with conventionally recognised genres and expectations.

Nesi and Gardner have explained how their genre family classification system drew on the work of the Sydney School, which used SFL to identify and explain genres (Nesi and Gardner, 2012: 11).

The BAWE corpus from the UK is much larger (about 2,200 more assignments) than the MICUSP corpus. The genres were identified via typical educational purposes and stages in each (Appendix 6). The classification system is different to the Sydney School however because they grouped similar assignments and were influenced by Swales' (1990) work on academic genres and Lea and Street's work on academic literacies (Nesi and Gardner, 2012: 11). The Academic literacies approach explores the cultural and social contexts of disciplines and wider institutional contexts. For example, they used SFL (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004, cited in Nesi and Gardner, 2012: 11) to '*explore the prosodic nature of evaluation*'. They also used Martin's appraisal system (2009) to '*analyse evaluative resources in texts*' (Nesi and Gardner, 2012: 11). The BAWE corpus was analysed for linguistic features using multidimensional analysis and a total of 67 linguistic features were grouped into 16 grammatical/ functional categories such as: tense and aspect markers; place and timer adverbials such as 'beside', 'early', and 'soon' and pronouns and pro-verbs (Nesi and Gardner, 2012: 11). Nesi and Gardner also used WordSmith Tools and Sketch Engine to create concordance lines, lists of key (frequency) words and common word combinations (Nesi and Gardner, 2012: 14). Nesi and Gardner (2012) noticed differences in the demands and expectations of assignment writing between students, departments, external assessors, employers and professional bodies (Nesi and Gardner, 2012: 17). Based on this understanding a genre study of Vietnamese university writing, similar to the genre studies summarised above, could help to identify the genres written within subject majors or across different subject majors. A study of this nature would have the potential to contribute to the creation of a corpus of Vietnamese student writing, similar to the BAWE or MICUSP corpus.

Cross-cultural factors in genre analysis

‘Various cultures organise and develop ideas differently when writing expository texts and these differences persist when users of these languages and cultures learn to write a new language’ (Bhatia 1993: 36). Hinds (1990, cited in Bhatia 1993: 37) explored expository writing in Japanese, Korean, Chinese and Thai and found there to be a delayed introduction of purpose. Gardezi and Nesi (in Charles et al., 2009) explored variations in the writing of economics students in Britain and Pakistan. Bhatia (1993) suggested this may not be as prominent in academic writing because researchers have recognised the need to follow universal conventions and standards in academic genres if they are to be accepted for publication within the ‘English-speaking world’. However, within English for Specific Purposes (ESP) it seems local sociocultural constraints impact on how genres such as business letters, job applications and some legal genres are written (Bhatia and Tay, 1987, cited in Bhatia, 1993: 37). Bhatia suggested that while the move-structure of specific academic genres may not be susceptible to changes made in response to local sociocultural environment, they may impact on how certain moves are written and which strategies are used to accomplish specific intentions (Bhatia, 1993: 38).

Theme 3. Perceptions, Attitudes and Feelings in SLW literature

The beginning of this section explains the types of perception or attitudinal research that is common with the general SLW literature. The second section then focuses on these types of studies within Vietnam specifically.

Studies of student and teacher feelings or perceptions have focused on perceptions about writing in English (Campion, 2016; Hyland, 2015; Tso and Chung, 2016), about writing and personal growth (Sasaki, 2009a, 2009b; Thomas et al., 2017) feelings of success (Tso and Chung, 2016; Wang, 2017), and students’ views of their own background in writing (Belcher and Braine, 2007; Kobayashi and Rinnert, 2002, Schneider and Fujishima, in Belcher and Braine, 2007). Some studies have explored

preferences for pedagogical approaches and students' experiences of L2 writing classes and tasks, how they view group work, the use of peer response and using sources (Alexander and Dooley, 2016; Leki and Carson, 1994; Polio and Shi, 2012; Truong et al., 2007). Students' personal goals for learning L2 English have also been investigated (Chang et al., 2017; Cumming, 2006). Some have explored L2 teachers' experiences in and outside of writing centres and have indicated a possible disconnection between L2 students' perceived needs and L2 writing teachers' practices (Cumming, 2006; Eslami, 2010; Matsuda et al., 2013).

Teacher-focused studies have often explored instructional routines; teachers' attitudes towards teaching writing and their curriculum options; and teacher views of pedagogy and practices. Some studies have analysed L2 writing curriculums in non-English dominant countries. For example, Cumming (1999) undertook interviews and analysed course outlines and samples of instructional materials in Hong Kong, Thailand, Japan and Quebec. Some studies have highlighted native speaker (NS) vs non-native speaker (NNS) differences in evaluation, error-tolerance and essay correction (Polio, in Kroll 2003).

When research has been more explicitly on students, studies have often included a discussion of their attitudes to peer response, their linguistic backgrounds and their previous L1 and L2 instruction experiences. Other research has been concerned writers' ability and proficiency, writer characteristics, composing processes, grammatical ability, writer perceptions and speaking ability (Polio, in Kroll 2003). Students' L1 and L2 texts have also been of interest, as well as their EAP and content experience. Others have been interested in understanding cultural and individual differences in perspective on plagiarism (Polio, in Kroll, 2003). Students' writing processes and the strategies used to complete writing tasks are also a key feature, as well as the problems or barriers they experience along the way (Benesch, 2001; Manchón, 2012).

Perceptions of graduate writing has received the most attention and has enquired as to the choice of topics for thesis/ dissertations, the difficulties faced by international students including how to access discourse communities and

genres and how to negotiate/ shape communities of practice both locally and wider. There has been a movement from document analysis to case studies that has helped to expose the disparity between knowledge and ESL/ EFL writing (Polio, in Kroll, 2003). This area has often included graduates' frustrations around a loss of status or issues around the roles of professors and other advisors in theses, dissertations or joint publications (Belcher, 2007).

Challenges faced by ESL/EFL learners

Tang (2012) divided the challenges faced by learners into linguistic challenges such as using grammar, sentence construction and issues with textual borrowing (Bloch, 2012; Pecorari and Petric, 2014), and non-linguistic problems. Linguistic challenges can also include difficulty grasping the level of authority in writing that students are allowed to show (Hirvela and Belcher, 2007), using hedging and boosting effectively, and understanding the AngloAmerican value of being clear from the outset about one's arguments rather than allowing ideas to emerge through writing more subtly. Tang (2012) suggested these very different ways of making meaning can impact on identity. L2 writers are said to form hybridised identities or have expressed a fear of losing L1 literacies or local identities because their own literacy may be discounted elsewhere in the wider disciplinary community (Canagarajah, 1995; Palvenko and Norton, 2007). 'Hybridised' refers here to the coming together of different languages and/or different writing identities leading to the creation of something new; a new identity. More recent research around identity has explored teachers' development (Lee, 2013) or has used narrative to understand how writers interact with writing (Pomerantz and Kearney, 2012).

In addition to these identity issues, challenges in publishing in English; including the time taken to write, needing to work with others as editors and understanding what counts as a good research article can also create problems for ESL/ EFL writers (Leki in Belcher and Braine, 1995). Writers also face 'specific language and discourse' problems like having to learn a large

vocabulary set, correct use of modal expressions and grasp the use of idiomatic English. Non-linguistic challenges include access problems to top tier international journals and new technologies to keep up to date with disciplinary contributions; these can affect publishability of writers' research.

Tang (2012) advised that we need to move away from a 'deficit model' and understand the 'cultural and linguistic' diversity that EFL students have. Using Tran's (2010) work, Tang (ibid) outlined how students can be seen to contribute to the discourse community. While they need to develop new skills, they also bring equally valuable skills. Tang (2012: 12) also encouraged us to remember that academic writing is difficult for native speakers too and academic discourse is not the first language of any writer.

Student and Teacher Perceptions in Vietnam

Studies of English language learning in Vietnam have mainly sought to establish student and teacher views towards English language pedagogy (Hiep, 2000; Khoa, 2008; Luong and Nguyen, 2008; Mai Ngoc, 2015; Nguyen, 2011; Tomlinson and Dat, 2004) but it is unclear how university students perceive learning or using English in its own right. For some, there appears to have been an assumption that English is a neutral curriculum subject (Huong, 2006; Le, 1999;). Reports that challenge the status of English in Vietnam, or how it is being taught do exist (Ellis, 1994; Khoa, 2008) but many of these have been published within the VNU, Journal of Foreign Studies and have tended to be literaturebased and anecdotal in nature rather than based on an assessment of student-views.

In addition, there is a significant amount of teacher-focus research in literature and in popular Vietnamese press (Dang et al., 2013; Pham, 1999). With the adoption of the CEFR (Van and Hamid, 2015), teacher proficiency benchmarks (levels B1 and B2) have been set and teachers are being retrained to meet expected standards. A 2011 review found that 83 percent of primary school teachers, 87 percent of lower secondary school teachers, and about 92

percent of upper secondary school teachers were ‘underqualified’ to teach English. A survey conducted among 319 college teachers who taught English found that almost 45 percent were also below the required standard (Nguyen, 2013a).

| | A1 | A2 | B1 | B2 | C1 | C2 |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|
| Primary School English Teachers | 22.1% | 30.6% | 30.3% | 8.9% | 0.3% | 0% |
| Lower Secondary School English Teachers | 14.5% | 33.9% | 38.7% | 7.7% | 0.4% | |
| Upper Secondary School English Teachers | 3.6% | 17% | 47.7% | 23.5% | 5.2% | 0.1% |

Table 1: Copy of review of Vietnamese teachers’ English proficiency against CEFR levels (Nguyen, 2013a: 63).

Consequentially most research has focused on teacher practices, perceptions or pedagogic interventions (Freeman and Dréan, 2017; Hung, 2011; Huong and Hiep, 2010; Ngoc and Iwashita, 2012, Nguyen, 2014a; Nguyen 2015; Pham, 2013; Pham and Hamid 2013). Partly due to this drive, student attitudes and strategies appear to have taken a back seat, including the role of motivation and attitudes towards the language itself; which are important features of ‘successful’ language learning (Dörnyei and Ushioda 2009; Leki et al., 2010). For this reason, it would be helpful to focus this research on the views of learners, rather than teachers. The focus on assessment within Vietnam also justifies a move away from this sort of investigation. Assessment is a major theme within SLW literature but, due to the amount of assessment-related literature already within or about ELT in Vietnam, this study will not focus on this area explicitly. Instead, there appears to be room for further work exploring the writing activities of higher education students. Assessment regimes within Vietnam feature heavily within the literature and so it may be the case that these become a feature of the research but, if this is the case, it will happen inductively, rather than as a result of direct targeting.

The conceptual framework and research questions therefore reflect this decision to focus on learners writing experiences, rather than a focus on teachers and/or assessment.

Student-focused studies have tended to be preoccupied with the effectiveness of specific learning interventions (Tran and Lewis, 2012; Vo et al., 2014), learner autonomy (Dang, 2010; Ha and Lam, 2010; Humphreys and Wyatt, 2014), and motivation and identity negotiation (Tran, 2007). Some studies have focused on strategies to improve reading (Gorsuch and Taguchi, 2008), and using group planning for oral presentations (Storch and Troung, 2007). Others have explored vocabulary testing (Nguyen and Nation, 2011), listening skills (Vu and Shah, 2016) curriculum concerns (Tran, 2014), and assessment (Tran et al., 2010). A smaller number of studies have explored how learner perceptions could be used to influence ELT methodology (Tomlinson and Dat, 2004; Nguyen et al., 2016a), or how foreign language anxiety plays a role in ELT (Trang et al., 2013).

Learner Views of Writing in English for University purposes in Vietnam

Very few studies have asked Vietnamese learners about their attitudes towards writing university assignments; or what they have found most challenging or enjoyable about writing in English at university. The views of younger English language learners or students' earlier experiences of using English also seemed to be lacking in the literature. Many studies have taken place in Australia and have used Vietnamese participants, rather than working with Vietnamese learning EFL in Vietnam, which is a very different context (Kirkpatrick, 2010).

Where studies have focused on learners, they have explored how particular interventions can support English language development. Chinh's (2013) study sought the views of Vietnamese graduates in relation to their experiences of the teaching of 'cultures' within ELT. Writing in journals over a three-month period, the participants indicated that learning about 'cultures' was often limited to learning about the daily lives of British or American people from textbooks or learning about Vietnamese culture in a way that

'propagated government policies' or described local festivals in a way that was bizarrely translated into English from Vietnamese books (Nguyen, 2013b: 5). English lessons were reported to have been dominated by language skills and grammar exercises that were theoretical and uninspiring, and teachers lacked experiences of the range of diverse cultures that participants wanted to learn about (ibid). Nguyen's participants recommended that simple practice activities should be replaced by interactive methods using discussion and becoming familiar with a *'new pattern of thinking'*. Students also called for *'debate, discussion, critical reading and writing, media and text analysis'* and felt teachers were also not using technology and media effectively in teaching and learning.

Tomlinson and Dat (2004) responded to a perceived lack of willingness to participate in lessons or a *'student reticence'* with a longitudinal study of 300 EFL adults in Vietnam. The learners appreciated learning together and engaging in conversations in the classroom but were anxious about speaking in front of others. Many students experienced performance anxiety and low self-esteem about their English proficiency. Foreign language anxiety amongst Vietnamese learners was also reported in a later study (Tran et al., 2013) and indicated that teachers should be mindful as to how they attempt to illicit discussion or responses in the classroom. Tomlinson and Dat's study (2004) supported the notion that Vietnamese learners tended to have had few opportunities to express their opinions about ELT experiences.

Tran (2007) explored the role of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation on the language learning of Vietnamese students. Tran relates the lack of interest in writing in English to the heavy focus on exams and a teacher-led approach in EFL writing classrooms. Tran indicated that a prescribed curriculum based on the perceptions of curriculum designers from universities and MOET, fails to understand or meet learners' writing needs (Tran 2007: 153). Within what Tran terms *'the curriculum model'*, language needs are prioritised over *'cultural needs, personal characteristics and attitudes'* (ibid). Tran referred to students' lack of opportunity to express themselves and a *'distance'* between teachers and students that is culturally defined leading to a reluctance in students to be open about their

individual needs. In response to these concerns, Tran used an open-ended questionnaire rather than interviews to explore learner perspectives where students would have a 'flexible space and time frame' supported by 'sensitive explanations' that helps students to understand how their views are valued and may be used to benefit them. Tran found that Vietnamese students were motivated by high grades, meeting teachers' expectations and responding to teachers' feedback that highlighted both strengths and weaknesses (Tran 2007: 156). Tran's participants identified the motivating impact of writing for known audiences such as teachers or for possible wider reading such as bulletins or publication (*ibid*). More recently, Ngo et al. (2017) found that English-major subjects were generally more intrinsically motivated to study English compared to non-English majors at university.

These types of learner-focused studies within Vietnam have yet to explore how students perceive different types of writing for university purposes. Tran's study could have benefited further by exploring whether the different genres related to the types of motivations expressed by students. It could be the case that students feel more or less motivated to write depending on the types of writing they are undertaking. It would be valuable to understand which types of writing or assignments students find more or less useful, more or less challenging, or more or less enjoyable rather than using a broad-brush approach to understand student attitudes towards writing.

Differences between English and Vietnamese

‘Applied Linguistic-type’ articles in Vietnam and about Vietnamese learners appear to have been written by Vietnamese lecturers of TESOL courses, or their MA students. They have mainly been published in the VNU Journal of Foreign Studies. There have been studies of code-mixing (using two more languages during communication), (Tran and Do, 2015), and complex clauses (combinations of words) and how clauses come together to form sentences using subject and verbs (Nguyen, 2013c). Some studies have investigated idioms denoting happiness (Nguyen, 2009b). A few studies have been focused on translation courses (Lâm, 2015; Nguyen and Trieu, 2015). Earlier articles written in Vietnamese within this journal do not have abstracts written in English and so it was not possible to gauge any trends or changes in general topics over time to the same extent.

In addition to studies of discourse analysis (Ngo and Phan, 2015), many studies have been based on the principles of contrastive rhetoric and have been mostly concerned with comparing similarities and differences between Vietnamese language features and those in English (Nguyen, 2009b). Studies have compared how satisfaction is expressed in Vietnamese and American English (Nguyen, 2009b), or how conceptualisations of sadness are different in the two languages (Nguyen, 2014b).

When it comes to attitudes towards writing in EFL specifically, Tran (2007) used student attitudes to explain other problems of intercultural communication. Firstly, students were said to have appreciated being taught to write in English via familiar topics however their textbooks were ‘Western’ based and not culturally sensitive to the Vietnamese context. In addition, students’ experiences of writing in Vietnamese was in direct contrast to writing in English. In particular, within their literature classes, Tran reported that the students were taught to write poetically and creatively with emotional expressions and imagery, messages were taught to be introduced subtly with metaphoric expressions and figurative speech (Tran 2007: 160). This was deemed to be almost opposite to the directness and *‘the logic of constructing*

arguments as in Western tradition' (ibid). Tran suggested that Vietnamese have been taught that successful writing is passionate and inspired and this becomes part of their writing identity that they bring with them in their second language writing (ibid). Tran suggested that free writing activities are most appreciated by students because it allows them to engage in negotiation of their writing identities while learning to write within new and different writing conventions. This language phenomenon felt very different to the rote 'Confucian-style' learning that had featured in other areas of the literature.

Kramersch and Sullivan (1996: 207) also identified how learning is made 'light and fun' through word play in Vietnamese classrooms., which is treated like a family. This is supported in the work of Ha and Baurain (2011) who describe how Vietnamese literature values the '*multi-layered, beauty and symbolism*' of words where the reader is responsible for teasing out the messages that are slowly and vaguely referred to within literature (Ha and Baurain, 2011: 30). Working with Vietnamese postgraduate studying in Australian universities, Ha and Baurain found that while the structure of an essay was similar in English and Vietnamese, students' ideas about the content were different. For example, introductions were seen as indirect and circular rather than explicitly and succinctly exposing the main issues to be discussed. Also, conclusions were thought to include recommendations, personal feelings or new ideas (ibid). Students did however indicate that literary and academic writing differences do exist at discourse or subject level, for example when discussing how 'flowery' or 'poetic' writing in Business Studies can be.

Tran (in Ha and Baurain, 2011) explored Vietnamese students' perceptions of 'critical thinking' in relation to their academic experiences in Vietnam. Students reported to have had difficulty with the need to be critical of others' work in light of the authority and respect awarded to academic writers. Tran suggested that students employed a '*hybrid adaptation*' whereby some students engaged in compare and contrast activities while avoiding highlighting direct weaknesses in others' work. While the case study students in Tran's study had different strategies for showing critical thinking skills, their Vietnamese writing instruction and literary styles did influence their perceptions of writing in EFL,

but they displayed more individualised differences in how these were adapted or negotiated in their academic writing in English. A common similarity however was the observation that all students focused on the expectations and guidelines or direct instructions from the teacher. Again, the role of the teacher and director and expert is echoed. Possible explanations for this phenomenon are explained in the next section.

While these studies have given us insight into students' general perspectives of ELT and some features of writing in English, they have not helped us to understand the types of assignments or writing features that are challenging for students from different subjects or to what extent students find writing in English useful for university or other purposes. There was room to explore these types of attitudes and perceptions to better understand how students had responded to writing assignments and how they go about completing them. With these insights, it would be possible to assess whether the challenges faced by L2 writers as presented in SLW literature are reflected by students in Vietnam and how they negotiate these. At the same time, the challenges of writing particular types of texts may be used to inform writing pedagogies or curriculums in ELT and EAP in Vietnam. Furthermore, by asking students about the enjoyable aspects of writing for university we can learn more about what types of writing they enjoy and why they enjoy it. This could be used to indicate their motivations and things they appreciate or their feelings of success when writing for university purposes. For Kormos (2012) there has been value in researching L2 writers' attitudes towards writing in general as well as those towards '*particular writing tasks and their contexts*' (Ortega 2012a: 409) because writers' interest and attitudes are linked to engagement. By asking which types of writing they found useful, students can share the important factors or proficiencies they deem to be important. It will give insight into what they feel are worthwhile writing activities and for what purposes, and what they felt they learnt or developed from writing assignments or other written tasks. Based on literature in this area, there could be implications for scaffolding the types of writing that students have found challenging yet useful, either for university purposes or other English language learning purposes.

Challenges accessing Vietnamese Learner voices: Confucianism, Collectivism and Communication

Since the early 1990s, learners from secondary level in Vietnam have been mandated to study a minimum of three-hours English language education per week, often taught by Vietnamese teachers using lexico-grammar, reading and translation methods (Van, 2007). Literature indicated that teachers have tended to work on sentence patterns and substitution exercises (Utsumi and Doan, 2008) with limited opportunities for writing practice, speaking practice or interaction within the classroom which has been dominated by teacher talk and quiet learners (Canh, 2007). Literature has argued that this method of foreign language teaching and teaching in general is culturally embedded within Confucian understandings of education and learning, which the Vietnamese were subjected to during over 1000 years of Chinese imperial rule from 111BC to 939AD (Huong and Fry, 2004a; Nguyen and Nguyen, 2007: 163). This ‘Confucian heritage culture’ (CHC) has embodied collectivist ideas that prioritise community over individualism (Tran, 2013). Learning and respect for others are said to have been promoted, with particular reverence for teachers, authority figures and ones’ ‘elders’. For thousands of years Mandarin leaders allowed only the highest academic achievers to become teachers who were, and continue to be treated with the utmost respect (Pham and Fry, 2004a). According to Huong (2008: 7), children were taught to respect teachers as they would the King or their parents.

Some suggest this Confucian elitist education ideology led to a system of learning where teachers became deemed infallible experts who should not be challenged; and learning involves memorisation of information provided by teachers (Subramaniam, 2008). Others have argued this leads to passive learners who have little opportunity for independent thinking or problem solving (Tran, 2007). This has been contested within higher education and ELT literature where most recent literature indicates the need to move away from these culturally homogenised stereotypes of learners to more insightful approaches that aim to understand how the role of individual differences and social contexts are negotiated by EFL learners (Tran, 2010, in Ha and Baurain, 2011).

In a study on the issue of Vietnamese learner passiveness, Tran (2013: 64) concluded that,

“Students from the CHC may hold a different perspective on the appropriateness of behaviours and reactions in the classroom environment”

This does not equate to passiveness or an inability to adapt or make the transition to a more active learning environment. Humphreys and Wyatt (2014) also argued that Vietnamese learners do not want to be ‘obedient listeners’ despite the teacher dependency that was found to exist at secondary school level in Vietnam (Ha and Lam, 2010 in Humphreys and Wyatt, 2014; 53). However, Ngoc and Iwashita (2012) found that Vietnamese learners favoured ‘*traditional grammar instruction and error correction*’ in order to help pass the grammar based national exams.

Tran’s research and other studies (Dang, 2010; Humphreys and Wyatt, 2014; Nguyen 2002, Tomlinson and Dat, 2004) have continued to indicate that Vietnamese learners have been influenced by Confucian ideology combined with Buddhist and Taoist traits (Ellis 1997: 19) which maintains respect for teachers and the importance of maintaining ‘face’ (ibid) for oneself and others. In their study of Vietnamese learners in Australian universities, Yates et al. (2012) concurred that ‘*differences between the cultures of learning in Vietnam* mean that students may be reluctant to speak out, especially if they might make a mistake (Lewis and McCook’s, 2002 in Ngoc and Iwashita, 2012: 36), they may have more experience of ‘rote learning’ based on a traditional requirement to engage in moral teaching first (*‘Tien hoc le’*) and particular ideas about teacherlearner interactions. Consequentially, they may continue to have few opportunities to express their opinions or may choose not to do so in order to avoid being seen to be challenging the teacher.

In Vietnam, it has been reported that personal identity and behaviour has been largely determined by social groups, which are based on family ties (Kim et. al., 1994 in Huong 2008: 4). In the Vietnamese language over ten personal pronouns exist to refer to people depending on their standing in the patriarchal family hierarchy. It has been

proposed that Vietnamese people usually use ‘we’ when referring to themselves which reflects the cultural association with group identity over individual stance. (Burns, 1998, in Huong 2008: 5).

In opposition to the Confucian Heritage Culture explanation for learner passiveness, Tuyet (2013: 72) argued that problems within the Vietnamese education system such as work load, curricula and exam requirements that leads to students’ passiveness. Tuyet (ibid) called for a wider renovation of curriculum and testing that support changes in teaching pedagogy. Centralised monitoring and MOET control over learning materials and classroom activities has also been identified by others (Dang, 2010; Nguyen, 2014a). In terms of more ‘cultural’ considerations, Tuyet (2013: 75) supported the notion that a heavy reliance on family members leads to a situation where young people have often been unable to make decisions independently about their future. In addition, while students are told they must commit to independent learning at higher education, they are unsupported to do so. Tuyet (ibid) stated that facilities, equipment and poor quality, noisy buildings also impede students’ ability to engage in learning. According to Tuyet (2013: 74) independent learning is further infringed by a shortage of libraries that are poorly stocked coupled with badly designed curricula and unclear learning objectives.

In summary, while the influence of CHC may be an important element of the socio- cultural context, it does not mean that Vietnamese students are unable to offer opinions or share their voice given the ‘right’ conditions in which to do so (Dang, 2010: 7) and it would be crude and unfounded to suggest otherwise. In a study of Vietnamese learner autonomy, Humphreys and Wyatt (2014) suggested that ‘*social mediation involving psychological support, explicit instruction, and scaffolding, underpinned by an understanding of the learners’ prior educational experiences*’ is crucial in helping learners become autonomous and more able to evaluate their own learning (Dang 2010 in Humphreys and Wyatt, 2014: 54). Ngoc and Iwashita (2012: 45) found that many learners felt that while teachers should be ‘*expert*’ in their knowledge, they should support them to develop ‘*autonomy and responsibility*’ too.

From a teaching perspective, Ngoc and Iwashita (2012: 34) found that *'most teachers thought it was more important to facilitate learners' autonomy and train them to be responsible for their own learning'*. While faculties have been given some opportunities to design parts of their own courses, this is only a small amount and the content of EFL courses are still deemed to be lacking (Dang, 2010: 6). Since the 1990s the British Council, the American English Language Institute and Australian AID programmes have reintroduced English language teaching (ELT) programmes in key regions across Vietnam (Van, 2007). Since this time, teachers have been encouraged to implement 'Communicative Language Teaching' (CLT) approaches alongside new materials to familiarise students with American culture and the concept of teacher as facilitator (Ellis, 1994; Lewis and McCook, 2002). In 2006, the MOET introduced a new CLTbased English language curriculum (MOET, 2006). Despite the emphasis on communicative approaches during this time however, and despite some CLT 'progress' being made in some classrooms (Huynh, 2006 in Ngoc and Iwashita 2012), it is questionable to what extent these strategies have been embedded across Vietnam.

Van (2007) suggested that ELT lessons were still grammar-heavy, supplemented with some reading comprehension and oral skills. Later, Dang (2010: 5) suggested that *'big class sizes, a rigorous test-oriented system, and heavy learning workloads'* make the consistent implementation of these new student-oriented methods very difficult. In 2014, Nguyen also supported this view, and compared the class sizes and allocated hours of English teaching in a state and private university. The class sizes in the state university were up to three times the size of the private university with 15 fewer lessons of English per semester, an additional unit of work to teach, reduced teacher pay (approx. 2.5 USD per lesson compared to 9 USD per lesson) and smaller tuitions fees for students (approx. 400 USD per year compared to 3,000 USD per year). The teachers in Nguyens' study claimed that large class sizes did influence the teaching methods used in the classroom and increased the amount of (L1) Vietnamese and code switching used in the classroom so as to help students cover the material more quickly (Nguyen, 2014a). Nguyen et al. (2016b) also found that use of

Vietnamese in classrooms had been a pedagogical tool rather than due to low English proficiency of teachers. Ngoc and Iwashita (2012) and Nguyen (2013b) suggested that the EFL context of Vietnam leads to a lack of exposure of the target language and low-level proficiency of English language teachers.

CLT-focused studies have investigated teachers' attitudes to and perceptions of CLT (Lewis and McCook, 2002; Pham, 2007; Sullivan, 1996), and how Vietnamese teachers cope with conflicts between Western values embedded in CLT and traditional Vietnamese values (Doan, 2014; Pham, 2004; Sullivan, 2000). Lewis and McCook (2002) found that teachers had various degrees of success in implementing CLT into their classrooms. Pham (2004, 2007) maintained that although Vietnamese teachers espoused communicative theory, they were doubtful and confused as to how it could be realized in practice. In their attempt to use CLT, the teachers only made surface changes to activities, practices and materials. An earlier classroom study by Sullivan (1996) pointed out that, though CLT was often not adopted holistically, many aspects of CLT such as encouraging speaking and using language games were integrated into the language classroom. Phan (2004) observed that, in trying to implement CLT, the Vietnamese teachers struggled with conflict between their two identities. As teachers of English, they needed to be a facilitator rather than a controller. At the same time, in order to be good Vietnamese teachers, they needed to perform their traditional duty as behavioural educators or moral guides.

A study by Ellis (1994) also suggested that an apparent resistance to CLT was not actually the result of '*class sizes, grammar-base examinations, and lack of exposure to authentic language*' but due to the need for teachers to adjust basic cultural beliefs related to the teacher-learner relationships. For Ellis and others (Huong 2008; Truong & Tran, 2014) this is a matter of intercultural communication where embedded ideas related to roles and relationships within Vietnam come into conflict. Along these lines, Dang (2010) and Abasi (2012) suggested that local sociocultural characteristics should be considered. For Dang the age of students is a crucial factor to explore because young people may generally have fewer choices available to them as they are often deemed too immature to make

decisions. This is used to suggest that they may become confused if confronted with too many options or knowledge sources other than their 'expert' teachers. For Phan (2009) the political, economic and sociocultural changes in Vietnam have led to a shift in learner attitudes towards foreign language learning in which learners no longer resent learning English but many can now appreciate the language which is increasing their motivation for learning it. Phan (ibid) called for Vietnamese policy makers and educators to pay closer attention to changes in learners' views about learning English.

In a MOET supported study, Utsumi and Doan (2008) had observed that many ELT teachers across five universities relied heavily on textbooks, workbooks and traditional practises like error correction, whole-class recitations, and lecturing. While various scaffolding activities and types of questioning were evident in ELT classrooms, the researchers observed few opportunities for student response or interactions. The students in the research claimed that the most common pre-college ELT experiences were dictation, grammar, memorization, and repetition. The students were keen to learn English to communicate but appreciated that their teachers were trying to get them through their exams (ibid). Activities such as project work and group presentations and other learner centred approaches were starting to be valued used more by EFL teachers but there appeared to be a lack of consistency across the education system (Dang, 2010; Dang 2008). In addition, textbooks written by non-teaching Vietnamese have tended to dictate the ELT curriculum in Vietnam, rather than the needs of the learners.

Summary and Research Questions

This chapter has explained how existing SLW and other fields of literature has informed the focus of the project. The conceptual framework formed throughout the process has been examined. The framework is based on major themes or research domains with SLW. These include L2 writing processes, genres and learners perceptions. Based on an assessment of the ELT and other relevant literature within Vietnam and about Vietnamese students, these areas

have been selected to frame a study that would help us to better understand what university students are being to write (in English) within their studies, their perceptions of the types of writing they undertake and how they write them. A detailed multiple case study of Vietnamese university writing of this nature could make a useful contribution to ELT literature in Vietnam as well as cross-cultural studies within SLW more generally. The first research question will aim to establish which genres university-level students write or have written for university purposes. It would also be valuable to ascertain any other types of writing in English that students have undertaken. Based on the research outlined in this chapter, the process of identifying the genres or types of writing undertaken may not be straightforward. This process of identifying genres is explained in the next chapter.

The second and third research questions focus on which writing processes the university students engage in when producing assignments and other types of texts and their perceptions of these assignments in terms of enjoyability, challenge and usefulness. As explained earlier in this chapter, these are key themes and approaches within SLW but there are unanswered questions about how Vietnamese university-level students write in English and what their attitudes towards this activity. The final research question will explore whether the sociocultural context influences or plays a role in either the genres written, the writing process or the perceptions of the Vietnamese students. As indicated earlier in this chapter, literature suggests that the writing will be socioculturally-charged but a deeper exploration within this study could help to unpack and to identify specific factors or features that impact on the writing experiences and behaviours of Vietnamese L2 writers at different times or within different writing activities. The next section explains how the research study will be designed, the research methods and approaches to data analysis.

Research Questions

1. Which genres do (ten) Vietnamese Higher Education students write in English for university purposes?
2. Which writing processes do (the ten) Higher Education students engage in when writing in English for university?
3. How do (the ten) students perceive writing for university purposes in terms of a) challenge, b) enjoyability and c) usefulness for university or d) other purposes.
4. How, if at all, does the Vietnamese sociocultural context influence how (the ten) students write in English, for university purposes.

Methodology and data analysis

This chapter begins with an outline of the epistemological framework of the research before explaining the methodology, sampling strategies and methods of data collection. It provides a rationale for the methods used and offers a detailed description as to how they were implemented. There is also a section describing how a pilot period helped to refine the methods used in the final data collection phases and how data was analysed in relation to each research question. The validation measures used are also detailed before outlining some ethical issues and mitigating actions put in place to address these.

Ontological and Epistemological Framework

The research project is Interpretivist in nature with a focus on the subjective experiences of individuals. Ontologically, there is a social constructionist assumption that social reality can only be understood fully by considering multiple perspectives and meanings made by individuals within a specific social and historical context (Jones, Torres and Arminio, 2014: 7; Crotty, 1998 in Creswell 2014: 9; Lichtman, 2013: 19). The research aim to explore student perceptions of writing in English for university purposes can only be meaningfully comprehended by contextualising the learners, and their perceptions within a time, place and position. This thesis has already established that language learning and second language writing does not occur within a social vacuum (Frodesen et al., 2005; Lillis and Scott, 2007 in Gardner, 2012: 54; Mack 2010:7;) and so the conceptual framework and methods used to explore this area should consider the impact of context (Frodesen et al., 2005). Participants' biographical details and information about their setting often feature heavily within this type of research (Lichtman 2013: 22; Martin, 1997 in Gardner 2012: 55;).

The research aims to discover how students complete writing tasks and their perceptions of these tasks. The focus is on the processes they typically and specifically use to complete assigned tasks for university. While the research also aims

to classify these writing tasks into genres and genre families, it investigates how students actually write, not only in terms of describing what they write but how this makes sense or can be understood within their particular experience and understandings of the writing activities and the language itself (Halliday, 2009 in Gardner 2012: 54; Lichtman, 2013: 17). This aspect of the analysis is often researched with individuals or small groups of people in a case study fashion (Lichtman 2013: 22) where researchers aim to understand behaviours in relation to a larger context (Lillis and Scott Lichtman 2013: 75). It is less concerned with how many assignments students must submit within their course modules, but rather which strategies they use to write them and how they perceive the assignments in terms of enjoyment, challenge and usefulness. This agenda is qualitatively unravelled within the data collection and analyses, and knowledge about the students' writing experiences are captured via particular writing situations (Mack 2010: 8). In attempting to uncover writing processes, the dynamic and 'inductive' nature of qualitative approaches allow for flexibility and evolution of methods throughout the research process to capture the social phenomenon as close to reality as possible (Lichtman, 2013: 19). In this sense, it is useful to use a range of methods in a pragmatic fashion to relate specific occurrences to general understandings and to triangulate research or use inter-rater reliability measures to verify my interpretations (Lichtman 2013: 22).

There are however aspects of the research that may appear reductionist or not in line with social constructionist values. Writers like Creswell (2014: 8) could suggest that, by categorising genres using an external genre classification tool, the research fails to capture the views or interpretations of the participants. In addition, by focusing specifically on their perceptions of enjoyment, challenge and usefulness of university genres, the research may limit the range of responses that participants may have offered otherwise. However, by using a number of different research methods within the project, other opportunities are created and alternative 'spaces' are made for individuals to express perceptions of learning and writing in English. This methodological pluralism is supported by pragmatist approaches (Creswell 2014: 12) where researchers are free to choose which methods to best explore the research questions that are inherently embedded within the social realm.

Interpretivist approaches to research has been criticised for their subjectivity and lack of generalisability (Mack 2010: 8). Yet, evidence from across the social sciences have shown that it is feasible to make comparisons or develop a theory or pattern using data constructed within an interpretivist paradigm (Creswell, 2014: 19; Mack 2010: 9). Firstly, the research may resonate with existing findings. This would lend support to individual findings and suggest that general theories of patterns could be proposed or confirmed from the findings. Secondly, similarities between participants could be used to suggest a wider pattern of behaviour or shared understanding that is experienced differently by individuals, based on their unique situation. For example, depending on the research methodology, it may be possible that information from each participant exposes similarities or significant shared experiences which denote a level of generalisability or transferability (Jones, Torres and Arminio 2014: 31).

Many qualitative researchers have suggested that it is possible to '*bracket out*' assumptions and analyse data objectively (Husserl 1973; Patton 2002 in Jones, Torres and Arminio 2014: 92). From Phenomenological roots, the bracketing process involves the researcher using strategies to create an awareness of their prior knowledge and assumptions about aspects of the research. It requires a level of '*transparent vigilance regarding the researchers own emotional and cognitive status in terms of their personal and professional selves*' (Tufford and Newman 2010: 84). Strategies used to support the bracketing process have included the use of memos (Cutcliffe 2003 in Tufford and Newman 2010: 85), engaging in interviews with outside sources (Rolls and Relf, 2006 in Tufford and Newman 2010: 85) and writing a reflexive journal before defining research questions (Tufford and Newman 2010: 85). During these activities, the researcher aims to 'peel back' their own constructions of the phenomenon in question.

The '*epoché*' process, outlined by Rockenbach, Walker and Luzader, is a type of reflexivity allowing researchers to recognise, though not abandon, their preconceptions and judgements about the world and create space to gain insight into the lived experience of the participants which may or may not

correspond with their own preconceptions (ibid). The methodology in this project allows for open thematic coding that supports participant-led themes to emerge from the data and use of reflexive memos during the data analysis stages. The memos reflect to what extent emerging data resounds with or challenges my existing assumptions about the research, the topics, the context and the research participants. This element of reflexivity compliments the interpretivist research values, and can be a measure of the ‘relational competence’ of qualitative research (Jones, Torres and Arminio 2010: 38). This establishes a need for transparency and reflection on behalf of the researcher as a socially positioned individual. The next section describes my position, assumptions and role within the project.

Position of the Researcher

The position of the researcher impacts on how the participants are represented, the interactions with participants during the research and whether the researcher is aware of what they include or exclude (Jones, Torres and Arminio 2014: 26). The cultural and historical experiences of the researcher, their assumptions and influences on the research is an essential part of the research (Cresswell 2003: 8; Lichtman 2013:28).

I visited Vietnam as a native English speaker undertaking PhD research and worked with Vietnamese Higher Education students who are non-native English speakers. Based on our experience and social positioning, our worldviews are likely to have encapsulated different values and concepts (Jones, Torres and Arminio, 2014: 12). My assumptions about Vietnamese students, Vietnamese Higher Education and English language learning stem from particular experiences of the world and literature. My sociocultural history (Jones, Torres and Arminio 2010: 41) and my ‘Western’ world of advantage, democratic political values and capitalist economics could be seen in opposition to the ‘developing’ status of Vietnam and its Communist system. From a Christian background my religious experiences differ significantly to the Buddhist beliefs and practices held by many Vietnamese people. Other

beliefs, values and concepts will also be different. Some differences will have more influence than others within the research. Paying attention to the role of social identities (Jones, Torres and Arminio 2010: 40), my position as a researcher, my age, gender and social status have a bearing on how I engage with participants and their responses to me. Significant power differences exist internationally between the researcher and the researched (Jones, Torres and Arminio 2010: 40). Within East Asia more generally, power differences exist between young and old, where older people and teachers are generally venerated and rarely challenged by younger people and students (Matthew and Ross 2010: 139).

I was a visiting, non-teaching member of staff within the universities, and was an 'outsider' in this respect. Many of the participants were undertaking research or were (trainee) English Language teachers. I could then be deemed an 'insider' due to my native English language and as a fellow researcher or teacher. They were aware of my status as PhD researcher and my teaching experiences. We shared resources and discussed research or teaching topics with a level of familiarity. There were both similarities and differences in our experiences but it was my '*responsibility to interpret voices in a way that is authentic to their experiences*' (Jones, Torres and Arminio 2014: 43). The similarities and differences between us could have impacted on how much information participants shared with me and the type of information they shared. They may have been reluctant to talk about some topics or may have given responses they thought I would appreciate or due to social desirability. All participants were aware of the research questions, and this could have led them to narrow their responses in order to offer information they perceived as most relevant or helpful. This issue is discussed further in this chapter and the discussion chapter.

Case Study and Sampling

The methodology of a research study has been defined as ‘*a strategy that guides the actual research plan*’ (Jones, Torres and Arminio 2014: 73). Creswell (2014) identified a number of qualitative research strategies including the use of Case Studies. Jones, Torres and Arminio (2014:94) also referred to Case Study as a methodological approach rather than a unit of analysis. Case study approaches have been common in Higher Education research and characterised by rich, indepth information that is specific to time, place and other descriptions of the context (Flyvbjerg, 2011 in Jones, Torres and Arminio 2014: 95). Case studies can ‘*explain, describe, illustrate and enlighten*’ (Yin, 2009: 19 -20 in Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2011: 314).

Yin (2009: 15) categorised case studies as either descriptive (narrative), interpretive or evaluative. Merriam (1988) classified them as ethnographic, historical, psychological and sociological. Sturman (1999) and Stenhouse (1985) used the terms ethnographic, action research, evaluative and educational to refer to types of case studies, whereas Stake (2000) referred to intrinsic, instrumental and collective case studies. For Stake (2000 in Jones, Torres and Arminio 2014: 96), an intrinsic case study aims to understand the particulars of one case in itself, whereas an instrumental case study aims to use information from the case to understand another issue that may be outside the case. A collective case study uses several instrumental cases to draw some conclusions or theories about a general condition or phenomenon (Stake, 2000 in Jones, Torres and Arminio 2014: 96). Similar to the study by Jones and Abes (2003 cited in Jones, Torres and Arminio 2014: 96) this research project used a hybrid collective case study which combines both intrinsic and instrumental cases. According to Yin (2009: 15 in Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2011: 317) it is possible to use these types of ‘*multiple case study*’ designs to engage in ‘*analytic generalisation*’ to shed understanding on similar cases, phenomena or situations.

The selection of cases is often theoretically derived and purposeful because it is either ‘*unique or typical, representative or common*’ (Jones, Torres and Arminio 2014: 96).

Researchers have tended to seek information-rich participants (Jones, Torres and Arminio 2014: 97). Using Yin's 'Basic Types of Designs for Case Studies' (2009: 46) it is possible to make the case study boundaries transparent (Figure 4)

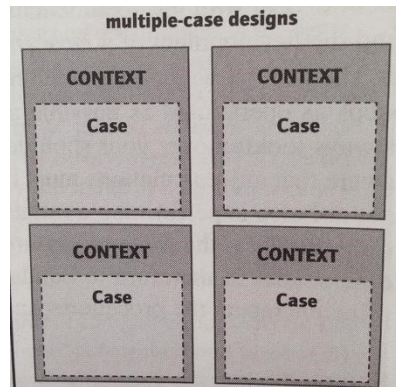


Figure 4. Copy of Yin's Case Study Design (2009: 46).

The cases in this research are the individual Higher Education students. The experiences and perceptions of each student are explored within their specific contexts which may share similarities with other cases but will also be different. The cases are theoretically driven and reflect the idea that perceptions about English language learning and experiences of written genres can differ markedly depending on the context (Hyland, 2009). When focusing on experiences of writing in English for University Purposes, there are a number of aspects of the individual case and their contexts that are valuable for exploration in their own right (intrinsically) but also in comparison to other cases or students in a more instrumental fashion (Stake Stake, 2000 in Jones, Torres and Arminio 2014: 96). The features of the (sociocultural) context have already been described in the first chapter of this thesis.

Participants/ Cases

The participants or case study students were selected based on the theoretical premise that each case could reveal insight into the writing experiences of individuals while also offering opportunities for case comparisons. According to Yin (2009: 54) when using multiple case study designs there is a logic to select a case that either predicts similar or contrasting results. Two participants were selected from a specialised Science and Technology university, three were chosen from VNU Hanoi Department for Languages and International studies, and one student was selected from a university for Economics and Business. In Ho Chi Minh City, two cases came from a VNU Humanities and Social Sciences department, one more was enrolled within an Australian University and one trainee teacher was enrolled within the Vietnamese Open University, and was undertaking a PGCE course within an International School which had an embedded teacher training programme. This allows for a comparison of writing experiences of the MA TESOL students within a university for Languages and International Studies but it also allows for cross case comparisons such as the writing experiences of a Microbiology student within a national Science university compared to those of an Auditing and Accounting major from a Business and Economics University. In this sense, the research project deploys a ‘maximum variability’ design where each case can be understood both intrinsically and instrumentally. These aspects of the context are summarised in Table 1.

| University | Subject Major & Pseudonym | Level | Instruction Medium | Year of study | City |
|---|--|----------|------------------------|---------------|-------|
| National, Languages and International Studies | TESOL/ELT Kim-Ly | MA | English | 2 (Final) | Hanoi |
| | TESOL/ELT Linh | MA | English | 2 (Final) | Hanoi |
| National, Science and Technology | Microbiology Duc | MA | Vietnamese | 1 (First) | Hanoi |
| | Biology Chau | BSC | English | 4 (Final) | Hanoi |
| National, Economics and Business | Auditing and Accounting Minh | Post Doc | Vietnamese | N/A | Hanoi |
| National, Language and Business combined course | International Business and Economics Tin | BSC | English and Vietnamese | 4(Final) | Hanoi |
| National, Humanities and Social Sciences | TESOL/ELT Phuong | MA | English | 2 (Final) | HCMC |
| | TESOL/ELT Tran | MA | English | 2 (Final) | HCMC |
| Australian International university | Business Administration Ton | MBA | English | 1 (First) | HCMC |
| An international school | Vietnamese (language) Ngoc | PGCE | English | 1 (First) | HCMC |

Table 2. Cases

Negotiating access to Universities and Participants

Access to the first two case universities was achieved via a gatekeeper. From the literature related to English language learning in Vietnam, two members of research and teaching staff with similar research interests in either English for Academic Purposes or Higher Education were identified and contacted by

email eight months before the proposed data-collection stage. Both researchers were Heads of Department and thus had some decision-making authority and influence within the universities. (Lee 1993:123 in Cohen and Manion 2011: 168), My research proposal and information about my personal background was sent to both contacts to help build interpersonal trust and we exchanged emails before my arrival. An invitation letter to potential participants was also provided which could be forwarded, on my behalf to potential participants, ideally via an email to all postgraduates. This was sent to all postgraduate students in an International university but not within the other Vietnamese universities. This meant that only in one university did all postgraduates have an equal opportunity to take part in the study.

While it is reasonable to gain access to Higher Education institutions and participants in this way, it introduces a bias and sample limitation (Cohen and Manion, 2011) which is discussed in more detail later. The gatekeepers offered access available to them in their particular roles or they called on the authority of colleagues. In return, one gatekeeper asked me to proof-read their colleague's journal article and to voice-record listening materials for students in the university. Overall, the sampling approach (represented in Figure 5) was very useful in gaining access to participants, which would have been more difficult to achieve if I had only approached universities from a 'cold' generic introductory letter (Walford, 2001 in Cohen and Manion 2011: 167). I had no reply when I emailed an administrative department and English department in an International University in Hanoi. By contacting individuals with a research or professional interest in the topic, I was considerably more successful in gaining access to participants (albeit perhaps limited and biased) and a working space within two universities where participants could meet me and undertake the interviews. This access allowed me to be seen as a temporary insider within the universities, as far as the participants were concerned, and they may have changed their behaviour or attitude towards me depending on whether they perceived me as a visiting researcher within the university with an office or as an outsider meeting them in a café for example.

Hanoi

Having gained access to the two universities, it was possible to select participants. In a member university of the National University in Hanoi, rather than emailing all postgraduates, the gatekeeper provided access to two groups of MA TESOL students who were undertaking an Academic Writing class. The gatekeeper felt these students would be able to offer more information about writing for university purposes because they had more experience of writing in English for university, and were more proficient English language learners than other ‘non-English-major’ students. This imposed a significant restriction on potential participants and heavily biased the sample, albeit based on a rational decision by the gatekeeper. Nevertheless, this bias would have to be addressed and given the theoretical importance of subject variability, it was essential to select participants from non-English majors too. This was achieved later in Hanoi via networking.

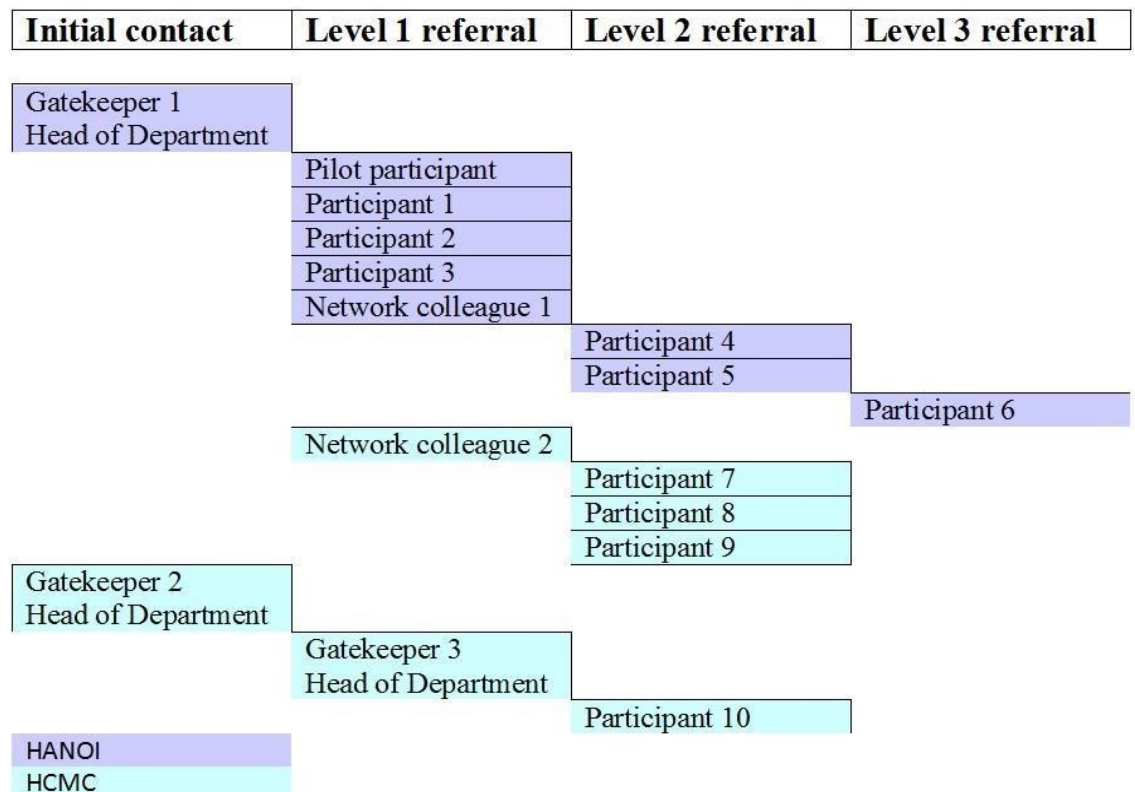


Figure 5. Sampling process.

The pilot participant and three others were selected via two visits to Academic writing lessons held within one of the national universities. In the lessons, volunteers were encouraged to make contact either by phone, email or visiting sometime after the session. The class members were given copies of the research invitation in English and Vietnamese. The gatekeeper in the university was an authority figure and made introductions to the classes and this could have had implications in terms of students' willingness to participate in the study or their concerns about being identified if they raised any sensitive issues for example. Those who preferred to use Vietnamese were offered the chance to have an interpreter from outside the university. Teachers and lecturers hold authority and sway in Vietnam (Le 2012), and so students may have been encouraged to take part in the research using this approach. This steering or shepherding by the gatekeeper (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983: 65 in Cohen and Manion 2011: 168) helped to identify the first participants but simultaneously introduced a sample bias. It was also important that participants were reassured that their information would be treated confidentially and all attempts made to make them unidentifiable; I had to be seen as supported by the university but not as an 'informant' (Walford 2001: 45 in Cohen and Manion 2011: 169).

Following advice from the gatekeeper in Hanoi, all participants were offered \$10 per interview for their time. Two participants did not accept the payment, one of whom was an employed post-doctorate lecturer in Hanoi and the other was a final year Biology major in Hanoi. Paying participants raises concerns including the risk that participants may feel obliged to provide information or the 'correct' information to the researcher, especially in belief that payment for their time alone is insufficient.

Seven participants from other member universities were introduced to me via snowball sampling or a 'networking' approach (Cohen and Manion (2011: 167). A member of teaching staff had met postgraduates and teaching staff from other member universities during a compulsory English course designed for all staff members. I was introduced to participants from the University of Science and the University of Business and Economics. Morrison (2006, in

Cohen and Manion 2011: 167) reported that networking is a popular strategy where gatekeepers can use informal networks to contact friends and professional associates and avoid formal access pathways.

In order to balance the subject and high-proficiency-biased sample, the next two participants were Microbiology and Accounting and Auditing subject majors. The nature of the relationship between these colleagues supported their commitment to the research. According to Lee (1993 in Cohen and Manion 2011: 168), this offers a security because the contacts given are trusted but it may also introduce a homogeneity to the sample. The contact from the office emailed the research invitation to these participants in Vietnamese because their English proficiency level was significantly lower than the MA TESOL students already recruited. The Microbiology and Accounting participants required an interpreter and chose the interpreter from the University.

The snowballing continued when the MSc Microbiology student, who was also a staff member at a national university, introduced me to a final year BSc student who studied Biology through English medium. While the two participants had similar subject majors and were members of the same member university, the BSc student presented an opportunity to explore a different perspective where English was the medium of instruction for a Science major and so this was deemed a valuable variation in the overall project. It is suggested that this type of 'convenience' sampling reduces the generalisability of the research though. The implications of the sample is discussed more fully in the discussion chapter.

Ho Chi Minh City

The gatekeeper from the national university in Hanoi introduced me to a colleague in Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC) with whom they had previously studied with. This contact was a teacher of two MA TESOL programmes in a Humanities Department of VNU and the national Open University. An email was sent to all postgraduates from the MA TESOL courses. Two postgraduates

responded from the national member university and one participant volunteered who was undertaking teacher training in an International School in HCMC. The MA TESOL bias applied again here and the participants were perhaps more inclined towards, or interested, in research. The participants who responded to the invitation had either already completed an MA TESOL or were in their final term and undertaking a research module. This would likely impact on the genres experienced by these participants and their attitudes towards English in comparison to non-English majors. This bias is discussed later.

The gatekeeper within the Australian University is a published academic in the field of English for Academic Purposes, so was already invested in the topic. Having established that the Centre for English Language within the University did not work with postgraduates, the Head of Postgraduate students allowed an invitation email to be sent to all postgraduates enrolled in the University. This shifted my research base from the Centre for English Language to a separate research department, and helped to disassociate or create some distance from the focus on English major students that had been a feature of the sample so far. However, with a small number of postgraduate courses offered within the University, there was a limited number of students and subjects within the target population. One MBA student responded and participated.

Ethical concerns were a significant feature in gaining access to the postgraduate students within the international University and as 'guests' within the country, the university's expectations with regards to political sensitivity were made clear from the outset. Any topic of potential controversy or social sensitive material was to be avoided to maintain the good reputation of the university and relationship with the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET).

Despite the sampling drawbacks, this method made it possible to access different subject majors that would have been difficult to access via alternative types of sampling. While the original gatekeeper 'heavily flavoured' the first and

second level of referrals, it was however made possible via these contacts to work with non- English majors and thus dilute the sample and add an acceptable amount of subject variability in both Hanoi and HCMC. While the final sample may still be biased in favour of MA TESOL students in terms of numbers, there is sufficient variety in other subject majors to consider the research questions from a non – homogenous group. Without this method, the initial interest and ‘buy in’ to the project would probably not have been achieved and much time could have been wasted attempting to gain access to universities via letters and emails. Alternatively, by making contact with interested parties, the process of sampling and in-routes to different groups was organic and arguably improved participants’ commitment to the project.

Translation of documents

Each document in English was translated into Vietnamese by two translators. One translator was external to the university and had two language degrees and research experience. The second translator was also the pilot participant from the University of Languages and International Studies. The most accurate of these documents was selected by the gatekeeper in Hanoi as this person was deemed the most qualified to make the decision as to which translation was most appropriate for the students in the study.

Pilot Study, Hanoi

The pilot participant was an MA TESOL student recommended by the gatekeeper in Hanoi. The stages of the pilot are detailed below.

Interview 1

The ethical and informed consent form (Appendix 2) was discussed first. The participant had had access to it (in Vietnamese and English) before the first interview so had time to prepare any questions. Each section was explained and the participant was reminded of their rights in relation to confidentiality, right to withdraw and the issue about anonymity, which is outlined later in this

chapter. It was translated into Vietnamese to use if any questions were misunderstood. A question schedule was used during the first interview (Appendix 3). The questions were used as a guide to gather background information, including which languages were spoken at home, age when starting school and age when they started to learn English, formally and informally. A Vietnamese version of the questions was available in case the participant did not understand any questions or terms I was using. It was a 'back-up' resource and was not given to the participant.

Interview 2

A list of the BAWE genre families identified by Nesi and Gardner (2012) (Appendix 4) was used to focus on types of writing undertaken and to explore these in more detail, including when they were written and for what purposes. The genre labels were created following an investigation of student university assignments in the UK. Within the pilot study, the summarised list- version of the genre families did not provide enough detail about the function of the writing or examples of assignments the participant may have found useful to recollect which writing tasks they had undertaken. The decision was made to provide a fuller account of the 13 genre families in the main study. This would provide detail about the purpose of each genre family and examples of genres that may be included within the genre family (Appendix 5). This was also translated into Vietnamese and made available for the main study. The aim was to focus participants' attention on the purpose of the writing tasks rather than the labels alone, which may be misleading for participants. The full genre categories by Gardner and Nesi (2013) can be found in Appendix 6.

Interview 3

The participant provided assignments to show the types of writing discussed in the previous session/ interview. One recent assignment was selected to use for a retrospective report activity. The participant outlined the major stages of writing such as pre-reading, planning, idea generation, peer feedback and editing. However, the participant spoke abstractly about these processes and did not often refer to the assignment itself. The participant used the pronoun 'we' rather than 'I' and spoke of best practice in writing tasks from a teacher

perspective rather than focusing on the writing processes undertaken to create the assignment of focus. The decision was made to use concurrent think-aloud methods to explore the writing process as it occurs; to have more insight into what the participant physically does and thinks about as they are writing. Some of the limitations of this method are discussed in the next section.

Interview 4

The first half of the session was spent on think-aloud training using a video clip and modelling a think-aloud activity. The video clip was of a think-aloud protocol while cutting an apple into slices. I modelled the method using a drawing example. The modelling of the procedure did not use a writing activity because it may have lead the participant to verbalise certain aspects of their thinking over others. With no experience of this procedure, they would have used the information in the demonstrations to contribute to their schemata for the method and it would have been restrictive to provide them with any prototype of the content they should or should not verbalise (Flower and Hayes, 1981). The participant then undertook a writing-only concurrent think aloud activity using an adapted version of Plakans' (2008) method and task prompt,

“Most cultures have borrowed from other cultures. Choose a country that you are familiar with and write about something borrowed from another culture. Consider if this borrowing has been helpful or harmful.”

Plakans had interviewed an English language program coordinator and students enrolled on English language courses to find ideal exam topics. Most popular topics included Technology and Cultural borrowing. Plakans developed an argumentative task because it is a common genre in academic writing. It was piloted and deemed sufficiently familiar to students. It also provided participants with a clear position to argue from (Plakans, 2008: 115). This task was selected for this study because the topic was useful for capturing culture-related information from the participants. The task was also open enough to give participants the opportunity to write about any culture or country, so they could personalise or depersonalise their answers. The

decision to use this topic and task may have steered or guided the type of content given by the participants and this is discussed later.

Plakans had directed participants to plan their answer and described how their writing would be evaluated. For this research, it was important not to lead the participants to undertake writing activities they may not usually undertake so the task prompt did not request them to plan. The writing was not being evaluated in a test approach so this part of the task prompt was also removed.

The participant was asked to explain their thinking at regular intervals with no more than 30 seconds of non-verbalisations. No additional questions were asked during the think-aloud session but notes were taken during the activity and questions were asked immediately following the writing session. Field notes detailed what the participant was doing throughout including where they had paused, edited or asked questions during the process.

Interview 5

The second concurrent think-aloud activity adapted Plakans' (2008) readingwriting task. The method and task prompt shows how the same topic (cultural borrowing) was used again. The same techniques were used in terms of eliciting thinking and making notes during the session.

“Globalisation has had a strong impact on the world. One issue of globalisation is cultural borrowing or adaptation. Read the following passages about this issue. Then consider your opinion about the impact of globalization on culture. Write an essay supporting your position and using examples.”

This task specifically asks participants to use examples in their writing. This directive was kept because it was helpful to see how the participant would include examples and how they would use the source texts. The participant was asked to explain their thoughts as they read the two texts and notes were made as they read and organised the texts in relation to the task prompt. The participant could write on the texts and task prompt sheet. There was no time

limit for the writing activity and it could have been continued into the next session if necessary.

For the reading-to-write task, Plakans searched for texts in textbooks, magazines, ESL textbooks, and on the Internet. Plakans wanted to encourage citation by using excerpts from several texts. Plakans own version of the task required participants to cite from the texts (Plakans 2008: 116). The texts can be found in Figure 6 and Figure 7.

Whose culture?

Adapted from *Globalize it!* By Brendan January

For many people in the world, globalization and Americanization are the same. They see an advancing tide of American youth culture—fast-food franchises, rap music, MTV, and Star Wars movies.

This is making people nervous. To some, the United States is forcing its ideals, its economic structure, even its culture and language on the rest of the world. They call it “cultural imperialism.” “Never before in modern history has a country dominated the earth as totally as the United States does today,” wrote the German magazine *Der Spiegel* in 1997. “The Americans are acting, in the absence of limits put to them by anybody and anything, as if they own a blank check in the ‘McWorld.’”

By the 1990s, American “soft power” seemed virtually unstoppable. In Spain, Great Britain, Germany, and Italy, at least nine of the top-ten movies in 1998 came from the United States. McDonald’s restaurants, of which there are more than 29,000 franchises in 121 countries, feed 1 percent of the world’s population every day.

At anti-globalization protests, the most common targets are franchises of American companies—such as Starbucks and McDonald’s. Anti-Americanism, which varies in intensity and degree according to its location, is growing.

Figure 6. Copy of Plakans (2008) Reading-Write Think Aloud, Source Text 1.

Plakans assessed the density level, as a measure of readability of the texts using different criteria. The word count is between 80-100, they are Flesch–Kincaid Grade Level 12 and have a Flesch Reading Ease between 30 – 60. The highest score for this index is 100, which is the easiest. As shown in Table 3, this means the texts were generally classed as difficult to read, but appropriate for undergraduate and postgraduates.

| Score | School Level | Notes |
|--------------|--------------------|---|
| 100.00-90.00 | 5th grade | Very easy to read. Easily understood by an average 11-year-old student. |
| 90.0-80.0 | 6th grade | Easy to read. Conversational English for consumers. |
| 80.0-70.0 | 7th grade | Fairly easy to read. |
| 70.0-60.0 | 8th & 9th grade | Plain English. Easily understood by 13- to 15-year-old students. |
| 60.0-50.0 | 10th to 12th grade | Fairly difficult to read. |
| 50.0-30.0 | College | Difficult to read. |
| 30.0-0.0 | College Graduate | Very difficult to read. Best understood by university graduates. |

Table 3. Copy of Flesch Reading Ease table.

In defence of globalization: Why cultural exchange is still an overwhelming force for good.

Adapted from an article by Philippe Legrain, Economics correspondent *The International Economy*

The beauty of globalization is that it can free people from the tyranny of geography. Just because someone was born in France does not mean they can only aspire to speak French, eat French food, read French books, and so on. That we are increasingly free to choose our cultural experiences enriches our lives immeasurably. Otherwise, we could not always enjoy the best the world has to offer.

Globalization not only increases individual freedom, but also revitalizes cultures and cultural artefacts through foreign influences, technologies, and markets. Many of the best things come from cultures mixing: Paul Gauguin painting in Polynesia, the African rhythms in rock'n'roll, the great British curry.

A big worry is that greater individual freedom may undermine national identity. Yet such fears are overdone. National cultures are much stronger than people seem to think. They can embrace some foreign influences and resist others. Foreign influences can rapidly become domesticated, changing national culture, but not destroying it. Clearly, though, there is a limit to how many foreign influences a culture can absorb before being swamped. Traditional cultures in the developing world that have until now evolved (or failed to evolve) in isolation may be particularly vulnerable.

Figure 7. Copy of Plakans (2008) Reading-Write Think Aloud, Source Text 2.

To be fully satisfied that the source texts were accessible to the participant, it would have been necessary to assess their reading comprehension and that of the texts. Instead the source texts were used in the pilot to ascertain any comprehension problems or other issues. The pilot participant understood the texts, their main ideas and the task prompt but struggled with some vocabulary, especially within the examples. These challenges were useful to show how the participant coped with tasks and texts with new vocabulary and non-culturally specific examples. The source texts were used again in the main study.

Insights and changes following full Pilot

The pilot was useful to confirm that participants should describe and identify the types of writing they had undertaken via a writing biography without the use of existing genre labels. It also confirmed that the genre family labels should not be used in isolation but that the social purpose and genre examples for each genre family should be given (Appendix 5). During the retrospective report of an assignment, the pilot participant was often vague and abstract in their explanation rather than focusing on the specific assignment. There was a concern that the participant was unable to recall important stages or writing processes so concurrent think aloud methods should also be used. Concurrent methods allow the researcher to witness first-hand the types of writing activities participants engage in during the writing task by observing and noting the writing behaviours. The method allows for deeper insight into the cognitive processes of participants as they complete writing activities.

There are a number of pitfalls with concurrent think-aloud protocols that are well established in research. The aim to understand the full range of cognitive processes can never be complete because participants may not share all thoughts or the cognitive processes may be affected by the think aloud process itself. The suggestion is that thinking to explain is cognitively different to thinking 'intrinsically'. Additionally, think aloud protocols and the quality of the data gathered is largely dependent on the training participants receive beforehand and on their metacognitive awareness or abilities. Paradoxically over-training for think alouds can be leading and provide participants with an overly structured conceptual framework which they may come to rely on or may restrict their thinking (Plakans, 2008). There is a need for balance of instruction, modelling and practice in think-aloud training.

During the pilot study, the participant talked about their ideas related to content and examples to use in their writing. They also wrote a plan structuring the content to be included in the essay. The participant then chose to erase or 'scratch through' some examples and so these did not appear in the final text or product. When questioned about the reasons for erasing or not including

particular examples, the participants' explanations revealed interesting insights culturally sensitive topics and audience awareness that would have been missed if think aloud activity had not been used.

Final Methods of Data Collection

This section describes the data collection methods and approaches to analysis for each research question. According to Yin (2008 in Jones, Torres and Arminio 2014: 897), once the cases have been identified, multiple forms of data such as interviews, documents and observations are collected to fully investigate the case. There are many variables operating in a single case and it is often necessary to use a mixed method approach to *'blend numerical and qualitative data, of both subjective and objective value, in order to better understand the case'* (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011: 314). This chapter also discusses a number of challenges that could have impacted on the validity of the research, and mitigating measures taken.

Interviews

Each participant took part in up to five weekly face to face sessions lasting between 1.5 to 2 hours. There was a general standardised procedure used in each session although additional and different types of questions were asked depending on the participants' initial responses. The methods used in relation to each of the research questions are summarised in Table 4.

The table shows that at least two different methods were used to collect data related to research questions 1 and 3, as a form of triangulation or to corroborate self-reported information. This technique helped to reduce issues of relying on self-report methods alone. For example it may have been possible that, due to social desirability effects, participants may have wanted to show they had more experience of writing a wider variety of genres (Shipman, 1997). By combining the self-reported information with copies of the written genres, it was possible to confirm them.. At the same time, it was possible to witness participants' writing processes during the think-aloud tasks rather than reply solely on their reports about their writing activities. It has been possible to

compare the writing activities or stages reported by the participants to those witnessed during the think-aloud tasks. The procedures and challenges raised by each method will be described in detail.

| Research Question | Methods | Analysis |
|---|---|--|
| <p>1. Which types of texts or genres in English do ten higher education candidates in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh produce for university purposes?</p> <p>(Unpacked) Which genres do participants report to have written for university purposes?</p> <p>Which genres have participants written according to the genre classifications identified within the BAWE corpus?</p> | <p>Interview</p> <p>Individual writing biographies using BAWE corpus genre families.</p> <p>Documents: Assignments and Textbooks</p> | <p>a) Coding transcripts for types of texts reported by participants during interview 1.</p> <p>b) Coding transcripts for genres identified by participants in Interviews 2 and 3 using the BAWE genre classification guidance.</p> <p>c) Identifying the genres of the copies of written assignments provided by participants by applying the BAWE classification guidance.</p> <p>d) Comparing types of texts reported by the participant and those evidenced by documents.</p> |
| <p>2. What are participants' attitudes towards written assignments in terms of a) enjoyability b) level of challenge c) usefulness for learning English d) usefulness for university needs.</p> | <p>Interview</p> <p>Likert scales for assignments used to ascertain attitudes and reasons for these attitudes.</p> | <p>Coding interview transcripts and fieldnotes for:</p> <p>a) assignments participants reported to have enjoyed or not enjoyed and undertaking a thematic analysis as to the reasons why.</p> <p>b) assignments reported as most and least challenging to participants and undertaking a thematic analysis of their explanations for this attitude.</p> <p>c) assignments reported to be most useful for learning English and d) university needs and undertaking a thematic analysis as to the reasons why.</p> |
| <p>3. Which writing processes do the ten participants use when producing texts for university?</p> <p>(Unpacked) Which writing processes do participants report to undertake writing assignments for university.</p> <p>Which writing processes do participants use when completing a written task.</p> | <p>Retrospective report using a recent assignment.</p> <p>Concurrent composing alouds: 1x reading-writing task 1x writing only task</p> | <p>a) Coding of retrospective report transcript for writing activities reported by participants.</p> <p>b) Coding of concurrent composing aloud protocols and fieldnotes to identify writing activities observed and verbalised.</p> <p>c) Comparing the writing processes reported by participants and evident in their writing tasks</p> |
| <p>4. How, if at all, do the students' sociocultural contexts influence their academic writing in English?</p> | <p>All above</p> | <p>Coding for evidence where aspects of the 'socio-cultural context' is evident or interested throughout the data using individual, departmental, national and regional levels of analysis (described above).</p> |

Table 4. Research Questions and Methods

The settings

The interviews took place in either a university office or a public setting, such as café or a university garden. These settings would not be deemed natural for the research participants because they would not have otherwise been in these places (Shipman, 1997). In Hanoi, noise disturbance was a significant problem and interviews were often disturbed by construction work, people talking or traffic. Only a small number of face to face sessions here took place in a quiet, private environment. This could have an impact on the participants' ability to concentrate and there were occasions where questions and responses had to be repeated in order to be heard over construction noise in particular. One interview had to be postponed due to the level of noise. Having said this however, even where noise may have impacted on focus or concentration, there was no evidence within the interviews, from audio recordings or transcripts to suggest that participants had not understood the questions being asked.

There was a lack of privacy in some interviews. During four interviews in Hanoi, a member of teaching staff was present in the office during the session. The teacher did not teach any of the participants though. Although the office was large and the staff member was engaged in other deskwork, it is not possible to say that their presence did not impact on the responses given by the participant. As a precautionary measure, during a later face to face session, when the staff member was no longer present, these participants were asked to respond to a brief verbal review where their key points from their last interview were summarised. All participants confirmed the information had been accurate and said they did not want to make any changes. In addition to this, all participants were given a summary of the information they had given and confirmed the accuracy of these.

Writing Biographies/ Narrative Account: Interview 1

The first interview followed the same procedure as the full pilot, and began with a discussion about the purpose of the research and some information about my background in English Language Teaching. This was followed by an explanation of the ethical considerations and the informed consent form. Rapport-building began and participants were interested to know about my family, my marital status, and how old I was. These questions are entirely appropriate within Vietnamese culture and are an essential process for participants to assign a social role within the social hierarchy. Participants younger than me, referred to me as '*chị*' or '*cô*' (meaning older sister, aunt or teacher) and participants older than me called me '*em*' (younger person) or '*ban*' (friend of the same age). One participant who was older than me called me '*ban*' as a sign of respect, even though I was younger than them.

As described in the first pilot interview, the same procedure was used to collect basic information about English-learning experiences. The demographic information was straightforward and relatively easy for participants to remember but when they were asked to talk about when they started writing in English and what they had written in English, it was more difficult for them to remember and explain the types of writing. This type of recall is particularly limited because it relies on memories of the types of writing completed in English and then an ability to explain this in a meaningful way. For some participants, this required them to remember writing activities they had experienced up to fifteen years previously. At the same time however, without any guidance or support, participants had the chance to talk about their experiences of writing in their own words, rather than being led by pre-existing genre categories.

Having a grasp of the general experiences of learning English and the types of writing in English the participants had reported, it was then necessary to explore these texts in more detail during the second face to face session. Participants had one week between face to face meetings which gave them time to reflect on the interview and possibly remember more information for

the next meeting. Participants were also asked to provide any electronic or hard copies of the types of writing or assignments they had completed. The process of finding these texts from course notes, folders or electronic equipment could have helped to trigger some memories about the types of writing. It also meant that the participants were investing time into sourcing their work in preparation for the next session. Writing tasks were generally written for either formative or summative assessment purposes and so were written for review either by university lecturers, tutors or peers. Not all assignments were reviewed by lecturers however.

Use of BAWE genre classifications: Interview 2

In the second interview participants were provided with an adapted version of the thirteen genre families identified by Nesi and Gardner (2012) (Appendix 4). This version of the genre categories included the social function of the text, the typical stages or structure of the genre and examples of texts. In their work, they call for researchers to investigate the plausibility of applying the 13 genre categories to other social contexts (Gardner and Nesi: 2013). This research offers some contribution to this call, but there may have been significant problems in the attempt to apply this UK-based genre classification system to the Vietnamese EFL context. Specifically, there are problems with using the language and labels available in the genre categories or guidance, and the categories may have been too restrictive.

To help resolve these issues, two measures were taken. Firstly, during the second interview, each genre was discussed in turn with a focus specifically on the function or purpose of the writing, rather than using labels only. It was difficult to explain the social function of genres without using the exact language within the genre categorisations, although some synonyms were used to replace terms participants may not have been familiar with.

In addition, participants had the opportunity to add any other types of writing they had done in English. They were asked to explain this using their own

words rather than being concerned with using genre labels. Also, in addition to these genre families, participants were asked whether they had written any other types of writing such as Emails, Postal Letters, Blogs, on Facebook, Twitter, or other social media. They were also asked if they had written in English for any University or department online groups or websites. The aim was to understand a wider range of writing activities the participants may have engaged in that may or may not be related to their academic writing. It partly helped to overcome the restrictive nature of using the 13 genre categories only. This part of the interview also collected information about the subject courses and English courses the students had studied over time.

Document Analysis

Copies of the participants' university assignments and other types of writing in English were collected to ascertain the genre types students had reported in the first two interviews. During analysis, the genre of these assignments was identified using the genre families identified within the BAWE corpus. Issues related to this analysis are discussed in this section. The collection and categorisation of the assignments was as a form of triangulation and students were assured that the overall quality of the texts would not be judged, and no feedback would be given on the assignments, however elements of the writing itself may be analysed where interview data indicates its relevance. For example, if a participant highlighted a particular issue in their writing or a specific example; then the documents were used as evidence of this and to clarify aspects of their writing they were referring to.

Analysis of Genre

Within Linguistic analyses, researchers explore lexical, grammatical, discursal/rhetorical and stylistic linguistic features of writing (Crystal and Davy, 1969; Ehrlich, 2014; Flowerdew, 2014; Halliday, McIntosh and Stevens, 1964, in Bhatia, 1993: 24). Surface-level linguistic descriptions, including register analysis by Halliday et al. (1964, cited in Bhatia, 1993: 5), focus on the incidence of lexico-grammatical features in relation to different registers or situations where these features are used. Halliday's Systemic Functional

tradition analysed the situations and contexts of writing in relation to the ‘field’ (the content), ‘mode’ (e.g. writing or presenting) and ‘style’ or ‘tenor’ (the role and status of participants in the discourse) (Fairclough, 2013). Bhatia suggested these surface-level approaches are superficial and descriptive rather than explanatory. This means they have not explained why particular syntactic features are present or absent in specific registers; only that they exist (Bhatia 1993; 2002; Bhatia et al., 2004). Other studies of lexico-grammatical features have involved assessment of the frequency of particular linguistic features such as the use of tenses or stylistic differences (Biber et al., 2007a). While these have explored the use of ‘rhetorical devices’ they have been criticised for failing to consider the communicative purposes of genres.

Assessing Purpose of genre/ text types

Genres can be identified via their communicative purposes. These purposes can be achieved using rhetorical strategies of narration, description, explanation, evaluation, and instruction (Bhatia, 2004, cited in Johns, 2011: 280). Genres can be promotional, reporting, academic and introductory genres (ibid). Swales (1990, cited in Bhatia 1993: 30) identified four rhetorical moves used by most writers when writing article introduction and these moves ‘*give the genre its typical cognitive structure*’. This means that while a genre has a communicative purpose, each move within the genre also has a communicative purpose such as, ‘*establishing the field, summarising previous research, preparing for present research*’ or ‘*introducing the present research*’ (Swales, 1981 cited in Bhatia 1003: 30). The writers can choose different rhetorical strategies that are used by almost all members of the discourse community, to achieve these moves or cognitive intentions. For example, writers can ‘establish the research field’ by either ‘*asserting centrality of the topic, stating current knowledge or ascribing key characteristics*’ (Bhatia 1993: 31).

In a genre analysis of 829 student assignments, Römer and O’Donnell (2011) claimed that the main rhetorical function of Argumentative essays is to demonstrate the ‘*ability to construct a coherent argument and support it with evidence/*

examples’ whereas the rhetorical function of Critiques or Evaluations is to present ‘*positive and/ or negative assessment of an outside source/ project or text*’. Nesi and Gardner (2012: 34) explained that the purpose of student university writing is a complex notion and genre labels tend to vary between departments.

| Paper category | Rhetorical purpose | Features | Examples |
|-----------------------|---|--|--|
| Argumentative essay | demonstrates ability to construct a coherent argument and support it with evidence /examples | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - paper is thesis driven - author’s thesis is supported by pieces of evidence from an outside source - may generate a new idea/argument in the field | argumentative essay, persuasive essay, literary analysis essay |
| Creative writing | by definition, the texts in this category do not adhere to any particular rhetorical purpose or structure | | narrative writing, poetry, drama scripts |
| Critique / evaluation | presents a positive and/or negative assessment of an outside source/project/ text | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - text is driven by an in-depth assessment of a product/policy/ procedure/text (although often interwoven with a description or observation of the product/policy/ procedure/text) - gauges the effectiveness, validity, or usefulness of something - recommendations for improvement may be offered | evaluation of business practices, problem–solution, literary critique, operations report |

Table 5. Copy of MICUSP classification (Römer and O’Donnell, 2011: 170).

The social and educational purposes of student university writing can be very broad. Assignments can aim to show proficiency to an assessor, to develop writing proficiency, to engage audiences of various kinds, to prepare students to carry out research or help them develop professional skills and knowledge of contemporary work in their field (Gardner and Nesi (2013). Gardner and Nesi (2013) used interview data and university documents to ascertain the social purposes and staging patterns of university assignments (2013: 34). The social purpose of texts is different to the rhetorical functions (e.g. describe, or narrative). Case Study genres ‘*demonstrate/ develop an understanding of professional practice through the analysis of a single exemplar*’, whereas the purpose of Essay genre

family is to, ‘*demonstrate/develop the ability to construct a coherent argument and employ critical thinking skills*’. These examples are shown in Figure 8 and a full list is available in Appendix 6.

| Type of writing | Purpose (+ notes) | Examples of writing |
|-------------------------|---|---|
| 1. Case Study | <p>To show that you understand professional practice by analysing a single or just one example.</p> <p>You describe one person or one organisation with recommendations or suggestions for future action.</p> <p>Often used in Business, Medicine or Engineering.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Business start-up company report ▪ Organization analysis ▪ Patient report |
| 2. Critique | <p>To show you understand a topic by evaluating it and assessing why it is important or useful.</p> <p>This type of writing might include a description, maybe some explanation, and evaluation.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Academic paper review ▪ Approach evaluation ▪ Business/organization evaluation ▪ Financial report evaluation ▪ Interpretation of results ▪ Legislation evaluation ▪ Policy evaluation ▪ Product/building evaluation ▪ Project evaluation ▪ Review of a book/film/play/website ▪ System evaluation teaching evaluation |
| 3. Specification Design | <p>To show that you can design a product or procedure that could be manufactured or used by others.</p> <p>You might have to write about its purpose, how the design was developed and how it was tested.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Application design ▪ Building design ▪ Database design ▪ Game design ▪ Label design ▪ Product design ▪ System design ▪ Website design |

Figure 8. Examples of Nesi and Gardner’s (2012) Genre Classifications: Case Study, Critique and Specification Design.

All attempts to classify written genre have posed challenges to the analysts. A genre family that seems a ‘catch-all’ or ‘miscellaneous’ genre group is often used. For example, Römer and O’Donnell (2011: 170) suggested that, ‘*by definition, the texts in this [Creative Writing] category do not adhere to any particular rhetorical purpose or structure*’ (Figure 8). In relation to a generic text structure, Nesi and Gardner (2011: 32) stated that, the only genre family whose members do not share a common generic structure is Empathy Writing, where students have to imagine a non-academic role or audience. However, this genre family counted for only 1% of the total assignments within the BAWE

corpus with only 36 texts classified within the group out of 2858 assignments. Creative Writing was the least represented genre category within Römer and O'Donnell's group counting for just 0.8 of assignments (2011: 173). This is an interesting descriptive but it does not help to understand the reasons why some genres are more or less common than others, or how this impacts on students' perceptions of them.

Staging Patterns/ Generic Structure/ Stages

Most genre analysis relies on the identification of moves (Swales, 1990: cited by Nesi and Gardner 2012: 27) or stages (Martin 1992 cited in Nesi and Gardner 2012: 27; Biber and Conrad 2009 cited in Nesi and Gardner 2012: 31). Römer and O'Donnell (2011) stated that Critiques/ Evaluation are texts that describe and assess a product, procedure or text by gauging the effectiveness, validity or usefulness of something. Recommendations might also be offered. Nesi and Gardner (2012) claimed that a 'Critique', *'includes [a] descriptive account with optional explanation, and evaluation with optional tests.'* The feature offered by Römer and O'Donnell is more detailed, especially in relation to the evaluation aspect and the suggestion that recommendations may be given. Recommendations are featured in Nesi and Gardner's (2012) Case Study genre family.

Nesi and Gardner (2012) firstly grouped similar texts which tended to be those that *'responded to the same type of assignment brief or title and were organised in a similar way'* (Nesi and Gardner 2012: 33). Those that were not grouped were analysed in more detail by identifying the assignment purpose which was generally found within abstracts, introductions and conclusions (Nesi and Gardner 2012: 33). They also used headings and subheadings to ascertain macrostructures of the texts (Nesi and Gardner 2012: 33). They skim read the first and last sentences of each section and paragraph to determine the purpose and stages of what had been written (Nesi and Gardner 2012: 34). They were then able to identify critical features about function, stages and purpose that differentiated one set from another and arrive at the thirteen genre families. Where assignments were marginal or between two genres, or not 'prototypical' examples, they

focused on which functions and purposes were dominant or necessary in relation to the context (Nesi and Gardner 2012: 34).

Approach to genre analysis in this study

Participants were asked to identify the types of writing, in English, they had undertaken. The interviews were transcribed and field notes that were taken during the first three interviews were coded within Nvivo and analysed line by line. In the first interview participants had not been introduced to the 13 genre categories identified by Nesi and Gardner in the BAWE corpus (2012). This meant that participants were not being led by genre labels but had the opportunity to discuss types of writing using language of their choosing. The data was coded where writing activities or tasks were referred to. This led to a list of the writing activities each participant claimed to have undertaken. It was then possible to relate these writing activities to the 13 genre family categories. As participants did not always use the labels identified by Nesi and Gardner, this required some interpretation of the genres being referred to. Participants' interpretation of the genre of the writing tasks they had undertaken did not always match the guidance or genre examples provided within the guidance. For example, one participant discussed a role play activity as a case study. This meant that it was possible to misinterpret the genre and make an error identifying the genre the participants were referring to.

In order to be sure that the assignments had been categorised in line with the BAWE corpus classification system, Hilary Nesi reviewed a selection of the participants' assignments to confirm that the genres had been identified accurately. This personal communication with Nesi in 2015, provided an opportunity to analyse the structures and moves within selected assignments and discuss how they should be categorised within this study.

In the second interview participants were asked to comment on each of the 13 genre families created from the BAWE corpus (Appendix 4) with a focus on the social functions of writing rather than the labels; although the participants often

found the labels useful. The types of written texts were again categorised into the genre families identified by Nesi and Gardner (2012). There were a number of ways this was achieved, the first was to identify aspects of the structure of the texts. For example, a case study was classified as such when it offered a, *'description of a particular case, often multifaceted, with recommendations or suggestions for future action'*. It was often helpful to use typical genre examples such, business start-up company report, organization analysis or patient report. This part of the process was more leading for participants than the first stage, because they were being provided with the genre labels and language used to discuss the social functions and structures of each genre family. They were also provided with examples of genres within each genre family (Appendix 4).

To avoid the limitations of relying on reported data alone, participants provided a number of assignments they had completed throughout educational stages. The genres identified by the participants were corroborated by these assignments. This required an interpretation of the assignments provided. The genres were identified using the staging criteria outlined by Nesi and Gardner (2012) and the genres reported by participants were compared to those evidenced within assignments.

Identifying the genres of writing tasks and assignments was not always straightforward when using Nesi and Gardner's classification. A discussion of challenges in this area are discussed within the findings chapter. The validity of the analysis however depends entirely on the assignments or documents provided by the participants. Participants provided unequal amounts and types of writing in English. Their choices about which assignments to share for the purpose of the study could be perhaps related to concerns about the quality of the assignment or how much effort was put into the assignment for example. Those assignments missing from the data have been either purposely deselected by the participant or they may no longer have copies of them. Many participants did not keep all copies of every piece of writing in English. Despite this limitation, it is still possible to identify the genres that were shared by participants in a way that can be deemed more objective or comparable.

Likert Scales for perceptions of writing assignments

During the second interview, participants were asked about their attitudes towards assignments and other writing they had experienced. They were asked to identify an example of an assignment, which was either physically shared by the participant or just referred to. A Likert Scale (Figure 9) was used to rate the a) enjoyability and b) challenge level for the piece of writing. The Likert scales were scored from one to ten representing least (1) to most (10).

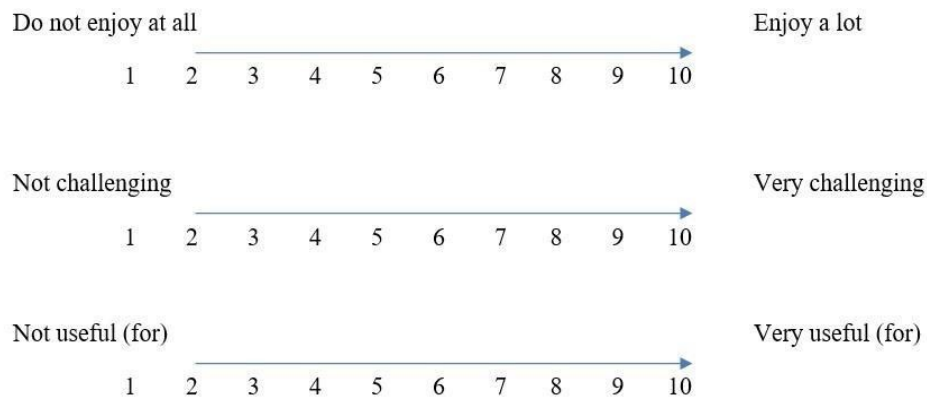


Figure 9. Likert scales used to discuss perceptions of writing tasks.

This activity provided an opportunity to understand how students perceived different writing tasks rather than an attempt to gather any quantitative data or measures of perceptions, which could be deemed inappropriate for this type of interpretive research study. The study can be regarded as interpretive in the way it recognises subjectivity, multiple realities and understandings, and individuals' interpretations of meanings. This is opposed to more 'objective' approaches that might aim to establish universal truths for example. The participants gave a number on the scale to represent their attitude and were asked to explain the reasons for the numbers selected. The same technique was used to ascertain their attitudes towards the usefulness of the writing for learning English generally, and the usefulness for university purposes. Questions were then asked about the differences or similarities in the numbers given for each piece of writing. For example, it was valuable to know why a participant scored a critical review text as a '7' for its level of challenge but gave an essay a score of challenge level of '5'. This allowed for a deeper

understanding of perceptions of different genres that were specific and personal to the participant. Given the idiosyncratic nature of these writing experiences it would not be appropriate to make direct comparisons between the quantitative scores given to each piece of writing by each participant. Rather, the explanations as to why particular assignments were more enjoyable or challenging than others, were more valuable in understanding the perceptions of assignment writing and allowed for cross-case analysis too.

This approach could be criticised for being either restricting or leading. By asking participants specifically about the enjoyably, level of challenge and usefulness of texts, they were indeed being steered towards these considerations. It may have been possible to have a more open approach to ascertaining their perceptions of the texts, for example by asking participants what they thought or felt about writing the assignment. This would be fitting with the interpretive nature of the study, but it would have also likely resulted in limited responses from participants, who would have had no guidance as to what aspects of their perceptions to comment on.

In reality, student and faculty ‘perception’ research rarely uses entirely ‘open’ questions to understand how individual perceive things. In addition, levels of like, dislike, challenge and usefulness are common questions asked to understand perceptions. For example, Miyazoe and Anderson’s (2010) asked participants to rate their perceptions of online writing in terms of their level of like/ dislike, to what extent they enjoyed the learning or were bored, and whether they found it useful or not useful. The students were asked to consider to what extent Blogs and Wikis were useful for a) reading English, b) translating from English to Japanese and c) communicating with classmates. Rao (2002) asked Chinese EFL learners whether they liked different types of communicative and non-communicative activities in their classroom including written exercises, small group discussion and dictionary work. They then asked the participants to explain why they liked or disliked various activities. Casanave and Hubbard (1992) asked faculty members to rate how important writing skills are for students. They were given a 5-point scale and asked to rate the extent to which 12 features of writing influenced

the grades they gave first year doctoral students. Punctuation, spelling and quality of content were some of the features of writing included. The staff members were asked to judge the severity of writing problems of native and non-native speakers using a scale of 1 – 3. It can be seen then, that this type of guided questioning related to perceptions, is entirely appropriate within this type of research. When combined with the opportunity for participants to explain their scores, it can overcome the problem of losing focus within the research and becoming steered-away from the research questions, which is a limitation associated with more interpretivist approaches to education research (Shipman, 1997: 84).

Analysing student perceptions

Nvivo 10 was used to code and theme all the data. Responses and explanations were analysed using different coding approaches. In-Vivo coding was used for some personal, or interpretive meanings (Saldaña, 2015: 61). The coding allowed for a participant-inspired information to be recognised while coding where information related to more conceptual and theoretical level of analysis (Saldaña, 2015: 95). The Figure 10 shows some examples of the codes that were used in relation to the question about whether and why the participants enjoy writing in English.

These codes were themed. For example, a recurrent feature of enjoyability related to success or achievement. This theme included the codes (or NVivo nodes); *‘being able to guess the answer from multiple choice, confidence right answer, good grade, high scores, and (knowing the) incorrect answer’*. Figure 10 shows some of the codes related to the challenges reported by participants. These were also themed. An example of a theme related to challenges reported is one related to structuring challenges, at sentence level and whole text concerns. The following codes were included in this theme: Difficulty ordering objectives, finding grammar mistakes, finding less popular sentences and paragraphs, linking sentences to ‘make it smooth’ and choosing sentence structures. The

findings from these ‘perception’ analyses are presented in the findings chapter on page 161 and discussed in more detail in the discussion chapter.

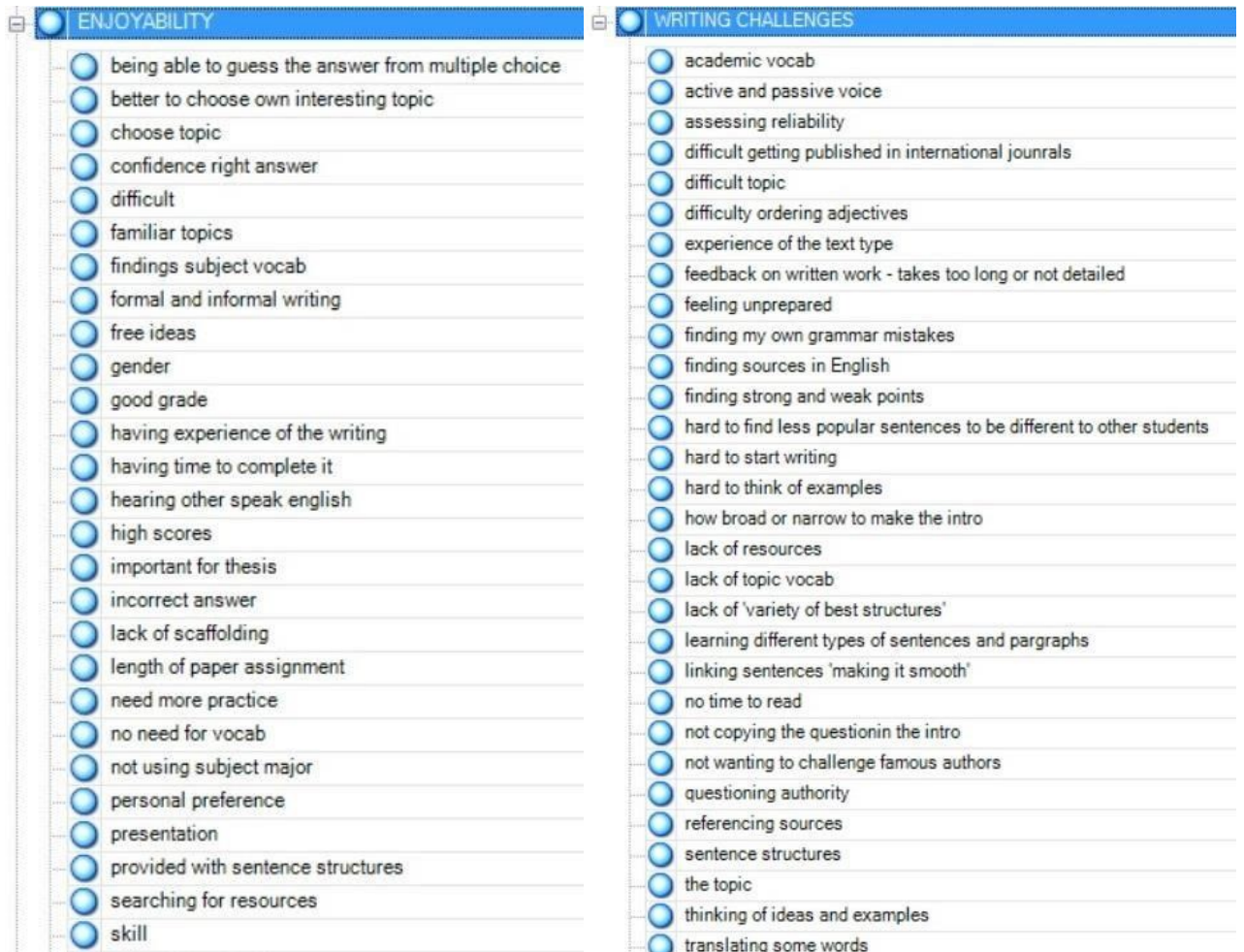


Figure 10. Codes/Nodes for participants' perceptions of enjoyment and challenge.

This process was repeated a third time when participants were asked what different writing tasks were useful for or what they felt their purpose had been. Examples of some of the initial codes are found in Figure 11. An example of an emerging theme was usefulness to practice for an exam or final assignment. The responses related to the usefulness of written assignments are described in the findings chapter.

| USEFUL |
|--|
| argumentative essay - supports brainstorming skills in VT and Eng |
| assignment about American literature - to get into the literature - not sure |
| case study of VT company - useful for learning some phrases and new vocab e.g. f |
| case study- useful to find info about VT company but difficult to find sources |
| compare and contrast essay - useful to receive feedback from friends (teacher too) |
| compare contrast essay- to prepare to write this type of essay in exam |
| contrastive analysis - more practice at writing before final |
| contrastive analysis - to distinguish between contrastive and comparative linguistics |
| critical response - improve critical skills and reading |
| description of HCMC museum - to practice writing skills |
| description of probiotic bacteria - more useful because related to subject major |
| different types of essays - how to apply to real situation or more knowledge for inter |
| essay about P.E in schools (staff course) - less helpful for research writing in MA - |
| Essay about P.E. -to learn critical thinking and debate in english. |
| everyday english |
| grammar - focused tests |
| grammar and gap fill exercises - useful to remember structure of grammar and pron |
| Int. standard program - useful to read original articles in english from universities al |
| job application exercise - useful for job in the future |
| letter writing - in CEFR A1 and A2 exam - learn English skills and learn format of the |
| letter writing - not sure useful for research writing in subject major |
| Letter writing - useful to understand structure of each part of letter and content in ea |
| more skills |
| not useful |
| PG assignments - to train their mind how to think and look in a different point of view |
| prepare a presentation for foreigners (of a famous VT tourist site) - useful for when |
| related to subject major |
| research report for student research conference - win a prize, challenge herself, use |
| resource review - didnt realise the purpose until started academic writing module th |
| Resource review - importance of critical thinkig and avoiding plagiarism |

Figure 11. Codes/nodes for participants' perceptions of the usefulness of writing tasks for different purposes.

Retrospective Reports: Interview 3

In order to understand the writing processes used by the participants, they were asked to 'talk through' an authentic and recent piece of English writing they had created for a university purpose. This activity required them to recollect what they did to complete the writing. They were asked to explain what they did from beginning to end.

Stimulated retrospective think alouds often involve showing the participant a video recording of their action, and requires them to remember what they were thinking at the time. The dependence on recall and the ability of participants to explain the iterative nature of writing reduces the validity of this approach. The ability of participants to be able to remember what they were thinking during their actions, is highly questionable and it is more or less accepted that these methods do not provide a complete picture of the cognitions at play during the activity. In response to this, the participants were asked what they did, or the stages they went through as they created the text, rather than what they were thinking about. When the participant had explained one aspect of the process, they were asked, 'What did you do next?' All participants who provided copies of their assignments took part in this part of the research. Only one postgraduate did not provide any assignments and so did not complete this task.

Participants were asked to find a recent assignment in the hope they would have better recall of what they did. The amount of time between the action and the recall is a significant factor within cognitive and retrospective research (Baddeley, 1972), but it is not the only or necessarily most important factor. For example, the topic, the time allowed to complete the assignment, the teaching instruction for the assignment and any personal meanings attached to the assignments are also of great relevance in terms of influencing accurate recall of writing behaviour (Tse, 1999), as well as the linguistic ability to put the recollected processes into meaningful words. As a consequence of these issues, research has often found that retrospective reports are rather incomplete, with significant gaps or lapses in information (*ibid*). Taken independently, they are of limited validity when capturing the composing activities of L2 writers and there is a high risk that participants offer information they believe the researcher would like to hear (Shipman, 1997: 86). The stages of composing or the writing activities reported by the participants are outlined in the findings chapter.

Concurrent think aloud protocols

Interviews 4: Writing-only task

Given the limitations of the retrospective report methods, participants were asked to undertake Plakan's (2008) writing activities described within the pilot study section above. They were asked to explain what they were thinking about as they completed the writing. The same video and drawing example from the pilot study were used to show the participants what it looks like when people attempt to offer verbalisations of their cognitions during an activity. Having confirmed they felt comfortable and able to complete the task, they did not have the opportunity to practice the procedure, which may have impacted on the content and quality of their verbalisations.

During this session, participants followed the same procedure as the pilot sessions. This involved them undertaking a writing-only task described in the pilot study on page 76. The choice of topic and genre was an important consideration in this activity (Flower and Hayes, 1981). The participants level of confidence or apprehension towards the task was likely based on their prior experience and success of writing on this topic, including the type of vocabulary required, as well as their ability to generate ideas. Participants' responses to the task are described in the Findings chapter on page 169. In addition, they had to have some understanding and experience of writing an essay.

Two participants had not experienced writing an essay in English and their English proficiency was significantly lower than other participants, so they were given the option to choose whichever type of writing they wanted to undertake. The readability of the source texts in the reading-writing task may have also been too difficult for their level of English proficiency. This may have led them to feel less apprehensive than other participants who did not have a choice of topic or genre.

There was unlimited time given to the task and it could have been continued in a following session, although the participants were aware that the session would last no longer than two hours. They were encouraged to explain as much as possible about their thoughts as they read the question and started the process of answering the question. They were given no other instructions but were told they could use any resource they would normally use to complete a piece of writing, such as the Internet or a dictionary for example. If the participant was quiet for longer than 30 seconds then they were prompted to explain their thinking by using the statement, '*What are you thinking?*'. Where answers to this prompt were limited, such as '*I am thinking what to write next*', they were asked whether they could explain it in more detail. This led to more detail on most occasions but not in all cases.

The session was audio-recorded and verbalisations were transcribed. Field notes were taken to record what the participant was doing, including when they were pausing, editing the writing or re-reading material. These also included the behaviours during pauses, such as tapping a pen or looking out of the window. They also captured how participants had laid out the various pieces of paper and when they read back over the task prompts or made changes to their writing. The field notes detailed whether whole sentences were scratched through/ erased, or whether particular words were being changed. They also noted when a dictionary or other resource was used. This level of detail may not have been captured on video, although it would have been more reliable to trace any revisions to texts using Google Docs, S-notation, Trace-It, JEdit and LS graphing. The decision was made not to use these because the tracking process could have distracted the participants further. It was also important that participants had the choice whether to hand-write or type during the tasks. This is a confounding variable and there may be an impact on writing evident within the analysis and findings.

In addition to the behaviours recorded during the writing tasks, the field notes included analytic memos about my own thoughts during the activity. These included questions I planned to ask the participant after the writing, which were related to the writing processes or content. Memos were also written

when similarities or differences between participants or processes were noticed. For example, two participants pinpointed that they did not understand the meaning of the word, 'revitalised' within a source text. Other memos included how the behaviours or texts being created were related to the individual in question. For example, a Business major tended to give business examples in their writing but a TESOL major offered examples from applied linguistics. These types of differences were recorded when they were noticed.

While the reliability and rigour of field notes and analytic memos are often questioned they are deemed valuable insights for analysis and can be used to help researchers reflect on the data collection events and dynamics (Creswell, 2014; Taylor et al., 2015). They can aid recollection or recall of important connections made during the data collection stage. This supports the notion that analysis occurs concurrently during data collection itself. It is a complex process whereby the researcher's schemata are equally as active as the participants. This means that the subject knowledge and experiences of the researcher come into play, this steers the focus or attention to particular aspects of events (Creswell, 2014; Taylor et al., 2015). This 'noticing'- effect can be attributed to what the researcher aims to focus on, their goals or expectations, but also additional subconscious recall of existing knowledge that make synaptic connections with 'online' or current activities. It is this complex process of cognitive connection-making and analysis that can contribute to the opaqueness of data analysis (Zohrabi, 2013).

The verbalisation process could have impacted significantly on the participants' 'normal' thinking and composing behaviour. The protocols transcribed are thus incomplete snapshots of some things the participant might think during the writing process (Cooper and Holzman, 1983), or may reflect what they think the researcher wants to hear. The protocols reflect the aspects of cognition or consciousness that the participants are aware of (Cooper and Holzman, 1983) and do not reflect the full range of thinking or 'meta-cognitive processes' they are engaging in (Nisbett and Wilson, 1977). The same limitations however can be applied to any qualitative research method. It is accepted, for example, that highly structured interviews or

observations can only ever offer an imperfect grasp of the total reality experienced by an individual (Flower and Hayes, 1981). Participants have difficulty answering questions or behaving unauthentically in many research studies and researchers have to be transparent about the limitations of the methods they selected. Given the nature of the research questions however, concurrent think-aloud protocols provided the closest real-time data about some of the considerations participants have while composing. Taken together with the fieldnotes, it provides evidence of the process or stages that the participant engaged in during that writing activity. Given the uniqueness and artificial nature of the writing task however, it is not possible to use this data to say that participants always or often follow the same process for assignment writing.

The act of creating verbalisations in an L2 language also adds an important aspect to the task that could have different effects for each participant, depending on the extent to which they think in L1 or L2 (Hayes and Flower 1983; Cummins, 1981). This is difficult to ascertain and participants in the study were asked to say, during and following the concurrent think aloud activity, whether they thought about any aspect of the writing in Vietnamese.

Despite the limitations of concurrent think aloud protocols, it is possible to compare the activities participants reported to have undertaken within their retrospective reports, with their behaviours and verbalisations during the think aloud process. Although the genres tended to differ for these two research tasks, they can be used to offer some support for the self-reports provided by the participants. An order-effect of the tasks however may have led participants to engage in the stages or activities they had previously reported to have done, rather than do what they would 'normally' do.

Interview 5: Reading-Writing Task

The same reading-writing task from the pilot study was used in the main study. Following each writing activity, participants were asked questions about their writing taken from notes made throughout the session. Questions were reserved for the end of the writing so as to avoid disrupting the writing and cognitive processes of the participant. The questions related to how the participant felt about the writing activity, whether it was similar or different to the first writing activity and specific questions such as why the participant had chosen to erase or alter certain aspects of their writing and the reasons for this. Questions were also asked about the content and examples written or excluded within the end product. The findings of the analyses of this data is found in Chapter 4.

Analysing writing processes

Preparation and analysis of think-aloud protocols

The think-aloud verbalisations were transcribed including pauses, false starts, repetitions and laughing episodes. Hand-written field notes and analytic memos were also incorporated into this. This meant it was possible to fill some of the behavioural gaps in the participants' verbalisations. It also helped to overcome some of the problems of not using a video camera, because it made it possible to match the observed record of the behaviour with the verbalisation and marry these two data sources with the participants' texts. For hand-written tasks, changes that had been reported in the field notes could be traced (whether they had been verbalised during the think-aloud or not). For those who typed their writing/ texts, their writing activity was tracked only via field notes. The transcript became a temporal representation of the think-aloud activity in terms of what was said, what was done and what was produced. It aimed to give as full a picture as possible of the lived activity, to enhance the data available for analysis.

Having collated and prepared the data into a manageable form, it was then possible to begin a more systematic process of analysis. It was necessary to decide how to capture the writing processes verbalised and observed within the writing tasks, while recognising that this ‘filtering process’ (Saldaña, 2015: 116) would result in selection and creation of some codes, at the expense of others. These selections became a particular “*lens which tend to reflect the particular theoretical constructs, personal involvement and other concepts that have prioritised throughout the project*” (Saldaña, 2015: 116).

A number of seminal L1 and L2 writing studies were reviewed (Emig, 1971; Perl, 1979; Pianko, 1979; Scardamalia and Bereiter, 1987; Flowers and Hayes, 1981; Cumming, 1989; Plakans, 2008; De Larios, Manchón and Murphy, 2008; De Larios, Marin and Murphy, 2001; De Larios, Murphy and Manchón, Tse, 1993) with a focus on their approaches to data analysis, and elements of their coding were combined to create a coding system based on perceived strengths and limitations of each; in addition to codes generated by the data itself. The coding system for this part of the data analysis is summarised in Table 6.

A problem with the analysis of think-aloud is the operationalisation of participants’ verbalisations. There are important differences in the behaviours included in the same labels across studies. In addition, some codes are entirely absent from some analyses. Specifically, Plakans (2008) identified 11 strategies within reading-to-write composing processes whereas Manchón et al. (2009) identified 7 composing behaviours. Both studies coded their think-aloud protocol transcripts using codes from existing research, combined with codes deduced from their own data. Manchón et al. (ibid) engaged in a lengthy recursive process of applying a number of coding systems to their protocols to find the most suitable coding system. They reported a 70% inter-rater agreement having had two researchers code 3 randomly selected protocols. In terms of similarities, L1 and L2 composing studies tend to split the writing process up into two or three stages. They are often referred to as ‘preplanning’, ‘writing’ and ‘revision’ stages, or similar terms (Scardamalia and Bereiter, 1987; Cumming 1989; De Larios et al., 1999, 2001, 2008; Emig, 1971; Flowers and Hayes, 1981, Hayes and Flower, 1983; Perl, 1979; Pianko, 1979).

Pre-writing processes/ behaviours

Perl (1979) asked participants to compose aloud on five separate occasions and identified the following stages a) General planning, which included '*organizing one's thoughts for writing, discussing how one will proceed*'. This was different to b) Local planning, which involved '*talking out what idea will come next*' and c) Global planning where participants discussed '*changes in drafts*' (Perl, 1979: 320). At this pre-writing stage, Perl noticed that d) Commenting included '*sighing, making a comment or judgment about the topic*' and interpreting where the topic was rephrased in order to better understand it (Perl, 1979: 320). The additional behaviours coded during the study were e) Assessing, f) Questioning g) Talking leading to writing h) Talking and writing at the same time, g) Repeating, h) Reading related to the topic which included, i) Reading the directions j) Reading the question and k) Reading the statement. Perl (ibid) also identified l) Reading related to one's own written product, m) Reading one sentence or a few words, n) Reading a number of sentences together and o) Reading the entire draft through.

Recent studies and models accept that these stages are not necessary linear, although there are some general patterns about what L2 writers tend to do at certain points in the writing process (Manchón et al., 2008). One of the earlier models of L1 composing by Flowers and Hayes (1981) (see Figure 12) was expanded two years later to better represent the recursive nature of revision, (Scardamalia and Bereiter, 1983). This later model included a Compare, Diagnose and Operate (CDO) planning stage.

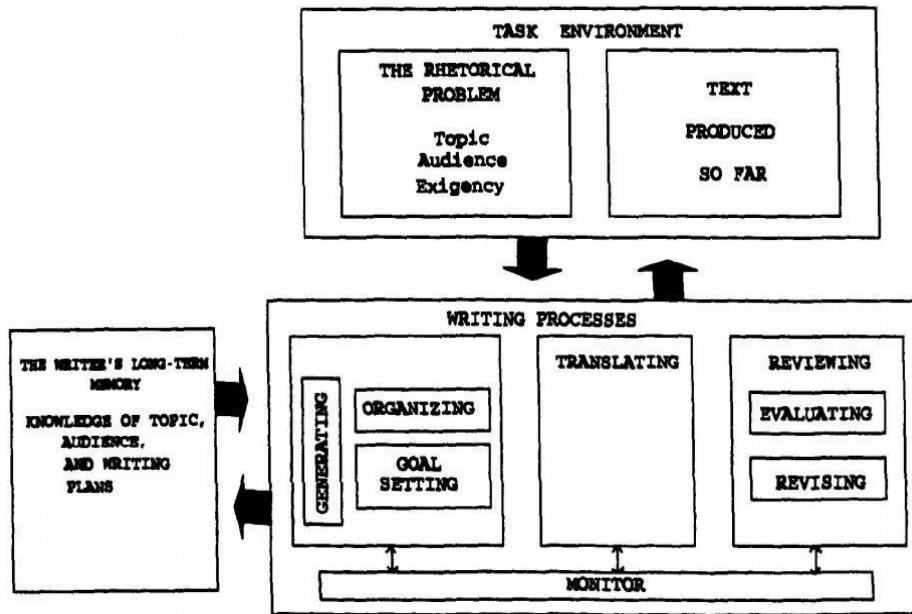


Figure 12. Copy of Flower and Hayes' (1981) Model of L1 Composing Process.

Cognitive L1 writing models of the 1990s featured assumptions made by Baddeley's concept of working memory (Kellog, 2001) and theories of long term memory including the role of task schema (Hayes 1977), as well as exploring how motivation and social aspects influence the writing process. In 2001, Hayes and Chenoweth amended their 1996 model in order to show how writing strategies and long-term memory capacity influence fluency (see Figure 13). They included the written text itself, the audience and any materials used to write the text. These were said to include reference texts like dictionaries, style books, notes or peer comments. These were described as 'external' factors. Internal processes included proposing, translating, revising, and transcribing; and these activate working memory and long-term memory (Becker, 2006: 34).

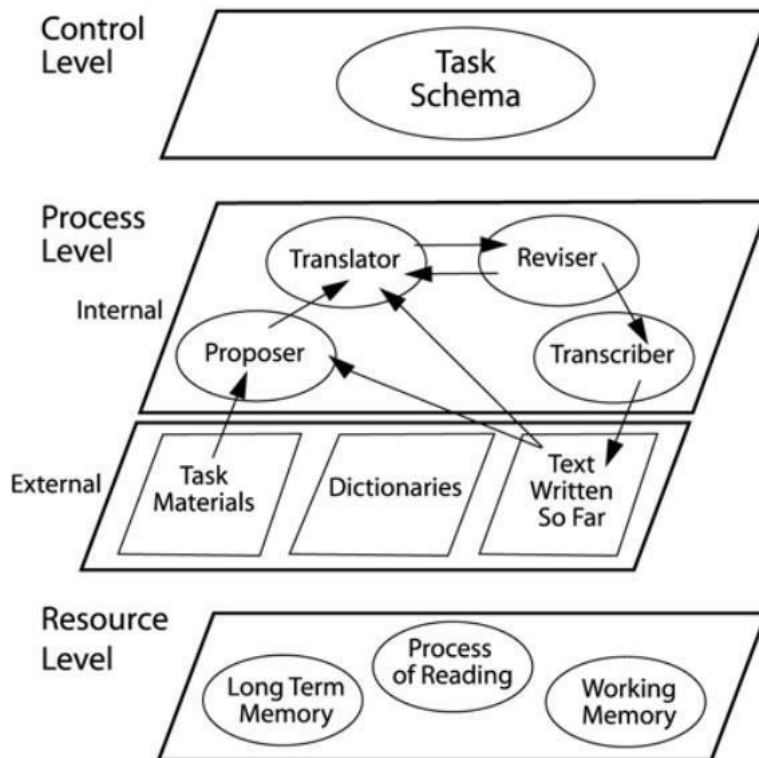


Figure 13. Copy of Chenoweth and Hayes'(2001) L2 model of four basic writing actions.

The first pre-writing or planning stage is similar in the work of Plakans (2008) and Manchón et al. (2008). They have both included a) Reading the prompt (Manchón et al., 2008) or b) Reading the task prompt (Plakans, 2008). Plakans (Figure 14) also added the activity c) Reading and interacting with source texts, which is a reflection of the focus on reading-to-write tasks.

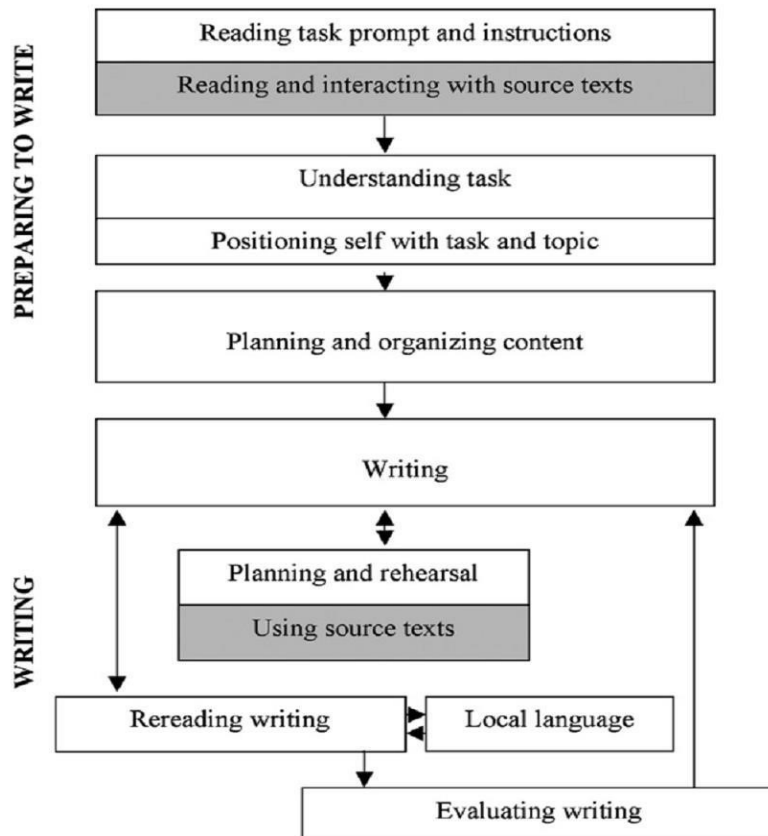


Figure 14. Plakans' (2008) model of composing process for reading-to-write tasks.

This type of 'Process coding' tends to use verbs for actions and processes (Charmaz, 2008: 106 cited in Saldaña, 2015: 98). Both studies included a stage where the writer attempts to understand the task demands. De Larios et al. (2008) (Figure 15) called this 'Task Interpretation/ Conceptualisation'. Plakans adds to this a 'Positioning of the self in relation to the task and topic'. Both studies also code for 'Planning', which, for De Larios et al. (2008: 116), involved 'Retrieval and generation of ideas'. It also involved goal setting. Plakans also added 'Organising content' at this stage (Plakans, 2008: 117).

Based on this literature, the 'Pre- writing' coding system includes the following: a) reading the task prompt, b) reading and interacting with source texts, c) task conceptualisation which includes d) understanding the task and e) positioning oneself in relation to the task and topic.

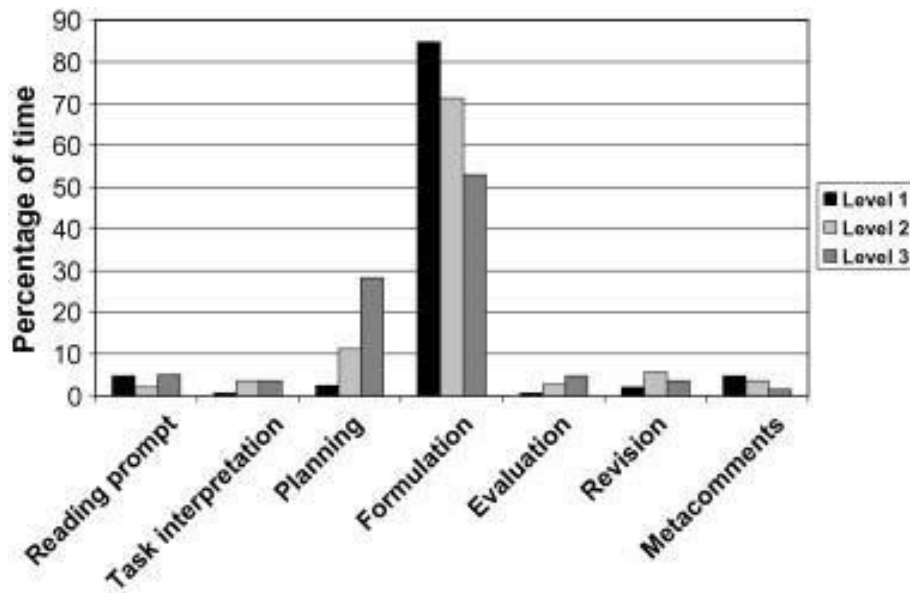


Figure 15. De Larios et al. (2008), Time spent on different composing activities for participants with different proficiency levels.

Writing processes/ behaviours

Coding systems for the Writing stage of composing have been more complex and open to different interpretations of the same data. It is important to be completely clear about the code labels and behaviours included within them. For Plakans (2008) this included a) writing, b) planning and rehearsal, c) using source texts, d) re-reading writing, e) local language and f) evaluating writing⁷. The local language code referred to verbalisations on ‘*linguistic issues, such as grammar, lexis and academic style*’ (Plakans, 2008: 116). The activities involved in the ‘planning’ during this writing stage were less transparent.

This part of the composing process was regarded as the Formulation stage for De Larios et al., (2008). These researchers have investigated how writers restructured their writing using reformulations (De Larios et al., 1999; 2001) and how they engaged in various problem-solving behaviours (Becker, 2006; De Larios et al., 1999; Flower and Hayes, 1977). They have divided restructuring processes into actions that aim to reformulate the text; to

‘upgrade’ it in order to express their meaning better, or to ‘compensate’ when they do not have access to the linguistic resources needed to express their intended meaning.

Within this model, writers who aim to upgrade their texts tend to focus on ideational or textual concerns such as changing or adding to their intended meanings (ideational), or being concerned with cohesion, coherence, register and avoiding repetition (textual) (De Larios et al., 1999) (Figure 16). Their study indicated that more proficient L2 writers spend more time on these upgrade restructuring activities than lower proficiency writers, who tend to grapple with compensating for a lack of linguistic expertise.

Compensation strategies included attempts to find L2 meaning from an L1 concept (lexical) or problems with finding the subjunctive mood L2 equivalent for example (‘morpho-syntactic’ problems). In another study, Manchón, De Larios and Murphy (2000) also discussed immediate and sentence level revision called ‘*repairs*’ which are categorised as a type of reformulation rather than revision. In their 2007 study, Manchón et al. conceptualised ‘revision’ as *‘those episodes in which the writer changes, adds to, or deletes previously written segments of different length’*. Within this project, revision is used as an umbrella term to capture activities where writers make changes to the text. This can take the form of sentence level lexical revisions or ‘repairs’ (Manchón et al., 2007) or more ideational and textual concerns including expressing meaning, and use of appropriate register for example.

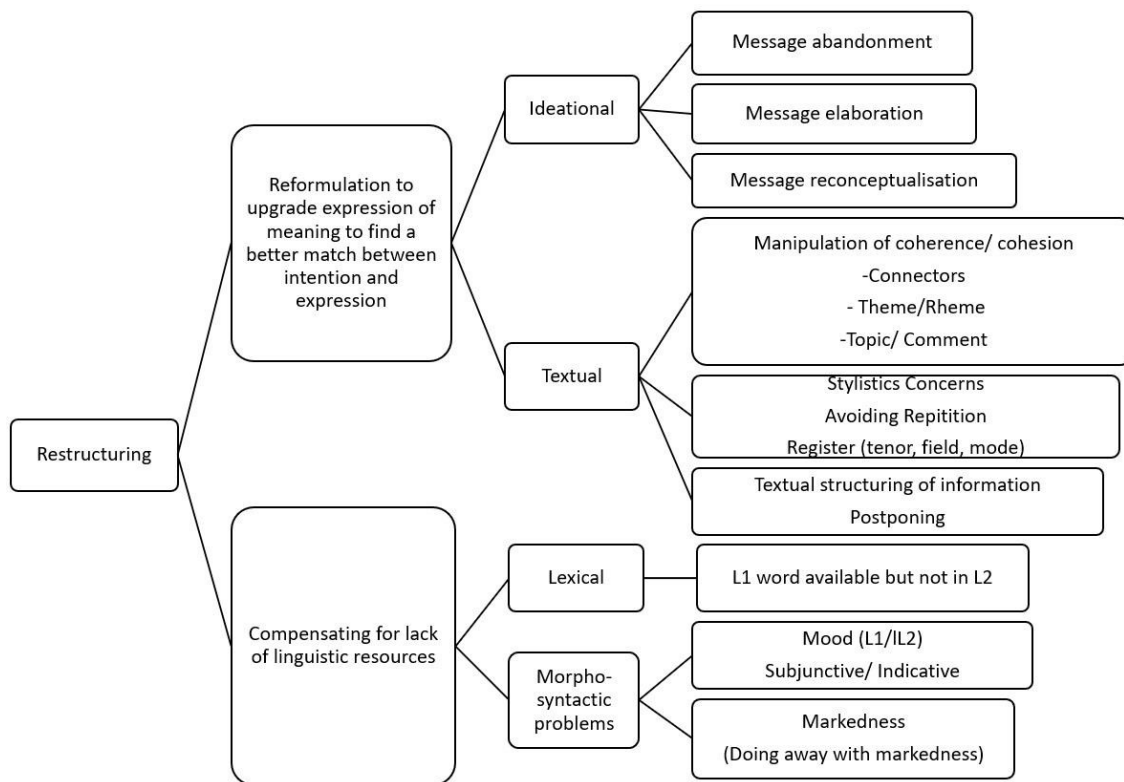


Figure 16. De Larios et al' (1999) Model of major types of restructuring behaviour in L2 composition.

For Perl (1979: 321), the writing stages within the think- aloud sessions were said to include, writing silently, writing aloud and editing. In a similar fashion to De Larios et al. (2008) the editing episodes had a number of features such as ‘adding (or deleting) syntactic markers, words, phrases, or clauses’, ‘indicating concern for a grammatical rule’, ‘adding, deleting, or considering the use of punctuation’, ‘considering or changing spelling’, ‘changing the sentence structure through embedding’, ‘coordination or subordination, indicating concern for appropriate vocabulary (word choice)’, ‘considering or changing verb form’ as well as ‘Periods of silences’. Perl (1979) engaged in a micro – analysis of ‘editions’ made during the writing tasks. A summary of the findings are provided by Perl in Figure 17.

| Editing Changes | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|------|------|------|---------|---------|--------|
| | Tony | Dee | Stan | Lueller | Beverly | Totals |
| Total number of words produced | 1720 | 1271 | 1640 | 1754 | 2179 | 8564 |
| Total form | 210 | 24 | 49 | 167 | 100 | 550 |
| Additions | 19 | 2 | 10 | 21 | 11 | 63 |
| Deletions | 44 | 9 | 18 | 41 | 38 | 150 |
| Word choice | 13 | 4 | 1 | 27 | 6 | 51 |
| Verb changes | 4 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 12 | 26 |
| Spelling | 95 | 4 | 13 | 60 | 19 | 191 |
| Punctuation | 35 | 4 | 5 | 11 | 14 | 69 |
| Total content | 24 | 7 | 13 | 2 | 21 | 67 |

| Editing Changes | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|------|------|------|---------|---------|--------|
| | Tony | Dee | Stan | Lueller | Beverly | Totals |
| Total number of words produced | 1720 | 1271 | 1640 | 1754 | 2179 | 8564 |
| Total form | 210 | 24 | 49 | 167 | 100 | 550 |
| Additions | 19 | 2 | 10 | 21 | 11 | 63 |
| Deletions | 44 | 9 | 18 | 41 | 38 | 150 |
| Word choice | 13 | 4 | 1 | 27 | 6 | 51 |
| Verb changes | 4 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 12 | 26 |
| Spelling | 95 | 4 | 13 | 60 | 19 | 191 |
| Punctuation | 35 | 4 | 5 | 11 | 14 | 69 |
| Total content | 24 | 7 | 13 | 2 | 21 | 67 |

Figure 17. Perl's (1979) Types of editions made by participants.

Both Plakans (2008) and De Larios et al. (2008) indicated an action where writers re-read their writing or 'backtrack'. Manchón et al. (2000) proposed that this serves both retrospective and prospective purposes. When writers rescan the task prompts, their plans and notes, they can re-check the task requirements, and whether their ideas are still appropriate to meet these. They can match their plan to the current writing so far but also re read the prompt to plan their next stage of writing or to generate more ideas. They can also use this 'backtracking' capacity to solve linguistic problems, such as avoiding repetition for example.

Plakans (2008) and De Larios (2008: 119) referred to 'Evaluation' or "Evaluating Writing' in which writers '*assess the efficacy of his/ her pragmatic, textual, and linguistic decisions.*' De Larios (2008: 130) also include metacognitive processes or 'metacomments' which are occasions where writers verbalise their 'mental processes' or their view about the progress made *within the task* (an 'on- task'

metacomment) and 'off-task comments' which indicate that the 'writer's attention is not focused on the task at hand. These comments may be on topics such as what other students are doing, personal issues, or what they can see out of the window'. 'Offtask' comments were relatively obvious to spot within the think- aloud data but there is a risk of overlap between aspects of metacomments and aspects of evaluation.

Pianko (1979) added 'Stopping' as a behaviour to describe the time where the participants had written all they want to for that time and say they are finished. Pianko was interested in the participants' behaviour at this time in belief that these would help to indicate their attitude towards the writing (Pianko 1979: 8). Plakans coding system did not allow insight into when and why the participants were faced with challenges when interacting with the texts. These verbalisations were evident within the protocols, and so 'Challenge with source text' and 'Prediction of topic/ task' codes were added to the coding system within this study.

With a coding system in place, it was possible to undertake a line-by-line analysis of the data. Saldaña (2015: 23) referred to this process as 'splitting' which allows for more detailed scrutiny of the data and avoids 'superficial analysis'. At the same time, however this approach can lead to an overwhelming quantity of codes and concepts.

Retrospective reports of writing

Each participant was asked to talk about how they created a recent assignment or task for university purposes. All the stages reported for each person were collated and themed in relation to the pre-writing stage, the writing stage and post writing. Initial codes were created from the steps reported including some in-vivo codes. These are available in Appendix For example, within the prewriting stage, participants spoke about choosing articles, choosing an interesting topic or something different to other students, detailed reading, engaging with texts, identifying the purpose of the writing, receiving instructions of the teacher (including how to structure the writing), brainstorming, bullet points, collect data, noting the main ideas (of reading and

for assignment), planning using columns, reading the research questions in articles, and writing an outline. This set of codes also includes some memotype notes such as *'participant skipping ahead – Michelle pulls back'* and *'contradictory info'*. These were used to help during the analysis and reflection about the activity.

Writing processes within think-aloud protocols

The same approach to analysis was undertaken for the writing processes reported and observed within the think-aloud tasks. These were more detailed compared to the stages reported in the retrospective reports and were grouped into the stages of writing identified within earlier studies. Table 6 shows how different parts of earlier composing models (De Larios et al., 1999, 2008; Plakans, 2008) were combined for this purpose. Additional codes were also created from the data.

| From existing coding systems | Data-generated codes |
|---|----------------------------|
| Reading the task prompt | Prediction of topic/ task |
| Reading and interacting with source texts | Challenge with source text |
| Task conceptualisation - understanding the task | Idea generation |
| Positioning oneself in relation to the task and topic | Example generation |
| Planning and organising content | Audience awareness |
| Revision - repairs | Evidence of instruction |
| Revision – upgrade, ideational | Content linked to Vietnam |
| Revision – upgrade, textual | Use of L1. |
| Revision – compensatory, lexical | |
| Revision – compensatory, morpho - syntactic | |
| Backtracking | |
| Evaluating writing | |

Table 6. Examples of codes used for think- aloud protocol analysis.

Recurring aspects of the writing verbalisations and behaviours that were somehow separate to the writing processes, were also themed. The frequency of these features was taken to indicate their importance across cases. These include the influence of teachers, the use of L1 and the choice of content and examples.

Analysing the influence of sociocultural context on writing

A separate analysis of all material collected was undertaken to find instances of social, cultural, economic or historical influences on writing or perceptions of writing. The data for this research question is drawn from the findings related to the first three research questions. Participants were not directly asked how they perceived their sociocultural context influenced their writing or perceptions of writing. Instead, information that related to different aspects of the sociocultural context was synthesised.

Table 7 was used to organise data. The levels of sociocultural context are linked to the sociocultural framework described earlier in this chapter (Figure 2). This process was repeated for each participant and all instances of this kind were combined to find any patterns or idiosyncrasies about the influence of participants' contexts. This finding of this themed synthesis is described in details in the findings chapter.

| Sociocultural context level | Related to types of writing/ genres | Related to perceptions of challenge, enjoyability and usefulness | Related to writing process/ behaviours |
|--|--|---|---|
| International level | Examples included here | | |
| National, historical, political economical | | | |
| National – ELT and VT education University and departmental level | | | |
| Personal level | | | |

Table 7. Analysis framework for the influence of sociocultural context participants' experiences of writing.

Participant Validation

Participants were provided with Summaries of their interviews and writing tasks to check and confirm their consent to use the information. A number of participants made changes to their information. These changes included adding or editing Vietnamese words or adding inaudible or misheard words. For example, one summary read,

'So some papers mention some old words that {name} was trying to remember... like the word 'yeudue/ yếu điếm' (Vietnamese), which refers to the negative characteristics of a people'.

The participant added the Vietnamese term that is highlighted in yellow. Some participants also added extra information, which is indicated in red in the following examples.

“languages to choose from, such as French, Russian or Chinese but these are available in other High schools (especially High Schools for gifted students and schools specializing in foreign languages).”

“entrance exam didn’t need to explain much about the instructions because they students could understand them (and easy guess, too).”

“Linh completed writing in English during her undergraduate degree that included paragraphs, dialogues and essays related to business and economic matters (a typical essay was about the advantages and disadvantages of taking part in the World Trade Organisation (WTO))”

Two participants removed information, seemingly because they deemed it to be socially and politically sensitive. The information had been their explanation of the, then, current situation of Vietnamese-Chinese relations and the government’s response to this.

Having made these changes, all participants confirmed the information gathered was accurate and gave consent for their data to be used. Most revisions did not involve any changes to meaning; however, some interviews with an interpreter raised more concerns in this area. For those who undertook the interviews in Vietnamese, their summaries were translated back into Vietnamese following a number of validation stages, which are described next.

Validation of Vietnamese-English Simultaneous Interpretations

The research raised a number of issues regarding the influence of interpreters or the dynamics created when interpreters are a part of writing research. Some of the most crucial concerns were ensuring that questions were accurately translated to the participants, ensuring that participants’ answers were accurately translated back without additional explanation from the interpreter and ensuring my own words and questioning were not part of data.

Ensuring questions were accurately translated to the participants

There were some indications of error in the translation or interpretation which showed a misunderstanding of the question. These included a) receiving an answer that did not match the question, b) the answer changing when asked in a different way, c) the participant indicating an error or misunderstanding after reading the interview summary, d) questions not being fully answered and having to return to them in the following interview and e) inconsistencies in answers across interviews evidenced within transcriptions and summaries.

A number of actions were taken to address this issue. Firstly, the chosen interpreter had time to read and discuss the interview schedule before the interviews. This meant he could grasp the nature of the questions and discuss possible answers from participants. However, most questions during the interviews were based on the participants' initial responses and so were unplanned. On these occasions, the interpreter was asked to feedback (in English) what he thought the question was before asking the participant in Vietnamese. The interpreter had misunderstood the question a few times and it was possible to clarify the question before an error occurred. As a third measure, the interpreter read all interview summaries while listening simultaneously to the audio recordings. It was possible to highlight any errors/ possible misunderstandings. Each of these were discussed during a face to face meeting and changes were made. The interpreter made a number of changes including changing nouns, adding additional information, removing information, correcting Vietnamese terms and factual information.

Some vocabulary changes are shown below:

~~“explanations~~ (inspirations)”.

“It was about ~~estimation??~~ probability and statistics in Biology.”

Generally speaking, these types of examples did not really cause huge changes to the meaning. A sentence that was removed is shown below. This could possibly be an

occasion where I had asked a question that was unanswered or information that the interpreter had added.

“Oanh’s high school score was ???.”

Examples of other changes to information are below:

“Chau thinks it would be easier to study these in English because she has to study for her Major in English and so the teacher decreases ~~the difficulty~~ the amount of knowledge and the number of lectures of the programme because they were learning in English and this was the period of time she started to learn English.”

“Very often, Chau didn’t understand ~~what the lecturer meant~~ the teachers also explained in English so they might not still understand.”

These changes partially altered the response but the same or very similar meaning applied.

Ensuring participants’ answers were accurately translated back to me

To help resolve this problem, the answers provided by the interpreter were reworded to clarify or confirm the answer in a different way. This was a very successful in identifying misunderstandings. By providing a summary of the interviews to the participants, which had been translated into Vietnamese by the same interpreter, it was possible for any errors in meaning to be discussed by the two people who were involved in the original conversation. The participants could make changes to their answers provided in the summary.

Finally, the interpreter’s Vietnamese-American pronunciation of ‘can’ and ‘can’t’ initially caused some confusion about what participants said they could or could not do, so this was always double-checked during the interviews and in the written summaries. There were some important changes to meaning made on these occasions. For example, there is a big difference in saying that a participant can write essays in English or they cannot.

As a fourth measure, all interviews in Vietnamese were transcribed by a second Vietnamese speaker with higher level of English proficiency than the original interpreter; they checked and highlighted any translation issues. This part of the

validation process was insightful. Here is an excerpt of a transcript of the talk in Vietnamese only. ‘T’ is the translator and ‘S’ is the student.

“T: What do you intend to sell?”

T: It means what are you intend to create to sell, more particularly?

S: I provide the secondary goods to places in need, for example... If we explain what secondary good is it will be better.

S: ...probably provide some shafts

T: Even if we translate she would not understand what secondary goods are.

T: Ah..... what she meant is that do you sell your ideas or your research or a particular product?”

In this example, the interpreter potentially limited the depth of the explanation the participant wanted to offer. From the second transcriptions, these instances happened more at the beginning of the data collection stage and appeared to occur less often as interviews progressed. The interpreter grew more familiar with the stages and content of the research questions and perhaps my style of questioning. On the flip-side however, there were times when the interpreter started to predict questions and tell the participant what would happen next, or later, before it happened. I noticed this on a couple of occasions during interviews when the interpreter spoke in Vietnamese when I had not asked a question. Most of these instances were found during the second transcription stage and did not cause any real validation concerns during the data collection stages. There were also occasions where the interpreter wanted to help the participant to understand more about the genres or genre labels being used. One example is shown below.

“T: When did you write this?”

S: Oh, you said that I no longer write it? I only read it? Er... This critical type before I’ve never read and written.

T: Because it is an evaluation. It’s called critical writing but it can be an evaluation. We evaluate about...

S: So now I have an essay, I send to the teacher, she evaluates it and send back to me, is that critical writing?

T: Yeah it’s a written literature. Here, there’s one here.

S: Critical writing.”

This type of interaction is important because the interpreter could be leading or even misleading the participant. This instance took place when the participant was

reporting which types of writing they had completed. It shows the difficulty of using the genre labels rather than the purpose of the writing. The interpreter was explaining what he thought was involved in evaluation rather than going back to the purpose of the writing, which I had outlined. This example also shows why it was so important to have copies of assignments completed, rather than relying on self-reports.

Ensuring the interpreter did not add their own points

There were occasions where the interpreter provided explanations (to me) that, intuitively, felt to surpass the knowledge or expertise of the participants. The consequences of adding additional information or explanations not explicitly given by the participant was explained to the interpreter. Where this issue was suspected the interpreter was asked the question, '*Did he/ she say that or was that your word/s?*'. This happened a couple of times where the interpreter said, '*what he means is*'.... followed by extra examples to support what the participant was saying. Another measure taken here, was to have the original interpreter listen back following the interview and highlight any information, words or examples added that was not directly said by the participant. The second Vietnamese interpreter also highlighted where the interpreter added information to the data, although this error had been almost eliminated after the first cycle of 'summary-fixing'.

Ensuring my own words/ questioning not part of data

When writing the summaries for the participants and during data analysis, the words from the participants (and interpreter) were used. For example, I used the word 'boring' in a first interview in Hanoi to relay a response from the participant. While the participant agreed to it, this type of leading statement (even when used in a clarification mode), should not be included in the findings because it did not come from the participant, it may not have been a reflection of their attitudes at all.

While these validation measures reduced the amount of data available for analysis, they did ensure that the material analysed was deemed accurate and a valid reflection of the information provided by participants.

Ethical considerations

Given the case study nature of the research, complete anonymity could not be assured. Pseudonyms are used to reduce the risk of participants being identified but the thick descriptions of educational experiences and other sociocultural information that are directly relevant to the research questions, could make the person identifiable to others, especially within the Vietnamese research institutions. On occasion, participants indicated some concern that others may judge the information they provide. To reduce the risk of stress or concern on this issue, the participants were made aware of their right to withdraw their data at any stage of the research process and they received copies of the interview summaries to check and confirm their approval, as a form of participant validation.

The participants were told how their data would be stored and how it would remain confidential, only to be shared for the purposes explained to them. If at any time, their information is required for any other purposes, not discussed within the original consent agreement, then additional consent will be sought from them via contact details they provide.

The research required awareness of topics and issues of social and cultural sensitivity within the two regions of Vietnam. These issues include discussions of social class or unequal income distribution, different ethnic groupings, and a reluctance to openly discuss disagreement with official policies (Scott et al., 2005). In Scott's work, these issues impacted in a number of ways, including how the interpreter translated information from particular ethnic minority groups for example. This observation also raises issues about the role of the interpreter and their own sociocultural background and understanding of social research processes including issues of interpretation and objectivity. Permission was sought from participants to engage with the interpreters and they were able to choose between an interpreter from the

university and one from outside the university. Participants also had the right to request a different interpreter at any time.

This chapter has explained how the research was conducted. It has been transparent in challenging embedded assumptions and has described the stages of data collection as fully as possible. Details of the approaches to analysis and coding methods have been demonstrated. A frank discussion about the impact of validation measures has also been shared. The limitations of methods and the process has been highlighted and will be assessed more fully in relation to the findings within the discussion chapter. The next chapter describes the research findings.

Findings

This chapter describes the research findings. The research questions were:

1. Which genres do ten Vietnamese Higher Education students write in English for university purposes?
2. Which writing processes do the ten Higher Education students engage in when writing in English for university?
3. How do the 10 students perceive writing for university purposes in terms of a) challenge, b) enjoyability and c) usefulness for university or d) other purposes.
4. How, if at all, does the Vietnamese sociocultural context influence how the ten students write in English for university purposes.

Information was gathered from ten Higher Education students in Vietnam via writing biographies, interviews, think aloud writing tasks and document analysis. The participants in the study were asked to share which types of writing they had undertaken throughout their life and then asked which of these writing activities they found enjoyable and/or challenging; and why. They were also asked to explain which writing activities had been useful for different purposes. During a retrospective account of a written assignment, the participants talked through the process or actions they undertook in order to complete the text selected. Following this, they were then asked to describe their thoughts during one or two 'live' or concurrent writing tasks. The final question was explored via a separate analysis of the data that had been gathered for the first four research questions.

The research findings are organised into two sections. The first section describes the findings related to each case in the research. This method of reporting is consistent with multiple case study approaches and includes information a) directly related to the research questions, b) highlighted as important or key by the participants themselves, c) that indicates a uniqueness or difference between the cases and d) indicates shared experiences and similarities between the cases. The second section offers a cross-case analysis of data related to the research questions. It describes the shared experiences of participants in relation to the research questions. This is an important analysis that

supports the generalisability of some of the research findings. Presenting the findings in this way however reduces the opportunity to include information verbatim from participants, that one might expect in a case study project like this. Instead, some of the findings described are supported by images and examples of student-writing that offer some depth to the findings.

The cross-case analysis outlines what genres participants reported to have written for university (and other purposes), and the evidence collected to support self-reports. Comparisons are made between participants studying an English-major and those studying other (non-English courses). Following this, participants' perceptions of specific genres are thematically described before synthesising the writing behaviours and processes evidenced in their writing. Finally, as outlined in the methodology chapter, an integration of these findings are combined in a new way to show examples where the sociocultural context has influenced the genres, perceptions and writing processes of the participants. A relationship diagram (Figure 44) provides a summarised visual representation of these findings.

Section 1: Cases

Tran MA ELT student

At the time of data collection, Tran was a 38-year-old MA ELT student and private English tutor in HCMC. Tran's students tended to come from wealthy Vietnamese, Korean and Japanese families. Being an English teacher was ironic for her because she had not enjoyed English until Grade 10 (the first year of High School), and her scores were so low it prevented her from receiving rewards. Tran felt this experience helped her to be a more empathetic teacher when students felt disappointed with their English language.

At secondary school level, Tran said that the classes used the national textbook to learn English sentences and short texts. In Grade 10, a new teacher taught grammar in a way that made the material interesting and easier to understand, which helped to change Tran's experiences and attitudes towards English. Tran remembers having difficulty with tenses and attributed this to tense formation in Vietnamese where the verb is unchanged, and another word is added to show past, present and future. English was not a compulsory part of the High School entrance test when Tran entered in 1993. Tran explained that English was not as important then as it had now become in Vietnam, and so most students would have likely failed if English had been included in the exam.

Tran explained that when the Vietnamese government declared the new 'open-door' (Doi Moi) policy the economy improved and people started to be exposed to American music like ABBA and the Carpenters. Tran liked the songs and learnt the words by transcribing the lyrics. From High School age, Tran noticed foreigners around town and she could use some English to help them. Tran felt that English was treated differently before the modernisation agenda. Tran remembered that people were poor and often relied on black-market goods like soap and clothes from Thailand and Cambodia. Tran's stated that her own clothes had been made from the standard black material worn by old women. Tran's great grandfather and grandfather were soldiers commissioned in the South and her father had been a director of his own business. Tran's grandfather had died in the American war and her father died in

1987, so he did not see the economic and other social changes that happened in Vietnam.

Tran had completed an undergraduate degree in Chemical Engineering and undertook an English Diploma at the same time. It was hard work to study the two courses simultaneously for four years, but she felt that having an English qualification would give her an advantage in job applications within Chemical Engineering. Tran held two positions as a chemical engineer. The first role was within a Filipino clothing company. They (the employers and employees) spoke in English and completed short standardised daily work sheets in English. Tran then worked for a Vietnamese chemical company briefly but left because the staff were not given correct protective clothing and equipment, like glasses and gloves, and she felt herself becoming unwell. In a later job working for the Danish Embassy, Tran wrote case studies in English describing Vietnamese companies to be reviewed by Danish companies who were seeking investment or business collaboration with a Vietnamese company.

In terms of other genre writing, Tran has found literature reviews difficult because they require a lot of reading and take time to paraphrase other's ideas. Tran had also been concerned with making her own contribution and avoiding too many quotes or citations. Writing a research proposal had been most challenging for her because she said that she did not know what a conceptual framework was. Tran had researched this online and had found a SlideShare presentation about it which helped her to it. Tran said she had shared this with other teachers in her MA group.

In relation to critical thinking, Tran spoke about differences between 'West' and 'East' and explained that, traditionally, they (the East) were not really encouraged to ask questions. If the students asked too many questions the teachers were not happy and students were to taught to accept ideas quite easily. Tran felt that traditional systems of rote memorisation learning were still common in lower school and she had tried to get her son to avoid being a 'sheep'. Figure 18 shows an introduction that Tran wrote as part of a critical review of a research article.

Task-Based Learning is being promoted all over the world as a new cure for ineffective English teaching-learning, especially in societies where learners are reserved and passive. Vietnam is one such society, where people tend to blend in, and mistakes are not looked upon kindly. It is natural for educators to think that implementing Task-Based Learning in Vietnam is the right thing to do. However, to avoid such hasty assumptions, empirical research on applying the approach in Vietnam was needed on the students' as well as on the teacher's side. The research "Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT): A Vietnamese Case Study Using Narrative Frames to Elicit Teachers' Beliefs" aimed to find out. The research was done by Roger Barnard and Nguyen Gia Viet. PhD Barnard is a well-known teacher trainer, researcher, and author. He is interested in the beliefs and practices of language teachers. Nguyen was a teacher trainer and a PhD student at the time of this research. The empirical research is expected to shed new light on the beliefs and readiness of English teachers in Vietnam in implementing TBLT. Being partial to a wider project of in-depth study of teacher cognition in Vietnamese high schools, this research only serves to carry out the voice of teachers on TBLT. The research is original, practical, and is an attempt to tackle a difficult subject in teaching English in Vietnam, to find out if the system is ready to change, and how. Its drawback is the scale of the research, and therefore can not be generalized to Vietnamese teachers as a whole.

Figure 18. Tran's introduction with a critique.

During the think aloud writing activities, Tran wrote about Vietnam because she felt that it was most familiar to her, and she did not want to be pretentious by writing about another country she knew less about. Tran wanted to smoothly lead the reader into her topic and spent time thinking of a pleasant way to do this. Tran said that she did not like shocking introductory statements because they felt incorrect to her; so she usually presented the background and then narrowed down to the point she was going to discuss (see Figure 18 for an example of an introduction written by Tran within an MA assignment).

When making an adjective choice during the first think aloud writing task (Figure 19), Tran reconsidered using the words 'bleeding history' because it reminded her of the desperate hopelessness of Jewish people during the Holocaust. Tran explained that, this recall came from a cartoon book called 'Maus', which was written by a boy in America, whose Jewish father had survived Auschwitz. Tran remembered reading

how the Jews were scattered and did not have a land, which was different to the Vietnamese situation. Despite their defeats by China and France, the Vietnamese were never without hope and there was always unrest against colonisation. Tran felt that, even during the reunification events in 1975, they (the Vietnamese) situation was not as bad as the Jewish plight; so she chose not to use the term.

Throughout human history, there have been numerous interactions between races and ethnics. Despite the need to remain independent and keep their identity, foreign elements have been unfailingly found in any singular culture. With Vietnam, the phenomenon is rather pronounced as there have been several contacts with different cultures through wars and trades in their history. For more than a thousand years, the Vietnamese were colonized by their gigantic neighbour Chinese, only to be followed by spells of temporary independence and later, to be conquered by the French Imperia. This new intruder ruled for more than 80 years, then only withdrew to make place for another fifty years of continuous war. Then contacts with traders and business people, as well as the appearance of the internet, have brought in new elements. Obviously, traces of foreign factors can be found in many aspects of the Vietnamese cultures, from language, ways of living, traditional customs, and even the people's characteristics.

The Vietnamese language consists of about 40 percent Chinese roots, 5 percent French words, and nowadays, more and more English loan words are being added to its vocabulary. There are many words, especially the academic ones, are Han-Viet, or Chinese-Vietnamese. For instance, the words 'phủ huynh' is adopted from Chinese but with a new, Vietnamese pronunciation and symbol. Thanks to the different writing system since the domination of France, the import of Chinese words stopped. Instead, French words were introduced and localized. 'Pê-dan' is such a word as it derives from the word 'pedal'. Unlike these words which have been adopted and evolved with time, English has been added and most still keeps their written form, though the spoken form is somewhat changed. 'Internet' is 'in-to-net' or 'net', 'bar' or 'quan ba' (with the Vietnamese word 'quan'-restaurant added to complement the meaning of the type of 'restaurant-bar'). All these changes and modification have enriched the language and made it spectacular. To the dismay of the older generations and conservative Vietnamese, the changes have been accelerated. However, it does not necessarily a bad thing, as it has happened several times and the language always has it way of coming back to its independence.

Though the most obvious, language is not the only aspect that has borrowed elements. New beliefs, customs, traditions... have found their ways into the Vietnamese culture as well. Take the Lunar New Year, for example. This tradition is Vietnamese in origin as it started with the Viet tribes thousands of years ago. However, there are Chinese elements added, such as the li-xi, or lucky money, and red paper cuts pasted to doors and ancestor altars. The French missionaries brought Christianity to Vietnam in the time of colonization. This added to the traditional belief in the people's ancestors or Buddhism. One interesting phenomenon is, despite accepting the new beliefs and ways, Vietnamese carry on believing their values and traditions. Take a Christian family, for example. It's not hard to see the main altar in the house is home for both the demised AND the adopted belief, with pictures of people and Jesus or Mary standing side by side, and burning incense sticks and candles. This tolerance may have been the reason for the lack of conflicts between new beliefs and the old ones, thus makes the Vietnamese culture a special and diverted one.

Finally, borrowed elements also help shape the Vietnamese people's characteristics. Being a colony under several intruders taught them to accept new factors at face values quite readily, yet deep down, they remain faithful to their own ways. Friendliness is one characteristic that is noticeable by foreigners; however, this does not always mean helpfulness as they hold a certain kind of distrust and distance to these newcomers. They are also resistant to change, to a deeper level, in aspects that concern their ways of living. Apartment or condominium living is introduced but not everyone is comfortable with it. Several might consider it 'cold', as neighbours do not know neighbours, while other might find enclosed and want to let the doors open and all family activities are there for anyone to see. This factor might be the one to keep Vietnamese being Vietnamese, as

Figure 19. Tran's Think Aloud writing for Task.

Duc MA Microbiology student

During the time of data collection Duc was 25-year-old and was an MA student of Microbiology. Duc said that he started learning English at secondary school in Hanoi. Outside of school, he used to watch some English-speaking TV channels but found English lessons at school less interesting. Duc preferred science and nature-related subjects. At high school Duc wrote letters, short paragraphs and short essays in English but he could not write long paragraphs or essays. Duc watched a TV programme about growing probiotic bacteria and this made him interested in Microbiology. He went on the study Biotechnology at undergraduate level and continued to study English compulsorily for 6 lessons a week, for four years. The English classes were like those in High school because they covered grammar, speaking, listening, reading and writing, but there was more opportunity to develop these skills than at high school.

Duc studied on the traditional (Vietnamese medium) instruction course because his English language grades were lower than the requirement to study on the International Standard Programme, which was taught in English. Duc said that university students worry about not achieving a B1 level (of the CEFR) because they would have to re-sit the English component of their degree until they reach that level and are then able to graduate.

In Duc's field of microbiology, Duc explained that people tend to be employed by food and medical companies, and universities. Duc felt that people with good English proficiency are favoured and Duc was keen to take an online English course. Duc had written essays but these were for his general English class rather than for his subject major. Duc needed to be able to write research reports for his major, and his undergraduate lecturer helped him to do this. The dissertation paper for his undergraduate graduation had to be written in Vietnamese. Duc had read and written scientific research reports in Vietnamese and English, and suggested there was a difference in use of personal pronouns and passive voice.

Duc's MA research was funded by the university and his MA lecturer was helping him to write up his research in English. The research explored the isolation of probiotic

bacteria from different sources, and Duc had a business idea to isolate probiotic bacteria for companies to use in consumable products and functional foods such as probiotic yogurt. Duc paid \$20 to set up a website to advertise this business idea and had to send emails in English to Google technical support services in order to set up the website. Duc chose an English term 'probiotics' for the webpage because he felt it is more well-known in English (rather than Vietnamese) and a wider international audience will use it.

As a departmental member, Duc was obliged to attend English classes for staff with low English proficiency, but this was to support his general English skills rather than for his MA. This course was taught in English by Vietnamese teachers. Duc suggested that staff were too busy with their work and so they missed the sessions, even though they were not formally permitted to miss more than 3 lessons.

Within this course, Duc wrote an essay about whether physical education should be compulsory in the Vietnamese education system. Duc found this assignment difficult due to a lack of specific topic vocabulary and knowledge of appropriate structures. Although the essay was less useful for his MA, Duc thought that the essay-writing practice could be useful if he were to take a qualification in English. Duc was unsure about the format of IELTS test but he thought it was like the format of the B1 test of the Common European Framework, which had a letter writing task and essay question.

Duc had enjoyed letter writing because they reminded him about the order of adjectives and nouns. Duc said that he had used different skills when writing letters and had found it challenging, but enjoyable. Duc had written a letter within the English classes for staff members; the teacher chose the topic of a letter writing task. Duc reflected that this writing helped him to understand what to include in each section of the letter. Duc said he would choose to write a letter over a research report because the former is shorter in length.

In his subject major, Duc had had to write about his process of extracting probiotic bacteria and he said he preferred this writing to the essay or letter-writing in the English lessons for staff. Duc was more positive about this writing because he said he had had enough time to prepare for the topic (he had one week to complete this

assignment), and he was able to find the specific vocabulary within his subject-major work, which made it easier. Duc had to write a research report in English for his MA and he wanted support to write about microbiology in English. However, Duc felt that learning everyday English was more important than being able to write in English within his subject major because he felt it was more important to communicate with people first, and then focus on writing needs.

In the think aloud writing activity, Duc chose to write a letter. Duc said he was unsure about the meaning of the ending of the letter, '*Best Wishes*' but he had seen it on other letters so he used it. Duc said he had started with the address at the top on the righthand side of the paper because his teacher taught him to do this. Duc said that he had experienced these topics and genres throughout his English classes at secondary and High School. The top image of Figure 20 is taken from a secondary level English language textbook. It is possible to trace the linguistic moves Duc used in his letter and the thank-you/ invitation letter within the national textbook.

2. Write a thank-you note to a friend. Invite your friend to go on a picnic with you. Arrange to contact your friend. Use the following questions to guide your writing.

- What did your friend give/send you?
- On what occasion?
- What was/were it/they like?
- How did you feel when you received the present?
- How do you feel now?
- Do you want to invite your friend somewhere?
- If so, then when?
- How will you contact your friend?

3. Use the same format to write another letter to another friend for other occasions.

February 6, 2015

Dear Michelle,

After some times, I was meet and talked to you. I feel it made me talk more bravely in English which I was often shy before. Moreover, I hope my information which is useful for your ~~research~~ research.

I still remember you talk me that you didn't go to visit many place in Hanoi. So today, I write this letter to you for two ~~two~~ reasons.

~~The first~~ first, I want to take the time

to your help during this period of time. I want to take the time to write my thank to you.

The second reason, I want to invite you to go to visit some place in Hanoi, may be after Tet Holiday.

I think it will help you more. Because you can know more for Vietnamese history and culture.

In Hanoi, there are many famous place which is not only symbol of historical relic in Vietnam, but also symbol of old Vietnamese culture in the past and at present.

I will so happy if you can go out with me on some day after Tet holiday.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Figure 20. Letter-writing activity from a Vietnamese English language textbook (top) and copy of Duc's letter (bottom).

Linh

MA ELT student

At the time of study, Linh was a 25-year-old female in the final year of an MA ELT course. At school, Linh said that she had enjoyed English (unlike many of the boys in her classes), although she rarely had the opportunity to speak English anywhere. Linh stated that high School teachers used English and Vietnamese medium, and textbook instructions were written in Vietnamese. Linh found that group work was rare but felt that teachers have since started to use more group work activities in the classroom in Hanoi. Linh suggested these changes had been influenced by the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) in order to help students to integrate into international education. Linh said that group activities that were popular in the UK and modern/ Western countries so the (Vietnamese) government wanted Vietnamese students to become more active, creative and '*progressive*.'

Linh attended extra English grammar classes held by English teachers from school and she said that many parents paid teachers money to '*look out*' for their child during lessons or to contribute towards learning materials or facilities. From her experience, this can cost about 100,000 – 150,000 VND (approximately £6.00) per lesson. Linh paid for extra support from teachers to help her pass the university entrance exam. The texts and instructions were written in English rather than Vietnamese; which Linh felt was more difficult because students had to become familiar with the English instructions before they took the test.

Linh's family supported her decision to study English because they felt it would lead to better employment opportunities and the chance to study overseas. Linh completed a BA in Economic English which was taught in English and Vietnamese. Linh remembered that the textbooks were written in English and published by Macmillan. Linh wrote paragraphs, dialogues and essays related to business and economic matters such as the advantages and disadvantages of taking part in the World Trade Organisation. Although she consistently wrote in English for four years of her BA, Linh's graduation paper took the form of a practice-based study that had to be translated into Vietnamese. Linh found the translation difficult because she had learnt subject-specific terms in English rather than Vietnamese so had to find the words in Vietnamese.

When Linh graduated she spent 6 months working and studying for an IELTS exam. Linh and her parents paid 10 million VND (approximately £366.00) to attend an IELTS centre for lessons. Linh's score was 6.5. and she was disappointed because she was targeted to get a score of 7.0. Linh had heard about IELTS from her friend but it was not as popular in Vietnam then as it had become at the time of the data collection.

Following the IELTS test, Linh took the MA entrance exam and then enrolled on the MA programme. Linh chose to study at one of the most prestigious universities in Hanoi and planned to become an English Language university lecturer and researcher. She was particularly interested in contrastive analysis studies of English and Vietnamese. She had already written an assignment comparing euphemisms denoting death. In order to teach English at university level, Linh said she would have to pass a difficult test which was not available for practice online. Linh was already a private English tutor for a high school student. This had provided her with some income but she also wanted to concentrate on finishing her MA.

At MA level, Linh had completed all writing in English and she said her teachers consistently used English in the classroom. Linh had also experienced more variation in the types of writing she was expected to produce at MA level, with an emphasis on writing for research purposes. Linh said that she struggled with referencing and using APA citations properly. Linh felt that she often waited a long time for feedback on her assignments, up to two months in some cases. The feedback was often in the form of a score and sometimes some comments. Linh felt the IELTS feedback at the language centre had been more helpful because it was more timely, and helped her to avoid the same mistakes again. While she was able to ask tutors for feedback, she felt that written margin notes and advice written from the university tutors would be helpful.

During the writing tasks, Linh chose to use a counter-argumentative structure where she argued that borrowing from different cultures can lead to improvements but also risk losing the uniqueness of one's culture. Linh used an example from the tourism

about Thanh Chuong Viet Palace (a museum) because this place was less frequently visited by tourists (see Figure 21 for this example). Minh felt a connection to the displays of traditional houses and ancient objects in the museum. The place reminded Minh of her grandparents and she could remember seeing the objects such as the old-fashioned chairs, beds and water puppets; she said she had a sense of quiet respect and remembrance when she had visited the attraction.

THANH CHUONG VIET PLACE

Thanh Chuong Viet Place is one of the best favorite place foreigner want to visit in Viet Nam, because it is tradition cultural space.

Thanh Chuong Viet Place is not history place, it is private place. Thanh Chuong is a big Viet Nam artist. He builded the place in his land with Viet Nam tradition houses and a lot of cultural antique (cổ vật) which thousand years old. The simple funitures also describe cultural of other Viet Nam dynasties such as Tran, Le, Ly,...

If you come here, you can feel Viet Nam tradition cultural because Thanh Chuong artist use installation art (nghệ thuật sắp đặt) to made cultural heritage to be alive (sống động).

I woud like to take you to Thanh Chuong Viet Place to introduce more. I like Chèo theater, water puppet theater, old funitures in that, it made me remember my grand father, my childhood.

Figure 21. Minh's writing used for retrospective reporting.

Minh said that she began the writing for the presentation with an introductory sentence that she thought would make people feel curious and want to continue reading about Thanh Choung. Minh said that the most difficult part of the writing was writing some specific and strange terms, like the word 'dynasty' (Figure 21 above). Minh translated many words from Vietnamese to English. The teacher had taught her how to structure the piece and then offered advice about some mistakes related to word choice and grammar, but she had not corrected Minh's ideas. Minh was pleased that the teacher had said the work was unique and would be interesting for people.

The lessons lasted for 3 months and then Minh stopped attending in order to have her baby, and to finish her PhD.

At the time of data collection, Minh was mainly teaching in Vietnamese to Vietnamese students, although she did have to teach a course introducing students to Accounting and Auditing terminology in English and Vietnamese. Minh said that the students that were taught in Vietnamese still had an English textbook to use and they had to write in English in other subjects. Minh felt that some students preferred to submit their assignments in English. Minh explained that some lecturers went to non-Vietnamese universities overseas and so they were able to teach courses in English medium. Minh stated that these lecturers were paid more money than other lecturers and they tended to teach students enrolled on the 'International Standard programme' and they had also marked/ graded assignments that were written in English by students on the traditional programme of study. Minh said that the students on the International Standards Programme were deemed to be talented and many Vietnamese students were encouraged to study on these English-medium modules via subsidised tuition fees. Minh said there were some non-Vietnamese students enrolled on these courses. Minh judged that the subject content for both programmes was the same but it was difficult to compare whether students studying subjects in Vietnamese or English understood the subject major better. Minh suggested that students studying in English were oriented to work for foreign organisations but students who study Vietnamese tended to work for enterprises within Vietnam.

As a staff member, Minh said she was obliged to attend weekly English classes. While she had fun with other colleagues on the course, she had busy work schedule which made it difficult for her to enjoy the course. Overall, Minh felt the course helped her to read the subject text book and other materials in Accounting and Auditing, and also helped her to design class lectures and reports in English. Although the lessons were not focused on her subject specifically, she could make use of the grammar work and other lessons covered. Minh planned to continue to learn English and use it for teaching and research purposes.

Tin explained that, when he was 16 years old, he enrolled on an English course within a language centre and got to talk with a native-English speaker from Canada. The teacher had been a tourist who decided to teach at the centre. After High School he had enrolled on a joint-degree programme in English and International Economics. The International Economics part of the degree was taught in Vietnamese except for one joint module called, 'Commercial correspondence'. In this module, Tin said he had learnt about complaint letters, purchasing orders and UK banking.

Some of the English major modules that Tin had studied included Research methods, Translation, British studies, American studies, Phonetics and Phonology, Grammar, Semantics and Discourse Analysis. Tin said he had chosen an Advanced Written and Spoken English module to replace a written graduation paper. Tin felt he had learnt how to write in English in the real world. This included learning how to write business letters, emails and memos. In his writing course, he had learnt how to structure paragraphs for different purposes (i.e. classification, description, opinion) and how to write different types of essays (i.e. argumentative, compare and contrast, cause and effect). The English courses were assessed as equivalent to the Business English Certification (BEC).

In his Business English module Tin had undertaken speaking role-plays where he acted as a manager in a job interview. Within a writing portfolio, Tin had to transcribe an authentic audio recording, reflect on the process and evaluate the recording. When Tin had written critiques and essays, the first version had generally been peer-assessed and the second draft had been marked by the teacher. Tin said that his teachers did not have time to give detailed feedback but they had given scores. Generally speaking, Tin had mostly enjoyed writing shorter pieces compared to longer pieces; and had enjoyed writing a job application because he felt this was useful for work. Tin was worried about writing a research report because it had to be about 40 pages long.

In essay-writing, Tin had chosen topics given by the teacher and had produced essay outlines and introductions in class. The teacher had given immediate feedback on these and advised about structuring for different purposes. Tin made decisions about paragraph structuring based largely on the amount of ideas or points he had, and the

nature of the ideas i.e. whether they were similar to other ideas or very different. Depending on these factors, he would either group ideas together and argue one side against the other, or would keep individual points separate if they were directly comparable. These decisions applied mainly to compare/contrast or argumentative essays. Tin had often had difficulty starting essays and being able to write introductions using a variety of sentence structures. Tin felt that many sentences were popular and were used often by his friends; he felt that, if he just repeated these sentences, he had had less chance of getting a high mark. Tin gave the example of the use of the word 'while', which he said was often used in compare and contrast essays. Tin had chosen to use alternatives like 'however' or 'on the other hand'. Tin said that signal phrases were used consciously in his writing to support coherence and cohesion.

During the writing activities, Tin stated that he had found brainstorming for ideas most challenging. Tin remembered his teacher advising him to avoid just repeating the question and to paraphrase it instead. The topic of the think aloud question was about cultural borrowing and this reminded him of his university module on 'Intercultural Communication'. Tin spent some time editing sentences, he used an online dictionary to check for words and often deleted whole sentences. Tin avoided repetition of words in his writing. For example, he wanted to replace the word '*many*' with '*a large number of*', or, '*a variety of*'. Sentence-level changes included changes to subject-object order, adding hedging and choosing more academic or formal terms.

Following the first think aloud activity, Tin reflected on his decision to write about how the Vietnamese had borrowed from Japan, rather than China. Although the relationship with the Chinese was the first thought Tin had on the subject, he felt uncertain or unsure about the differences between Chinese and Vietnamese culture to be confident enough to write about it; so he chose to write about aspects of Japanese culture. Tin also did not choose American or British culture, because he felt less familiar with these non-Eastern cultures and less able to write about Western foreigners.

In the second think-aloud activity, Tin felt more confident with the topic of globalisation because he had read about this topic in his degree programme. This was an interesting topic for him and he remembered reading a case study about Starbucks.

Tin spent time to underline and circle key words and command verbs in the question and texts. Tin gave an example of how some non-Vietnamese groups or religions have influenced some groups in Vietnam to demonstrate against the authority of the Communist Party. A recent example had been the situation between China and Vietnam regarding the ownership of the 'East Sea'. Tin was concerned about how this could affect China-Vietnamese relations.

Kim- Ly

MA ELT student

Kim-Ly was a High School English teacher in her home town and she taught English in a Language Centre in Hanoi. Kim-Ly had attended a remote primary school which had not offered English lessons. When she arrived at secondary school, she felt her English proficiency was much lower than her peers. Kim-Ly said the student had listening lessons once or twice a year because there was one tape player at school. Kim-Ly said that she listen at the time because she did not understand what they were saying, and the class would use the answer key to complete the exercises anyway. By Grade 8, KimLy had found a new confidence in English because she had started to understand the rules and how to get high marks.

Kim-Ly's grammar knowledge developed well and she entered two competitions during her secondary school years. The first was a district competition and she came in at second place. The second was a competition to enter a gifted High School which took place during the summer holiday. It was an important and memorable competition for her because there were 100 students attempting to gain one of 30 places in the English class within the school. Kim-Ly passed the exam and gained entry into the English major course but was disappointed and ashamed to find out that she had scored the lowest in her new class. The teacher had left the class score sheet on the table one day so she looked at the scores. Writing at High School consisted of writing summaries or short paragraphs based on her reading. This was difficult because Kim-Ly was still one the 'worst' students in the class.

Kim-Ly completed a BA in English Teacher Education and had enrolled on the MA course. Kim-Ly explained that all students had to study a second foreign language and she had chosen French. Within her MA programme, Kim-Ly had started to write critical response pieces and would use the Internet to find out whether other people

had agreed or disagreed with the points or arguments in the resource or text she was reviewing. When writing on a computer Kim-Ly often uses the copy and paste feature to select information from online sources and texts. The key points are then paraphrased or used as quotations.

Kim-ly said that as she writes she tends to check back and forth for 'smoothness'. This has meant re-reading sentences to check spelling, grammar and individual words, but she did not feel as though she has had to perfect every sentence along the way. Kim-Ly has regarded the ideas, grammar and format as equally important in academic writing. If she has had the time, she has re-read the assignment another day but this has not often been possible because it has usually been written too close to the deadline day. Kim-Ly has not tended to re-read her work aloud because she has been living in a dormitory and it would disturb others. Rushing assignments or having to work on them through the night in order to meet the deadline has impacted on how much she had enjoyed writing and she felt she might enjoy writing more if she were not under that time pressure. Initially, Kim- Ly thought it would be more enjoyable to be able to choose texts to read and use rather than using the textbook only. Then she felt that without being told to use the textbook, her peers would probably not read what was in the book.

During the first think-aloud activity about cultural borrowing, Kim-Ly first thought about the relationship between China and Vietnam but she was unsure exactly as to how the Chinese had impacted on Vietnamese culture so she decided to write about Korean culture in Vietnam. Kim- Ly spent some time considering the concept of 'culture' and what aspects of life should be regarded as culture. In the end, she wrote about the influence of Korean fashion, films and food in Hanoi. Kim-Ly paid attention to ways of linking sentences, using words accurately, hedging, and ordering of adjectives such as, '*young Vietnamese people or Vietnamese young people*'. Kim-Ly said she checks about formatting conventions, like whether films should be written in italics. At the beginning of her writing, she returned to the question to check what should be included but, having completed the writing, she realised she had answered only the first part of the question. This surprised Kim-Ly and she was relieved it was not an exam scenario.

Chapter 5 – Exercise E5.10 page 175

a.

Because the ROA of the restaurant near campus is 18 percent (higher than other restaurant elsewhere in town) so I am willing to pay more than \$200000 for this. At the location near the campus, the income I will receive is \$36000. On the other hand, when I pay more than \$200000, ROA decreases from 18 percent to lower value. The maximum amount of money I am willing to pay is 240000. ($36000 / 240000 = 15\%$) If I pay more than \$240000, ROA of the restaurant near the campus will decrease to lower than 15 percent.

b.

Assume payment by cash

| Cash | Assets | 240000 | Decrease |
|------------|--------|--------|----------|
| Fair value | Assets | 200000 | Increase |
| Good will | Assets | 40000 | Increase |

Assets accounts in balance sheet would be used to record the cost of the restaurant

Figure 22. Copy of Ton’s accounting exercise example.

Ton had written a business case study that described a company (Vinomilk) and offered solutions to identified business-related problems. This was enjoyable to write and he was surprised how he managed to write 1,500 words. The most difficult part was writing the introduction and making the link between the introduction and the body. The assignment was useful to learn about the company and he found new business-related vocabulary, although it was difficult to find sources online (using Google search engine) and in the library. Ton had also written a group report about Apple, but he did not think that group working was very productive for Vietnamese (students/ people). Ton had read an article about how cultural differences between Vietnamese and Japanese people make group work more effective for Japanese students. Ton also found it had taken a long time for his group to agree on anything, so work progress had been slower for him.

Ton said that he had played Dota 2 for some time. This is an online international computer game, which Ton has written character play-guides for. This writing helped him to learn gaming-specific terms like ‘gank’; which he said is a combination of two words, ‘gang’ and ‘kill’, which means a whole party of people who try to kill a character. Although he has most enjoyed this type of writing because it is his hobby, some other players from the Philippines and Australia, had mocked him because he made a silly English-language mistake in his writing.

Ton had undertaken data analysis in accounting where he analysed annual profit and revenue trends for a business. Ton had analysed data within an IETLS course too but he

felt the university analysis was more challenging because he had had to understand the meaning behind the numbers, rather than just describe them. In IELTS writing Task 1 assignments, Ton had described the cycle of a frog, the water cycle and the harvesting cycle/ food production from wheat to the factories. Ton did not enjoy many of the topics given within IELTS courses and he said he wrote the minimum amount of words allowed. Ton felt that writing under time pressure, within the IELTS tasks also made it less enjoyable.

In his English course prior to his MBA, a teacher criticised Ton for being lazy because he used too many quotes rather than summarising in a literature review. Ton had been concerned that, if he had paraphrased the texts, he might have changed the meaning and made grammatical errors. During the first think-aloud activity (Figure 23), Ton wrote about the Chinese origin of giving 'lucky money' to children at the start of the new year. Ton used Wikipedia to find that, originally, adults wrote lucky messages in the envelopes rather than giving money and he then reflected that giving lots of lucky money to people's children can be a form of corruption. Ton said he had thought of Vietnamese words or phrases to describe the actions and consequences in this giftgiving tradition. For example, he had thought of the term '*chúc lại*' to refer to the process where the receiver wishes back or gives back to the giver, and he thought about the term '*mục đích*' to refer to the negative process whereby givers manipulate the tradition for their own gain. Ton also thought about the Vietnamese term '*quan liêu*' which translates into 'bureaucratic'. When Ton uses the dictionary he often finds that he did know the meaning of word but had forgotten it because he had not used them for a long time. An example of this is the term 'social evils' or '*tệ nạn*'.

In an integration world, it is easy that a country is influenced by other countries in many aspects. One of the easiest thing a country have impacts on their neighbour country is culture. Vietnam's cultures is influenced by Chinese's culture. One of the Chinese's traditional customs that Vietnam borrows is giving red envelops in Tet holiday. In this custom, old generation give red envelops to their children or younger generation with the purpose of wishing luckiness, health as well as wealth to the receiver in new year. After receiving the lucky money from others, receiver need to give wishes back to the givers. Lucky money which is replaced wish papers is considered as a spirit to protect receivers against bad things such as sickness and death. However, some people take advantage of this culture in order to get their purposes. As a result, this is the beginning of evils such as corruption and bureaucratic. Everyone in general and Vietnamese in particular have to be clear about the meaning of giving red envelopes in Tet holiday to develop this good borrowing culture in future.

Figure 23. Ton's first think aloud writing task.

While typing his essay, Ton took time to edit and revise each sentence and he said he wanted to introduce the topic broadly before focusing specifically on culture. Ton said he visualised the structure of the paragraph in his mind but came across challenges, particularly when combining sentences. Ton spoke about using countable and noncountable nouns together and the difficulty of being certain about grammatical accuracy when combining sentences. For example, he wanted to have the words '*wishes*' and '*money*' together but explained that, because the word that follows these nouns is different, he could not have them together to structure the sentence accurately. Ton used commas to combine sentences and said he was unsure what other options would be available for him to combine them. Ton deleted whole sentences a number of times because he could not be sure if they were accurate. Ton also changed the points he wanted to write about when he could not find the language to express what he wanted to say. For example, Ton focused on the negative or harmful features of the lucky money example because he did not know how to express his point about the positive aspects of this. Ton said, '*I'm not satisfied with last sentence but I don't know how to change it*'. On reflection, Ton said he felt the traditional custom topic was easy for him to write about, so the ideas were not a problem however the structure and way to express his ideas were 'poor'.

Ngoc MA Linguistics and Post-Graduate Certificate in Secondary Education

Ngoc explained that her family are from a province in the middle of Vietnam but she has not lived with them since she was 13 years old, when she went to live with her sister in a different region. Ngoc was at secondary school and her sister was at high school age.

Ngoc started to write paragraphs after her undergraduate degree. Before this time, she had mainly created sentences and memorised vocabulary. The university entrance exam had included Literature, History and Geography because Ngoc did not study an English major. Ngoc chose to study Chinese throughout university, instead of English. Ngoc said she chose Chinese because it was more helpful to her Vietnamese literature learning because there are many poems in Vietnamese that were written in old Chinese characters. For her Linguistics MA, Ngoc wrote her graduation thesis on the use of English in Vietnamese advertising. The MA entrance exam had included English, Linguistics and (Vietnamese) Philosophy; and the first year modules included Semantics, Phonetics, Grammar, Discourse, Pragmatics, Sociolinguistics, Cognitive linguistics, and Vietnamese regional languages. Ngoc said these were taught in Vietnamese, rather than English. In the English classes, common topics were hobbies, travel aspirations and describing oneself. Ngoc felt that teachers had continued to focus on grammar in writing but there were also some speaking skill activities.

At the time of the study, Ngoc was training to teach Vietnamese language and literature in an International School. Ngoc said the children come from all over the world but there were many American and Korean children. Ngoc felt that although they did not enjoy learning Vietnamese, the students completed the work she had given them. Some Vietnamese students learnt literature rather than language, and there were many bilingual children. Many of the non-Vietnamese students talked in English in class, but Ngoc said they should have been talking in Vietnamese. Ngoc had written her assignments, lesson plans and case studies in English and had used Bloom's taxonomy to create lesson objectives. Ngoc started the lesson objectives task with a lesson plan template and copy of Bloom's taxonomy provided by the teacher trainer. Ngoc had to find definitions for the terms used (i.e. 'describe', 'explain',

access to journals from different countries, but Chau had not been taught the content in Vietnamese so she was learning about the subject for the first time in English. In the second year of the programme, Chau studied computing and a practical physics module in Vietnamese, not English. Chau said that the university planned to teach this in English with the next cohort. Chau was happy she did not have to learn it in English though. Chau felt that some of her lecturers in the (Science) university had lower English proficiency than those in the (Languages) university, and this made it harder to learn the subject and the language. The English classes also stopped in the second year and Chau said there had been very little writing in English required in the second year. For at least one topic, Botany, they had to translate the information in their English textbooks into Vietnamese. Also in this year, Chau was taught by an American biology lecturer. The teacher left and Chau was concerned it was because some of the students were sleepy in class. The possibility of this had made Chau feel sad so she had sent the teacher an email to ask what she (the teacher) thought about the other students, or whether she had been unwell.

By year 3, the program focused more on biological modules such as Human Physiology, Genetics, Invertebrates and Vertebrates, Developmental biology and Molecular biology. Chau wrote in English in these courses and they had drawn a diagram and written about the structure of the kidneys. Chau had had to name the parts and explain their functions. In molecular biology, Chau had to answer short questions to give a solution to a problem. An example of this was what they would do if they had negative control in PCR (polymerase chain reaction).

Chau preferred the third year because she was more familiar with the programme and how to learn subject content in English. At the time of the study, Chau was at the start of year 4 and had learnt more about scientific research, medical microbiology, the practice of microbiology, and conservation biology. They had given presentations in English and had written a research report. Chau was required to write a graduation paper about genetic engineering, specifically the creation of a strain of *Streptomyces natalensis* (a type of microorganism) by the insertion of a copied positive gene using high pressured liquid chromatography (KPLC). Chau conducted and wrote her experiments in Vietnamese but she had to write her graduation paper in English.

During her writing activities, Chau took time to consider the meaning of the term 'culture', she said she wanted to be sure to include relevant cultural examples. Chau used an essay plan and said she wanted the first sentence to be impressive. In relation to her ideas and example, Chau planned to write about an example of Chinese culture that had been adopted by the Vietnamese, known as the Mid- Autumn festival' or '*tet han thu*' but when she started to write about it she was not sure if it could be used as an example of borrowing culture because perhaps other countries also have this type of festival. During her writing, Chau paid attention to writing coherent paragraphs and how to mirror or balance the introduction and concluding paragraph. In terms of the topics, Chau initially felt the first writing activity would be boring but, once she started it, she thought it was more interesting. In the second writing activity, Chau said she was not confident in her knowledge of the topic and globalisation, although she recognised it was similar to the topic about cultural borrowing.

Phuong

MA Linguistics student

Phuong came from a large Catholic family in rural Vietnam and was 26 years old at the time of the study. Phuong started to learn English when she was 11 years old although she had heard her father speaking English before then. Phuong's father had been a soldier and had occasionally interpreted for American soldiers in the (Vietnamese/ American) war. When the war ended, he returned to the family farm but he had often re-told the stories about his army-related work, although Phuong suspected there had been some difficult experiences he had not shared.

In Grade 6, Phuong found it hard to keep up with peers who had started private English classes with (school) teachers during the previous summer holiday. Compared to the others, her scores were very low and she did not enjoy the way the teacher used the book and only gave the answers without further explanation. In Grade 7, Phuong had a devoted teacher who had asked them to learn vocabulary and to prepare before school, and she gave lots of exercises and explanations.

At secondary and high school, Phuong felt that writing was very similar and grammarbased, although they rearranged sentences and learnt mechanic dialogues like 'Hello, how are you?'. Phuong remembered that the multiple-choice type questions

became more popular at high school and there were few speaking and listening lessons. Having used the contemporary textbooks in her own teaching, Phuong felt that English classes and writing tasks had changed because students now had to write paragraphs to describe their family. Phuong thought it was harder now for students because they had to learn more and the textbook was still not quite authentic. Those who learn at language centres have had better opportunities to learn other ways of speaking outside of the dialogues within the textbook.

In Phuong's own MA research, she wrote about the relationship between teacher's gender and teaching styles. Students and teachers completed a survey and Phuong had taught herself how to use SPSS, to analyse the data. The university then started to provide an SPSS course for students. Phuong found it more difficult to read a statistics book in Vietnamese than she did in English. In terms of academic writing, Phuong found critical reviews and research papers most challenging. Although the skills required were new for her, and she found it difficult to think of evaluation points for herself, these assignments helped her to develop a new way of thinking.

Phuong found that undergraduate essays had been most useful for teaching phrases and words that could be applied in other essays. Choosing academic words and writing complex (rather than simple) sentence structures was most challenging for Phuong. A teacher had taught them to learn new sentence structures by reading and choosing structures they like the sound of.

In her think aloud writing tasks, Phuong wanted to find examples from her own country, so she wrote about French flavours being included in Vietnamese foods and the adoption of celebrations like Mothers Day and Valentines Day. This type of writing about celebrations and festivals is a common topic in the national textbooks Phuong would have used at school (Figure 24) In the second writing activity, Phuong decided which stance or position to argue based on how many examples were given in the text and how many more she would have to think of herself if she chose to argue one way or the other (about the impact of globalisation on culture).

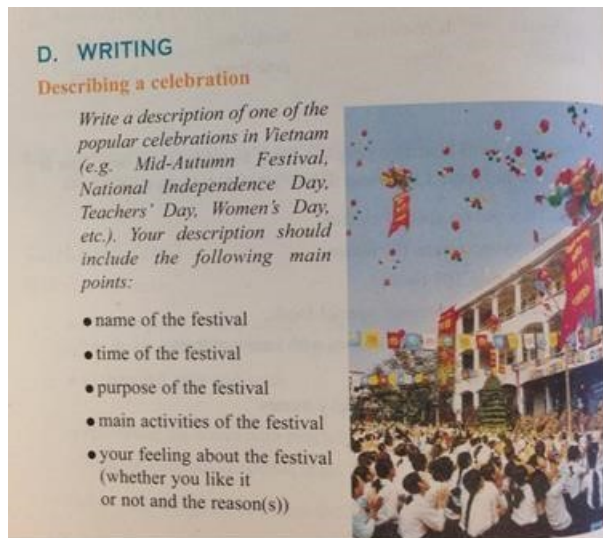


Figure 24. Copy of a writing task in a Grade 8 (secondary level) English textbook in Vietnam.

Having described some of the findings as they relate to individual participants the second section of this chapter will explore similarities and differences in their experiences of genres, perceptions and writing processes.

Section 2 Cross- case analysis

It is helpful to compare the findings from each case study and explore emerging patterns and differences in relation to the research questions. This section draws together findings related to the research questions.

Research question 1

Which written genres (in English) have ten Higher Education Vietnamese students produced for university (or other) purposes in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City?

Missing data

In total, participants provided 97 examples of writing for university or other purposes. There were occasions where participants reported they had completed a type of written genre but did not provide copies of assignments to support their reports. Where this has occurred (Table 7) participants had generally not kept copies of their writing or they were confidential case studies (of individuals or companies). Another reason may have been that some participants chose not to share their writing because they may have been concerned how their writing might be read or judged perhaps.

The genre family ‘Exercises’ has not been included as a discrepancy of this kind because copies of the national textbooks indicate that each participant would have done some exercises in class-time. In addition, it is well established that all English language exams were (and still are) either multiple choice, fill the gap or short answers, including the High School graduation exam. From 2015, this also became the University entrance exam rather than having two separate (graduation and entrance) exams. Figures 25 and 26 show this test in 2013 and 2015.

BỘ GIÁO DỤC VÀ ĐÀO TẠO
ĐỀ CHÍNH THỨC
(Đề thi có 7 trang)

ĐỀ THI TUYỂN SINH ĐẠI HỌC NĂM 2013
Môn: TIẾNG ANH; Khối D
Thời gian làm bài: 90 phút, không kể thời gian phát đề

Mã đề thi 359

Họ, tên thí sinh:.....
Số báo danh:.....

ĐỀ THI GỒM 80 CÂU (TỪ QUESTION 1 ĐẾN QUESTION 80)
Mark the letter A, B, C, or D on your answer sheet to indicate the word whose underlined part differs from the other three in pronunciation in each of the following questions.

Question 1: A. species B. invent C. medicine D. tennis
Question 2: A. superstar B. harvest C. particular D. part

Mark the letter A, B, C, or D on your answer sheet to indicate the word that differs from the other three in the position of the primary stress in each of the following questions.

Question 3: A. commercial B. constructive C. essential D. national
Question 4: A. copy B. remove C. notice D. cancel
Question 5: A. curriculum B. economics C. hesitation D. calculation

Read the following passage and mark the letter A, B, C, or D on your answer sheet to choose the word or phrase that best fits each of the numbered blanks from 6 to 15.

In "Cerealizing America", Scott Bruce and Bill Crawford remark that the cereal industry uses 816 million pounds of sugar per year. Americans buy 2.7 billion packages of breakfast cereal each year. If (6)_____ end to end, the empty cereal boxes from one year's consumption would (7)_____ to the moon and back. One point three (1.3) million advertisements for cereal are broadcast on American television every year at a(n) (8)_____ of \$762 million for airtime. Only automobile manufacturers spend more money on television advertising than the makers of breakfast cereal.

(9)_____ of the boxed cereals found in supermarkets contain large amounts of sugar and some contain more than 50% sugar. Cereal manufacturers are very clever in their marketing, making many cereals appear much healthier than they really are by "fortifying" them with vitamins and minerals. Oh, (10)_____ – you now have vitamin-fortified sugar!

Before you eat any cereal, read the ingredient list and see how (11)_____ sugar appears on the ingredient list. Then check the "Nutrition facts" panel.

There are actually only a small handful of national commercially-branded cereals that are made (12)_____ whole grains and are sugar-free. If you shop at a health food store instead of your local supermarket, you (13)_____ to find a healthy, whole grain, sugar-free (or very low sugar) cereal. But (14)_____! Some of the health food store boxed cereals are sweetened with fruit juice or fructose. Although this may be an improvement (15)_____ refined white sugar, this can really skyrocket the calories.

From "Foods That Burn Fat, Foods That Turn to Fat" by Tom Ventulo

Question 6: A. laying B. lay C. laid D. to lay
Question 7: A. prolong B. stretch C. contact D. reach
Question 8: A. cost B. charge C. average D. expense
Question 9: A. Mostly B. Furthestmost C. Most D. Almost
Question 10: A. beautiful B. gorgeous C. lovely D. charming
Question 11: A. many B. large C. tall D. high
Question 12: A. by B. from C. at D. in
Question 13: A. would be able B. are more likelier C. could more or less D. are much more likely
Question 14: A. see through B. keep alert C. look up D. watch out
Question 15: A. from B. on C. with D. at

Trang 1/7 - Mã đề thi 359

Figure 25. Copy of University entrance exam in Vietnam.

ĐỀ THI TUYỂN SINH PTTH Quốc Gia NĂM 2015
MÔN THI: ANH VĂN
 Thời gian làm bài: 90 phút, không kể thời gian phát đề
 Mã đề thi: 194

Mark the letter A, B, C or D on your answer sheet to indicate the word whose underline part differs from the other three in pronunciation in each of the following questions.

- Question 1 : A. deal B. teach C. break D. clean
 Question 2 : A. supported B. approached C. noticed D. finished

Mark the letter A, B, C or D on your answer sheet to indicate the word that differs from the other three in the position of primary stress in each of the following questions.

- Question 3 : A. recipe B. candidate C. instrument D. commitment
 Question 4 : A. conceal B. contain C. conserve D. conquer
 Question 5 : A. advantageous B. oceanic C. compulsory D. influential

Mark the letter A, B, C or D on your answer sheet to indicate the correct answer to each of the following questions.

- Question 6 : The receptionist, _____ answered the phone, told me that the director was out.
 A. whose B. whom C. who D. that
 Question 7 : Changes have been made in our primary schooling program. As a result, young children _____ do homework any more.
 A. needn't B. oughtn't C. couldn't D. haven't
 Question 8 : _____ the salesman promised to exchange the defective CD player for a new one, they insisted on getting a refund.
 A. Despite B. Although C. And D. But
 Question 9 : The headmaster has decided that three lecture halls _____ in our school next semester
 A. will build B. will be built C. are being built D. will be building
 Question 10: Although MERS (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome) spreads through close contact with sick people, not through the air, many people still avoid _____ to crowded places.
 A. to go B. having gone C. gone D. going
 Question 11 : Students will not be allowed into the exam room if they _____ their student cards.
 A. produced B. hadn't produced C. didn't produce D. don't produce
 Question 12 : A large number of inventions and discoveries have been made _____ accident.
 A. at B. on C. in D. by
 Question 13 : When asked about their preference for movies, many young people say that they are in favour _____ science fiction.

Figure 26. Copy of National High School exams (University entrance exam included)

Students have their own perceptions of specific genres

For consistency and reliability purposes, the genre family of each assignment provided was categorised according to the descriptions within the BAWE genre families. There were occasions where participants did not think they had completed genres but, when they provided copies of assignments, the writing activities were of a different genre to the one they felt they had written.

Two examples have been selected to show this. Linh stated she had not completed a narrative recount yet other participants had been asked to write reflective accounts at secondary and high school level. These are also evidenced in the national textbooks Linh would have used. Linh attended state secondary and high school so it would be logical to suggest that she also wrote reflective accounts but did not associate them with this type of genre. Linh also claimed she had not written a case study but then showed an example of a case study during an internship at a hotel. This was part of her undergraduate program, and she wrote a report about the company with a description, one or more problems the company was having and solutions to the problems. Linh did not identify her writing as a case study because she thought that a case study *'must be carried out over quite a long time, at least 6 months or several months'*. Additionally, Chau felt she had written a case study describing the morphology of *Streptomyces natalensis*, but this would be regarded as an explanation (the genre family), as an 'organism account' (the genre). The aim was to describe it and say why it important, rather than making suggestions for future action. However, when she completes her research she would then make suggestions about the best ways to extract this strain of bacteria.

There are challenges in classifying genres: stages, social purpose and key words.

Six assignments were not easy to classify. Three examples have been selected to show some of the difficulties classifying the genres using the BAWE classification system. Those assignments that were difficult to classify were discussed in person with Hilary Nesi in 2016. Nesi agreed with the classification made of all assignments based on a discussion of my interpretation of the social function and stages of the assignments.

One of Ton's assignments was described as a critical response. When analysing the language and moves (shown in Figure 27), there were some areas of overlap and inconsistency between Nesi and Gardner's classification system and the assignment. The text had an introduction and a clear aim, *'to provide a critical response'*. It identified two journal articles and then compared 2 or 3 key points within each article. It used evaluative language such as *'more or less convincing'*, *'fails to consider'*, and ended with a

conclusion. When focusing on the stages of genre families within the existing classification system, the assignment includes features of a ‘critique’ because there is a ‘*descriptive account and evaluation*’; however it also has an introduction, series of arguments and conclusion’, so it could also be classified as an essay (based on the stages within the assignment).

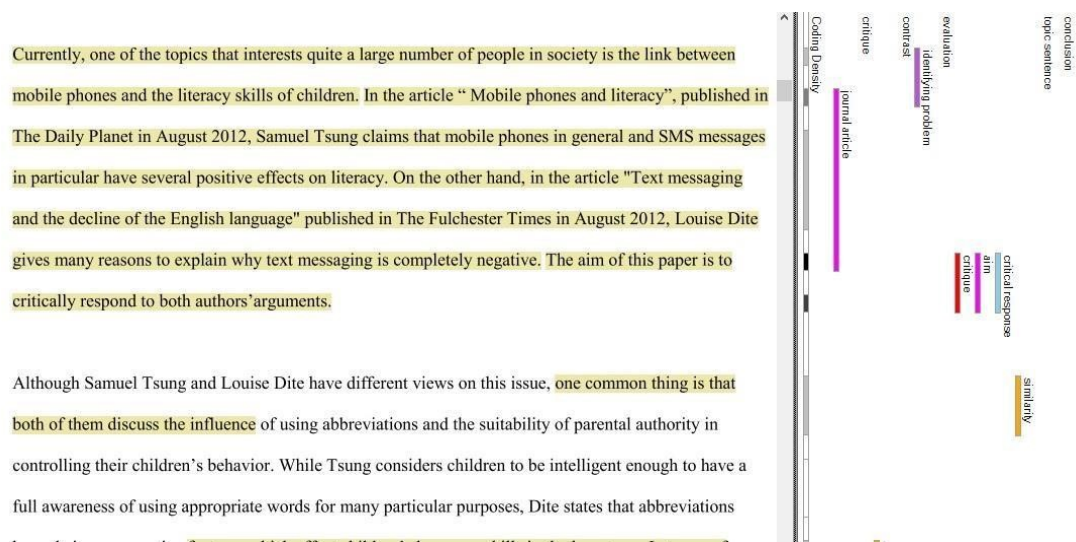


Figure 27. Example of classifying a genre (Ton’s critical response) within NVivo.

Additionally, when matching words from the assignment against keywords reported to be found in undergraduate critiques and essays (Nesi and Gardner 2012: 121), the only word to match was the verb ‘*claim(ed)*’. For the purpose of classifying this assignment as either a critique or an essay, the keyword frequencies were less helpful. This may be because Ton wrote the assignment as pre- undergraduate and the standard of it may not have been of the level to be included in the examples of ‘good’ student assignments collected within the BAWE corpus.

The crucial determinant in classifying Ton’s assignment was the ‘social purpose’. Nesi and Gardner described the social purpose of a critique to ‘*develop understanding of the object of study and the ability to evaluate and/ or assess the significance of the object of study*’. For this assignment however, the purpose of the assignment was to ‘*develop ability to construct a coherent argument and employ critical thinking skills*’. Based on the social purpose then, the assignment would be classified as an essay, and not a critique.

A second example of this classifying issue is shown in a 'Bill of Exchange' (Figure 28). It has been classed as 'Exercise' because it is a fill the gap activity requiring short answers, however it might also be regarded as having the social function of 'preparing for professional practice' where the student is engaged in a 'simulation' in which they pretend to be undertaking the (Business) activity (Nesi and Gardner, 2012: 172). It is related to writing in the workplace rather than writing for academic purposes but it does not fit into the genre families of 'Problem Question', Proposal/ Design Specifications' or 'Case Studies'.

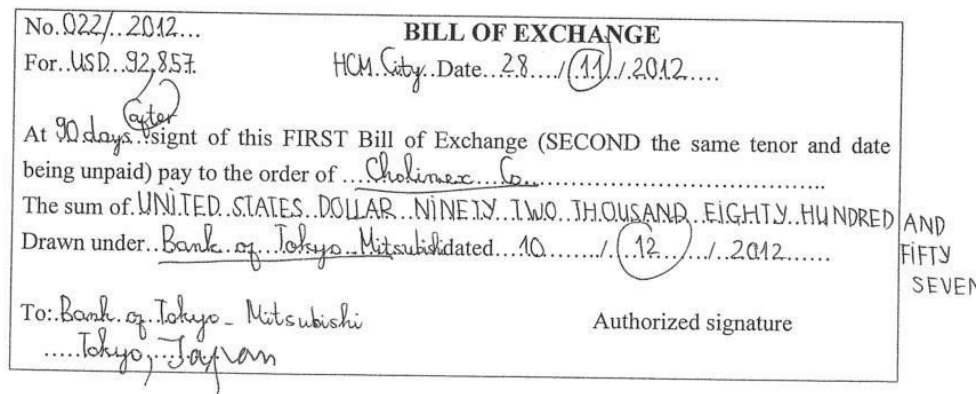


Figure 28. Example of an Exercise: a 'Bill of Exchange'.

Standardised genres pre- MA

The genres reported and evidenced within the study are represented in Table 8. The types of genres written at primary, secondary and High School were standardised. Each participant generally reported to have written the same types of genres as each other until they reached university level. These included Exercises, Empathy writing and Reflective recounts (within Narrative Recounts).

The Exercise genre family was the most predominant genre type at all lower levels of education. The exercises were almost always taken from the national English language textbook. At these levels teachers were reported to have rarely introduced writing tasks from other sources outside of the prescribed textbook. The written exercises were mainly written in the classroom although this did not apply as much when students wrote longer pieces at High School. Two participants said they tended to write longer pieces at home. Referring to high school English classes, Tin explained,

'Writing takes too long, so my teacher usually missed that out'. Exercises are made up of a group of activities that involve a series of responses to questions. They aim to provide 'practice in key skills'. Some examples of the exercises completed by participants are provided in Figure 29.

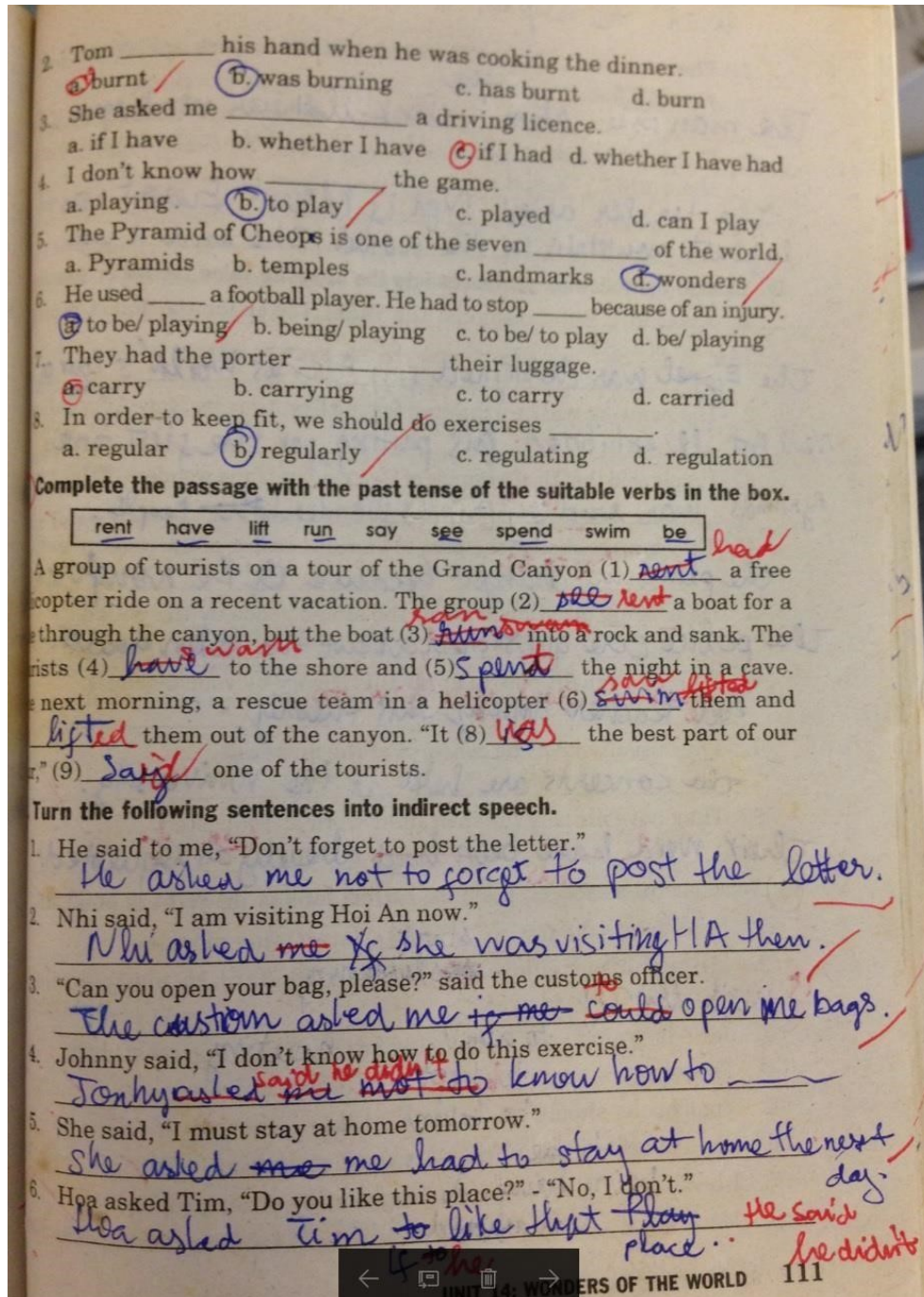


Figure 29. Examples of grammar gap fill and sentence re-write exercises in a Vietnamese textbook.

Grammar gap-fill exercises were the most common type of exercise completed at secondary and high school. They were also used to test grammar and vocabulary within the national English language exams each year (Figures 26 and 26) Many participants enjoyed these types of exercises because they were very familiar with them. Duc, Ton and Trang particularly enjoyed the multiple-choice questions because it was easier to get the correct answer by elimination. When asked about why they enjoyed particular assignments or types of writing, participants often mentioned scoring high marks. When they were able to score high marks on multiple choice and grammar gap fill exercises, they felt as though they enjoyed that writing activity more. At lower levels, these types of exercises were the least challenging types of writing although, according to Kim-Ly, Linh and Tin, they became more difficult within English major university entrance exams and specialist high school entrance exams. Tin felt this should be the case because they were going to be English major students, so their level of English should be better than non-English majors, even at the start of university.

The second most predominant genre family at lower levels of schooling was empathy writing, specifically letter-writing. This genre family includes letter writing or writing a newspaper article. It can also include writing an information leaflet, a job application or offering expert advice to a member of the public. No participants reported to have written a ('pretend') newspaper or magazine article and there is no evidence of newspaper writing in the national textbooks. According to (Nesi and Gardner 2012: 42), the purpose of these activities is to show an understanding of '*academic ideas by translating them into a non-academic writing*'. As exemplified earlier by Duc, letter writing was a common task in the national textbook. Most participants had written letters to friends or family but this was not to show their understanding of academic ideas. Instead, the letter-writing was treated as a type of exercise to practice sentence structuring and appropriate use of vocabulary. Indeed, Duc found this was one of the most helpful functions of letter- writing. An example of a letter- writing task can be found in Figure 30.

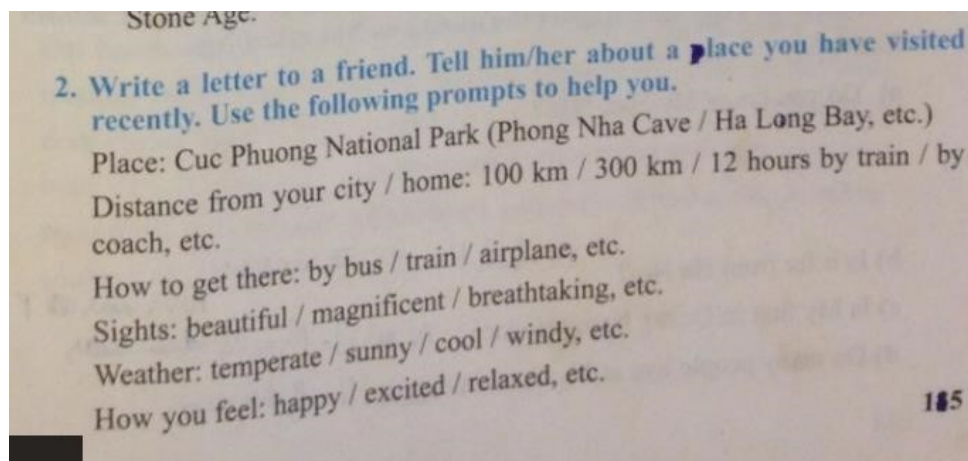


Figure 30. Example of a letter-writing activity from a Vietnamese textbook.

Five participants reported having written pieces of reflective writing at secondary and high school level, although only two of these shared copies of assignments. There is evidence of reflective recounts within the national textbooks where students are asked to write about how they felt during an event or how it affected them in some way. As part of a writing portfolio at undergraduate level, Tin had to write a reflective account of a reading and listening exercise and Ton had written a character outline for his gaming hobby. Other MA ELT students had also written reflection pieces about reading and writing tasks.

Design specifications and problem questions were the least reported and evidenced genres by English and non-English majors. Linh and Ton had experience of Business-related courses and had evidence of writing case studies with recommendations for businesses.

The influence of subject major at higher level

Overall, English majors reported to have had more experience of writing critiques, essays and literature surveys. Ton and the English-majors provided copies of assignments to evidence critiques, Essays, Explanations, and Literature Surveys. The English majors also provided examples of research reports. English majors provided evidence of two written proposals.

Some non-English majors had been writing research reports in Vietnamese (Table 8). For example, Duc had been writing his microbiology laboratory reports in

Vietnamese but he was due to write a research report in English, with the support of his university teacher. English majors reported to have written fewer problem questions and case studies compared to those studying other subjects. Case studies had tended to be written in business- related degree courses.

| Genre Family | English-major participants | | | | | Non- English major participants | | | | | Number of participants who provided evidence | | | | | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------|------|--------|---------|------|---------------------------------|------|------|-----|-----|--|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | Tin | Linh | Kim-Ly | Phuon g | Tran | Chau | Ngoc | Minh | Duc | Ton | | | | | | | |
| Reported/ Evidenced | R | E | R | E | R | E | R | E | R | E | R | E | R | E | R | E | |
| Case Study | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 |
| Critique | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 7 |
| Spec. design | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| Empathy writing | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 4 |
| Essay | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 7 |
| Exercise | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 10 |
| Explanation | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 5 |
| Lit. survey | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 5 |
| Methodology recount | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| Narrative recount | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 |
| Problem question | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| Proposal | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 |
| Research report | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 |

Key

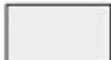


-  Most common pre – University genres:
-  Most common undergraduate genres.
-  Most common postgraduate genres.

Table 8. Genres reported by participants and evidenced in assignments.

Writing for research and understanding the research process is a feature of writing for MA-level university purposes.

Research reports, proposals and literature surveys were reported by almost all participants. Two examples of research proposals and research reports from the English majors were not included, because they were still being written. Both Tin and Linh were in the process of writing a research proposal for their graduation thesis, and their graduation paper would take the form of a research report. Other participants were also working towards writing a final research report for university and/ or for publication. Many participants had first experienced these research-related genres at MA level, although some had limited research-related writing experiences towards the end of undergraduate level. For example, Chau, who was studying on the International Standard Programme, had written a research proposal and mini research reports in English from her third undergraduate year. Writing for research purposes in the form of a proposal or research report was required for all, except one participant. For those non-English majors, who had no experience of writing these types of genres as undergraduate level, this was particularly challenging.

Research question 2

How do the ten students perceive (their) writing in English for university purposes in relation to a) challenges, b) enjoyability and c) usefulness for university d) usefulness for other purposes.

a) Writing challenges

Participants were asked what they found most challenging about writing assignments in English. Their responses were coded, synthesised and themed. Information from the think aloud protocols were also included in this analysis. This included occasions where participants verbalised if they were finding something difficult (or enjoyable) during the writing tasks.

Feeling unprepared for some types of genres/ lack of scaffolding

Most participants felt a lack of preparation or scaffolding to complete the types of MA assignments required. For many participants, the genres expected at MA level were new and it had an impact on the extent to which they enjoyed a piece of writing or how challenging they found it. For example, Linh explicitly rated her enjoyment to whether she had experience or practice writing a particular type of text.

Familiarity with topics and issues around idea generation

Many participants voiced challenges when generating ideas for writing purposes. MA ELT students also identified problems when they ask their students to think of ideas in the classroom or in their writing. The pilot participant suggested there should be no examples offered during interviews because the participants would not think for themselves. Participants voiced, and showed, a lack of confidence or sense of inadequacy when it came to thinking of new ideas. Linh had had some training on idea generation from her IELTS teachers and she spoke openly about how she used this strategy during the think aloud tasks. This strategy allowed her to consider the topic from a range of perspectives (economic, cultural, social) and helped her to think of ideas and examples related to each of these areas. Familiarity with the topic was reported as an important factor by participants but, while all participants chose to write about Vietnam in the think aloud activities (because they felt Vietnam was most familiar to them), they also reported to struggle with ideas in relation to cultural borrowing and globalisation in relation to their own cultural legacies.

Trouble getting started: writing introductions

Most participants found introduction writing one of the most difficult parts of the writing process. Most tended to start with the introduction, although one person said they tend to write their introductions last. Some said they had to go back to their introductions as their assignment changed during the writing process whereas others did not change the introduction, even if the content had changed along the way.

A recurring theme was how much detail or breadth to provide in the first two sentences of the introduction. Most participants wanted to provide a general scenesetting sentence before focusing on the specific topic of the assignment. In his introduction, Tin wrote generally and was purposeful to avoid mentioning culture in the third introductory sentence because he wanted it to be a surprise point for the reader. At diploma level, Tran remembers recognising that the differences between Vietnamese and English writing are cultural, as well as linguistic in nature. Using the example of writing about coffee, she suggests that British, American, or most Western people she knows would start directly with, '*Vietnamese coffee is good to drink in different circumstances*'.

Then they would explain, give examples and then conclude their argument; however Vietnamese people would start by slowly introducing the topic in a subtly persuasive way, rather than '*attacking*' with a direct statement. These types of differences made it hard for Tran to write in English initially and she still feels as though writing in a more direct manner causes an internal type of conflict. Other participants were concerned not to re-use the wording from the task prompt or question in the first sentence of the introduction. Two participants stated this would be regarded as plagiarism and said it was important, but difficult, to paraphrase the assignment or task question within the introduction.

Structuring challenges: sentence level and whole text concerns

Forming sentences or phrases was a challenge demonstrated within think aloud writing tasks. Many participants either changed the point they wanted to express or abandoned an idea completely if they were unable to produce the structure to express it clearly. This meant that important ideas and content were lost in the writing process, and therefore not featured within the finished product. It was only via think aloud activities that this became apparent. Participants had not stated this during their retrospective reporting.

The amount of attention paid to grammatical accuracy differed between participants. Some participants claimed they tended to focus more on the ideas and whole text structure, rather than attempting to perfect every sentence along the way. During think

aloud tasks however, some participants were heavily concerned with grammar and revised sentences constantly. In these cases, the amount of writing was significantly reduced. Ton's first think aloud task is shown in Figure 23. After considerable sentence level revisions, Ton produced one paragraph in 90 minutes.

Difficulty connecting sentences was verbalised during think aloud tasks. Participants wanted to create compound sentences and used strategies to coordinate and subordinate clauses. Writing these sentences generally took the most time and required much revision. Participants also wanted to link sentences within paragraphs and wanted the work to read 'smoothly'. For Tran, this meant it should read in a way that's sounds right, and avoiding awkward-sounding sentences.

Four of the MA ELT students were concerned with the overall format and presentation of their writing. This included the line-spacing, font and paragraph alignment. The work should look neat and standardised. Whole text restructuring was not found during the think aloud tasks and participants did not explicitly talk about moving entire paragraphs or sections of texts to change the structure of order of points/ arguments in a piece of writing.

Academic register and subject-specific vocabulary

A lack of academic vocabulary made writing for university purposes difficult. When participants knew subject-specific vocabulary, or where they had access to relevant vocabulary, they reported that they found the writing process was less challenging, but not necessarily more enjoyable. Three non-ELT majors found some assignments most useful for learning subject-related vocabulary. For example, Minh and Duc both found it useful to write a macro-economics assignment in English to learn economics and business-related vocabulary. Difficulties arose when participants had learnt terminology in English and then had to translate assignments into Vietnamese. Linh had to translate her undergraduate Business graduation paper into Vietnamese. It took her a long time to find subject-specific terminology in Vietnamese because she had learnt it and applied the terms in English only.

A similar theme was found when participants talked about using academic or more formal registers. There were seemingly conflicting or confused messages about writing for academic purposes in English and Vietnamese. Some participants said the register was similar, if not the same, whereas others felt there were differences between the two. When talking about the difference writing a research article in Vietnamese and English, Phuong said that it was not feasible to write about emotions or feelings when writing in English for university, but this also applies to writing in Vietnamese. Ton said the 3piece structure of an essay (introduction, main body, and conclusion) was the same for essays written in Vietnamese and English.

The role of critical thinking

Many participants distinctly remembered when they were required to think or write ‘critically’ for the first time. A common response was a sense of unknowing and inferiority to challenge existing literature, research and authors. Linh said,

“I started to learn to think critically and to make an assessment of someone else’s work during the MA. This was the first time I was taught how to do this. At the beginning, I found it a little difficult because I was never being taught it before, even at university when I was an undergraduate student. But now I think is quite good and I can adopt it for different situations”.

For example, Linh spoke about her unwillingness to challenge famous linguistic academics within her critical review assignment. Two further participants reported to have difficulty assessing the reliability of sources and finding ‘strong and weak’ points of other’s work and arguments. MA ELT students indicated some strategies they use to ‘make an assessment of someone else’s work’. One techniques was to assess whether research reports included all the required contents. Kim-Ly and Tran usually checked whether authors had included the research questions and methodology. Linh also considered whether the research questions were well-linked to the introduction and the literature discussed. Linh, and other English majors in Hanoi, had been taught about the structure of research reports and how to evaluate research reports using the template (or similar) shown in Figure 31. This shows the detail that the participants had been taught to include in their research reports.

Observation (if used):

If observation was a part of the research project, you will need to explain several things to the reader or attendee at your presentation starting with why this method is appropriate for your research goals. In addition, the following topics should all be part of the final report:

- Explanation of why observation was appropriate
- Location and conditions under which observation was conducted
- Description of the population observed
- The recording methods used
- Methods used to interpret observed behaviors
- Conclusions drawn from observation
- Explanation of bases for those conclusions
- How these conclusions will contribute to the rest of the research project

Survey Research:

This is the section that should be pulling together all of the other issues that were identified in the research steps that were conducted previously. The connections to the issues and constructs identified earlier should be made again here so that they reader can easily see the foundations that are being used. Many issues will have to be addressed in this section regarding how the survey was developed and how it was administered. Topics discussed in this section should include:

- Identification of all issues included on the survey
- Explanation of the importance of the selected issues to project
- Development of the survey questions and wording
- Sources of survey questions (existing scales or newly created)
- Description of population of interest
- Explanation of target population appropriateness
- Determination of sample size needed
- Sampling procedures (random or convenience)
- Determination of the sample population
- Method of survey distribution

Data Analysis:

In this section, the reader should find a brief overview of the methods that were utilized in the research, the reasons that those methods were appropriate for the research problem, an explanation of how the outcomes for those methods can be understood and interpreted. It is important to remember that the people reading your report or listening to your presentation may not be familiar with the analysis methods being used. You must present the methods in such a way that anyone interested in your research will be able to understand what was done and why it was done. This section should include the following:

- Overview of analysis methods used
- Justification for methods chosen
- Outcomes of analysis
- Significance of results (statistical and otherwise)

Figure 31. Copy of research-assignment/ research methods guidelines for an MA ELT module.

Fewer participants discussed how they evaluated the content, ideas or arguments in texts. For a critical review assignment, Tran said she used the internet to find out if other people agree or disagree with the author of the report she was reviewing and then used these to decide whether she should support the ideas or not. One participant mentioned how she assesses the quality of the research itself and considers sample bias in her evaluation. Tin undertook a reflection/ review of an article about employment in the UK. In Figure 32, he comments on the use of vocabulary use, the role and expertise of the author, the credibility and reliability of the evidence used in

the text, the relevant and engaging nature of the information (according to Tin) and the overall strength or persuasiveness of the argument.

In the article, the author used some vocabularies^v that are quite suitable to emphasize on the attitudes such as “double dip”, “watchdog”, “think tank” and so on. Moreover, the author is an economic correspondent so he also understands how exact the information needs to be and he used the reliable evidence that is the saying by Minister, some economists, financial organizations or even many up-to-date figures to make the article more persuasive. I have read very carefully to find out the main ideas because the author write it by reporting and commenting on the information received. In terms of knowledge, the news from the text is rather useful with the shortage in the job market of the UK. The author created in readers' mind in one aspect of economic reasearch. ?!

All in all, the article voices a strong attitude toward creating more jobs in the UK. In fact, the author also aims to explain his opinion in the real condition. Furthermore, the writer provides much new information with the evidence and many figures to make readers interested in the text.

Figure 32. Copy of excerpt of Tin's 'reading reflection'/ critique.

Overall, MA students were continuing to develop critical thinking skills for their studies and there was some accumulation of skills and practice undertaken before writing the final, high stakes graduation papers or research reports. There was a strong sense of apprenticeship and instruction to help them to build these new skills.

Feedback on written work

Delays in receiving feedback on written work and a lack of written feedback were found to cause extra challenge for participants. When teachers marked all class assignments, feedback could take a couple of months or more. The participants were quick to point out the reasons for feedback issues, such as the teachers being busy, or that they are required to give detailed comments (which takes time), or because their teacher holds additional responsibilities or management roles within the department or

university. Some participants were grateful to supportive teachers who would explain the feedback face to face if they had requested it of them.

For those who had experience of receiving feedback more quickly, such as Linh's experience on her IELTS course, she felt more informed and confident that she would not repeat the same mistakes in her next assignment. This was an opportunity missed within her university course however, and the feedback was often in the form of a score rather than notes and advice in the margins. One participant suggested a lack of constructive written feedback could be due to teacher's assumption that the students' English proficiency is more advanced so there is no need for that level of detail. There are many potential causes for the feedback issues described here and a note of caution is due here since teachers' feedback was not collected or evidenced within this study.

Working with sources and accessing resources

Access to journal articles differed for MA ELT students in Hanoi and HCMC. In Hanoi, students had limited access to journal subscriptions through their university but participants reported better access to online articles in HCMC. Although all participants were part of the national Vietnamese National University, they were within different member universities and departments. Some non-English majors in Hanoi and HCMC also used articles written in English. Duc and Chau both used microbiology articles written in English because there were more of these available than those written in Vietnamese. Finding appropriate articles in Vietnamese was difficult for some participants. As Chau was studying her course in English-medium she had to read articles in English independently, but Duc was supported by his teacher to read and understand the research reports he needed for his MA work.

Some participants said they had found it hard to search for relevant articles. They often used the library or online searches via Google. No participants talked about using Google Scholar or other search databases, that may or may not have been available to them via their universities. Reading sources was reported to take much time and effort. Two participants spoke about the difficulty they have using correct

citation and referencing conventions and how some courses use APA whereas others use Harvard. During the think aloud tasks, only Phuong cited the source texts used (Figure 40) even though others used ideas or concepts from the texts too. Two participants used the internet to search for material on the topic but did not reference the websites in their writing.

b) Factors linked to participants' perceptions of enjoyability

Effort required and familiarity

If an assignment was challenging to write, it was usually reported as less enjoyable.

Assignments that required a lot of effort were generally perceived as less enjoyable. Few participants suggested that they enjoyed a piece of writing even though it took much time and effort. The amount of reading and lengths of texts were linked to effort-level for some participants. Tran remembers not enjoying an MA assignment because she had to read a significant amount of literature to complete it. Longer texts were generally deemed less enjoyable compared to writing shorter texts.

A lack of experience of certain texts and limited familiarity with the topic was also related to enjoyability. If participants were familiar with the topic and the type of writing (genre) then it tended to make the writing more enjoyable because they felt more confident about the writing.

In Tin's second think-aloud, he explained that the topic reminded him of an assignment he wrote about Starbucks, and this topic was interesting to him. Tin became more confident and engaged in the second task compared to the first task. Linh felt the essay requirement of the think aloud activities were similar to the IELTS essays she had been trained to write and she completed the writing quickly following the strategies and structure she had been taught. There was an increased sense of confidence when participants had some knowledge of the topic and the genre.

The opposite also applied. When participants felt the topic was unfamiliar to them, they enjoyed the writing less. Tran suggested she would have enjoyed the think-aloud tasks more, if she had had time to develop some background knowledge on the topic. At least two participants verbalised some discontent about the topic and the examples given in the source texts in the second think-aloud task. Some participants also preferred writing on topics of their own choice, or topics that were of personal interest to them. Duc and Chau were both keen biologists and enjoyed their fields of research. Many MA ELT students however were heavily supported by their lecturers to choose and refine a topic for their theses. Topics seemed to relate closely to the expertise of the lecturers and it is not possible to say, from the data, how far the final research questions or topics related to the original interest of the participant.

Achievement and writing for social purposes

Participants reported to have enjoyed getting the right answers in tests and scoring well in exams. All participants could remember their high school scores, despite graduating up to 10 years previously. Many participants linked this to confidence level and feeling able to complete tests. For example, Duc preferred multiple choice questions that had only 3 possible answers because this allowed him more opportunity to eliminate the incorrect answers and reach the correct answer. Many participants felt they enjoyed writing tasks more if they received a good grade. Very few participants spoke about enjoying writing assignments for any intrinsic benefit.

Two participants felt they enjoyed writing activities that would help them later on, including thesis writing but more felt they enjoyed 'freer' types of writing outside of academic or writing templates. Ton most enjoyed writing for his gaming hobby and Ngoc preferred writing in English on instant messaging or facebook because they could be more creative and less restricted by structures and the need for assessment.

d) Usefulness for university and other purposes

This question revealed less (detailed) data than the questions about enjoyability and challenge. When asked whether, and why an assignment or writing activity was useful, a popular response was, *'to develop/ improve my writing skills'*, so further detail was sought. For some pieces of work, participants were not sure why they were useful or why they thought they had been asked to write them. Others had not really considered this until they were asked to think about it, and then they were able to reflect on the usefulness of some writing tasks.

Practising skills

Different writing activities were useful for finding sources, reading, brainstorming, avoiding plagiarism, and engaging in critical thinking. This is the most common set of reasons why participants felt some university assignments and writing tasks were useful. Ton explained that his research report was useful for learning how to find relevant sources. Tran's literature review was useful to develop reading skills, especially reading research reports and other academic literature. Duc and Linh felt that essay writing and learning about different types of essays (including argumentative essays) were useful for developing idea brainstorming skills and critical thinking skills. Linh spoke about her postgraduate assignments helping to *'train her mind'*, to think differently and to evaluate more.

Practise for exams and final assignments

This is the second most popular reason given by participants. A number of participants reported that multiple choice questions and sentence structure exercises were most helpful for exam practice, presumably because this is how the exams were presented. Some undergraduate assignments and MA assignments were regarded as good preparation for graduation papers and research reports. Although many genres were new to participants at MA level, there was a sense of practice and skill refinement over the course of a module, semester or course. MA ELT students recognised that literature reviews and resource reviews contributed to their final research reports. Two of the (micro) biology majors, were writing building laboratory

results, which would be used to inform their theses. Although they tended to write their lab reports and results in Vietnamese, their final paper will be written (or translated) into English.

Grammar and subject-specific vocabulary

This is the third most common response. Ton's case study of a Vietnamese company was useful to learn business-related vocabulary and some phrases. In an earlier assignment he also prepared a presentation about Apple which taught him new vocabulary too. Figure 33 shows a range of new vocabulary related to business strategy such as 'operating system, hardware, application software and innovative industrial design'.



Figure 33. Example of a presentation slide from Ton's MBA presentation about Apple.

Ton, Linh and Ngoc found some essays and 'critical responses' useful to learn phrases they could reuse again in later pieces of writing. An example of this are the introductions in Ton's series of critical response assignments (Figures 34, 35 and 36).

These show a recycling of sentence and paragraph structures that is altered slightly for the different topics.

Currently, one of the topics that interests quite a lot of people over the world is to choose a lingua franca. In the article "Esperanto, the hope of the world" written by Yan Rado in June 2011, he claims that Esperanto has its own beneficial features to be a language of the world. On the other hand, Doctor Angla Sola illustrates several reasons to explain why Esperanto is not a choice for the language of the world in the article "What's the point of Esperanto?" published in the Language Journal in 2011. The aim of this paper is to critically respond to both authors' arguments.

Figure 34. Introduction by Ton: example 1

Currently, one of the topics that people in society concern is whether people have a right to access free health care or not. In the article "All Americans have a right to free health care" published on Left Coast Times on January 18th 2012, William Liberal claims that free health care should be available for all citizens. In contrast, Hornberger illustrate several reasons to explain why health care is not a right for all Americans in the article "Health care is not a right" published on The Future of Freedom Foundation website on July 1st,2009. The aim of this paper is to critically respond to both authors' arguments.

Figure 35. Introduction by Ton: example 2

Currently, one of the topics that interests a large number of people in society is whether students studying at high school have to participate in the voluntary work or not. In the article "Students - Help Our Country!", posted in Community Action Blogpost in September 2011, Pham Phuong Thao claims that students should take part in volunteering because of the shortage in the number of the volunteers. On the other hand, in the article "Students Deverse Choice" published in Community Action Blogpost in October 2012, Andy Nguyen argues gives many reasons to explain why students do not need to join in any volunteer work. The aim of this paper is to critically respond to both authors' arguments.

Figure 36. Introduction by Ton: example 3

Many participants felt that grammar gap-fill exercises were useful to remember grammar rules, sentence structures and use of pronouns for example. Tran found her undergraduate essays useful for learning new phrases that she has been able to use in later writing. Linh also felt the same about the IELTS essays she had been taught to write. Indeed, Linh showed how she transferred this learning into the think aloud tasks. In her essay about American literature, Kim-Ly felt she learnt many new words related to the ‘freedom of speech’ topic. The same applied to Duc’s description of probiotic bacteria. Conversely, his letter-writing assignments, set within the English classes for staff member, were not useful for learning specific vocabulary. Minh’s essay about macroeconomics was also useful for learning economics and accounting-related terms. Tin completed an exercise to record useful vocabulary and structures from a piece of reading. Figure 37 shows the template provided for this type of exercise.

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Source | http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2013/mar/11/uk-850000-jobs-recession-resolution-foundation?INTCMP=SRCH |
| Word count | 680 Words |
| Name of the author | Phillip Inman |
| Year of publication | March 11, 2013 |

III. Useful vocabulary and structures (topic – related language)

| No. | Word | Transcription | Meaning | Example |
|-----|-------------------------|---------------|---|---|
| 1 | Private sector | 4 | The part of a country’s economy that is not under the direct control of the government. | Employees hope that private sector pay will rise in the next month. |
| 2 | Keep pace with (sb/sth) | ? | To move, increase, change at the same speed as sb/sth. | Until now, wage increases have always kept pace with inflation. |
| 3 | Hail | / heil / | To describe sb/sth as being very good or special, especially in newspaper. | The conference was hailed as a great success. |

Preparing for employment

Assignments that were reported to be useful for employment purposes were job application forms, cover letters and research report writing. Tin, Linh, Phuong, Tran, Ngoc, and Ton, had written job or university applications or cover letters in English, but not all of them had had practice for job applications beforehand. Ton's example of a practice cover letter is evident in Figure 38.

Full name [redacted]
Class [redacted]

COVER LETTER

[redacted] Hanoi
3 February 2015

Sky Nguyen
Enp Training Company
[redacted] Hanoi

Dear Mr Sky,

I am writing to apply for the position of Teaching Assistant, as recently advertised on epn.edu.vn website. After reading the job description, I realized that I would be a reasonable candidate for this position as my experience and abilities.

During my BA in English major, I have been working as a tutor for students from primary schools to high schools. This experience has been invaluable in putting into practice some of the linguistic theory I learned in my degree. In particular, I worked with a child who was not really interested in English and needed the encouragement for learning progress.

Figure 38. Tin's cover letter exercise.

Those who aspired to work in academia, found research report writing useful for future employment, partly due to the desire to be published in English. For business-oriented students, their assignments were useful to become familiar with the context in which they could work in in the future. For Ton, this could be within a Vietnamese company like the one who wrote a case study about and for Tin, it could be the type of Japanese/ international company he had learnt about in the international business course. Some MA ELT students wanted to teach English within

a university, rather than a school, but a few thought this was a difficult feat. For those who already taught at university level, they were undertaking classroom-based research for their teaching roles (as a staff member), as well as research for their MA theses. This is research that is undertaken by an active teaching practitioner in order to explore or investigate challenges or topics within their own classrooms. The research they undertook for these purposes was sometimes related, but not always. For example, Phuong explored the relationships between gender (of teachers) and teaching styles. The participants were the MA students on her course, rather than her teaching colleagues within her university. The pilot participant had undertaken some teacher-research on communicative language activities to engage students in the classroom. The findings were shared with colleagues within the university.

Receiving feedback from peer assessments

Only one participant gave this response when asked about why an essay he had written was useful but three other MA ELT students spoke about the role of peer assessment in their writing processes, and to what extent this is useful for their writing. Technically this is slightly off topic because it is not what made a piece of writing useful but the recurring nature of the topic warrants discussion in the thesis.

Tin found feedback from peers useful to correct the smaller grammar errors that his teacher may not have time to pick up on. It seems peers have time to read assignments in more detail than their teachers. Tran found peer assessment useful to ensure her ideas and arguments could be understood. A classmate had struggled to understand a key point in her contrastive linguistics assignment about Freedom of Speech in the U.S and Vietnam so Tran explained it to her and re-wrote the argument in a clearer way. Kim-Ly did not always find peer assessment as useful because she questioned the proficiency and authority of her peers to assess and correct her work. Kim-Ly wanted a teacher who has a higher level of knowledge, to give her feedback, rather than her peers.

Research question 3

Which writing processes do the ten students use when writing for university purposes?

Participants were asked to report on the writing processes or stages they went through when completing a recent assignment or piece of writing. Participants also undertook two think aloud writing tasks where they verbalised what they were thinking during the writing process. The first retrospective reports of writing processes were less detailed than the concurrent think aloud protocols. The behaviours and thinking reported were analysed and structured into a pre-writing stage, writing stage and postwriting stage. This approach reflects the L2 writing process tradition and shows the phases of writing. The model in Figure 39 is a visual representation of some of the findings in relation to this research question.

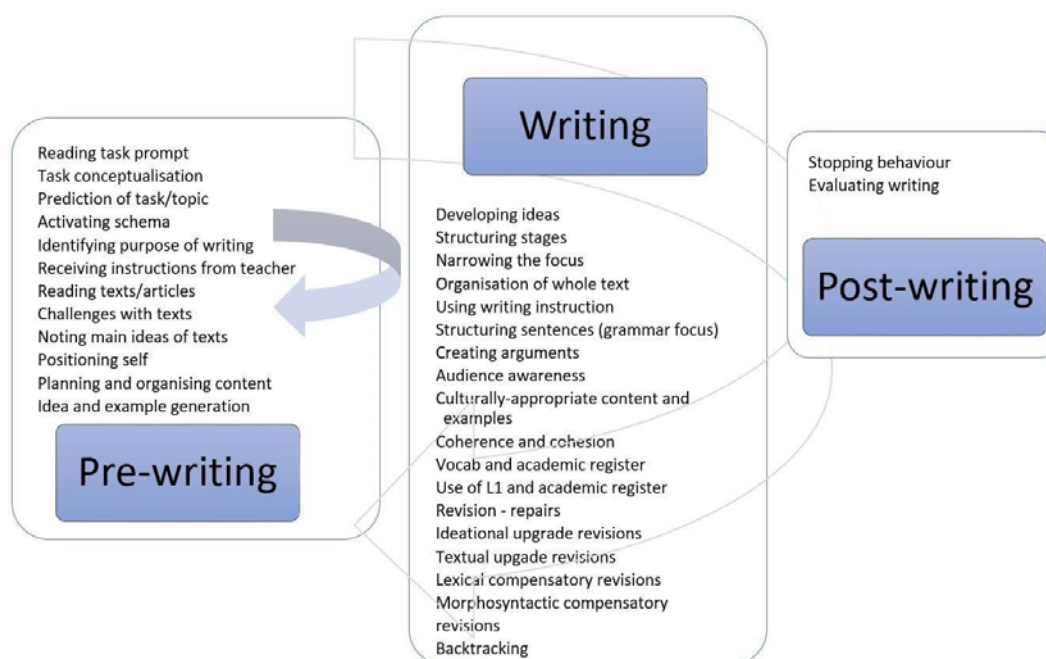


Figure 39. L2 model of writing from retrospective and concurrent think aloud activities.

The three sections indicate that L2 writing for university purposes starts (somewhere) and finishes (somehow). There is a beginning and an end when it comes to writing an assignment. The processes within this however are not finite because each piece of writing is connected to earlier and later writing activities and other experiences. This is reflected in many actions and thoughts within this model. For example, conceptualising the task, activating schema and identifying the purpose of the writing and planning content all rely on previous experiences of some kind. These are likely to be earlier experiences of writing for similar tasks or topics in addition to other sociocultural influences. This point is to show that, although writing tasks were generally discussed in isolation within the data collection stages, they were construed very much as part of an ongoing process of writing development and experiences that build on one another. There were many examples where participants clearly used prior learning and experiences of writing within the think aloud tasks.

A second feature of the model is the recursion, which also echoes existing representations of composing processes, or 'post-process' ideas. The mental processes and actions evidenced in writing are often simultaneous, inter-dependent and nonlinear so at any stage of the writing, participants would probably be engaged in mental processes in what they had already written and what they will do afterwards. Indeed, this fundamental aspect of the writing process makes it difficult to capture as it happens 'live' in the working memory of individuals (Olive, 2012; Olive and Passerault, 2012). The actions and verbalisations are linked in many ways, for example, wanting to achieve cohesion and coherence in writing is linked to organisation of writing (amongst other things), and this can require textual revisions along the way. Another example is how the process of creating arguments relates to the use of academic register and ideational revisions (to express ideas and meaning intended). These may require compensatory revisions before the writer is satisfied with the argument, and this tends to involve backtracking (a checking over what has been written before to inform what to write next or how).

Writing processes from retrospective reports of writing

A general process was reported that involved pre-writing and writing stages. MA ELT students and those expected to write research reports reported to have chosen articles and some wanted to find an interesting topic or something different to other students. They undertook some detailed reading, engaged with texts, identified the purpose of the writing, received instructions from the teacher (including how to structure the writing), noted the main ideas (of reading and for assignment). Some reported to have planned for the writing using columns or writing an outline.

Topics, ideas and arguments

Other participants reported to have considered the question or narrowed the topic before turning to materials or data collection. They generally read texts in the form of a course-book, other books or articles (online and hard copies). Some participants said they highlighted parts of the reading and/or made either handwritten or typed notes from their reading. One participant said she tends to copy and past material before paraphrasing the copied texts.

This stage tended to contribute to planning and idea-generation activities. Some participants reported to have formed key points and arguments based on their reading and, (for some), an assessment of the reading. Some participants explained or drew a diagram to show how they tend to plan for assignments. This included using brainstorming, using bullet points or writing points in columns or creating sentences and paragraphs from notes made of the reading.

Some participants spoke about showing critical thinking skills in their writing. Kim-Ly said she decides whether to agree or disagree with the reading or arguments based on whether the points are well supported by others. Linh and Phuong reported to assess the reliability of research reports based on clarity of the research questions and research-related issues, like any sample bias. Tran found it important to provide strong, logical arguments and avoids using '*weak*' phrases like '*in my opinion*'. Two MA ELT participants said they thought about how to make their writing interesting or engaging for readers and Phuong used counter-argumentative paragraph structures to

add strength to her arguments. This meant that she tended to write a shorter paragraph for the argument she does not agree with, followed by a longer paragraph or two paragraphs supporting the point/s she does agree with.

Structuring, language and drafting

Almost all participants spoke about how they structure the whole text. This usually included an introduction, main body and conclusion and many participants reported to generally follow a format or structure given by their teacher/ lecturer or follow the structure of an article (for a resource or critical review). At this stage in the data collection, many participants admitted to having difficulty starting the writing. There was a general consensus that the introductory sentences can take a long time to refine. Only one participant said she leaves the introduction to the end of the writing, all others said they started with the introduction and kept going, with revisions later on. Three MA ELT students explained how they try to structure sentences and paragraphs in a coherent way. They also used the term '*cohesion*' in reference to making the writing 'flow' but did not expand on any cohesive strategies other than using particular 'phrases'.

Some participants said they paid attention to grammar and correct use of tense, as they wrote. This was also related to making writing 'smooth' and natural-sounding. Four participants said they looked for academic words or more formal phrases via synonyms or using a dictionary. Details of sentence-level revisions were not offered and, when prompted about this, one participant said he might change phrasal verbs or correct some words. Two MA ELT participants and Minh said they thought about how to engage the reader in their writing. They try to make it interesting or engaging for the reader somehow. Linh is cautious about using particular words in her writing. When describing how she wrote an essay, she said she was careful not to overuse the word 'however' because her teacher would want justification for using such a strong word. Linh would use the term to show a difference or a critical point in her writing.

Four MA ELT students said they would share their work with a peer before submitting it to the teacher. For two participants, this peer checking was a

compulsory part of the writing and assessment process and the teacher would not mark the assignment unless a peer had reviewed it first. For Linh, peer assessments were not compulsory but she liked to get feedback from her friends, if she had time to send it to them before the deadline. Tran and Phuong were less keen about receiving feedback from their peers because they felt the teacher had more expertise than their own counterparts. For her literature review assignment, Kim-Ly said she had to explain her main points to her friend, because her friend did not understand them from the writing. Kim-Ly said her friend then understood her points so she did not change the writing. Phuong said she checks over her writing but cannot always find the grammar errors.

Pre-writing processes from think-aloud tasks

Reading the task prompt and Task conceptualisation

Many participants made some sort of prediction about the topic or task before it was given. They wondered what the writing would involve and said they thought the writing might be a review or an essay or describing something. Phuong said,

“Maybe I can guess your topic, your questions. This is a critique, maybe a critique, and you give me a paragraph and I have to analyse it.”

When given the question and source texts, all participants re-read the task prompt many times and interacted with it in some way. They underlined, circled or highlighted key words and verbally repeated key words in the question, such as ‘culture’ or ‘globalisation’. Kim-Ly considered whether fast food restaurants were part of culture; she felt the concept was ‘*complicated*’ and said she needed more background information on the topic. Many participants reflected on the topic and how familiar it was to them. For example, Chau felt the topic was unfamiliar to her and she questioned why the task had the topic about cultural borrowing. Phuong also felt that the topic would be difficult for students who were not familiar with it. Most participants asked limited questions about the task such as whether they should choose one culture or more. Tin felt that the topic reminded him of a topic in an ‘Intercultural Communication’ task, which was part of his writing portfolio. However,

he felt that he had not read much about this topic generally, so brainstorming and thinking of ideas was difficult for him. Tin explained he had read a large number of articles and texts in Education, Economics and Socioeconomics, but these had not been focused on culture. In the second task, the question reminded him of articles about globalisation and adaptation that he read in the second year of his International Economics course.

Interacting with source texts and positioning self

For the second writing activity, participants read and re-read the texts fully, at least twice, and went back to the task prompt a number of times. Tin said he skimmed the question the first time round and so went back to read it again in detail. Some commented on the main ideas/ stance or position of each text. Hang felt that Text 1 was in support of the phenomenon whereas text 2 was critical of the impact of globalisation on culture. Chau wrote 'good' and 'bad' next to key points in each text to show if they were suggesting globalisation had a positive or negative effect on cultures.

Three participants expressed difficulties they were having, particularly with text (2) and the context-specific examples such the Rock and Roll and African reference. These examples, and some new vocabulary (like 'revitalise) partly affected comprehension of fine details but all participants accurately identified the gist of the texts. Reading the texts was a help and a hindrance. Tran wanted to have more texts to read whereas Linh found it hard to avoid re-using the examples given in the text. Chau spent some time considering the meaning of the term 'impact' within the text. Chau wondered if the word was being used to mean the verb, 'effect'. Although she had previously used the term to refer to negatives, she thought it could be representing both positive and negative things if used in the same way as 'effect'. Tin reflected that he did not realise that anti-globalisation groups and protesters target American companies. Tin said,

“This sentence told me that the United States culture, the American culture forcing on the rest of the world, why? I want to know why it says that.”

All participants who completed the Plakans think aloud tasks positioned themselves or their position on the debate/ topic in some way. In the first task, some choose to argue that either cultural borrowing was either helpful or harmful but most chose to be neutral and offer examples for and against. In the second task, participants tended to take a more definite position and tended to explain how globalisation is more positive for cultures, than negative. An example of this is shown in Phuong's writing in Figure 40 when she writes how she 'totally agrees' that globalisation has a positive influence on cultural exchange.

For the first writing task, all participants wrote about Vietnam and they explained they were choosing to write about Vietnam because it is most familiar to them. Thao said she could write about another culture but she was concerned this would be pretentious of her. All participants spoke about Chinese influences on Vietnamese culture but some chose not to write about this in their essay. This decision would not have been evident if retrospective approaches only had been used. This has methodological implications for L2 writing process research, which is discussed in the next chapter.

Planning and idea generation

Some participants planned their writing. They tended to hand write an outline or use for and against bullet points. In the second writing activity, two participants followed the structure of the texts in their planning whereas Phuong was concerned about being too dependent on the texts in the second writing task (Figure 40). Some did not plan their answers. Tran said she planned in her mind and Kim-Ly only planned to answer the first part of the question in the first think aloud task. Towards the end of her writing she realised there were two parts to the question and said it would have been a '*disastrous*' scenario if that had happened in an exam situation. Some participants verbalised or wrote ideas and examples in their plans, but did not include the material in their piece of writing. Decisions were made about what to include and exclude between the planning and writing stage.

Task

Globalization has had a strong impact on the world. One issue of globalization is cultural borrowing or adaptation.

- Read the following passages about this issue.
- Then consider your opinion about the impact of globalization on culture.
- Plan and write an essay supporting your position and using examples.
- Incorporate relevant information from the passages appropriately. Do not copy exact phrases; cite the authors.

neutral → Integration

impact globalization

1. Advantages:

- + be accessible to other cultures → understand
- + understand the aspects of world cultures
- + Acquire the good new cultures from other countries (positive appropriate) ... Examples?

2. Disadvantages:

- + Lose cultural diversity → melting pot
- + Some bad people take this opportunity to cheat someone (disguised) → Examples ???

East

South + In the history, China use cultures to make no distinction.

Figure 40. Task and planning sheet from Phuong's second think aloud task.

Idea and example generation occurred during the pre-writing and writing stages.

It was a common verbalisation and point of apprehension for participants who distinguished between thinking of an idea and then examples to support it.

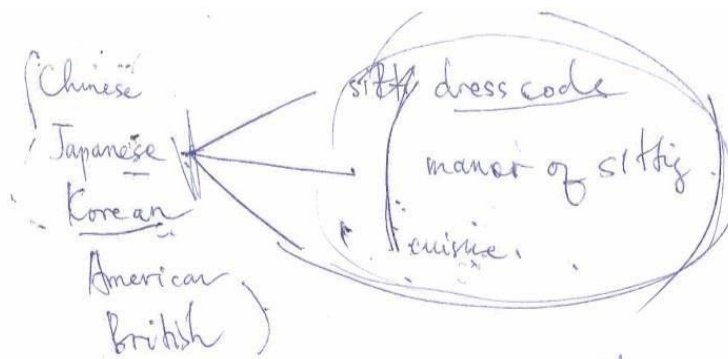
Consequentially they were coded as separate entities. Three participants said they were writing additional explanation of examples used because a non-Vietnamese reader might not understand the relevance of the example. Tran said, if she were writing for a Vietnamese audience, she would give more examples but would probably not need to explain them in the same way. Tin read over his work and found some examples were irrelevant, he felt he needed to explain the events leading up to a point, in order to understand the point. Tin was referring to the influence of Japanese culture on

Vietnamese businesses, and investments the Japanese government and corporations had made in projects in Vietnam. Tin added information to make it more relevant and logical and then reads over a paragraph to check if the sentences are relevant to one another.

Linh struggled to think of an equal number of examples for each 'side of the coin' so she chose not to use a counter-argumentative structure (as taught by her IELTS tutors) because she would have needed more examples to make this type of structure. Linh used complex sentences and added an extra generic sentence to make up for lack of examples to support ideas in paragraphs. Tran was also concerned that her ideas were overlapping and not distinct enough from one another.

Processes during the writing stage from think-aloud protocols

Participants generally followed a similar approach to writing. All participants who completed the Plakans tasks wrote an introduction. This tended to take longer to write compared to other sections of their texts (i.e. the main body and conclusion). All participants were concerned with staying close to the question and ensuring they were answering the question/ task. Some participants verbalised their thoughts about what should be included in the introduction. Tin said it is a challenge for him to start writing because he'd been taught to avoid plagiarism by not simply copying the question in the first sentence. Tin said he had to paraphrase it and needed to write an overview of the topic, which was a challenge for him. Tin's introduction is displayed in Figure 41 and shows a general, global introduction to the 'cultural' topic before specifying the two cultures he chose to discuss. Ton also wanted to make a link between the first general sentence and a second, more specific, sentence, which is evident in his introductory sentence in Figure 23. Ton rewrote the first sentence four times.



There is no doubt that ^{the world} civilization is distinguished in different manners ~~which~~, which ~~civilization~~ cultures ~~is~~ ^{capable} ^{plays} an important role. Cultures may be transferred ~~from~~ ^{among} a large ~~var~~ variety of nations all over the world. Japanese and Vietnamese are considered as the similar cultures ~~is~~, but ~~it is because of~~ the reason is that Vietnamese culture have borrowed from Japanese one.

Figure 41. Tin's planning and introduction for first write-aloud activity.

The process of making points more specific was evident in many participant's writing and there was evidence of hedging in some writing, but not all. For example, Tin wrote how cultures 'may be' transferred and Phuong wrote how 'some' people believe that globalisation has a positive influence on cultures (Figure 42). Examples of hedging were not always supported by verbalisations so it is not possible to say that the participants were purposely using modal verbs or modal adverbs, for example, to be cautious in their language or to alter the strength of their claim.

Globalization has a positive effect on the culture.

Writing :

Introduction part :

Whether globalization has a negative or positive impact on the world is controversial. ^{while} Some people believe that globalization has a good influence on the cultural exchange, others claim that globalization this trend can be harmful to the cultural development of countries. I totally agree with the ~~former~~ former idea

Body part :

Regarding the negative effect of globalization on the world, a lot of [✓] people think that globalization & Am's is similar to Americanization. The phenomenon of ~~that~~ American youth culture such as fast food, rap music, MTV and Star Wars movies makes people worried of the thing called "cultural imperialism" (Brendan January, 2008). However, the ~~fact~~ ^{also believe that} different people share different viewpoints. There are also a lot of people [✓] the trend of global

Figure 42. Excerpt of Phuong's second think aloud writing task.

Some participants wanted to ensure their sentences or points were linked and they used 'transitional signals' to show a change in topic or idea. Phuong and Tin suggested these were sentences that show the direction of the writing to the reader such as 'Regarding the negative effect of globalisation' in Phuong writing above in Figure 42. The MA ELT students were clear in their verbalisations about using a more formal register and revised at word and sentence level to ensure writing sounded more academic. Tin, Tran and Duc spoke about avoiding the use of personal pronoun 'I' and being careful when including their own opinion. Like Tran, Tin wanted to avoid using the phrase, 'in my opinion'.

All participants commented when they were ready to start the ‘main body’ of their writing and again for the conclusion. Two participants said they were relieved or happy to be at the conclusion. Backtracking and revisions were evident for all writers but there were some differences on the reasons for the revisions. Kim-Ly often reread her own writing when she was ‘stuck’ in her writing, so she took the opportunity to go back to the questions, read what she has written in response to the question and then continue to write based on this. Backtracking and revisions or verbalisations evaluating writing came together. This meant that, as participants read back over their work they spoke about making changes (and made changes) or assessed how well they thought they were writing or how much progress they were making in answering the question.

Revision – repairs

Repairs are reformulations and revisions are defined as ‘*those episodes in which the writer changes, adds to, or deletes previously written segments of different length*’ (Manchón et al., 2007, 2008). It was difficult to assess the reasons for all instances of revisions. If repairs were supported by a verbalisation, it made it easier to assess the purpose but this did not always happen. Some repairs were clearer to identify without verbalisation, such as word changes to make the writing more formal or academic. Within this project, ‘repairs’ are used as an umbrella term to capture activities where writers make changes to the text where it was not possible to be sure of the purpose for the revision. In reality, the relationship between these different types of revisions is more complex than the categories shared by Manchón et al. (1999) seem to show. For example, making changes to express meaning better is related to knowledge of morpho-syntactic strategies in order to express the meaning clearly.

Upgrade revisions

Although some participants felt it was difficult to think of ideas and examples, they were clear about at least some initial ideas and messages they wanted to write, when they started to write. For some, additional ideas and examples were developed during the writing stage. There appeared to be a relationship between participant’s lexical and morpho-syntactic knowledge and their ability to express their ideas in writing. Textual revisions were the most common form, based on verbalisations and observations

during the think aloud protocols. These were identified as occasions when participants were concerned with cohesion, coherence, register and avoiding repetition. Avoiding repetition was a significant feature of writing. Ton checked synonyms of the term 'culture' because he did not want to use the word too many times. Tin also wanted to avoid repetition of the word 'many' so considered using 'a large number of', 'a variety of' and 'a majority of'. Ton chose to use the term 'younger generation' rather than 'children' because it '*sounded more beautiful*'. Although this type of decision required lexical know-how, they were not compensatory (based on a lack of linguistic resources); rather they were intended to upgrade or better express meaning based on a range of lexical choices available in their repertoire.

Via backtracking, Linh assessed that the first sentence was not relevant to the current paragraph she was writing so she deleted it. Ngoc read over a sentence, added an extra sentence and then combined them using a comma to show how they two sentences were linked. Kim-Ly was concerned with making writing smooth and said she would return to earlier sentences to link them together at the end of the writing. Tran also said she would go back to the beginning of the writing, once the structure has changed, to add in cohesive words.

Compensatory revisions

Compensation strategies included attempts to find L2 meaning from an L1 concept or term or morpho-syntactic' problems. The latter included instances when participants made changes when forming words or the ordering of words in sentences. Almost all participants reported to have thought about concepts in Vietnamese and translated them into English. This was perhaps more likely to happen when writing about cultural topics but there were instances when other concepts were translated. For example, Ton used a dictionary on his mobile phone to research the meaning of the term 'bureaucracy', the Vietnamese term 'chuc lai' (to wish back), and another term meaning 'to manipulate'. These translations were not always successful but alternative means of expressing the meaning were sought. Generally speaking, the MA ELT students engaged less in this type of revision but those studying in English-medium still undertook compensatory revisions. Recurring revisions showed participants'

difficulty with clauses, compound sentences, subordination, coordination or reduction. It is not possible to say that different types of revisions were linked to the English proficiency level of participants. When participants spent a significant amount of time on sentencelevel compensatory revisions, they tended to produce shorter pieces of writing compared to those who paid less attention to this. Two participants were unable to successfully revise their writing and decided to abandon ideas or key points. These examples show the types of verbalisations and behaviours when participants had exhausted their lexical or morpho syntactic expertise, and were often accompanied by a sense of frustration and disappointment.

Evaluating writing and stopping behaviour

Although participants arrived at a point of completion with their writing, they were more critical of their writing abilities during the writing itself. Tin said he was not very good at brainstorming, others felt that some sentences '*did not sound right/ good/ nice/ smooth*'. Ton was concerned that he might make some mistakes in his writing and Tran said she has to remind herself that she is writing in a second language, so anything she can write is good overall. Almost all participants re-read their writing and voiced that they were finished in some way. Chau, Tin and Ton had written a plan for their second writing think aloud tasks but did not fully complete the writing in the twohour session.

Other findings related to writing processes

Use of L1 and content linked to Vietnam

Participants were asked to indicate when they were thinking for their writing in Vietnamese. This would have been a challenging task, especially for those who continue to do most of their thinking-for-writing in L1. Nevertheless, some participants could indicate when they had thought of an example or term in Vietnamese and either successfully, or unsuccessfully, found a translation for this.

The think aloud protocols allowed an insight into the decisions made about content related to Vietnam and its relationship with other countries. Although the task topics were about cultural borrowing and globalisation, so participants were more likely to write about cultural and other Vietnamese-related content; it would not have been possible to

understand how and why they chose to include and exclude different points and examples if final texts were used in isolation. The think aloud protocols and questions asked about the writing decisions made during the tasks, help to explain how many participants perceive or position themselves in relation to other cultures and countries in SE Asia and the U.S. More participants wrote about the influence of China, rather than the influence of America. This applied equally to participants in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. Knowledge of Chinese and French colonisation was discussed in relation to the current impact on Vietnamese culture, traditions and language.

Participants positioned themselves as 'we', as Vietnamese individuals, and as part of the Vietnamese family. When writing about Vietnam, in relation to China, five participants referred to the size differences between the two countries and Vietnam's ability to reject or be resilient against losing its own culture to their much larger, more powerful neighbour. Participants wrote and spoke about this topic with passion and pride. Ngoc's response to the first think aloud protocol in Figure 43 is very similar to Tran's and points within them are echoed in the writing of other participants from Hanoi and HCMC.

There are many cultures in the world and the influences between the different cultures is normal. Vietnam also has a variety culture because it is impacted from other countries, especially China. The most important influences from Chinese cultural on Vietnamese cultural are language, food and religion.

The firstly, there are a lot of words in Vietnamese that has the same sounds with Chinese. Many linguistics claim that Vietnamese and Chinese have original language. However, in my opinions the similarity of two languages just is the impaction of culture. Chinese had been had a thousand of years to control Vietnamese like a continent and in this time they had tried to turn Vietnamese culture into Chinese culture. Yet, that process had been successful because Vietnamese had taken that influences to make its culture more differed. Vietnamese had turned Chinese sounds into the sounds are more familiar and used it to describe the life of them. People can see a lot of Vietnamese poetry which had been written by Chinese letters but had been read by Vietnamese sounds. Therefore, language of Chinese had impacted on Vietnamese like the influences of culture.

Vietnamese is the opened culture and the food of Vietnamese show up it clearest. There are many Chinese have lived in Vietnam, especially in the South of it such as Ho Chi Minh City, Can Tho city and My Tho city. The food in such there has mixed the taste between Chinese food and Vietnamese food. People can enjoy Vietnamese noodle cooked in the ways of Chinese like Mi vit tiem or Chinese food cooked in the ways of Vietnamese like Hoanh thanh. All of food is great and make the food culture of Vietnamese more interesting.

The cultural factor Vietnamese borrowed from Chinese is the religion. Many years ago, the Buddhism of India had spread out in China and Chinese had considered it as the national religion. When attacking and controlling Vietnamese in the past, Chinese had brought the Buddhism to Vietnamese and forced them believing in it. Vietnamese had adopted this religion because it makes people more peaceful. After that, when Vietnamese had been an independent country, they have been keeping this religion and believing in it as the national religion. There are a lot of great temples which show the belief of Vietnamese people in it and most of them have the similar shapes of Chinese temples.

The influences of Chinese culture on Vietnamese culture is more positive than negative. It makes Vietnamese culture more interesting and attractive. However, the influences between cultures are not always positive. Hence, it is important that Vietnamese should think over what they can take from other countries and what they cannot.

Figure 43. Ngoc's first think aloud writing

At the same time, there was an overall lack of clarity about the ways in which Chinese culture had merged with Vietnamese traditions and two participants were unsure whether minority groups who lived in the far North of Vietnam were really Vietnamese or Chinese. This issue was deemed sensitive by at least four participants and some avoided using this type of example in their writing. The sociocultural influences on the writing, including the examples selected, the uncertainty about Vietnamese identities and cultural traditions and the political sensitivity of the topics, were only fully understood using think aloud protocols. Although the primary use of think aloud protocols has been to explore writing processes, the findings here suggest there are methodological implications for those wishing to better understand the influence of sociocultural and socio-cognitive factors on L2 writing in different types of contexts.

Research question 4

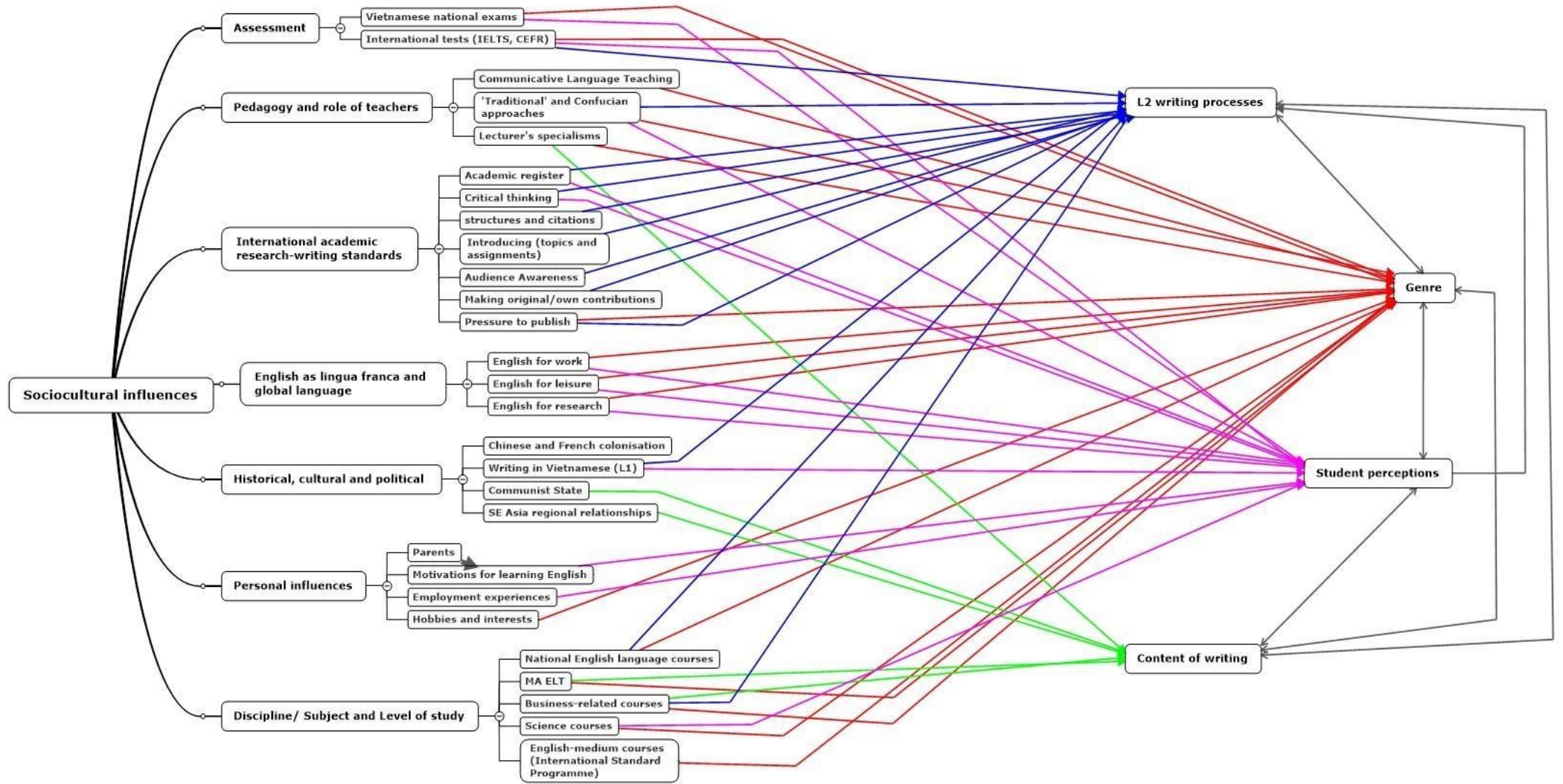
How, if at all, does the Vietnamese sociocultural context influence how (the ten) students write in English for university purposes?

The data for this research question is drawn from the findings described above. The material for this research question is an interpretation of the findings against literature outlined in the literature review. Participants were not directly asked how they perceived their sociocultural context influenced their writing or perceptions of writing. Instead, information that related to different aspects of the sociocultural context was analysed. It is possible to show where some features of the sociocultural context have more influence or impact on the writing and perceptions of the participants, than others. This chapter begins with a visual presentation of findings in relation to this research question in the form of Figure 44. Each section of the figure is then outlined in turn.

Structural influences

These are defined as influences on writing that were outside of the immediate control of participants but were seen to influence what, or how, they wrote for university purposes. Any national, international or institutional processes or frameworks are included within this set of factors. While participants still had decision-making abilities and behaved as individual social actors when writing for university and other purposes, there were more external pressures and motivations than personal or subjective influences. The cross-case synthesis allows for these types of macro constructs and trends to be realised in a way that overcomes the limitations of individual cases could expose taken in isolation.

Figure 44. Sociocultural influences on writing in English in Vietnam.



Influence of National and International Assessment agendas

The genres written by participants were influenced by national and international assessment agendas. National assessments and the prescribed national textbook heavily influenced genres at lower levels. Exams questions and textbook exercises were reported to be used consistently by teachers at secondary, high school and university level (for non-English majors). Other classrooms approaches, including more communicative-based activities, had made some impact and there is evidence of CLTbased activities within textbooks.



Figure 45: Focused view of Assessment section of Figure 44.

University assessments, in the form of theses and graduation papers also influence genres at postgraduate level. All subject majors had to undertake research of some kind at postgraduate level and so research-related genres were important. Aiming to reach international criteria and standards were evident in thesis writing and planning to publish research.

The CEFR also featured within the writing experiences for students. At least two non-English major participants expressed concern that they would not reach the required B1 level (equivalent) required to graduate from their course. Duc was pleased that the CEFR had not been introduced when he took his undergraduate degree because he reported that many students he knows have to keep retaking the English tests before they can graduate. As a staff member Duc is also required to reach the CEFR B2 level and he was waiting for his results during the research stage. IELTS was a second international measure that had some impact on the writing experiences and perceptions of some participants, although not everyone. Three participants had paid to study for and undertake IELTS tests and they were generally positive about these experiences, although Linh was disappointed with her score.

Influence of ELT pedagogies and teachers within the Vietnamese education system

Participants often made reference to teaching instruction or the roles of teachers when they were explaining their writing processes retrospectively or during thinkaloud verbalisations. The research had purposely avoided any direct focus on pedagogy and other teaching interventions in the aim to capture students' attitudes and behaviours instead. This would help to counter balance the majority of EFL research studies in Vietnam, which are teacher focused and teacher-led. During the research process however, the role and influence of teachers and writing instruction became apparent when participants made direct reference to their teacher or what they had been taught about writing.

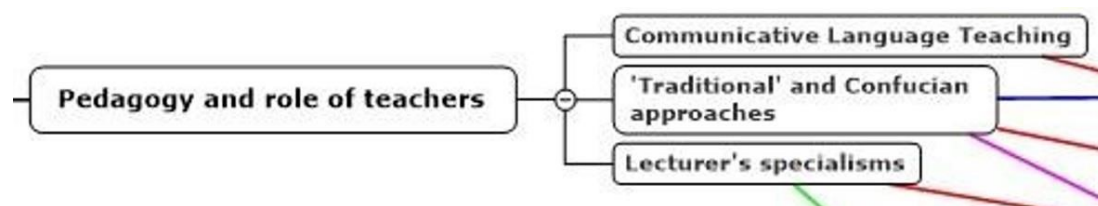


Figure 46: Focused view of Pedagogy and role of teachers, section of Figure 44.

Teachers and pedagogy had a direct impact on experiences of English and the types of genres/ texts written in English. During think aloud writing activities, participants often stated their teachers' instruction as the basis for their decision- making. For example, Duc designed his letter in the way directed by his teacher, Linh structured her essay as directed by her IELTS tutors and Tin approach the think aloud essays following structures taught by his undergraduate tutor. Teachers also influenced writing content. Linh was cautious about using the word 'however' because her teachers had taught her this is a strong word that would require justification in an oral exam. In module evaluation forms one participant did not write her honest opinion about the course or the teacher because she was concerned they would either discover it was them or respond negatively to the whole class. These findings reveal a caution about what is deemed acceptable content in writing for university (and other purposes). Audience awareness and a hyper-sensitivity to avoiding any offense to the

teacher-reader is evident. At the same time, there is an undercurrent of distrust that information will be managed properly, and there were worries about anonymity and confidentiality breaches in teaching evaluation/ feedback purposes and within research projects.

Traditional approaches to ELT and the influence of CLT were referred to by participants. Early experiences of English were dominated by grammar translation methods and participants felt that some assignments were more useful for learning about grammar, sentence structure and phrases. During think aloud tasks, some participants invested most of their writing time to attending the grammatical accuracy. Features of Confucianism and other historical-cultural influences were evident in participants' reports about learning via rote memorisation, respect for teachers, and not wanting to challenge authority. This was evident in the 'Philosophy' course, compulsory for all students of all levels. This meant that MA students had to resit the exam they had already passed one year previously. They were taught about Ho Chi Minh and Socialist values and ideology. They had to remember and repeat, and this course was disliked by most participants.

Rote memorisation and teacher-led classes of this kind may, or may not, be linked to reports of difficulties or lack of opportunities to engage in idea generation and critical thinking in classes where teachers provide topics and give answers. Some participants had experienced more CLT-pedagogies or reported to implement these in their own classrooms. Some participants reflected on this as a learner and a teacher. For example, Kim-Ly said she has tried to use more group work and collaborative activities with her own high school students but was disciplined by other teachers for the noise coming from her classroom. Linh and Tran felt 'improvements' in teaching pedagogies were slow but evident at higher levels of education, rather than at primary or secondary levels. At MA level, teachers/ lecturers were seen as supportive and they offered guidance in relation to topic choices for MA dissertations. For example, KimLy spent much time with her dissertation supervisor refining her topic and research questions. She was told what to research and whether a research idea was feasible or not. Some supervisors had impressed the notion of 'original contribution' as something new or different, that MA dissertations should aim to reach this standard. Even at

undergraduate and MA level then, some participants were dependent on tutors and supervisors in choosing graduation paper and thesis topics.

Influence of international academic writing, subject major and research requirements

Understandings of genre or what should be included in different types of writing influenced the structure and moves within different assignments. This was supported by teachers who may or may not have provided templates. Notions and concepts about what academic writing should look, and sound like, were discussed and contrasted to Vietnamese ways of writing. A clear example of this was the writing of introductions described above. This can be taken to indicate an international, and non-Vietnamese, influence on writing practices at least at MA level. Participants felt that assignments helped them to develop academic writing skills that are agreed and disseminated by the international academic community. For example, in the second writing tasks, three students reflected on the need to include their own examples, rather than just citing those given with the texts. Participants felt that some assignments were more useful for developing academic style and register, including formal register and choosing academic terms. The aim of these types of assignments and the aspiration of the writers was to align with international standards. Minh and Tran commented on the challenges of having research accepted and published in English.

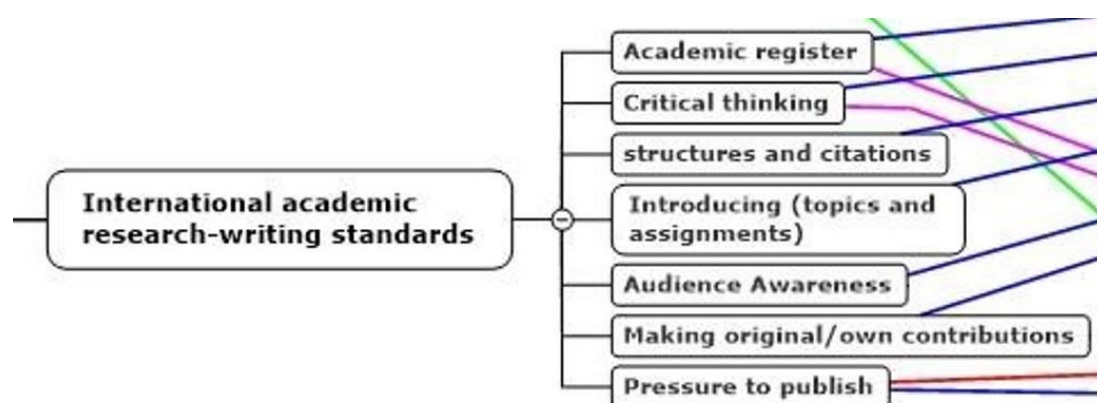


Figure 47: Focused view of International academic research-writing standards section of Figure 44.

While the same applied to writing within disciplines (mainly Business, Biology and ELT), there appeared to be some differences in the genres within each of these subjects. Business majors like Linh, Ton and Tin tended to have written more case studies of companies. Tran had also written these for work purposes. Duc and Chau however had written more biological explanations and laboratory reports. A shared influence was the requirements to write for these types of research purposes. This was linked to genres and perceptions of the stages and content of research reports in English. These standards were used to evaluate sources and existing research. Business and Biology majors had tended to write essays only for English language courses rather than within their subject whereas MA ELT students had written different types of essays for different modules including sociolinguistics, pragmatics and semantics courses.

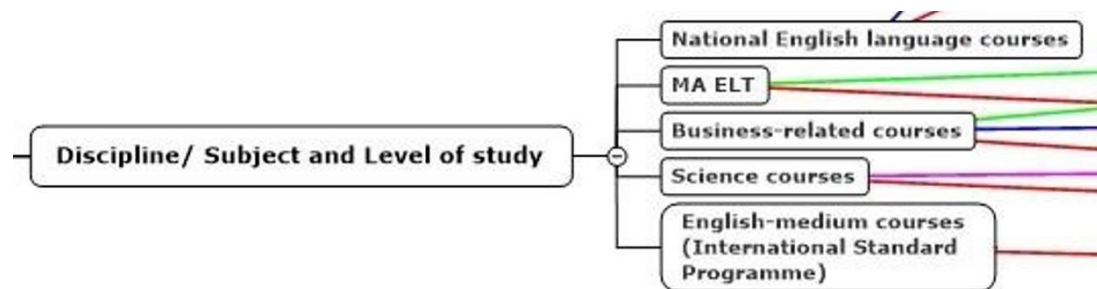


Figure 48: Focused view of Discipline/ Subject and Level of Study section of Figure 44.

Influence of English as a lingua franca, economic and historical phenomena

Although described as personal or subjective experiences, experiences of writing different genres for work purposes is evidence of English as a shared language for communication between non-native speakers. Tran showed how she would write in English for a Danish company and Ton would write in English within his online gaming community. All participants were motivated to improve their English skills and four participants made reference to employers (Vietnamese employers and foreign companies) preferring Vietnamese employees who can use English. With the exception of English language use among some parents however, this historical relationship with English and English-speaking communities, like the U.S influence in the 1970s, was hardly mentioned throughout the data collection process. The sharp

decline in English teaching for over ten years, from 1975 onwards, was not featured at any stage. There was no mention of the significant loss of privilege that English and French languages, and speakers, went through at this time, even though this would have been in the lifetime of participants' parents and grand- parents. Tran, the oldest of the participants, indirectly referenced the effects of the American Trade Embargo on Vietnamese life, and the influence of French teaching on older generations, but did not offer any reflections on the experience of teachers of English following Vietnam's reunification.

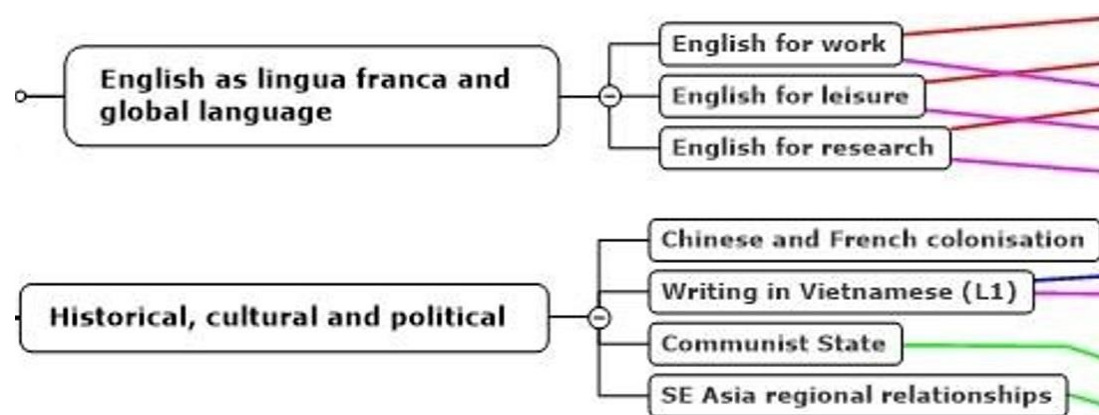


Figure 49: Focused view of English as lingua franca and Historical, cultural and political sections of Figure 44.

The impact of French and Chinese colonisation, communism and the Doi Moi modernisation agenda were highlighted by participants in different ways. In their think aloud tasks, all participants wrote about the Vietnamese context. The content and examples they chose to include or not include shed insight into their perceptions of the relationships between Vietnam and China, France, Korea and the U.S. These were based on their historical understandings (or lack of clarity) and contemporary developments. Many participants were keen to be politically correct in their writing and avoid offending people. The examples chosen in think aloud tasks were about the influence of Chinese and French culture and language in Vietnam.

Personal influences

Personal influences seemed to impact on some perceptions of writing more so than on the genres completed or writing processes. A few participants said that their parents had encouraged them to choose English as an option at High School or to major in the subject at University. Two participants in Hanoi explained how their parents had, or continue to use, English for work purposes. Phuong's father had used English to work with American soldiers and Ton's father uses English to work with business men from Singapore.

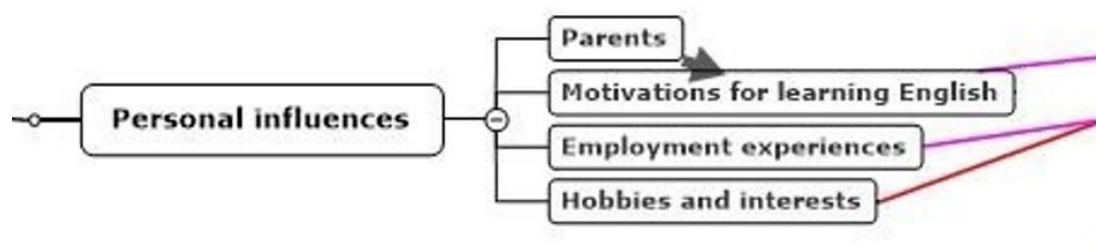


Figure 50. Focused view of Personal Influences section of Figure 44.

Difference in employment experiences also mean that some participants had written genres outside of the standardised educational ones. Tran's case studies of Vietnamese companies and Ngoc's work memos and feedback questionnaires were examples here. Some hobbies and interests also affected genres and perceptions of writing. Ton's gaming writing was most enjoyable to him and three participants said they wrote on facebook or other social media in English if they were contacting English speaking or English-proficient friends.

The third research question aimed to better understand which parts of the sociocultural context was linked to, or impacted on L2 writing experiences in Vietnam. Although there are significant caveats with these multiple case study findings, structural influences appear to be linked more closely to participants' experiences of genres, writing processes and perceptions of writing in English for university purposes. These findings have implications for others hoping to unpick or refine our understanding of the reasons for the writing decisions made by L2 writers in different contexts, and these are discussed in the next chapter.

In summary, the multiple case study design has shown the value of undertaking in depth analysis of L2 writing to understand how individuals go about writing for university purposes and their experiences of writing in English. Taken together, the findings have revealed how some structural influences have played a role in what participants have written, their perceptions of the writing, and how they have tackled assignments. Some patterns have indicated that it may be possible, to some extent, to make generalisations from the ten case study participants, to other Vietnamese postgraduates. These have been described in the cross-case synthesis above. This includes the types of standardised genres written at lower levels of education and the emphasis on research-related tasks at undergraduate and MA levels. There are shared challenges among participants including the use of academic register, vocabulary and writing introductions. The findings show how Vietnamese higher students share experiences of learning and writing in English with one another, and with others in similar EFL contexts, such as using English as a lingua franca for work and other communicative purposes. The findings could have implications for English language teaching in Vietnam and make helpful contributions to understanding genres and L2 writing in different contexts. These are discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Discussion

This chapter explains the relevance and implications of the research findings in relation to the Vietnamese context and current discourses within the second language writing field. It outlines to what extent the findings are validated or supported by earlier and more recent studies; and discusses some methodological limitations. The chapter explains what has been learnt and what can be shared or deemed useful by individuals and groups interested in second language writing genre and process research, as well as for Vietnamese teachers, learners and the Ministry of Education and Training. A number of future research and pedagogical recommendations are also suggested.

The first research question identified the genres written by the participants for university and other purposes. The second research question investigated how the participants perceived specific assignments or genres in terms of what made them enjoyable or challenging. Findings also revealed why participants' felt that some assignments were useful. The third research question explored how the participants wrote assignments in English by asking them to report on their writing processes. The final research question and findings showed how particular parts of the Vietnamese sociocultural context played a role in the genres, perceptions and writing processes of the participants. It draws on the findings from the first research questions. The findings revealed areas of overlap between participants perceptions of assignment-writing and the things they paid attention to during the writing process. There were also a range of sociocultural issues that were raised when identifying the genres undertaken and perceptions reported. These areas of overlap have been managed in this chapter by combining discussions of findings where the issues are most relevant. The chapter does not follow the structure of the findings chapter but all findings are discussed.

Section 1

Classifying genres using the BAWE corpus genres (Nesi and Gardner, 2012; Gardner and Nesi, 2013)

The first research question aimed to identify which genres participants had written in English for university and other purposes. Nesi and Gardner's (2012) genre classification framework could be applied to the texts provided by the participants within the Vietnamese context, but not without challenges. This appears to be the first time that the genre classification system of the BAWE corpus have been used to identify genres in Vietnam. It was not possible to compare the findings to other studies of student genres in Vietnam because other studies of university writing within Vietnam have not identified the range of genres completed by any one individual or group either within or between subject majors. Instead studies have explored a specific genre or text type (Luu, 2011a; Lap and Truc, 2014; Nguyen and Miller, 2012).

Although all 97 texts collected within this study could be identified using the classification system, some aspects of it were more helpful than others. The social purpose or function of the texts as described by Nesi and Gardner (2012), could be relied on more than other ways of identifying genre families; such as the structure or staging and key words (Nesi and Gardner, 2012). The difficulty and subjective nature of identifying genres is well established within literature and so it was unsurprising that this endeavour would be more nuanced than the research question would suggest (Bhatia 1993; Hyland 2002a; Römer and O'Donnell, 2011). There were discrepancies between which genres the participants felt they had written and what they had actually written, such as Linh's idea of what a case study should involve or Tin's idea that a Problem Question could be a role play. Again, this type of genre-identification error has been found in earlier and more recent studies studies (Römer and O'Donnell, Alsop and Nesi, 2009; Hardy and Friginal, 2016). Römer and O'Donnell (2011) collected 829 student assignments from proficient students whose work had been awarded an A grade. They were drawn from 16 disciplines. Students volunteered their assignments, uploaded them and selected a pre-defined text type or classed it as 'other' if they felt it did not fit with existing categories. The text type options available for students were:

'Response paper', 'Research proposal', 'Literature Review', 'Term paper', 'Case study', and 'Technical/ Lab report'. From a random check of papers from the database, it was ascertained that students' self-categorisation of texts was not very reliable. This finding is echoed in other work (Alsop and Nesi, 2009: 76). In the U.S, Hardy and Friginal (2016) also found that students often identified genres as 'term papers', which made their self-identification of genres less reliable. The labels or genre names that universities had given to different assignments also did not necessarily fit that genre classification (as described by Nesi and Gardner, 2012). The ways in which departments and academics differ in the way they understand and explain different genres within their disciplines has been found in other research (Hyland 2004a, 2004b).

The genre family 'Exercise' was not used within Römer and O'Donnell's (2011) genre typology so if this classification system had been used instead of Nesi and Gardner's (2012) then it is uncertain how the types of writing activities undertaken by those learning English in a foreign language context could be identified, or where they would 'fit' within the framework. Hardy and Friginal (2016) used Römer and O'Donnell's (2011) existing genre categories to classify the texts within the MISCUP corpus, in the same way that the current study used the categories identified from the BAWE corpus. Pre-assigning the categories of the texts could have been limiting and could have benefitted from a cluster analysis procedure to determine the text types, rather than matching them to existing genre families (Biber et al., 2007a, Grieve et al., 2010 cited in Hardy and Friginal, 2016).

Implications for future genre-related research in Higher Education in Vietnam

A more comprehensive assessment of the range of genres written by Vietnamese undergraduate and postgraduates would be valuable. This project would have two functions. The first would be to act as a needs analysis of the types of writing that students are writing within different subjects at different levels. Using this knowledge, writing curriculums can be better tailored to meet the actual writing needs of learners, rather than be based on a prescribed national textbook that may not help students to build the writing skills and expertise required for university or professional/ work purposes. The second function of a large genre review, similar to the ESRC-funded project or the MSCUP project, would be to create the first Vietnamese corpus of

university-level writing. Depending on the scope of the research, this has the potential to be a national MOET-funded collection and classification of genres. On a smaller scale, if the research was undertaken by a university or consortia of departments for example, this could lead to a smaller corpus. These corpora could be made publicly available and be used by teachers and students to perform different types of analyses of rhetorical function, structuring and lexical features of writing in English within higher education in Vietnam. This would require a level of genre-analysis training for teachers and students. These could then be compared to other corpora to form the basis of contrastive approaches, which are already popular within applied linguistics and MA/ELT students in Vietnam (Duong, 2009; Nguyen, 2009b; Nguyen, 2014b). Nesi (2015) proposed that the process of creating a corpus improves a researcher's understanding of the context and data. Tribble (2017) concurs that '*specialist minicorpora*' can be more useful to study a specific subject rather than large general corpora.

As reported by Nesi (2017), professional academic writing corpora publicly available include the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA-A), the Professional English Research Consortium (PERC) corpus of science and technology research articles, and Cooke and Birch-Becas's corpus of drafts of research in the health and life sciences. The COCA-A is divided into nine disciplinary areas: business and finance, education, history, humanities, law/political science, medicine and health, philosophy/religion/psychology, science and technology, and social science. Professional corpora however are not recommended for lower levels of study or those entering non-research careers. Instead smaller and more specific academic corpora of proficient student assignments can be more helpful. These include the British Academic Written English (BAWE) corpus (Alsop and Nesi, 2009; Nesi and Gardner, 2012) and The Michigan Corpus of Upper-level Student Papers (MICUSP) (Römer and Swales, 2010; Römer and O'Donnell, 2011).

These corpora are useful to identify the genres written by students and for comparisons of student writing conventions. Subcomponents of these corpora have been created and compared with other corpora of discipline-specific student writing in English from other regions of the world. This has included a collection of writing by Pakistani economics students (Gardner and Nesi, 2009) and a corpus of Chinese undergraduate

dissertations (Lee and Chen, 2009). About 18% of the MICUSP corpus assignments and 30% of the BAWE corpus assignments were written by L2 learners and so it is possible to compare writing of L1 and L2 writers, even though this type of comparison was not intended (Nesi, 2017). Chen and Baker (2010) and Leedham (2014) examined BAWE assignments produced by Chinese and L1 English students, for example. The creation of a Vietnamese student writing corpus could make a valuable contribution to this cross-cultural analysis of student writing.

Lack of genre diversity and preparation

The findings showed a standardisation or conformity of genre experiences pre-MA (for all subject disciplines), or pre-university level (for non-English majors). For those not studying English as a subject at university, participants who continued to attend traditional English language classes tended to complete conventional types of writing in English. These included Exercises, Empathy writing, Explanations and some essays (in some cases). The writing tasks were very similar to those undertaken at High School and Secondary School. The findings reveal that these general English classes continued to be grammar-based and exam-focused; and the writing curriculum content and pedagogy may not consider the types of writing that the undergraduates may go on to undertake at MA level, or within later work and professional environments in Vietnam or overseas. Overall, there appears to be a lack of diversity of genres taught and written, and a lack of scaffolding for later writing expectations. Participants often felt unprepared to write the types of texts that were required of them at MA level. This was daunting for non-English subject majors who had no experience of report writing for science (in English) but had to write an MA graduation research report or felt under pressure to publish their work in English.

An explanation for this is that the types of writing at these levels are assessment-led. Assessment in the form of multiple-choice and gap-fill exercises within end-of-semester, end-of-year and graduation exams continue to influence the English writing experiences of school-age and university learners. Tran (2007) indicated that a prescribed curriculum based on the perceptions of curriculum designers from

universities and MOET, fails to understand or meet learners' writing needs (Tran 2007). This finding has implications for developing the nature and format of English assessment across the Vietnamese education system. In 2010, Tran, Griffin and Nguyen started a validation review of the university entrance English test for Vietnam National University. The review plan was written in response to a lack of publicly available validation or testing process reports from the Vietnamese MOET, and the need for an independent and objective study as to whether the university entrance exam can predict students' performance. The research team encouraged a national review of the university selection and language testing policies for all college and universities. The information from participants in this current study indicate that little has changed within the English exams, and reported that the multiple choice, grammar- focused questions persist. This was also evident in the copies of exam questions given.

Without other studies of the types of university or work genres expected of these, and other Vietnamese higher education students, it is not possible to corroborate the extent to which they are being prepared for writing when they start work or when they study different subject majors. Indeed, it is unclear to what extent English teachers at secondary, high school and university level consider the types of writing students will be expected to produce later on. It would be sensible to find out what sorts of writing (in English) Vietnamese students are undertaking for work and university purposes. For example, within the study reported here, Duc said that he had written emails in English to seek advice about setting up his Microbiology business; he had also designed a website in English. Tran (2007) also found that Vietnamese students were motivated to write to improve their writing skill so that they would be well prepared for their future jobs but found that students were also disappointed to find that they had not developed the types of writing skills required for work purposes, even when they had completed specific business- English courses. Even the use of students' assignments or a 'learner corpora' would not help to understand writing undertaken outside the classroom (Nesi, 2015). There is evidence of a discord between what and how students are being taught to write at undergraduate and postgraduate level, and what they are required to write later on.

There are important implications for universities to better understand the types of genres or text types that graduates are writing within Vietnamese and other organisations. This requires a collaborative relationship between universities, graduate employers and industry. To begin, organisations and companies within Vietnam, who require employees to write in English for various purposes could share what these types of writing are and what purposes they serve. They could share who the general audiences tend to be or could be. This endeavour takes the research from writing for university purposes, to writing for the workplace and professional purposes, which is increasingly popular in second language writing literature (Bhatia, 2014; Leijten et al., 2014; Matsuda, 2013). Bhatia explored cross cultural variation of sale promotion letters and job applications; and the writing of legal discourses in professional settings. Millot (2017) investigated how L2 writers express their professional voice in business emails. This could form a different type of corpora that could be used within discipline-specific language modules or within a more general genre awareness pedagogy.

Exercises

The findings showed that Exercises were the most common genre completed by the participants. These were almost all exercises undertaken to practice for English exams. Exercises were one of the smallest groups or least common genre family within the BAWE corpus. The Arts and Humanities group within the BAWE corpus did include English Language Studies and courses in Linguistics but none of the assignments were the type of exercises written by the participants. As the assignments were collected within the UK, the types of writing people undertake when they are learning English as a language in an EFL context, like Exercises, are not really present. These two reasons would explain the differences in the predominance of the Exercise genre in this study and the BAWE corpus. The English language-learning exercises completed by participants were often shorter than any of those within Nesi and Gardner's BAWE corpus, which were between 500 and 2,500 words (Nesi and Gardner 2012: 61). Nesi and Gardner found exercises were '*more common in the physical/mathematical science and engineering group than the social sciences and humanities group*'.

Given the numbers of different exercises written by participants over their life course, it is not possible to ignore their influence in the current study. Instead it would be more

helpful or insightful to unpack this genre family, to break it up to explore differences and similarities in the types of exercises undertaken at different levels and for different purposes. This could apply to the exercises completed within English language classes but also in other subjects. So far, it has been possible to say with some certainty that these types of exercises help students to pass the English exams but participants had also learnt grammar and other lexical features from these activities too. It would be worthwhile to compare how different types of exercises match with lexical requirements within undergraduate writing tasks and more discipline-specific writing requirements.

The grammatical and lexical features being practised are not neutral or can necessarily be generally applied (according to the genre, rhetorical and lexical analyses within subject disciplines). This means that the structures and lexical bundles that students learn and transfer to later writing (in a recursive fashion) may not be useful or even appropriate for different types of writing expected of them (Hyland, 2004a). Without the awareness however, secondary and university-level EL teachers appear to continue to teach to the test and students appreciate learning and practicing in order to do well in the exams.

ELT pedagogy was an important feature of the Vietnamese sociocultural context that impacted on what students had written, how they had written it and their perceptions of it. In 2007, Tran found that getting high marks was one of the most important factors which motivated Vietnamese students to write. They were more motivated if they knew that the assignment would be part of continuous assessment and will be counted in the final result. The findings being reported here also evidenced how students tended to enjoy (or be motivated by) gaining high scores for writing tasks. Another significant source of motivation was to fulfil the teacher's expectations. According to Ellis (1996), Vietnamese EFL learners' motivations are shaped by the "teacher's initiative" and the "students' will to succeed" (mainly in examinations). Le (2000) also shares the view that Vietnamese learners are bound to extrinsic motivation as a result of the pressure to pass exams.

The influence of assessment and pedagogy narrowed the range of text types that students had written or could be writing in English, that could better prepare them for writing later on at university or in the workplace. This is not to undermine the

importance of grammatical accuracy, but there is a need for an appreciation of how writing, even grammatical structures, can change depending on what one is writing and who one is writing for (Hyland, 2004a). The Foreign Language Project 2020 aims for Vietnamese graduates to be able to use English competently in different environments, for different purposes by 2020. The format of the English tests and the ELT pedagogies reported in the findings of this study, and others, appear to be working in opposition to these targets.

The conceptual framework of the thesis, steered away from pedagogical concerns and this decision has been justified at the beginning of this thesis. Instead, the study aimed to focus on the perceptions and experiences of the learner, rather than the teacher, on the topic of writing for university purposes. The findings revealed however, that in addition to the role of assessment; ELT and general pedagogies within Vietnam are linked to the writing experiences of Vietnamese higher education students. The original conceptual framework that integrated the texts, processes and perceptions within the Vietnamese sociocultural context, perhaps did not go far enough to show how these two important features could play a role, even though second language writing and EAP literature would have predicted this to be the case. They are discussed as features of the 'Sociocultural context' but their influence is significant against all three areas investigated (Products/ Texts, Perceptions and Processes). This is not altogether negative because it can be taken to reinforce the central role of the teacher within ELT, as described by individual ELT learners and other studies. Given the epistemological and methodological nature of this thesis, it is not appropriate to assess the statistical significance of these relationships, which is why the numbers within the attitudinal Likert scales were not used as a rigorous comparative measure. Nevertheless, this endeavour might have been possible if correlational and categorical regression techniques (ANOVA) had been used.

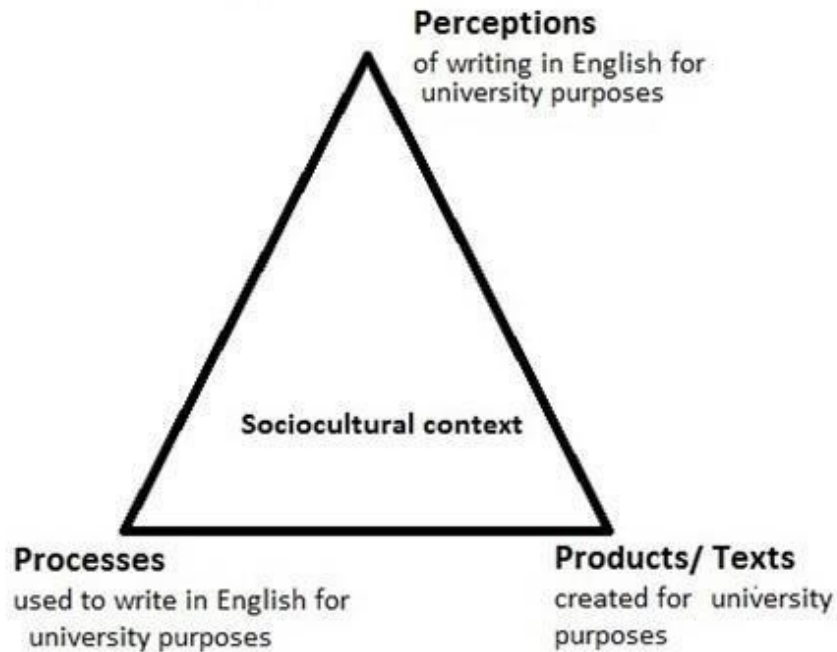


Figure 1 (repeated). Conceptual Framework of the thesis

ELT pedagogy in Vietnam

One of the issues that emerges from these findings is that the majority of English language learners in Vietnam continue to learn English in non-communicative ways. Other findings suggest this has an impact on the extent to which they will be able to use the language for purposes other than to score well in grammar assessments and exams (Nguyễn 2013; Tran, 2007). Without direct classroom observation, this study has been unable to confirm the types of pedagogies at any level or location, but the consistency of the self-reports and their resonance with literature offer a form of rigour that can be relied on. In 2010, Hamano wrote about the implementation of Vietnam's 2002 education reforms and claimed teachers needed to learn new methods of instruction if the new curriculum approach is to be realised. Changes in relation to the role of rote memorisation; and behavioural changes in terms of classroom practices have been slow but appear to be taking place, at least at university level in Vietnam. MA ELT students who teach English discussed some of the challenges they face implementing less traditional pedagogies and referred to group work and learner-centred practices as part of this discussion. Tran suggested that learning experiences

may be more child-centred or engagement-based within university courses and Kim-Ly shared her concerns of trying new and communicative-type activities with students in case they make noise, and she is deemed incapable of controlling her class by other teachers. Linh also reported that an urban/ rural divide exists, with city schools more likely to use interactive and less traditional approaches. These findings mirror the work of Ellis

(1994) who already outlined the challenges or barriers of implementing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in Vietnam. A possible explanation for these findings may have been that the MA ELT students who participated in the study were familiar with the CLT discussions and based their responses on their reading or learning, but this does not account for the non-English majors who corroborated this language-learning experience.

Phelps et al. (2012) wrote about the gap between the child-centred education policy within Vietnam, and the reality of learning experiences across primary and secondary schools. They use Seel's (2007) work on the cultural contrast between ideas of childcenteredness and the cultural beliefs and social norms that tend to underpin traditional pedagogies. Often, these differences create major challenges to the mindset and pedagogical practices of teachers and so curriculum reform has been '*cumbersome, timeconsuming and complex*' (Duggan, 2001, cited in Phelps et al., 2012: 39). Three MA ELT participants also said there were rural/ urban differences in teaching English; with rural teaching being more traditional and less open to change.

From the findings in the current research project, it can be concluded that the pedagogical issue is not outdated in Vietnam; it still very much applies within many primary, secondary schools, high schools and universities. Further work is required, and underway to establish to what extent more communicative and other approaches are being implemented within primary, secondary and university levels (Nguyen, 2017; Phelps et al., 2012) and whether this can be combined with genre approaches to reading and writing to enhance the learning experiences and preparedness of students for engagement in Higher Education within Vietnam or overseas.

Writing for Science, Research and Business purposes

Participants reported that the standardised genre experiences from secondary and high school started to become more varied when they started university or postgraduate study. For those majoring in an English subject, a joint subject or being taught in English medium at undergraduate level, they started to write different types of assignments in English at that time (Table 8). Those studying a non-English subject still tended to write the type of exercises and empathy writing from high school level. There were similarities and differences in the genres written by participants within different subject majors from undergraduate and MA level. Nesi and Gardner (2012) and Hyland (2017a) found clear differences in the genres written within different disciplines in the UK and Hong Kong respectively.

The findings indicated that many participants valued learning to write for research, science and business purposes. This is similar to Huong and Hiep's (2010) finding. They found that most Vietnamese students wanted to learn English to get a better job, or because they had to. Others wanted to study abroad or communicate with non-Vietnamese speakers. The participants at later undergraduate and MA Level started to write genres that were related to their subject majors. This applied even to those who were not studying in English at MA level. All participants were expected to write research proposals and research reports in English at MA level, usually in the form of a graduation paper or thesis/ dissertation. Business majors had experience writing business-related assignments such as a Bill of Exchange, company reports or company data analyses; and science majors had written scientific process-type assignments, as well as writing research reports in English too. At least three participants had written for business and science in the workplace and they valued writing that would help them in later employment. All MA, BA and BSc participants were required to write research reports in English, even those studying in Vietnamese medium. The research reports involved some form of primary data collection. There is a difference however in writing for science subjects and writing for research within the Humanities and Social Sciences. Hyland and Tse (2007) argued that even the frequencies and meanings of words in the 'universal' Academic Word List (AWL) differ across disciplines and so

using this as a basis for vocabulary instruction can become problematic. Durrant (2014b) and Hyland (2007, 2012, 2017a) have found that linguistic features such as the use of hedges, self-mention, and directives differ across disciplines.

Writing within sciences, as undertaken by Tran, Duc and Chau, is said to differ to other types of research-related writing. Martin and Rose (2008) found that the most common genres within the sciences include report, explanation and procedural recount. Both biology majors in the study being reported here reported to have written procedural recount genres (of Whisky distillation and the process of extracting microorganisms using different methods). An MBA student reported to have written procedural texts (of the water cycle, or Frog life cycle) at undergraduate level however. Other participants in this study did not report to have written as many, if any, of the procedural genres within their undergraduate or postgraduate courses. Even though the sample size is small, Martin and Rose's (ibid) genre findings are supported here.

Veel (2006) suggested that different 'Explanation' genres exist in science texts. So for the writing of sciences, it may be possible, and useful, to unpack the Explanation genre further than its current depiction within the BAWE classification system. Many science and non-science major participants felt they had written explanations, either in defining new vocabulary or as part of a larger genre. This could have included writing explanations (of things/ theories/ concepts) within a literature review, within a graduation paper for example. Nesi and Gardner (2012) acknowledged how genres and genre families can form part of other genres. Indeed, many of them are completed separately to build up to the larger genres. Many MA ELT students within this study had written literature reviews separately before writing a literature review within their final research reports.

This study has not explored however the amount of different genre families as a percentage of all assignments collected or how individual genres may have been different in each subject. Hardy and Friginal (2016) also admitted that their genre classification corpus research failed to combine paper type and discipline so it is not possible to explore how the same genres in different subjects or disciplines compare to one another (Hardy and Friginal, 2016). Nesi and Gardner's (2012) BAWE corpus

classification system does have this function however and a similar approach to genre analysis would be a worthwhile research activity and valuable learning exercise for Vietnamese and other researchers to undertake to compare the rhetorical and linguistic features of different student genres across disciplines and then compare these to other existing corpora perhaps. Nesi (2015) outlined the types of corpora that are publicly available for these purposes.

In terms of writing for business purposes, two participants had written business correspondence within Vietnamese and International companies, and other participants felt that being proficient in English would lead to better career prospects. Karr (2001) predicted that employers would value business writing skills more in the future (cited in Bacham and Bahous, 2008: 76). Within the Vietnamese context, where employees work with non-Vietnamese using English as a lingua franca, writing patterns that are effective (in Vietnamese culture and language) may not transfer successfully in intercultural communication.

For those graduates entering a multicultural workplace, they often need to write business letters and other genres for different cultural audiences. According to Nguyen and Miller (2012), although the common goal of any business letter is to obtain a favourable response from the addressee using persuasive and other rhetorical strategies; discursive features of English business letters written by Vietnamese students are different to those written by business people from different cultural backgrounds. There is a mismatch that can cause communication breakdown. Bhatia and Bremmer (2012) also noted that business genres often have promotional and regulative sections with sharply distinct discourses, and this is not typical of academic genres, even proposals. In a comparison of authentic and student-written scenario business letters, Nguyen and Miller (*ibid*) found that formulaic expressions were rare in the authentic business examples but were consistently used by students. The students lacked flexible expression patterns and resorted to reuse subjunctive moods to present or persuade the business request to the extent that the scenario letters looked almost the same, regardless of the contexts represented. The subjunctive moods included the use of 'if, plus wishes or suggestions or hypotheticals. On a cultural note, Nguyen and Miller (*ibid*) interpreted that the students used more face-saving and polite inductive rhetorical

strategies compared to more direct and potentially face-threatening strategies of authentic writers. Within this thesis research, this type of phrasal recycling was evidenced in Ton's critical response writing and in Linh's IELTS essay writing. Although these were not necessarily writing for business purposes, it is important to mention that the writing for these courses was undertaken within non-Vietnamese international centres or universities. This points to the possibility that inflexible or deterministic linguistic and genre approaches, which are the same regardless of the context, should be avoided (Johns, 2011). Johns (2011) reflected how the term 'essay' has come to limit students' understanding of the depth of the genre due to the way it is used in North American classrooms, curricula, and textbooks; which are being used in many contexts. Hyland (2017a) also stated that, '*lectures or essays imply neither homogeneity nor permanence and it is easy to believe there is greater similarity in the communicative practices of different communities than is actually the case*'.

Up to this point, the findings and discussion has indicated the potential for genre pedagogy or genre-awareness to become a feature of English language lessons and teacher training in Vietnam. The genre approaches deployed could better prepare students for writing in their disciplines at higher levels of study if they include discipline-specific training or orientation. The evidence to support these types of genre approaches will now be further outlined followed by a discussion of possible research and implementation options for Vietnamese universities (and high schools). A small number of Vietnamese ELT practitioners and researchers have investigated the appropriateness and efficacy of using genre pedagogy at university level and these found important insights that could be further developed.

Genre pedagogy/awareness for teachers and students

Overall the findings of this thesis study, and other studies, indicated that genre-oriented instruction could become a feature of English language teacher training and education in Vietnam (Devitt, 2009, 2015; Humphrey et al., 2016; Leon Perez and Martin-Martin, 2016).

Genre approaches to university and academic writing have been explored by some Vietnamese researchers but these have tended to be implemented with learners (Lap and Truc, 2014; Luu, 2011c; Nguyen and Miller, 2012) rather than English language teachers. Tuyen et al. (2016) however interviewed TESOL lecturers to identify core components that would/ should be included within a Process Genre Approach to Research Paper Writing; with the intention of designing a curriculum for undergraduates (in Vietnam and Malaysia).

Outside of Vietnam, Hedgecock and Lee (2017) asked pre-service teachers about their experiences of different genres and argued that genre knowledge requires an understanding of communicative purposes and rhetorical actions, rather than an awareness of genre categories/ labels or any prototypical rhetorical structures. Within the study, teachers were repeatedly exposed to disciplinary content within genres; they read and explored the rhetorical arrangement of texts and received direct guidance. The teachers' genre awareness and metacognitive skills developed via the scaffolding and reproduction and they reported to have recognised the 'multi-voiced' nature of genres.

It has been shown how teachers can also become aware that interpretations differ across disciplines (Hu and Wang, 2014, cited in Hedgecock and Lee, 2017) and how language and linguistic developments are being used in multi-layered contexts (Hedgecock and Lee, 2017). This involves preparing teachers to analyse any EAP or ESP genre independently. Hedgecock and Lee (2017) found that many participants were less familiar with professional (teaching) genres such as lesson scripts, curriculum plans, and assessment instruments.

Interestingly, only one participant in this thesis project referred to these types of professional genres. Ngoc was undertaking a PGCE within an International School and had valued learning to write learning objectives, lesson plans and schemes of work. Ngoc said she was instructed to create learning objectives using Bloom's taxonomy (Bloom et al., 1956). According to Nguyen (2014a), the Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) had requested teachers (of all subjects) to base lesson plans and assessment on Bloom's taxonomy to support the development of higher order and critical thinking skills (MOET, 2006). None of the MA ELT students

reported to have written lesson plans or schemes of work, although many of them had produced a statement of their opinions on the philosophy of teaching. A number of students had been teaching English in state schools and language centres for two or more years. This finding could mean that the teacher participants had not written lesson plans or schemes of work. Pre-university English language teachers in Vietnam have not needed a professional teaching qualification and the curriculum has tended to be prescribed by the Ministry of Education and the national text book, so there may have been less need for lesson plans and schemes of work. It may have also been the case that the participants did not report on these genres because they were deemed professional rather than academic. This is unlikely however because the data collection phase was very clear that any, and all, types of writing in English were relevant; including writing within and outside university. If students had been producing lesson plans and schemes of work in English then it would have been very probable that they would have shared this.

When it comes to genre pedagogy within the English language classroom, Luu (2011c) somewhat successfully employed a genre approach to teach the writing of Recount genres to one class of students in a University of Finance and Marketing in Vietnam. In a bid to move away from existing writing strategies where university teachers provided vocabulary lists and gave guiding questions to help students to organise their ideas into paragraphs, Luu wanted to offer students an alternative approach. Luu (2011c) had found that writing classes in universities were language-based that focused on sentence writing for sentence building tests, rather than working to create compositions to serve the purpose of plurality of real readers outside the classroom context. While this approach helped students to produce error-free texts, it did not help them to understand the purposes, audiences, context and linguistic conventions of the texts.

Luu also noticed that the students often lacked the knowledge of the text-type in terms of language features and text features; which impinged on their ability to turn their ideas into intelligible text. Luu ascertained how useful the students felt the genre approach had been for learning English and for university purposes. It is unclear why a Recount genre was chosen in this study, and it is uncertain to what extent Finance or Marketing students would need to use a Recount genre like, '*Write about a famous person*',

in their studies or for assessment purposes. Students' control over the social purposes, the schematic structure and the language features of 'the' Recount genre was assessed in their writing, with positive benefits in these areas. Almost all students felt the genre approach helped them to realise the social purposes, the writer and the intended readers of the genre and understand in what situations the genre could be applied. While all students felt that learning how to write a Recount genre was '*suitable for their learning English at university*', they were less convinced that the biographical recount genre could stimulate them to learn English in the future. This finding may be a reflection of the relationship between the students subject-major and the genre selected, and could indicate that students did not know how the genre could play a role in future writing activities outside of university. This question is left unanswered and further indicates the need for a more accurate understanding of the types of writing or genres that students will be expected to write later on.

Lap and Truc (2014) applied a similar genre approach to Luu (2011c) and found that the quality of argumentative essays improved significantly. Twenty EFL students at a college in a Mekong Delta province of Vietnam participated in the study and reported positive attitudes towards the intervention. A similar pedagogical approach to teaching university writing was used to teach Vietnamese students how to write Business Request genres (Nguyen and Miller, 2012). Nguyen and Miller's students had already completed a 'Business Correspondence' ESP course (like the one undertaken by Linh and Tin in this thesis study), but had been using '*inflexible textbook examples and memorisation of formulaic structures*', with limited application to the workplace. There was a lack of contextualisation around the genre and replicating rhetorical formulas had not helped to support students in developing awareness of the complexities of the audience and context of writing. This type of formula writing was also found in this thesis research, where students valued writing or assignments that helped them to learn phrases they could use in later writing. In Nguyen and Miller's work, the writing tutor helped a class of students to analyse the moves within authentic and scenario (student novice) business letters, and retrospectively assessed their rhetorical choices via a questionnaire.

.Nguyen and Miller's students felt that any mismatch between the letters they wrote and the rules introduced to them in class would affect their marks. Students tended to treat all readers in the same way or impose on them the same cultural assumptions influenced by their own values and perspectives. In Nguyen and Miller's study, one participant admitted that she did not consider the reader in cultural terms in forming the rhetorical moves of her scenario letters, but she did feel that she was writing to Asian customers. This lack of cultural knowledge, documented by Nguyen and Miller was not entirely reflected in the findings of this research project. Instead, many students considered who the readers could be and altered the content to fit. For example, they thought about whether the reader would be a non-Vietnamese and therefore how much detail they would need to give in an explanation. Nevertheless, writing for teachers was still the main priority.

In Nguyen and Miller's study (2012), scenario letter-writing was affected by the cultural belief that the message should be persuasive rather than demanding. Students also felt that their education and prior writing instruction had had an impact on the way they wrote business letters. More recently, in a study of move analyses of Results-Discussion chapters in theses written by Vietnamese MA TESOL students, Nguyen and Pramoolsook (2015) found that the TESOL discourse community in Vietnam had influenced the distinctive composition of section and chapter introductions. Additionally, the writers described composing the chapters based on their perceived communicative purposes. A genre- based approach could be applied well across larger cohorts of students within subject specialisms at university level. There is a risk however that genre approaches can become equally inflexible and unhelpful as rigid textbook use. Instead, as suggested by Johns (2011), a genre- awareness approach is preferred.

Based on language learning research, Hyland (2002a, 2017b) argues that complex language skills can be developed as and when students need them, even when they may still have difficulty with sentence level skills. In this way, language learning does not occur in fixed stages. Therefore, learners at all levels are quite able to grasp even complex elements of language acquisition and discourse/ discipline linguistic features, despite struggling with perhaps some sentence level issues. Cho (2014) also found that

students with lower levels of proficiency can learn and achieve in the same way as those with higher proficiency. In a study of genre pedagogy for genre and lexical-phrase knowledge, Cho (ibid) found that students' final attainment was similar, regardless of their starting levels. Rose and Martin (2012) found that the less proficient students gained more than other learners when using a genre approach because their difficulties had been partly due to a lack of awareness of schematic structures within discourse communities. If the students did not have the independent scaffolded strategies, genre pedagogies helped them to bridge this gap.

Quinn (2014) reported on the value of a corpus and concordance-training module that was introduced to EFL writers as a self-correcting tool and an additional resource to traditional dictionary use. This approach did not undermine the important role of the teacher in highlighting errors or offering feedback but it empowered the learners to use linguistic tools to overcome errors themselves. Concordancing and analysing patterns within corpora is not entirely the same as genre analysis; although they are closely related. It is a technique used by English language teachers, students and other linguists to search a corpus and be provided with a list of examples of a word or words as they appear within a sentence (or context). The user can then analyse patterns in how the word is used and the parts of speech that tend to come before and after it. Yoon (2016) trained students how to undertake concordancing using web-based corpus and found that it can be used well with other sources, although it can pose difficulties for some users depending on their writing tasks, writing stages, and writing goals. None of the participants in the study being reported here, including those MA ELT majors, reported to have made use of corpora. Instead, they tended to rely on dictionaries to check vocabulary and other word-based errors or uncertainties. Linh said that she did not feel confident in finding or remedying word use errors independently in her writing. Concordancing could be introduced to learners as an alternative and autonomous tool for self-correction and other linguistic purposes, such as increasing the variety of linguistic structures.

In the same way, genre pedagogies do not undermine or underestimate the role of the teacher but they have the potential to help students to become more independent in understanding genre, social purposes and rhetorical features (Gardner, 2016). Hyland

(2017b) and Yoon (2016) have argued that teachers can draw on the knowledge and analytic skills of learners to facilitate comparisons of disciplinary experiences and rhetorical differences in disciplinary texts. This approach helps to avoid the prescribed teaching of writing formulas or texts and the potentially constraining or uncritical genre-training described by Benesch (2001), Lillis (2006), and Jenkins (2014). Rather than focusing on specific texts as examples of genres and their grammatical or lexical features, it is possible to focus instead on rhetorical contexts first before turning to genre and seeing the evolution of genres as processes rather than products that should be strictly imitated. This can allow teachers and students to recognise that a '*general expository academic prose*' including explicitness, objectivity, emotional neutrality, and hedging (Johns, 1997, cited in Hyland, 2017a: 26); tend to be recognised differently in disciplines.

The discussion so far has responded to the genre-related findings of the study. It has suggested that English language departments and academic writing tutors could take steps to identify and understand the types of genres students from different subject majors are being asked to write in English (at undergraduate and MA level); and to work with industry to have more understanding of the genres for work and professional purposes. The findings suggest that teachers and students could benefit from genre pedagogies as part of their training and English classes. These measures would help higher education students to become more prepared to write the types of texts that are required of them within higher education. This could be applied to English and non-English majors.

Feedback on written work

The findings indicated that the participants may not have had consistency in the feedback they had received and it may not have always supported them to develop their writing. At the same time, many of the participants had a preference for a particular type of feedback and recognised the reasons why it might be difficult for their tutors to give the type of detailed feedback they would value. Linh appreciated the way her IELTS tutors wrote notes in the margin and gave her specific actions to make improvements. Scores (high scores) were also appreciated by participants though. The

participants had found some assignments useful for the feedback received from peers, but more so from teachers. Delays in receiving feedback on written work and a lack of written feedback were reported to cause extra challenge for participants who did not have the chance to make improvement in later assignments. There are many possible causes for the feedback issues described here and a note of caution is due since teachers' feedback was not collected or evidenced within this study. It can be suggested however that feedback practices within English classes at university level and lower levels could be further explored.

From other Vietnamese studies, Tran (2007) found that students were motivated when teachers gave them specific feedback that highlighted the strengths, weaknesses and actions on how to improve. Seeking positive feedback from teachers had been echoed in earlier work too. In 2011, Luu also found that receiving teacher feedback after writing was most favoured by Vietnamese learners and they felt their final assignments improved via feedback and corrections from peers and teachers. The Vietnamese ELT context is characterised by large class sizes and over 20 hours of teaching per week in multi-level classes. Teachers have reported challenges of finding effective ways to give feedback on student writing in these conditions and it has been reported that they may not provide the level of enthusiasm and detail that students appreciate (Tran, 2007). Nguyen (2009a) stated that Vietnamese participants also felt that teacher feedback was important and this finding was attributed to the teacher's central role as source of knowledge. Students paid more attention to teachers' feedback than that of their peers. Although Vietnamese teachers had started to pay more attention to giving feedback, it was often subjective due to a lack of explicit criteria. Bitchener and Ferris (2012) found that L2 writers attempted to apply previously learnt rules in their writing, but because teachers feedback had been unclear or lacking in detail, some of the rules had been misapplied. Choi (2013) found that students responded significantly more to teachers' comments compared to those given by their peers. Choi (2013) and Shintani et al. (2014) concluded that peer and teacher feedback can be complementary either given together or one after the other, which was often the case for the participants in this study. Indeed, some participants said their teacher would not give them feedback until the assignment had undergone a peer check first.

In studies of Vietnamese pre-university level, Nguyen (2015) found evidence of a gradual shift in feedback practices where teachers encouraged self and peer-assessment, and discussed feedback with learners. Taken together with the apparent non-standard and subjective feedback practices reported by participants, these findings indicate that further research into feedback preferences, practices and effectiveness could be updated within the Vietnamese literature. This could possibly take the form of a triangulated exploration from teacher and student perspectives and/or a more longitudinal investigation of the impact of different types of feedback on writing performance or transitions of individuals.

The next section moves on to a discussion of findings related to participants' perceptions of writing and processes they engage in, which were the second and third research questions. The section is structured by the writing processes reported and undertaken by the participants. The writing process-related findings are discussed in an order but should not be taken to represent the order of writing behaviours of the participants. While there were some general patterns that participants engaged in; such as reading the prompt, interacting with the prompt and sources, and then planning; the entire writing process was not linear. This was visually presented in the Figure 39. within the findings chapter on page 190.

An overarching point in relation to the challenges and writing processes undertaken by the participants, is that they closely mirror those identified by other L2 writers within ESL and EFL contexts. Challenges and writing processes are discussed in relation to other seminal and recent studies. There are however some differences in the content and perceptions (of writing) of participants that may be attributed to the Vietnamese sociocultural context specifically.

Section 2

Writing processes, writing challenges and motivations

This section shifts the discussion from the genre-type discourses to the ‘process’ related topics. The findings of this study revealed insights into many of the writing process themes discussed in the first two chapters of this thesis (e.g. revision and editing, the extent of L1 use, techniques in text generation, the extent and nature of backtracking). Unlike other writing-process research (Gebril and Plakans, 2013; Leki, in Belcher and Braine, 1995; Krapels, in Kroll 2003:38), this thesis has not explored the role of proficiency and has not judged the quality of student assignment and texts by any measure. This may be regarded as a limitation of the research and this is discussed in on page 216.

The first six writing behaviours to be discussed involve behaviours participants reported, verbalised or displayed during the retrospective reports and think aloud protocols. The behaviours include reading the task prompt, conceptualising the task, working with the topic, generating ideas, interacting with source texts, and positioning oneself. These have been paired for writing purposes but in reality they occurred almost simultaneously. These (and other writing processes) are dependent on the L2 writers’ schemas (Flower and Hayes, 1981; Chenworth and Hayes 2001). The findings of the study reported here revealed important insights into participants’ schemas and influence of prior writing experiences, and other sociocultural influences.

Reading the task prompt and Task conceptualisation

In line with other L2 writing process research, all participants interacted with the prompt. They read it to themselves, read it out loud, circled or underlined key words and generally took time to understand what they were being asked to do. De Larios et al. (2008) used the term Task Interpretation/ Conceptualisation for the stage where the writer attempts to understand the task demands. Plakans (2008) added a stage where writers position themselves in relation to the task and topic. Hayes and Beringer (1996) described how task interpretation activities involve listening, reading, scanning graphics

and creating “*internal representations from linguistic and graphic input*”. Embedded in writers’ long-term memory are: task schemas, knowledge about the topic, knowledge about the audience, linguistic knowledge, and genre knowledge. Task schemas are defined by Hayes (1996: 24) as “*packages of information stored in long-term memory that specify how to carry out a particular task*” and understanding the task instruction determines how the tasks are addressed.

Plakans (2008) found that participants required thinking time to interpret the task. One writer was unsure of the meaning of the term ‘*culture*’ in the writing-only task. Three participants in the study being reported here also spent time considering the meaning of this word; and which parts of society could be classed as culture, such as fast food restaurants. Most participants asked limited questions about the task such as whether they should choose one culture or more. All writers understood the task requirement and were able to undertake planning within a few minutes of reading the task prompt in the first writing-only task. Participants did look back at the task prompt at different times during planning, writing and post-writing stages.

Familiarity with topics and issues around idea generation

The findings reverberated existing literature on the role of topic in writing quality and motivation. All participants commented on the topic/s of the think aloud activities in positive and negative ways. Those with relevant background knowledge interacted with the prompt and source text and recalled links to existing schema on globalisation and/ or culture. Tran felt the topic would cause writing difficulties for participants without any background knowledge and Phuong had ideally wanted to have had time to do research beforehand. For Flower and Hayes (1981) and Hayes (1986), these would be classed as examples of ‘Topic knowledge’ held within long term memory. Knowledge about the topic is all that the writer has in order to write about the topic, and ‘knowledge of the audience’ consists of considerations of social and cultural issues involved in writing. The last two types of knowledge, ‘linguistic’ and ‘genre knowledge’, refer to the knowledge about the language forms brought into the writing and the

“knowledge about the socially and culturally appropriate forms that writing takes in a given situation for a given purpose” (cited in Weigle, 2000: 28). The topics of cultural borrowing and globalisation within the two writing tasks (from Plakans, 2008) were also likely to encourage participants to draw on social and cultural topics, and thus activate these schemas. This could be seen to be a significant advantage of the topics but could also be criticised for leading participants to write about topics or give examples they may not have included otherwise. The topic might also be deemed to be slightly culturally bound and so could lead to increased use of L1 (van Weijen et al., 2009).

Many participants perceived or positioned themselves in relation to other cultures and countries in SE Asia, and the U.S. In the first writing activity, participants wrote about the influence of China, rather than the influence of America. This applied equally to participants in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. Knowledge of Chinese and French colonisation was discussed in relation to the current impact on Vietnamese culture, traditions and language. Participants positioned themselves as *‘we’*, as Vietnamese individuals, and as part of the Vietnamese family. As reported in the findings chapter, when writing about Vietnam in relation to China, five participants referred to the size differences between the two countries and Vietnam’s ability to reject or be resilient against losing its own culture to their much larger, more powerful neighbour. Participants wrote and spoke about this topic with passion and pride. At the time of the study, Vietnamese news channels were reporting often about the status of the Spratley Islands in China’s South Sea/ Vietnam’s East Sea. A number of Chinese-owned factories had also been vandalised within Vietnam which could be taken to indicate some serious discontent in relations between the two nations.

In an investigation of writing strategies used by Vietnamese students, Nguyen (2009a) found that topic was a source of motivation. According to her students, interesting topics were those related to their *“daily life”* and/ or *“emotional feeling in the community”*. Students valued *‘free’* or creative writing where they could incorporate personal experiences with few limitations on their flow of ideas. A number of participants in the current thesis study also noted that they enjoyed undertaking freer or more creative writing. Nguyen (2009a) suggested that the notion of creativity in Vietnamese written work, is joined to emotional feelings, subjective assumptions and personal imagination;

and these underpin students' ideas about what motivates them to write. Nguyen (ibid) perceives this phenomenon as a means of cultural identity negotiation in which students find a middle ground between adhering to writing conventions and incorporating their creative-inspired linguistic self-representation (Nguyen, 2009a). Using writing diaries and retrospective reports, Nguyen (2009a) found that students felt they had produced 'better' writing on topics they were interested in and sensed that world or background knowledge was only useful in generating ideas for topics which they were familiar with, and which did not require reading before writing. Without background knowledge, students turned to their peers and literature for information to help to generate ideas.

Although many participants in the current study felt that the topic of cultural borrowing was not very familiar to them; they were able to use social and historical knowledge (of Vietnam) to add context to the topic and to think of ideas and examples. As described within the findings, all participants spoke and/or wrote about the historical and contemporary relationship between Vietnam and China but some chose not to include (some) of their ideas or examples in their writing. The sense of pride, yet uncertainty, about the uniqueness and preservation of Vietnamese culture and identity was an important and unexpected insight. The topic then turned out to be not entirely uncontroversial, and there was a sense of anxiety from some participants about the need to be politically correct on the issue of Vietnamese-Chinese relations. Some participants also wrote about the influence of French, Korean, Japanese and U.S cultures on language, food and fashion within Vietnam. MA ELT students referred to their studies of language and a business major referred to intercultural relations.

On a methodological note, the concurrent think aloud writing tasks made these types of schemas evident in the writing decisions of the participants in a way that would not have been possible using other writing process methods. Arguably, some of the most interesting and sociocultural insights in the findings reported here came from participants' explanations of the ideas and examples they deem socially and politically appropriate; and those that they felt should not be used in writing. The decisions to exclude, rather than include, could not have been understood via methods that use the finished product-only, or retrospective reporting techniques. It appears to be the case in

think aloud research however, that the relevance of what is not written, or the value of omissions in different sociocultural contexts, is rarely investigated.

Other topic-related issues raised by participants revolved around topic choice. When referring to previous writing experiences, participants in the study discussed here said that their teachers often chose the topics for them pre-MA level, although they were freer to choose topics for their graduate dissertations. The topics they ended up focusing on however seemed to be the result of consultation and guidance from supervisors/ tutors. Two MA ELT students explained the level of support and guidance from dissertation tutors. One participant had spent hours with her tutor at her tutor's home and they had refined the research question and structure of the thesis together. It is not possible to say from the findings whether this is the norm for MA students though. The level of guidance about MA thesis topics could be an important influential factor on the types of MA research undertaken. Within the VNU Journal of Science: Foreign Studies, there is a significant over-representation of contrastive rhetoric studies that explore differences in the linguistic features between Vietnamese and English texts, or semantics. Three participants spoke about the difficulty in finding new or different information; or how to make an original contribution and this influenced their choice of topic also. This could be taken to indicate, that familiarity of the topic, or whether they find the topic interesting or not, are not necessarily the most important motivational factors in writing for university purposes for the Vietnamese students. The desire to do something different to other students could also be a strategic external motivation too.

Most participants who completed the two writing tasks took time to gather ideas and examples during pre-writing/ planning stages. Many of them felt that they struggled with brainstorming and thinking of ideas in their writing. Nguyen (2015) claimed that since 2010, the Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training have encouraged teachers to use teaching approaches to help students to synthesise 'knowledge and skills to generate their own ideas...and develop their creative and independent thinking skills' (Nguyen, *ibid*). This is suggested to have led to some positive changes in how students are assessed but this view is not supported by the findings in this study. During their writing activities, the participants in this study drew on their

cultural, personal and academic experiences and used planning strategies as instructed by teachers/ tutors. Linh had been taught how to think of ideas and examples by viewing the topic with different lenses; she considered the globalisation and culture issue from an economic, cultural and historical perspective to help her to think what different stakeholders might contribute on the topic. Although she was taught this strategy within her IELTS writing course, her examples were based on her experiences learning and working in business and tourism industries.

Some participants reported using L1 when thinking of ideas or examples. For example, Ton thought about lucky money in Vietnamese, Tran thought about FrancoVietnamese examples and Minh thought about the Vietnamese ancestral homes and traditions. Wang (2003) found that the participants in his study called on their L1s for idea generation for both personal letter and argumentative writing. However, the amount of L1 use was found to decrease as students gained L2 proficiency. These findings are corroborated by Van Weijen (2009).

Some participants valued writing assignments that gave them to opportunity to develop idea generation skills. Duc and Linh felt that essay writing and learning about different types of essays (including argumentative essays) were useful for developing idea brainstorming skills and critical thinking skills. Linh spoke about her postgraduate assignments helping to '*train her mind*', to think differently and to evaluate more. Many participants felt that teachers and assignments encouraged them to engage in evaluation and other kinds of critical thinking. This aspect of writing will now be further explored.

Critical thinking

The issues raised by participants about critical thinking are reflected well in existing literature, and the debates in this area still apply at the time of writing. Linh, and other participants, had explained that they were not introduced to critical thinking until undergraduate or MA level.

The Vietnamese participants in Tran's (2011) study also struggled with this part of writing. They tended to avoid explicitly writing about limitations or flaws in arguments

and opted to write about compare and contrast points instead. Tran found that writing instruction and literary styles had played a role in the strategies students used to show their critical thinking (skills) in their writing. Yates and Nguyen (2012:41) suggested that the social norms embedded within the legacy of Chinese Confucianism expects Vietnamese students to be *'hard-working, passive, compliant, obedient, and deferring to respected instructors'*. As a result, students can feel uncomfortable confronting or disagreeing with the esteemed teachers who are normally regarded as authorities or experts. Phan (2009) found that Vietnamese students lacked training in critical thinking and were unwilling to question published information and avoid referencing sources in a way that could be deemed rude or impolite; by writing for example, 'such and such *claims* this to be the case'.

It has been suggested that Asian cultures subdue their own voices to those of experts so much that they would rather just use the words of those experts verbatim (Ballard and Clanchy, 1991). During his retrospective report of an assignment, Tin said that he had wanted to keep the structure and wording within a source text because he knew it would be accurate and he would struggle to make it any better. Tin's teacher had interpreted this as laziness and asked him to take the time to paraphrase the author's work instead. Tin's teacher was an American teacher working in an Australian university in Ho Chi Minh City. Despite these findings and explanations, culture alone cannot account for unintended plagiarism in higher education in Vietnam or anywhere else for that matter. Franklyn-Stokes and Newstead (1995) found that a significant percentage of (all) students undertake some form of plagiarism regardless of their cultural background.

From a more recent literature perspective, Yeager and Gadkar-Wilcox (2017) proposed that authorship within Vietnamese writing has been influenced by Vietnamese Marxism since the 1945 revolution/ independence from France. Before this time, Vietnamese people had used an adaptation of the Chinese Han script (*chữ Hán*), known as *chữ nôm*, which is said to have been unintelligible to the Chinese and thus used as a symbol of Vietnamese national identity. "Vernacularization," is used to refer to the way Vietnamese authors tried to create a new voice when translating from *chữ Hán* into *chữ nôm*. The process was not just about making texts accessible to others, it was a *'process of*

asserting authority over a text through the process of introducing, re-explaining, and recopying a text
(Gadkar-Wilcox, cited in Yeager and Gadkar-Wilcox, 2017: 75).

In the 17th century, European missionaries, including Alexandre de Rhodes, introduced ‘*quốc ngữ*’, which used Roman characters, but the Vietnamese also went on to adapt and elaborate this for their own purposes (Lo Bianco, 1993; Nguyen Khac Vien, 1993). Under French rule, although French was made the official language, FrancoVietnamese schools existed and private schools run by patriotic teachers promoted the teaching of Vietnamese (Thinh, 2006). Le (2008) has traced the influence of French on Vietnamese literature and journalism. Within their think aloud writing tasks, a number of MA ELT students made reference to the influence of Chinese and French language on the current Vietnamese language, including some terms that have been borrowed. These linguistic developments reflect the pride and resistance Tran explained in her think aloud protocol when she described the Vietnamese struggle for independence from Chinese and French colonisers. It also adds weight to the importance that writing has had for Vietnamese authors over time.

This situation was said to change under later political regimes. Yeager and GadkarWilcox (2017) state socialism imposed control over people’s writing, and who could say what for the state and for the Vietnamese people. The potential impact of Confucianism and state-controlled literature may have continued to play a role on the writing behaviours and tendencies of Vietnamese people to avoid direct challenge of authors or arguments as discussed earlier, and could possibly explain the concern some participants had about being politically correct in their views and their writing. Two participants chose to remove content that could be deemed sensitive, from their interview summaries; and so it is not possible to report on or discuss this information within this thesis.

Caution should be exercised when discussing the influence of culture on L2 writing. While it is accepted that culture does play a role in writing, we must avoid suggesting that cultural differences in writing are negative or that some forms of writing are superior or inferior to others. Belcher (2007) and Volet (1999) warned that westerncentric attitudes about learning and the socialisation of children within Confucian heritage cultures are unhelpful. Instead, the strong academic achievement

of students from these cultures should be celebrated and their highly adaptive learning strategies need to be better understood as more dynamic and flexible within the sociocultural context.

Overall students felt that critical thinking skills were introduced during post-graduate education.

The findings and discussion suggests that English language teachers and students in Vietnam could benefit from some level of instruction in critical thinking skills in an exploratory way, rather than a prescribed approach. Critical thinking can include analysis and judgement of the reliability and validity of arguments (Davies, 2013; Ennis, 1987;), identifying the contributions and limitations of work (Davis and Barnett, 2006) and discussing counter or parallel options (Moore, 2016). It not only refers to a set of skills but also a '*willingness to inquire*' (Moore, 2016: 77), and an ability to reflect on biases in one's work and how these can lead to unbalanced evaluations of arguments (Alexander and Spencer, 2008; Ennis, 1993).

Education reform policies in Vietnam and pedagogy training workshops (Hamano, 2010) that require teachers to make learning and teaching more interactive and help students to develop critical thinking skills and dispositions, have been slow to implement, if at all (Tran and Ngyen, 2015; Lộc et al., 2011). Vietnamese education policy and Article 5 of Vietnamese Education Law (2005) recommended that student should be taught to question, to examine arguments and evidence and consider bias and assumptions (Lộc et al., 2011). Evidenced has indicated however that teacher talk continues to dominate and students are described as being shy and afraid to give an incorrect answer and examinations and school cultures impeded these type of teaching approaches change (Nguyen, 2015; Tran and Nguyen, 2015). Multiple-choice tests are used instead of assessments that support or assess high order thinking skills (Tuy, 2012; Wei, 2012) and critical thinking skills are lacking in students and graduates (Le, 2005; Hào, 2008; Wei, 2012). Teachers continue to transmit knowledge through lecturing and note-taking with limited student participation (Tran and Nguyen, 2015).

Many EAP courses include the teaching of critical thinking skills, although the definition of 'critical thinking' has been debated (Hashemi and Ghanizadeh, 2012).

The 'generic-specificity' arguments apply to critical thinking in a similar way to the genre debate. Some EAP courses have taught general critical thinking (skills) (Umar Alwehaibi, 2012); others have 'infused' the skills, or 'immersed' them within subject courses; or 'mixed' different approaches Ennis (1989). Davies (2006) recommends that an "infusion approach" can be most helpful because general skills can be combined with subject or discipline content; this can help to pull out those aspects of critical thinking that are more generalisable or more subject-specific than others.

Interacting with source texts and positioning self

For the second writing activity, participants read and re-read the texts fully, at least twice, and went back to the task prompt a number of times. All participants interacted with the sources either by deciding the authors position in the argument or indicating whether the points made were for or against the issue. For example, Chau wrote 'good' and 'bad' next to key points in each text to show if they were suggesting globalisation had a positive or negative effect on cultures. Some participants in Plakans (2008) study used reading strategies to interact with source texts; such as summarising, reacting to ideas and phrases, and identifying rhetorical structures. Participants in this current thesis study, also interacted with source texts. They underlined, circled or highlighted key words. Tin felt that the topic reminded him of a topic in an 'Intercultural Communication' task, which was part of his writing portfolio . Tin explained he had read a large number of articles and texts in Education, Economics and Socioeconomics, but not about culture. In the second task, the question reminded him of articles about globalisation and adaptation that he read in the second year of his International Economics course. This is a good example of the role of task schemas and topic knowledge described by Hayes (1983).

Plakans (2008) found that participants reread the prompt for the reading-to-write task more often than the writing-only task, because writers read the source texts and had forgotten the prompt. The same applied to the participants in this thesis research, understandably. Plakans (ibid) did not indicate whether the participants expressed any challenges with the source texts however. For the participants in the study reported

here, the texts were helpful if they were uncertain of the meaning of some terms and examples.

All participants who completed the Plakans think aloud tasks positioned themselves or their position on the debate/ topic in some way. In the study discussed here, in the first task, some participants chose to argue that either cultural borrowing was either helpful or harmful but most chose to be neutral and offer examples for and against. In the second task, participants tended to take a more definite position and tended to explain how globalisation is more positive for cultures, than negative. An example of this is shown in Phuong's writing in Figure 42 when she writes how she 'totally agrees' that globalisation has a positive influence on cultural exchange. In the first writing activity, all participants positioned themselves, as the writer, within the Vietnamese context. They said they chose this context because it is most familiar to them.

Plakan's participants positioned themselves largely due to their interaction with the source texts and five writers used the same process to position themselves for both types of tasks. In both writing activities, participants in the current study considered their position or stance on the topic. They positioned themselves based on 1) their opinion on the topic, 2) the amount of and strength of examples in the texts and, 3) the amount of ideas they would have to generate themselves if they were to argue 'for' or 'against'.

Participants used the texts to get an idea of the debate. Some used key terms from the sources (with and without citation) but none of the specific examples were used in their writing. Instead, the participants thought of more relevant examples for them and the Vietnamese context. The ideas within the source texts were used with some level of paraphrasing. When reporting on their challenges, some participants experienced difficulties paraphrasing other's work in a way that avoided plagiarism while maintaining the original meaning. Hirvela and Du (2013) found that Chinese students were unsure of the purpose of paraphrasing and how they should go about it for university purposes.

Trouble getting started: writing introductions

Almost all participants commented on the difficulty they had experienced writing introductions, and most used a rather standard general-to-specific format that introduced the broader topic first and then the area of focus. Tran explained that she felt uncomfortable being so abrupt when writing direct introductions. There was evidence of a form of linguistic loyalty (Manchón, 2009) and negotiation, even if it did not come across in the final written products.

These findings are consistent with existing L2 writing and pragmatics research. It has been well established for some time that cultures organise and develop ideas differently (Hinkel, 2013). In a study of writing in English in Southeast Asia, Ha and Baurain (2011) suggested that the reader is seen as responsible for teasing out the messages that are slowly and vaguely referred to. Hirose (2003) have also found a delayed introduction of purposes in expository writing of Japanese students. Phan and Baurain (2011), found that introductions written in Vietnamese were often much longer and tended to have a flowing, abstract, poetic style. They contained information like the historical background, information about the person or people discussed in the writing, and anecdotes or judgements. The lack of this additional information can make essays written in English appear too abrupt or straightforward. Vietnamese writers used symbolism for the audience to decode or interpret the message. This expressive style was also found by Tran (1999).

In the findings of the study being discussed, Minh said that she thought writing in Vietnamese is more 'free', more circular, less direct and one can 'explore' in [reading] Vietnamese essays. Bhatia (1993) thought that the move structure of academic genres would probably stay the same within different cultures, although the sociocultural environment could impact on how certain moves would be written. The findings in this study indicated that, although participants were aware of an alternative (presumably 'Vietnamese') way of writing introductions, they nevertheless maintained the introduction structure taught by writing and other teachers of English. This tended to be the three-move progression described by Dudley-Evans (1986) where they lead their readers from very general to specific topics in a narrative style.

Structuring challenges: sentence level and whole text concerns

Most participants found it difficult to form sentences with grammatical accuracy and others reported that they found some assignments useful for learning phrases that they can use elsewhere. There was evidence of the use of formulaic sequences in the assignments provided by some of the participants. In a study of genre pedagogy, Jing (2016) reported that MA Linguistics students in Hong Kong had more instruction or confidence in using learnt phrases rather than genre knowledge. These types of phrases have been called clusters (Hyland, 2012), recurrent word-combinations, lexical phrases or bundles (Biber and Barbieri, 2007). Fairclough (1992, cited in Shaw, 2017: 146) called the actual re-use of words or phrases '*manifest intertextuality*'. Shaw (2016) stated that many writers tend to use the wording and structure of the question in their answers. Interestingly, two participants in the study discussed here were keen not to re-use the words or structure in the question or task prompts. Tin thought this could be classed as plagiarism.

Analyses of academic corpuses have shown how these phrases are used often in academic writing of expert writers and the 'chunking' process can help L2 writers to master them better than single lexical items (Jing, 2016). Ackermann and Chen (2013) developed an "Academic Collocation List" consisting of the most frequent 2468 collocations of pedagogical relevance. Jing (2016) defines lexical phrases that have general discourse functions and those that are move and genre based. A move or step is defined as the, '*smallest discourse unit that carries a communicative function*'. 'Pragmatic' and 'decontextualised' bundles may be learnt and applied more readily than others that are more context and 'function' dependent but it is also possible to learn about the phrases used within moves within genres. For example, in the introduction of a research article, the moves are often to establish a territory or establishing a gap.

The participants in the study discussed here demonstrated genre knowledge and linguistic knowledge when they recalled how they had written a previous assignment, and during their concurrent writing tasks. Hayes (1996) perceived genre knowledge to be recalled from long term memory during writing activities. Although Hyland would agree with this point, he has been critical of these types of process-oriented

explanations of writing because they are susceptible to focuses '*on the writer as a solitary individual engaged in a struggle to discover and communicate personal meaning, and fails to recognize writing is a social activity*' (Hyland, 2004b: 46). By exploring how sociocultural, including situational aspects influence the writing of participants within the current study, it protects itself from this type of criticism.

Phuong, et al. (2015) explored the metacognitive behaviours of Vietnamese students via retrospective reports. Students reported considering the task or instructions carefully before writing; they also brainstormed for ideas and wrote notes. They used their background (world) knowledge in idea generation and to write an outline. These behaviours were also found in the study reported here. The 2015 participants, and the participants in this study both recalled editing for grammar, vocabulary, spelling and punctuation. Some reported doing this along the way whereas others said they left these type of error checks for the end. Phuong et al. (2015) labels this as a compensation strategy and does not discuss the different reasons or purposes for the revisions, so it is difficult to compare the findings with those in this study. Nguyen did not use concurrent think aloud protocols so it may have been that the retrospective reports alone did not offer enough detail about the sentence level changes that the participants made. This would have also been the case in this study if 'live' writing tasks were not used.

Hayes considered this type of 'evaluative reading' to be a central process in writing. Writers read and scan to evaluate their own work to detect errors. This is a complex activity that requires word decoding, application of grammar and semantic knowledge, and making factual inferences. backtracking' In this current research study, this reading would be most likened to 'backtracking' and repair/ revision work. During Plakans' (2008) think aloud writing tasks, one participant was reported to have stopped often to plan and rehearse, whereas others stopped infrequently. In contrast to this, only two MA ELT students in the study reported here wrote almost continuously during the writing stage; the others frequently stopped to revise and plan. In Plakans and this current study, rereading or backtracking was often done to check phrasing of sentences.

The findings described how participants repaired and revised their writing in order to achieve cohesion and coherence, to address register and/or avoid repetition (upgrade textual revisions), or to better express their meaning (ideational upgrade revisions). Compensation strategies included attempts to find L2 meaning from an L1 concept or term or morpho-syntactic' problems. The latter included instances when participants made changes when forming words or the ordering of words in sentences. These can be likened to Hayes' (1996) revision local (sentence level) and global (content and organisation), which he suggested is determined by the writers' proficiency. Specifically, a lack of global revisions were said to be due to poor reading skills, inadequate working memory and inadequately developed task schema for revisions. Overall, the participants tended to revise more at local rather than global level. Most participants had identified the content and structure of the writing during pre-writing and planning stages; and they tended to follow that. This is different to Nguyen's (2015) study where she found that a Vietnamese participant did revise at global level. It is not possible to make any direct comparison of the participants or the findings however and it is also not possible to establish any causal relationship between the participants' reading skills, working memory or revision task schema, as suggested by Hayes (1996). This would require a different type of investigation involving a more rigorous measurement of these independent variables.

Academic register and subject-specific vocabulary

During the writing activities participants said they wanted to choose more formal or academic words over informal words. They also reported having experienced challenges when asked to write an assignment without an understanding of the relevant terminologies or key words. On the flip side, some writing tasks had helped them to learn new subject specific words. For example, Ton's case study about a large Vietnamese company helped him to learn business related words. A problem with learning these sorts of terms in English however is the issue of translating these words into Vietnamese or trying to read about the topics in Vietnamese; because the participants had learnt them in English.

The participants in this study used hedging and metadiscourse (Hyland and Tse 2004) during their writing tasks. They also looked-for synonyms to find alternative, or more formal, words. Linh said she often wrote a number of synonyms first and then chose which one fitted best when she read back over the paragraph. The findings in relation to the use of academic register and subject-specific vocabulary reflect other discussions about the teaching of vocabulary in L2 writing.

The second issue about being able to engage with subjects and topics in L1, if the subject is taught in L2 is worthy of further discussion. The implications of English as a medium of instruction has been attracting much attention within the EAP arena and some of the main concerns are echoed within the findings within this study.

English medium instruction

In 2008 the Vietnamese government stipulated that a) delivering programs in English at some universities, and b) using English as a medium of instruction for maths and science in upper secondary schools were two of five core objectives of the National Foreign Language 2020 project. The other objectives are to create a proficiency framework compatible with the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), to implement compulsory English language education from Grade 3, and to improve English teachers' English language proficiency (ELP) and understanding of language pedagogy and language acquisition. Before this time, courses in English medium instruction had been offered in collaboration with international partners, such as the MBA programme at Hanoi National Economics University and an undergraduate IT course at Hanoi University of Science and Technology. These were respectively partnered with a French university and La Trobe University in Australia (Nguyen et al. 2017).

The introduction of degree courses in English medium instruction are increasingly popular in SE Asia. There are a number of assumptions about learning subject majors in English that lead Ministry's of Education to perceive it as a quick and cost-effective way to gain competence in English. They also want to become international universities by attracting international students and building an international research reputation (Vu and Burns, 2014). The university-level teacher participants in this study were

obliged to publish (in Vietnamese) every two years but many felt that a publication in English would be highly valued. In a similar fashion, Hedgecock and Lee (2017) reported that their participants also spoke of the challenges and rewards of promoting their university by publishing their research in reputable international journals.

There are increasing numbers of courses in English medium in China (Hu et al., 2014) and 30 Japanese universities are now part of the ‘Super Global’ which has launched degree programmes taught entirely in English with international partners (Hu et al., *ibid*). In Korea, up to 40% of all courses are now taught in English (Sharma, 2011). A similar figure applies to courses taught in Macau (Botha, 2013). Critics of EMI suggest that the psychological wellbeing of local students and academic staff should be more carefully considered (Cho, 2014) and there are important issues around linguistic ecology, linguistic identity, and the politics of access to EMI education (Nunan, 2003).

Two participants in the study discussed here had undertaken joint Business and English undergraduate programmes, another student was studying Biology in English, in a Vietnamese university and another participant was studying an MBA in English in a Vietnamese campus of an Australian University. These foreign programs involve overseas institutions delivering courses within Vietnam (Nguyen, 2009). This participant would receive an Australian MBA qualification, rather than a Vietnamese/local degree. Chau did not want to learn in English; she had wanted to study Microbiology in Vietnamese instruction but had been told that she did not make the grades. Instead, she was able to study Biology in English. Minh also stated that Vietnamese students studying on the International Standard Programme (which are degree subjects studied in English), receive financial incentives. These findings reflect a form of ‘languagebased income inequality’ that includes wage discrimination in favour of those proficient users of English (Nguyen et al., 2017).

Nguyen et al. (2017) more recently shared some insights about the problems of these types of degree programmes within Vietnam. They reported that there had been a lag between institutions’ practices and the availability of policy to guide their actions. For example, many joint programmes were running above capacity, and others were shut down because they had been proceeding without regulation (*ibid*). Institutions had not had guidance regulating tuition fees for the English medium courses. In this thesis study,

Chau spoke of the challenges she faced when she started to learn her subject major in English for the first time; she also felt that the teacher would reduce some of the content or difficulty of the course (Biology) because the students found it difficult to understand in English. This is corroborated by an academic in Nguyen et al. (2017).

Nevertheless, many Vietnamese universities require low English proficiency to enrol on courses (Duong, 2009). Nguyen et al. (2017) found that in one university, students had difficulty writing assignments, interacting with teachers, and others in the class.

Vietnamese was often used by the students to ask questions and clarify points. In the study presented here, Chau also explained how Vietnamese might be used to explain some things in class. Nguyen et al. (2017) found that where teachers lectured solely in English, there were issues of decoding language-specific discipline terminology. One student in their study said that they have difficulty understanding business concepts in Vietnamese even though they understand them in English.

Linh also found it difficult to understand topics in Vietnamese, when they had studied them in English. Linh had to translate her undergraduate thesis into Vietnamese from English and she found it very difficult to find the Vietnamese terms and meanings. Ngoc also tried to study inferential statistics within SPSS in Vietnamese but could not understand it so she chose to read up about it in English instead. Potentially, this could lead Vietnamese students to be disadvantaged due to a lack of subject knowledge in Vietnamese or in relation to the Vietnamese context. Although the students may be deemed at an advantage due to assumed advanced English proficiency and better job prospects, it raises questions about how students on EMI courses can meaningfully engage in discussions with Vietnamese speakers about the business and science courses they are studying if they do not have the language, in Vietnamese, to be able to communicate what they have been learning, or how to make it applicable to the Vietnamese context.

Nguyen et al. (2017) stated that where students on English medium courses have received additional English language support, it was not a targeted curriculum. Instead the language support was based on a business English textbook and students were taught about *marketing, organisation, leadership, business vocabulary and discourse strategies* (e.g.

negotiating), rather than *academic English skills*. The thesis so far would suggest that this type of subject-specific language work could have been more beneficial for the joint major students. The problem here however lies in using a generic business textbook to fit in with a curriculum in a context in which the language and rhetorical features may not necessarily apply. This supports the findings in this study, as reported by the two participants who undertook a Business and English joint programme. Tin had identified the type of Business English textbook that Nguyen et al. (2017) refer to above; he also provided examples of the Bill of Exchange he had written. It is unclear whether Tin would ever need to write a Bill of Exchange in his work life however. Tin had however taken an Academic Writing module as an option and was also learning to write for ‘academic purposes’ in addition to the subject-related pieces of writing. Nguyen et al. (2017) recommended that additional academic and English language support could take the form of writing consultations with specialised academic skills tutor or subject specific courses (rather than generic EAP courses). They also suggest that teachers could be supported by consultations about linguistic aspects of course materials or via seminars on Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and other EMI pedagogies. Given the discussion on genre pedagogy earlier in this chapter, it seems reasonable to suggest that this approach could well support the teachers of EMI courses.

This chapter has so far discussed the findings of the genres completed by participants; their perceptions of assignments and writing in English for university and other purposes; and the types of processes they undertake when writing assignments and other texts. It has also included a discussion of how different aspects of the sociocultural context appears to have played a role on these L2 writing activities. This leads to a final discussion about the value of unravelling these sociocultural features within L2 writing research but also how this type of approach can underplay the role of individual differences in L2 writing.

Section 3

Investigating the role of sociocultural contexts in L2 writing

A number of sociocultural features were seen to influence or impact on the genres, writing process and perceptions of the participants. These have already been discussed throughout this chapter. Overall, many of these structural influences might be evident if the study was repeated in another SE Asian or East Asian context. This might include for example, the influence of CHC, the grammar-translation/ traditional pedagogy and assessment approaches; and the role of English language within international business and scientific purposes. These features may not necessarily be uniquely Vietnamese and similar types of findings and discussion are evident elsewhere. There were however some specific features of the sociocultural context that could be deemed specific to Vietnam such as the influence of its historical and current relationship with its Chinese neighbours, and the linguistic preferences for lengthy symbolic and poetic writing using language that had been adapted by (and for) Vietnamese ancestors who were resistant to colonisation. These legacies were still evident in participants' writing processes and perceptions.

This rest of this section is reserved to address the value of the final research question in itself. It answers the question to what extent the findings have contributed to our understanding of sociocultural influences on L2 writing more generally and whether there has been any value-added in examining specific aspects of the sociocultural context in this way. As explained in the first chapter; social, historical, cultural and political contexts appear to play a role in how people write in English as a foreign language, or indeed any writing. The term 'sociocultural context' was defined in the methodology chapter in this thesis as the multi-layered context of the case study. It includes the international, national, regional, institutional, departmental, personal and specific writing contexts or levels. It was designed before the data collection phase. It was based on L2 writing literature and literature relating specifically to the Vietnamese context. The findings indicated that the levels or potential aspects of the sociocultural context were well predicted. Findings revealed insights about the influence of features within each of the 5 levels demonstrated in Figure 2 (repeated) . These have been further grouped into 'structural' and personal or 'idiographic' features.

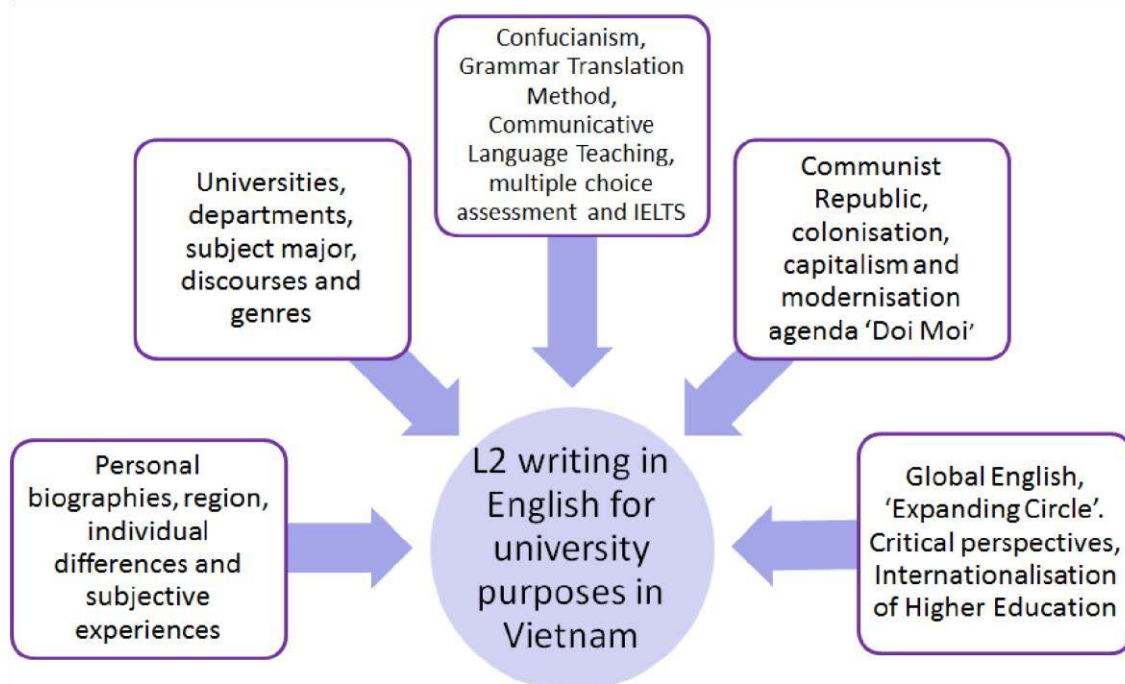


Figure 2 (repeated). Sociocultural context of L2 writing in Vietnam.

As explained in the first chapter in this thesis, descriptions of the sociocultural context have often tended to be abstract, vague, and all-encompassing. Although they have been persuasive on a theoretical level, they have not necessarily offered researchers a tangible basis to begin to understand the specific sociocultural influences on L2 writing in different country contexts for example. In contrast, this thesis has not only identified which aspects of the sociocultural context are linked to L2 writing but also explained how different aspects appear to play a role on different areas of L2 writing.

Structural and personal influences

The findings indicated that structural influences seemed to influence participants' writing more than personal or idiographic aspects. Personal influences on writing included the participants' work experiences, attending a private IELTS course or the influence of their parents (Figure 44 and Figure 50). In the literature review of this thesis, there was an assumption that the views and opinions of older generations could

become a part of the participants' cognitions about writing in English. This could include parents' and grandparents' experiences of learning and writing in English. Given the changes to the status of English language teaching in Hanoi (in the North) and Ho Chi Minh city (in the South) since 1975, there may have been differences in peoples' perceptions about writing in English. Overall, this was not found in the information from participants. Despite the magnitude of the events of the Vietnam/American War and post 1975 events, this historical episode did not feature heavily in participants' responses. There was no negative attitudes towards the U.S and when participants referred to their motivations for learning English; almost all reported that their parents supported and encouraged them to study English. This applied equally to participants in the North and the South. Most participants reported that their parents could not speak English. There was no evidence whatsoever of any negative attitudes or perceptions of English as a neo-colonial tool, which is reported to have been the prevalent attitude pre-1980s. Only in the South, however, did anyone report that their parents used English. Ngoc's reported that her father had learnt some English while working with US soldiers during the Vietnam/American war and Ton's father used English to communicate with business people from Singapore and other countries. It might come as a surprise that the events of the Vietnam/ American war did not feature more significantly in how participants spoke about using English. The research was not focused on these aspects, however, and it may have been the case that more information on this matter could have been found if different questions had been asked with members of the older generation. It could also have been the case that participants did not feel it was appropriate or polite to discuss their opinions on this matter.

Another reason for a lack of personal or individual differences in writing may be due to the design of the study and methodology. Those interested in individual differences in writing often use cognitive approaches rather than sociocultural approaches (Kormos, 2012; Dörnyei 2009; 2010). This thesis used both approaches. The cognitive aspects of the research were most prominent when investigating participants' writing processes. This involved finding out what the participants reported to be thinking about or paying attention to during writing and the findings were organised in a similar way to Kellogg (2001) and Manchón and De Larios (2007). Other studies have explored differences in writing processes in relation to a range of learner variables; such as aptitude (Robinson, 2005), working memory span (Kormos and Trebits, 2012), motivation, Noels, Clément,

and Pelletier (2001), self-regulation and affective factors Kormos (2012). This thesis research did not assess writing processes against any identified learner variables and did not differentiate between the participants in these types of variables.

Other individual differences that influence writing processes are said to be students' interest, self-efficacy beliefs, and the value attributed to the task (Kormos, 2012). However, findings related to these concerns in this study indicated there was more similarity than difference between what the participants were interested in writing about; the areas they felt were most challenging to them and the types of writing they felt was most useful. So, even where there were opportunities to find differences, similarities and patterns persisted. If the study had used an experimental approach with an assessment of aptitude or working memory span for example, it may have been the case that individual differences were found in participants' writing processes.

Summary

The discussion chapter has raised implications for future research, for pedagogy and for assessment considerations within Vietnam. These have included recommendations to undertake a larger investigation of university- level genres to help prepare undergraduates for the types of writing expected at undergraduate level and beyond. In addition, a collaborative research agenda with industry and graduate employers could be designed to ascertain the types of writing in English in Vietnam graduates could be required to undertake. Based on this research or needs analysis, genre awareness training and genre pedagogies could become a feature of English language lessons and English writing curriculum at university level, at least. Within this agenda, critical thinking approaches could become embedded as students are supported to investigate discourse and lexical features of language within exemplar texts. Literature suggests this could be generalised or subject- specific in nature.

In order for teachers to be able to contemplate working with a genre awareness approach or genre pedagogy, the influence of assessment regimes could be further explored. This is already underway within Vietnam (Tran, Griffin and Nguyen, 2010). There may be benefits of assessing students' writing skills based on the types of writing and communicative functions they will be expected to undertake later on. The issue of

what to measure or assess on a national level is prominent within assessment literature and work is already being undertaken to adapt the CEFR benchmarks and descriptors to improve how English language skills are assessed in Vietnam, including the university entrance exam.

On a conceptual level, the study has indicated that it is possible to unpick different aspects of the sociocultural context within L2 writing. When investigating sociocultural factors in L2 writing, researchers could go further to explore different features of the context and writing situation to better understand some of the decisions made by L2 writers. This can include for example how people perceive different genres, how they choose or avoid certain topics and terms. When exploring sociocultural influences in writing, think aloud protocols proved invaluable. Indeed, it would not be possible to find out about writers' live decisions and reasons for omissions without this technique. Researchers using think aloud protocols in the future could also gain important sociocultural insight by focusing on what L2 writers choose not to write about. They could use these as discussion points immediately following the writing task to ascertain how writers explain their decision making in this area. The discussion has included references to discussions of cross-cultural and sociocultural studies of L2 writing. The findings of this thesis could make a contribution to these literature fields.

Conclusions

The centrality of sociocultural context

This thesis has reported an exploration of the second language writing activities of ten higher education students in Vietnam. The introductory chapter explained how I became involved in EAP and the reasons why I chose to undertake EAP research within Vietnam. One reason for the research interest was due to Vietnam's historical relationship with the English language. The first chapter described how understandings of L2 writing had been influenced by 'the sociocultural turn', which regards every act of writing as being socially and culturally laden. During the literature review process, the term 'sociocultural context' started to feel like a catch-all phrase, and it appeared that researchers had paid limited attention to defining or making transparent what was being referred to within this umbrella term. The thesis has aimed to find out which features of the sociocultural context seem to play a role within different aspects of L2 writing for some Vietnamese students. It has tried to be specific in identifying apparent, observed and reported links between different parts of the sociocultural context and writing in English.

Timing and the need for Vietnamese learner voices

The timing of the study was also an important part of the decision to undertake the research. As explained at the beginning of the thesis, the Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training were in the process of implementing Foreign Language Project 2020. The project aimed to improve the foreign language proficiency of Vietnamese learners and teachers. Teachers have been under the spotlight in Vietnam and there appeared to be room for pedagogical, curriculum and assessment renovations (Freeman and Le Dréan, 2017). This teacher focus seemed to act as a pedestal for teacher views or teacher-issues, possibly at the expense of learner-focused studies. There appeared to be less consideration of learners' experiences of learning to write in English.

Vietnam's renewed emphasis on English language learning was positioned as part of a wider, international trend in which English has become the dominant foreign and

second language globally. Vietnamese students and graduates are increasingly expected to be able to produce texts in English for university and employment purposes. More Vietnamese universities seek to attract international students and to offer courses in English medium instruction. Students and other academics face linguistic and nonlinguistic challenges when they write in English for academic and university purposes. Learning how to write within respective disciplines is one challenge. There are differences in the types of texts or genres that tend to be written in different disciplines, as well as linguistic and rhetorical differences in the texts. There appeared to be a need to better understand Vietnamese students' experiences of; and perceptions towards, writing in English for university and other purposes in a way that had not really been explored before.

A review of the literature within Vietnam and about Vietnamese students indicated that a university level genre-mapping investigation had not occurred within Vietnam. This meant that it was not possible to tell which types of writing students had been asked or were being asked to write within their subject majors at university-level. There was also limited information about the genres Vietnamese students had written across their life course or during transitions between secondary, high school and university level. SLW literature indicated that, when we know what types of texts or assignments students are asked to write for university and other purposes, we can help them to learn the skills to complete these successfully. The first step in this endeavour was to find out what students were writing or had been asked to write; and this could then be used to form a type of mini needs-analysis for curriculum development work, or to act as a springboard for further research. The first research question aimed to identify the genres that the higher education participants in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City had written for university and other purposes.

Identifying genres within Higher Education in Vietnam: challenges and implications

Via writing biographies and using copies of assignments, it was possible (although not unchallenging) to use Nesi and Gardner's (2012) genre classification system to classify the genres. The findings showed an overall standardisation of genres written by the participants at lower levels of education. Exercises and empathy writing were the most

common genres and these were taken to be informed by traditional ELT pedagogy and multiple-choice grammar translation assessment formats within Vietnam. As participants progressed throughout High School and University, this standardisation was reported to have continued for most. For non-English majors, variability in genres were reported to have occurred at postgraduate level. In line with existing genre research, there were some differences between the genres written by different subject majors. For example, participants undertaking science-related courses had written different types of texts to those studying business-related programmes. The requirement to write in English, even as a non-English major, indicated the influence of the language across business and science discourses. Overall, there was a general shift towards writing for research purposes. Some participants had also written new types of texts as employees within Vietnamese and international organisations.

This 'jump' in genre and writing expectations was often described as daunting and participants reported to have felt unprepared for the types of writing and skills required of them. This finding indicated that students could be better prepared to undertake the types of writing expected of them later on in university and even within work environments. Further genre-related or needs analysis research could help to better understand what a broader range of students are writing for university and other purposes. The findings of which could then inform a genre pedagogy or genreawareness approach to the teaching of writing at university level, either generically or for different subject majors.

There appeared to be a lack of insight into what Vietnamese students thought or felt about writing in English for university or other purposes. Although all higher education students (regardless of subject major) were mandated to reach a prescribed level of English in order to graduate; it was unclear to what extent that students had had the opportunity, within research or elsewhere, to explain how they engaged within different writing tasks or what it meant to them to be writing in English within their subject majors. Although research existed about the types of things that motivated Vietnamese students to learn English, it was not at all evident which types of writing they tended to enjoy the most, and why; or which types of writing they found most useful to them, and why. Based on the literature, the thesis proposed that gathering these sorts of

insights would be helpful to better understand Vietnamese students' experiences of writing in English, and could contribute to our cross-cultural understandings of what it feels like to be an L2 writer within Vietnam. Participants reported that they were motivated to achieve high scores in exams and they were keen to please their teachers. Participants felt more motivated to write on familiar topics and to write in a style loyal to the 'Vietnamese-way' of writing. Participants reported and were observed to have difficulties with certain aspects of L2 writing such as writing introductions, using academic register and engaging in critical thinking. Literature had indicated that students from Confucian Heritage cultures and those accustomed to traditional (English) teaching and learning pedagogies; may have had less experience of developing critical thinking skills, or that the type of disposition required for refined critical thinking skills might not have been nurtured. As discussed earlier in this thesis, the participants verbalised these types of sentiments when they spoke of the new-ness or novelty they experienced when asked to use critical thinking skills for the first time. Some of the English language teacher participants however indicated that there was some evidence of change. These findings indicate that, by engaging Vietnamese students in critical thinking activities pre-university or pre-MA level might help to reduce the surprise or possible distress when they are asked to start using critical thinking skills later on. Literature has stated that this is already on the agenda for the Vietnamese MOET and this gesture is included within official education guidelines within Vietnam. The reality of the experiences of the participants in this study however indicated that more could be done to include critical thinking skills within the English (and possibly) other subject curriculums within Vietnam secondary or high school. A number of examples of how researchers and education institutions have embedded critical thinking within the curriculum have been discussed within the discussion chapter of this thesis.

Methodological limitations and the potential for new applications

Having decided to identify which genres Vietnamese students were writing and their perceptions of this writing, the third research question explored *how* participants completed assignments and writing in English. SLW literature had demonstrated that value of exploring the writing process or strategies used by L2 writers in different

contexts. By asking participants about their writing behaviours and by examining writers; it has been possible to tell what they tend to pay attention to when they write, what they deem to be important when they write and what they find most difficult when writing. The writing-process literature tended to be heavily oriented (historically and recently) towards comparing the writing behaviours or more and less proficient writers or on measuring the impact of one or more individual differences. As explained earlier, this thesis took a step away from this tradition. Although a multiple case study approach was used, proficiency or other types of individual differences were not used as a measure or judgement within the data collection or analysis. The limitations of concurrent think aloud protocols have been discussed earlier in this thesis. Despite the shortcomings of this technique, verbalisations and writing behaviours showed that participants paid attention to whole text organisation, paragraph structure and academic register. The participants engaged with the task prompt and the source texts in similar ways to participants in other studies. Also in a similar fashion to other findings about the writing processes of L2 writers, they revised at sentence level in order to upgrade their writing or for compensatory reasons.

Overall, structural influences like: national and international testing and assessment frameworks, traditional pedagogies and the role of teachers within Vietnam; international academic research-writing standard, the role of English as a lingua franca and global language, historical, cultural and political influence, and discipline or subject-related factors appeared to play more of a role in the writing experiences, perceptions and processes of the participants than personal or more subjective influences. Some aspects of personal narrative included the role of parents, as well as employment and other motivations for learning English.

The use of think aloud protocols led to a surprising and important methodological insight that related to L2 writers' choices about what to exclude from their writing; and how these decisions can be used to understand the influence of the sociocultural context. A recurring feature of L2 writing process or product-based studies has been an interest in what writers produce and how they write it. There seemed to be less attention paid to the importance of omissions or the things that L2 writers choose not to write about or focus on in their writing. As reported in the findings and discussion

chapter of this thesis, the participants' decisions to avoid certain topics or examples was based a number of socioculturally embedded ideas or uncertainties about the relationship and cultural differences between Vietnam and its northern Chinese neighbour, and concerns about being politically correct. While these findings may have been steered by the type of task and topic selected within the study; it does not take away from the point that, from a methodological perspective, those interested in the role of sociocultural influences in L2 writing could use this approach to pay attention to the material or ideas that did not '*make the cut*' or feature within the final texts and ask questions about that decision-making.

Other aspects of the sociocultural context also featured in the participants' writing processes. In line with existing L2 composing models, the participants' prior learning and writing experiences influenced how they structured the texts and the moves they felt were relevant or necessary within the texts. Direct instruction from teachers and other tutors were reported to impact on these types of decisions. Those that paid attention to academic register and other conventions were clearly aiming to meet international academic writing criteria. Some participants reflected on the differences between this academic style of writing and Vietnamese approaches to writing. For some, there was a conscious effort to avoid the flowery, subtler and 'beautiful' Vietnamese writing style. In reflection of existing literature, there was a sense of disconnect between how the participants enjoyed writing or were used to writing, and the way they felt they must write to write well for university or more academic purposes, or to please/appease their audience. On this note, a significant caveat to the findings reported here are that they are based on a dialogue between a researcher and a participant. As discussed in the methodology chapter of this thesis, there are likely to have been occasions where participants did not self-report accurately or honestly; either intentionally or unintentionally. This limitation is shared by almost all research approaches and the thesis has described a range of validation measures used to present as accurate picture of the reality as possible. For example, copies of assignments were collected to show which types of assignments had been written. A selection of the assignments were classified by myself and Nesi (in 2016) as a form of checking or validation. Where participants had used Vietnamese within the data collection sessions/ interviews; an interpreter and a second interpretation validator reviewed the interview

transcripts to ensure the information was accurate and presented as intended by the participants. The participants also had the opportunity to review the information they provided and to withdraw any material they did not want to be included. Additionally, in most places, the findings resounded with existing research and the lack of any obvious or glaring anomalies could be taken to indicate some level of reliability in the findings reported.

Towards the end of the thesis, the discussion returned to the sociocultural context question and established that there had been value in deconstructing this concept within this study. It has been possible to identify which aspects of the social, historical, economic and discipline/ subject context played a role in which genres the participants had written, their perceptions of writing and the writing processes they used. The original conceptual framework of this study had justified a focus on the relationship between the 1) genres, 2) perceptions and 3) writing processes of the participants in relation to the sociocultural context. By following this through, the findings revealed that, while the decision to focus on these themes were justified at the time, there were other significant themes that perhaps should be included in any L2 writing study. Within this study, these themes were the role of teachers and ELT pedagogy and the impact of assessment regimes. As explained within the discussion chapter, although these were included as important parts of the sociocultural context, their influence on the writing of the Vietnamese participants in this study, was particularly substantial.

In summary, this chapter has summarised how and why the research questions and design of the study was established based on existing literature within and outside Vietnam. It has summarised some of the main findings and implications of the study. Despite some methodological limitations, the findings have indicated that there can be value in taking the time to unpack which parts of sociocultural contexts influence L2 writing in different ways and how the use of think-aloud protocols can offer researchers the opportunity to investigate socio-cultural influences (within L2 writing processes) in a way that has not traditionally been used or publicly discussed within the L2 writing process literature. An important contribution of the study is that it has made a start in understanding the types of writing undertaken by Vietnamese university-level students

over time and has made suggestions about how the findings could be used as a basis for further needs-analysis research and genre pedagogy within the Vietnamese ELT arena.

Going back to the original intention of my ELT/EAP work (as described in the introduction of this thesis), the hope is still that, if we have a better understanding of the types of writing that Vietnamese undergraduates and postgraduates are expected to write, and if we have a better understanding of their motivations and writing challenges, then there is a basis to develop writing curriculums and use scaffolded approaches that support individuals to develop their writing skills and be able to succeed in whichever path they choose to take next.

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Appendix 1

Reading Vietnamese writing

These images can be used to support reading and pronunciation of the Vietnamese words used in this thesis. Information from

<http://www.omniglot.com/writing/vietnamese.htm>

You can hear how to pronounce the Vietnamese letters and tones at:

http://www.seasite.niu.edu/Vietnamese/Guide_to_Pronunciation/alphabet/alphabet_system.htm

Vietnamese alphabet and pronunciation

| | | | | | | | | |
|-----------|----------------|--------|--------|----------|---------|---------|-----|-------|
| A a | Ă ă | Â â | B b | C c | D d | Đ đ | E e | Ê ê |
| a | á | ớ | bê/bờ | xê/cờ | dê/dờ | đê/đờ | e | ê |
| [a] | [a/a:] | [ə] | [b/?b] | [k] | [z] | [d/?d] | [ɛ] | [e] |
| G g | H h | I i | K k | L l | M m | N n | O o | Ô ô |
| giê/gờ | hắt | i ngắn | ca | (e-)lờ | (em-)mờ | (en-)nờ | o | ô |
| [ʒ/ʎ] | [h] | [i] | [k] | [l] | [m] | [n] | [o] | [o] |
| Ở ở | P p | Q q | R r | S s | T t | U u | Ư ư | V v |
| ơ | pê/pờ | cu/quy | (e-)rờ | ét-si/sờ | tê/tờ | u | ư | vê/vờ |
| [ə:] | [p] | [k] | [z] | [s] | [t] | [u] | [i] | [v/j] |
| X x | Y y | | | | | | | |
| ích-xi/xờ | i dài/i-cờ-rét | | | | | | | |
| [s~ç] | [i:] | | | | | | | |

Other letter combinations

| | | | | | | | | |
|------|---------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| ch | gh | gi | kh | ng | ngh | nh | ph | qu |
| [t] | [g] | [z] | [kx~x] | [ŋ] | [ŋ] | [ɲ] | [f] | [kw] |
| th | tr | ach | anh | ăm | ăng | ôm | ông | |
| [th] | [tʁ~tʂ] | [aɪk] | [aɪŋ] | [aɯm] | [aɯŋ] | [oɯm] | [oɯŋ] | |

Vietnamese is a tonal language with 6 tones. These tones are marked as follows:

| | | |
|---|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. level (<i>không dấu</i>) | a ă â e ê i o ô ơ u ư y | ma [mā] = ghost |
| 2. high rising (<i>dấu sắc</i>) | á ắ ấ é ế í ó ố ớ ú ứ ý | má [má] = cheek |
| 3. low/falling (<i>dấu huyền</i>) | à ằ ầ è ề ì ò ò ù ừ ù | mà [mà] = but |
| 4. dipping-rising (<i>dấu hỏi</i>) | á ắ ấ é ế í ó ố ớ ù ừ ù | mả [mả] = tomb |
| 5. high rising glottalized (<i>dấu ngã</i>) | ã ắ ấ ẽ ể ỉ ố ố ữ ữ ỹ | mã [mã?] = horse |
| 6. low glottalized (<i>dau nặng</i>) | ạ ặ ệ ệ ị ộ ợ ự ự ỹ | mạ [mà?] = rice seedling |

Appendix 2



Ethics and consent form

Dear Postgraduate Students

You are invited to take part in a research study to investigate how postgraduate students write in English for academic purposes.

Venue:

Dates:

Calling for Vietnamese postgraduate students who write in English at university. You **do not** have to be studying English as a degree subject and you **do not** have to speak English. There will be free access to an interpreter so English language is not required. All degree subjects are accepted as long as you have to undertake some writing in English. Postgraduates who are undertaking a course in English are also invited to take part.

Researcher and Research Institution

Michelle Evans, PhD Student from the Centre for Education Studies, University of Warwick, UK.

Research methods and research questions

Interviews

Postgraduates will be asked to take part in up to five individual interviews over 8 weeks. Each interview will last up to two hours and aim to discover:

- 1) What types of writing in English do you produce for university and other purposes?
- 2) How do you perceive academic writing in English? What are your attitudes and feelings towards writing in English?
- 3) Which types of writing do you find enjoyable, useful or helpful?
- 4) What writing processes and strategies do you use when writing for university and other types of writing?
- 5) What role, if any, does your sociocultural environment have on your writing in English.

Document Analysis

You will be asked to provide copies of work or assignments written in English. This is to find out which types of writing you have undertaken.

Retrospective Think-Aloud

You will be asked to talk about pieces of work written in English. This will include which strategies were used and your perceptions towards the piece of writing. You will be able to talk in any language you prefer; an interpreter will be available.

Writing activities

You will be asked to undertake some writing to show the things you do and think about when you are writing in English.

Research ethical standards

The research project is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) in the United Kingdom. The following ethical standards will be maintained throughout the research process.

- Informed consent

You will be fully informed about the research questions and methods used throughout the research. You will be able to access this information in a language of your choice and will have the opportunity to ask any questions about the research throughout the research process.

- Right to Withdraw

You have the right to withdraw your participation and any information you have given at any time during and following the research process. You will be reminded of this throughout the research and you will have contact details of the researcher and research institution for you to make contact following the research.

- Anonymity and Confidentiality

Pseudonyms will be used to help maintain anonymity, and any other information that clearly identifies you will be changed. However, you may be identifiable to some people because of the details included in the research and so full anonymity cannot be fully guaranteed. All information given by you will be protected electronically by passwords and will only be used for the purposes outlined to you in this document.

- Respect and Integrity

You will be treated with respect and your privacy will be maintained at all times. The researcher will not judge you based on any information you provide and all research methods and activities will be undertaken in a professional manner. You will have the opportunity to ask any questions about the research or any concerns you might have about being a participant.

- Risk of harm

The research must not cause any harm to you including physical, social, emotional and psychological harm. The nature of the research and the interview questions are not personal or sensitive in nature, but if there are any issues raised by you, then these will be dealt with in a supportive way. If any ethical issues do arise then further ethical advice may be sought from the university to ensure you are supported effectively.

How the information will be used

The information collected throughout the research will be used for the following purposes

- PhD thesis
- Publishable journal articles
- Dissemination at academic conferences

If the information is to be used for any other purposes then additional consent will be sought from you at that time.

If you are selected to take part in the research, you will receive a paper copy of this document which will be discussed with you. If you have understood and agree to participate in the research, please complete the return slip below.

NAME:

UNIVERSITY:

DEGREE COURSE:

EMAIL:

OTHER CONTACT DETAILS (TELEPHONE OR ADDRESS):

DECLARATION

I have read and understood the details of this document and I consent to take part in the research.

SIGNED:

DATE:

If you would like to take part please email michelle.evans@warwick.ac.uk

Appendix 3 Interview schedule

Name:

Gender:

Age:

University:

Subject/ Course:

English language learning

1. How old were you when you started to learn English language?

2. Did you learn English at:

- Home
- Primary school
- Secondary/ High school
- College
- University – undergraduate
- Private language school

Other

3. How old were you when you started to write in English?

4. Did you write in English at:

- Home
- Primary school
- Secondary/ High school
- College
- University – undergraduate

Private language school

5. Do you have any qualifications in English language?

6. Which English language courses have you studied in the past?

7. Do you currently study English language?

8. Do you currently study English for Academic Purposes?

Appendix 4

Nesi and Gardner's (2012) BAWE genre categories.

Types of Academic Writing in English taken from the 13 genre families of the British Academic Written English Corpus (BAWE) plus additions.

- Case Study
- Critique
- Design Specification
- Empathy Writing
- Essay
- Exercise
- Explanation
- Literature Survey
- Methodology Recount
- Narrative Recount
- Problem Question
- Proposal
- Research Report

Additions:

- Dissertation/ Thesis
- Emails
- Postal Letters
- Blog
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Other social media
- University/ department online group/ website

Writing English as part of English language classes at college/ university

Appendix 5

Adapted version of Gardner and Nesi's (2013) Genre categories

| Type of writing | Purpose | Examples of writing |
|-----------------|---|---|
| Case Study | <p>To show that you understand professional practice by analysing a single or just one example.</p> <p>You describe one person or one organisation with recommendations or suggestions for future action.</p> <p>Often used in Business, Medicine or Engineering.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Business start-up company report ✦ Organization analysis ✦ Patient report |
| Critique | <p>To show you understand a topic by evaluating it and assessing why it is important or useful.</p> <p>This type of writing might include a description, maybe some explanation, and evaluation.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Academic paper review ✦ Approach evaluation ✦ Business/organization evaluation ✦ Financial report evaluation ✦ Interpretation of results ✦ Legislation evaluation ✦ Policy evaluation ✦ Product/building evaluation ✦ Project evaluation ✦ Review of a book/film/play/website ✦ System evaluation teaching evaluation |

| | | |
|----------------------|---|--|
| Specification Design | <p>To show that you can design a product or procedure that could be manufactured or used by others.</p> <p>You might have to write about its purpose, how the design was developed and how it was tested.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Application design ✦ Building design ✦ Database design ✦ Game design ✦ Label design ✦ Product design ✦ System design ✦ Website design |
|----------------------|---|--|

| | | |
|-----------------|---|---|
| Empathy Writing | <p>To show that you understand academic ideas by translating them into a non-academic writing, for example - a letter or newspaper article.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Expert advice to industry ✦ Expert advice to a member of the public ✦ Information leaflet ✦ Job application ✦ Letter to a friend ✦ News report |
|-----------------|---|---|

| | | |
|-------|--|---|
| Essay | <p>To show you can create an argument and use critical thinking skills. This writing includes an Introduction, main arguments, and a conclusion.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Compare and contrast ✦ Discuss |
|-------|--|---|

| | | |
|----------|---|--|
| Exercise | <p>To give you practice in key skills and to show what you have learnt.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Calculations ✦ Data analysis mixed(e.g. calculations + short answers) ✦ Short answers to questions ✦ Statistics exercise ✦ Fill the gaps |
|----------|---|--|

| | | |
|---------------------|--|--|
| Explanation | To show you understand the topic by describing it and saying why it is important. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Business explanation ✦ Instrument description ✦ Methodology explanation ✦ Organism/disease account ✦ Site/environment report |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Species/breed description system ✦ Process explanation ✦ Account of natural phenomenon |
| Literature Survey | To show you know about important literature in the topic, maybe with some evaluation of the literature. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Literature review ✦ Literature overview ✦ Research methods review ✦ Analytical bibliography ✦ Annotated bibliography ✦ Anthology ✦ Review article |
| Methodology Recount | To show you know about procedures, methods, and how to record experimental findings. You describe the procedures used. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Research methods report ✦ Experimental report ✦ Lab report ✦ Field report ✦ Computer analysis report ✦ Data analysis report ✦ Materials selection report ✦ Program development report |
| Narrative Recount | <p>This can be a fictional or factual recount of events.</p> <p>To show you are aware of the motives and or behaviour of people and organisations.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Reflective recount ✦ Biography ✦ Character outline – e.g. person in a story. ✦ Plot synopsis ✦ Report o disease outbreak ✦ Accident report ✦ Account of literature search |

| | | |
|------------------|---|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Account of website search |
| Problem Question | <p>To give you practice in solving professional problems.</p> <p>You may be given a scenario and you offer possible solutions.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Business scenario ✦ Law problem question ✦ Logistics simulation |
| Proposal | <p>To show you can plan action for the future. This might include the purpose, detailed plan, and persuasive argumentation.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Book proposal ✦ Building proposal ✦ Business plan Catering ✦ plan legislation reform ✦ marketing plan ✦ ✦ policy proposal ✦ research proposal |
| Research Report | <p>To show you can complete a piece of research including research design, and an appreciation of its significance in the field.</p> <p>Includes your research aim/question, investigation, links and relevance to other research in the field.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Research article ✦ Student research project ✦ topic-based dissertation or thesis |

Appendix 6

Gardner and Nesi (2013) Classification of genre families

| Genre families | Educational purpose/generic structure/genre network | Genres (examples) |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| 1. Case Study | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To demonstrate/develop an understanding of professional practice through the analysis of a single exemplar• Description of a particular case, often multifaceted, with recommendations or suggestions for future action• Typically corresponds to professional genres (e.g. in business, medicine, and engineering) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• business start-up• company report• organization analysis• patient report• single issue |

| | | |
|--------------------|---|---|
| <p>2. Critique</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To demonstrate/develop understanding of the object of study and the ability to evaluate and/or assess the significance of the object of study • Includes descriptive | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • academic paper review • approach evaluation • business/organization evaluation financial report evaluation interpretation of results • |
|--------------------|---|---|

| Genre families | Educational purpose/generic structure/genre network | Genres (examples) |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| | <p>account with optional explanation, and evaluation with optional tests</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May correspond to part of a Research Report, professional Design Specification or to an expert evaluation such as a book review | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • legislation evaluation • policy evaluation • product/building evaluation • project evaluation • review of a book/film/play/website • system evaluation • teaching evaluation |

| | | |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| <p>3. Design Specification</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To demonstrate/develop the ability to design a product or procedure that could be manufactured or implemented • Typically includes purpose, design development and testing of design • May correspond to a professional design specification, or to part of a Proposal or Research Report | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • application design • building design • database design • game design • label design • product design • system design • website design • • • |
| <p>4. Empathy writing</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To demonstrate/develop understanding and | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expert advice to industry • expert advice to lay • |
| <p>Genre families</p> | <p>Educational purpose/generic structure/genre network</p> | <p>Genres (examples)</p> |

- appreciation of the relevance of academic ideas by translating them into a nonacademic register, to communicate to a nonspecialist readership
- person information leaflet job
- application letter to a friend news report

May be formatted as a letter, newspaper article or similar nonacademic text

May correspond to private genres as in personal letters or to publically available genres such as information leaflets

5. Essay

- To demonstrate/develop the ability to construct a coherent argument and employ critical thinking skills
- challenge commentary consequential discussion exposition factorial
- Introduction, series of arguments, conclusion
- May correspond to a published academic/specialist paper

| Genre families | Educational purpose/generic structure/genre network | Genres (examples) |
|----------------|---|--|
| 6. Exercise | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide practice in key skills (e.g. the ability to interrogate a database, perform complex calculations, or explain technical terms or procedures), and to consolidate knowledge of key concepts • Data analysis or a series of responses to questions • May correspond to part of a Methodology Recount or Research Report | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • calculations • data analysis • mixed (e.g. calculations + short answers) • short answers • statistics exercise |

7.
Explanation

- To demonstrate/develop understanding of the object of study and the ability to describe and/or account for its significance
 - Includes descriptive account and explanation
 - May correspond to a published Explanation, or to part of a Critique or Research Report
- business explanation
 - instrument description
 - methodology explanation
 - organism/disease account
 - site/environment report
 - species/breed description
 - system/process explanation
 - account of natural phenomenon

Genre families

Educational purpose/generic structure/genre network

Genres (examples)

8. Literature survey

- To demonstrate/develop familiarity with literature relevant to the focus of study
 - Includes summary of literature relevant to the focus of study and varying degrees of critical evaluation
 - May correspond to a published review article or anthology, or to part of a Research Report
- analytical bibliography
 - annotated bibliography
 - anthology literature
 - review literature
 - overview research
 - methods review review article
 -
 -
 -

9. Methodology recount

- To demonstrate/develop familiarity with disciplinary procedures, methods, and conventions for recording experimental findings
 - Describes procedures undertaken by writer and may include Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion sections
 - May correspond to
- computer analysis report
 - data analysis report
 - experimental report field
 - report forensic report
 - lab report materials
 - selection report
 - program development report
 -

| Genre families | Educational purpose/generic structure/genre network | Genres (examples) |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| | part of a Research Report or published research article | |
| 10. Narrative recount | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To demonstrate/develop awareness of motives and/or behaviour in individuals (including self) or organizations • Fictional or factual recount of events, with optional comments • May correspond to published literature, or to part of a Research Report | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accident report • account of literature search • account of website search • biography • character outline • plot synopsis • reflective recount • report on disease outbreak • urban ethnography |

11. Problem question

- To provide practice in applying specific methods in response to professional problems

- Problem (may not be stated in assignment), application of relevant arguments or presentation of possible solution(s) in response to scenario

- Problems or

- business scenario law problem question
- logistics simulation
-

Genre families

Educational purpose/generic structure/genre network

Genres (examples)

situations resemble or are based on real legal, engineering, accounting or other professional cases

| | | |
|--------------|--|---|
| 12. Proposal | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To demonstrate/develop ability to make a case for future action • Includes purpose, detailed plan, persuasive argumentation • May correspond to professional or academic proposals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • book proposal • building proposal • business plan catering plan legislation • reform marketing plan policy proposal • research proposal |
|--------------|--|---|

| | | |
|---------------------|---|--|
| 13. Research report | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To demonstrate/develop ability to undertake a complete piece of research including research design, and an appreciation of its significance in the field • Includes student's research aim/question, investigation, links and relevance to | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • research article student research project topic-based dissertation |
|---------------------|---|--|

| Genre families | Educational purpose/generic structure/genre network | Genres (examples) |
|-----------------------|--|--------------------------|
|-----------------------|--|--------------------------|

other research in the field

- May correspond to a published experimental research article or topic-based research paper

Appendix 7. Initial Codes in Writing Process Analysis

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> read | <input type="radio"/> ideas first grammar last | <input type="radio"/> analysing |
| <input type="radio"/> wrote a draft | <input type="radio"/> mistakes | <input type="radio"/> arranging ideas |
| <input type="radio"/> reorganised | <input type="radio"/> tense | <input type="radio"/> backtracking |
| <input type="radio"/> draft 2 | <input type="radio"/> verbal word choice | <input type="radio"/> brainstorming |
| <input type="radio"/> create sentences from hand written notes | <input type="radio"/> grammar | <input type="radio"/> bullet points |
| <input type="radio"/> use computer | <input type="radio"/> peer assessment | <input type="radio"/> cant remember |
| <input type="radio"/> given title of task | <input type="radio"/> read out loud | <input type="radio"/> change sentence structures |
| <input type="radio"/> choosing articles | <input type="radio"/> write the body, the main part | <input type="radio"/> changing ideas |
| <input type="radio"/> highlighting | <input type="radio"/> participant skipping ahead Michelle pulls back | <input type="radio"/> check grammar |
| <input type="radio"/> choosing important ideas | <input type="radio"/> read research questions in article | <input type="radio"/> check spelling |
| <input type="radio"/> writing notes | <input type="radio"/> writing notes from reading | <input type="radio"/> choosing articles |
| <input type="radio"/> detailed reading | <input type="radio"/> first draft | <input type="radio"/> choosing important ideas |
| <input type="radio"/> using phrases | <input type="radio"/> notes the main ideas | <input type="radio"/> choosing interesting topic or something different |
| <input type="radio"/> started writing | <input type="radio"/> first draft not in english | <input type="radio"/> cohesion coherence |
| <input type="radio"/> multiple revisions | <input type="radio"/> changing ideas | <input type="radio"/> collect data |
| <input type="radio"/> final draft | <input type="radio"/> problems with translation | <input type="radio"/> compensation |
| <input type="radio"/> idea generation | <input type="radio"/> uses dictionary | <input type="radio"/> conclusion |
| <input type="radio"/> use notes | <input type="radio"/> overcoming translation problems | <input type="radio"/> contradictory info from pp |
| <input type="radio"/> change sentence structures | <input type="radio"/> compensation | <input type="radio"/> copies and pastes |
| <input type="radio"/> add new ideas as writes | <input type="radio"/> structuring organisation of text | <input type="radio"/> create sentences from hand written notes |
| <input type="radio"/> brainstorming | <input type="radio"/> using the article structure | <input type="radio"/> cultural differences |
| <input type="radio"/> writing on paper | <input type="radio"/> word limit | <input type="radio"/> detailed reading |
| <input type="radio"/> writing on computer | <input type="radio"/> strategy to stay witin word limit | <input type="radio"/> do the analysing |
| <input type="radio"/> introduction | <input type="radio"/> word choice | <input type="radio"/> do the research |
| <input type="radio"/> adds points to essay | <input type="radio"/> phrasal verbs | <input type="radio"/> doesnt change introduction |
| <input type="radio"/> doesnt change introduction | <input type="radio"/> academic words and phrases | <input type="radio"/> draft 2 |
| <input type="radio"/> reviews sentence | <input type="radio"/> instruction from teacher | <input type="radio"/> engaging with text |
| <input type="radio"/> grammar check | <input type="radio"/> contradictory info from pp | <input type="radio"/> feedback from teacher |
| <input type="radio"/> when finished | <input type="radio"/> length of text | <input type="radio"/> final draft |
| <input type="radio"/> ideas first grammar last | <input type="radio"/> make changes following peer check | |
| | <input type="radio"/> agrees with peer check | |