

1-1-2002

**College students' construction of writer identity : furthering understanding thr[o]ugh discourse analysis and poststructural theory.**

Linda A. Fernsten  
*University of Massachusetts Amherst*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholarworks.umass.edu/dissertations\\_1](https://scholarworks.umass.edu/dissertations_1)

---

**Recommended Citation**

Fernsten, Linda A., "College students' construction of writer identity : furthering understanding thr[o]ugh discourse analysis and poststructural theory." (2002). *Doctoral Dissertations 1896 - February 2014*. 5453. [https://scholarworks.umass.edu/dissertations\\_1/5453](https://scholarworks.umass.edu/dissertations_1/5453)

This Open Access Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst. It has been accepted for inclusion in Doctoral Dissertations 1896 - February 2014 by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@library.umass.edu](mailto:scholarworks@library.umass.edu).

UMASS/AMHERST



312066 0288 1420

COLLEGE STUDENTS' CONSTRUCTION OF WRITER IDENTITY:  
FURTHERING UNDERSTANDING THROUGH DISCOURSE ANALYSIS AND  
POSTSTRUCTURAL THEORY

A Dissertation Presented

By

LINDA A. FERNSTEN

Submitted to the Graduate School of the  
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

May 2002

School of Education

© Copyright 2002 by Linda A. Fernsten  
All rights reserved

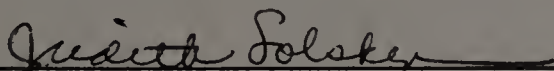
COLLEGE STUDENTS' CONSTRUCTION OF WRITER IDENTITY:  
FURTHERING UNDERSTANDING THROUGH DISCOURSE ANALYSIS AND  
POSTSTRUCTURAL THEORY

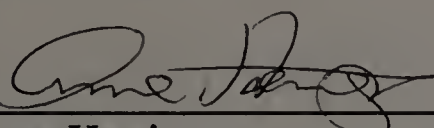
A Dissertation Presented

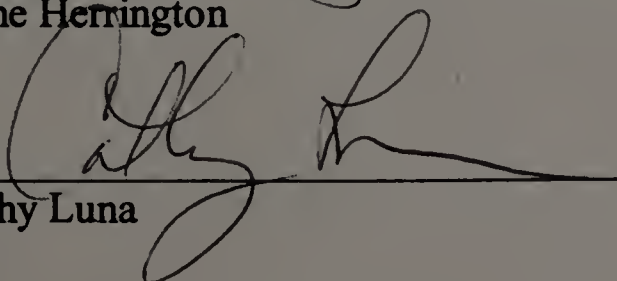
by

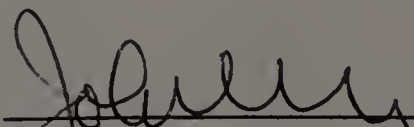
LINDA A. FERNSTEN

Approved as to style and content by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Judith Solsken, Chair

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Anne Herrington

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Cathy Luna

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Bailey W. Jackson, Dean  
School of Education

## DEDICATION

For my mother,  
whose faith and optimism guided this project,  
and

For my father,  
whose life inspired it.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to my exceptional committee - Judy Solsken, for her support, careful review of each draft, and ability to challenge as well as guide - Anne Herrington for her insight, warmth and generosity, as well as her expertise in the field of composition and her understanding of the teachers who work in it – and Cathy Luna, for her generous spirit and intelligent ways.

Thanks also to my study partners over the years, Bernadette, Paul, Mary and Kate, but especially Pam and Kim whose friendship and intellectual gifts sustained this work.

Thanks also to my large and wonderful family who provided solace, support, regular contact despite the miles, and an understanding of my need to “tilt at windmills.”

Thanks most especially to “my guys,” Jeff, Josh, Andrew, and Puck, whose lives are the light of mine, and for whom no simple thank you could ever say enough.

## ABSTRACT

### COLLEGE STUDENTS' CONSTRUCTION OF WRITER IDENTITY: FURTHERING UNDERSTANDING THROUGH DISCOURSE ANALYSIS AND POSTSTRUCTURAL THEORY

MAY 2002

LINDA A. FERNSTEN, B.A., UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

M.Ed., UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

Ed.D., UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

Directed by: Professor Judith Solsken

The purpose of this study was to investigate issues of writer identity in a college classroom, especially as they relate to the social and cultural influences of society. Using a poststructural lens to establish the theoretical viewpoint, this study examined the role of discourse in both framing student constructions of their identities and shaping the ideological stances from which they drew those understandings. The methodology used included an ethnographic study of a junior year writing class required of education majors at a large university. Examination and analysis of student writing/talk was used along with observation of student behaviors. Discourse analysis was also employed as a means of more closely examining the work of four of these students who were chosen because they constructed their identities in a more negative fashion.

The research was conducted with twenty-one students with findings indicating they did not generally recognize aspects of race, ethnicity, second-language, disability or other sociocultural conditions as influential factors on their writer identity constructions. Students demonstrated a clear preference for expressivist writing,



constructing more positive identities around it. Many students expressed concerns about aspects of traditional formal writing and signaled stunted growth and uninitiated-type identities when discussing these concerns. A third of the students expressed concerns about process writing, primarily fearing judgment and critique of their peers.

Discourse analysis provided evidence that the composition discourses of expressivism, traditional formal academic discourse, and process permeated student language and were instrumental in constructing writer identity. This methodology also provided evidence that the basic composition metaphors of “stunted growth” and initiation were implicated in student writer identities, especially in relationship to traditional formal academic discourse. Writer identity in almost all cases was found to be multiple and, for most students, conflicting across situation and genre.

The implications of this study suggest a need for explicit discussion of the political aspects of written language use in the academy. A case is also made for integrating more hybrid forms of discourse into writing classes as students taking up expressivist discourse, for the most part, constructed more positive writer identities.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	iv
ABSTRACT .....	v
LIST OF TABLES .....	13
CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION AND FOCUS OF THE STUDY .....	1
Introduction .....	1
Background to the Problem .....	3
This Study .....	5
Statement of Purpose .....	6
Approach to the Study .....	9
Rationale and Significance of the Study .....	11
Limitations of the Study .....	13
2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE .....	15
Introduction .....	15
Postmodern/Poststructural Theory .....	15
Postmodernism .....	16
Poststructutalism .....	21
Writer Identity .....	34
Critical Discourse Analysis .....	40
Summary of the Literature Review .....	47
3. METHODOLOGY .....	48
Introduction .....	48
The Context of the Study .....	49
Participants .....	49
The Researcher .....	49
Course Curriculum .....	51
Access and Consent .....	53
Research Design .....	53

Data Collection .....	54
Recorded Conferences .....	56
Data Analysis .....	56
Question One .....	56
Question Two .....	58
Summary .....	65
4. DISCOURSES AND IDENTITIES .....	67
Introduction .....	67
Discourse Definitions .....	68
Identities .....	77
Sanctioned Discourses and Identities .....	82
Summary .....	87
5. FINDINGS FOR QUESTION ONE .....	88
Introduction .....	88
Student Constructed Identity .....	89
Initial Identities .....	90
Expressivist Discourse and Identity .....	90
Traditional Formal Discourse and Identity .....	92
The Exception .....	95
Process Writing Discourse and Identity .....	95
General Positive Statements of Identity .....	97
Summary of Stunted Constructed Identities .....	98
Student Reports of Influences .....	99
Family as Influence .....	99
Teachers as Influence .....	101
Schools in General as Influence .....	102
Language as an Influence .....	103
Summary of Influences .....	104
Identity and Ethnographic Data .....	104
Negative Identity, Enacted Negatively .....	106
Student #1 .....	106
Student #2 .....	107

Student #3 .....	108
Student #4 .....	109
Summary of More Negative .....	110
Identified Negatively, Enacted Positively .....	111
Student #1 .....	111
Student #2 .....	112
Student #3 .....	113
Summary of Negative with Positive .....	113
Mixed Identity, Mixed Behaviors .....	114
Student #1 .....	114
Student #2 .....	115
Student #3 .....	117
Student #4 .....	117
Summary of Mixed .....	118
Mixed Identity, Positive Behaviors .....	118
Student #1 .....	118
Student #2 .....	119
Student #3 .....	121
Student #4 .....	122
Summary of Mixed Identity, Positive Behaviors .....	123
Positive Identity, Mixed Behaviors .....	124
Student #1 .....	124
Student #2 .....	126
Student #3 .....	126
Summary of Positive, Mixed Behaviors .....	127
Identified Positively, Positive Behaviors .....	128
Summary of Ethnographic Data .....	129
Overall Summary for Question One Findings .....	130
6. CASE STUDY FINDINGS .....	133
Introduction .....	133
Tracy's Case Study .....	135
Contributions to Developing Story .....	135

Writer Profile .....	136
Text Selected for Microanalysis .....	138
Summary of Tracy .....	152
Vance's Case Study .....	153
Contributions to the Developing Story .....	153
Writer Profile .....	154
Text Selected for Microanalysis .....	155
Summary .....	166
Len's Case Study .....	168
Contributions to Developing Story .....	168
Writer Profile .....	169
Text Selected for Microanalysis .....	173
Summary .....	191
Mandy's Case Study .....	194
Contributions to Developing Story .....	194
Writer Profile .....	195
Text Selected for Microanalysis .....	196
Summary .....	217
Microanalysis Summary .....	219
7. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS .....	222
Overview of the Study .....	222
Writer Identity and Its Influences .....	223
Implications .....	225
Expressivism and Identity .....	226
Implications .....	228
Process Discourse and Identity .....	229
Implications .....	233
Traditional Forms of Discourse and Identity .....	235
Implications .....	236

Sociopolitical Discourse and Identity .....	240
Conclusions .....	241

APPENDICES

A. CONSENT FORM .....	244
B. MICROANALYSES OF TRACY .....	246
C. MICROANALYSES OF VANCE .....	254
D. MICROANALYSES OF LEN .....	261
E. MICROANALYSES OF MANDY .....	272
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	285

## LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	Page
1. Type or Class Analysis . . . . .	64
2. Microanalysis # 1: Tracy’s “Who Am I” and “Influences” . . . . .	140
3. Microanalysis #2: Tracy’s Conference . . . . .	143
4. Microanalysis #3: Tracy’s Midterm Letter . . . . .	148
5. Microanalysis #4: Tracy’s Final Letter . . . . .	150
6. Microanalysis #1: Vance’s “Who Am I as a Writer?” . . . . .	156
7. Microanalysis #2: Vance’s Best Experience . . . . .	158
8. Microanalysis #3: Vance’s Midterm Letter . . . . .	161
9. Microanalysis #4: Vance’s Final Letter . . . . .	164
10. Microanalysis #1: Len’s “Who Am I as a Writer?” . . . . .	174
11. Microanalysis #2: Len’s Influence Paper . . . . .	178
12. Microanalysis #3: Len’s Worst Experience . . . . .	181
13. Microanalysis #4: Len’s Conference . . . . .	185
14. Microanalysis #5: Len’s Final Letter . . . . .	189
15. Microanalysis #1: Mandy’s “Who Am I as a Writer” . . . . .	198
16. Microanalysis #2: Mandy’s Journal Entries . . . . .	202
17. Microanalysis #3: Mandy’s Conference . . . . .	207
18. Microanalysis #4: Mandy’s Final Letter . . . . .	213

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION AND FOCUS OF THE STUDY

#### Introduction

Educators in schools across the United States are being asked to consider equity issues regarding increasingly heterogeneous student populations. The results have produced tensions between official language use (traditional discourses) and a variety of “minority” discourses or ways of using language (Luke, 1995-1996). A “minority” discourse in the academy may be viewed as one infused with language patterns associated with certain ethnicities, races, classes, regions, etc. that differ from the practices of academia. The term “discourses” is being used here to mean ways of speaking, writing, thinking and valuing (Gee, 1999; Sarup, 1989; Weedon, 1997). A discourse community (e.g., the academic discourse community) can be viewed as a culture with the socio-historically produced norms and conventions of a particular group of people who define themselves, in part, by their discourse practices (Ivanic, 1997). While the term “discourse community” is often used to explain norms and conventions in relation to written language practices, it includes both spoken and written language practices that exist in various communities.

Many students struggling to become more skillful users of the discourses expected in college-level written work become convinced they are simply “bad writers.” They have entered the world of college professors who often valorize academic discourses and marginalize or devalue other discourses. At the college level, the efforts of well-intentioned gatekeepers to critique and “fix” the language differences



they find have resulted in some students becoming fearful of writing and academic writing tasks. In large part, this study emerges from my own experience of watching young writers struggle within the academy to find a voice and gain acceptance of their writing. Sometimes silenced in ways they do not understand but frequently accept, many have come to see their writing practices as inferior or incompetent, receiving the negative responses of others more as a “truth” than a social construction. They live these “truths,” unaware that the social and political negotiations which reinforce this labeling and sustain these hegemonic practices may lead them to conclusions that stifle them as students who are expected/required to write.

The dominant values of those with power frequently go unquestioned, despite the fact that judgment in response to student writing is often highly subjective and even capricious (Elbow, personal communication, 1997). This authority to treat difference as incompetence can both marginalize and silence student voices. This dissertation will explore the issue of writer identity with a particular focus on “problem writers,” i.e. how students identify as writers, by examining the ways juniors and seniors in a required writing class at a large public university discuss and understand their writer-selves and represent themselves in their texts. While identity has been investigated across many disciplines, the writer-identity to be examined in this study is best defined by Davies (1993). She refers to the human psyche as in a continual process of change, positioned one way then another, depending on both history and context, but spoken into existence through multiple and contradictory discourses. In contrast to the popular liberal humanist view, the individual is not perceived from this perspective to be in full control of his or her identity. The rational scientific perception of order and certainty is

questioned as people take up various discourses and, in turn, are believed to be taken up by them.

### Background to the Problem

Over the last three decades, researchers have begun studying in earnest what composition theorists began calling “basic writers.” Harris (1997) found three central metaphors used to typify these diverse student writers who many in the academy have deemed “problem writers.” While “problem writers” have been identified for decades, that population seemed to increase considerably when post World War II college opportunities were presented to ever-wider groups of students. Difference from the norms and expectations of what had been the traditional college student became of increasing concern. Additionally, the acceptance of students with more varied ethnic, racial, and class backgrounds in the Open Admissions movement of the sixties refocused higher education’s attention to writing issues and the need for more courses to address this group’s perceived needs. In the 70s and into the 80s these writers were seen as deficient in “growth” or as immature users of the language. This stunted growth metaphor emphasized the need for students’ improved mental conceptions regarding writing and frequently saw practitioners offering sequential steps to help students become better writers (Harris, 1997).

This view was replaced by the “initiation” metaphor, strongly influenced by Bartholomae (1986). It characterized writers who did not measure up to the academic standard as “uninitiated” into the discourse community of the university. It incorporated the concept that moving into the university involved not just an

intellectual step, but a social and political step as well, which involved accepting new value systems and cultural practices (Rose, 1988). Both of these earlier models regarded writers who did not conform to the university standards as somehow immature as writers or outsiders to the still unquestioned standard of academic discourse. However, the initiation model additionally views writers as social and political outsiders to the discourse.

“Conflict” is the latest metaphor to be embraced by composition theorists (Harris, 1997), and it is the one most closely linked to the theoretical base of this dissertation. Lu (1991) best articulates this stance in her discussion of the political dimensions of language choice. This metaphor conceives of writer identity as related to issues of race, class, and gender as well as the social and political considerations of language. Lu believes that students often feel marginalized, or like outsiders to academic discourse, because of the way their own discourses have been received in the academy. Marginal writer identities can evolve when students are unable to disrupt the practices of the academy that have made them outsiders. Important to this dissertation is the concept that negative writer identities can reflect the conflict, struggle, and tensions of working within the institutional bounds of the university. This can be especially difficult without access to the conversations that can provide building blocks to a more emancipating understanding of one’s situation and the factors influencing writer identity.

## This Study

Researchers have discussed writer identity from the teachers' perspectives (Bizzell, 1986; Jonsberg, 1993; O'Leary, 1993), but this study uniquely asks students to define themselves as writers and identify factors they perceive to be influential on these writer identities. While I am interested in studying the ways students construct their writer identities, the terms they use, the concepts they incorporate, and the factors they believe to be influential, this research centers on an ethnographic study of classroom writing and interactions that tells a story of writer identity which goes beyond students' surface impressions. As part of the course curriculum, the class they attended would include discussion of a variety of factors that affect how people feel about their writing.

In addition to the students' reported influences, I investigate the possible sociocultural influences that may be affecting the writing, language use, and beliefs about writing that these students bring to the classroom. Analysis of student texts is also used in a search for representation of identity. Ivancic (1994, 1997), who has co-researched writer identity with her non-traditional adult students in Great Britain, has inspired many aspects of this study. She believes that a critical awareness of the nature of writer identity by both instructors and students can eventually help transform the academy's practice of "fix this essay" into a more broadly conceived project that helps students understand and gain control of their own writing. In a first step toward this goal, this study ethnographically examines how social, cultural, and political factors can work to shape writer identity. Given a field still largely shaped by cognitive, developmental, and psychological models, I believe this study adds to the present

literature, which embraces the “conflict” metaphor, identifying factors that may contribute to writer identity.

### Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this research is to investigate issues of the writing classroom associated with writer identity, especially as they relate to social and cultural influences and in light of the complex nature of power and privilege in society. The study takes place in a required writing course designed for education majors in their junior year at a large public university. I was the instructor of the course and served, additionally, as participant-observer.

The major areas of study were twofold. The first question was designed to gain an understanding of the ways students identified and presented themselves as writers and to study their discussion of the influences they initially perceived to be instrumental in the shaping of their identities. The specific question that frames that concept is as follows:

Question 1: In what ways do students identify as writers in a writing classroom, what do they report as influences on these identities, and what displays of behavior in the classroom contribute to an understanding of the writer identities they report?

A question regarding writer identity and influences was asked at the beginning of the semester, before any discussion of language and beliefs about writers and writing had been introduced. The format in which they answered allowed students to wander around in their thinking, many of them contemplating and writing about how they see themselves as writers for the first time. The assignment students were given actually

consisted of three prompts: Who are you as a writer? Which influences have affected this definition of self? Describe an incident (positive or negative) where someone has responded to your writing. Students were asked to respond informally, but as fully as possible, filling a typed page for each prompt with their "stories." In addition to the information students offered in response to the questions, I was able to see the different ways students used language in this informal task. These papers reflect some of the beliefs and assumptions about writing those students have. Issues of race, class, ethnicity and disability, if a significant factor in their conversations, are noted though these are often assumed by students to be less influential than many educators believe them to be.

I had wondered if influences to which students attribute their identities would be more closely tied to those often mentioned in educational circles, such as talent, personality, training, or lack of it. For many of the students I have taught in public institutions, the effects of class, access to education, home experiences, and differences from the dominant culture have had demonstrable effects on how their writing has been accepted and viewed. I wondered to what degree students would think to mention or even recognize these sociocultural factors as possible influences on their writing lives and writer identities. Also, I wondered how the academic community influenced their responses.

During the semester, how students wrote, discussed writing, and acted on their beliefs in the classroom were observed. How did beliefs regarding academic writing seem to have influenced them? Because this was a course for education majors, not only writing but also issues concerning the teaching of it came into the discussion. Both

students' words and behaviors around writing and writing issues constituted the data for answering question one.

The second question of the study, while linked to the first, expanded examination of the role of discourses used by these students. It sought information regarding the following:

Question two: What identities do students take up and what discourses do students seem to draw on / resist / or omit when writing about or discussing writing and/or identity, especially those students who construct more negative identities?

The focus of this question is the search for traces of discourses in students' self descriptions, writing and conferences that show evidence of, conflict with, resistance to, or acceptance of the language, beliefs, or values typically embedded in writing programs at the college level. Because it is the discourse used to interpret their experience rather than the experience itself that poststructuralists say is at the center of identity, how those around them have discussed, responded to, and reacted to their writing, together with their own personal histories and cultures, become important to student construction of identity. What discourses have been available for students to draw on or resist? How have students understood or interpreted their own writing experiences? Do they de-value not only what they say but also who they are as writers when there is a lack of conformity to the expectations of the educational community? Did their classroom talk and writing reflect any questioning of the hegemonic influences that permeate the thinking about writers and writing in this country? Had the evaluative discourse that dominates writer response in some academic circles adversely affected their writer identity?

It is a premise of this study that all people are limited by access to discourses and affected by the dominant ideologies (i.e. prevalent beliefs) embedded in the discourses that surround them. For, example, if a professor assumes a formal academic discourse is the only acceptable one to use for a class paper, s/he may lower the score of papers that show evidence of local dialect. The “rich use of language,” “subtle organization,” “controlled length and complexity of the writing” needed to score at the highest level on the Commonwealth of Massachusetts comprehensive assessment exam may be required by some professors to receive a good grade on academic papers. The state’s discourse makes an assumption about writing and writers that is ideologically based and may go unquestioned. The social, cultural, and political history of individuals and institutions, after all, shapes people’s ideologies or beliefs. The language of scoring on state tests and university entrance exams inevitably offers subject positions that create winners and losers and can affect the way students are not only perceived by others, but also how they perceive themselves.

#### Approach to the Study

The methodology used to conduct this research includes an ethnographic examination of the events in the classroom related to writer identity issues and critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1995), a tool used to study the discourses students use, resist, or omit primarily in their writing. Examination and coding of student writing as well as discourse analysis is employed to more closely study a selected group of writers who have constructed more negative identities. The discourse analysis provides the means to examine student language more closely in order to better understand what



students accept, oppose, and possibly miss in the discussion of writers and writing. Using these methods, I describe and gain further understanding of how students construct writer identity and which discourses are implicated in the process. By examining the information related to the student responses regarding identity and the discourses they seem to draw on and resist, the link between these writers, their writer identities, and the social, cultural and political world which has shaped them becomes more evident.

As both teacher and participant observer in this class, I directed the assignments, organized the activities, led the discussion, and set the criteria for evaluation. Students were required to submit an e-mail assignment regarding their literacy history that invited them to reflect on early reading and writing experiences. Students' portfolios included formal papers such as a position paper done in APA format, an educational issues paper, a resume, revisions, and a few papers on more general topics using genres of their choice. Informal writing included e-mail, a reading journal with reflections regarding assigned reading and classroom activities, quick-writes done at the beginning of class, reflections on portfolio pieces, and self-evaluations. In all, their portfolios constitute a fairly substantial packet of writing and became a part of my data.

Additionally, informal conferences that occurred before and after classes and unassigned e-mail which offered or added pertinent information was noted. A conference with each student was audio taped when that student met with me to discuss his/her portfolio and concerns about writing. Relevant stories or narratives regarding writing and writers that students included in their written work and in discussion were

noted. I searched for assumptions, rules, conclusions, and ideologies embedded in their stories.

### Rationale and Significance of the Study

The approach to this research is unusual in that I asked students, themselves, to both define how they see themselves as writers and discuss the influences they feel have contributed to their definitions. This informs theory in that it serves as a starting point that later moves to examination of what other influences might be at work, using a social, cultural, and political lens rather than a cognitive or psychological view. Because the course to be studied was designed primarily for educators, it was a rather singular place to discuss how student writers feel about writing and how writing may be viewed or responded to in classrooms. These students were in the position of contemplating writing issues from both the students' and the educators' points of view, as, for the most part, they would become educators.

While there may be numerous people who go through life happy with the way they feel about themselves as writers and the presentation of their writing self to the world's variety of audiences, the experiences that inform my thinking indicate they may not be in the majority. My teaching experiences include work with secondary, university, and adult learners, and I have found even folks assumed by others to be bursting with writer confidence often are not. This study, however, will not contribute to the self-esteem movement, an educational paradigm made familiar to teachers in the last decade. Its focus is not the psychology of the individual but the social, cultural, and political workings of discourse that can affect students in an academic community. By

examining writer identity in a small group of students, I hoped to find if and how their personal constructions were political and how their identities may have been engendered by social conditions. Poststructuralists such as Cherryholmes (1988) speculate that knowledge and power create and recreate each other in curriculum discourse. In this way, some students are rewarded and indulged and others sanctioned and deprived by their choice of discourses in educational institutions.

Also, this study used a poststructuralist lens as its theoretical frame, not unique in the literature, but perhaps less often discussed in empirical studies than structuralist and sociocultural views or the more educationally popular psychological stance. Poststructuralism's emphasis on discourse is of prime importance. Ivanic's (1994, 1997) work with adult learners and writer identity provided much of the vision for this work as she has called for research to further examine aspects of identity, suggesting a discourse-based look at these issues with populations other than the adult learners of her study. She suggests looking at what subject positions writers construct for themselves discursively, which they own and disown, and why and how they feel positioned by discourse.

It is my hope that some of the issues I will investigate in this study will add to the present understanding of writer identity. Research can help end oppressive practices or, as hooks (1994) says, serve to transform and liberate. It is my sincere hope that researching writer identity and its influences can be of help to instructors who teach young writers who feel "stuck" in their writing for reasons they may not understand. I also hope this research will be useful to writers who have blamed

themselves and given up on their writing, perhaps allowing them new insights into both their struggles and academic writing tasks.

### Limitations of the Study

In a study of this type, there are a number of limitations. First, being in the role of teacher, I bring a perceived authority and power to my role of researcher in addition to the actual power that every instructor with the power to grade holds. Despite reassurances about grades and participation, there is the real possibility that students may have engaged in certain activities simply to please a person in a position of power. Being the teacher, however, allows closeness to students and an access to conversations that may not occur when one is in the role of researcher, alone. I took a number of measures to reassure students that their participation was in every way an option, and, while I am not sure how my dual role influenced the study, the fact that it was a dual role should be noted.

Secondly, this research group is a relatively small one and conclusions I find, while possibly indicative of other students and classrooms, is limited to this group. Studying a small group, on the other hand, allowed me to know each student more intimately, establish a closer relationship, and focus my attention in more concentrated fashion on the students I did have. Also, what affects the students in one classroom may well be affecting students in other classrooms.

A third consideration is the fact that I did not investigate the out-of-school discourses of this population. The research is limited to a study of this classroom and what was said, done, and written in it. I am interested in writer identity however,

especially as it affects students in the classroom, so this limitation may not be of particular consequence.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### Introduction

The major aspects of the literature reviewed for this dissertation have to do with poststructuralism, relevant empirical studies utilizing discourse analysis, and research exploring writer identity. The theoretical aspects of poststructuralism influence the ideas in the study as well as the approach. With its emphasis on discourse, poststructural thought frames the major issues of this research. Because discourse analysis will be used methodologically to review and analyze data and because writer identity is at the heart of the study, research in these areas will also be reviewed.

#### Postmodern/Poststructural Theory

My theoretical stance is grounded primarily in poststructural and postmodern theory. The very nature of these theories rejects or denies tight definitional standards in constructing a vision of the world. While some theorists, e.g., McLaren and Lankshear (1993), have used the terms postmodern and poststructural synonymously, I will be using poststructural analysis as a subset of the more general postmodern concepts regarding identity. The wider postmodern perspective regarding identity leads logically to the selected poststructural views, which are focused on discourse, a major consideration in this study. I have divided the theoretical constructs into categories for purposes of discussion, but it should be noted that there is considerable overlap among them. Also, the theorists about whom I write may identify themselves in terms other

than poststructural and postmodern. For example, Shor and Ivanic are generally considered critical theorists, but both of their works harbor strong elements of the postmodern/poststructural perspective. While theories are often compartmentalized to clarify discussion or emphasize points, the ebb and flow of ideas and concepts is quite usual and, for postmodernists, accepted almost as part of the theory itself.

### Postmodernism

The term postmodernism is often believed to have originated in the architectural field. It was soon usurped by numerous other areas, including philosophy, social theory, cultural criticism, and the arts. Foundationally, postmodernism suggests that theories themselves are not true or false, perfect, or imperfect, good or bad. Neither are they universal or objective. Theories, themselves, are part of social, cultural and historic moments. Additionally, a key aspect of postmodernism is the critique of any singular, central notion of power. While espousing the idea that knowledge is social and cultural in nature, an essential part of the perspective for some postmodern thinkers is its call to understand and transform social relationships that are oppressive (Brodkey, 1992; Ellsworth, 1989; Gee, 1990; Lu, 1987; Weedon, 1997). These ideas are at the core of my choice of a postmodern perspective.

More specifically, the following concepts from postmodernism, as articulated by Berlin (1992) and Weedon (1997), are central to my thinking.

1. Identity is a sociocultural construction which challenges the perception of the individual as one who is unified, coherent, and autonomous, replacing that construct

with a multiple and conflicting self who is the product of social and material conditions (Berlin, 1992).

Unlike liberal humanism, which permeates the dominant discourse of Western society, it does not assume the unitary nature of the individual (Sarup, 1989). Foucault (1984), often cited by postmodern and poststructural thinkers, critiqued not only the modern forms of knowledge, rationality, and social institutions, but subjectivity or identity when it is presented as given and natural, seeing it as contingent on the social, cultural, and historical. Postmodernists call into question the human “subject” or “self” of humanism with its emphasis on the individual and its acceptance of a coherent, unified identity with initiative, singular will, and purposefulness and argue for a view of subjects with more fluid identities. Humanist thought celebrates the concept of human freedom and self-determination and is still much a part of the dominant ideology of American educators. This concept is contested by poststructuralist thinkers who argue that this supposed freedom of thought and action is actually limited by linguistic and socioeconomic factors, including, of course, components such as race, class, ethnicity, and gender. In the writing classes where I have worked, the effects of social class, access to education, home experiences, and differences from dominant culture, whether related to ethnicity, dis/ability, dialect, or race, are not invisible, unimportant factors. Students may not mention them often or easily, but these aspects of social identity do seem to be influential factors in what is written, how it is written, and how that writing is responded to in the classroom.

2. Postmodernism rejects any all-encompassing theory used to decide “good” and “truth.” It is critical of what Lyotard (in Weedon 1997) has called the



“metanarrative,” which is any narrative claiming to explain all features of an individual’s experiences objectively or universally.

This concept sees all knowledge as historical and subject to change. It notes that all such narratives are inherently partial and interested, intended to endorse particular relations of power and to privilege certain groups in their struggles. Lakoff (1997) relates this postmodern idea to identity when he writes that there is not a single, monolithic, self-consistent, correct cultural narrative of what a person is. Instead, he says, there exist many overlapping and partially inconsistent conventional conceptions of self in our culture. Postmodernists challenge the universality and static nature of all knowledge, including our identities, seeing it as more provisional and finding its differentiation to be based more on the social location of the person or group in power. It is important to note here that postmodernism does not call for abandonment of theory, but argues for understanding the partial nature of narratives which it sees as always historically specific and partial.

The dominant ideas or metanarratives regarding writing may affect students in negative ways. Structuralist thinking (Cherryholmes, 1988; Levin, 1996), which dominated writing theory in the eighties, contributed to the idea and continues to sustain the belief that teaching writers the “necessary skills” would allow them to “join the university” and be recognized as writers. During this time, the theory of an initiation model that trained, socialized, or initiated writers into the discourse community of the university was popular (Bartholomae, 1986; Bizzell, 1986; Fox, 1990; Rose, 1985). While these theorists had moved from the remedial model that was popular with the cognitive theorists before them, this structuralist outlook continued to accept, often

without question, the idea of a global discourse of academia. Rose (1985) wrote of academic discourse as a world of “rich cognitive and rhetorical complexity” (p. 346), Bizzel (1986) as “prestigious” and “socially powerful” (p. 299) and Bartholomae (1986) as a “privileged discourse” (p. 9).

By the nineties, these same theorists would take a more postmodern view, problematizing the unquestioned acceptance of academic discourse as the single “truth” about good writing and questioning the idea of a discourse which was stable, unchanging, and superior in its aspect. The structuralist view, however, remains popular in academic institutions and testing agencies today, continuing to valorize academic discourse and its ability to be a transformative factor for the uninitiated.

This perspective also questions a pedagogy that moves students to construct a more purposeful vision of self by accepting a dominant discourse without also understanding that the discourse is partial, ideologically based, and self-validating. In a similar vein, twenty-five years ago Geertz (1973) was able to analyze events like the cockfights in Bali without discussing the social significance of their gendered qualities, i.e. who participated and who did not. Because both the feminist and the postmodern movements have introduced new ways of examining what was once unquestioned, this analysis would be done differently today. Holland (1997) reiterates this point stating,

Clearly a person’s social position – defined by gender, race, class, and any other social division that is structurally significant – potentially affects one’s perspective on cultural institutions and the ardor of one’s subscription to the values and interpretations that are promoted in rituals and other socially produced cultural forms (p. 168).

Today it is important to ask whose account of the world is being privileged. Accounts of what is true and not true about writing that ignore the importance of social position

are part of the mechanism that silences those who have less access to privilege and power.

Students often work with instructors who are convinced that there exists a structure called “good writing” which is subject to a set of rules and skills. Writers who do not utilize these skills as prescribed may be considered deficient, basic, remedial, or any number of terms used to identify those who do not live up to the cultural narrative or depiction of “good writer.” The metanarratives of writing classrooms most often relate to the principles of academic writing traditions, which reflect a culturally accepted standard of “correctness.” Students’ “imperfect use” of this standard in academic papers may set them up for criticism as in most classrooms a form of this discourse is expected. Its use is presented as objective, rational, ideologically neutral and ahistoric. Its hegemonic influence on instructors and students alike is strong. Its ideals are generally considered by adherents to be stable, common sense, and fundamental truths. The appeal to what is natural or common sense is powerful in educational institutions. Unfortunately, it is also a way of denying history, ignoring power relationships, and accepting privileged beliefs without question. In actuality, language is socially produced and historically mediated. Weedon (1997) writes the following:

Commonsense is imbued with social meanings and ways of understanding the world which favor or uphold the interests of particular social groups. All common sense relies on a naïve view of language as transparent and true, undistorted by things such as “Ideology,” a term which is reserved for explanations representing opposed sectional interests, . . . power comes from its claim to be natural, obvious and therefore true (p. 74).

In its rejection of the universality of grand narrative, postmodernism rejects all encompassing rules that propose to explain “truth.” Interestingly enough, theory, itself,

has a tendency to explain through master narratives. In an attempt at explanation, theory sometimes presents itself as the answer and can seem to be insisting on a vision of what is best, claiming that as “truth.” The “students can no longer write” scare has been fed, in part, by these “truths.” Knowing when to challenge narratives whose depictions marginalize and belittle means not only being aware of their existence, but also uncovering their history of power and how they came to be privileged.

### Poststructuralism

In addition to these postmodern concepts, there are three poststructuralist concepts concerned with an analysis of social organization and meanings, power, and the individual consciousness that frame my theoretical stance. According to poststructural theory, language is where identity, social organization, and the social and political consequences of our participation are found, accepted, and resisted. Poststructuralism’s concern with how discourse is related to identity informs my stance in the following three key ways.

1. The discourses we take up construct our sense of self, other and reality. According to poststructuralist theory (Britzman, 1990), the discourse of experience rather than the experience itself is at the center of identity. As students respond to the question, “Who are you as a writer?” it is not just their past experiences that are at work in their constructions. Their ability to retell or invent that identity is affected not by an intuitive sense of who they are, but by their access to the discourses that they use to create the experience. This, in turn, is limited by their histories, beliefs, and socially constructed conceptions of “truth,” knowledge, and power.

Poststructuralists note that people have multiple and various forms of identity that are historically grounded and derived through the discourses by which they speak and write the world into existence. This differs from the more dominant and influential structuralist philosophy which offers more order, certainty, organization, objectivity, “truth,” and control than poststructuralism (Cherryholmes, 1988).

Discourses, according to Foucault (in Weedon, 1997), are ways of creating knowledge. They are ways of thinking and ways of producing meaning. They involve both the unconscious and the conscious mind and emotions. They involve power relations, which are frequently institutionally based. Gee (1999) describes discourse as similar to an identity kit, which comes complete with the appropriate costume and instructions on how to act and talk so as to take on a particular role that others will recognize. He uses the term “discourse with a little “d” just to name language in use or stretches of language. He writes that big “D” Discourses always involve integrating language with other “stuff”(such as ways of thinking, believing, valuing, acting, interacting, using various tools and technologies, etc.) so as to “pull off” a given socially-situated identity. Gee theorizes that social languages only exist within what he terms “Discourses” with a capital “D.” As teachers, he says, we are not teachers of literacy or language, but of social languages within Discourses. He emphasizes there are as many different literacies as there are Discourses which use reading and/or writing in characteristic ways and assumes we acquire a “primary Discourse” as part of our initial socialization within whatever has constituted family in a specific culture. The variety of discourses we acquire in life he refers to as “secondary Discourses,” and these are frequently acquired within institutions that are part of wider communities than

our initial socializing group and could include, for example, school, church and community organizations.

Remembering Gee's concept of a primary discourse and various secondary discourses, it follows that people belong to a primary discourse and many secondary discourses that represent the multiple social roles and identities they experience. The academic discourse students are asked to use in college writing classes represents a secondary discourse. Discourses with tremendous power in American society usually have strong institutional backing, for example, the legal, religious, and educational discourses. The academic discourses of our educational institutions are powerful, indeed.

Within most discourses a variety of subject positions can be found with some identities or subjectivities being preferable. Good or competent writer is a subject position familiar in most writing classes. Students may be positioned as intellectually or even personally weak, inferior, or lazy if their writing falls short of either the responders' concept of good writing or that of the students, themselves. For example, when describing what he thought of as basic or remedial writers, Whitted (1967, p. 40) referred to them as "pathetic children." In the halls of academe today, I have heard student writers described as careless, undisciplined, immature, incapable, stupid, affirmative-actioned, and disabled if their writing was perceived to have fallen short of the instructors' or institutions' standards.

"Latecomers" is a term also coined by Gee (1999) to refer to both children and adults who come to the acquisition of a discourse without the early preparation or sociocultural resources of more advantaged learners. He notes how difficult it is for

some people to master dominant discourses fully enough to evade the workings of powerful gatekeepers when they are latecomers. Gee theorizes that somehow latecomers must gain meta-knowledge about how dominant discourses work in relationship to other discourses in society. As students struggle to master dominant discourses, it is his view that they should also maintain their mastery and respect for their primary discourses or non-dominant secondary discourses. A powerful point Gee emphasizes to educators is the need to teach the dominant discourses in forms that don't simply leave students feeling colonized or marginal to the dominant discourse.

It is possible that students who have overwhelmingly negative identities can be encouraged to rethink those negative constructions and how they were acquired in order to reposition themselves differently. Access to the discourses that will allow them to do so can be crucial. As Weedon asserts, "Language differentiates and gives meaning to assertive and compliant behavior and teaches us what is socially accepted as normal" (p.73). Many students who passively accept writing comments from authority figures without question or explanation internalize those comments as a reflection of who they are rather than what they did on a given assignment. Poststructuralists see language as the site of both social and political struggle (Shor, 1992), but many students lack the awareness that it is possible to contest the voices of authority, instead accepting as "truth" responses to their writing and, thus, to their perceptions of who they are in the academy. While poststructuralists would say that identity is neither unified nor fixed, the fluidity of one's identity can be affected and limited by access to the discourses that allow them to conceive of their positions differently.

This leads to the second aspect of poststructuralism that frames this study's perspective.

2. Identity is historically grounded and not only derived from but also limited by the discourses to which people have access.

How does this idea which suggests that subjects are constituted within a historical framework and self is defined by social forces expressed in discourses (hooks, 1989; Weedon, 1997) inform identity in the writing classroom? Jonsberg (1993) explains how her expressivist writing classroom is joined to poststructuralist theory as a way of examining self in relation to social discourse. She has her students struggle with the hidden complexity of oppressive practices by questioning their understanding of writer identity as self-created, independent, unconnected, and separate from their history, social interactions, and culture. Using examples of student narratives, Jonsberg demonstrates that writing can be a way of rehearsing new subject positions. She has found that through their writing students can discover, challenge, and resist practices that are oppressive. Brodkey (1992) also writes of introducing the usefulness of poststructural analysis to demystify the power of discourse and, like Jonsberg, examines the usefulness of the discourses people have taken up as their own, and the discourses they have been taken up by.

Ivanic (1994) introduces this concept in another way. She sees the impression that writers hope to convey to readers as conscious and unconscious manipulation done according to writers' commitments and what they find to be in their best interests. Writers in academic situations, especially when writing is being used for assessment purposes, may feel conflicted, knowing that the identity they are constructing in some



papers is more comfortable than the identity they construct in others. Ivanic finds that how writers view themselves, their feeling of being authoritative, and the exerting of presence in texts is often related to the sense of power and status they bring with them to the writing tasks at hand. Writers' opportunities, experiences, and encounters are shaped, enabled and constrained by the social, economic, and cultural factors that reflect different access to discourses and identification with particular social groups. Some of my students have used these social interactions in discussion of their writer-selves, i.e., "My freshman comp teacher told me..." or "My mother said..." or "Friends love my poetry." What they usually do not discuss are the elements of access, ethnicity, race, dis/ability, and class that are implicated in these interactions, in part because these topics of discussion are not likely to be part of writing- class discourse in American educational institutions. They run counter to the "bootstraps," "little engine that could" metanarratives that permeate much of the thinking in American education.

Lakoff (1997, p. 92) writes,

Who we really are is always defined by history and culture. Since concepts change radically across time and culture, there are not essences and, hence, not essences that define the self, no single consistent overarching narrative that accurately describes who we are. Instead, we are a patchwork defined by fragments of cultural narratives.

Following the same line of thinking, Jopling (1997, p. 26) discusses poststructuralist

Rorty's work saying Rorty

... argues that the self is a kind of text that is language dependent, fluid, situation specific, self-weaving, and self-reweaving. Whatever beliefs people have about themselves are only the residue of current language games or 'personal vocabularies'; they are not glimpses into a non-linguistic or non-conceptualized reality. A person is a self-transforming being who changes with changes in his or her narrative and discursive practices.

While change may not come easily, poststructuralism offers not just its possibility, but its inevitability given a variety of formative factors.

Some aspects of identity are not articulated in an explicit fashion in certain social milieus or even understood because students' and teachers' access to those conversations will not have occurred. However, gaining access to other points of view and a variety of social interactions can affect identity construction, which, as stated earlier, is in constant social negotiation. For example, students may unproblematically present their "personality" in a unidimensional fashion. They conceptualize this idea of a fixed personality apart from and independent of social context, with little or no discussion of how the personal intersects with the social. This familiar model in our culture perpetuates stories like "I am never happy with my writing because I am a perfectionist" or "I'm just not a born writer like my brother." These stories have been told and accepted by students in my classroom.

Coming to understand one's identities is complex as people are bound by their own history and discourse access. For students struggling with aspects of negative writer identities, the difficult task of hearing more clearly the voices of the past and negotiating a new aspect of identity can mean gaining a clearer conception of the powerful echoes of their history. Clearly, some aspects of writer identity are articulated and experienced in explicit fashion in classrooms and are thus more quickly grasped and adopted by students. Commonly, one may hear, "I get 'A's' in writing, so I guess I am a good writer." Other conversations occur less frequently in certain social realms and individuals without access are shut out. For example, use of dialect may directly affect how others perceive a student and how that student perceives him/herself. While

instructors may explicitly appear to be commenting on “grammar problems,” they may actually be commenting on difference. For example, my father’s first language was French. When he attended a predominantly Anglo high school in the 1940’s, both students and teachers mimicked his French accent and “backward” English dialect and that behavior was accepted as normal. He, after all, “could not speak or write English correctly.” What they were really commenting on was difference. He internalized the comments to mean he was “not smart enough” or “up to standards,” a painful and humiliating experience. Today, in much the same way, native English speakers are often praised when they attempt to speak a second language, no matter how raw their attempts. However, students whose first language is Spanish, for example, may be judged deficient or lacking because they “can’t speak English” the same way as native speakers or those raised in the dominant discourse of the area.

Poststructuralists often look to the works of Foucault (1972, 1980) as they grapple with the relationship of language, subjectivity, and power. Foucault’s theory insists on the importance of the historical. In his work on the meanings of madness and sexuality, he found there were no universal meanings that could be derived from history as meaning always takes from the forms defined by historically specific discourses. He saw discourses as ways of constituting knowledge, which, together with social practices, form subjectivities and power relations. Because most powerful discourses in our society have come from institutional bases (Weedon, 1997), who is called a writer and who has the right to identify as a writer is strongly influenced by the discourse of schools. This, in turn, is derived from the dominant academic values regarding language and the teaching of language in schools.

Because subjectivity occurs when individuals identify with or consent to certain subject positions within a discourse, many students who identify as poor or incompetent writers have come to comply with someone's construction of their identity. This idea plays into Foucault's notion of power, which he sees as structuring relations between different subjects within and across discourses. Although poststructuralists view identity as socially constructed in discourse, it is possible to resist these subject positions and power relationships. In the process of resisting, however, it is helpful to keep in mind the ideological base of all discourse, a discussion of which follows.

A third perspective from poststructuralism emphasizes ideology and helps frame the theoretical perspective of this study.

3. All discourses are inherently ideological (Gee, 1990, p.144) and embody concepts, viewpoints and values at the expense of other concepts, viewpoints, and values, at times marginalizing other discourses.

This embracing of one discourse at the expense of the other often marginalizes the discourses that are not dominant in the culture. One's ideology or belief system influences how one thinks and acts toward others. Poststructuralists encourage the teaching that knowledge and beliefs are value dependent, culture dependent, and changeable. They stress the idea that "reality" is a construction, so identity (including writer identity) is constructed within the constraints of the culture and shaped as well as limited by a person's access to certain discourses. Critical composition theorist Shor (1992) reiterates this concept when he notes that in some way all language is political.

Norton (1996) in her work with second language learners and identity suggests a need to understand the complex social identity of language learners in reference to the

often-inequitable social structures in which they interact. While her study focuses on the second language learners, her implications regarding student interactions in often inequitable social structures apply to others who may be “different” from the dominant culture in various ways. Through spoken and written language events, students construct a sense of who they are as writers. At different times, in different places, they negotiate a sense of self, often without recognition of what access has been denied or given in their social spheres. Many may also assume that academic and social interactions are a neutral site of communication, missing the poststructural concept that all discourse is ideological and therefore burdened with political and social meaning, much of which remains unexamined.

Education, which in American culture includes learning to read and write, occurs in social situations. Bloome (1991) says that from an ethnographic perspective, reading and writing can, in fact, be seen as a social and cultural process rather than a cognitive or literary process. Depending upon people’s exposure to social, economic, and political factors, they will experience language in some ways and not others. Individuals will also experience response to writing contingent upon those very same factors. If one’s home dialect, social class, ethnic or educational background differ significantly from those who will “judge” that writing, one can easily be labeled “deficient.” Speakers of dialects or non-dominant forms of English run the risk of being labeled inferior (Labov, 1982) as do those with language disabilities or differences. Given a writer’s social, economic, and political situation, one may come to use and experience language in some ways but not in others, with less than just results (Hymes, 1980). Because literacy skills are so frequently “judged” in educational

institutions, an individual's lack of academic literacy or skill with certain rhetorical traditions may result in a negative writer identity within the institution. Given the temper of the time, e.g. the continuing governmental saga of "Why can't Johnny write?" simple answers to complex situations come to allow well-meaning people to marginalize students whose discourses and discursive practices may seem less efficient or simply different from the institutional norm. Instructors most often function as agents within the academy, legitimizing the dominant ideology regarding discourse and "truth." Foucault (1980) reminds us that "truth" is not eternal, but historically and culturally contingent. He writes as follows:

Each society has its own regime of truth... that is, the type of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true (p. 131).

Brodkey (1992) writes that poststructuralism suits her not because she is fascinated by the possibilities of socially constructed political reality, but "by the possibility of teachers and students reconstructing themselves in relation to political realities via discursive practices that resist those representations that work against them" (p. 110). Negative writer identities, students' own as well as those labels cast by people whose authority students accept, have power. It is in understanding the nature of that power, as well as how they have come to accept it, that students can learn. By concentrating on how they have taken up their identities, they accept and engage in the work of critical self-understanding. They may also better grasp the dialogic, ever-evolving construct of identity and its relationship to ideology.

Because we are bound by our histories and access to discourse, coming to understand our identity in general and writer identity in particular can be complex. Without reflection on our self-definitions or access to a wider range of possibilities, it can be difficult or even impossible to contest constructions we have taken up that no longer serve us. For students struggling with aspects of negative writer identities (“fearful of writing,” “can’t write”) hearing more clearly the voices of their history and negotiating the ideological boundaries that have both enclosed and shut them out becomes critical. Through language we have learned what is socially acceptable and what determines “good and bad,” “strong and weak.” It may take other discourses to help us examine our subject positions within the academy and how they have been enacted through the established beliefs of our culture. It is important to examine the truth claims regarding the nature of writers and writing within the academy and realize teachers as well as students are enmeshed in ideologies.

Clifford (1987) notes that one difficulty with the traditional training of writers has been the avoidance of any discussion of social and political purposes. By examining writer identity explicitly, writers may discover that what they assumed to be personal constructions are really political and how their subjectivity has been engendered by social conditions (Britzman, 1990) they never realized. Post-structuralists concern themselves with the components of experience, the historicity of knowledge, hegemony, resistance, and the politics of discourse. By asking why certain texts are valued and others not, we move to examine the ideologies that may lay hidden in discourse.

Cherryholmes (1988) explored how knowledge and power create and recreate each other in curriculum discourse when he asked who individually or what group was rewarded and indulged and, conversely, who was sanctioned and deprived by the discourse of certain curriculum. Too few students have access to Cherryholmes' conversation.

Whenever we fix meaning, it is not a neutral act, but ideologically based, as language does not reflect meaning, it constructs it. Cook-Gumperz (1993) examined the language of a writing student's encounter with her tutor using a poststructuralist approach. In this study she explored the difficulties the student faced when daily language practices clashed with the ideology of school language. Her research helped point out and contest the underlying ideologies and assumptions regarding writing instruction. Ivanic (1994), too, has put out a call for raising learners' awareness of the nature of writer identity, itself, as a way of giving writers maximum control over their writing and writer identity. She advocates a number of different setups in the writing classroom which include teaching writers the idea that writing is an extremely complex social act, and that it does not mean something is wrong with them personally when they get "stuck" in the process. She advocates helping students develop awareness of their own histories and the social constraints, which may have made acquiring certain discourses more difficult for them. She also thinks that allowing students to see how discourse types position people will help them make better social and political decisions around discourse choices.

In summary, poststructuralists emphasize the linguistic construction of the writing self through the concept of contesting discourses. They problematize both the



humanist and the structuralist view of a rational, autonomous writing self by helping envision how writers operate within social, historical, and ideological discourses. While academic discourses have been historically valorized, and continue to be so, awareness that self is situated within a web of contesting discursive practices destabilizes the notion of transcendent truths and allows students to think about the identities they assumed in more varied ways. Students who are stuck in the shadow of negative writer identities and who have come to fear and despise writing tasks may find there are alternatives to their present ways of thinking about and discussing writing as well as alternatives to how they construct themselves as writers. In addition, these views inform my study of writer identity by identifying social and cultural influences that are often missed or dismissed in the popular cognitive and psychological models of research.

### Writer Identity

Writer identity has been discussed in the literature from a variety of perspectives. While there is undoubtedly overlap in these theoretical approaches, it is helpful to understand the unique aspects of the studies, which may be viewed as embracing three broad categories. The social psychological view, which has long been popular with educators and researchers, takes into account both social and psychological aspects of a writers' identity and borrows heavily from the field of psychology. The social-cognitive view considers the social background of writers but relies heavily on the premise that writing involves having and/or acquiring certain cognitive skills without which one's ability to be a "good writer" in the academy will be

negatively affected. The third stance emphasizes the social and cultural aspects of writer identity and is more applicable to this paper.

Welch (1996), Shiffrin (1996), and Shethar (1993) examined writer identity, framing their studies using a social psychological perspective. Welch tells the story of three students in her semester long, first year college writing class. She examines student writing and revision in order to facilitate recognition of what students are identifying with and whom they are imitating in their writing. This study relies heavily on a psychological analysis to determine influences on the identities these students have come to construct through their writing.

Shiffrin (1996) analyzed the language from the stories of a small group of Jewish women in order to reveal aspects of the storytellers' identities. In her study of their narratives, she examined how these women constructed positions in their families and displayed their social identities as mothers. Her analysis of writers' identities, however, never focuses on how participants feel about themselves as writers or even who they are as writers, but, instead, on how their writing can be used to understand who they are within their family structures.

Shethar, in her study of a Chicano inmate over a one-year period, also delves into psychological aspects of writer identity. Her research examined negotiation of both her identity as tutor and the inmate's writer identity in so far as his writing and her responses became a place for working out social differences and meaning. Interesting for its approach to ways writing can be a factor in negotiating and reorganizing identities, it focuses more on the writing as a tool for moving a passive learner to a position of active knowledge-making regarding his own identity. While all three of

these studies relate to some of the social aspects of writing, each also reflects a psychological orientation and does not center on the ideological, historical, or sociocultural constraints of discourse.

Bartholomae's (1985) seminal article, "Inventing the University," while not an empirical study, must be mentioned here for its powerful influence in shaping composition theory. It focuses on the concept of initiating students into the powerful discourse of the university and moves the focus from cognitive skill building in writing programs to an emphasis on the social factors involved in student writing and student writer identity. This is not to say that he abandons consideration of cognitive strategies, as his article takes an uncritical view of the norms and conventions required in academic writing. As significant as this one article is to composition researchers and theorists, Bartholomae accepts without question the monolithic concepts associated with writing in the academy and assumes that "initiating" students into the discourse is the solution.

Jones (1999) advances the theoretical position that aspects of academic discourse naturally involve conflict. He proposes directly teaching the idea that this discourse uses elitist jargon and suggests that students investigate the discursive practices of their college majors to gain greater understanding of how the discourse works. Like early Bartholomae, however, after instructing and engaging students in the conflict they felt regarding their perceived submissiveness to academic discourse, he then moves to teaching them to utilize and participate in it. The main movement, perhaps, from Eighties initiation thinking is his recognition and understanding of

student conflict about its acceptance. Jones, however, still moves, almost unquestioningly, to advocating its use.

Rose (1988) uses this approach in his discussion of writer identity. His reflection details his own role as a committed teacher of disenfranchised veterans who desperately need explicit and focused instruction in order to gain a measure of success in what was, for many of them, an alien academic setting. He examines this social view of writing, still conceding to a need for the application of cognitive strategies to become a good writer. He emphasizes, however, that integrating a social view of writers and writing allows for a more comprehensive picture of the factors that work in writer identity. This view of writer identity discussed by these two composition theorists was critical to the more social and cultural view of writer identity that would follow.

The third perspective moves further from any emphasis on cognitive approaches and squarely focuses on social and cultural aspects of identity. Ivanic (1997), whose ideas have strongly influenced the concepts of this study, contends that rather than initiating students into the powerful discourse of the university, we learn to understand the tensions and struggles that result when students bring to the university multiple practices and possibilities for identity. She makes the point that writing, itself, is an act of identity. Through their writing, students align themselves with socioculturally shaped possibilities for selfhood. They also reproduce or challenge dominant practices and discourses and the values, beliefs, and interests which they embody. This view of writing and writers differs in its emphasis as it does not conceive of writing as an individual act of creation and discovery, but as a social act, embedded in one's sociocultural history. Ivanic assumes that a student's writer identity evolves not from

original discourse that belongs uniquely to that student, but from a “rich stew” (p. 85) of discourses with which the student is familiar. Thus, a writer’s identity is not individual and new, but constituted by the discourses s/he has adopted and by the way the student draws on and combines them. Ivanic’s research has been conducted with adult learners in Great Britain, most of whom are working class. It has focused primarily on the discursal construction of identity and the issues of identity as they are linked to academic writing.

Kamberelis and Scott (1992) also discuss the social and cultural aspects of a writer’s life that affect how one writes without the focus of how one is perceived or judged by others or how one sees oneself as a writer. Using the essays of two fourth graders, they argue that the process of text construction and the construction of subjectivity are co-implicated. In their article, they emphasize the ideas that text is a “synchronous moment” of developing self and that self is text under continual revision (p. 399). Their data clearly points to the concept that writing is not an act of individuality, but rather a construction put together from the voices and communities to which the writer has social and political associations.

The relationship of writing to identity has been researched at different age levels. Solsken (1993) researches how discourse shapes concepts of self while examining the literacy practices of children. She found that children create literacy identities while negotiating identities related to gender and class and points out how learning to read and write involves a complex process of defining and redefining self through various literacy practices. In her book-length study of elementary students, Solsken found that in the process of learning to read and write, the choices youngsters

make were implicated in their definitions of self and in their relationships with significant figures in their lives.

Solsken's findings regarding children's literacy choices and their identities were found to be valid for the four young adults of college age in Herrington and Curtis's (1999) research study. Conducted over the period of these students' college years, Herrington and Curtis found that their participants used writing for the continued development of identity and that writing did, indeed, have deep personal and social significance. Their study indicates that writing, even the public types of writing frequently required in college, was imbricated in the development of students' personal identity. This study is particularly important not only for its link between writing and identity but also for its relationship to social issues, its ties to identity development, and its selection of college-age participants.

Though Critical Language Awareness was the theme of Cheevers' (1999) study of middle school students, not specifically writer identity, her focus on the social, cultural and political issues of language was important to student subject positioning. Her ethnographic study and critical discourse analysis work with an ethnically diverse student population underscored the concept that the traditional study of English language structures does not prepare students for citizenship in a democratic society. Working primarily in the areas of peer conferencing and student writing, an emphasis of her research was that language is not a neutral entity but one which reproduces power relations, at times leaving writers feeling silenced and disempowered while also creating an inequitable and socially unjust learning environment. A key finding of this extensive study was that critical language awareness offered students a tool for

becoming social activists rather than passive users and receptors of language, thereby contributing to more empowered identities.

Janks (1999) also uses a Critical Language Awareness approach in her research of students in a postgraduate course. Using student journals as data, she examined how students constructed multiple identities in their writing. Her analysis describes how some of these identities were transformed and others conserved as they entered a new discourse community. Janks's focus was more on language awareness and less on how students think of themselves as writers, but her language awareness connection to students' identity is important to this study's assumption that identity is multiple and conflicting. She noted that multiple and changing identities were in evidence as students moved into a new discourse community.

In summary, while researchers have used a variety of theoretical perspectives to examine writer identity, the stance most critical to this study involves less emphasis on the psychological and cognitive and more on the social and cultural. Writing in the academy is a complex social act that involves forging a variety of discourses to fit the requirements of the writing task. Developing a positive writer identity is not a simple matter of the "right" cognitive development. Lack of a critical awareness of the social constraints connected to the acquisition of certain discourses may affect students' conceptions of who they are as writers.

### Critical Discourse Analysis

In addition to the postmodern/poststructural base reviewed above, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is important to this study as it provides a way of closely

examining the use of discourses and unpacking the social, cultural, and political influences that are at work in language. Because this study is concerned with students and the discourses they bring to a writing classroom, CDA provides the groundwork for its methodology. Ethnography and CDA can be mutually reinforcing. Discourse analysis of students' spoken and written texts provides evidence of the beliefs they have integrated into their thinking. The ethnography offers a way to study the sociopolitical explanations for the patterns of discourse of the participants.

Theorist Fairclough (1992) has established a systematic approach to the examination of language that establishes a link between the popular structural analysis of his predecessors and language analysis that considers social influence. His multidimensional model draws on social theory, especially that of Foucault, and refers to how knowledge and social practices are structured by systems of power and patterns of communication. A key term in his work is discourse. Like poststructuralists, Fairclough believes that discourses do not just reflect social relations, they shape them by positioning people in various ways. Many researchers, including Ivanic (1994, 1998), have used what Fairclough terms Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to examine the relationship of discourse to social, cultural, and political practices.

The use of critical discourse analysis helps make visible how language positions people and how language choices are shaped by a variety of conventions. It can be used to raise awareness of language in its social context and can also help people understand and gain control over their own roles in the use of discourse. How does it do this? By examining closely writers'/speakers' choices or uses of discourses, it is possible to focus on how people position themselves and are positioned by, construct and are



constructed by the linguistic and ideological choices that are made. Critical discourse analysis as a research methodology allows for an increased understanding of how language shapes and locates people as they negotiate the socially available discourses at their disposal.

There have been studies of educational and youth cultures based on a poststructuralist theory of discourse, voice, and subjectivity (Fine, 1992; Lather, 1991; Wexler, 1992). These ethnographies and case studies, however, use rather broad interpretations, drawing themes from their transcripts and creating interesting generalizations. The task set out in this dissertation is to examine actual patterns of language used by the students and connect them with themes of students' views regarding writing. In this way I also hope to study how social privilege and cultural representations occur in classroom life. Several studies have examined actual patterns of language used by students and inform my study both methodologically and thematically.

Kamberelis and Scott (1992) used discourse analysis in their interpretive analysis of the essays of two fourth grade students. Their purpose was to highlight the extent to which children's texts demonstrate intertextual links and how these links are implicated in social formations and political ideologies. Using data from written and spoken texts, they segmented texts by "utterance" and coded them for embedded voices, then analyzing the types of "voice appropriation" (p. 375) of the student writers. Finally, by inference, the researchers tried to establish various kinds of social and political alignments. The researchers indicated that their resulting interpretations are meant as "heuristics for understanding the co-articulation of texts and subjectivities in

the lives of children” because expecting to uncover or predict all possible “intentions, effects, and rejoinders of discourse is a hopelessly modernist goal” (p. 376) in their opinion.

In addition to their approach to language analysis, Kamberelis and Scott’s research is particularly relevant to the concepts in this study in its emphasis on the idea that writing is “inescapably an historical, intertextual, social, and political practice - a discursive activity within which different ideas of economic, social, cultural, and political conditions and positions are contested” (p. 400).

Freeman (1998) and Willett (1995), whose research involves bilingual issues, bring to the forefront the sociopolitical aspects of language in schools, an aspect of some importance to my research. Freeman (1998) conducted a lengthy study of bilingual education in a dual-language (Spanish/English) elementary school in Washington D.C. Using interview data, school pamphlets on the program, observations of students, teachers, and parents, and transcripts of selected classroom interactions, she analyzed the data to find how the program was represented and evaluated and the goals of the various target populations. Employing both micro and macro level discourse analysis techniques, she searched across texts for emergence of various themes, investigating how the dual-language plan functions in its sociopolitical context. Specific stages of analysis included identification of particular speech situations, analysis of speech events/activities, determination of participation frameworks, and analysis of units of various speech acts. She summarizes this as an intertextual analysis of classroom discourses and acknowledges CDA’s methodological importance in constructing her findings.

Like Freeman's work, Willett's (1995) study, incorporates a CDA methodology, but also includes discussion of the effects of class and gender in her findings. In her research on ESL children in a mainstream elementary classroom on a college campus, Willett (1995) focused on four ESL youngsters in order to describe/interpret the outcome of socialization in the classroom. She scanned data, created categories, noted patterns, searched for counter evidence, and selected domains for further analysis. She also conducted microanalysis of selected transcripts and classroom materials. The conclusions Willett was able to draw from her use of discourse analysis reflected the complexity of micropolitics in the influence of class and gender on students.

These threads of class and gender are key aspects in the findings of Gee and Crawford (1997) who analyzed the discourse of two fifteen-year-old girls (one working class and the other upper-middle) in an urban area. They employed another form of discourse analysis which included three levels of analysis to construct their story: each girl's use of the word "I," the motifs that ran through each interview, and a narrative analysis to uncover differences in how the girls viewed the world and themselves. Their findings indicate that aspects of gender and class in our society can work negatively for youth, regardless of social position.

The works of Willett, Solsken, and Wilson-Keenan (1996) and Ivanic (1997) are particularly relevant to my research for their use of discourse analysis to examine aspects of social identity. The first study includes discussion of a range of students' social identities, while the second more tightly focuses on writer identity. Using discourse analysis in their ethnographic action research project, Willett, Solsken, and Wilson-Keenan studied a linguistically diverse urban first/second grade classroom.

Using field notes, audio and videotapes of classroom events, student writing, classroom events, and interviews, these researchers employed thematic analysis to identify classroom events for their microanalysis.

They chose message units as their unit of transcription and analysis. They identified the kind of language event that was taking place, the set of social relationships involved in the transaction, and the cultural ideology which framed the event. They then moved to examination of change over time, discussing levels and types of participation, the students' range of social identities, and the construction of an ideology of multiculturalism within the classroom. Using this methodology, their analysis helped make evident how everyday language practices affect identity in the classroom and can be fraught with tensions.

Ivanic (1997), who has studied and co-authored with Fairclough, contributes to research regarding social identity and the way writers are positioned, or given certain identities, through use of the discourses on which they draw. She notes that writers who feel "stuck" may assume it has to do with the content of their work while they may actually be uncomfortable with the self they are projecting through their discourse. From her work with adult learners in Britain she finds that Critical Language Awareness (Ivanic, 1990; Fairclough, 1992) can liberate writers from the bias of socially privileged discourse by helping them understand the social values and beliefs embedded in discourse. She writes that Critical Language Awareness for her adult students involved the critical discussion of discursal choices and the way discourse use can position writers. Her study also discusses some of the complexities of using discourse analysis and how she, herself, had to abandon some beginning strategies in

favor of the difficult task of looking at whole texts. She begins her analysis by examining the work of a single writer. Ivancic brings together what the writer reports about her literacy history with analysis of extracts from her essay. She then garners comments regarding what the student said about the writing of it. Using information from the students, Ivancic continued by garnering data regarding the origins of particular parts of their writing. She then connected what she knew about these students' literacy histories and literacy practices and created categories, in part derived from the interviews she conducted. She found that interview data, together with a linguistic analysis of the discourse characteristics of the texts, helped her determine what discourse types she would then choose to comment on, which texts were most interesting as regards discursal construction, and, lastly, how discourse types position users in certain ways. This is especially useful in informing my study as it uses the student writing to demonstrate how the discourse choices of the writer can position her in the classroom.

Critical discourse analysis, as it will be used in this study, draws from poststructuralism the view that discourse operates across local, social and institutional sites. The above studies show how CDA can help demonstrate how texts have a constructive function in the shaping of human identities. They also point out how CDA can help uncover how discourses work to produce and replicate ideological interests in social formations.

## Summary of Literature Review

This literature review has considered three areas critical to this dissertation. It has analyzed two tenets of postmodernism and three aspects of poststructuralism that lay the theoretical foundation for the study. This groundwork links the key concepts of identity, discourse, and social, cultural, and political influence, all themes relevant to my research. Secondly, this literature review summarized studies related to writer identity, the central theme of this work. It has focused on projects that have taken a sociocultural view of writing and writers as this perspective relates closely to views that are a part of this dissertation. Lastly, this review has outlined the nature of critical discourse analysis and explained its relevancy as a methodological tool for the study of discourse as it relates to this examination of writer identity. It has reviewed research using discourse analysis with both thematic and methodological relevance to the focus of this dissertation.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

This dissertation is a study of writer identities constructed by students in an upper level writing course at a public university. It is also an examination of the discourses that students use, resist, or omit around issues of writing and identity in the writing classroom. A goal of this research is a better understanding of how social, cultural, and political influences shape the writer identity of students, especially those who construct more negative identities in the academic classroom.

The following questions are the focus of this study.

- In what ways do students construct their writer identities in a writing classroom, which influences do they believe have shaped their constructions, and what displays of behavior in the classroom contribute to a further understanding of the identities they report.
- What identities do students take up and what discourses do students draw on, resist, or omit when writing about or discussing writing and/or identity in the writing classroom, especially those students who construct more negative identities?

In the discussion of methodology that follows, I describe the setting of the study and its participants. I also explain my own background and how I came to be interested in this topic. A detailed look at the course curriculum follows, with information on how I gained access to the site and consent of those who participated. The research design

with details of the data collection and analysis comes next and includes a sample of the microanalysis of language I employed

### The Context of the Study

#### Participants

The participants in this study were students in a required junior year writing class for education majors at a large public university in the Northeast. While many of these students planned to teach in early childhood and elementary schools, a number of them hoped to find non-teaching jobs in the education field. The majority of students in these classes were in their early twenties, female, and white. In this particular section, there were 21 students, 17 females and 4 males. Two of the males identified as Haitian-American, one male identified as Afro-American, and one female identified as Korean-American. The remaining students were Caucasian. With the exception of one female sophomore who obtained special permission to be in this class, all students were in their junior or senior year.

#### The Researcher

This was the fifth semester I was instructing this course. As teacher, I directed the assignments, organized the activities, led the discussions and set the criteria for evaluation. As ethnographer in my role as participant-observer, I took notes and recorded information pertinent to writer identity issues. This section describes the background I bring to my role of teacher and researcher.



Because I was both instructor and participant observer in this research site, I was particularly conscious of the criticism directed at ethnographers who assume the authority to represent a culture as the “objective truth” without discussion of their own identity and its possible influences on the research process. Fine (1992) critiques the way researchers are known to represent others in her discussion of “ventriloquy.” She argues that in acting as ventriloquists, authors tell “Truths,” but seem to have no connections to gender, race, class, or stance themselves. She reports that this is commonly done in the academy and that researchers feel it stalls critique because it allows them to be in positions of truth telling while remaining unlocatable and without responsibility for their own positions. She says researchers select, edit, and deploy the texts of others as if their own subjectivities did not come to bear on how and what they select, edit, and deploy.

In the position of researcher, I was concerned about the ease of ventriloquy, the lure of its safety, the impossibility of objectivity, and the complications of speaking for and with those whose voices may not often be found speaking in the pages of research. With Fine’s critique in mind, I report I am a woman who has been teaching both secondary and post-secondary English classes for over twenty years. I am the daughter of a man who spoke English as his second language and who learned to distrust schools and teachers for the humiliation he was made to feel in their presence. I became an English major in college because I loved to write and mistakenly believed most people did. I entered teaching believing that those who did not love writing soon would under my tutelage. Not surprisingly, I was often stymied in this endeavor. What I believed 20 years ago and continue to believe is that no student should leave my classroom feeling

as my father had in his school experiences. In every student who does not fit the school's conception of good pupil, I find a bit of my father and remember it is most often not the students but the institutions that are shortsighted. My commitment to family and teaching combined with my enjoyment of writing makes this research personally interesting and valuable.

At the time I asked permission to use these students' words and our classroom as a research site, I shared not only my own joy in writing, but my concerns about the number of students who fear or dislike writing academic papers. At that time, I did not theorize with them regarding the variety of social, cultural, and political factors that may be at work. However, we did share a discussion about students in their own classrooms (as a number of them had already participated in teaching practica) and what it may mean to youngsters to have teachers who dislike or fear writing themselves.

### Course Curriculum

As mentioned, the course was the junior level required writing class for education majors. At this university, all students were required to take a writing class in their major during their junior or senior year. The course itself was a place for students to consider and develop aspects of their own writing, including genres that were personally and professionally relevant. This particular course was also designed to allow them to think about issues related to the teaching of writing as many of them had been, were, or would be involved in teaching practica and may even have been practice teaching while enrolled in this course.

Typical assignments include the following:

- Educational issues paper in a genre of their choice (e.g. a letter to parents or a newspaper editorial)
- Research paper in APA or MLA format
- Resume and cover letter
- Creative pieces developed from a variety of prompts
- E-mail assignments which included a literacy history and updates on progress
- Journal with responses to required reading and/or class activities.

Students were required to read a collection of articles on topics in education and the sections of Nancie Atwell's book In the Middle (1998 ed.) that pertain to writing workshop methods. Class activities included large and small group activities and discussion, some teacher lecture, and a writing workshop where their work was shared and received response.

An explicit grading rubric detailing the requirements of the course was shared with students the first day the class met. Because the emphasis in this class was on writing-as-a-process, students were reassured that it was possible for everyone willing to put in the time, complete all assignments, participate in all activities, and attend class regularly to do well. The class met once a week for two and one half-hours for one semester. Because the course was designed for future educators, many of whom were or would be teaching aspects of writing, it provided a unique opportunity to reflect on the issues of writers and writing.

### Access and Consent

Students were invited to give their written consent (see Appendix A) to be anonymous participants in a study of writers and writing issues. I shared with them my passion for writing and teaching and my concerns that so many students I have met over the years disliked or feared writing. I explained the requirements for their portfolios and reported how those portfolios and parts of our discussions would comprise the data I was collecting to research writing issues. They were encouraged to ask questions, share any concerns, or come in to discuss the research with me.

Students were reassured that participation in the study was entirely voluntary and did not require any additional assignments or work beyond the class requirements. Because students had the grading rubric in hand at least a week before consent was asked, they were clear that lack of participation in no way affected how they would be graded in the course.

### Research Design

The research design of this study brings together ethnographic analysis of classroom events, thematic analysis of students' descriptions regarding writer identity and influences, and critical discourse analysis of selected written work and some spoken events.

An ethnographic and discourse analytic approach to the study of writer identity cannot be reduced to a simple causal equation. Understanding writer identity, especially negative writer identity, in a population that is linguistically, culturally, and socio-economically diverse is a complex process. It most certainly requires a more

complex response than the often- simplified discussion that policy makers have been known to use to inform the public about student writer difficulties. That discussion often blames “lazy” or unintelligent students and inadequate teaching.

An ethnographic approach traditionally focuses on a particular community. As a researcher, I do not assume that the writers in this study are functionally using part of one coherent ideological discourse that is part of an official writing policy that all participants accept, embrace, or act on. There is not only the possibility but also the probability that competing discourses around the practice of writing were at work in this classroom.

In an effort to understand the underlying influences that have helped to shape student writer identity, I analyzed what the students said when directly asked who they are as writers, along with a variety of other texts, written and spoken, and classroom observations. I believe a combination of ethnography and critical discourse analysis was appropriate to the focus and purpose of my research as it allowed study of behaviors around writing in the educational setting in which they occurred as well as a close examination of language / discourses associated with those behaviors and/or connected to writing issues and identity.

### Data Collection

In this study, I assumed the roles of both instructor and researcher. As is typical in ethnographic research, I was in the role of learner in addition to my role of instructor. I recognized these students to be a rich source of knowledge. With them and through

their words, written and spoken, I gathered information pertinent to the topic of writer identity and its influences, whether explicitly revealed or implicitly demonstrated.

Field Notes. Field notes were generally recorded after each session although I was able to jot down some information during class. Through observation, I noted resistance behaviors related to writing assignments, e.g., late or undone assignments, incomplete work, or papers not brought through the process. I also noted any unusual behaviors when students shared their writing, worked in response groups, or participated in discussion groups. Included, also, were my own feelings and thoughts regarding students, activities and discussions, both formal and informal.

I kept a notebook with a section for each student that served as a type of file of observations or conversations particularly relevant to that student. For example, it included notes regarding who stayed after class, who came early to talk, what questions were asked, and what pertinent information was shared. The notes also included quick jottings of impressions I got of students as they participated or chose not to participate in class discussions.

Written Work. All students were required to turn in a complete portfolio at the end of the semester that included all assignments (drafts and revisions), hard copies of their e-mail, and a journal with reflections on the assigned reading and/or class activities. Also included were what I call "quick-writes," short reflections written during class in response to a prompt related to the class's topic of study on any given day.

Recorded Conferences. Students were asked to participate in a conference with me that was open to discussion on any aspect of their writing or class work. The tape recordings of these conferences were also part of the data.

### Data Analysis

Question One. How do students describe and act on their writer identities? The first phase of the analysis utilized a three-page paper students were asked to write regarding writer identity. All students completed a paper on writer identity, writing approximately a page on each of the questions that follow. They were told it was an informal assignment and they should feel free to wander around in their thinking and their writing. This allowed me to examine language and ideologies they brought to the assignment before any discussion of writer identity had ensued. The writing prompts were as follows.

1. Who are you as a writer?
2. Who or what has had the most influence on this writer identity you have constructed?
3. What has been your best or worst experience in terms of someone responding to your writing?

Beginning with this initial paper on writer identity, I looked for information or patterns that relate to or help further explain a student's self-constructed identity. Data analysis included a search for themes related to their writer identity constructions and how they went on to explain it. In conducting the thematic analysis, I reviewed student portfolios, conference tapes and field notes. Initially, I focused on the students' written

assignment regarding identity, influence and writing experience, using those to create the broad categories of more positive, more negative, or mixed in terms of how students seemed to identify as writers. Because students generally took up the more evaluative discourse of educational settings, i.e., “good at,” “struggle with,” etc., these categories were apparent or more readily identifiable for analysis. After review of that data, it became apparent that many of the students’ initial identity statements for the “Who are you as a writer?” section of the assignment actually provided a kind of broad thesis statement for the information that followed. Given that, I often used it to frame their general categories of identity.

Further analysis indicated that students seldom fit a single identity category in a seamless fashion and that their feelings about who they were as writers often depended on the types of writing they did. This finding led to categories that I labeled expressivist/creative writing, traditional formal writing / concerns, and process-oriented writing. Whether they enjoyed, resisted, preferred or felt more or less competent in these types of writing became an important theme. I then reviewed their responses in terms of who or what had most influenced their identity constructions, also using their story of a pivotal writing experience to garner additional information on both identity and influences. The reported influences from these students fell into categories I then coded.

The thematic analysis then moved to the ethnographic data I had collected for each student. So if a student identified more positively, I searched my classroom and field notes to see if their behaviors supported, contradicted, or seemed a mixture of support and contradiction. For example, if a student identified in a more negative



fashion, did s/he voice concerns about papers, miss assignments, consistently hand in late work, have difficulty with the revision process, act nervously in response groups, etc.? While this analysis was tedious, it helped point out the fluid nature of writer identity and the complexity of assigning categories of identity. It also emphasized the concept that binaries are not the emphasis of this study: terms such as positive and negative were simply utilized to describe leanings or shifting and recursive points on a far-from-static continuum.

Additionally, in the classroom, I looked for the way students were positioned as writers and the way they positioned themselves, which could vary depending on the context and the task. I also noted their behaviors, i.e., who participated, who volunteered, who appeared uncomfortable and when, who handed in late or incomplete assignments, and what excuses were given. Information regarding initial identities and influences was examined for all students.

Data collection continued throughout course as I searched for information that reinforced or contradicted student descriptions of who they said they were as writers. Which behaviors that students displayed throughout the course contributed to their own definitions and my understanding of their writer identities?

Question Two. The students selected for close analysis of their texts were generally those who had indicated through their words or actions that they had more negative writer identities. For these students, I searched for patterns they shared which told a story of how these negative identities may have come about, stories that may underlie the explicit reasons they gave for their negative identities.

The methodology for examining student discourses was adapted from Fairclough's (1992) three-dimensional model for thinking about critical discourse analysis. Briefly, at its center, there is an analysis of vocabulary and textual structure, one of the traditional areas studied by linguists. The second layer has to do with discursive process or the production and consumption of texts. The third layer, the layer that is of most interest to me in this study, involves social practice and includes both form and meaning, that is, discourse, institutions, and ideologies. This area has to do with peoples' beliefs about what makes sense in specific settings. This third layer is important because it is related to explanations of why certain understandings and discourses may come to have dominance and what the implications of that may be. At this layer of examination, it is possible to problematize what students say and review who is advantaged and disadvantaged by what is said and the ideologies implied. This is also the level where one studies which discourses students access and which they resist, an interest of this research.

Close analysis of the way students represent themselves as writers and in conversations they have about writing issues was intended to help me better understand what students accept, what they oppose, and what they miss in terms of talking about themselves as writers in an academic setting. I searched for ways that these writers echo the actual voices of people with whom they have associated in terms of writing and also how they position themselves in relation to the valued "good writer" identity of the university.

Using critical discourse analysis of student texts, I examined the discourses students drew on, resisted, or omitted in the writing classroom. The analysis for

question two presents the data in context in order to identify the relationship of different discourses and identities within a text. Using four case studies, I searched for language and themes that connected student texts to broader academic and sociocultural influences. While my analysis of the first question began with that first identity paper and proceeded to include other student texts and classroom interactions, this second question continued by investigating how some linguistic features and themes function to provide an understanding of student writer identity. Here it is important to remember that discourse in this paper reflects the Foucauldian notion of discourse defined by Fairclough (1992) as “a particular way of constructing a subject matter” (p.128). For example, would error correction or process writing be at the heart of their discussions? Would they use the evaluative discourse so often found in schools? Would there be types of resistance discourse that I needed to figure out? Where did the language and beliefs these students drew on and borrowed from seem to originate? Ivanic (1997) reminds us that writing is not only a text but a set of practices that writers bring from their past experiences. As teacher, I brought my own assumptions about writing workshops and process writing that could be quite different from those of my students.

The microanalysis on selected sections of student texts explores the ways language use helps further define identity and seeks the ideologies that underlie writing and writing-related issues. The microanalysis also contributes to an understanding of how discourses in the social and cultural milieu of students’ lives contribute to their understanding of their situations.

The discourse analysis on selected student texts was done after reviewing the data from all students. Four focus students were selected who, either through their

words, written or spoken, and/or their classroom behavior, had indicated some concern about their writing in the academy or their status as outsiders in the writing classroom. I began by seeking key passages in their texts that related to Question 2 in my study, i.e. what discourses do students draw on or resist? I selected student texts, looking to identify key issues having to do with writing or how they saw themselves as writers for microanalysis. Four or five texts were selected for each student. The unit of analysis was a sentence. This linguistic unit was chosen because its boundaries are relatively clear and it is generally meaningful.

Once the texts were segmented by unit of analysis, they were analyzed for the information embedded within them related to question two. Because the way we speak and write is related to who we are and what we believe, the following categories were selected: identity, ideology, discourse drawn on, and discourse resisted or omitted. I identified key categories by working with selected texts.

An explanation of concepts selected for microanalysis follows.

- Identity. How does language in the text signal participation, representation, or identification with some group or indicate a relationship regarding who this individual is in the world? While this category may relate to numerous segments of social identity (race, class, ethnicity, gender), it primarily reflects aspects and attitudes regarding their writer identity and how students position themselves in the classroom and elsewhere. Unless otherwise indicated, this identity indicates student positioning of self. Because the focus of this study is writer identity, especially as that identity relates to the classroom, the identities in this category most often reflect the metaphorical descriptors of stunted

growth, initiation, and conflict. These are especially important for their relationship to academic discourse. Identities having to do with competence in writing and satisfaction with writing as well as pertinent personal identities are also included.

- Ideology. What values and conceptions of the world show themselves in the text? What does the student accept as “natural,” and what is his/her understanding of society? What are the power relations that appear? Which are privileged? What values and conceptions of the world come through in the student language?
- Discourse drawn on. This analysis describes which sets of conventionalized practices are drawn upon or which discourses students are using. Here I borrow from Fairclough (1992) the idea of discourse being “a particular way of constructing a subject matter.” (p. 128). While aspects of ethnicity, geographical location, social class, gender, language patterns, syntax, education, social activities, and beliefs can be reflected in the discourse choices students make, I am especially interested in discourses related to writing ideologies, e.g. traditional academic, expressivist, and process. These will be clearly defined in the pages that follow.
- Discourse resisted or omitted. Because access to a discourse makes possible its use and because ideology informs what one believes to be acceptable, I also note some discourses that seem to be omitted or resisted. While students may not have had access to the concept of the “conflict” metaphor, could that ideology

be implied but omitted? Is academic discourse resisted? What might be omitted that helps tell the student's story?

In the sample that follows (Table 1), the type or class of writing assignment or speech event being analyzed is given at the top left of each chart. Noting the genre of the piece helps establish the category of writing and also signals the degree of formality assigned or assumed by the instructor.

In line 3, Tracy's statement that she used to think of herself as a halfway decent writer is described as using the stunted growth metaphor and drawing on traditional formal discourse's idea of measuring, judging, and comparing writers against a particular standard as she positions herself as less than "halfway decent."

In line 5, the identity construction of former community college student adds further knowledge of the personal and historical aspects of this student's life, enhancing my own understanding of who she is and how she sees herself in her current setting.

Through the analysis of line 6, it becomes clear that Tracy's writer identity can shift with the genre as she appears to see herself as a better writer when she is creating short stories. It is not absolutely clear that this is an expressivist discourse (thus I have not included it in the "Discourse drawn on column"), but those who teach short story in introductory classes often allow tremendous latitude and freedom of expression in the genre. Thus, the link of competence to something other than traditional formal discourse is signaled in the microanalysis. The ideology column describes this student as embracing the belief that writing "ability" can vary with the assignment or the expectations of the genre, again adding insight to this student's conception of writers and writing.

Table 1

## Type or Class Analysis

L	UNIT OF ANALYSIS TRACY'S "WHO AM I" AND "INFLUENCES" Microanalysis #1	IDENTITY	IDEOLOGY	DISCOURSE DRAWN ON	DISCOURSE RESISTED/ OMITTED
1	After reading this question the first time, I chuckled				
2	I asked myself, Me, as a writer				
3	I used to think of myself as a halfway decent writer	Stunted growth		Traditional formal	
4	My sister informed me otherwise	Stunted growth	People's response to writing affects writer's view of self	Traditional formal	
5	I took a creative writing class at the community college I went to before the university	Former community college student			
6	I found I did better with short stories	Competent	Writing "ability" can vary with the genre		
7	As I thought about it for a few more moments, I decided that I am a writer in progress	Initiation	Good writers evolve	Process	
8	The more papers I write, the better I get	Initiation	Practice improves writing	Process Bootstraps	
9	The first draft is usually awful; each draft gradually improves		Redrafting is a way to improve one's writing	Process	
10	I am also looking to improve my writing	Initiation		Process	
11	I enjoy constructive criticism		Writer response can improve drafts	Process/ Traditional formal	

In lines 7, 8, and 10, the entries in the identity, ideology, and discourse columns indicate a shift to an initiation identity, i.e. Tracy sees herself as a writer who needs to learn the conventions of university writing. This is an identity that is linked to process discourse for her. The process ideology of practice and redrafting is associated with

Tracy's taking on the subject position of a writer in progress, someone on her way to writing as a university English major "should." It was in places like line 8, where I saw Tracy drawing on both process and bootstraps discourses, that I began to see a tie between the discourses, helping me realize how the ideology of one may be embedded in the other.

For purposes of discussion, the selected categories necessitate a degree of essentializing, that is creating artificial categories that suggest a pure form, which I realize does not exist. The metaphors of stunted growth, initiation, and conflict are used simply to indicate the positions or identities frequently made available to students in the writing classroom. As is evidenced in this sample, the use of traditional formal, expressivist and process to identify the major writing discourses does not, of course, fully represent the far wider range of discourses embedded in each of these categories. For the purposes of this research, however, these three are sufficient to suggest the ideologies embedded in the broader categories of these discourses that, in turn, influence particular identities.

### Summary

This chapter explained the context of the study, a junior-year required writing class at a large university, and described the participants. It outlined the subjectivity of the researcher in an effort to forestall the critique of "ventriloquy" outlined by Fine (1992) against ethnographies. It reviewed the course curriculum and how access to the group and consent of students to participate was obtained. An explanation of the research design was followed by explanation of the method of data collection. The



details of data analysis for questions one and two followed. A sample of the microanalysis for question two was included along with an explanation of the terms that functioned as category headings in the microanalysis.

## CHAPTER 4

### DISCOURSES AND IDENTITIES

#### Introduction

This chapter outlines the categories of discourses and identities that are central to the findings for questions one and two of the study. Some of these definitions were drawn from the literature as a result of my preliminary analysis of student writing. That data analysis had suggested the importance of specific concepts in the composition field. Included, for example, is traditional formal discourse, which resulted from students' emphasis on aspects such as grammatical correctness, organization, and more formal language use. Many students whom I had begun to code more negatively in terms of identity were actually found to enjoy assignments they saw as personally more creative in nature or that more clearly allowed an expressivist stance. These preliminary findings sent me back to the literature which was, of course, rich in discussion with composition theorists such as Elbow (1991, 1995), Bartholomae (1995) and Fulkerson (1990) crystallizing the salient points among scholars and researchers regarding academic and expressivist philosophies.

After much experimentation in coding writer identities, I also found that students relied quite heavily on the typical educational paradigms used to discuss writing in educational/composition circles. Going back to what the literature has come to call "basic writers," I found three metaphors that seemed consistent with ways students constructed their identities in relation to academic writing. These are the stunted growth metaphor, the earlier and still predominant metaphor in many grade

schools, the initiation metaphor, and the conflict metaphor. This chapter defines the various discourses to be used, further elaborates on the identity metaphors, and extends the identity categories.

### Discourse Definitions

The broad nature of the term “discourse” as defined in this study, combined with poststructuralist theory’s rejection of tight definitional standards to construct a vision of the world, brings me to the following caveat. Among the discourses defined here, there may be some overlap or places where people draw on multiple discourses, as well as points of debate regarding aspects I have chosen to include in each definition. It is my intention to keep the constructs broad enough to aid understanding of the idea and narrow enough to emphasize and clarify discussion points. For example, there may be folks who see themselves as expressivists who find the definition of expressivism that follows too broad. Undoubtedly, there are process-oriented instructors who see themselves aligned with expressivists, others who may use process as a way to help students achieve a more refined academic discourse, and still others who say process is a step-by-step approach to any type of writing.

Additionally, what I am defining as traditional formal discourse is actually a kind of academic discourse whose varied forms can be found in different departments across colleges and universities. The definitions that follow, however, specifically expressivist, traditional formal and process, are constructed to allow discussion of writing, especially the philosophical bents that have had cultural capital and have had a predominant effect on school writing programs over the past few decades. These have become part of “school” and writing classrooms, and their ideologies are generally understood (and debated) in that context.

Expressivist discourse informs a pedagogy that privileges individual control over textual meaning and production. It is often viewed in opposition to traditional formal discourse where form and correctness of a text are valued over the expression of individual meaning. It encourages students to believe in their voices and to believe that their writing should portray some sense of themselves. It generally encompasses the view that individuals have a unique voice.

Berlin (1988) notes that expressive ideology was “unsparingly critical of the dominant social, political, and cultural practices”(p.485) of the sixties and seventies when expressivism was on the rise. This discourse fits well with other anti-establishment ideologies associated with the sixties as it espouses a freedom of thought alongside criticism of established rhetorical tradition.

The term expressivism is often used to indicate a personal, almost autobiographical approach to writing. Expressive writing pedagogy locates meaning or individual truths inside the mind of the student, and, in fact, theorist Peter Elbow uses the terms “personal” and “expressive” writing interchangeably at times. The goal of expressive writing is often thought to be personal empowerment, that is, having students speak their own minds and find their own individual voices. While some see expressive writing as emotive or confessional, others see it as writing for self-expression or self-discovery, and still others use it to assist students in their expression of ideas for personal essay writing.

It is often viewed as rejecting the standards of academic writing as it suggests that the ability to write comes not from the memorization of rules but from the true expression of our innermost thoughts. Hairston (1992) epitomizes this thinking when

she says that students learn to write by writing about what they care about. She feels a diverse student body writing about and sharing their own experiences is what produces real cultural diversity in the classroom.

Traditional formal discourse informs a pedagogy that is noticeably more formal in tone and style. Typical conventions discussed in traditional formal include structured introductory paragraphs, thesis statements, topic sentences, well-organized writing, and logical claims supported by pertinent details. Linked to the academic discourses, this discourse assumes the use of Standard English. Berlin (1987) reviews the history of this discourse calling it Current Traditional Rhetoric and tracing its roots to early Twentieth Century Harvard University. Correctness of form, i.e. spelling, punctuation, usage, syntax, and paragraph structure, is emphasized. Strength of description, narration and exposition are also important. This form of discourse, according to Berlin, has been adopted by many large state universities and has been the dominant form of college writing instruction from that time until this.

Bizzell (1999) summarized the characteristics of this type of academic discourse as typically using the most formal and ultra-correct form of language and treating as “errors” usage that would be acceptable or unproblematic in casual conversation. This discourse typically employs an objective persona. It implies emotions and prejudices do not influence the ideas. It implies precision, logic and sound evidence. When the media rails against falling standards, they are often referring to movements that have shifted writing away from more traditional formal discourse.

Bartholomae (1995) has voiced what many in the academy believe, that academic writing is the real work of the academy and therefore of critical importance in

the teaching writing at the college level. Student writing, he contends, is in an institution where power is not equal. He rejects the ideas of expressivism as being outside the history and culture of the academy.

It is important to note that there is also a standards discourse which mirrors traditional formal discourse and reflects how the popular media and politicians of the past decade have usurped some of its ideas. For the purposes of this discussion it will be included as part of Traditional Formal. Frequently using standard grammatical structure and spelling as synonyms for “good writing,” it is perceived by some as a negative reaction to acceptance of more inclusive, multicultural views. Certainly, standards discourse has crept into schools at every level. While tied to traditional formal discourse in this paper, undoubtedly, there are academics who would object to this inclusion.

Academic discourse comes in many forms and traditional formal is one form of the discourse that is implicated in positioning students as stunted, uninitiated, and in conflict, as do academic discourses in general. Many writing courses, my own included, employ elements of the three major writing ideologies. While, at the time, I would have said my emphasis was process. I think many writing instructors blend philosophies as well as employ different forms of academic discourse. In a single sentence of response, a writing instructor may stress the need to employ the “necessary conventions” it takes to be “initiated” as well as express concerns about the immaturity of the thinking or student’s inability to generalize in a piece. Though teachers at the university level may well be instructing students about their conflicts with assuming certain discourses, there are probably few, in those same classrooms, who are not trying to initiate them into some form of academic discourse, which is known to have more

cultural capital in the academy. I, like many writing teachers, have been socialized to “teach students to write well” and to think in terms of assisting students who seem “stunted” in this process. The focus of many writing programs is how to help students “improve,” and that usually means help them better approximate that model in our heads regarding good writing. The mandate to classroom teachers in the state of Massachusetts is just that, to make writers “more proficient.”

So, while there are a variety of so-called academic discourses, traditional formal being one of them, I would argue that academic discourses “allow” a variety of writer identities, depending on how the writing, writing instructor, and writer intersect with other factors related to language. As poststructuralists would contend, these identities are not “a reality” with actual borders that are distinct and routinely separate in the classroom, but social constructions. What is important to emphasize is the concept that traditional formal discourse, as I am using it for this research, assumes students perceive there is a level of “correctness” for writing. The identity that students, themselves, assume as they take up this discourse, which reflects what students have internalized about their relationship to “traditional formal” discourse, is what is of key importance to this research.

Process discourse informs a pedagogy that emphasizes the conception of how writers go about creating texts (Fulkerson, 1990). Rising to popularity in the 1970s, it drew on the work of experienced and novice writers to better understand the actual “process” of writing. While “process” may be embraced by those using academic or expressivist discourse, it is separate in that the idea of teaching writing as a process with

brainstorming activities, multiple drafts and peer/teacher review stands as a pedagogical tool or philosophy on its own.

Traditionally, English teachers taught and evaluated students' writing as a finished product. The process philosophy embraces the idea of multiple drafts or working until one approximates the desired end product. Donald Murray (1984) explains that, traditionally, English teachers would teach and evaluate writing as if it were a finished product of literature. He contends that students learn better if they are taught to realize that writing itself is a craft and involves a process. Many of the traditional rules for writing change as students work at their own pace and experiment with what works best for them. Murray finds that writing teachers who were taught to view student work as if it were a piece of literature often set an impossible goal for beginning writers. Thus, novice writers often find their papers full of red marks for not measuring up to the standard in the teacher's head. While the process-oriented approach may conclude with editing as a final stage of text creation, it does not begin there, as is often the case in a product-oriented approach. In process discourse, the role of the teacher is most often seen as composing coach rather than reader.

Bootstraps discourse in popular culture often has to do with an American story of resilience. For example, a horribly disadvantaged youth faces difficult circumstances but goes on to achieve tremendous success. Implied in this discourse is the concept that those who try hard enough will succeed. This bootstraps discourse often leads to blaming victims for their hardships and troubles. It also leads to acceptance of unrealistic standards of success for those who just "try hard enough." While embraced by popular culture, this "pull yourself up by the bootstraps" attitude can hurt the



chances of real people who are not able to escape the hardships and disadvantages of their lives. The discourse encompasses the myth-like concept that opportunity is available to all and those who work hard will succeed at whatever they do. It denies both class and racial discrimination or, at best, overlooks them. Quite deeply ingrained in American culture is this idea that hard work and talent open all doors to anyone who tries hard enough. Bootstraps discourse is, at times, linked to other philosophies, but for the purposes of this dissertation it will be tied to the school ideology of “Try hard and you will succeed” and “Effort is what really counts in school.”

The field of Learning Disabilities has permeated schools for the last several decades, paving the way for a number of discourses that reflect ideologies within the field. Prior to 1975, children with disabilities had no federally guaranteed right to education. In 1975, Public Law 94-142 guaranteed the education of all school children regardless of disabilities. The language of learning problems, learning styles, and concepts from both the medical and psychological fields to discuss these learning differences have come into common usage in schools. Students who have low grades, experience frustration with traditional teaching styles, or have emotional, attentional, psychological or cognitive differences from what is considered mainstream in a particular school or district may be referred for an evaluation and recommended for special assistance or accommodations in a school. While enforcement practices may vary somewhat from state to state and encompass a wide range of political ideologies, those generally associated with the field include the following: students have a right to classroom help to deal with and overcome specific deficiencies; students who have disabilities face challenges and obstacles in the traditional classroom; students should

not be labeled or considered less intelligent because they have a disability; a continuum of services should be available for all students with disabilities, mental, physical, and emotional; students with special needs have the right to be educated along side non-disabled students, with the responsibility for modification to students' programs belonging to educators and administrators. A discourse that has evolved within the field is what I will term the LD (Learning Disability) medical discourse. This discourse, quite common among students, parents, and educators, asserts that there is something "wrong" with the way the brain functions, thus causing an inability to function "normally" in one's academic tasks. This medical "malfunction," if you will, may cause organizational problems, written language difficulties, or attentional distractions that inhibit one's abilities in the classroom. While other discourses are undoubtedly associated with the field, this is the one that informs the analysis of data here.

Multicultural discourse is based on the view that people and cultural memberships may be different but they are equal. It embraces the idea that a person's sense of identity and self-worth derive from cultures that they know well and call their own, re-enforcing an interest in the survival of a particular culture, even when other cultures fulfill the same needs (Bhargava et al. 1999). In addition, the following pertinent ideologies are associated with the discourse.

Social environments should be based on fairness, diversity, mutual respect, and cooperation. Education should cultivate an understanding and appreciation of different cultures, histories, and achievements. Multiculturalism encourages social cohesion by enabling students to accept, enjoy and cope with diversity. The identity of communities should be defined to include all its citizens and avoid creation of "outsiders" (Parekh,

2000). Diversity should be respected and nurtured and Eurocentrism and mono-cultural views critiqued. While students said to be using a multicultural discourse in this paper may not be familiar with some aspects of this ideology, their underlying understanding of a belief in the value of more multicultural views will be evident.

The field of Second Language learning, like the Learning Disabilities field, umbrellas a number of discourses taken up by schools, researchers, and others to refer to students who do not speak English as their first language. There is much scholarly research as well as pedagogical theories on the subject of how to best teach and organize curriculum for these students. Discourses that frame the often-debated ideological stances within the field are frequently discussed in terms of English immersion programs (ESL) vs. Bilingual programs, but these are not the subject of this analysis. My purpose is not to explicate or debate the politics of these ideologies. More simply, I will refer to a second language (SL) as deficit / problem discourse which informs the following philosophy. Second language dilemmas are imbricated in the identity of SL students. Students speaking other than English as their first language in American schools face issues of marginalization both in writing and speaking assignments. SL students may be assessed lower on tests, including standardized exams, and writing tasks by virtue of their language issues. Generally understood is the realization that SL students and curriculum vary from school to school and state to state, often with little appreciation or concern for the cultural heritage of the students or the language they face. SL Deficit Discourse, as it will be called in this analysis, underscores the idea that ESL speakers are marginalized because of their status and face writing issues directly related to the fact that they speak English as a second language.

Sociopolitical discourse explicitly acknowledges students' cultural conflicts with language. It avows the concept that language use has social consequences and endorses a pedagogy that recognizes conflict and struggle (Lu, 1993). A sociopolitical discourse in the writing classroom emphasizes differences; it does not subvert them. The privileged characteristics of academic discourse are examined and recognized as an institutional force. Sociopolitical discourse sees this force as capable of oppressing students whose difference, whether that difference springs from racial, ethnic, class or other sources, makes itself evident through language. It also acknowledges that assuming a new discourse may mean subverting other aspects of one's identity.

A sociopolitical discourse accepts that students' identities may be in conflict with dominant writing practices and thus, because of issues of race, class, gender, or disability, may be marginalized within the academy. This is a discourse that calls for a conscious effort to understand how language and writing operate within our culture and how difference has consequences in this society. It does not assume just because a discourse has more cultural capital that it is superior to others. Bartholomae (1993), shifting from an earlier stance regarding the initiation of writers into academic discourse, has moved to a call for more discussion in composition classrooms of the social and political forces which shape writer identity as has other researchers like Bizzell (1999) and Ivancic (1990).

### Identities

While there are myriad identities students may take up in the writing classroom, for purposes of analysis, when possible, I first focus on three metaphorical terms used in

the basic writing field. These terms are stunted growth, initiation, and conflict. I believe that students often associate themselves with these ideas because they have become so used to school discourses, which often reflect the core conceptual frameworks, especially that of stunted growth. Students may not use the same terms, of course, but the identities they take up often relate to the concepts inherent in them. These metaphors detail the way basic writers were seen or conceptualized in scholarly research. Before the Eighties, the stunted growth metaphor predominated. While it continues today in popular culture and many political circles, it was replaced in the Eighties by the initiation metaphor, which itself was replaced by the conflict metaphor of the Nineties. Note that they are all ways of “seeing” or “constructing” the student who is considered a “basic writer” in the academy. What follows is a brief summary of what each metaphor entails.

Stunted Growth Identity assumes that students need to improve their cognitive abilities or mental conceptions of writing as they have somehow not learned what needs to be learned to be a good writer. Sometimes I ask students working on early drafts what they would do if they had a magic wand they could wave over their papers. The answers frequently have to do with “fixing all the errors I don’t know how to fix” or organizing the ideas or eliminating spelling mistakes. They seem to have accepted the idea that if these issues could be addressed, they would be good writers, but feel somewhere along the way they missed being taught (or missed learning) the steps needed to write “right.” In summary, the stunted growth identity is attached to the following concepts:

- Beginning writer or novice
- Immature thinker

- Cognitively delayed or deficient
- One with grammatical difficulties
- One unable to generalize or clear cognitive hurdles

Identities related to this stunted growth metaphor could include immature writer, disorganized writer and grammatically deficient writer.

Initiation involves a metaphor popularized by Bartholomae (1986) and relates to an identity associated with not measuring up to what is expected of writers in the academic classroom. It does not see writers as simply immature users of the language, but as social and political outsiders to the discourse of the academy. There is not simply an intellectual step to be taken; there are new value systems and cultural practices to be assumed before one can assume an identity that fits with the academic discourse of the university. A characteristic of this type of thinking and the identity one takes up in assuming it is the unquestioned belief that academic discourse, itself, is not problematic. Failing to problematize its unquestioned authority can result in a negative writer identity for students as they can easily assume they have not “measured up” for a variety of reasons when failing to assume the discourse “properly.” In summary, the initiation metaphor is attached to the following concepts:

- “outsider” to academic discourse
- one who needs to appropriate specialized discourse
- new to conventions of academic discourse
- one who needs to think rhetorically in order to duplicate the discourse of the academic community

- one whose errors are a logical part of composing process, though still an impediment
- one who can think logically, but is not familiar with academic discourse conventions
- the privilege of academic discourse is unquestioned

Identities associated with this metaphor might include uninitiated writer, marginalized academic writer, novice, and outsider.

The conflict identity originates from a metaphor associated with Lu (1992) in her piece on “Conflict and Struggle: The Enemies or Preconditions of Basic Writing?” This identity is related to issues of race, class, gender, and the social and political considerations of language. Lu believes that the marginalization students feel when writing in the academy comes from the way they believe their own discourses have been received in the academy. There is conflict, struggle, and tension when trying to write within the institutional bounds of a university. Though feeling bad about the writing they have produced, students often want to discuss their areas of competence. Their conversation often embraces the concept of “I am competent, BUT...”

Changing one’s discourse affects identity in ways not fully taken into consideration in either the stunted growth or uninitiated views. The pressure to conform can affect identity, which, in turn, can result in considerable conflict. In summary, the concepts associated with the conflict identity are as follows”

- the writer is shaped by society and embraces conflict
- the writer is on the “borders” and is affected by institutional oppression
- writer’s position is politicized within the academy

- identity is seen as multiple, embracing issues of race, class and gender
- identity embraces conflict and uncertainty, is flexible rather than fixed as in stunted or uninitiated
- academic discourse is viewed as privileged with historical and social background
- associated with struggle, diversity and shifting privilege
- all linguistic choices have political dimensions

Identities related to conflict include political resistor, oppressed or marginalized writer, conflicted writer.

Of course, there are numerous identities one can take up in the classroom. These three metaphors simply provide broad structures to help think about how students may be positioning themselves in terms of their writing in the classroom. They are especially helpful because of the focus of this study on “negative” writer identities. While the analysis must, by necessity, include other identities students seem to be taking up in their writing or discussions, when possible, I will reference these concepts to name identities associated with their far-reaching philosophies, common in educational circles.

The focus of the above three metaphors is on the problematic or negative aspects of writer identity, especially as they relate to traditional formal discourse. It is also necessary to include two categories that embrace the positive aspects. One positive identity has to do with Competence, especially as it relates to specific types of writing, i.e., academic, expressivist, and process. This identity will be coded Competent in the analysis, with reference to a specific area when needed.



Another positive identity reflects a student's enjoyment, pleasure, or passion for writing, which also may be linked to a particular type or style of writing. This category will be labeled Satisfaction to indicate the student's satisfying relationship with writing and the positive aspects of their writer identity.

At times, students may refer to components of their personal identities that may reflect family, class, ethnic, or other personal aspects of identity, not directly correlated to writing. These are often self-explanatory and will generally be labeled in a way that needs no further explanation. For example, "daughter of Korean-speaking parents" or "Haitian-American."

### Sanctioned Discourses and Identities

It is important to discuss the discourses that, if not all explicitly sanctioned, were certainly implicit in the curriculum and power dynamics of this college classroom. As noted earlier, I introduced aspects of process at the onset of the course, explaining that multiple drafts would not only be encouraged, but also required. We employed brainstorming activities for all major assignments and worked in response groups regularly, incorporating Elbow's response techniques for writing workshops. Elbow, in fact, ran a workshop for the university writing instructors teaching this junior level course.

It should be noted that I used a blend of process, expressivist and traditional formal discourses in the classroom, but I never articulated that approach to the students, nor did I think about it explicitly until writing this dissertation. While encouraging students to write for self-expression and seek their individual voices in a number of

more autobiographical and creative writing exercises, for the major assignments of the course, such as the research projects and issue papers, I required a more formal academic discourse. Their reading assignments were also a blend of authors who praised the importance of personal voice and others who emphasized the political reality attached to the power of academic discourse. In the classroom, I both praised the power of their voices and stories and demanded Standard English and traditional format in the edited versions of their work. Examples of the readings, all of which were discussed in the class, follow.

Expressivist readings included Anais Nin's piece, "The New Woman," which talks about how writing creates a world and allows one to recreate the self. Brenda Ueland's article, "Everybody is Talented, Original and Has Something Important to Say," was heavily expressivist in its orientation with a title that epitomized this philosophy. Students were required to keep a journal of responses to articles they read. Informal writing without emphasis on grammar, punctuation or organization was the norm. We also did a few reflective pieces about their own lives where students were free to choose the genre and writing style of their work. A stated course objective related to expressivism was to explore our voices and stances through inquiry and writing.

Process Discourse was sanctioned through the inclusion of Elbow's ideas about different ways to respond to a piece of writing and included a list of criterion-based and reader-based questions. I frequently discussed peer review of writing and talked about how process could be implemented into the classroom for different age levels. In addition, Nancie Atwell's book In the Middle (1987), which was required reading,

detailed methods used in a process classroom and served as both a handbook for future teachers and a guide to process writing. My course objectives stated that two goals were to develop an understanding of writing as a process and experience the complexity of writing workshops via participation and reflection.

Traditional formal discourse was sanctioned in a variety of ways. We reviewed Standard English practices using Diane Hacker's A Writer's Reference and the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (1995). Students were expected to use Standard English in their issues papers and their research paper, which also required APA format. When students came to ask about a particular paper, it was often about how to move it to a more academically appropriate discourse.

The stated course objective most directly related to traditional formal discourse (though also tied to other discourses) was to recognize personal areas of writing strength and address areas that need work.

Sociopolitical aspects of writing were examined and discussed through readings like June Jordan's article "Nobody Mean More to Me than You and The Future Life of Willie Jordan," a political essay about a class the author taught on Black English and a young African-American student in the class. The student struggles to understand the injustice in South Africa while dealing with the death of his brother, which resulted from New York police brutality. She discusses the power and clarity of Black English and issues of oppression.

Gloria Anzaldua's "How to Tame a Wild Tongue" examined language use from the point of view of a woman who grew up between two cultures and who sees herself

as living in a “borderland,” where two languages and cultures meet. Amy Tan also looks at the “different Englishes” she grew up with in her piece “Mother Tongue.”

Unlike many of the writing classes in the English department of this university, this class did not emphasize a social constructivist philosophy. I did, however discuss some sociopolitical aspects of language, especially as regards how it shapes our perceptions of ourselves and how others perceive us. The politics of language was not the focus, but simply a footnote in what I have come to realize was a more traditional approach to composition. Lu’s (1992) call to “find ways of foregrounding conflict and struggle not only in generation of meaning or authority, but also in the teaching of conventions of ‘correctness’ in syntax, spelling, and punctuation” (p. 910) was largely unheeded.

Sanctioned most explicitly was process method, and I encouraged them as future writing teachers to employ it. While we had discussions about the politics of language in writing, in retrospect, there was no explicit discussion of expressivist and traditional formal philosophies by name. In fact, it was not until I was working and reworking my data that I began to realize my students’ discourses were so closely tied to the three composition ideologies of traditional formal, expressivist, and process. It was this study of student language that led me to basic writing research, which, in turn, led me to the stunted growth, initiation, and conflict metaphors that now frame much of the identity category.

It is clearer to me only now that the expressivist ideas in my classroom may have been in tension with my traditional formal requirements. While I praised the importance of personal voice, I often demanded a more formal rhetoric. Another

tension I only recognized in retrospect had to do with my assumptions related to bootstraps discourse. I saw students as somewhat naïve and politically innocent when they attributed their lack of success to their need to just “work harder.” Now I realize that my process philosophy was often about trying harder or repeatedly to make writing improvements. The expectation that somehow they would move to a more sociopolitical understanding of their situations was probably naïve and politically innocent on my own part.

What identities were made available in this classroom? Again, in retrospect, I offered them many of the same identities they had found in previous writing classes. I hope I offered them more opportunity to be satisfied and competent with their work, but that may be what most writing teachers would say. I realize, now, that the conflict identity was not really available in this classroom, though we often spoke of the politics of language. While we did discuss the idea that language choice has political dimensions, I don't think I offered, for example, a choice of dialect or furthered their understanding that assuming the discourse I was requiring in their formal papers may actually have required them to surrender a piece of their identity or compromise a part of them closely related to issues of class, race, ethnicity, etc. Quite honestly, what seems so natural as I discuss theoretically what a writing classroom can be, would have seemed revolutionary in terms of my practice at that time.

## Summary

This chapter named and defined the discourses that are used in the findings for questions one and two. They include Traditional Formal, Expressivist, Process, Bootstraps, Multicultural, LD Medical, and Second Language and Sociopolitical.

This chapter also reviewed the types of identities that will be important in discussing findings. Three major identities have been drawn from basic writer research and include the concepts of stunted growth, initiation, and conflict. Also, identities associated with competence and satisfaction with writing were discussed, as well as the commentary that personal aspects of identity having to do, for example, with race or ethnicity would be self-explanatory in the coding.

As a conclusion, I discussed which of these discourses were sanctioned in the course either explicitly or implicitly through course curriculum.

## CHAPTER 5

### FINDINGS FOR QUESTION ONE

#### Introduction

In this chapter, I describe the various ways students identified as writers in the writing classroom under study and discuss the influences they reported as affecting their identities. I also analyze how students enacted writer identity in the classroom in light of their self-descriptions. While I use a variety of terms to discuss writer identity, I have, however, appropriated the terms positive and negative as a means of describing a student's relationship to the concept of authorship both in the academy and outside of it. These terms are not meant to assume that binary poles are the optimal way of "measuring" writer identity, as measurement is not the focus of this study. The terms positive and negative do provide a standard of comparison, however, and may best be viewed as points on a continuum. They help us see how individual participants have "created" their identity and both assimilated and pushed against the social and cultural forces at work in their world.

Question one is as follows: In what ways do students identify as writers in a writing classroom, what do they report as influences on these identities, and what displays of behavior in the classroom contribute to an understanding of their identities?

The term "positive writer identity" indicates a sense of how students have embraced writing and been welcomed or positively embraced by those who have read and/or responded to that writing. Positive indicates a degree of confidence "Negative writer identity" will indicate a sense of how students have felt outside their perceived

vision of what writing “should” encompass. Negative refers to a lack of optimism about writing, a sense that it is less effective or without reward. Because discourse communities “create” their participants, and schools, universities, and testing agencies are discourse communities which often focus on who is the “Good” student or writer and who is the “Bad,” the terms positive and negative seem most appropriate for this initial discussion.

This report of findings for the first two parts of question one is based primarily on students’ initial written responses regarding their writer identity and influences on that identity that were written in the first few weeks of the semester. The third part of question one, the ethnographic data, comes from student writing, conferences, discussion, behaviors, and field notes occurring over the course of a university semester.

### Student Constructed Identity

The initial assignment for students included the following questions: Who are you as a writer? Who or what has had the most influence on your construction of this writer identity? What have been your best and/or worst experiences with writing in terms of someone simply responding to or evaluating your writing? Students were asked to “wander around in their thinking” and respond as informally or formally as they chose. They were free to use any genre, so if they preferred to answer with a letter, an essay, or journal-type response, all would be acceptable. They were required to write a minimum of one typed page for each question. This was my attempt to circumvent the two-line answers that required little explanation of their initial response.



### Initial Identities

There were twenty-one students in the classroom, and all twenty-one of them demonstrated mixed identities to one degree or another. Some clearly identified more negatively and others more positively, however, often appropriating the language of school to define themselves and then to further explain their definitions. For example, one student said she felt “capable” in her writing, specifically mentioning being “confident in terms of communicating information to the reader,” though it was rare, according to her own report, to feel uninhibited about writing an assignment for school.

Some components in writer identity construction included terms usurped from the evaluative aspects of classroom discourse. Examples are “I’m slightly above average,” “I am an intermediate level writer,” “I often feel my writing is not good enough,” “I would never stand up to a very educated writer,” and “I have never excelled in writing.” This standards/ traditional formal discourse was fairly typical as, not surprisingly, students took school’s evaluative language, so familiar to them by the time they were college age, and used it to create an identity.

### Expressivist Discourse and Identity

Of the twenty-one students responding, sixteen stated a clear preference for personal writing or writing in the expressivist tradition. In many of the following excerpts, the expressivist discourse is quite clear. It was interesting to note that of these sixteen students, there were those that claimed to be strong writers and those that claimed to have difficulty. While some of the following simply espouse what

expressivists have long said about writing for the self, others (coded conflict) reflect possible aspects of the conflict metaphor as they relate to writing and identity.

- I have a sense of fulfillment when I write about something that has to do with me or someone close to me.
- Writing has helped me come to terms with something that had been bothering me.
- I have embraced writing as an opportunity to express feelings and opinions.
- I feel capable as a writer but prefer writing for myself.
- Personal writing is good.
- I try not to write in order to please others but rather to express myself for myself.
- I write to release stress, to figure things out. I have so many pages of my feelings that sometimes I think I'm crazy.
- Writing has always been a part of my life, whether it was passing notes in 4<sup>th</sup> grade or writing in a journal.
- My writings are my way of broadcasting my feelings of the world to the world: writing became my way of expression to understand the world.
- I am passionate in my writing and write from the heart.

When asked to tell "Who are you as a writer?" what we are hearing here is that many students see themselves as writers in the expressivist tradition. Many have an affinity for writing when it is meaningful and important to them personally. This type of writing does not focus on "correct grammar," "extensive vocabulary," or "sounding

educated.” It often is about communicating a sense of oneself, or, as one student put it, “... my way of broadcasting my feelings of the world to the world.”

About three-quarters of these students see themselves in a positive light as writers when they write in the expressivist mode. Of note here, also, is that a larger number of students actually mentioned or discussed preferring the personal assignments that were a part of our work for the class. These included memory reflections, poetry about the self, and journals. I am not using a higher number than the sixteen of twenty-one, however, as it is possible that their later discussion was influenced by the fact that all of their personal assignments did not have to go through the more rigorous draft process of most of their more academic pieces. This made them less “high stakes” than their issues paper, research paper, and resume, perhaps reflecting less time pressure in their very hectic schedules. Thus, the primary data for this point was garnered from their initial papers that asked them to reflect on their identity.

#### Traditional Formal Discourse and Identity

In these initial “Who are you as a writer?” papers, it was interesting to find that seventeen of the twenty-one students expressed concerns strongly related to traditional formal discourse. Even students who claimed to enjoy writing, felt that concerns about issues such as grammar, language choice, structure and organization were problematic and contributed to stress, fear, and writer’s block in assigned work. The identity aspects of “stunted growth” and “initiation,” as discussed in Chapter IV, are clearly intimated in the following excerpts and are noted in parentheses in some cases.

- One student, who claimed to love writing, wrote that spelling problems made her self-conscious and she thought people critiqued her informality. She feared not producing “the kind of papers teachers wanted.” (initiation)
- Another said that while she never excelled in writing but her “skills were average,” she wished to improve her vocabulary in order to impress others with her knowledge of the English language. (initiation) Of some interest is the fact that while she spoke English as her first language, both of her parents spoke English as a second language.
- One woman felt her writing was “too elementary” and would never stand up to that of “educated writers.” She felt more embarrassed about her writing when she heard the papers others wrote. (shades of stunted growth and initiation)
- Another mentioned “problems with my written assignments flowing properly” as well as difficulty organizing, starting, and concluding a paper. She claimed that writing had been her “weakness” for as long as she could remember. (shades of both stunted growth and initiation)
- One stated that though her English teacher father helped her with grammar skills, she took criticism from others very personally and writing felt like a burden. She felt she “babbled a lot” and “bored” readers, never writing “good enough.” (stunted growth)
- One student specifically referred to concerns about her “academic writing,” fearing the “quality is not good enough.”
- One woman wished she could be “eloquent” but was “terrible when it comes to structure” and “setting up a paragraph around a point.” (initiation)

- One stated simply that she did not enjoy academic papers and was not good at them. She wrote, also, that academic papers with their required structures “burn me out.”
- Another woman simply reported her “biggest weakness is grammar” (stunted growth)

At the time I was teaching this class, I was not thinking about expressivism and traditional formal discourse. In fact, I had read my results, initially, with surprise at how many of these future educators did not seem to “like writing.” It was many readings later that I realized it was not writing they disliked, but the conflict so many of them felt when asked to assume a discourse that was not only less familiar, but which often changed from department to department. Those assignments were frequently read with an eye not on the message of the writing, but on what errors the writer had made in producing the piece. Comments such as the “professor made me feel like a failure” and “I’ve become afraid to take risks with my writing” help tell that story.

What I saw on closer examination of students’ statements was that many of them actually did like writing, even those who went on to discuss the problems they had with structure, vocabulary grammar and organization. What was problematic for the majority were aspects of a discourse which was new for some, which is subject to change from not only department to department but paper to paper, which is privileged and has many political dimensions, and which is often not explicitly discussed in the classroom. That students’ identities are multiple and conflicting when it comes to writing is understandable in light of what they say about who they are as writers.

## The Exception

Only one of the twenty-one students specifically mentioned a preference for academic writing. This young woman felt she always had “good format” and her papers were “grammatically well done,” but she was self-conscious about her ability to make the content of the writing “exciting” and felt she could not “expose self the way her teachers wanted.” In sum, her writing was “bland compared to others” and academic writing was preferable. This woman’s identity was a reminder that there were limits to expressivism and personal writing, and that one’s affinity for sharing aspects of the self varies tremendously from individual to individual. There is comfort in the academic and its logical, reasoned discourse for some, especially when one is privileged to have access to its many dimensions. Not surprisingly, this young woman is someone I would have categorized as a “strong writer” if I were to make that judgment by reading her portfolio. I also realized that English departments have instructors who themselves are strongly expressivist, process, or traditionally formal, but who may never have articulated their teaching philosophy explicitly. Before this research, I was one of those instructors.

## Process Writing Discourse and Identity

Only three of the students mentioned a preference for Process writing in their initial identity paper. These three women mentioned that working on drafts helped them improve each time a new draft was completed. All three of them drew from bootstraps discourse the concept that hard work would help them or had helped them succeed in some fashion. It is interesting to note that two of the three had fathers who were

English teachers who worked through their drafts with them, and the third was married to an English teacher who also assisted her with writing drafts for class assignments. It seems as if their close association with people who taught writing gave them access to this process discourse, which now they integrated into their writing identity. While this class they were in would also focus on process, their words and the statements of the seven who follow who did not like process have given me much to think about.

These three women also had in common the clear statement that they enjoyed writing. Each of them, however, also mentioned their “fear” of criticism and the idea that they did not in some way measure up to their own and others’ concept of “good writer.” Despite specifically mentioning the philosophy of process, they intertwined the discourse of traditional formal/ standards and the identity of the “uninitiated” in their papers. The following is a sample:

- Writing is a burden and I often feel discouraged by it, that it is not good enough.
- I take criticism too personally.
- I fear my papers are not as good as my peers.

Process discourse also was used by another seven of the twenty-one students, all of whom had negative things to say about it. It is very possible that elements of the stunted growth identity informed these writer identities as the idea that their writing was somehow deficient was an element in most of their discussion. For many of them the idea of having peers read their work was particularly uncomfortable or stressful. For students who might be feeling that their work is immature or deficient in some way, or who feel the job of a response group is to critique or find errors, that discomfort is understandable.

- I fear peers will be judgmental and base their ideas about me on my writing.
- I don't like sharing my writing.
- I fear others will think my writing stupid.
- I fear negative responses from my peers.
- At times I alter my works until the final draft doesn't relate to the original copy .

Because the work of the class was to be centered on a process philosophy with response groups meeting frequently to discuss their work, I found this information somewhat unsettling when I first read their identity papers. Later I would find, however, that introducing Peter Elbow's methods of response was helpful both to students who were "concerned" about others reading their work and to me as an instructor who did not expect students to "edit" or "fix" each other's work. Many of the students who disliked process had been in groups where students were asked to correct one another's work. We kept to the idea of a coach, with questioners, summarizers, and pointers who asked questions and discussed ideas. Process classrooms can be used for so many different reasons; it was helpful to hear about the students' concerns and fears before setting up my structures.

#### General Positive Statements of Identity

In addition to identities that drew on traditional academic, expressivist, and process discourse and utilized the metaphors of basic writer identities (primarily stunted growth, initiation), there were a few purely positive statements of student writer identity. Some students talked about liking writing in specific genres and some just kept more general. While these were frequently mixed with negative aspects or



concerns, it was clear that for some, writing was a joyful experience. A sampling of these follows:

- I love writing.
- Overall, I am a good writer.
- I am fond of writing and enjoy writing poetry.
- I am a pretty good writer and can hold my own.
- I love to write in different genres.

### Summary of Stunted Constructed Identities

Defining ourselves on paper is, perhaps, never an easy task. Students undoubtedly must have wondered what I would do with the information about them and if there was a “right” or “wrong” answer. The identity papers give evidence that many writers of these had expressivist leanings and feared or worried about not being able to write well in academic situations. Process writings that link to academic tasks and evaluative judgments made a number of students uncomfortable. Feeling they were stunted or deficient in skills certainly contributed to the negative constructions as, having been judged less capable by others, they assumed that identity for themselves. What is clear, though, is that identity is indeed multiple and even conflicting, depending on a variety of factors. Writer identity does not have to do with simply having skills or not having them. It is not solely influenced by how teachers, peers, or family may have reacted, though these can all be important factors. Identity is complex, layered, and situational.

## Student Reports of Influences

Another focus of this study is students' perceptions of influences on their construction of their writer identity. The question was asked directly to them in their writing assignment, but asking them to tell a story about someone's reaction to their writing also provided further information. In the same way that I wondered how students would construct their writer identities, I also wondered what they perceived to be the most influential factor on those identities. I wondered if issues of race, class, ethnicity and disability would appear as part of their conversation for these can influence language in many ways. I also wondered if influences more commonly talked about in educational circles such as talent, personality, training or teachers would be mentioned. The findings are as follows.

### Family as Influence

One third of the twenty-one students mentioned family members as influential on how they saw themselves as writers. Three of that seven viewed family influence as positive, two negative, and one as positive in some ways and negative in others.

On the positive side, siblings and parents provided the inspiration, with no specific reference to types of writing. General encouragement and inspiration were the norm for two of the students while the other two wrote about academic assistance from fathers who assisted with skills and the drafting process. Ironically, one of the students who mentioned her English teacher father as someone who encouraged and assisted, also said he was a negative influence, shaping her writing to a standard he believed to be correct. The three students who referenced family as negative influences felt they

did not measure up to the high quality of their siblings' writing, thereby feeling less competent compared to their sisters. While only one actually referenced academic skills, the measuring, judging and comparison language of traditional formal discourse is woven throughout their statements.

Examples of family as influence statements follow.

- One woman referenced a younger sister who wanted to be a journalist and whose excellent writing provided inspiration for improving her own.
- One woman said her mother was very encouraging overall; her brother encouraged her to be an active writer, and the memory of her deceased father continued to guide and inspire her.
- One woman recalled how her father inspired her and helped her with her grammar skills. She said he is the "principal influence in my writing advancement."
- Another young woman also said her father had the greatest influence on her as a writer as he was a high school English teacher and always encouraged her, helped her with papers, worked on drafts, and taught her that writing was a process. He was also a negative influence as he wanted her to write papers "his way."

All of the students who mentioned family as a positive influence were women, two of them referencing academic assistance from educated fathers.

Three of the students mentioned family members as a negative influence.

- One woman said her sister at Yale was such a good writer that it always made her feel inferior.

- Another woman referenced sibling competition and said her younger sister was such an excellent writer that she herself felt discouraged because she could never write as well.
- The same woman that felt her English teacher father was such a positive influence also felt he took the joy out of writing for her and was the cause of many battles during her high school years, always demanding that she complete multiple drafts and write to his standards.

### Teachers as Influence

For the ten students referencing teachers as a positive influence, three actually discussed that influence in terms that were expressivist in nature, e.g. writing from the heart and liking certain creative works. Three references were more traditionally academic in nature, e.g., the challenge to improve or get good grades. Several of the students in this category made more general statements regarding teacher feedback and told how positive feedback made them feel like more successful writers. Examples of teachers as positive influences follow.

- One young man recalled his senior year teacher who made him write more than he had in his whole life. While he said his school system was nothing to brag about, this teacher always challenged him and the rest of the class to do better.
- One woman said her freshman composition teacher really affected her when she told her she was one of the strongest writers in the class. Her “grades” from teachers had really had the “biggest influence” on her identity, though she never really received bad grades.

- One young woman said her senior year teacher influenced her love of writing by teaching her to write from her heart and value what she had to say.
- Another young woman mentioned a teacher who also told her not to be afraid to write from her heart and that had influenced how she saw herself as a writer.
- One woman said that just being in college inspired her to want to write well as teachers expected good writing and she wanted to do well.
- One young woman said that a teacher who really liked her poetry shared it with the class and thereby inspired her to continue her personal writing.

Of the four students referencing teachers as a negative influence, all referred to instructors' remarks regarding their skills or skill level. Their references seem to pick up on the more traditionally academic nature of their writing.

- One student was told by a professor to "take a writing course" and lost her confidence.
- Another woman said that red marks all over her paper from one professor "ripped my heart out."
- One student had a teacher who made her paper a model for "mistakes" and felt horrible about herself and her writing for a long time.

### Schools in General as an Influence

Four students mentioned schools in general rather than specific teachers. For all of them, what they perceived to be the poor quality of the institution coupled with a lack of preparation for college work were cited as problematic. From their remarks, I infer that a lack of substantial preparation for academic writing required at the post-

secondary level was of concern. While this group did not give much detail, some said they did not do much writing, therefore they felt less prepared.

### Language as an Influence

Of the three students referencing language and vocabulary as influential on their views of self as writers, two were bilingual and one was the first in her family to be college educated. Two of these students viewed their academic writing as somewhat behind their peers, and the third felt a need to link creative aspects of writing, which he loved, to the academic work he was required to do in college.

Two students actually mentioned language or vocabulary as having some effect on how they saw themselves as writers. Those mentioning language as an influence did link their discussion to traditional formal discourse and its requirements for correctness and a more extensive vocabulary.

Clearly these three students may be said to be influenced by background and the requirements of academic discourse, but I have chosen the category of language as they came closest to discussing how social and cultural influences affect identity long before we had the discussion in class. Sample statements follow.

- One student said he was bilingual and needed help from friends when he was writing papers. He felt strongly that he was not a good writer, especially referencing traditional formal areas.
- One student saw himself as a creative writer but cringed at the idea of reading and responding to works that had no “relevance” to his “placement in the American scope” (He was Haitian-American). When a professor finally helped

him link his creative language to his academic language, he felt his writing changed for the better.

- The third student said she never questioned her writing ability on the personal level but had concerns about her academic writing because she did not come from an “educated” family and thought her language may not be good enough.

### Summary of Influences

Teachers, family, and schools were seen as the primary influences on writer identity. While two of the students referenced their bilingual background and another her family’s lack of a college education, students in general did not describe issues of race, class, or ethnicity as influential on writer identity. The students who mentioned their schools as poorly preparing them for college may have been indirectly referring to class issues, but this is not clear from their statements. Not surprisingly, teachers and family members were seen as influencing how students feel about their writer-selves. Talent, personality, and learning disabilities / modalities were not mentioned as influential factors by this group.

### Identity and Ethnographic Data

The construction of the student identities analyzed above was garnered from the students’ own words. The following discussion will utilize field notes, classroom data, and student portfolios. It is again important to point out that the terms “positive” and “negative” are, of course, broad generalizations. Used here, they are not meant to imply that student behaviors and words can be casually represented in binary terms.

Indeed, these terms have been chosen as a way of furthering and deepening understanding, while at the same time simplifying a discussion of how writer identity can be enacted. Certainly the concept of identity and the behaviors reflecting that identity are more intrinsically complex and involve layers of both seen and unseen processes.

The purpose of the following discussion is to demonstrate by way of analysis how students enacted writer identity in the classroom in light of their own self-constructions regarding that identity. The terms positive, negative, and mixed are chosen to help the reader envision general tendencies in the behavior, not to categorically label students' behavior. So, the fact that a student falls into a negative pattern in no way means that all behaviors are negative. Rather, it indicates that more behaviors than not tend to fall in that direction.

Using the initial "Who are you as a writer?" paper as a base, I assigned general categories of more positive, more negative, or strongly mixed to each student. I used their first paragraph as my primary source of data, calling it a "Synopsis statement." The first paragraph for most students, I found, gave a general picture of how each one identified as a writer, with later paragraphs explaining and giving examples. It was almost as if, without realizing it (or perhaps many did), they had selected their thesis and went about proving it in their text. Of primary interest in the following analysis, however, is not how many identify as positive or negative. The focus is, given students' stated identity, what behaviors went on in the classroom to support and/or contradict those self-constructions.



### Negative Identity, Enacted Negatively

Four of the students who identified in a negative fashion enacted an identity that could be described as more negative in the classroom. I am defining a negative identity ethnographically as someone who may be late with papers, may be openly nervous or reluctant to join a response group, may express continued concerns about writing throughout the semester, may hand in assignments of a lesser quality, and/or may not complete assignments. Data summaries of those students who identified and acted negatively follow.

Student #1. Synopsis statement: "I feel embarrassed about the quality and content of my writing."

While this student often struggled with assignments and, especially at first, tended to hand in rough, unedited drafts for final drafts, she seemed to enjoy the chatty, interpersonal aspects of response group. She openly talked about being nervous sharing her own papers, however, though much more so in the first half of the semester. Her chatty, relaxed demeanor during response sessions belied the anxiety that she recalled for me later, saying, "I can remember feeling so embarrassed and afraid that my peer responder or editor would laugh at my writing or criticize it too much." She frequently made excuses for what she considered "poor" work, but her words did not translate to undone assignments, and her drafts frequently exceeded the required length, especially those that were expressivist in nature.

This young woman eventually took both peer and teacher responses seriously. While it took until the end of the semester, she began to edit more carefully, develop ideas more fully, and organize her papers more logically.

Her final self-assessment (an assignment that normally runs two pages double-spaced) ran a full four pages, using one and a half rather than double-spacing. She spoke about thinking more consciously of what she had to do to make her writing better. This is a student who seems to have benefited more clearly than some from a process approach, i.e., taking time to consider review and redrafting of initial papers.

While she tended to be more negative than mixed in her overall class identity, she clearly had some positive tendencies. Certainly the fact that she never missed a single class nor was she ever late signaled some positive aspects.

Student #2. Synopsis statement: "I am not as confident as I would like to be and have frequent writer's block."

This young woman was usually anxious when papers were assigned, asking to review the assignment again and again. Even given the guidelines in writing and a discussion of the assignment in class, it was not unusual for her to stay after class and go over it once again.

She kept her focus on the "grade." At the beginning of the semester, each student was given written guidelines for grading. These covered aspects of workshop participation, reading assignments, journaling, discussion, as well as drafting and redrafting for the portfolio. Individual papers were not assigned letter grades, but "scored" with a rubric that indicated areas of strength and areas needing work for the final draft. Despite regular reassurances that doing well in this class was more about demonstrating use and understanding of process methods, it was difficult for this student to let go of performing for a grade each time she wrote and to think of early drafts as works in progress. This student's more "negative" writer identity in terms of

behaviors in the classroom got me thinking about how simply grading papers and returning them set many students up for an anxious cycle of trying to please the teacher. Seldom could I get this student to focus on issues of writing in general – clarity of points, pertinent detail, and logical organization. Her narrower focus of “How can I make this particular paper please you so you will give me an ‘A’?” was foremost in her actions.

Her fragility was also evident when she cried because a project she did before the class met with questions from a peer that were probing, but not overly critical. She had come from a middle class background and had made some sweeping generalizations about the quality of inner city teachers, which, of course, evoked reactions from urban students in our classroom. What I had perceived to be a useful intellectual exchange between students, she saw as a critique of her project. She again came to me after class concerned that her “grade” would be low because of the discussion with her peers that followed her presentation.

The “Give a performance, get an ‘A’” mentality remained her focus. Even though she did well in the class, the need for constant grade feedback and reassurance in place of content discussion contributed to the negative identity she held on to as a writer.

Student #3. Synopsis statement: “I am a very simple writer who would never stand up to an educated writer.”

This student was consistently conscientious about getting assignments in but always concerned about the level of her work. She often voiced worries about the breadth and depth of her own papers. Interacting in response group and listening to the

papers of her peers seemed to reinforce rather than quell her fears. She and I spoke at length about different “styles” of writing. I shared the example of an Ernest Hemingway versus Nathaniel Hawthorne to demonstrate that what appears to be very simple in terms of language, can be as rich and complex as far more intricate and convoluted language. For her, though, sophisticated vocabulary and abstruse sentence construction was what made “good writers.”

While she could be supportive and pleasant to others in the class, she was often more critical than helpful to others in response group. Especially the first half of the semester, she focused on the minor editing details of her peers’ papers, avoiding content and organizational feedback. I wondered if lack of regard for her own work made her want to appear knowledgeable and authoritative in response group, or if she just needed to learn response techniques. Not surprisingly, she may have assumed critique meant authority. After all, how often had her papers met with a similar response in her school experience? She had remarked a few times that previous teachers’ responses to her work had contributed to her insecurity.

She regularly asked questions about how to do things “better” or “well,” expressing concerns that her work would not meet required criteria. The research paper and resume were particularly stressful pieces for her, but she managed to produce satisfactory work. Traditional formal papers seemed a source of more stress than the expressivist assignments, though all appeared to present challenges.

Student #4. Synopsis statement: “I never thought of myself as a good writer.” This student was consistently late with assignments which, when turned in, were often partially done. Throughout the semester he remained nervous about working with

peers, especially those he did not know. He often waited until assignments were past due to clarify aspects he questioned, and, at times, would forget his paper when it was a response day. This student will be written about in detail in the case studies for question two.

### Summary of More Negative.

Three of these students were consistently anxious in writing situations. Even when the assignment was an informal journal, they had questions about how to do it and would frequently leave journal and quick writes incomplete or undone. Student #2, however, seemed to thrive on the social atmosphere of the response group, gaining confidence and energy with each encounter. Without the pressure to “critique” or be “critiqued” she found she had lots to say and, by the end of the semester, demonstrated an enormously different persona in the group. It took most of the semester, however, for her to even appear more relaxed when sharing her own work.

Clearly the responses of others to their work remained the focus of this group’s concerns. Though their writing strengths varied, their identities seemed tied to how they perceived others to accept or view their writing. For three of these four, my attempts to get them to understand response as an exchange of ideas rather than fault finding proved unsuccessful. While they all generally preferred expressivist tasks to more formal academic assignments, they were clearly neither comfortable nor confident about their ability to do either.

### Identified Negatively, Enacted Positively

There were three students who identified more strongly negative initially but who did not generally enact a negative identity in the classroom.

Student #1. Synopsis statement: "Writing has been my weakness for as long as I can remember."

This student's negative identity came across strongly in her initial paper. She talked about her lack of confidence, past difficulties in response groups, and dreading all college writing assignments. Her behaviors told another story. She was unusually creative in her personal assignments, often turning in polished drafts when only the rough drafts were due. Her more formal papers were well thought-out and well written. Every assignment was done on time, done completely, and met all requirements.

Though she was quiet and rather shy in the classroom, she was exceptionally helpful and willing to participate in all activities. Her attentiveness to her peers in response group was clearly respected and appreciated. She told me she had had a peer responder her freshmen year who "picked apart" her writing and made her feel like a "total loser"; clearly, she had learned from that experience about how to be a more helpful responder. We discussed the fact that helpful response is not easy to give, especially without training. We also talked as a class about how to set up workshops that "work" in their own classrooms and what to teach about peer response. This conversation may have freed her from taking too personally peer response. I would never have known she had major concerns about her own work from the work itself or

from observing her interactions with other in the classroom. Her expressed concerns were never evident in her behaviors.

Student #2. Synopsis statement: “I am concerned about the quality of my writing and fear it is not good enough.”

This student’s negative writer identity often puzzled me. All assignments were completed on time and done quite well. Despite her obvious pregnancy, childcare issues for her two-year-old, and a move from one residence to another during the semester, she kept up with the work and attended all but one class.

Like others with a stronger negative view of herself as a writer, this student seemed to lack confidence. She shared her perception that since she was a college student, she felt others expected her to always reach a certain “educational standard” in her writing. She believed that standard was something that did not come easily to her as her “parents were not college educated” and language use in her household was “different” from others. It had only been “recently” that teachers “no longer corrected the wording to make it sound more professional.”

In the classroom, this student performed “professionally.” Her assignments were done completely, as assigned, and on time. She clearly had done the required reading and kept a thoughtful, reflective journal. While she never volunteered to read aloud to the whole class or take part in discussion, she always participated in whole class activities and conversations. While reticent at first to give feedback, by the second workshop she appeared comfortable and performed competently.

She shared willingly within response group, discussing writing issues with some authority, despite the stress she mentioned feeling regarding time issues. She attended

classes faithfully and completed both expressivist and traditional formal assignments with evident skill.

Student #3. Synopsis statement: "I don't consider myself the best writer with my run-on sentences and organization."

This student will be reviewed in the case studies for question two. In summary, all work done was on time and done well. She was an active, enthusiastic participant in response groups. She talked about her fears regarding sharing writing with peers yet was the first to volunteer to read her paper to the class during our first open reading. She was especially helpful to her peers and proved an enthusiastic participant in response group. There are traces of second-language influences which, given some peers' and instructors' preoccupation with mechanics, may have created problems for her.

#### Summary of Negative with Positive.

For these three women, the negative identity they constructed seemed closely linked to the initiation metaphor. Despite their concern about issues regarding how to put together a good paper, my observations indicated they wanted to assume an even stronger academic identity and that became their focus. These women were clearly competent, articulate writers who set a high standard for themselves and were harsh critics of their own work. They had all taken to heart harsh or critical remarks from teachers and peer responders along their way and seemed to believe they were less competent as writers than they appeared to be in this classroom.



### Mixed Identity, Mixed Behaviors

Four of the students spoke of their multiple identities from the beginning and tended to act on those identities throughout the semester. They obviously struggled with some assignments more than others and were nervous at times about participating in certain tasks. All of the students were coded with strong mixed identities, and all clearly preferred expressivist discourse, that is they valued personal ownership of their writing, to traditional formal discourse with its rules and regulations.

Student #1. Synopsis statement: "I enjoy the idea of writing, but feel discouraged by it at times. I love writing but often feel my writing is not good enough."

This young woman was very positive about all class activities, "like Mary Poppins" I wrote in my field notes. For her, every task was a challenge to be approached in a positive way. She talked about her writing being "too simple" and she feared she would bore her readers. However, she really seemed more focused on attaining a formal discourse and using sophisticated vocabulary to enhance her ideas, perhaps conflating what one said with how one said it. She was anxious to assist others, but lacked confidence regarding the usefulness of her own responses. She had spoken to me about how best to respond to writers as she had difficulty moving past mechanical errors to development of ideas. With a little practice and instruction on the different types of feedback one could use (I recommended Elbow's methods of response), however, she appeared more confident and was soon sharing her newfound methodologies with her peer group.

This was a woman who cared about writing and had some enthusiasm for it. She talked about wanting not to just please others in her writing, but trying to please herself. She indicated that she had spent too much time focused on what others thought of her work and, especially given the fact that she would be teaching writing, would work harder to judge things for herself. For students whose main concern has been “how to please the teacher,” this move to a focus on self-assessment can be a leap. Melding the instructor’s requirements and one’s own beliefs about writing often takes another step.

Student #2. Synopsis statement: “My creativity makes up for my lack of ability.”

This student openly discussed her lack of confidence at the beginning of the semester as well as her concerns about working in a response group. In the early weeks, she talked about wishing to improve her vocabulary in order to “impress her group,” conflating use of vocabulary with strength of ideas. Her first formal paper was about college students and the use of fake ID’s. She said she would never forget stumbling over her own words because she had not taken the time to edit and feeling absolutely “humiliated.” Later, she recalled promising that she would save herself the embarrassment and never let that happen again. Thereafter, she carefully edited each of her papers before reading them to her response group. With her new-found confidence, she emerged a leader in her group. It was interesting to watch this young woman who had stayed after those first weeks of class concerned that she could not do the work evolve into a woman who calmed the fears of others and worked to boost her group members’ confidence.

This student did not abandon her focus on attaining a more formal vocabulary, nor did she let her peers forget that she felt “slang” was inappropriate in their academic papers. Her interest in language choice was, at times, consuming. While she said she “did not mind street slang at all . . . just in formal pieces,” she recalled how she stopped e-mailing a Boston friend because his letters “read like he spoke” and it was “completely annoying.” For students who preferred an informal vocabulary, she proved to be a tough responder!

This student’s parents were Greek immigrants and she was the first in her family to be college educated. Like a few others in the class, the desire to “sound educated” was strong for her. One way she believed this would happen was her choice of a strong vocabulary.

While she said at the beginning of the semester that creative writing was her strength, she was most pleased with her formal issues paper and her resume at the end of the semester. Her bootstraps belief that “When I put my mind to something, anything is possible” seemed at work for her, at least in this case. She revised and rewrote until she was satisfied, not just with the surface areas, but, later, with the depth and breadth of these papers. This is a student who seemed to embrace the initiation metaphor as she came to believe that thinking of writing as a process, where she could appropriate the specialized discourse in subsequent drafts, would make her a more successful writer.

Student #3. “I am an intermediate level writer who feels embarrassed about the quality and content of my writing.”

Assignments were often incomplete and final drafts still unedited. While an active participant in writing discussions and response groups, it was evident he had not always completed the assignments. He talked about enjoying writing that was personally oriented where he could use a more interesting discourse rather than a more “boring” academic discourse. He seemed to enjoy sharing his work with others as the informal, conversational tone of peer response groups fit well with his friendly, gregarious nature. Despite his difficulty with structured assignments and editing, he did not appear to feel the embarrassment or discomfort that so many others felt in sharing early drafts. He seemed to trust that his responders really were there to assist him in redrafting and to give him helpful feedback, no matter what the assignment. In many ways, he modeled the idea of peers as helpful coaches. This student will be discussed in more detail in the case studies for question two.

Student #4. Synopsis statement: “I am a writer in progress.”

This student, also, is discussed in more detail in the case studies for question two. Briefly, she was an English major with concerns about the quality of her work. She demonstrated high anxiety around new assignments, especially if they were lengthy and structured. She clearly believed that redrafting was helpful and that hard work would improve her writing. A number of papers were turned in late and she often showed signs of stress when a paper was assigned or due. This is a student who had come to see herself as “stunted” and a type of powerlessness frustrated her efforts, though she was certainly working hard to emerge as a more competent writer.

### Summary of Mixed.

This is a group whose skills varied tremendously, but all were able to recognize their strengths. While each of them preferred expressivist writing, they brought great energy to all of their work. The students with strongly mixed identity constructions and strongly mixed behaviors may, in essence, be representative of the majority of students I have worked with in composition classrooms. Some believe they are stunted and have missed important lessons along the way. Others are working to attain the discourses that will help them sound “smart” and “educated.” And still others rebel in their conflict to be successful in the academy without becoming “boring” and surrendering key aspects of their own identities and voices.

### Mixed Identity, Positive Behaviors

Four of the students who gave strongly mixed statements about writer identity demonstrated very positive behaviors in the classroom. They might typically volunteer to read assignments to the class, which was never a requirement, demonstrate positive leadership in their groups, complete assignments on time and well, and/or offer assistance to peers who were struggling with writing or process issues.

Student #1. Synopsis statement: “I am fond of writing but terrible when it comes to structure.”

This was a student whose negative identity constructions had to do with the more traditional formal areas. She was a very creative young woman and knew it. Even when she had to work in traditional forms, she would work to make them creative pieces, sometimes letting her creativity overshadow the task at hand. For example, the

students had to write a final paper at the end of the semester in which they reviewed all aspects of the work required for the class. Her final letter was more of a three-page story of her life rather than an assessment. Interesting and creative? Yes! Meet the requirements of the assignment? Not quite. An optional assignment (needed to get an “A” in the class) was a mini-lesson on some aspect of teaching writing. With a partner, she turned this “writing” lesson into an exercise on creative movement. Peripherally, writing was a part of the lesson, but it was not the focus!

Her enthusiasm for life and her creative artistry often overshadowed her lack of skill/interest in structuring formal academic papers. She mentioned numerous times her fear of writing, being intimidated by certain topics, and feeling “completely incompetent” when it came to research papers and the like. However, she did a reasonable job in completing all of the work.

While she came to class prepared and positive and readily joined in response groups, she was (according to her own words, not what I could detect in her behaviors) far more “in her element when it came to creative assignments.” It is true that these more creative assignments exceeded any length suggestions while her more academic papers just met requirements. Her view of what was important seemed to “conflict,” at times, with the requirement of traditional formal work. On the other hand, she worked to integrate her passion with the everyday tasks of the world, and like many others, met with success and failure in her journey.

Student #2. Synopsis statement: “My writing is never adequate enough but with my creative writing I have been more than satisfied.”

Like student #1, this student was creative and would shine when assignments were expressivist-oriented. Given his great zest for life and enthusiasm for all activities, had he not told me of his concerns about his academic pieces, I would not have been able to tell by observation.

He regularly volunteered no matter what the activity and emerged as a strong leader in his response group as well as the group at large. He was also an outstanding support for another student who was an extremely reluctant writer, coaxing him and assisting him with ideas and friendly gestures. His positive, energetic, and enthusiastic manner consistently brightened the classroom.

He was articulate in speaking and clever and creative in his writing, with formal assignments showing evidence of some second language influence. This was his first year at the University as he had transferred from a community college. He was taking an overload of credits and was involved in numerous activities on campus. For example, he was helping to produce a campus play and generously shared information about it and various other campus events. He regularly called to the class's attention events with noted speakers or interesting artistic productions.

He was often late with assignments, though this seemed to reflect a credit overload and involvement in numerous extra-curricular activities rather than concerns about writing. He gave some insight into his writing history when he talked about being unable to connect his creative talent to his high school writing assignments and cringing at the thought of producing required papers. He thought his lack of confidence showed in his papers because he had mentally constructed a model of what those academic papers should look like, and he was unable to achieve that goal. In college,

he finally melded the creative with the academic. This hybrid form of writing filled his portfolio, demonstrating a comfort level he said he had been unable to achieve before his post-secondary experience.

When papers were completed, they were well thought out and interesting. Like student number one in this category, if there were a way to add creativity to any assignment, he would. Even his final self -assessment was written as a poem! He summed it all up well with typical good humor. "I strive for the best, And prepare for less, But if I were to grade me, I would probably get an 'A' Oops! That doesn't fit the rhyme scheme, I mean 'B.'" "

Student #3. Synopsis statement: "I do not enjoy academic papers and am not good at them but am somewhat of a creative writer."

Despite her dislike of academic papers, this young woman performed admirably in all writing assignments throughout the semester. Her passion, however, lay clearly in her creative work. She said it very succinctly, "I do not enjoy writing academic papers nor am I very good at them. Academic papers are so structured, rigid and boring and I feel like I never get them right. It seems that I ramble on about useless information just to be sure I fill up enough pages. Creative writing is a lot different." I did observe a joyful aspect to her creative pieces and they have a fluency that is not evident in her issues paper and research piece. Her in-class behaviors did not tell a similar story. At all times, she worked cooperatively and with seeming enthusiasm.

The first day we were to workshop an academic piece, however, she did come to me about a bee sting on her hand. She thought it necessary to leave for the infirmary right away though she had no history of allergic reactions and the sting was barely



noticeable. Her fear, however, was genuine. She reminded me how difficult it was to share a part of yourself about which you don't feel very good. When she asked to be excused, she said the pain was traveling up from her arm; though she did not voice any concerns, I wondered if fear of workshopping her paper was also traveling in that direction. She returned the next week and said all was well; there had been no reaction of consequence. And, by the time we workshopped our next academic paper, she handled it like a pro. She had found a comfort level with her response group and had garnered respect from her peers for her creative ideas and unique approach to assignments.

Her work was always done very well. She had a clear understanding of all guidelines and always participated though seldom volunteered. Had she not voiced her dislike of academic papers, I never would have been able to ascertain that from observation.

Student #4. Synopsis statement: "I am many different things as a writer."

Despite openly discussing her "self-consciousness" as a writer, this young woman liked to share her work both in small response group and with the whole class. The first week of class, she had stayed after to tell me about her fears of having to participate in a writing workshop. I tried to reassure her about what we would be doing in class, but was not convinced my conversation had made her feel much more relaxed. The next week I was very surprised when she volunteered to read her very first assignment to the class! I would later learn that spelling issues were more her concern than actual writing issues, though clearly expressivist assignments seemed to cause her less stress than more formal academic pieces, which she never volunteered to read. She

later told me that her spelling remained on about a sixth grade level (as measured during her high school years). She told how a teacher had once used a spelling mistake she had made as a joke for the whole class (She had written "self-of-steam" instead of "self-esteem"). The incident had left her in tears and tremendously self-conscious about the way her writing would appear to others.

She was able to use all assignments to explore areas of interest, from the death of her father, to how schools deal with issues of homosexuality, to cooperative learning. As the semester went on, she worked harder on her final drafts, perhaps realizing that redrafting could improve those mechanical errors that concerned her. For one assignment, she told me she had created four separate drafts.

She offered tremendous support to her response group as well as others in class who struggled. When others voiced concern about assignments, she was always willing to discuss how she had dealt with a similar problem or share a strategy she had used. She was an active participant in class discussion and told everyone that it took a conscious effort to work through the intimidation she felt inside.

Without her discussion of the writing concerns she experienced, I would never have known. From all appearances, she was a confident, competent writer who was occasionally careless with her editing.

#### Summary of Mixed Identity, Positive Behaviors.

Something that these four students seem to have in common is a real passion for writing but concerns about their more academic assignments. Perhaps being so at ease with expressivist work (and they all were) where they received considerable praise,

they fell into the “initiation” identity, feeling they were not able to assume the same measure of success with their academic discourse as they had with their more personal writing. In classes where single drafts are the norm, creative ideas and approaches may garner praise, but their traditional formal approaches may have engendered a less enthusiastic response. Though a creative turn of a phrase often finds an appreciative audience, this is not true in all subjects and across all disciplines.

### Positive Identity, Mixed Behaviors

Three of the students who identified quite positively in their initial papers demonstrated far more multiple identities in the classroom. For these students, I wondered if their initial papers were more about giving the teacher the right answer than really exploring their feeling about writing. Looking back, I find their identity papers rather “cautious” in that they wrote more about what they were capable of doing, not what they enjoyed and nothing regarding writing concerns.

This was in contrast to the range of performances they demonstrated in the classroom. All three typically expressed concerns about writing assignments, both expressive and academic. There were some mixed behaviors around response groups, and they obviously struggled with some of the assignments or had difficulty with steps in the process.

Student #1. Synopsis statement: “I am one who enjoys to write and am pretty confident in my writing ability. I have every paper I have written since eighth grade”

This is a student who met every deadline, but she was often very stressed about her papers’ content. Her early drafts always needed substantial revision, and she was

concerned when her response group found them less than perfect. She frequently asked for detailed explanations regarding how to go about an assignment, and appeared uncomfortable when the assignment allowed for a variety of options. She wanted me to tell her the “best” way to approach an assignment and, when one was completed, if she had done it “correctly.”

In response group, she appeared to be focused on peer acceptance. Unlike many students who began the semester workshops that way and seemed to move quickly to more comfortable discussions about the writing itself, this student’s behavior remained rather stiff and uncomfortable when she shared her own work. She did not like to read first and offered numerous excuses about her work before sharing. Discussion or questions, even the most supportive and interesting, often evoked self-defensiveness rather than an awareness of the support she was receiving.

Her final self-assessment ran to six pages, covering every aspect of her work both in and out of class. The line “I realize this assignment may be a little tedious and difficult, but I feel it is definitely worth it,” sums up this woman’s approach to most of the writing assignments. They were like medicine, good for her perhaps, but unpleasant. There was no obvious difference in her behavior when the assignment was expressivist rather than traditionally academic.

Despite this stoic approach, I believe she did take a baby step in the direction of self-confidence. She told me she had been reflecting a great deal on this writing course and had come to an important realization. “I realized the writing is mine,” she said. “If I am happy with it than I should be satisfied. I know I will never be able to satisfy everyone so I have become happy knowing I have satisfied myself.” For this young

woman, I do believe this was a critical step. She clearly had ability but somewhere along the way she needed the confidence to go with it.

Student #2. Synopsis statement “ I always have good format and my papers are grammatically well done.”

While this student’s identity paper mentioned only positive aspects of writing and her ability to perform required writing tasks, her classroom behavior indicated her identity was more mixed than positive.

Her papers were generally fair as far as meeting assigned criteria, but a few drafts were late and a number of assignments were minimally done. Even her revisions were not thorough or well-edited, and the more difficult academic papers were minimal, at best.

A quiet young woman, she worked willingly in response groups, though seldom enthusiastically. She was verbally more confident than her sometimes reticent behavior would indicate. I never saw her take a leadership role in her response group, and often she waited until others had read to share her own work. When I reviewed her journal, she did not appear to have read assignments on more than a surface level, as her written discussion was minimal, at best. I did not notice a substantial difference in attitude or ability when the assignment was personal or academic.

Student #3. Synopsis statement: “Writing has always been a part of my life. I wanted to be a writer at one time.”

This student wrote about loving writing but was nervous and verbally concerned about working in a response group. She was one who went from wallflower to spokesperson over the course of the semester, however. She said she did not like

writing on assigned topics but never complained or balked at the numerous assignments required in this intensive class.

In her first two response group sessions, she appeared tenuous and unsure. Her relief at the tight structures I put on the types of response one could give in the first few workshops was obvious. Her tension seemed to drain as she became more relaxed with each workshop. The presence of her cousin in the class further added to her comfort. Her cousin often stayed after class to chat, and she talked enthusiastically both during and after class about the workshop strategies and techniques we used. That enthusiasm seemed contagious as this student became more a participant and less an observer as time went on. By the end of the semester she was taking more of a leadership role and giving advice about strategies that other students in her group might use for the more complicated assignments.

Feeling safe and comfortable was important to her, and once she did, she was able to move forward and focus on different aspects of writing.

### Summary of Positive, Mixed Behaviors

These three students were probably not folks who came to this class with a love for writing. Unlike others who identified more positively, I suspect their initial identity papers were an exercise in hope and, perhaps, an attempt to say the right thing to the teacher. All three seem to be writers with serious concerns about their written work, but with a strong desire and hope that they would be more successful than they had in the past. They needed a little extra support, especially in the beginning. Given it, they were willing to take some risks in writing and response.

### Identified Positively, Positive Behaviors

Three of the students identified very positively and consistently acted that way in the classroom. I have not written them up individually because they were so strikingly similar in most regards. While all three of these students stated a preference for personal and creative writing in their identity papers, they brought a confidence and sense of enjoyment to all of their writing tasks. These three students had excellent attendance and all assignments were completed thoroughly and well. Despite the clear leanings toward a strong positive identity, in their written work, each added an area of concern to his/her initial identity paper. One wrote that she rarely felt uninhibited when writing papers for school; another said she feared peers would base their judgments about her on her writing; and another said he was afraid to take risks in his writing.

All three were exceptionally hard working and quietly positive in their interactions with peers and instructor. In many ways, these students exemplified the typical "good student" role so familiar in classrooms. They were frequently "invisible" in that they seldom volunteered, though were always prepared to answer if called upon. Their behaviors were courteous and polite, with a subtle, barely perceptible enthusiasm. If this were the workplace, they would be deemed professional and efficient.

While many students shared personal stories or histories either in writing or before and after class, two in this grouping did not. They came to class, did all the tasks as asked, worked efficiently and thoughtfully in all aspects of workshop, and handed in complete, well-done portfolios. The other often stayed to speak to me of his mother's battle with cancer and how that was affecting his semester, but never stayed to discuss issues of writing.

All three participated in our writing conferences in a similar fashion. They said things were going well; they had their revisions nearly completed and needed no assistance; they enjoyed the class and were confident they had done well. And they had.

### Summary of Ethnographic Data

Despite the numerous ways these students have been categorized in terms of their identities and behaviors in the preceding section, one concept seems to hold true. While there are numerous ways to define oneself and to enact identity, there are few observed “pure” strains of any behaviors. Borrowing the terms positive and negative to help construct a vision of the multitude of behaviors that could be observed along an imagined continuum, I found few students at either extreme. While some appeared to be more representative of one end or the other, the behaviors, discussions, and writing of these students would indicate that multiple and, at times, conflicting behaviors were the norm.

Despite a clear preference for expressivist assignments voiced by the majority of students, their behaviors around both expressivist and academic assignments, at least in terms of response groups, late assignments, and undone work, did not significantly differ. The process philosophy of working on an assignment until it was a relatively “good draft” may have eased the burden of “high stakes” one draft, one grade thinking that seemed to haunt so many when it came to academic writing. Having the opportunity to discuss papers and given the time to improve them mitigated the “problem” of mechanical errors, organizational issues, vocabulary use, and idea



development. It did not, of course, make it any easier to show that first draft to one's peers. Perhaps, though, knowing one would be reading one's paper to an audience of four or five peers provided incentive for spending more time on even rough drafts.

There are students who see themselves as "stunted," having internalized the educational conversation that presumes some writers are immature thinkers, cognitively deficient, with grammatical difficulties. Still others see themselves as moving in the direction of assimilation, that is, wanting to be "initiated" so they will sound more educated and be better able to negotiate the discourse of academia. In a few, the conflict of being on the borders in this educational institution is problematic. Labeled, perhaps because of race, class, or second-language issues, they know they must struggle harder without always being able to articulate why. Their fears about the judgment of others are strong, and not surprising given some of their experiences.

Students behaved in ways that both supported and contradicted the manner in which they identified. Given the task, the situation, the rewards, the penalties, the voices in their heads, their perceptions of others' perceptions, and a host of other factors, they negotiated their way through class as through the world, as best they could given the requirements of the moment.

#### Overall Summary for Question One Findings

In this chapter, student reports of their writer identity indicated that all twenty-one described their identities in a mixed fashion. Some were more strongly positive and others more negative, and most appropriated the language of school to define and further explain their definitions. Sixteen stated a clear preference for writing in an

expressivist tradition with three quarters of those seeing themselves in a more positive light as writers when using an expressivist mode.

Seventeen of the twenty-one students had concerns about aspects of their academic writing. They also used language that signaled stunted growth and uninitiated-type identities when discussing these concerns. Only one student preferred academic discourse.

Three students preferred process writing, drawing on bootstraps discourse that the hard work of rewriting would make them more successful writers. Seven of the twenty-one disliked process for a variety of reasons, but having peers read and judge their work was a major factor. A stunted growth identity, i.e. feeling that as writer their work was deficient, seemed to underlie their dislike of peer review.

Thus, identity was constructed by students as multiple, layered, and situational. Teachers, family, and schools in general were the factors students reported as most influential on their writer identity constructions. In general, students did not directly attribute writer identity to issues of race, class, ethnicity or second language.

The ethnographic study emphasized the complexity of human behaviors with numerous inconsistencies in student actions in the ways they both defined and enacted their writer identities. Even students who defined themselves in strongly negative or positive terms acted in ways that indicated those identities were quite fluid and situational.

The mini case studies of this chapter drawn from student writing and student behaviors point out the complexity of trying to examine writer identity using this methodology. While they highlight students' self-constructed identities and give an

overview of behavioral tendencies that support and / or contradict their constructions, they remain a snapshot view. To reach a deeper level of understanding, it is necessary to probe beyond what this method offers and garner a closer look through a microanalytic study. Discourse analysis provides the tools needed to examine more closely the discourses drawn on in students' construction of their identities as writers. Thus, we can understand those identities more fully.

## CHAPTER 6

### CASE STUDY FINDINGS

#### Introduction

The four case studies that follow closely examine the writer identities students assumed and the discourses they used and omitted/resisted in their discussions of writing and writer identity. This findings of this chapter address Question Two, which is What identities do students take up and what discourses do students draw on/resist/or omit when writing about or discussing writing and/or identity, especially those students who construct more negative identities? All of these students were selected because they had in common an uneasy relationship, stated and/or observed, with aspects of the academic discourses they had been asked to adopt. These students brought to the study a variety of sociocultural histories that had shaped and influenced how they positioned themselves in the academy, how others had positioned and perceived them, and how they, themselves, had perceived the writing requirements of the academy.

Conditions of their own histories add to the layers of complexity in each story, giving each case aspects of distinctiveness. At the same time, the mutual aspects of these stories also become evident.

For each of the four students, there will be evidence of how traditional formal discourses have shaped their identities. For three of them, their similar concerns about peer response in a process classroom reflect their fragile relationship with academic discourse. Of particular interest to me, as instructor and researcher, is the positive

relationship to writing that all four, but three in particular, experienced when the discourse was expressivist as opposed to traditional formal.

Tracy, a white female, identified in a mixed fashion initially and went on to demonstrate that mixed identity in the classroom. She brought to this study a very positive relationship to process ideology (Appendix B), unlike Mandy, who both struggled with and embraced parts of it (Appendix E), and Len (Appendix D), who so strongly mistrusted it. Tracy's stunted growth identity when using academic discourse shifts quite interestingly when she takes up process or expressivist discourse.

Vance, the fourth case study, while also identifying and enacting mixed writer identities, brings both philosophical and dialectal concerns about academic discourse to the discussion (Appendix C). An Afro-American male with confidence and a strong work ethic, Vance's frustration with the idea that hard work has not paid off is one shared by both Tracy and Len. He is embarrassed by the stunted growth identity he feels with traditional formal discourse, yet his positive relationship to expressivist writing and the satisfaction and competence he feels when using it constitute an important part of his story.

Len was chosen because his relationship to writing is more strongly negative than that of other students in the class. He both constructed his relationship to writing negatively in his initial identity paper and enacted a negative identity in the classroom. Information about his earlier life in another country, his language history, and a possible learning disability casts a light on how difference can have its price in the academy.

Mandy's story highlights a writer who initially identified more negatively, but who was a strongly positive in terms of writing classroom behaviors. She articulates a

solid relationship to expressivist ideology coupled with hints of conflict identity that researchers have come to know and better understand in the past decade. Also bilingual and bicultural, Mandy's struggle with diversity issues and the politics of her situation is tempered with her desire to be successful in the academy despite its oppressive factors.

Again, while there are many connections and layers of similarity in these stories, each, individually, enhances the study as a whole with its unique aspects.

### Tracy's Case Study

#### Contributions to Developing Story

Tracy was the only one in the case studies to embrace process discourse, though she used it primarily to discuss traditionally academic themes. She shifted between stunted growth and initiation identities in most of these selections, and she gives evidence that a process discourse can help shift a student from his/her own perceptions of a stunted growth identity. Tracy also illustrates how the philosophical stance one comes to class with can persist despite the subject matter of the course. With this student, threads of her deeply held beliefs about the importance of effort, the need for conventional correctness, and the conviction that her writing will progress echo through her work.

Tracy's educational background may or may not be an indicator of class or educational background, but her community college experience, by her own words, was quite different from her writing experiences in the university.

Finally, she presents some evidence that one hears the lessons of the classroom in relationship to what one already believes, a situation also evident with Len and Mandy. Tracy's views of process at the end of the course seemed the same as they were when she entered, and the identities she came with were the same as those she embraced when she left.

### Writer Profile

Tracy was a 25-year old transfer student from a local community college who took a year and a half off after high school before reentering at the post-secondary level. At the semester's beginning, she commented that she had lost touch with some basics of writing before transferring to the university. Information omitted from her discussion could have told us more about Tracy's reasons for attending community college before attending the university, whether it be financial, academic, or otherwise.

Tracy brought what seemed to be an enormous amount of anxiety to the classroom. Despite a syllabus that outlined the writing assignments and classroom discussion that reviewed the requirements of each task, she would often ask me to repeat what was expected for each assignment again. She was frequently late with work, including brief e-mail assignments designed to inform the class about a topic or brainstorm ideas for paper. She had balked at using the internet and doing the required e-mail work, saying it was too much of a hassle, she shouldn't have to, etc. We had held one class in the technology lab to assist students who were not yet computer literate and discussed why technology skills would be important to future teachers. I had distributed material to assist students in locating labs across campus and had

identified other students in our class who were willing to help those who were having difficulty. Still, she resisted.

Tracy's papers about writing usually sounded far more positive than the words she spoke or the behaviors she enacted in the classroom. She often appeared overwhelmed for one reason or another. For example, she moved residences during the semester and that seemed to set her back for a few weeks. She was carrying six courses, two of which were English classes, and this was clearly a very stressful load for her. Twice after class she broke down into tears when telling me about the semester's workload.

Tracy had constructed her initial writer identity as "a writer in progress," a seemingly perfect match for our process classroom. However, her late assignments, anxiety around most tasks, numerous excuses and regular complaints never led to anything near perfection and her complaining became quite tiresome to me as the instructor over the semester. Reassurances that this was a process classroom and drafts could be discussed and reworked did not seem to alleviate her distress.

While Tracy completed all major assignments and, eventually, got most of the technology work accomplished, her high stress level and insecurities did not make her a popular small group partner. On the other hand, once part of a small group, she did actively participate and often seemed to relax once into the throes of an activity. Her peers were very supportive, offering suggestions and strategies when she seemed particularly distressed. The influence of her English-teacher husband and "good writer" sister seemed deep rooted for her as will be evidenced in the microanalysis that follows.



It was both their well-meaning support and strong critique as well as her own wish to measure up in some way that perhaps put an extra burden on her.

Tracy was unusual in that her resistance was often displayed as a negative attitude. If she was not angry that she had to utilize technology, she was upset with the number of writing assignments. If it was not that, then the attendance policy or the late policy displeased her. She was an interesting student to observe, but difficult to move to a more positive state of mind around writing tasks.

### Texts Selected for Microanalysis

The two closely related pieces “Who Am I as a Writer?” and “Influences on Writer Identity” introduce Tracy as a writer already entrenched in process philosophy, especially as a tool to improve her academic writing. We also see aspects of both the stunted growth and initiation identities. Her mid-term letter reviewed her work over the first half of the semester, focusing primarily on what aspects of her writing needed improvement. She took up the stunted growth identity as she discussed her “weak” areas using traditional formal discourse. We also see her with more positive identities as she discussed her strengths in writing.

Tracy’s conference selection once again revealed her stunted growth identity and also better reflected the anxiety she brought to the course and her writing, especially in traditional formal terms. Because she has been judged deficient in other writing tasks, her concern that I would not recognize her efforts and also that her efforts had not been producing the desired results exacerbate her stress.

In her final evaluation piece, we get a glimpse of Tracy's resister identity, but also see the persistence of her earlier themes, effort is important, her writing will improve, writing is a process. We also see the reemergence of both the stunted growth and initiation identities. Her final lines are a reminder that a writer's focus on mechanics can be enduring.

These two pieces will be analyzed together not only because they are so short but because they are closely connected thematically. The microanalysis of this text showed that Tracy moves between the stunted growth and initiation identities while taking up a process discourse. She was one of very few who had bought into process writing philosophy before attending the class. Despite what she perceives to be problematic in her writing, she writes about improving drafts, enjoying feedback, and becoming better (lines 8-13), unlike the lack of confidence she usually displayed in the classroom. She also brings an understanding of peer response, perhaps related to her teacher-husband whom she counts on to review her work. Most interesting in this selection is how she moves from the stunted growth identity to that of initiation when she takes up process discourse (lines 7-8). She does not just see herself as a writer with problems, but as a writer who is addressing her problems through the process method and gaining confidence (line 14).

When asked to write about who or what had most influenced the writer identity she constructed for herself, she speaks again of her husband and sister (line 1b). She takes on a stunted growth identity (lines 4b-7b) when discussing her sister's "brutally honest" (line 15 b) critique of her writing. Hearing her sister's response made her rethink her writing and come to the conclusion that it did need work (line 7b). Here she

Table 2

## Microanalysis # 1: Tracy's "Who Am I" and "Influences"

L	UNIT OF ANALYSIS TRACY'S "WHO AM I" AND "INFLUENCES" Microanalysis #1
1	After reading this question the first time, I chuckled
2	I asked myself; "Me, as a writer?"
3	I used to think of myself as a halfway decent writer
4	My sister informed me otherwise
5	I took a creative writing class at the community college I went to before the university
6	I found I did better with short stories
7	As I thought about it for a few more moments, I decided that I am a writer in progress
8	The more papers I write, the better I get
9	The first draft is usually awful, each draft gradually improves
10	I am also looking to improve my writing
11	I enjoy constructive criticism
12	I am willing to listen to new ideas
13	And I like someone to edit my writing
14	This helps me feel more confident about my writing
15	My husband is an English teacher
16	And my sister writes extremely well
17	Between the two of them I get lots of feedback
1b	As you have just read, I feel that the most influential people in my writing have been my husband and my sister
2b	They always take the time to give me honest feedback
3b	I trust their opinions and feel they have more experience with writing than I
4b	I have not always enjoyed my sister's constructive criticism
5b	I never thought that I was an awful writer until she said to me, "God! Your writing is awful!"
6b	You would never know you were in college"
7b	I took a step back, looked at my writing and thought, "she was right."
8b	I did not write "polished"
9b	And that was how I wanted to write
10b	This is when I began to change my writing.

Continued, next page.

Table 2, continued:

L	UNIT OF ANALYSIS TRACY'S "WHO AM I" AND "INFLUENCES" Microanalysis #1
11b	I started to take more time with writing, to really think about what I wanted to say, and what words I wanted to use
12b	My writing has gradually improved
13b	It will keep improving with each piece I write
14b	I think the more writing a person does, the better they become
15b	I know this self realization would not have occurred if my sister wasn't so brutally honest with me
16b	For that, my writing is a work in progress///

moves to an initiation identity, commenting that her work should be more "polished" (line 8b), that is, she needs to appropriate the specialized discourse and conventions of academic writing. Tracy uses both traditional formal discourse and process discourse to discuss her discovery about her writing and her goal (line 13b-14b) for improvement. Bootstraps discourse, the idea that effort will most certainly lead to improvement, is also evident (12b-13b). While acknowledging that some response is not enjoyable, she comes to the conclusion that it has helped her progress (line 15b) and ends by saying, in her initiation identity, that, indeed, her writing is a "work in progress" (line 16b).

These pieces by Tracy lend understanding regarding the complexity of teaching writing for students who see themselves as struggling writers. Even though Tracy talks all the talk of process, she still finds the work painful. She is a student who wants to write well and accepts feedback from folks she sees as very qualified to give it – yet there is still something "brutal" about it. Beyond her sister's harsh words lurks the judgment of Tracy, herself, no matter how "honest" and helpful those words are meant to be. Her sister's response of "Your writing is awful!" actually echoes the responses

other students have said they have received from professors, making me wonder about the purpose and intent of their words.

Some of Tracy's later resistance behaviors make more sense in light of her introductory words. She is an English major, and, as she implied when she spoke about her husband, English majors are supposed to know how to write. As a teacher who adheres strongly to the process philosophy, I could see how, what students might perceive as the judgment of others, could be very stressful. Despite all the rule setting regarding response and how to ask for what you want rather than getting wide open comments, for folks who have experienced the "brutality" response can bring in certain situations, it appears difficult to trust and not feel stressed.

As Tracy would tell me later in the semester, "I enjoy writing my own ideas, but find difficulties with mechanics and organization." Tracy seems to have adopted the part of process discourse which focuses on improving drafts and the more one writes, the better writer one can become, embracing that process philosophy quite thoroughly.

This conference took place one month before the end of the semester. Students were invited to discuss any concerns they had about their portfolios, which would be due, complete and revised, the next month. We can see in this microanalysis that in lines 1-4, Tracy moves immediately into traditional formal concerns and takes up the stunted growth identity in her discussion of grammar, punctuation, and word choice. Her frustration (line 3-4) seems to be that no matter how hard she tries, those language convention issues still haunt her.

Table 3

## Microanalysis # 2: Tracy's Conference

UNIT OF ANALYSIS Tracy's Writing Conference Microanalysis # 2	
1	When I write I have a really hard time with mechanics like grammar, punctuation, just things like word choice
2	and I really try to focus when I write
3	I really try to focus on correcting those things
4	And every time I think I do a good job it doesn't happen, it doesn't happen
5	<b>I: Did you feel a shift when you moved to the university from the community college?</b>
6	Yeah, I mainly felt that last year when I went into English
7	But that was really a shock
8	I felt like I just got slapped in the face
9	That is how I felt
10	But I guess I am concerned, because I really don't want to, being an English major
11	Just because I'm an English major doesn't mean that I can write well
12	I am an English major basically because I like to read – not because of -
13	<b>I saw that in your letter and you made that real clear. So when you sit down to write, it sounds to me like you are bringing a lot of anxiety to it</b>
14	Yeah, I am because I feel like – like even vocabulary when I – I will try to think of a word and I am like what is a better word for whatever – any word – happy – I mean and I am like OK – I will think about another one and then I will pick a word and then it doesn't make sense – like I don't know.
15	<b>But that is why I want you to always think of writing as a process. When people totally focus on the mechanics of writing – sometimes they get that frozen feeling that you are talking about and I can sense some times that it feels more like a chore than a pleasure</b>

Continued, next page.

Table 3, continued:

16	Well that is not true because I do like to write
17	I do like to write
18	I love writing
19	I mean I do, I don't mind writing
20	I just,
21	It's been recently that I have gotten more insecure about my writing
22	Like I used to think I wasn't half bad
23	And then I think it was this year when I wrote a paper in one of my other classes and I thought it was decent
24	And then I got it back, it was totally ripped apart
25	And like some of the things he said to me I didn't even understand what he was talking about
26	And I was just kind of like oh my god, is it really this bad
27	And he was like "Did you even proofread this?"
28	"This is awful," is basically what he was saying
29	And I was kind of like, All righty
30	And I guess I was concerned because this is a writing class
31	I have done all the assignments and I worked really hard
32	See I feel like it doesn't show and I feel like you think that I am not working hard
33	<b>I: Do I somehow give you that impression?</b>
34	No, I think it is probably just my own insecurity
35	I don't like handing in papers that I don't have (her English teacher husband) check over
36	He is an excellent writer so he will go over things with me and explain things to me
37	I don't know if it is because I've been away from just basic grammar for so long
38	<b>Did you have time in between – are you still in your early 20's ?</b>
39	I am 25
40	After high school I took like a year and a half off from school and then I went back To school and even, like my writing, that was a long time ago
41	So I just feel like I lost touch with just basic things that I should know
42	And it wasn't really until this point that it really posed a problem for me
43	Like I have taken creative writing and I think my teacher was just very – she wasn't focusing on things like that and mechanics and like
44	I think my thoughts and ideas that I have are strong, but it is just basic things like that

My question to her in line 5 reflects the idea that the university may hold her to a standard that is different from that of her community college. She answers in the affirmative (line 6), saying that her entry into the university's English program came as a shock, as if she were "slapped in the face" (line 6), and here she takes up a stunted growth identity. I assume by what she said that Tracy found critique of her writing much stronger and the expectations of an English major's writing much higher in regard to language and discourse conventions. She offers the defense that she became an English major because of her reading skills, not because of writing (line 11-12), emphasizing her competent reader identity alongside that of stunted growth. She goes on to describe how even her vocabulary choices have become an issue for her (line 14), again taking on a stunted growth identity as she takes up traditional formal discourse.

In an effort to quell her growing anxiety, I offer the idea that writing a strong draft is a process and that focusing on the mechanics may make writing seem like a chore (line 15). Tracy quickly disagrees and insists she not only likes writing, she loves it, but then moves back to the idea that she does not "mind writing" (lines 16-19), emphasizing a more competent, satisfied identity.

In lines 21–29 Tracy reveals an incident with a professor not unlike the incident she had with her sister. The professor "ripped apart" (line 24) her paper, giving feedback she did not understand (line 25). All of this seemed to support the stunted growth identity she had previously adopted, especially in terms of traditional formal writing. Given the responses she had had to her writing, she was anxious because ours was yet another writing class. She feared that when I saw her portfolio, I would judge her to be a student who was not working very hard (lines 30-32), and bootstraps



discourse reflected an important aspect of her thinking. This may have been a fairly logical conclusion as I had discussed in class the idea that a number of pieces need to be revised and edited, i.e., brought to final draft status for the portfolio, assuming with a variety of responses this would be a task all could accomplish.

In another effort to help her feel less anxious, I asked if I had given her the impression that I did not think she is working hard (line 33). While she said she was just feeling insecure (line 34), she also went back to the idea that her husband was assisting her with drafts and grammar, especially because she had "been away from basic grammar so long." (lines 35-37). Here (line 36) we can see process discourse tied to initiation and stunted growth (line 37) wed to traditional formal.

Not having realized Tracy was an older student, I asked her age and found out she was 25, having taken time off between high school and college (lines 39-40). Tracy attributes her present difficulties to this time lapse, though more likely the university's more stringent requirements were the stumbling block. Like others in the class, she did not have these traditional formal discourse concerns about her creative writing (line 43), which she linked to a competent identity. She remained confident that her thinking and ideas were good, she was just not initiated into the discourse conventions required at this level (line 44). Here, reflecting a change, initiation is linked to traditional formal discourse.

In this piece we can see that the good effort, strong work ethic of her earlier pieces is no longer the focus. What comes through is her anxiety about the future evaluation and her concerns that she will not measure up. The negative response of her

professor and her own portfolio review have reinforced her stunted growth identity, which, at this point, seems firmly entrenched.

After reviewing our conference notes, it was more apparent that Tracy's anxiety about her writing cast a shadow over her classroom experiences. She seemed to have accepted that stunted growth identity and, even worse, had noticed that even a tremendous effort on her part had not "fixed" her. The line between the stunted growth identity and the uninitiated begins to blur a bit as the conference goes on, but on the whole, she seems to accept the idea that there is a problem that exists within her. This is the cause of tremendous anxiety, especially when she has not been as successful as she would like in "fixing" it.

In lines 3 –17, Tracy reviews her portfolio. We can see in the text of this microanalysis that using a traditional formal discourse, she reviews her "weak" areas, organization, word choice, wordiness, and mechanical errors. Throughout this discussion, she maintains the stunted growth identity. In line 13-14, when she says her writing needs some "fine tuning," she comes closer to an initiation identity as she seems to be indicating that her thinking is logical but she needs further work with academic discourse conventions. In line 15-18, though, she reverts to the stunted growth identity once again, identifying more as a beginning writer with grammatical difficulties.

In line 20, Tracy moves the discussion to her strong points. Interestingly, her conversation in lines 21-28 focuses on her willingness to improve, take criticism, and put forth a good effort. She does not really address writing issues until lines 26 and 27

Table 4

## Microanalysis #3: Tracy's Midterm Letter

line	UNIT OF ANALYSIS TRACY'S MIDTERM LETTER Microanalysis # 3
1	Dear Mrs. Fernsten
2	I am writing to inform you about the improvements needed in my portfolio
3	First and foremost allow me to start by addressing my weak areas
4	The organization of my writing samples needs revision
5	I am aware of my weakness
6	A more comprehensive organizational strategy would improve my writing
7	Secondly, word choice is an area of weakness
8	I have a tendency to over use common words, failing to use precise Vocabulary
9	Also, my sentences are wordy at times
10	Run-on sentences are also an area of difficulty
11	I try to over express myself
12	Lastly, the most evident weakness is in mechanics
13	My writing needs fine tuning
14	Proofreading would benefit me greatly
15	Punctuation usage needs improvement
16	Often times I use punctuation inappropriately
17	Also, my use of grammar is incorrect
18	I have always had a difficult time in this area
19	However, these areas can improve with diligent work
20	With my weak points addressed, allow me to share with you my strong points
21	Being a future educator, it is important to strive to improve one's Performance
22	As a writer I am always working to improve my writing
23	I am open to feedback, welcoming constructive criticism
24	I will encourage this in my own classroom
25	Another one of my strengths is effort
26	Frequently, I try to research my topic and write as much as possible
27	I think critically about my writing, trying to say all I feel and believe
28	The third strength is the passion evident in my writing
29	I truly enjoy writing
30	I find writing to be therapeutic, helping me express my thoughts
31	I enjoy writing in a wide variety of genres
32	This enjoyment of writing is sure to be heightened in my own classroom
33	Sincerely, Tracy

when she reveals she researches thoroughly and thinks critically about her work. Like other students, especially females, she mentions the "therapeutic" (line 30) nature of expressing feelings in writing and then moves to her enjoyment of working in a variety of genres, all of which, she maintains, should help her become a better writing teacher (line 32).

For this midterm review of her portfolio, Tracy began with a discussion of her "weak" areas and moved to a discussion of her writing strengths. While I wanted students think of writing as a process and rethink and re-vision their work, it is interesting that Tracy used process in such a traditionally academic way, i.e. here are my errors or what needs to be fixed, here is what is good. For the most part, her "weak" areas, as she calls them, focus on editing issues.

Her strengths, also, focused on the academic ideas of "striving to improve one's performance," "effort," and "constructive criticism," though they moved to her "passion" for writing and the expressivist idea of writing as a vehicle for expression of one's thoughts, as well as "enjoyment."

Tracy's consistent focus is on editing issues and effort. Effort is the key to improvement, according to Tracy. These are themes that Tracy discussed in her initial papers, brings up here, and reiterates in her final self-evaluation.

In Tracy's final evaluation, she reviews the different criteria of the grading rubric, explaining why she feels she deserves a good grade in the class. After stating she deserves an A/B (line 1) for completing most of the work on time, the microanalysis of this text shows how she goes on to say why she has not completed all of the technology requirements (lines 4-7). She has tried to debate the need for

Table 5

## Microanalysis #4: Tracy's Final Letter

line	UNIT OF ANALYSIS TRACY'S FINAL LETTER Microanalysis #4
1	In evaluating myself in this class I think that I deserve an A//B
2	I feel this way because first of all I have completed all of my work on time, with the exception of the e-mail assignments
3	I thought about the question of meeting the five o'clock deadline on Saturday
4	I do not own a computer nor do I have access to one
5	I realize I can use the computers at school but my address book did not send my e-mail to everyone
6	I think that e-mail should be optional, considering it is only used twice in the semester
7	These assignments I discussed with you and was told not to worry about them
8	I have devoted time and worked hard on each piece of writing
9	I realize that I need some serious help with mechanics of writing, but I am a writer in progress
10	I will progress as I continue to write
11	I think that my writing shows potential and displays my personal thoughts in each piece
12	...As far as a reflection of me as a writer, I think the most important thing I have realized about my writing is that I am more aware of my writing
13	What I mean is I focus more on what I am writing
14	I mean a paper or story is much more effective when it is mechanically correct
15	I enjoy writing and hope to improve as I continue to write
16	As a future educator, it is important to teach correct grammar, spelling, punctuation and word choice so students can write effective sentences
17	I hope that I can not only help myself as a writer, but help my students to write the best that they can

technology all semester and her resister identity comes through in this final piece.

Contrary to the assertion that she need not worry about them (line 7), she (as well as all of her classmates) was required to complete the e-mail assignments. Campus access to computers was provided along with a map to all laboratory sites and help from a

qualified assistant in setting up a class list. She was, however, persistent in her resistance.

In line 8, Tracy once again takes up the identity of hard worker, but moves to stunted growth identity once more when she reviews the mechanical aspects of her writing (line 9). Though she continues to call herself a “writer in progress” (line 9) as she did in her initial identity paper for the class, identity seems more stunted growth than initiation. In line 10, she reiterates the theme of her earlier papers that she will continue to progress, an ideology embedded in the process discourse she uses.

As in her midterm letter, she then moves to a competent identity, but this time takes up the expressivist idea (line 11) that her work “displays her personal thoughts” and shows potential. Of note is her reflection that the most important thing she has realized as a writer is an awareness of her own writing (line 12). This appears to be an initiation identity (again associated with a process discourse) as she seems to be saying that she can think logically but lacks familiarity with academic discourse conventions. While we had discussed the importance of editing final drafts, mechanical correctness was not the focus of the course, though in line 13-14 it remains of paramount concern for Tracy. As in her conference, she emphasizes her enjoyment of writing and her hopes for improvement (line 15). Not surprisingly, she says that as a future writing teacher, mechanical aspects will be a focus of her program (line 16). This final evaluation demonstrates how persistent a student’s own views of writing and self can be. She entered class with concerns about mechanics and as a believer in the process method. Obviously, these are ideas she is taking with her. While attention to Standard English conventions was expected in final drafts, it is still surprising to see it

emphasized so strongly in this final evaluation. I am once again left wondering how this class may have influenced her thinking.

### Summary of Tracy

Tracy is a student whose self-identification as a “writer in progress” proved persistent as she began and ended the semester with those words. She had many traits I associate with students who enact more negative identities, especially late papers and high anxiety around writing tasks. Tracy was one of few students who embraced process writing discourse / ideology from the beginning, discussing it primarily in relation to more traditionally academic writing tasks. She also linked it quite closely to the “effort will bring success” aspect of bootstraps ideology. This was despite some evidence to the contrary that strong effort had not produced the desired results regarding her writing, as least as yet. She is one of the three students to embrace process philosophy, all of whom were closely related to a public school English teacher. Tracy’s traditional formal discourse was primarily associated with a stunted growth identity. However, her identity moved to initiation when she took up process discourse.

Tracy also gives evidence of the powerful influence of family on writer identity. Even when her sister’s negative critique pained her, she used it not only to construct a writer identity, but also to decide she would make a strong effort to change it. She demonstrates the persistence of both identity constructions and ideological stance. There is little shift from her initial paper to her final letter.

## Vance's Case Study

### Contributions to the Developing Story

Vance took up the identity "intermediate level writer" in his initial writer identity paper. He said he felt embarrassed about the quality and content of some of his writing and feared not understanding some of the assignments. The discourses he drew on had him articulating traditional formal concerns about his grammatical correctness. He was, however, far more positive when he drew on expressivist discourse, saying he wrote his best when he could pick his topics; he liked best to "write from the heart."

To the overall picture, Vance lends understanding of why expressivist writing is important. It has allowed him to tell stories people like and accept, stories that have helped others understand who he is and what is important in his life. He was not a student who hated writing, but one who struggled with aspects of it. He brought a sense of pride and confidence to his work despite his negative experiences with more academic forms of writing. Despite some resistance to academic forms, he was not someone damaged by the system's negative critique. On the other hand, he realized his efforts had not solved his writing "problems," and though he was not giving up, I remain unconvinced that he really believed he would make great strides toward improvement.



## Writer Profile

Vance was a junior education major the semester he enrolled in this required writing course. He was an outgoing, friendly, talkative young man with an easy-going manner that endeared him to his classmates. He was also a member of the university's football team, which was to attain its first championship in many years that semester. As is usual for varsity team members, tutors regularly checked his progress to ensure he was successfully keeping up with assignments.

Vance was an Afro-American male from an urban area with traces of Black English Vernacular (BEV) in his speech. His mother was a grade school principal who raised him and his brothers, his father having left the family when Vance was young. Vance wrote, at times, of the poverty he faced growing up, the difficulty and violence of life in the projects, the disappointment he felt in his "no-good" father and the pride and love he had for his mother.

Ethnographically, his behaviors, like his identity papers, were mixed. A number of his assignments, both academic and expressivist, were incomplete. Many of his final drafts showed little evidence of comprehensive rewriting. On the social side, Vance worked enthusiastically in response groups, both giving and seeking support. He was an active participant in class, though there was some evidence that he did not complete a number of the reading assignments. He was a favorite partner in small discussion groups, pleasant and adventuresome, if not always prepared.

Vance reported that a male friend of the family had influenced his writing by taking the time and showing an interest in his work. He wrote that this man's interest

and encouragement, rather than his expertise, were very important in his academic success.

No matter what the assignment or how difficult he found it, Vance's attitude remained positive. He would inquire about steps to use to break down difficult writing tasks and regularly assured me that his tutors would work with him. If he had to miss time because of travel with the team, he would arrange to get the assignment to my mailbox. Vance could see a gap between his writing and that of many of his classmates, as could his response group. Still, he did not appear to become discouraged or frustrated. What keeps one student confident and enthusiastic when progress is slow is difficult to know.

#### Texts Selected for Microanalysis

Vance's "Who Am I As a Writer?" demonstrates the competent and confident aspects of Vance's identity while pointing out his acknowledged difficulties with traditional formal tasks. It was when he took up traditional formal discourse that he also took on the stunted growth identity.

In his "Best Experience with Writing" piece Vance confirms his feeling that given the right writing task, he is a good writer. His confidence and joy regarding the right writing task spur an identity of competence and tell the story of why he believes he is a writer.

The "Mid-term Letter" further discusses aspects of academic writing and demonstrates how he moves between the stunted growth identity and the competent

identity, depending on the discourse. He also shares aspects of his personal life which may put him “in the margins” in terms of traditional formal writing.

Lastly, Vance’s final evaluation reiterates the themes of his earlier pieces. He once again demonstrates the mixed nature of writer identity and how identity is influenced by discourse.

Table 6

Microanalysis #1: Vance’s “Who Am I as a Writer?”

	UNIT OF ANALYSIS VANCE “WHO AM I?” Microanalysis # 1
1	The type of writer that I am is that I am a straight forward writer
2	Whatever is on my mind that’s how I write
3	I write like the way I talk
4	If someone was to ask me about the way that I write and if I am confident in my abilities than I would have to say yes
5	I was always told that I have a vivid imagination
6	I know that I am not the best type of writer
7	But I am not one of those writer who would get you to lose interest and fall a sleep as you read something that I wrote
8	When I get the chance to write about things that I like I seem to excel in this situation
9	It’s like a river the ideas keep flowin and flowin out of my mind
10	Writing to me is just taking my ideas from my head and write it down on paper
11	My ideas just flow and I might misspell things here and there
12	And the grammar may be slightly incorrect
13	But the effort is there and I do try my best.

The microanalysis of this text shows how Vance constructs his writer identity and brings up three themes that will echo throughout his work over the semester. These are his stunted growth identity in relation to academic writing, his preference for expressivist writing, and his efforts to do well. He resists traditional formal methods such as planning out a paper and using a more formal discourse (lines 9-12). He also points out his struggles with spelling and standard grammar (lines 6, 11,12). Perhaps

without knowing it is a recognized writing ideology, he aligns himself with expressivists when he calls for writing from one's feelings about topics that interest him and letting the ideas flow (lines 7, 9). It could be said that, in some cases, the initial steps of process are very similar to what he prefers, for example the brainstorming, free writing and early draft stages associated with process method. Vance says he excels when he writes about things that he likes, but it is possible that the moving, interesting stories he likes to tell are written for audiences with expressivist leanings. His moving poetry and prose may appeal to a different audience than his struggling attempts to adapt to the discourse expected or even required in his academic classes. There appears to be some irony in the fact that Vance does not access a discourse that politicizes his language use or preferences in terms of race or class. While both class readings and discussions would later open the door to a wider understanding of what shapes people's use of language, that discussion is often left out of writing conferences and written feedback. I was to find, however, that even introducing those missing concepts may not have been enough to change years of experience.

The mixed identities that seem to be the norm of students in this study are represented by the different identities Vance assumes in this piece. He feels that he is an excellent, imaginative writer (lines 5,8) when the topic interests him, especially when he can share his strongly held feelings about family and the trials and tribulations he has experienced. He speaks further on this in his midterm letter. He likes to write about topics that are important to him in a language he finds comfortable and interesting. He expresses confidence about his writing but knows he has difficulty with spelling and grammar. It makes sense that he feels more confident in the expressivist

mode where these may be less a focus. The formality of more traditionally academic discourses may highlight his difficulty with spelling and grammar, especially as he struggles additionally with organization and idea development. One of Vance's recurring themes is that of effort. Tempering the idea that readers may not see his writing as good, he writes that he is putting out a strong effort and trying his "best" to get it right (line 13) taking up a bootstraps discourse.. Perhaps a reflection of an athletic discourse or even a holdover from the grade school concept that giving one's best effort is what really counts, Vance, like other students in the study, never loses that focus.

Table 7

Microanalysis #2: Vance's Best Experience

line	UNIT OF ANALYSIS VANCE BEST EXPERIENCE PAPER Microanalysis # 2
1	Well I must say that my best writing came here at the university
2	I wrote a story about my mother how she is the one I want to be like
3	That she is my role model and that all the things she did for my brothers and I while we were growing up
4	The teacher that I had for English 111 name is _____
5	She read my story that I wrote about my mother and she told me that she started crying
6	I was kind of in shock because no one has ever told me that before
7	So I felt real good and mailed a copy of it to my mother
8	Then when the semester was over I haven't seen Mrs. _____ since the last day of class
9	So one day I was walking on campus and I saw Mrs. _____ and she told me she was pregnant
10	So I said congratulations
11	But that was all she told me that one of the reasons for her getting pregnant is so that she can have a son like me and for him to write a story about her like I wrote about my mother
12	Right there that made me feel even better about myself
13	To know that I wrote a story that was so good it made someone go out and get pregnant
14	So that was my best experience with writing

This piece was a part of the second writing assignment of the semester where students were asked to discuss an experience they had had with writing. It is the only one of the three that filled a page on the first draft, as was asked. What is important about this piece is the sense of pride that Vance, who clearly struggles with structured aspects of his writing, can find in assignments that are more expressivist in nature. In lines 2-11, he recalls an experience with his first year writing teacher, telling the story of a chance meeting he had with her after completing the course. She recalled for him a story he had written about his mother and tells him she hopes her own child will someday feel the same way about her. Vance draws heavily on expressivist discourse when he tells me that, able to tell of his personal experiences and share what was meaningful in his life, Vance had found a powerful voice, one that made his writing teacher weep with emotion. After a lifetime of struggles with the usual academic assignments, he discovers it is not writing he dislikes. He rejects having to write in a voice that he feels does not represent who he really is and assignments that require him to write about issues that are of no personal interest. His former writing teacher's remarks have had such a positive effect that this event remains his "best experience" (line 14). Aspects of his life that may have been marginalizing factors, such as race, poverty, and language, have allowed him to tell a powerfully moving story, but he is not able to say why those same factors may conflict with his writing success in the academy.

The competent identity Vance takes on in this piece, while not in sharp contrast to the mixed identities of his other pieces, reflects some of the confidence and joy that seem such a part of who he is. What keeps a student positive and undefeated in the

midst of real struggles with academic discourse is not clear to me. Perhaps his personal belief system, which is religiously oriented, plays a part as well as a support system that includes tutors and an athletic department determined not to let him fail. It is difficult to say with any certainty.

In this piece Vance moves primarily between the competent and stunted growth identities of his earlier pieces. He makes clear that traditional formal writing is both unappealing and difficult for him and reiterates the pleasure he takes in expressivist assignments, especially when he is able to share personally meaningful experiences with his readers.

He believes he views his writing differently from the way others view their writing (line 1), but he does not really explain how. When using a traditional formal discourse and discussing areas like mechanics, grammar (line 3) and organization (line 6), he takes on the stunted growth identity. However, the fact that he chooses not to use "big words" (line 7) and "dilly doodle around the point" (line 8) are not problems in his writing, as he sees it, but a choice. He identifies as a "straightforward person" (line 8) as he has in an earlier paper, and that seems to be a part of his identity he does not want to relinquish. He seems to imply that assuming the formal tone and language of academic discourse would mean changing a part of who he is, a part in which he takes some pride. He associates his language with being straightforward and honest, but never moves to politicize this linguistic preference or take on an identity that demonstrates his conflict.

Table 8

## Microanalysis #3: Vance's Midterm Letter

line	UNIT OF ANALYSIS VANCE MIDTERM LETTER Microanalysis # 3
1	Dear Ms. Linda
2	The way that I view my writing may not be the same way that everyone else views their writing
3	As I sit back and look through my portfolio I realize that I really need to work on my mechanics and grammar
4	It's not like I don't know what I am doing it just the simple fact that the way that I write my papers is the way that I speak
5	The thoughts just come running out of my head like a waterfall.
6	I realize that my thoughts and everything is all their but my organization and grammar can use some fine toning
7	I also realize that I am not one of those people who choice to use those big words
8	I am a straight forward person so I tend to get right to the point and I don't dilly doodle around the point
9	I like the fact of getting feedback either from my peers or a teacher
10	I rather it be a teacher because you would not be a teacher if you don't know what you are capable of doing
11	By my being able to sit down and read a response on my paper or for someone to say it to me it just makes me try to work that much harder so I will not get a response back
12	Even though I learn from the responses I want there to be a time in which there is no response on my paper, that it is an excellent well-written paper
13	That right there is my goal to achieve
14	The times that I felt really good about myself in writing was when I write about something that means a lot to me or I feel very strongly about
15	Like when I write the story about my mother
16	I love my mother with all my heart
17	She is my role model and I want to be just like her
18	When I was able to display the feelings I had and the struggle that my mother went through raising three boys, getting robbed and evicted from the projects in Brooklyn, New York
19	Having a no good husband who took off when the going was getting tough
20	Never saw her kids except on Sundays when it was time to go to church and give thanks to the man upstairs for making a way out of no way
21	When I get to express my true feeling like that; I believe that I am one of the best writers, and my chances of making mistakes I (are) really low because that is all coming from my heart and when you are coming from your heart there is no way I can make a mistake

Continued, next page.



Table 8, continued:

line	UNIT OF ANALYSIS VANCE MIDTERM LETTER Microanalysis # 3
22	Now the times I feel like I am an average writer is when I listen to other peoples writings and they are using their extended vocabulary, and that they have such an imagination that makes me not even want to raise my hand and read my story
23	Not saying that I am not proud of it because I am proud of what ever I do but I guess I feel inferior or even timid
24	Well I guess that I have learned to have more patience in my writing
25	That change will not come unless I work hard at it then it will come
26	Also that it would be nice to be one of those profound writers but since I'm not don't stop giving up
27	And that it is not bad at all to be one of those laid back kind of writers who keeps you interested and not wondering what does this and that word mean
27	But I really notice myself working a whole lot more on writing so I like that change a lot
28	Sincerely, Vance

Like Len, in a case study to follow, Vance makes a minor case against peer response, saying he would rather have the teacher review his work (line 10) as s/he is more capable, but, unlike Len, he says he likes getting feedback from both peers and teachers (line 9). Response groups may have been uncomfortable for Vance at times, as his written language was often disorganized and unedited. Helping students respond to ideas rather than simply language structures takes work. During one early response session, two women in his group came up to me when Vance was out of the room and asked what they might do with a paper that had as many errors in it as his did. They felt that it was impossible to work with ideas before addressing some of the mechanics. Vance came into the room as we were speaking and though he did not hear the conversation, I assume he may have had some sense of it. Language difference, whether it is the result of race, class, education, or other factors, was an issue Vance

understood. Wanting to write a “good paper” and discovering all his efforts did not seem to change how his papers were received, remained a problem for him.

Vance’s goal remained to write a paper and “get no response” (lines 12-13), as no response would mean to him that it was a good paper. While response in this class was not supposed to be focused solely on critique, it is understandable that Vance’s experiences told him differently as the mechanical errors in his work often overshadowed his ideas.

In line 21 Vance articulates what expressivists have long believed, that being able to express his “true feelings” makes him one of the “best writers” because when one’s work comes from the “heart” there is no way one can make a mistake. Working with Vance made me more accepting of the genuineness and sincerity behind his words. He was a trusting young man whose strength of belief came across in both words and actions. His interest in doing well, his lack of great success despite his efforts, his respect for his peers, his optimism, and his can-do attitude were a positive force in the classroom.

When Vance listened to his peers’ papers in response group (line 22) he felt he was only an “average” writer, “inferior and timid” (line 23). While he has learned in life to stay “proud” (line 23), he feels he is not doing as well as others and falls back on the bootstraps discourse that hard work (line 25) will make the difference. His wish to write so people will stay interested and understand his vocabulary is a reaction against some forms of academic discourse. Academic writing shuts out some audience members and he has been one of them, so he opts for writing that he finds more inclusive.

Table 9

## Microanalysis #4: Vance's Final Letter

line	UNIT OF ANALYSIS VANCE'S FINAL LETTER Microanalysis # 4
1	As I look back on the work in this class I realize that I did a lot of writing
2	I came to this class thinking that I will not be (doing) a lot of writing and that it will be like English 122 the first writing class that you take when you get into this school
3	But soon after that my opinion was changed when we entered your classroom and you said that there will be a lot of work and if you just do the basic work that you will receive a "B"
4	That took me by surprise when you said that to us because that was one of the first comments you said after hi
5	but now I realize that it was all worth it and that it only makes me better because I got to pick and choose about what I wanted to write about
6	As I sat back and looked at my portfolio filled with the pieces that I composed for this class I realized that my writing stepped it up a notch than usual
7	I got the chance to write about things that interest me and in classes at _____ you really don't get that opportunity to do that too much
8	I also see in my writing that my writing is not the best in the world
9	I make a lot of stupid grammar mistakes that shouldn't even happen after I sit back and read my responses
10	Also in my writing my organization is not always there
11	I seem to start one thing and then jump to the next and then jump back to it
12	But I do like the fact that I do express myself well and that when I am on a topic I seem to hit it from every angle
13	I express myself and that is good I feel because when you write you need to be honest with yourself so that your true thoughts and feelings come out when you write
14	Lastly, I can say that when we had a deadline or had to hand in a paper that I was always on time with my work
15	It can be concluded that I as a person realize who I am as a writer and that I realize what I have to do as a person to improve and make my writing better in the near future.

In his final evaluation letter, Vance begins by reflecting back on the quantity of writing required in the class and the requirements he would have to meet to receive a "B" (lines 1-4). Because he was asked to match class requirements with his own work as part of the evaluation, this can be assumed to be his summative statement.

In line 5, he moves to an expressivist discourse saying that because he got “to pick and choose” what he “wanted to write about” the hard work was “all worth it.” Reviewing his work, he thinks it is of a higher quality than usual, in his words it is “stepped up a notch” (line 6). He does not explain what this means in any detail. In line 7, however, he again picks up the expressivist idea that writing about things that interest him is important, but that is rare in an academic environment. His portfolio is a mix of genres that include both types of writing he claims to prefer as well as the usual academic fare. Even for more academic assignments, students in this class chose their own topics, giving a student like Vance a personal investment in the work.

He recognizes that much of his writing still does not adhere to the rules of academic writing, especially in regard to mechanics and organization (lines 8-11). As he moves to a more traditional formal discourse, he again takes up a stunted growth identity, having moved from the more competent, satisfied identity he took up when using the expressivist discourse earlier. Vance then reiterates the theme of the importance of honesty in writing (line 13), a point he also made in his first identity paper. When he is able to express himself honestly, he feels once again the competent, more satisfied writer. Assuming language that does not fit his sense of who he is seems deceptive and pretentious. Thus we see Vance’s use of expressionist discourse.

Vance began the semester with a strong sense of confidence and remains confident that he does a number of things well. While he accepts that in the traditionally academic realm of correct sentences and well-organized papers he is stunted, he says he believes he will be able to improve his writing in the future (line 15). In this paper, he does not mention the concept that hard work makes writing better,

perhaps realizing that despite lots of hard work over the semester, many of his perceived problems continue to haunt him.

Certainly the positive aspects of his writer identity come through in relation to his expressivist discourse. Despite some confidence that in the future he will be a better writer, though, he remains locked in his stunted growth identity when he takes up academic discourse. Even after a semester of discussing language use and writing, Vance does not take up issues of dialect, race or class in his summation.

### Summary

Vance shows much evidence of his resistance to academic discourse even as he assumes its vocabulary and takes on the stunted growth identity so closely tied to it. Despite his efforts, he has not felt successful in its use and consistently takes on a stunted growth identity when discussing his relationship to it. He finds its vocabulary unwieldy. His acceptance of the values embedded in expressivist discourse is evident. He feels more competent as a writer when the emphasis is on personally meaningful writing and not the language structures of spelling and grammar.

While Vance prefers to have papers reviewed by a teacher, unlike Len he is not against peer review. His personal charm and ease in social situations could make a response group seem like a gathering of old friends. His goal, however, was to get no comments at all from peers, making it clear that negative critique is his usual experience. He mentions his difficulty with language structure a number of times in varied pieces.

Vance's Afro-American culture with its dialectal differences, in addition to possible access and privilege issues, may make academic discourse more remote to him. He mentions his struggle with its vocabulary, grammar and spelling, but without invoking the conflict or even difference discourse. Thus, factors which undoubtedly affect his writing remain seemingly invisible. The sociocultural discussions of language did not prove powerful enough to move his discussion to one that highlighted issues of marginalization.

Vance said that assuming academic discourse seemed to require relinquishing a part of his valued identity by requiring him to be less "straightforward" or less honest, if you will. Traditional formal discourse required a different vocabulary and is less interesting, he believed, to his readers and to him. His most successful writing had been expressivist in nature, where he felt more himself. Though he did not politicize this position, undoubtedly lacking a discourse to do so, expressivist stories value a variety of vernaculars. However, the dialectal and class issues that affect our language are not always praised and appreciated in the academy, especially when standardization is the expectation. While some may have gotten discouraged about their attempts to conform to the requirements of traditional formal discourse, Vance, however, was not one of them.

He saw himself as a competent writer when his subject matter was important to him, but "not the best" writer when compared to his peers or assigned material in which he was not interested. His belief that more effort will make him a better writer has not proven particularly true as his difficulties with the language itself have been persistent. Relinquishing the "straightforward" "honest" quality in favor of the "dilly doodle"

aspects of academic discourse means giving up a part of his valued identity. His need to express his genuine feelings was hindered when he tried on academic language, but he remained unable to access a discourse that said why this was so.

Vance did not embody the conflict identity as he did not embrace a discussion about the political nature of language and what it meant to be a writer on the borders, affected by institutional oppression. While his identity was most certainly affected by his race and class, he did not explicitly associate his struggles with diversity issues. While the class had introduced the idea that linguistic choices have political dimensions, it is not a concept that Vance overtly embraced, even in his final evaluation.

### Len's Case Study

#### Contributions to Developing Story

Len's story demonstrates how a strong negative writer identity can be interwoven with positive aspects. His identification with the stunted growth metaphor is primarily associated with academic discourse. It is tempered by a more competent, satisfied identity when he speaks of assignments which are more expressivist in nature. His story also reflects the complexity of writing in the academy for students whose first language is not English and for whom race and class have been marginalizing factors. There are discourses that could help others better understand his language use and possibly help alleviate some of his own writing frustrations, but they are never fully accessed.

Len's story also shows how the process writing method can be a source of great anxiety and embarrassment for students already feeling the effects of marginalization. When he takes up process discourse, his resistance is evident. He also demonstrates how traditional formal discourse's emphasis on language structures and form contributes to a silencing of voices and a need to find trusted responders who understand that there is more to a person than the writing they see on the page.

The possibility of a learning disability, while skirted in his LD medical discourse, is never explored or explained. His lack of success and confidence in his academic writing has led to a reliance on friends to "fix" his writing rather than an ability to trust to his own skills. Len's traditional formal discourse, perhaps, best represents the pain and frustration of young writers whose efforts seem to bear so little fruit and who have found ways to survive the system rather than utilize it more fully.

### Writer Profile

Len was a senior economics/education studies major the year he took this required writing class for juniors at the university. While polite whenever I spoke with him, neither friendly nor distant in class, he usually sat apart from the group, gazing out the window unless addressed directly. Because every class involved two or three different activities (e.g., writing, discussion, small group activity), I was able to observe him move affably from one task to the next and work well with each assigned group. While he appeared shy or quiet, so were a number of others. If group members for a day's task were not preordained in some fashion, he would search out either Vance, an



Afro-American male, or R, a Haitian male, as his preferred work partners. M, white and the only other male in the class, was not a partner of choice.

Len was a frequent resister, advising me that his papers were too incomplete to discuss or “forgotten” at home, though his attendance was excellent. While he never volunteered to share his opinions in class, Len’s journal revealed a strongly held view that learning another language should not make one forget his/her native language tongue, whatever it may be. He wrote, “It is important for all cultures to remember their own language and history,” commenting that is not easy to do this in America. He ended this brief journal entry with the thought that keeping one’s native language and cultural history from generation to generation is a must for many African descendents, Spanish speakers and Latinos, a stronger political statement than he ever shared in class.

Because of his classroom silence, many students did not realize Len was bilingual or Haitian. Even when other bilingual students or the children of non-English speaking parents shared personal experiences, he did not openly reveal those aspects of his identity. Whatever had silenced him was powerful. In conversation one day, when I told him how important it was for others to hear his voice of experience, he told me solemnly that many did not want to hear opinions very different from their own.

In one journal entry, he wrote that Americans should not be able to tell students when and where they can speak Spanish, saying simply it was unfair to certain groups. In another, though, he wrote he did not believe any form of Ebonics should be taught in the classroom, only “Standard English.” In still another entry, he took up the popular

conservative political discourse that it is very important for everyone living in the U.S.A. to know the “main language so they can associate with the American world.”

His journal seemed the most comfortable place to try out ideas, contradict himself, and explore through writing his stand on these evolving issues. Even when I used the strategy of each member contributing a summative thought or remark (a technique I often used to be sure each student was heard), Len kept his remarks general, never sharing his journal identities. Near the end of the semester, he wrote, “The life of a black man in America is a hard and difficult thing to live. There are many problems that we have to face in society such as the assumption of doing wrong. Many races assume black males are always doing wrong.” This identification with oppressed Afro-American males came through only in this short, summative entry.

At the end of the semester, Len had not signed up to do a volunteer project that could help raise his grade. Then, after class one evening, R, another Haitian-American student from class, and two females stayed to chat. I was asking Len about an e-mail that he meant to send to his Haitian friend, which he had mistakenly sent to the entire class. It was written in Creole and I was fascinated, never having seen a written form of this language. R explained how Creole integrated aspects of different languages, and he gave us all some fascinating cultural background. Len seemed embarrassed by the note whose contents were primarily about the portfolio requirements for class. R added jokingly that it was poorly written in a few languages and Len smiled his concurrence. He clearly relaxed and perked up when we (the women) revealed how fascinated we were by the language itself and asked many questions. It was then that my gregarious women students came up with a wonderful idea. How about having Len and R teach a

class in Creole, reversing roles for this primarily “white” class and teaching them the “proper” dialect and rules for this language? The room exploded with ideas as classroom discussion that day had focused on “difference” and how they, as teachers, would handle diversity issues in the classroom. One student had sparked hot debate that night when she said that diversity was fine, but school was about “learning and doing proper English.” These four students wanted to continue that discussion to see how students who were used to doing school “well” would react when confronted with “teachers” who expected them to speak “correctly,” only this time in Creole.

The next week, the two men volunteered to go first, the first time all semester Len had volunteered to do anything! They had flashcards and performed splendidly, R in his dramatic fashion and Len in his quiet way. It was undoubtedly one of the most successful lessons of the semester. Students swamped them with questions at the end and our “experts” led the discussion. An identity usually not apparent, that of the joking, smiling, confident Len, was in force.

I would like to report that by the end of the semester Len had gained confidence in his ability to write and was better at tackling academic writing assignments. Unfortunately, I don’t believe that is the case. In his final letter to me, he reiterated many of the themes you will find in the microanalyses that follow. These include the idea that he is “different” from others, still fears the comments of those who read his writing, and, despite the fact that peer response may help him complete a better paper, he would choose not to do it. He even reiterates that with practice one can “catch those small grammatical errors,” as if will and effort are all it takes to shape one’s language. This was the discourse he came with and, despite many discussions on the complexities

and politics of language, it is the discourse with which he left. I am left wondering if the ideas of social and cultural influence and the power of academic discourse to both free and oppress had touched him – and realize, as is usual with my students, I will probably never know.

The preceding narrative about this student gives some insight into his socio-cultural background. Len's history, set beside the microanalyses that follow, tells a story of identity that could be missed in an instructor's need to "get through curriculum" and "prepare students for writing" in the "real world."

#### Texts Selected for Microanalysis

Five pieces have been selected to help tell Len's story. In all of them he discusses aspects of his writer identity or writing history, the focus of the study. Though three, "Who Am I," "Influences," and "A Story About Writing," are taken from his earliest assignments, these papers were not all written the second week of class. His first drafts were incomplete, so parts of the papers that are analyzed were "rewritten" later in the semester. Because final portfolios had to be "complete," parts of these redrafts were actually assignment completions needed for credit. While they do represent some of his initial thoughts about his identity and writing, they demonstrate as well both the tenacity and continual shifting of his beliefs about the world around him and his place in it.

The conference is important as it gives more evidence for the stunted growth identity in relation to traditional formal discourse. This conference took place in mid-November. Students were told portfolios were due in a few weeks, complete with

revisions. The one-on-one conference would be a time they could discuss any concerns or questions they had about writing or any of their required selections. Len also tries to explain his difficulty with process and writing tutors in terms of how they make him feel. His final evaluation letter was selected because it reiterates his difficulty with academic structures, tells of his preference for expressivist tasks, and points more strongly to factors that may be affecting his written language.

Table 10

Microanalysis #1: Len's "Who Am I as a Writer?"

	UNIT OF ANALYSIS LEN'S "WHO AM I?" PAPER Microanalysis #1
1	It is very easy to explain the type of writer I am
2	I never thought of myself as a good writer
3	I do not know why but I never liked writing very much
4	But there are times that I enjoyed writing certain topics that catch my interest and most important my readers
5	I am a better writer when the topic will catch my audience interest
6	I favor topics like comedy, sports and subjects that reflect and relate to adolescents
7	I like writing about things that happened to me as a young adolescent
8	First of all, I am a bilingual student that never like favor writing much from the first time I had to write a paper
9	I am a very strange student that has many views of doing things
10	One day I might like to write my ideas, views on paper and other times I might want to let my views out verbally
11	My problem with writing is that most of the time I can not concentrate on one topic at time
12	I tend to bring unnecessary information into the subject
13	I can't seem to brake away from that weakness
14	It is something that happens to me all the time when I write any paper
15	One thing I try to use to keep me on one particular subject or topic is writing an outline
16	But somehow I would write some different information in the middle of the paper
17	My mind always switch direction through the middle of the paper, which I have been trying to avoid for a long time
18	I feel that it is one reason why I do not like writing papers much

Len's words remind me of the painful difficulty so many have in writing successfully for the academy. As he tells it, he is not a young man who hates writing. He is someone who has felt unsuccessful in writing academic papers.

In line 2, Len makes his claim that he has never thought of himself as a good writer, probably drawing his identity from the stunted growth philosophy he has faced in his academic endeavors. While he also claims not to know why he doesn't like writing (line 3), he is perhaps wondering what an appropriate writer identity would be for this paper requested of him in yet another academic class. In line 4- 7 he attempts to explain, however, that there are some kinds of writing he actually enjoys and attempts to uncover what kinds of writing that encompasses. It is here that like many other students in the class, expressivist writing, i.e., writing that values the personal voice and story, is the discourse he draws on. These statements signal Len's attempt to establish a positive identity that reflects the competence he has felt at times in writing and language. He is a writer, but only feels successful under certain terms and circumstances.

In Line 8, Len establishes his bilingual identity but may also be intimating that he has situated himself as a writer "on the borders," someone affected by difference. By calling attention to his difference in lines 8-10, he embraces the uncertainty that affects those who do not seem to "fit" in the social milieu in which they have found themselves. Here he is strange, unlike the other writers. Some days he just prefers expressing ideas orally. Despite the efforts he makes (discussed in line 13-16) to improve, or become "initiated," he has found himself unable to "break" from his

“weakness,” drawing from traditional formal discourse, as well as possibly boot straps, the idea that with effort, writing should improve.

In lines 11-13, he tentatively moves to an identity that constructs him as one who is not able to concentrate on one topic at a time, and he continues that theme in line 17 when he says that his mind is always switching directions. It is possible that Len is drawing on learning disability medical discourse here (certainly the symptoms of Attention Deficit Disorder include an inability to concentrate and organize). He may also be more familiar with story and idea development that is more circular and recursive, a cultural pattern with more episodic structure. It is also possible that the requirements of writing and organizing in an academic discourse and in a second language could have the same effect. Educators who believe in the stunted growth identity construct writers as powerless to clear cognitive hurdles and as immature thinkers. Those ascribing to the initiation model see students as needing to learn to think rhetorically in order to acquire the academic discourse. It is not surprising to me that Len seems to have accepted the beliefs embedded in “school” writing programs. To politicize his position within the academy would mean associating his race and class with an inherent part of his struggle and seeing his linguistic choices as having political dimensions. Len does not overtly seem to take on this identity, however. While it is true he seems “conflicted” about his position in the university, there is not much evidence that Len, himself, takes on the political understandings of that identity, seeming more to accept, with reluctance, the stunted growth identity.

In line 19 he tells us that those who “correct” his papers have told him it “takes practice” to break from his “weakness,” echoing that 80’s philosophy that is both

assimilationist and paternalistic. In other words, one simply needs to appropriate the new conventions of academic discourse and be "initiated" into its unquestioned role in the university.

In summary, this piece provides evidence that he has accepted a number of beliefs embedded in writing programs, including the idea that trying harder will make a difference and that he is "stunted" in his writing growth. There is also some resistance to the bad writer construction as well as the helpfulness of peer response. He lets us know that expressivist assignments are something he enjoys, so it is not all writing but that requiring an academic discourse that is problematic. The politics of language use in our educational institutions as they relate to second language use, class and possibly disability may be affecting Len, but he does not take up the identities and ideologies offered by those discourses to position himself more favorably as a writer.

In line one, Len changes the point of the question from "Who or what has had the most influence on your construction of your writer identity?" to "Those that influence my writing." Having previously constructed himself as not a "good writer," at least in terms of his traditional formal papers, he signals an attempt to explain the importance of finding readers for his papers who understand him as a person. He makes abundantly clear in line 2 that it is a fearful, painful experience to have others read his work. Elucidating this point, he takes this position further by saying people try to hurt his feelings "about my writing" (line 3). Rather than just claiming the novice identity of initiation, he remains stuck in a more traditional formal discourse. While he might legitimately claim the effects of institutional oppression here as he appropriates the identity of a writer who can be competent but is different, he does not take up that



multicultural discourse that could support his position or move him to a conflict identity.

Table 11

Microanalysis #2: Len's Influence Paper

UNIT OF ANALYSIS LEN'S "INFLUENCE" PAPER Microanalysis #2	
1	The people that influence my writing tremendously are those I asked to correct my writings
2	I don't ask any one to read my writing because of my fear of getting many bad remarks
3	They will try to hurt my feeling about my writing
4	If the person do not know me then the person would not have any idea of how I write
5	My writing format is very different from others
6	I choose to have people that know my writing to read my writing because of the following reasons
7	I only ask people that know me first, and my writing to read my writing because they have better understanding of my writing
8	They are more likely to understand the structure of my writing than those that do not know my writing or me
9	They do know how to help me improve the writing
10	Many times I don't have to be there to have them help me improve my papers
11	They know what to do and how to correct the mistakes
12	I can have them help me improve my papers for the fact that they will not hold back any thing from me
13	They will do their best to improve my writing
14	But they will tell me what I am doing wrong and teach me how to make the corrections
15	I do not feel uncomfortable around them when they are helping me
16	But I do feel uncomfortable around those that I do not know when they are reading my writings
17	That is one of several reasons that I do not like to have classmates read my work in the classroom
18	It makes me fee unsecured about my work based on people's reactions to the writing

It is of note that he shifts the position of the question away from an individual or singular experience as influential. He reveals that those he trusts to read and “correct” his writing have the most influence on the writing itself, not necessarily on him. The focus then becomes the writing and not the writer. It is difficult to know whether this was his perception of the prompt or a shift in focus that enabled him to make an important statement about the process classroom and his position in the university.

He reaffirms his membership of outsider but competent (line 4) by stating that without knowing him it is not possible to understand how he writes. Analyzing this relationship in the context of an academic discourse means that, at some level, Len does not “get” that language use has political dimensions and that his bilingual, minority race, “poor writer” subjectivity is associated with how others have positioned him in the university. Len emphasizes individuality, feeling it is necessary to be aware of who a writer is in order to understand his writing rather than aspects of marginalization having to do with difference from the dominant culture.

In line 5, using traditional formal discourse, he reestablishes his writing as “different,” as those who subscribe to the stunted growth metaphor might also claim. He is someone who has not yet learned to adopt its specialized discourse, therefore he is “different.” He goes on to enumerate why having people he knows “improve” his writing is his choice (lines 7-15). People who know him can better understand the way he writes and his writing structure. What he does not say is that people who speak English as a second or third language, as he does, often struggle with its “structure” and that those who understand SL issues do understand those structural differences. This is,

perhaps, an SL deficit discourse or even multicultural discourse to which he has not had much access.

While he seems to be resisting process discourse at this time, he is also embracing some of the philosophy of process by having selected readers specifically respond to his drafts to help improve them. While he says they will “teach me how to make corrections” (line 14), he also signals somewhat of a contradiction when he says they will “correct the mistakes” (line 11) and Len, himself, does not “have to be there to have them help me improve my papers” (line 10). Here Len moves between the traditional formal concept that writing is “corrected” by others and the process discourse of having a responder help work on content and editing issues with the writer. He embraces the identity of one who is stunted in his writing growth, but he also demonstrates that identity can shift from moment to moment when he positions himself as one made uncomfortable by those who do not understand him (line 16). He seems conflicted as he struggles with his place in the academy. The reactions and responses of peer readers have not helped him become a better writer. In fact, they have made him feel even more insecure and uncomfortable. It is the process of the “process” classroom that has not worked for this student and he has chosen to redesign the process to make it safer. In some ways he subverts the system by having others do the work of making his writing acceptable. When his efforts have not proven successful, it is not illogical to seek another avenue to succeed. I think there are hints of a multicultural discourse in Len’s words, though the case for them is weak. As an insider to multicultural issues, he is better able to recognize why he may be judged an outsider by others.

Table 12

## Microanalysis #3: Len's Worst Experience

L	UNIT OF ANALYSIS LEN'S <b>WORST</b> EXPERIENCE Microanalysis # 3
1	My worst experience with writing is the remarks that I get from people evaluating, correcting my writing
2	The first evaluation is always full with numerous of remarks on how to improve the writing
3	I hate watching someone evaluating my writing because of the remarks and comments that I expect to see
4	I'd rather have them correct it without me being present
5	Many times I get response back from people who evaluate my writing like how to make my writing more accurate, need more details and they always tell me that I have unnecessary information in the paper
6	It makes me feel very low meaning unable to write anything well
7	I am a student that needs serious help writing a paper of any subject
8	I am an individual that has strong feelings for my writing
9	It hurts me most of the time when I get my evaluation paper back
10	Most of the corrections are from writing unnecessary information into the paper
11	I usually have the information in the wrong location of the body of the paper
12	I am a writer that use a lot of times writing my class papers
13	I try to start ahead of times so I will be ready to turn the writing assignment in on time
14	I decided to start ahead of times because of the numerous corrections that I feel that I might have to do to do an accurate writing assignment
15	Through out the semester I like to improve my writing abilities so I can be a better writer
16	I look forward of quitting the weakness that I have writing papers
17	I also know that all the weakness and problems might not be taken care off at once
18	But I feel that I can improve those weaknesses

While the assignment called for an informal discussion paper, this paper's conspicuous editing irregularities were unusual in this group of college juniors and seniors. While it is true that basic skills varied tremendously across the class's population, Len's differences were still exceptional.

Closer examination of what he was saying in this worst experience paper indicates his tremendous struggle and his clear awareness that writing for him in the academy was a landmine of problems. Academic writing for classes created painful situations as he had discovered that no matter how much time and effort he put in, he had had little success in the past (line 12-14). In reality, a process classroom designed primarily to get response on issues like the clarity of argument or the design of a particular resume style may not have been the most productive experience for him. Len says about this writing class that he understands “all the weaknesses and problems may not be taken care of at once”(lines 17-18). Even though he is hopeful that this writing class will be useful, as a senior, he has had writing classes before. He has tried hard before – and still his writing has been an issue of much concern.

In line 1, Len decides to focus on a “worst” experience, telling his story in a way that suggests a stunted growth identity. In the past, others have positioned him as an immature writer with grammatical difficulties, and here we see he both accepts and resists that identity. The worst thing, he says, repeating a theme he had brought up in his identity paper and continues in his conference, are “the remarks” of those who read his work. The fact that the “first evaluation is always full with numerous remarks on how to improve the writing” (line 2) is problematic for him, demonstrating a lack of understanding that writers, novice and professional alike, are commonly dissatisfied with first drafts. He personalizes the responders’ comments, taking to heart the responses of others and interpreting them as a reflection on his personhood.

The fact that he hates being present during response (line 4-5) calls attention to the complexity of the identity associated with this statement. Is it oppression he feels?

Is it the idea that he connects the judgment of his writing with judgment regarding who he is as a person? What social situations has he faced that make this young man fearful and powerless when it comes to a discussion of his writing?

In line 5 Len reveals the types of critique he has received. The work needs to be more “accurate,” needs more “details,” and needs to eliminate “unnecessary information.” In a process classroom these would not be untypical or harsh responses. For Len, who seems to feel battered by the responses of others, however, they are crushing. His identity has been constructed by experience as “deficient” and he has been positioned as an “outsider” after trying long and hard to improve. However, nothing has worked to the satisfaction of those judging his work. He feels “low” and “unable to write anything well”(line 6). Here Len demonstrates that the academic discourse of others has been internalized and he now positions himself as they have positioned him. He doesn’t think he can write because they have told him he cannot write well. “I am a student that needs serious help writing a paper of any subject” (line 7), he asserts.

Len never says that second-language speakers often struggle with the grammar of their second language. He does not mention that being unable to write ideas “well” in the academic discourse of a second language is a common struggle. He does not even say that appropriating the conventions of academic discourse may be difficult for anyone who has not had much access to it in the past.

In line 8, Len calls attention to the fact that he cares deeply for his writing, as if a reader might assume that someone who writes as he does must not care very much how he writes. How many times in the traditional classroom have teachers made the

assumption that "errors" indicate carelessness, laziness, or a lack of effort? In line 12 he refutes this by saying he spends a lot of time writing papers and even starts "ahead of times" (line 14) to make sure he completes an accurate assignment. None of what he has been led to believe should work has worked, however. He feels bad, "low," and believes the problem is within him. He looks forward to "improving his writing abilities" and "quitting the weakness" (line 16) with his writing, as if it were a choice and a matter of self-control. In lines 17-18 though, he says he knows that all the weaknesses may not be taken care of at once, but he can improve. I am not certain he did.

Len is not unusual when he blames himself for being a poor writer. Nowhere does he demonstrate access to a discourse of "difference." Rather his conversation is about feeling "low," accepting the old metaphor of stunted growth, of someone who has not been able to measure up. The fact that he "hates" watching someone "correct" his writing and would rather not be present when they do (lines 3-4) indicates a lack of personal power and an acceptance of the judgments of others. Is it acceptance, though? Or does he just prefer to be somewhere else when he is constructed as "stunted" or "deficient" and is unable to move from that identity?

This text is part of a writing conference with Len held near the end of the semester. Len had resisted some of the writing workshop activities in the classroom through late papers and undone assignments, though the reasons he had offered for his behavior related to misunderstanding due dates or confusion about the assignment. All dates were listed in the syllabus that he had from the first day of class and all

Table 13

## Microanalysis #4: Len's Conference

	UNIT OF ANALYSIS Len's Writing Conference Microanalysis #4
1	<b>I: Do you have any concerns about your writing?</b>
2	Oh, well, it's just that my writing is different from others
3	<b>I: In what way do you think it is different?</b>
4	Ummm... the styles that I use for writing
5	like I talk faster than I write
6	And I jump like into may areas of unnecessary information
7	It's like keeping track and also going faster than my hands
8	So I make like lots of grammatical errors and stuff like that
9	<b>I: Have you gone over to the writing center</b>
10	No, well, sometimes, but not really
11	Because I don't like to have anybody, strangers, read my papers, writing
12	<b>I: How come?</b>
13	I don't know
14	It's just that someone may say something bad to me
15	If I don't know the person I'm not going to have the person read my writing
16	Because of the fear of the response that I'll get back
17	<b>I: Fear of response? Tell me what you fear.</b>
18	I have a feeling like my writing is too vague
19	Or, you know, needs a lot of corrections and stuff like that
21	And the person might feel that his writing is...
22	Or think that his level is low
23	Stuff like that
24	Or it's not on the level it should be at
25	That's why I don't have anybody that I don't know read my writing
26	Because of like the fear of the response that I'll get back

assignments were discussed in detail beforehand, so I felt there may be reasons he was late with assignments other than those he indicated.

In this conference he was more candid than he had been in our brief discussions before or after class. Here, it became clearer that having his writing "judged" by others was a painful process that inevitably made him feel "low." In this selection, Len demonstrates knowledge of the terms and measuring devices of traditional formal



discourse – and according to them he judges himself as falling short, as do others. Thus, he has found the identity of poor writer, one who is “low,” difficult to escape. Even in this process classroom where discussion of mechanics/editing was supposed to be a last step, done after response to the ideas of the writing, focusing on response rather than editing had been difficult for some peer responders.

In response to my question regarding any concerns about his writing, Len begins by calling attention to the idea that his writing is “different” (line 2). He understands that in the academy this difference has set him apart, and he draws on the academic language of “styles” when asked to explain what he means by different. In lines 5-8 he struggles further, explaining what happens to him as he tries to assume the discourse required of college writers. He comments on the gulf between writing and speaking, an area that second-language speakers like Villanueva (1997) have also argued. Len does not, however, discuss the fact that English is his second language. Instead he talks about “talking faster than I write” (line 5) and jumping into areas of “unnecessary information” (a response he has probably received on his written work). He is struggling to formulate why he does not seem able to do what he perceives others to be doing, but the words to identify his problems are difficult to find. He chooses, “It’s like keeping track and also going faster than my hands” (lines 7-8). As a writer, he is ascribing responsibility for this “problem” to a force within him and trying to clarify what it feels like. He finishes by falling back to traditional formal discourse, the discourse which has been used and which he feels relates to the culminating problem people have with his writing, “So I make lots of grammatical errors and stuff like that” (line 9).

As instructor, I fall back to the traditional, also, and ask if he has gone to the writing center on campus (line 10). In my experience, students who feel that their writing needs extra review or help, especially if they do not come to my office hours to discuss it, go to the writing center where tutors are available to review papers and discuss strategies for writing. At first, Len hedges with a "no, yes, not really" response (line 11). I realize now that contradicting an instructor who so obviously believes that writing centers are helpful places that are staffed with kind, caring, interested people must have been difficult for him. He responds that having "strangers" (line 12) read his writing is something that he does not like. He has replaced my assumption of helpful responders with strangers. Len struggles with the idea that in his experience writing centers are not kind and helpful but also has the added pressure of explaining this to an instructor who obviously does not believe as he does.

In line 13, I ask why he would not have strangers read his writing, again assuming that all students find writing centers helpful and supportive. He hedges again with "I don't know" (line 14), perhaps wondering if it is possible to get me to understand his conflict. He maintains the stunted growth identity and confesses that the responders may say something "bad" (line 15) as they have in his previous experiences. Len does not take up a process discourse with the recognition that it is common for both novice and professional writers to be dissatisfied during the drafting process and that critique is meant to be a helpful way to improve writing. It is not supposed to be a personal criticism of the writer. He takes the strong stand that if he does not know the responder, he will not have them read his work because he actually "fears" their response (lines 15-16). Without access to a discussion that helps him understand that

academic discourse is something many people have difficulty with and second-language speakers have additional issues with which they must contend, Len remains fearful of others and feels he is lacking. He lacks a discourse that empowers him to discuss "difference" in an explanatory fashion rather than as a deficit model,

I continue to push my process philosophy, dismissing Len's point regarding the fact that process has not worked for him. "Fear of response? Tell me what you fear?" (Line 18) Once again, Len gropes to articulate what he feels is wrong with his writing to an instructor that just does not seem to be getting his point. He again uses academic discourse, the discourse that has been used so often to discuss his writing, and explains how his writing is "vague," and "needs a lot of corrections and stuff like that." He also says the reader might feel his "level is low" or "not on the level it should be" (lines 19-24). Len's experiences have repeatedly informed him regarding what would hold "true" about writing centers. His "low" identity has been shaped by his social experiences of school, and he knows that people he does not know cannot understand why he writes the way he does. He, himself, cannot formulate an adequate explanation without access to other discourses. Shaped by his social and historical circumstances, Len takes a stand about who can respond to his writing, and reiterates the concern that "fear" of response is what troubles him.

Len's final letter both reiterates some of his earlier themes, a preference for expressivist tasks and difficulty with the structures required in traditional formal tasks. He also more strongly points out issues that may be affecting his language use, a

Table 14

## Microanalysis #5: Len's Final Letter

Line	UNIT OF ANALYSIS LEN'S FINAL LETTER Microanalysis # 5
1	Dear Mrs
2	It is hard to evaluate myself in any of my classes when the works are writing assignments, journals
3	It would be a lot easier if there are exams than my grade would be based on the grades on my exams
4	But I preferred this kind of format that includes no exam, because I do not do well on exams
5	I have a psychological problem taking exams
6	It is a long story which does not belong in the letter so I will not discuss it
7	Basically, I have Attention Disorder Deficit
8	I see myself as a student who is trying hard to complete my college education with many kind of difficulties in my way
9	I am trying my best to do the best I can on the writing assignments
10	Even though writing is not something that I am great at but there are times I enjoy writing about interesting topics
11	I like writing about interesting topics that readers and audience will enjoy
12	I like writing about childhood story that other kids can relate to sometime in their life
13	I am a writer that likes to express my childhood stories to those that can relate to my childhood stories
14	I live a difficult and different life from many American kids
15	One thing about me is that I don't let any one read my writings because of my fear of getting bad comments, remarks from the readers
16	I hate in-class group work that includes students reading other students papers
17	I know it helps tremendously because it has helped me in some of my classes
18	I just don't like to have someone I don't know read my writing
19	The reader might tell me that my paper needs specific corrections but at the same time the reader say in his or her mind that my writing is weak, poor
20	I know my writing is not to the level of others
21	My format of writing papers for classes is that I must have an outline of what I want to write about
22	It makes it a lot easier for me to write down an outline by putting what I want to write in order
23	Having the outline in order keeps me in order of writing the paper
24	But somehow, I tend to fall off in the middle of the paper by putting unrelated information in the paper

Continued, next page.

Table 14, continued:

line	UNIT OF ANALYSIS LEN'S FINAL LETTER Microanalysis # 5
25	It is one of several weaknesses that I have writing papers
26	As a bilingual student, I can help other bilingual students that are in the process of learning the English education
27	I can work with them by showing them what I used to learn the English language
28	It is not an easy language to learn especially when writing it professionally
29	It take lots of practice and hard (work) to be able to catch those small grammatical errors
30	Sincerely, _____

diagnosis of Attention Deficit Disorder and the fact that English is not his first language. The evidence of a stunted growth identity ( lines 15, 18, 19, 20, 24, 25, 29) especially in regard to more academic tasks remains, though it is tempered with satisfaction (lines 10-13) around expressivist tasks and then somewhat justified by his LD ((lines 5, 7) and bilingual identities (lines 26-29). While this letter does not fully access the political dimensions of his situation, Len has mentioned second language and bilingual issues and comes closer in this writing to associating them with some of his struggles in academic tasks. In line 14, he also says that his life is difficult and different from other American students, perhaps referencing a class issue as well as the complications of being bicultural in America.

Len's resistance to peer response groups has not changed as, once again, he talks about his discomfort of having others read his writing and judge it (and perhaps him) as weak and not at a college level (level 15-20). He moves to explaining how he works at outlining papers in an effort to make them cohesive (lines 21-25) but feels he is still not a strong writer (line 25). He moves directly from that idea to a discussion of his bilingual identity (lines 26-28). Rather than saying that may be part of his difficulty

in mastering academic writing, he says it may help him be a better teacher for others as he has a special understanding of what it means to learn a language.

The ending to his letter, almost as common as the “happily ever after” in fairytales, brings up the idea of practice and hard work (line 29), the mantra of educators and students in America.

### Summary

This microanalysis of Len’s texts addresses the question of writer identity and discourses drawn on, resisted and omitted in three important ways. First, Len’s case study demonstrated the multiple aspects of his writer-self and how they have been informed by the metaphorical paradigms of basic writing in the academy. Second, the analysis has show how he drew upon traditional academic, process, and expressivist discourses to construct his position in relation to his writing. Thirdly, microanalysis gave evidence of his resistance to the hegemonic influences of certain educational discourses and demonstrated his omission of other discourses which might better inform and explain his struggles in the academy.

While acceptance of Len’s stunted growth identity was evident throughout, multiple aspects of his identity were clearly evident. He has been constructed by others and constructs himself as cognitively delayed or deficient. Despite his best efforts, he remained a student with “grammatical difficulties,” unable to clear the cognitive hurdles required to be a good writer. He had heard and repeated the stunted growth paradigm in relation to his own writer identity. He also took up the identity of the uninitiated as he labeled himself “strange,” i.e. an outsider to the unquestioned

academic discourse that had been required of him. He believed that "quitting his weakness" would involve appropriating the special discourse required in this community.

Len saw himself on the "borders" and his strong negative emotions and frustration might be viewed as an effect of institutional oppression, but he did not access the discourses that tell this story. The identity components of class, second language, and perhaps disability have set him outside the circle of privilege at times, yet the multiple aspects of that identity got little discussion. Second language and multicultural discourses received little play and references to race, class and second language were seldom explicit. While many students access learning disabilities medical discourse to help others better understand their writing, he did not. He was a success despite his struggles. After, all, he was a senior, soon to graduate.

The discourses Len drew on gave strong evidence of the power of the institution to shape not only how we are constructed by others, but how we construct ourselves. He drew on academic discourse to shape, in large part, his writer identity in the classroom. He saw his writer self as unorganized, deficient in skills, and far from competent in the ultra correct standard of traditional pedagogy. He pushed against this "incompetent writer" construction as he moved to expressivist discourse. When he wrote about personal topics, ideas that were meaningful to him, he was a writer. The audience for his work, he told us, was an important factor. Like many of his peers, a more positive relationship with writing could be found in his expressivist work.

The pull and tug of process discourse was an integral part of his discussion. When he had control over who the responders were and was secure in the idea that they

knew and understood who he was, Len embraced process, at least his version of it. He took up the discourse, rejecting the philosophical and practical aspects of its ideologies that did not work for him and shaped them to his needs. He found the people he trusted who could help make his papers approximate the traditional formal discourse required in his classes and he found comfort in the fact that they would not judge him.

Lastly, which discourses had he omitted or resisted? Len's words demonstrated how well he may have understood the judgment of his writing within the academy, and at the same time how little he understood the complexity of his situation in it. He did not fully access discourses in the field of second language, learning disabilities, and social justice as they related to class. These discourses could have better captured the depth of his writer conflicts.

First, English was a second or even third language for him, but if he had knowledge of the wide discussion regarding writing and second language speakers, he did not access it.

Second, while he briefly mentioned the possibility of an Attention Deficit Disorder at one point in the semester, he neither explained nor correlated his discussion of organizational issues to that diagnosis. While the learning disability literature has much to say on the topic of writers with ADD, Len is either without access to it, made a conscious choice to avoid it, or did not connect the importance of it to his writing.

Lastly, Len did not mention issues of class and privilege, a topic given little to no play in American educational classrooms. His early erratic attendance in an academic institution along with biographical data that indicated financial and family struggle never were connected to his continuing frustrations in accessing traditional



formal discourse. While class issues swirled around him, Len, like most Americans, did not tie academic discourses to access and privilege.

### Mandy's Case Study

#### Contributions to Developing Story

Mandy's initial construction of a more negative identity did not match the ethnographic data of the semester. Mandy participated enthusiastically in all writing activities, peer response groups, and class discussions. Every assignment was completed on time and even first drafts were thoughtfully and carefully done. Her attendance was excellent.

So why is Mandy a case study for more negative writer identity? Mandy brings to this study an identity that comes closest to Lu's idea of the conflict metaphor without quite taking part in it. She raises many points relevant to conflict but never fully establishes her identity in political terms. Her resolutely articulated stance regarding her right to expressivist discourse is persistent throughout the semester and brings to the overall discussion a view of the limits and pitfalls of traditional formal discourse for some students. Her case for use of more hybrid discourses in the academy in light of second-language issues is formidable.

To the developing story, Mandy also brings consideration of more tolerant and less dogmatic approaches to writing. Though, in writing, she discusses cultural and second-language issues, she does not connect those to her love of expressivist ideas until much later in the semester. Even so, her words allow for an understanding that

expressivism can be an important vehicle for students who find the rule-bound territory of traditional formal discourse a recipe for frustration and disappointment. This is a capable, creative, intelligent woman who has the desire to speak and write in a way that is articulate yet different from what some may consider "the correct way." While her stunted growth identity links to academic discourse, her individualist identity speaks volumes to how this woman sees herself in the academy.

### Writer Profile

Mandy was a junior sociology major at the university, taking this writing course for future educators in her junior year. Her parents were Korean immigrants. While she, herself, was born in Korea, she had attended American schools since kindergarten. Korean was the only language spoken in her home, however, so she was involved in English as Second Language programs in grammar school. Her spoken language demonstrated no hint that English was not her first language, though her written work, upon close examination, showed traces of second language. She was a perky, friendly, intelligent woman who early on emerged as a leader in the class. Though she said, "I don't consider myself to be the best writer," in her identity paper, her concerns about her writing were more about its structures, "run-on sentences, grammatical errors," than a concern about an inability to get her thoughts on paper. In fact, she talked about being able to "babble on forever." Strongly influenced by the teaching of a high school expressivist instructor, Mandy struggled to demonstrate her capabilities in a university setting that seemed more focused on getting traditional formal writing right. A willing

participant in all classroom activities, she was, perhaps, nervous at first, but willingly accepted challenges and always appeared eager to do well.

Mandy's enthusiasm for writing belied the lack of confidence she felt for traditionally academic assignments. It was through the microanalysis that I discovered the conflicts and frustrations she felt in her academic writing. Observing her in class, I saw only an enthusiastic, hard-working student, thoughtful in her work and careful but spirited in her presentation. She was liked and respected by her peers, often taking a leadership role in response groups, organizing, supporting and encouraging despite any initial nervousness. Periodically, she consulted me about grammatical issues, asking questions that were the typical, technical questions often asked in my college sections. There was nothing to indicate in her work or behavior that she was anything but a "good" student. Her bicultural identity was not visible behind the cheerleader persona and Valley girl accent of the classroom.

During the initial "Who would like to share?" read-around that semester, Mandy, to my surprise, was the first volunteer reader, a step that demonstrates a degree of confidence and security around writing. Because the first day of class she told me she had concerns about her writing, I was quite surprised. Mandy's contradictions are better understood through discourse analysis.

### Texts Selected for Analysis

The following four selections were chosen for the following reasons:

The "Who Am I As a Writer" piece shows a blend of the traditional formal and expressivist discourses Mandy brings to her thinking about writing. It also

demonstrates how she both resists and conforms to writing practices, especially in her discussion of process. While she does not believe in "the process" as she was required to practice it in high school, she discusses adaptations of it for her present use. Here we also see the variety of identities she brings to the task of writing.

Mandy's journal, more than many students', spoke to the class readings. In these particular entries, she has discovered writers whose passion for the written word matches her own. She also examines SL issues and identity, as well as develops her conflict with traditional formal discourse.

In her conference, Mandy begins to link the hybridity of her own identity to that of her writing. She explores ESL issues in terms of stereotypes about non-native speakers and her frustration with those who do not understand that imperfect English is not a sign that one lacks intelligence.

Mandy's final letter seems to embrace a form of process but persistently advocates for expressivism, little having changed from her first class paper about writing. She also reflects on the concept that being bicultural may affect writing, an idea not new to her work, but more sharply defined in this piece.

This paper was written as the second assignment of the semester, the first being an optional genre. The microanalysis of this text showed that in lines 5-9, she wavers between the stunted growth and initiation identities using traditional formal discourse. She is not the "best writer" (line 5) and has trouble with introductions which she feels must be strong to keep the reader interested. This language is often that of writing teachers prodding students to write powerful introductions for their essays. She has

Table 15

## Microanalysis #1: Mandy's "Who Am I as a Writer?"

line	UNIT OF ANALYSIS
	<b>Mandy "Who Am I?"</b> <b>Microanalysis # 1</b>
1	Who am I as a writer?
2	Hmmm
3	This question has had me in deep thought for the past twenty minutes or so
4	And I still don't know how to answer the question
5	I don't usually consider myself to be the best writer
6	I usually get jammed up when I have to write a paper because I have a hard time getting started
7	I think that the introduction should be the most powerful part of an essay
8	I can sit for hours in front of a blank screen with ideas of what I'm going to write about, but I just don't know where to begin
9	After all, if the introduction doesn't grasp the reader's attention, why would they want to continue reading the essay?
10	But once I get started, I can babble on forever
11	No matter what the topic is, I can find some point to argue, discuss, or question, for pages
12	However, this often gets me into trouble with run on sentences, and other grammatical errors
13	Especially with organization
14	That's what I don't understand about writing
15	I know that there has to be standards and guidelines
16	But I don't understand how someone is allowed to have the authority to judge and grade someone's writing ability
17	After all, isn't writing supposed to be a form of individual expression?
18	I mean, I understand that one must be grammatically correct and organized in their ideas so that the reader may be able to understand and follow the writer's train of thought
19	But what if I said that this is how I think
20	I write as I think and what I think
21	I don't make first drafts and so on
22	When I write, I sit down at my desk, turn on my old school word processor, and I start to write as the thoughts enter my mind
23	I cannot sit down, brainstorm ideas on paper, organize them and outline and then start writing
24	I've been forced to oblige by this method all through my secondary schooling, and I would get nothing accomplished

Continued, next page.

Table 15, continued:

line	UNIT OF ANALYSIS <b>Mandy "Who Am I?" Microanalysis # 1</b>
25	Anyway, after I write all that I can in one session, I turn off my word processor, and forget about my writing until the next day
26	Then, I reread what I have written and I move paragraphs and sentences to form a more organized essay
27	However, I rarely edit my actual writing
28	After all, if I wrote an idea down, then that was my idea
29	I always have faith in my first thoughts
30	Once I start to second-guess at something, I always end up being wrong
31	It's the same way when it comes to my writing
32	I'm not sure if I answered your question
33	However, everything that I have written is straight from my mind and onto ink
34	I guess that is the best way to describe my abilities as a writer
35	I write how I think and what I am feeling
36	This way, I don't waste my time pretending to be what I am not
37	And I don't waste the reader's time by presenting ideas that are not genuinely mine

been initiated, but does not feel she easily measures up to some perceived standard of a good introduction. This creates a kind of writer's block for her as she "can sit for hours in front of a blank screen" unable to begin despite the ideas she has for the paper (line 8).

Mandy does not question her ability to write out ideas, however, as she takes on the identity of competent and satisfied when discussion moves to her facility to "find some point to argue, discuss or question" (line 11). She quickly moves back to stunted growth, however, when she thinks about the structure of that writing, (lines 12-13) with its grammatical requirements and need for the prescribed organization.

It is most interesting that even in this initial assignment, Mandy conflicts with the authority of others (line 16 -17) to question her form of expression. While accepting the concept that writing must meet some guidelines (line 15, 18) she begins

to resist with her statement "But what if I said this is how I think. I write as I think and what I think" (lines 19-20). I see this as insistence on an individualist identity as it expresses the idea that written language can reflect a choice, but she does not take up the conflict identity which would recognize that all linguistic choices have political dimensions. Despite her statement that she does not consider herself the best writer, she moves on to say how she is competent (line 22, 23, 25, 28, 29). At the same time, even as she rejects the process method she feels she was force-fed in school (line 24), she tells how she has adapted it to suit her writing (line 25, 26). While many process instructors would encourage adapting a process strategy, the structure of teaching and moving students in grade school through a process method may often appear to be a "one way" methodology to young students. Her shift between accepting and rejecting process presents an interesting adaptation.

That Mandy rarely "edits" (line 27) may be connected to the difficulty any second-language student (as well as many native English speakers) experience when trying to "correct" the subtle structures of Standard English. Great writers employ fine editors to do that detail work which can be so tedious and, especially as regards the subtleties, so difficult. However, Mandy's use of editing implies "deletion," possibly connecting to her recognition that she can "babble on forever."

Mandy's competent identity is closely linked to expressivist discourse (lines 28, 29). Her conflict with what she perceives to be the academic requirements of writing in the academy (line 35-37) are fed by her belief in the idea that individual expression is important and more honest than being forced to adopt writing techniques that conflict

with one's own views about writing. She wants to challenge traditional formal discourse, but lacks a discourse to help her do that in a more effective way.

It is interesting to see how firmly entrenched her expressivist views are and how strongly she asserts her views on writing. It seems to me this paper both demands and cries out for acceptance of Mandy for who she is and how she believes. At first glance it may seem as if it is saying, "This is what I learned about writing so this is how it is," but her beliefs go beyond that. In later papers when she is frustrated by others' lack of acceptance regarding how she writes, she is also saying "This is who I am, and why can't you accept it?" Her writer identity is, of course, linked to other aspects of her identity, including those ethnic, second-language aspects, which are so often judged as "not quite right" in the academy. She links a kind of honesty and integrity to her writing, much like Vance's concept of being a "straightforward" writer. Both seem to insist on this genuineness of voice, what they see as a more honest, unpretentious persona than that found in more formal academic language. Mandy fits Lu's concept of a writer in conflict with the academy and its traditional formalways. She is not saying I can't write the way the academy wishes, she is saying that to do so would change her writing in ways that make it less her own. Again, she lacks a more political discourse about linguistic choice and dominance as she takes up the more individualistic argument that she has a right to do things her way.



Table 16

## Microanalysis #2" Mandy's Journal Entries

L	UNIT OF ANALYSIS MANDY'S JOURNAL Microanalysis # 2
1	Brenda Ueland _"Everybody is Talented..." (Title and author of assigned readings)
2	This article really touched me.
3	I undoubtedly believe that everyone is original and creative in their own way.
4	However, criticism kills this creativity and self- expression.
5	Ueland addresses all the issues I have about writing and teachers.
6	Many teachers have killed my passion for writing with the use of their power to criticize my writing
7	Although I internally believe that it doesn't matter what they think, they are the ones grading me;
8	My academic career depends on their opinion.
9	I don't think this is fair
10	Pablo Neruda – "Memoirs"
11	I think that Neruda's passion for writing and words is beautiful
12	The way he speaks of the many uses for words and how he brings words to life is inspiring
13	Anais Nin "The New Woman"
14	Like Neruda's piece, Nin's article also speaks of her passion for writing.
15	I think that it is so inspiring to read these words
16	"When I don't write, I feel my world shrinking."
17	She gives us such a vivid image of this passion.
18	I wish that I could feel this way about writing.
19	In a way I think I do but writing for school kills it
20	I enjoy writing when I know I won't be graded on it
21	I like to write my feelings down because it helps to deal with them
22	I used to write in diaries all the time when I was a child
23	It was my therapy
24	Now writing is a task
25	I don't even have a diary anymore because after I do all of my required work, I don't want to write anymore
26	Amy Tan- "Mother Tongue"
27	I can thoroughly relate to this article.
28	Both of my parents speak "broken" English and I speak "broken" Korean"
29	Therefore, my parents and I have difficulty communicating with each other.

Continued, next page.

Table 16, continued:

L	UNIT OF ANALYSIS MANDY'S JOURNAL Microanalysis # 2
30	I often find myself reconstructing my English so that my parents will understand.
31	Sometimes I even speak "Konglish," a collaboration of English and Korean.
32	I get offended when I hear people, comedians, etc. mocking Asians because they speak with accents.
33	I want people to understand that a person is not stupid because they cannot speak perfect English.
34	I think that my mother feels embarrassed to speak to some people due to her "broken" English.
35	As did Amy Tan, I often have to pretend to be my mother when calling a company or writing a letter
36	I often wish that I was able to speak Korean better so that I could fully communicate with my parents
37	I often feel that my parents and I don't really know each other because we can't talk about certain things.

All students were asked to keep a weekly journal that included reflections on assigned reading and any in-class work that they wished to discuss. The entries in Mandy's journal reflect her understanding and/or feelings about assigned readings. She had entered each journal with the author's name and title of the article as shown in lines 1, 10, 13, 24. They were asked to feel free to "wander around in their thinking" and write in any format, which Mandy did.

Mandy's brief discussion of Ueland's article (lines 2-9) reiterates the expressivist discourse she has so frequently used in the other pieces. She reaffirms her conviction that every writer is unique and creative (line 4) and explicates her belief that writing for teachers creates a problem for her. This claim that many "teachers have killed my passion for writing with the use of their power to criticize my writing" constructs her individualistic identity by elucidating her opposition to the traditions of

writing in school. She resents the idea that what teachers think is what matters, and she makes the same point Bartholomae does in "Inventing the University," that instructors are the ones with power and her "academic career depends on their opinion" (line 9). She signals her frustrations with this situation in line 10, summarizing it all with "I don't think this is fair." Her need to be good student, however, conflicts with her belief that real writing is about satisfying the self as she does what is required of her in school, but resents it.

When Mandy moves to Anais Nin's piece, she connects to Nin's "passion for writing" (line 14) and how this article inspires her (line 15). That, plus Nin's idea that without writing she feels her "world is shrinking," again links strongly to expressivist discourse. Mandy's frustration is especially evident when she juxtaposes Nin's words alongside her own idea that "writing for school kills passion" (line 19). Having something graded, judged, and standardized is frequently at the heart of the academic assignment, and it is this philosophy Mandy so clearly resents as seen by her words, "I enjoy writing when I know it won't be graded on" (line 20). Unlike the days when writing was her "therapy" (line 23) and she "used to write in diaries all the time," she tells us, now "writing is a task" (line 24). It is not difficult to understand being too busy to write for oneself in college. However, the concept is somehow more poignant when Mandy writes, "I don't even have a diary anymore because after I do all of my required work, I don't want to write anymore" (line 25). The silencing or death of Mandy's most loved aspect of writing is a reminder of the compromises at times required by the move to more academic discourses in college.

When Mandy journals about Amy Tan's "Mother Tongue," she asserts her SL identity. She calls attention to the fact that, like Tan, having parents who speak a different language from what one is expected to use in everyday society carries with it unique issues. Like many of my SL students before her, Mandy writes that she "can thoroughly relate to this article" (line 27). She positions herself as the daughter of immigrant parents whose English is not perfect, while confirming a pride in her Korean identity and a frustration with those who do not understand that pride. Here her bicultural identity is strongly asserted but never politicized.

In line 28, Mandy identifies as someone who speaks "broken Korean" just as she sees her parents speaking "broken English." While I have heard the term "broken English" many times, juxtaposing it along side "broken Korean" brought new meaning to it, i.e., most people think of broken things as needing to be fixed. Mandy's frustration with academic discourse is its focus on what is "broken" in her writing, not what is interesting, creative, or intelligent. The "difficulty communicating" in Korean with her parents mirrors the difficulty communicating with professors that she has in the academic classroom. As she straddles both worlds and both languages, this intelligent young woman has come to feel inadequate in both.

Line 29 indicates that because she and her parents each speak a "broken" form of the other's language, they have difficulty communicating. This is interesting in that it implies that if the language is less than perfect, communication is hindered – a similar point to the one she so strongly disagrees with when it comes to her own use of academic discourse. Mandy resents critique of her academic discourse, but echoes the

ideology embedded in academic discourse that things must be correct to be most effective.

The jokes others make regarding people who have Asian accents offend her (line 32), as she is concerned that people who do not speak “perfect English” may be judged “stupid” (line 33). It seems from looking at Mandy’s other writing, that this concern carries over from her concern about her academic discourse. Even though she can write quite well, when using academic discourse, she is judged more harshly, and may therefore be considered less intelligent. Just as she believes her mother feels embarrassed to speak to some people “due to her ‘broken’ English” (line 34), so she feels embarrassed to have her academic writing judged for the same reason.

That quiet contradiction underlies Mandy’s summation that if she could speak better Korean, she could communicate more fully with her parents. The conflict of her linguistic choices has political dimensions. While she must tackle professors who feel she may not be communicating as effectively as they would want – and resents this, she embraces the idea that speaking “Konglish” with her parents mitigates the effectiveness of the communication.

These journal selections are particularly interesting as they draw on Mandy’s multiple subjectivities, that of passionate writer, frustrated writer, dutiful daughter, daughter with communication problems with parents, good student, resentful student. She takes up expressivist discourse in order to fight the ideologies of traditional formal discourse and demonstrates how identity can shift moment to moment as one negotiates the complexities of life and its intricate relationships.

Table 17

## Microanalysis #3: Mandy's Conference

line	UNIT OF ANALYSIS <b>Mandy's writing conference Microanalysis #3</b>
1	When I think of writing –I really see writing as like someone's individual expression
2	And I think if someone writes in a certain way that another person doesn't agree with, it doesn't mean it is wrong
3	You know, I think that is just their style
4	But a lot of people are like, "No, that is wrong, you shouldn't have done it like that Like you have to go by this structure"
5	And I personally just don't understand like how they can put limits and structures and like borders and walls around writing
6	You know because writing is just writing, and that is what I don't understand
7	Like my teachers are like , "No, this is wrong, you shouldn't have done it like that
8	And I have teachers like rephrase my words and that really upsets me
9	And I am like, you know, if I wanted it like that, I would have wrote it like that
10	But this is how I saw it, you know, so that is why I wrote like this
11	And they will reword me and then, to me, that ruins my paper, you know
12	Like it is not mine anymore.
13	<b>I: And especially when they are telling you these are criteria after you have written the paper. They set the rules and you are like, "Where were you before I wrote this?"</b>
14	Because even like for my roommates and my friends, like we are constantly writing papers and everyone just complains
15	Like I don't know what my professor wants
16	In a lot of my journal writings that I do for my other classes, I just write it because know that is what she wants to hear
17	Like you know, that is just so pointless
18	<b>I: You mentioned because English is your second language, you feel more conscious of it sometimes. Do you feel more conscious of the structures at times?</b>
19	Yeah, sometimes, because it is different, sometimes
20	Like I have been to school here since the beginning
21	I never went to a different school
22	<b>I: I didn't even think of you as a second language student</b>
23	But it is hard because my parents don't speak it much
24	They speak Korean

Continued, next page.

Table 17, continued:

line	UNIT OF ANALYSIS
	<b>Mandy's writing conference</b> <b>Microanalysis #3</b>
25	Because they say we are in this culture, we have enough connection with the English language outside the home
26	And the only place, I think, that teaches like the Korean language and the Korean culture is inside the house
27	So they will talk to us in Korean and everything
28	And like sometimes, I will catch myself and I will be like wow, that is just not right
29	It's like confusing and there is no need for me to be confused because I am more educated in English than I am Korean
30	But sometimes I will feel like, like my mind just makes a switch
31	And you know I guess it is something like in me
32	I don't even know
33	But like it happens
34	<b>I: Actually it is so wonderful for you, and when you have second language students, you can articulate that and share it, you share it so beautifully</b>
35	<b>I: You could write a good article sometime, you know, like the Amy Tan one we read</b>
36	I really liked that article because I totally related to it
37	You know, like I read it and I was like, wow, that makes a lot of sense
38	And it is weird, because even like a few weeks ago, my roommate was saying something about one of his TA's who really couldn't speak English and had an accent
39	And how like it is kind of hard to understand her
40	And I got like all upset
41	And that is when it hit home and I looked at him
42	That person is probably more intellectual than you are
43	But it is just the language
44	That's all it is
45	There is a language difference
46	You know it is nothing more than that
47	My parents are very intelligent people, you know
48	But they just can't speak English
49	And why should they have to, you know
50	<b>I: If I say it, it doesn't mean as much because you are just another teacher saying it</b>
51	<b>I: but if you say it, people hear it – and also within the classroom you will make you students feel it- because you understand it to your toes – this whole sense of how language shapes how people think about you</b>

Continued, next page.

Table 17, continued:

line	UNIT OF ANALYSIS
	<b>Mandy's writing conference</b> <b>Microanalysis #3</b>
52	And sometimes it is weird because I will be talking with my friends
53	Most of my friends are white
54	So they don't like go through the same things that I did.
55	I was talking about this with another Korean friend that I have
56	And we were like no one will understand what it is like to be Korean unless you are Korean
57	Like it is a completely different experience
58	Korean parents in our generation are exactly the same, especially the ones that immigrated here
59	But they haven't been changing with the Korean culture and like Korea is so different now
60	Like I go back like every three years and it changes every time I go back
61	But our parents aren't there to experience it so they are holding on to their old traditional culture here like it is exactly the same and it is not
62	Some of my friends will be like, "What are your parents talking about – you are American you have been raised here like all your life"
63	But I am not American
64	I am Korean American
65	I am never going to say that I am not Korean just because I have been raised here my entire life
66	Just because I can speak the English language and everything
67	And it's funny to have some people think that I don't want to be Korean
68	Like it doesn't make sense to me

Mandy made many wonderful contributions to our class. If you closed your eyes and just listened to her inflections, you might think of a parody of the popular culture "Valley Girl." She used the words "like" and "you know" so often it could read like a script from "Saturday Night Live." What Mandy had to say was no laughing matter, however. She was eloquent about the complexity of being bilingual and bicultural in America.

Mandy's conference shows sparks of the conflict metaphor's ideas of resistance to the dominant discourse of school (lines 8,9,10,11,12). While using expressivist



ideology, she moves, or at least takes some steps toward, an identity that conflicts with the notion that what teachers say represents the one correct way to say things. This is more political than she has been previously. She reveals that having teachers rephrase her words upsets her because she wants things the way she wrote them. Their rephrasing ruins her work, making it not hers (lines 9-12).

Mandy makes the point that she knows how to play the school game, however, by writing what she knows her professor want to hear (line 16) when she isn't frustrated by not knowing what they want (line 14, 15). She again edges toward a conflict identity when she says in frustration that it is all "pointless" (line 17).

Mandy's bicultural identity is explained more in this conference as she gives biographical data about her ethnicity and the complexity of being bilingual in an English speaking world (lines 23-33). Her identification with Amy Tan's article (lines 36, 37) emphasizes her lived understanding of second language issues and the problems posed by them. As she recalls an incident when her roommate criticized a teaching assistant's lack of fluency with the English language, she adopts both a second language and a multicultural discourse (lines 40-44) to coincide with her own SL identity. Her frustration that SL speakers may be judged less intelligent may well mirror her frustration with and relationship to academic discourse in the university. Her perceived lack of fluency in that discourse may mark her as one who is less intelligent.

She works to explain what being Korean American means for her and shares aspects of both her bicultural identity (lines 56-68) and frustrations about others' perceptions of her. Unlike Len, she was more familiar with a discourse about difference, one that allowed an individual who was different in the academy not only to

be “okay,” but to be intelligent. She is making connections with the subtle kinds of prejudice that exist among her friends (lines 38-49).

The expressivist discourse Mandy learned in high school helps her fit together the puzzle of her life. She understands there are people in schools who value personal expression and its myriad varieties. She is able to use that discourse to survive in the world of the university. That she feels conflicted about language issues much of the time, especially when it comes to writing, is not a surprise. That she has been able to stay as positive as she has, perhaps is.

I believe Mandy was rebelling against those powers who judge “difference” as “less” or “incorrect” or even “unintelligent.” It’s just “a language difference,” she says. “You know it’s nothing more than that.” There is a certain prejudice that exists in American schools reflected in groups like the English Only and the Back to Basics Movements. We say we applaud bilingualism, but if that second language has not been taught to you in school, somehow it is appreciated less. If a student scores well on an AP Spanish exam, there is high praise. But for the youngster who can converse in Spanish enough to translate for the parent with the principal or the banker or the grocer, there is little regard but high hope that they will get educated in English and become a “real American.”

While this conference tape wanders away from issues of writer identity, I think it is important because it reflects how language and culture are intricately tied in to other aspects of our identity. Who we are, how we see the world, and how the world sees us can not be separated like ingredients in a recipe. Rather we are like the product of the recipe, melded together in ways that make single aspects of our identity

inextricable from other aspects. As Mandy says, "It's funny to have some people think that I don't want to be Korean. Like it doesn't make sense to me" (lines 67-68). Mandy takes a multicultural stance and refuses to be just American instead of Korean-American. She recognizes that cultures change and are not static here or in Korea. Expressivism values individuals where they are, so a foot in both worlds is not problematic. She values that hybridity in life and writing.

When she speaks about not wanting professors to change her words or the fact that they insist upon certain "structures," (lines 4-9) she represents that tension and conflict of saying, being, writing, and even thinking in that standard American academic way. Her expressivist leanings allow her to be less structured, less standard than the traditional way. When professors rephrase her language, she insists, they are no longer allowing her message, but giving their own – and she is not willing to give up her identity to come closer to the one they feel is more correct. Ironically, she moves to "give them what they want" thinking in her journals, however, tacit acknowledgment that resistance has a price and in school that price often comes in the form of grades.

Mandy actually assumes the identity of an SL student in this paper much more so than she had earlier. She expresses more articulately some of what Len was saying in his papers - the notion that writing one's thoughts can be a real struggle. Both seem to struggle with the idea that writing as they are expected to write in most of their academic classes is problematic for them, and they feel they have to suppress a part of who they are to do this. Unlike Mandy's first identity paper, she now openly integrates elements of her Korean background and language into the paper. By the time she wrote this we had spent class time discussing how one's background affects not only what

Table 18

## Microanalysis #4: Mandy's Final Letter

line	UNIT OF ANALYSIS <b>MANDY'S FINAL LETTER</b> <b>Microanalysis # 4</b>
1	Upon review of my writings, I found that I have more success when I am able to take time to reflect
2	This is evident when comparing my work, such as the Issues Paper and Peer Review to the in-class writings
3	I am more of a creative, free writer and therefore enjoy writing reflective pieces
4	This may be attributed to my past experiences in the academic classroom
5	As a high school student, I was profoundly affected by the teachings of my senior year Humanities teacher, Dr. S.
6	He has instilled a philosophy based on creativity and free will, which guided my work
7	Dr. S. insisted that our personal experiences were to be reflected in our writing
8	He believed that a person's writing should reflect their personal character and thus insisted that we write at our own will
9	Dr. S. believed that a writer's voice should be apparent in his/her work
10	Therefore, I have the tendency to write my thoughts as they are
11	This in turn deters me from re-drafting my writing
12	I have found that when I begin to edit my work, I start to make changes in which I change my original ideas into those that I believe that the reader wants to read
13	As a result of this process, my work no longer is a reflection of my originality and becomes another person's ideal
14	However, as I entered the college academic classroom, I have found that Dr. S's teachings contradict the expectations of the professors I've encountered
15	At the college level, many professors prefer the standard structure in which to write
16	This standard does not allow for an individual to express their creativity and requires a person to follow strict guidelines when writing
17	Therefore, I have struggled when writing papers at the college level
18	I no longer enjoy writing, and view it to be more of a task, than a form of my individual expression

Continued, next page.

Table 18, continued:

line	UNIT OF ANALYSIS MANDY'S FINAL LETTER Microanalysis # 4
19	The difficulty that I experience when I am writing results from my inability to transfer my thoughts onto paper
20	In most cases, this is due to the fact that I am attempting to organize my ideas to the expectations of the reader; in most cases, a professor
21	In other words, I know what it is that I wish to state, but am required to rephrase my ideas to appear more intellectual
22	As a result, I often feel disheartened and incompetent when writing
23	I have always experienced difficulty in the area of grammar
24	I often think that this may be directly caused by the fact that English is not my native language
25	As an immigrant to the states, I was immediately registered into kindergarten, and therefore was pressured to learn the language at an expedient rate
26	However, because my family had always addressed each other in our native tongue at home, I had to learn to distinguish the difference between the grammatical design of my native language and the English language
27	As an ESL student, it was difficult for me to learn the complicated rules of grammatical sentences
28	Therefore, because I was able to pass my courses without effectively learning grammatical tasks, I am experiencing even greater difficulty at the college level
29	When my works are reviewed during peer response groups, errors in grammar and spelling are always emphasized
30	However, I have found this to be beneficial
31	Although I have always been uncomfortable by the idea that another peer was to read my work, I have found that they contribute constructive criticism, which can improve my work
32	In addition, because I tend to refrain from editing my writing, it is helpful that my peers are able to correct my grammatical errors before my work is evaluated by a professor
33	As a result from my experiences in the academic classroom, I feel that I am able to transmit what I have learned onto my future students

Continued, next page.

Table 18, continued:

line	UNIT OF ANALYSIS MANDY'S FINAL LETTER Microanalysis # 4
34	I feel that it is more important for a student to gain confidence in their ability to write than to be able to conform to my expectations
35	I feel that no one has the authority to criticize a person's individual expression.
36	This is not to say there is not a need to follow certain guidelines
37	However, it is essential that a person's individuality and past experiences be recognized and accepted
38	Therefore, as a teacher, I would understand my students struggles in being able to transfer their thoughts onto paper
39	I would encourage my students to write as they wish for their writing voices to be heard
40	I would emphasize the fact that my expectation of their writing is limited to their creativity and that I expect my students to be honest when expressing themselves
41	I would also express that I expect each individual to write for his/her own audience, which is not limited to what (s)he believes will be me, as his/her teacher
42	My students will be encouraged to write according to their own criteria, because I believe that no one is more critical of a person, than the self

one says, but also how they say it. With that conversation now a part of our classroom issues, she appears more comfortable in sharing this part of herself, taking pride in knowing two languages, even if it affects how she writes that second language. She begins to move toward a political stance regarding language without fully accessing a more liberating discourse.

In line 26, Mandy says that as an SL student, she was not held responsible for learning "grammatical tasks effectively." This, she feels, contributes to her current difficulty with grammar in college. It is clear that she longs for the expressivist situation of her senior high school year where what she wrote was valued and accepted as it was. She lacks the joy of writing now that she is required to write what she thinks

her audience wants to hear, i.e., write for her professors. Mandy comments that peer responders focus on grammar and editing issues (lines 29-32). This focus on “correctness” is not untypical at the college level in all departments, many of whom frequently complain about writing to English Departments. English Departments must face the problem directly in freshmen writing classes where Bizzell (2000) tells us that “‘Correctness’ is a perennial issue in basic writing instruction.” The “stunted growth” metaphor used to refer to the theoretical stance that students can not produce academic writing because they are cognitively deficient is not dead in the academy. While composition classrooms may have moved beyond judging students on whether or not they can write Standard English correctly, many others in the academy and in the government testing agencies have not.

Much of the negative feeling Mandy has about writing reverts to her use of language (lines 28, 31, 34) and how it is judged by others. Being labeled linguistically or cognitively deficient is a troublesome burden for students. There are a number of ways to look at this. Bartholomae may tell us that any new writing task can be seen as a struggle. Learning to utilize an academic discourse effectively can be frustrating and they are in the midst of that struggle. On the other hand, their own identities and backgrounds may be in conflict with university expectations. As Lu points out, a variety of aspects in the university and resistance to adopting this new discourse may mean giving up an important, valued piece of who they are to become more like the majority population. Clearly, Mandy resists it verbally but conforms, saying she has just come to dislike writing.

## Summary

Mandy assumed a more positive identity with her expressivist work. She had experienced acceptance, value, and delight in her high school mentor's writing class and embraced his way of thinking about writing. She was a writer in the sense that what she wrote was important and appreciated. Aspects of second-language and the traditional formal discourse that may have frustrated or plagued her - and probably continued to do so in college- were no longer the focus. This hard-working woman with lots to say found a venue where what she said was accepted and appreciated. She internalized this expressivist discourse. What is the philosophy behind it that may make it work for her? It embraces the following: individual expression is valued; there are lots of ways to say things, all of which have intrinsic value; creative thought has an outlet; the "right" way and the "wrong" way are not part of the vocabulary.

The "non traditional" student may well be the more typical learner in the public University today, but many still feel like outsiders. Mandy returned to her home where English was not spoken; she understood her parents' breadth of knowledge and deep intelligence which, she found, could be judged as inadequate in mainstream America; her lived experiences often conflicted with the stories of American experience. She had discovered a bias exists which she had not fully recognized before. She now realized that the prejudice toward her parents extends to her in ways she was just beginning to understand.

By assuming an expressivist ideology, Mandy could also assume a writer identity that was not that of "incompetent writer" but of competent writer in conflict with the situation she was experiencing in the academy. Expressivism provided a



place, an understanding, and a niche. She wanted to fit into this highly valued educational world but she resists the traditional formal discourse, which measured success in ways different from her mentor's. On the other hand, she integrated aspects of it into her own belief system - "I know papers have to be organized and grammatically correct." We adopt and adapt the discourses of our worlds into our experiences, sometimes with great ease and relief as with Mandy's meeting with expressivism, sometimes with a mighty clash, as with her friend's racist views and the academy's traditional formal discourse. Mandy's friend created a thinking space for her that connected in uncomfortable ways to her experience.

Identity is not static. She "lived" between the world of a living, breathing changing public university and a home life that tried to uphold traditional Korean values but was also in flux. Mandy's existence changed her parents no matter how tightly they held on to their traditions. Then we have Mandy. "Who am I as a writer" she said, "Hmmm." No wonder it took her 20 minutes to begin her answer.

Clearly Mandy did not resist all traditional formal discourse. She was learning to negotiate both worlds, struggling to make them work for her. Integration of worlds, philosophies, etc. is often a messy process. Letting go of its parts can mean letting go parts of who we are and how we have acted in the world. Integrating is a part of that messy process and more recursive than linear. Mandy seemed to exemplify that mid-continuum world. Expressivism tells me this, traditional formal discourse tells me this; here's where I am. I am competent; I have authority. Mandy's strength and belief in herself seemed to permeate her identity and ideology. The confidence that Len lacked

as he suffered from feeling “low” was not her problem. The side road of finding success through avenues open to special athletes like Vance was not her way.

Tracy’s dilemma of questioning her own capabilities regarding whether or not she could become a “real member” of the academy was also not her dilemma. It is interesting that the title of Mandy’s required research paper for the term was “African-American Drop Outs: The Effects of Structural Racism in Schools and Its Impact on African- American Males.” Part of the thesis found in her introduction stated, “Educators often blame Black men through allegations of genetic inferiority, laziness, ineducability, and cultural deficiency. These negative stereotypes influence teachers when they teach Black males and explain why these children fail in school.” Ironically, she did not draw more fully on this discourse in relation to herself.

As Mandy pondered her own struggles with institutionalized racism and cultural bias, I wondered if she saw reflections of herself in aspects of her paper. At one point she wrote, “... it is evident that a teacher’s attitude towards learning and his/her students affect the behaviors and attitudes of the students.” This idea echoes somewhat in her wide embrace of her loved mentor and her rejection of and frustration with professors who required traditional formal discourse as the only way to write a college paper. Her concluding sentence was, “We must provide them with teachers who believe that they can achieve.”

#### Microanalysis Summary

Examining in detail the words of these four students through microanalysis allows a look at the discourses they use and understandings they bring to writing in the

academy. Each student carries his/her own world of experience to the multidimensional world of academia. Melding, weaving and integrating those worlds takes an active, often frustrating process of holding on to who they are and validating the worth of the past with an acceptance of this new experience and an understanding of how it may have value in their present situations.

All of these students have felt that stunted identity but each had managed it in his/her own way. That they favored a discourse that embraced uniqueness and individual voice was not surprising. That three of them still held to the idea that more effort on their part would "fix" that problem is. Neither was it surprising that different" still equated to "less than" for these writers.

Expressivism allowed them a more powerful and accepted voice. Traditional formal discourse had proven difficult for all of them. All lacked a discourse that better allowed them to make sense of how their life factors have marginalized them and hindered their successes.

When these students moved away from traditional formal discourse, however, they also moved away from that stunted growth identity. When Tracy took up process discourse, she moves more to initiation. When Mandy, Vance, Len and Tracy took up expressivism, they moved to a competent or satisfied identity.

That the stunted growth metaphor of the seventies still seems to predominate in the thinking of these students may tell us more about a relationship to academic discourse than it does about the writing of these students. The discourses of educational circles around "basic writer," especially as they related to concepts embedded in the metaphors of stunted growth and initiation, were evident in these

students. Their lack of more empowering discourses to both explain and evaluate their writing status within the academic world of the university was notable.

In retrospect, while I had hoped to empower students in terms of their writing and ability to negotiate the tasks they would face in the academy and the world, access to the politics of language use was lacking. I offered them the more traditional discourses. I embraced, shared, and preached process methods. I also offered/required both expressive and traditionally academic writing assignments. It was really through this research, however, that the powerful social and political aspects of the conflict metaphor with its critiques of the academy's unstinting acceptance of this dominant discourse became more apparent. While the class discussed the politics of language use as part of the curriculum as well as the sociocultural factors that affect curriculum, we talked more about how to negotiate successfully within that system rather than how we might work to change it.

## CHAPTER 7

### DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

#### Overview of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate issues of writer identity in a college classroom, especially as they relate to the social and cultural influences of society. Using a poststructural lens to establish the theoretical viewpoint, this study examined the role of discourse in both framing student constructions of their identities and shaping the ideological stances from which they drew those understandings. The methodology used to conduct the research included an ethnographic study of a junior year writing class required of education majors at a large university. Examination and analysis of student writing/talk was used along with observation of student behaviors. Discourse analysis was also employed as a means of more closely examining the work of four of these students who were chosen because they constructed their identities in a more negative fashion.

The questions this study sought to answer are as follows:

- In what ways do students identify as writers in a writing classroom? What do students report as influences on their writer identity constructions? What displays of behavior in the classroom contribute to an understanding of the writer identities they report?
- What identities do students take up and what discourses do students draw on, resist or omit around issues of writing and identity in the writing classroom?

This chapter will discuss the findings of this study and consider their implications for pedagogy and research. I have divided the discussion into sections that relate to the major findings of this dissertation. They include the following: Writer Identity and Its Influences, Expressivism and Identity, Traditional Formal Discourse and Identity, Process Discourse and Identity, and Sociopolitical Discourse and Identity. After review of each subsection, I will discuss the possible implications for research and pedagogy.

### Writer Identity and Its Influences

The finding of this study that students described their writer identities in multiple and, at times, conflicting ways supports poststructural theory that identity is, indeed, multiple and can be conflicting. It can change with the tasks students are asked to perform and the students' perceptions of the requirements of those tasks. This held true for students in the case studies as well as the other students in the class. Students who constructed more positive identities and claimed to enjoy writing in general did not claim a positive writer identity consistently. In fact, many claimed to be strong writers only in certain genres and either disliked or felt inadequate in others. What struck me as a particularly interesting finding was that students with strong negative identities were also found to have multiple and conflicting aspects to their identities, a fact that surprised me. Even students like Len, who dreaded having to take a writing class and who demonstrated many behaviors that enforced the construct of a negative writer identity, actually enjoyed certain forms of writing.

Almost without exception, the task that a student was asked to perform or the student's perception of the requirements of a task made a difference in the identity the student took up. For example, some students whose behaviors and words indicated they disliked or felt deficient in terms of writing actually enjoyed particular genres, and the identities they took up in relation to certain tasks were indicative of a competent and /or satisfied writer.

These students' beliefs about who they were as writers often reflected the vocabulary typical of assessment situations in schools. For example, students would say, "I'm not good in grammar," or "I'm a bad writer when I have to write term papers." Rorty (1997 in Jopling, p. 26) theorizes that typically people use the "personal vocabularies" to which they have had access to construct identity. The students' discourses had shaped the possibilities for defining themselves. Within certain situations or given particular tasks, students' concepts of themselves shifted in this study, giving evidence of the fluid nature of identity. Enjoying, fearing, avoiding or liking writing was not just about the act of putting words on paper. These students gave evidence that the social and cultural allowances and expectations involved not only shaped how they felt and performed, but they also affected the identity students took up for that performance. This finding supports the poststructuralist theory that identities shift in relationship to the social milieu. The multiple identities these students constructed are not individual creations but adaptations "allowed" by the discourses that have been made available to them.

This concept of identities constructed from available discourses is further supported by the influences students reported as having shaped their writer identities.

In general, students named family, teachers, and schools as most influential on writer identity construction. For these students, the comments of family and teachers as well as "school" in general were perceived to be most important in forming and shaping their understanding of who they are as writers. The elements of access, ethnicity, race, dis/ability and class, which have undoubtedly shaped and molded them in myriad ways, do not, for the most part, get referenced as influential factors. Students, in general, seem to have remained outside those discussions. This is, perhaps, because they do not support the metanarratives of "equal opportunity" or "everyone who works hard will succeed." These define the culture of school and American society and, therefore, influence not only how students define self but how they perceive what is most influential on their creation of a writer-identity. As Ivanic (1994) has theorized, writers' encounters and experiences have been both enabled and constrained by sociocultural factors which reflect their access to different discourses.

### Implications

Further research on the ways students construct identity could advance understanding of the process of student identity construction in the academy. In-depth interviews with students regarding self-constructed writer identities could be worth pursuing in order to gain a better understanding of the discursal construction of self. Studies that focus on the ways social interaction mediates writer identity construction in and out of schools would aid understanding of how discourses both shape and position writers, implicitly and explicitly. With a better understanding of how students see



themselves as writers, instructors might work more productively with those whose negative constructions are hindering their productivity.

The finding that students generally named family, teachers and schools as more influential on their constructions of writer identity, rather than sociocultural factors such as race, class, ethnicity, second-language influence or disability, has both theoretical and pedagogical implications. Curriculum that is more focused on how language is shaped in and perceived by society may alter students' perceptions of the most influential factors on language and writing. This in turn could affect how writers perceive themselves in the academy, helping students better recognize how language is mediated by sociocultural factors. The literature has shown how students' everyday language practices can create tensions as they shape identity in our classrooms (Gee and Crawford, 1997; Ivanic, 1997; Solsken, 1993; Willett, Solsken, Wilson-Keenan, 1996). The work of these researchers complements these findings by making visible how language positions people and fosters particular subjectivities. By raising awareness of language in the social context of school, we can help students begin to understand and gain control over their own roles in the use of discourse (Ivanic 1997). Armed with this better understanding, students may stop blaming themselves for their perceived inadequacies.

### Expressivism and Identity

Both a premise and finding of this study is that discourses people take up construct their sense of self, others and reality. The finding that expressivist discourse is preferred by many students and allows a more positive construction of writer identity

may surprise few writing instructors. Its ideological acceptance of and respect for a variety of individual voices make it a safe and welcoming mode of communication. It is usually not associated with judgments of "incompetence" or "low level" writing as is often the case with more traditionally formal academic writing.

The following finding regarding expressivist writing tasks helped further explain the multiple identities students constructed. The majority of students (16 of the 21 studied) preferred expressivist writing and three-quarters of those constructed a more positive identity when they took up expressivist discourse to discuss their writing.

When I began the study, I had not realized how heavily the different writing philosophies would be reflected in student discourses or how strongly these ideologies would affect student-constructed identities. In their preferred expressivist mode, students saw themselves as more competent and satisfied writers. As an instructor, it was not surprising to find that students have a tremendous personal investment in their work. What was surprising was how critical and vital the opportunity to express personal feelings and tell their stories was to students, even those claiming not to be "good writers." Expressivism allows students to retain far more individual control, which, in turn, allows them to see themselves as more competent.

While I had recognized students' enjoyment of assignments reflecting expressivist ideology in my classes before this, I now understand more clearly why a forum for personal expression is such an important part of a writing class. Voices that may be silenced in other forums can ring with power in expressivist pieces. I am thinking of a short poem that encouraged expressivist discourse that Vance wrote, one the class praised and applauded, when much of his other work met with perplexed looks

or endless editing suggestions. His sense of success as well as his acceptance of himself as competent author was dramatically different from the stunted identity that was so wearisome and that writing instructors know so well in their frustrated students.

Another student in this class who would seldom meet the minimum requirements for traditional formal papers wrote in wonderful detail and at great length those papers more expressivist in nature. In general, students were more eager to share, more excited about response groups, and more unabashedly proud of these types of writing.

### Implications

Spigelman (2000) argues that composition curriculum must shift away from its emphasis on product and give students access to the epistemological discussion of competing models of teaching writing, whether they be the classical models of rhetoric, expressivism, or other competing forms. Her call is for discourse on the discourses. This may prove pedagogically sound as students come to understand why they prefer writing in a certain way and why they identify more negatively when being required to use certain rhetorical styles.

This finding also has implications for wider use and acceptance of more hybrid forms of discourse. A pedagogy that both encourages students to write and allows them wider avenues for success as they move to more structured discourses may help prevent the all too familiar refrain of "I'm just not a good writer" or "I can't write." Hybridity, a combining of student writing genres, has had advocates for a number of years now (Bizell, 1999; Solsken et al. 2000). Research that further tests its applicability as a tool

in academic classrooms for fostering more positive writer identities could further substantiate the case for more hybrid discourses in the classroom.

McComiskey (2000) argues that writing teachers should stop separating composition into competing categories and examine what each has in common, each leaves out, and each adds to the other. By creating a more hybrid approach to the study of composition, he contends, students could achieve a more balanced view of effective writing. I believe my own findings further substantiate his argument. Finding ways to encourage writing by tapping expressivist ideology could enhance and foster student enjoyment of writing. Combining these ideals with more traditional formal academic goals (Macrorie, 1988) may further the objective goals of writing for both instructors and students alike.

#### Process Discourse and Identity

Four of the findings were directly related to process writing discourse. First, process discourse was often linked to bootstraps discourse's idea that hard work and persistence would bring success. As a process instructor of many years, I should not have been surprised to find this was the case, though the finding was unsettling at first. Reviewing the definition of bootstraps discourse used in this course, I know that my intended message was not to blame students for their difficulties with their writing. I also see how this can be an unintended result. Some students may have accepted what seemed an unrealistic standard of success in terms of their writing and blamed themselves when they did not feel they had achieved it. It is important to acknowledge my own "preaching" that repeated efforts and multiple drafts would make the writing

better. It is also important from me to acknowledge that often, and for many students, while individual drafts improved, writing, in a more global sense, often did not. That is, many students who felt they had specific problems with their discursive practice often felt they had those same problems at the end of the course. Len, Mandy, Vance and Tracy all struggled with many of the same writing issues at the end of the semester that they struggled with at the beginning. While individual papers may have better approximated the standards I set for the class through process method, individual student drafting of papers always seemed to begin back where the first draft of the semester had begun. Upon reflection, I will look to the sociocultural factors at work that affect language use and discuss them more explicitly with students in the future.

Having said this, I continue to believe that process does offer an opportunity to improve drafts and to progress through a series of stages focused on improving papers in a variety of ways. However, bootstraps discourse is a powerful discourse in American education and offers seductively simple answers (Just try harder!) to complex problems. It is especially easy to take it up in a process program. What the discourse denies, however, is disadvantage. No matter how hard one tries, overcoming a disadvantage that one does not even recognize as part of the issue is immensely problematic. Without a discussion of the issues regarding why writing can be so difficult for some students, it is easy to begin thinking it must be a matter of effort or motivation, even for the students, themselves. What is disturbing to me as a writing instructor is how I may have fallen into this trap. While I knew many factors influence writing, I am not sure I gave my students the discourse they needed to stop blaming

themselves. I only realized this when I found their bootstraps discourse was so closely aligned to process discourse.

Pedagogically speaking, if the real task is to assist students in improving academic writing, then we must find ways to help them both feel and be successful. This must go beyond the “try harder” discourse we or they may have adopted. For example, students who accept, “If you try hard enough, you will succeed in school,” by implication may also accept “If you have not succeeded, you just did not try hard enough.” Allowing students to blame themselves for not doing well when sociocultural differences affecting language may be at the heart of the problem is pedagogically unsound and, for many young people, personally defeating.

Another thing that surprised me regarding process was that students with some of the most negative writer identity constructions disliked it so much. I wondered why the opportunity to improve drafts did not appeal to them. The second finding related to Process discourse helped to explain this. Students expressing concerns about process methods generally disliked the idea of peer critique, some fearing they, themselves, would be seen in a less favorable light because of perceived weaknesses in their writing.

Workshops that require peer response can present a formidable threat to students who already see themselves as deficient. Allowing others to see in black and white the writing “problems” that they have been told they have can be humiliating. For student responders who have learned methods of response primarily from their own classroom experiences, effective peer review may not come easily and can appear to be overly harsh and judgmental to those already lacking confidence in their writing. Thus, a pattern of negative experiences around writer-response is perpetuated. For students

struggling with language issues, peer review can feel even more humiliating than the red pen of the teacher. Its promise of coaching is hardly worth the pain of being judged horribly deficient by one's peers, even if that judgment comes in the form of a friendly face.

Len's absolute insistence that peer response groups were extremely difficult for him highlighted this point for me. Even Vance, who was far more sociable and confident with these classmates, did not begin the semester comfortable with peer response. These two students, already marginalized because of race and language difference, felt that the judgment of peers rather than their support awaited them. Their fears highlight the need for careful rule setting around peer response as well as explicit teaching regarding methods of response.

It was also a finding that process discourse seems to facilitate a transition from stunted growth identity to initiation identity. Students who saw themselves as deficient writers did discuss their work as improving as they worked on conventions and eliminated some of the "errors" of the composing process. So, for these students, the idea that they could get response to a draft and then revise before it was graded felt more positive than it did for the previously discussed group who focused more on the embarrassment of having to share their "deficient" work. The shift away from a single product to an improved draft or a "work in progress" allowed some to move from the stunted growth metaphor to the "I will improve with practice" metaphor of initiation. It is true that there was still no questioning of traditional formal discourse, but, as has been mentioned, the conflict identity, which requires access to a more sociopolitical discourse, was not explicitly available to them in this class.

The finding that students who construct negative writer identities for themselves may find ways of “working around” the system rather than learning to work within it is also tied to aspects of process discourse, although it may well be linked to traditional formal discourse, also. For example, rather than experimenting with language and writing when they have difficulty, students may get others to make improvements or even write a paper for them in order to get better grades. While over-zealous responders can be found no matter what the method of teaching, actually having others do the work of revision for them seemed linked more to process discourse in this study. Len, again, is the best example of this as he went to people he trusted, people who understood him as a person, and had them work with his writing to make it more “acceptable” for his classes.

We need to understand students’ own constructions of the forces that both motivate and silence them and, as instructors, examine our own writing feedback strategies. Instructors’ understanding (or lack of understanding) of dialect, second-language difference, learning disabilities and other factors become a part of how they teach. Cultural differences affect our judgments of writers and writing difference. In order to help students understand the politics of language and examine ways to work within that political framework, academic institutions must first understand their own position in regard to that difference.

### Implications

In terms of research, a study could be conducted that analyzed both students’ and professors’ responses to student writing. There have been a number of studies that



examined response to writing. Valentino (1992) found that teachers' responses to student writing reflected their values and beliefs about language and often pointed to deficit and developmental models of writing. Other studies of writing response have focused on students' reactions to instructors' writing response ( Spearling 1987; Hedgcock & Lefkowitz 1994; Straub, 1997), while still others have offered suggestions for or critique about the different types of responses teachers give ( Zamel 1985; Sullivan 1985; Gay 1998). I would suggest a study to examine the language of responders to see, specifically, which metaphors and metanarratives were implicated in their language. A researcher might also search out, for example, assumptions embedded in responses to second language speakers or any student who showed evidence of language difference. A researcher could examine the judgments implied in peer responses. Researchers have begun to explore sociocultural factors related to writing in school settings (Freeman & Freeman, 1994; Bruch & Marback, 1997; Comfort, 2000), but more must be done. A study such as this could be useful in examining the hidden agendas of our writing classrooms and making them explicit in order to examine more fully the politics of language in the classroom.

It might also be useful to research the vision and philosophies of instructors using process methods. I believe my own assumption about it was that it was almost always empowering and motivating. This study has me rethinking that assumption. Pedagogy must take different variables into consideration. Elbow (1981) writes that students need to experience two different kinds of power in the writing process. First, there should be power over oneself and, second, there should be control over the use of language as a tool for communication. These are in addition to the contact and power

over readers that are a part of process. These ideas can help instructors remember to link social and academic writing goals. If we implement process methods in our classroom, we must stay aware that a societal as well as an academic review of writing is taking place.

### Traditional Formal Discourse and Identity

The majority of students (17 of 21) assumed more negative writer identities in association with traditional formal discourse. As they took up traditional formal discourse in their discussions, students also took on the identities of stunted growth and initiation as opposed to satisfied or competent identities. The case studies, selected because those students initially constructed more negative writer identities, support a finding that writers with sociocultural histories different from those more dominant or “mainstream” in academic institutions, especially when those differences affect language, may be judged by others and, therefore, judge themselves as less able.

Gee (1999) has theorized that people who acquire certain discourses late, without much early preparation or access to dominant or privileged sociocultural resources can be disadvantaged and run into difficulty as they bump up against the powerful gatekeepers of the dominant discourse. Traditional formal discourse has many of these gatekeepers in the form of teachers and state testing agencies determined to “enforce high standards.”

While the traditional formal discourse itself is not monolithic, it encompasses a melding of many discourses that can be found on any given college campus. Behaviors often associated with the discourse, especially those that measure and judge, that claim

difference as less than, and that exclude and devalue without acknowledging themselves as societal constructions, were implicated in more negative identity constructions.

Judged as some form of “stunted,” students have shown acceptance of these judgments even as they moved to more competent identity formations in their expressivist writing tasks.

Weedon (1997) has argued that language differentiates and informs us about what is socially accepted as normal. Students who bump up against traditional formal discourse in the academy have come to understand their writing as “less than normal,” or “deficient” compared to that of their peers. They have learned that through the words of those who critique or grade their work.

If traditional formal discourse, when taken up by students, contributes to more negative writer identity constructions, we may need to examine values and ideologies embedded in the discourse itself. Bizzell (1999) writes that

... in a discourse community, shared conventions of language use affect social status, world view, and work. The elements are so powerful that the discourse could be said to take on a life of its own, independent of individual participants; it could be said even to ‘create’ the participants that suit its conventions by allowing no other options if they wish to be counted as participants” (p. 9).

How true that was for some of the “bad writers” in this community.

### Implications

Pedagogically, it is reasonable to set expectations that are not unfairly vague or extraneous to the communication task at hand. Students convinced that they are “bad” writers, however, may fall victim to the inaction that preys on people convinced that past “failures” predict the failure of future efforts. Sizer and Sizer (1999) tell us that

“Anxiety draws energy, stifles thought, distracts. Expectations set a standard, give a target, send helpful signs that a task can be accomplished. Expectations that set a too distant or irrelevant target or a demonstrable threat promote paralysis” (p.102). Helping students understand the writing expectations and assisting them in the goal of attaining them may involve different strategies for different students. For Len, “success” in writing may mean coming to understand aspects of language that he only knew previously in terms of “deficiency.”

Wider acceptance of more multicultural discourses and more freedom of presentation in academic writing tasks at the post-secondary level may help students move more effectively through required academic writing tasks. Some forms of traditional formal discourse and the expectations of those who require it may detract from the communicative ability of the writer by stifling the thought process with its paralyzing emphasis on “required structures.” While it is reasonable for teachers of academic writing to set standards, they must also help students fully understand the required tasks. They need an awareness of what must be taught to help students get those assignments accomplished.

The metanarratives of school represented by the metaphors of stunted growth and initiation were implicated in students’ negative writer identity constructions, especially in relationship to traditional formal discourse. These narratives could be further researched with not only students, but with educators. With the growing popularity of state exams to determine who “can” and “cannot” write, we must be socially and politically aware of the criteria that are used to measure and judge students and have an awareness of their appropriateness for students. Research related to this

finding could further examine how the metanarratives of school affect those who may be, for example, second language speakers and have dialectical differences. Also fodder for research is the connection between the sociocultural history of student writers and the way they are positioned in the academy. The state's and educators' understanding of "good" writers and "bad" should be studied further in order to dissect the beliefs and biases embedded in them.

A stunted growth identity was closely associated with traditional formal discourse, reflecting the lasting effects of the theoretical premise of the Sixties and Seventies that "Basic" writers were immature thinkers, powerless to clear the cognitive hurdles required in the academy. Positioning writers as deficient or delayed continues in this 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Further research into understanding why students take up this identity in relation to traditional formal discourse may help inform pedagogical strategies in composition. Research on how to respond to writers could not only further clarify this issue but also, perhaps, suggest a pedagogy that better assists students who have come to believe they are simply "not good writers."

This finding also has important pedagogical implications in that students appear to accept as "truth" the negative representations of themselves as writers that work against them in the classroom. Brodkey (1992) writes that poststructuralism offers the possibility of teachers and students reconstructing themselves in relation to political realities via discursive practices that resist those representations that work against them. Writing instructors can help bridge poststructuralist theory to language awareness and writer identity in the classroom by explicitly teaching aspects of critical language awareness. Given the dominant ideology of testing for "basic competence" that now

pervades America's classrooms, students must be aware of the political implications of their language "choices." Vance, able to say that academic writing is less "straightforward" and "honest," may come to understand why his choice of expressivist discourse is preferable.

Gaining meta-knowledge regarding how dominant discourses affect us in society is important in order to help students like Len and Mandy feel less marginalized and compliant. Helping students understand that language as a site of political struggle will help them contest their "stunted" constructions in more productive ways. While conflict, as Lu (1991) presents it, allows for struggle and uncertainty as it deals with issues of diversity, it does not always mean one has a comfortable relationship with language. It does provide for a less marginalized, more empowered view of the world of writing and one's position in it.

The finding that students with sociocultural histories that are different from those more traditionally found in academic institutions, especially when that difference affects language, may be judged by others as less able and may, therefore, judge themselves as less able, has similar implications for the classroom. If multiculturalism is truly a part of the goals for an academic community, pedagogically, we must explicitly discuss writing for students with linguistically and socially diverse backgrounds. If difference is not to be equated with "less than," conversations about difference must take place in the classroom. For example, when Vance feels less "straightforward" and Mandy feels not her "real self" when they assume traditional formal discourses, they might better understand their feelings about language in a socio-political discourse. We must teach academic discourse, if that is the goal, in ways that

do not leave second language students (and others) feeling colonized or marginal to the dominant discourse.

According to students, the method of one draft correction and return is still common at the university level. It may be less productive than conversations about what makes a paper work, which ideas are clear and helpful and which are not, and what language choices would make writing most effective for a particular task.

### Sociopolitical Discourse and Identity

A discourse that students did not take up is the sociopolitical discourse of writing. This discourse could have assisted students in understanding how, as writers, they have been shaped by their schooling, their families, and a variety of other factors. It would have enabled writers like Len and Sandy to connect some of the language issues they were struggling with to the hegemonic influences that work in our society, many of which allow and even condone forms of institutional racism and other forms of oppression. While students, themselves, constructed multiple and conflicting identities, they did not, for the most part, imbricate those identities with sociocultural factors such as race, class, ethnicity.

Students who took up stunted growth and initiation identities generally lacked those empowering discourses that could explain their lack of success in academic discourse in ways other than "deficient." Despite the fact that a number of the class readings discussed issues of language and writing in society, I have learned that more explicit teaching of the issues connected to the metaphor of conflict may better serve students with more negative identities. Process ideology as used in this class did not

emphasize politics and, therefore, did not provide the empowering discourses some of these students needed.

A sociopolitical discourse would connect the idea of the privilege to the use of traditional formal discourse, and it would review its historical background. Students would better understand traditional formal discourse's association and less than tolerant history with many aspects of diversity. A sociopolitical discourse would also have helped them thoughtfully consider the idea that linguistic choices have political dimensions, thus opening up the idea that language can actually be a choice.

It is the discourse used to interpret their experience rather than the experience itself that poststructuralists say is at the center of identity. This dissertation supports that theory that student construction of identity is affected by the way those around them have discussed, responded to, and reacted to their writing, together with their own personal histories and cultures. Knowledge and power do create and recreate themselves through curriculum, and it is the responsibility of educators to find ways to successfully include those students who have been have identified themselves as unsuccessful in the learning process.

### Conclusions

This study discussed student-constructed writer identity, the influences reported by students as shaping that identity, and the discourses taken-up and omitted by students in their discussions of writer identity. The major writing discourses of expressivism, process, and traditional formal were found to permeate student language and shape writer identities in ways that positioned them both favorably and unfavorably.



Discourse analysis, used as a tool to more closely examine student language, demonstrated that students who have differences related to language, whether those differences relate to race, ethnicity, second-language or other sociocultural influence or disability, may feel “stuck” in their writing, especially in relationship to traditional formal discourse. Students, in general, did not recognize how sociocultural influences affected language and, therefore, tended to fall into the paradigms of the past, stunted growth and uninitiated. Those paradigms reflected a need to advance cognitively and developmentally to acquire the unquestioned traditional formal discourse required in the academy.

This study suggested a need for explicit discussion of and instruction in the sociopolitical aspects of language. This, it was suggested, would help students move to more positive constructions of writer identities in the academy and help them learn to negotiate language rather than be manipulated by it. I am not suggesting that a simple solution exists for writers who have come to believe they are unable to successfully negotiate the writing tasks required in the academy. I am suggesting there is a better way than allowing them to remain labeled as deficient.

The implications of these findings challenge us to be aware pedagogically of how our students become marginalized. Important to this dissertation is the concept that negative writer identities can reflect the conflict, struggle, and tensions of working within the institutional bounds of the university. This can be especially difficult without access to the conversations that can provide building blocks to a more emancipating understanding of one’s situation and the factors influencing writer identity.

We must also continue to offer avenues to help students become more successful, recognizing the value of more hybrid discourses within the academic community. Research on writing that blends aspects of expressivism with more traditional discourses in classrooms could tell us if those who have come to fear academic writing are more able to find success using hybrid forms. We live in a world that is ever more multicultural in its aspect. Perhaps a blending of writing epistemologies would better serve the blended social and cultural natures of students in this Twenty-first Century.

APPENDIX A

CONSENT FORM

Dear Students:

As a teacher, researcher, and doctoral student, I have a strong interest in writing students and writing classrooms. I am presently conducting research on writer identity as part of my doctoral work and would like to use our 370 class as a primary site for my study. As part of our class work and discussion, we will be examining how students conceive of themselves as writers, what influences they attribute to that identity, and what influences may be at work that generally go unrecognized. It is my hope that this work will be of value to me as researcher and to all of us as educators.

I would like permission to use your spoken and written comments, portfolios, conferences, class discussions, course activities, information about you as a member of this class as well as recordings of selected classes as part of the data. At some point I may follow up with some individuals to further clarify data and talk at greater length regarding research issues. At no point will you be identified, as pseudonyms will be used in all drafts and possible future publications. Your decision to give or withhold written consent will in no way affect your final grade in this class and your consent to participation may be withdrawn any time before the end of the semester. Also, if at any time before the end of the semester you realize you have said or written something you would not want included, you may ask to have that material eliminated from the study.

I plan to share the results of this study in a dissertation. There is also the possibility that the research will be used for professional writing and presentations. In addition, I would be most happy to share the results with you not only as research participants, but also as fellow educators. Please feel free to ask questions about the study at any time and to freely voice your opinion at any time. It is my sincere hope that teacher-researchers will play a definitive role in making writing classrooms effective and satisfying places for all young writers.

Sincerely,

Linda A. Fernsten

I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree to participate in the research of Linda Fernsten as described in this consent form. I give permission for comments, papers, interviews, and other data from Education 370 to be used in the study with the understanding that my privacy will be protected.

APPENDIX B  
MICROANALYSES OF TRACY

L	UNIT OF ANALYSIS TRACY'S "WHO AM I" AND "INFLUENCES" Microanalysis #1	IDENTITY	IDEOLOGY	DISCOURSE DRAWN ON	DISCOURSE RESISTED / OMITTED
1	After reading this question the first time, I chuckled				
2	I asked myself, "Me, as a writer?"				
3	I used to think of myself as a halfway decent writer	Stunted growth		Traditional formal	
4	My sister informed me otherwise	Stunted growth	People's response to writing affects writers view of self	Traditional formal	
5	I took a creative writing class at the community college went to before the university	Former community college student			
6	I found I did better with short stories	Competent	writing "ability" can vary with the genre		
7	As I thought about it for a few more moments, I decided that I am a writer in progress	Initiation	Good writers evolve	Process	
8	The more papers I write, the better I get	Initiation	Practice improves writing	Process Bootstraps process	
9	The first draft is usually awful, each draft gradually improves		Redrafting is a way to improve one's writing	Process	
10	I am also looking to improve my writing	Initiation /stunted growth		Process	
11	I enjoy constructive criticism		Writer response can improve drafts	Process, traditional formal process	
12	I am willing to listen to new ideas		Writer response is helpful		
13	And I like someone to edit my writing		Peer editing is useful in the process	process	
14	This helps me feel more confident about my writing	Initiation	Peer response can aid a writer's confidence	process	
15	My husband is an English teacher	Wife of English teacher			
16	And my sister writes extremely well	Sister of good writer			
17	Between the two of them I get lots of feedback		competent feedback is important	process	
1b	As you have just read, I feel that the most influential people in my writing have been my husband and my sister		Family members can influence writer identity		
2b	They always take the time to give me honest feedback		Time and trust aid good feedback about writing	process	
3b	I trust their opinions and feel they have more experience with writing than I	Initiation	Good writers can give good response	process	
4b	I have not always enjoyed my sister's constructive criticism	Stunted growth	Writing critique can be unpleasant	Possibly process	

5b	I never thought that I was an awful writer until she said to me, "God! Your writing is awful!"	Stunted growth	criticism can change a writer's self perception	Traditional academic	
6b	You would never know you were in college	Stunted growth	College writers should reach a higher standard	Traditional formal	
7b	I took a step back, looked at my writing and thought, she was right	stunted growth	Peer response affects writer's views	Process/ traditional formal	
8b	I did not write "polished"	initiation	Good writing has a certain standard	Traditional formal	
9b	And that was how I wanted to write	Initiation	Good writing is a goal to strive for	Traditional formal	
10b	This is when I began to change my writing	initiation	Writing can be changed by an act of will	Traditional formal	
11b	I started to take more time with writing, to really think about what I wanted to say, and what words I wanted to use	initiation	Careful, thoughtful writing and word choice can improve writing	Traditional formal, process	
12b	My writing has gradually improved	competent	Conscious steps improve writing	Traditional formal process, bootstraps	
13b	It will keep improving with each piece I write	initiation	Improvement comes with practice	Process bootstraps	
14b	I think the more writing a person does, the better they become		Improvement comes with practice	process	
15b	I know this self realization would not have occurred if my sister wasn't so brutally honest with me		Highly critical peer response can be effective	Traditional academic, process	
16b	For that, my writing is a work in progress	initiation		(?) process	

	UNIT OF ANALYSIS Tracy's Writing Conference Microanalysis # 2	IDENTITY	IDEOLOGY	DISCOURSE DRAWN ON	DISCOURSE RESISTED / OMITTED
1	When I write I have a really hard time with mechanics like grammar, punctuation, just things like word choice and I really try to focus when I write	Stunted growth	Good writers are mechanically correct	Traditional formal	
2	I really try to focus on correcting those things	Stunted growth	Working hard should address writing problems	bootstraps	Possible learning disability
3	And every time I think I do a good job it doesn't happen, it doesn't happen		Hard work does not fix all problems	Traditional formal	LD (?)
4	I: Did you feel a shift when you moved to the university from the community college?	Stunted growth	Effort does not address all problems	Possible LD	
5	Yeah, I mainly felt that last year when I went into English	instructor	A university standard can differ from community college	Traditional formal	
6	But that was really a shock	Transfer English major	English department standards were different from others		
7	I felt like I just got slapped in the face		Academic standards are higher at the university level		
8	That is how I felt	Stunted growth	It is difficult to be judged deficient		
9	But I guess I am concerned, because I really don't want to, being an English major	Stunted growth	English majors should be good writers	Academic writer	
10	Just because I'm an English major doesn't mean that I can write well	Stunted growth	English majors are not all good writers	Traditional formal	
11	I am an English major basically because I like to read - not because of -	Competent reader, stunted growth	English majors are not all good writers		
12	I saw that in your letter and you made that real clear. So when you sit down to write, it sounds to me like you are bringing a lot of anxiety to it	instructor	One's personal expectations and standards can cause anxiety in writing		
13	Yeah, I am because I feel like - like even vocabulary when I - will try to think of a word and I am like what is a better word for whatever - any word - happy - I mean and I am like OK - I will think about another one and then I will pick a word and then it doesn't make sense - like I don't know	Stunted growth	Word choice is an important part of good writing	Traditional formal	



	instructor	process
15	But that is why I want you to always think Of writing as a process. When people totally focus on the mechanics of writing – sometimes they get that frozen feeling that you are talking about and I can sense some times that it feels more like a chore than a pleasure	
16	Well that is not true because I do like to write	
17	I do like to write	
18	I love writing	
19	I mean I do, I don't mind writing	
20	I just	
21	It's been recently that I have gotten more insecure about my writing	Traditional formal
22	Like I used to think I wasn't half bad	Traditional formal
23	And then I think it was this year when I wrote a paper in one of my other classes and I thought it was decent	Traditional formal
24	And then I got it back, it was totally ripped apart	Traditional formal
25	And like some of the things he said to me I didn't even understand what he was talking about	Traditional formal
26	And I was just kind of like oh my god, is it really this bad	Traditional formal, process
27	And he was like "Did you even proofread this?"	Traditional formal
28	"This is awful," is basically what he was saying	
29	And I was kind of like, All right	Traditional formal
30	And I guess I was concerned because this is a writing class	bootstraps
31	I have done all the assignments and I worked really hard	bootstraps
32	See I feel like it doesn't show and I feel like you think that I am not working hard	

33	<b>I: Do I somehow give you that impression?</b>	Instructor concerned about student's perceptions	Saying back statement may help student look at class process to examine her conclusions	process	
34	No, I think it is probably just my own insecurity	Stunted growth	Lack of confidence stems from a variety of historical issues		
35	I don't like handing in papers that I don't have (her English teacher husband) check over	Stunted growth, Wife of English teacher initiation	Response from peers is a step in the process	process	
36	He is an excellent writer so he will go over things with me and explain things to me	English teacher initiation	trained responders give helpful feedback	process	
37	I don't know if it is because I've been away from just basic grammar for so long	Stunted growth	Good grammar is necessary for good writing	Traditional formal	
38	Did you have time in between - are you still in your early 20's?	instructor	Non traditional students may face academic issues	Traditional formal	
39	I am 25	Older student			
40	After high school I took like a year and a half off from school and then I went back to school and even, like my writing, that was a long time ago	Older student	Without practice, writing weakens		
41	So I just feel like I lost touch with just basic things that I should know	Stunted growth	(as above)		
42	And it wasn't really until this point that it really posed a problem for me	Stunted growth	University writing requirements are more stringent		
43	Like I have taken creative writing and I think my teacher was just very - she wasn't focusing on things like that and mechanics and like	Competent	Expressivist teachers do not emphasize mechanics	expressivist	
44	I think my thoughts and ideas that I have are strong, but it is just basic things like that	initiation	Standard English rules for the basis of writing	Traditional formal	

line	UNIT OF ANALYSIS TRACY'S MIDTERM LETTER Microanalysis # 3	IDENTITY	IDEOLOGY	DISCOURSE DRAWN ON	DISCOURSE RESISTED / OMITTED
1	Dear Mrs. Fernsten				
2	I am writing to inform you about the improvements needed in my portfolio		Reviewing writing assumes making improvements	Traditional formal/ process	
3	First and foremost allow me to start by addressing my weak areas	Stunted growth	Writing must match a standard	Traditional formal	
4	The organization of my writing samples needs revision	Stunted growth	As above	Traditional formal, process	
5	I am aware of my weakness	Stunted growth	As above		
6	A more comprehensive organizational strategy would improve my writing		Good organization is key to good writing	Traditional formal	
7	Secondly, word choice is an area of weakness	Stunted growth	Strong vocabulary is an indicator of good writing	Traditional formal	
8	I have a tendency to over use common words, failing to use precise vocabulary	Stunted growth	As above	Traditional formal	
9	Also, my sentences are wordy at times	Stunted growth	Conciseness is an indicator of good writing	Traditional formal	
10	Run-on sentences are also an area of difficulty	Stunted growth	Correct sentence structure is an indicator of good writing	Traditional formal	
11	I try to over express myself				
12	Lastly, the most evident weakness is in mechanics	Stunted growth	Poor mechanics indicate poor writing	Traditional formal	
13	My writing needs fine tuning	initiation	Good writing appropriates a specialized discourse	Traditional formal	
14	Proofreading would benefit me greatly	initiation	Good writing means good editing	Traditional formal	
15	Punctuation usage needs improvement	Stunted growth	Good writing means standard punctuation	Traditional formal	
16	Often times I use punctuation inappropriately	Stunted growth			
17	Also, my use of grammar is incorrect	Stunted growth	Standard English is the correct form	Traditional formal	
18	I have always had a difficult time in this area	Stunted growth			
19	However, these areas can improve with diligent work				
20	With my weak points addressed, allow me to share with you my strong points	Competence	Hard work makes good writers	Process, bootstraps	

21	Being a future educator, it is important to strive to improve one's performance			Education is about improvement		
22	As a writer I am always working to improve my writing	Hard worker			Traditional formal, process	
23	I am open to feedback, welcoming constructive criticism	Hard worker		Writing is a process		
24	I will encourage this in my own classroom	Future teacher				
25	Another one of my strengths is effort	Competent		Good writers work hard		
26	Frequently, I try to research my topic and write as much as possible	Competent		Knowledge of subject is a component of good writing	Traditional formal	
27	I think critically about my writing, trying to say all I feel and believe	Competence		Honest expression is a component of good writing	Traditional formal, expressivist	
28	The third strength is the passion evident in my writing	Competence		Passion is a component of good writing		
29	I truly enjoy writing	Competence				
30	I find writing to be therapeutic, helping me express my thoughts	Satisfaction		Writing can be cathartic	expressivist	
31	I enjoy writing in a wide variety of genres	Satisfaction		Writers should be competent in different genres		
32	This enjoyment of writing is sure to be heightened in my own classroom	Future teacher		Good writing teachers enjoy writing		
33	Sincerely, Stacy					

line	UNIT OF ANALYSIS TRACY'S FINAL LETTER Microanalysis #4	IDENTITY	IDEOLOGY	DISCOURSE DRAWN ON	DISCOURSE RESISTED / OMITTED
1	In evaluating myself in this class I think that I deserve an A/B				
2	I feel this way because first of all I have completed all of my work on time, with the exception of the e-mail assignments.				
3	I thought about the question of meeting the five o'clock deadline on Saturday				
4	I do not own a computer nor do I have access to one	resister			Resister
5	.I realize I can use the computers at school but my address book did not send my e-mail to everyone	resister			
6	I think that e-mail should be optional, considering it is only used twice in the semester	resister	Resistance is a way of objecting to certain assignments		
7	These assignments I discussed with you and was told not to worry about them.				
8	I have devoted time and worked hard on each piece of writing	Hard worker	Hard work should be a factor in assessment	Bootstraps	
9	I realize that I need some serious help with mechanics of writing, but I am a writer in progress	Stunted growth	Beginning writers face convention difficulties	Traditional formal Process	
10	I will progress as I continue to write	Initiation	Becoming a good writer is a process	Process	
11	I think that my writing shows potential and displays my personal thoughts in each piece	Competent	Good writing includes Individual thought	Expressivist	
12	...As far as a reflection of me as a writer, I think the most important thing I have realized about my writing is that I am more aware of my writing.	Initiation	Understanding one's own writing is a part of the process	Process	
13	What I mean is I focus more on what I am writing	Initiation	As above	Process	
14	I mean a paper or story is much more effective when it is mechanically correct	Initiation	Effective writing follows traditional rules	Traditionally formal	
15	I enjoy writing and hope to improve as I continue to write	Satisfaction	Enjoyment can aid improvement	Process	
16	As a future educator, it is important to teach correct grammar, spelling, punctuation and word choice so students can write effective sentences	Future writing teacher	Effective writing meets standards	Traditional formal	
17	I hope that I can not only help myself as a writer, but help my students to write the best that they can	As above			

APPENDIX C  
MICROANALYSES OF VANCE

	UNIT OF ANALYSIS VANCE "WHO AM I?" Microanalysis # 1	IDENTITY	IDEOLOGY	DISCOURSE DRAWN ON	DISCOURSE RESISTED / OMITTED
1	The type of writer that I am is that I am a straight forward writer	Competent, satisfaction	Writing can be candid and direct	Expressivist	
2	Whatever is on my mind that's how I write	satisfaction	Honest expression is important	Expressivist	Traditional formal
3	I write like the way I talk	satisfaction	Writing can use the language of everyday speech	Expressivist	Traditional formal
4	If someone was to ask me about the way that I write and if I am confident in my abilities than I would have to say yes	Competent			
5	I was always told that I have a vivid imagination	Competent, satisfied	Writing can be imaginative	Expressivist	
6	I know that I am not the best type of writer	Stunted growth	Good writing follows certain rules	Traditional academic	
7	But I am not one of those writer who would get you to lose interest and fall a sleep as you read something that I wrote	Conflict	Good writing keeps the reader interested		Traditional formal
8	When I get the chance to write about things that I like I seem to excel in this situation	Competent, satisfaction	Personally meaningful topics make for better writing	Expressivist	Traditional formal
9	It's like a river the ideas keep flowin and flowin out of my mind	Competent	As above	Expressivist	
10	Writing to me is just taking my ideas from my head and write it down on paper	Competent	Free writing is a style of writing	Expressivist, Process	Traditional formal
11	My ideas just flow and I might misspell things here and there		Free writing may have editing problems	Traditional formal, Process	
12	And the grammar may be slightly incorrect	Stunted growth		Traditional formal	
13	But the effort is their and I do try my best	Hardworking writer	Effort is important in writing	Bootstraps	

line	UNIT OF ANALYSIS VANCE INFLUENCE PAPER Microanalysis # 2	IDENTITY	IDEOLOGY	DISCOURSE DRAWN ON	DISCOURSE RESISTED / OMITTED
1	Well I must say that my best writing came here at the university	Competent			
2	I wrote a story about my mother how she is the one I want to be like	Competent	Good writing is personally meaningful	Expressivist	
3	That she is my role model and that all the things she did for my brothers and I while we were growing up	Appreciative son			
4	The teacher that I had for English III name is _____				
5	She read my story that I wrote about my mother and she told me that she started crying	Competent	Personal stories can be deeply moving	Expressivist	
6	I was kind of in shock because no one has ever told me that before	Satisfaction	Good writing can take many forms	Expressivist	
7	So I felt real good and mailed a copy of it to my mother	Competent	As above	Expressivist	
8	Then when the semester was over I haven't seen Mrs. _____ since the last day of class				
9	So one day I was walking on campus and I saw Mrs. _____ and she told me she was pregnant				
10	So I said congratulations				
11	But that was all she told me that one of the reasons for her getting pregnant is so that she can have a son like me and for him to write a story about her like I wrote about my mother		Personal stories can be deeply moving	Expressivist	
12	Right there that made me feel even better about myself	Competent			
13	To know that I wrote a story that was so good it made someone go out and get pregnant	Competent	Being judged a good writing is encouraging		
14	So that was my best experience with writing	satisfaction	Good writing touches people	Expressivist	
			Good writing is personally meaningful	Expressivist	



line	UNIT OF ANALYSIS VANCE MIDTERM LETTER Microanalysis # 3	IDENTITY	IDEOLOGY	DISCOURSE DRAWN ON	DISCOURSE RESISTED / OMITTED
1	Dear Ms. Linda				
2	The way that I view my writing may not be the same way that everyone else views their writing	Competent	Writing is very individual	Expressivist	
3	As I sit back and look through my portfolio I realize that I really need to work on my mechanics and grammar	Stunted growth	Writing follows certain rules	Traditional formal	
4	It's not like I don't know what I am doing it just the simple fact that the way that I write my papers is the way that I speak	Competent	Writing can be expressed in different ways	Expressivist	Race (BEV?)
5	The thoughts just come running out of my head like a waterfall	Competent	Free writing is a technique	Expressivist, process-draft	
6	I realize that my thoughts and everything is all their but my organization and grammar can use some fine tuning	Stunted growth, Competent	First drafts need revision	Traditional formal, process	
7	I also realize that I am not one of those people who choice to use those big words	Competent	Language use is a choice	Expressivist	Traditional formal
8	I am a straight forward person so I tend to get right to the point and I don't dilly doodle around the point	Competent	Being concise in writing is a choice	Expressivist	Traditional formal
9	I like the fact of getting feedback either from my peers or a teacher	Initiation	Peer response is a helpful process	Process	
10	I rather it be a teacher because you would not be a teacher if you don't know what you are capable of doing		Teacher response is best	process	Process- peer response
11	By my being able to sit down and read a response on my paper or for someone to say it to me it just makes me try to work that much harder so I will not get a response back	Stunted growth	Response is about pointing out errors	Traditional formal	
12	Even though I learn from the responses I want there to be a time in which there is no response on my paper, that it is an excellent well-written paper	Stunted growth	(as above)	Traditional formal	process
13	That right there is my goal to achieve				
14	The times that I felt really good about myself in writing was when I write about something that means a lot to me or I feel very strongly about	Stunted growth satisfaction	Good writers write correctly Writing should be personally meaningful	Expressivist	
15	Like when I write the story about my mother.				
16	I love my mother with all my heart	Devoted son	As above	Expressivist	
17	She is my role model and I want to be just like her	Admiring son	As above		
18	When I was able to display the feelings I had and the struggle that my mother went through raising three boys, getting robbed and evicted from the projects in Brooklyn, New York	Someone who has known poverty		Expressivist	
19	Having a no good husband who took off when the going was getting tough	Raised by mother		Personal	

20	Never saw her kids except on Sundays when it was time to go to church and give thanks to the man upstairs for making a way out of no way	Son of hardworking, religious mother			
21	When I get to express my true feeling like that; I believe that I am one of the best writers, and my chances of making mistakes I (are) really low because that is all coming from my heart and when you are coming from your heart there is no way I can make a mistake	Competent	Writing about meaningful subjects improves writing	Expressivist	Traditional formal
22	Now the times I feel like I am an average writer is when I listen to other peoples writings and they are using their extended vocabulary, and that they have such an imagination that makes me not even want to raise my hand and read my story	initiation	Judging writing against others demonstrates its weakness	Traditional formal	
23	Not saying that I am not proud of it because I am proud of what ever I do but I guess I feel inferior or even timid	Stunted growth	As above	Traditional formal	
24	Well I guess that I have learned to have more patience in my writing	Stunted growth			
25	That change will not come unless I work hard at it then it will come	Stunted growth	Hard work makes writing better	Bootstraps	
26	Also that it would be nice to be one of those profound writers but since I'm not don't stop giving up	Initiation	As above	Bootstraps	Traditional formal
27	And that it is not bad at all to be one of those laid back kind of writers who keeps you interested and not wondering what does this and that word mean	Competent	Language choice can make writing confusing	Expressivist	
27	But I really notice myself working a whole lot more on writing so I like that change a lot	Hard worker	Better writing is about a process	Process	
28	Sincerely, Lance				

line	UNIT OF ANALYSIS VANCE'S FINAL LETTER Microanalysis # 4	IDENTITY	IDEOLOGY	DISCOURSE DRAWN ON	DISCOURSE RESISTED / OMITTED
1	As I look back on the work in this class I realize that I did a lot of writing				
2	I came to this class thinking that I will not be (doing) a lot of writing and that it will be like English 122 the first writing class that you take when you get into this school				
3	But soon after that my opinion was changed when we entered your classroom and you said that there will be a lot of work and if you just				
4	do the basic work that you will receive a "B" That took me by surprise when you said that to us because that was one of the first comments you said after hi!				
5	but now I realize that it was all worth it and that it only makes me better because I got to pick and choose about what I wanted to write about	Initiation	Personally meaningful topics are important	Expressivist	
6	As I sat back and looked at my portfolio filled with the pieces that I composed for this class I realized that my writing stepped it up a notch than usual	Competent, satisfaction	Personally meaningful topics make for better writing	Expressivist	
7	I got the chance to write about things that interest me and in classes at ___ you really don't get that opportunity to do that too much	Satisfaction	As above	Expressivist	
8	I also see in my writing that my writing is not the best in the world	Stunted growth	Writing must follow rules	Traditional formal	
9	I make a lot of stupid grammar mistakes that shouldn't even happen after I sit back and read my responses	Stunted growth	Peer response can improve drafts	Traditional formal, process	
10	Also in my writing my organization is not always there	Stunted growth	Good writing is well - organized	Traditional formal	
11	I seem to start one thing and then jump to the next and then jump back to it	Stunted growth	As above	Traditional formal	
12	But I do like the fact that I do express myself well and that when I am on a topic I seem to hit it from every angle	competent	Topic development is important	Traditional formal	
13	I express myself and that is good I feel because when you write you need to be honest with yourself so that your true thoughts and feelings come out when you write	Competent, satisfaction	Honest expression is important	Expressivist	Traditional formal
14	Lastly, I can say that when we had a deadline or had to hand in paper that I was always on time with my work	Good student	Good students meet deadlines		
15	It can be concluded that I as a person realize who I am as a writer and that I realize what I have to do as a person to improve and make my writing better in the near future	Stunted growth	Good writing means following the rules	Traditional Formal	

APPENDIX D  
MICROANALYSES OF LEN

	UNIT OF ANALYSIS LEN'S "WHO AM I" PAPER Microanalysis #1	IDENTITY	IDEOLOGY	DISCOURSE DRAWN ON	DISCOURSE RESISTED / OMITTED
1	It is very easy to explain the type of writer I am				
2	I never thought of myself as a good writer	Stunted growth	Good writers can write in a particular form	Possibly traditional formal	
3	I do not know why but I never liked writing very much				
4	But there are times that I enjoyed writing certain topics that catch my interest and most important my readers.	Satisfaction	Personally meaningful writing is enjoyable	Expressivist	
5	I am a better writer when the topic will catch my audience interest.	Competent	Good writing results when a writer can please the audience		
6	I favor topics like comedy, sports and subjects that reflect and relate to adolescents	Competent	Topics of personal interest make for better writing	Expressivist	
7	I like writing about things that happened to me as a young adolescent	Satisfaction	Personally meaningful writing is enjoyable	Expressivist	Traditional formal
8	First of all, I am a bilingual student that never like favor writing much from the first time I had to write a paper	SL writer	Bilingual students face unique writing issues	SL deficit	
9	I am a very strange student that has many views of doing things	Uninitiated to formal discourse	Students "in the margins" face unique issues	SL deficit	
10	One day I might like to write my ideas, views on paper and other times I might want to let my views out verbally		Writing is just one way to express views	Possibly LD medical	
11	My problem with writing is that most of the time I can not concentrate on one topic at a time	Stunted growth ADD?	Linear idea development is only one way of thinking	Possible LD medical, Traditional formal	
12	I tend to bring unnecessary information into the subject	Stunted growth and/or Initiation	Good writers do not have unnecessary information	Traditional formal	
13	I can't seem to brake away from that weakness	Stunted growth	Difficulty with writing is something one controls	Traditional formal	
14	It is something that happens to me all the time when I write any paper	Stunted growth	Writing problems are persistent		
15	One thing I try to use to keep me on one particular subject or topic is writing an outline	Initiation	Using an outline helps with linear thinking	Traditional formal	
16	But somehow I would write some different information in the middle of the paper	Initiation	Writing "good" papers takes practice	Traditional formal	

17	My mind always switch direction through the middle of the paper, which I have been trying to avoid for a long time	Stunted growth	A strong effort to improve writing does not always work	Possible LD	
18	I feel that it is one reason why I do not like writing papers much	Stunted growth	Repeated failing efforts create dislike of the task	LD medical	
19	Many of the people who correct my papers for me told that it takes practice to break that weakness	Stunted growth	With practice, basic writers can become initiated to the discourse conventions	Traditional formal, process bootstraps	

	UNIT OF ANALYSIS LEN'S "INFLUENCE" PAPER Microanalysis #2	IDENTITY	IDEOLOGY	DISCOURSE DRAWN ON	DISCOURSE RESISTED / OMITTED
1	The people that influence my writing tremendously are those I asked to correct my writings		Correcting is a typical response to writing	Traditional formal	
2	I don't ask any one to read my writing because of my fear of getting many bad remarks	Stunted growth,	Negative critique is a typical way of responding to writing	Traditional formal	process
3	They will try to hurt my feeling about my writing	Stunted growth	Responders critique people as well as writing		process
4	If the person do not know me then the person would not have any idea of how I write	Competent	There are many aspects of writing responders do not understand	Traditional formal	Omits multicultural
5	My writing format is very different from others	Competent	There is a specialized discourse in the university	Traditional formal	
6	I choose to have people that know my writing to read my writing because of the following reasons	Conflict	Responders need to understand individuals	Process, individualistic	Resists classroom process
7	I only ask people that know me first, and my writing to read my writing because they have better understanding of my writing	Competent	Understanding writing means knowing about the writer	A kind of process but outside the lassroom,	Resists classroom process
8	They are more likely to understand the structure of my writing than those that do not know my writing or me		As above	Personal process	Omits SL, LD medical
9	They do know how to help me improve the writing	Initiation	Allies are better able to help with writing	Personal process	Classroom process
10	Many times I don't have to be there to have them help me improve my papers		Others can make the corrections for a writer	Traditional formal idea of "correcting"	Classroom process
11	They know what to do and how to correct the mistakes	Stunted growth	Responders can "'fix" the writing	Traditional cormal	Process
12	I can have them help me improve my papers for the fact that they will not hold back any thing from me	Stunted growth	Allies are more honest and helpful in their feedback	Process	
13	They will do their best to improve my writing	Stunted growth	Allies will make improvements for you		Process
14	But they will tell me what I am doing wrong and teach me how to make the corrections	Stunted growth	Allies teach	Process	
15	I do not feel uncomfortable around them when they are helping me	Competent	Allies understand people	Multicultural	
16	But I do feel uncomfortable around those that I do not know when they are reading my writings	Stunted growth	Responders do not understand all writers	Multicultural	Process

	Process		Conflict			
17		Peer response is an uncomfortable process when one has difficulty writing		That is one of several reasons that I do not like to have classmates read my work in the classroom		
18		People are judgmental and hurtful when they see writing that does not fit with what they expect to see in the academy	Stunted growth	It makes me feel unsecured about my work based on people's reactions to the writing		



L	UNIT OF ANALYSIS LEN'S WORST EXPERIENCE Microanalysis # 3	IDENTITY	IDEOLOGY	DISCOURSE DRAWN ON	DISCOURSE RESISTED / OMITTED
1	My worst experience with writing is the remarks that I get from people evaluating, correcting my writing	Stunted growth	Writer response is negative critique	Traditional formal	process
2	The first evaluation is always full with numerous of remarks on how to improve the writing	Stunted growth	As above	Traditional formal or process	Possible SL
3	I hate watching someone evaluating my writing because of the remarks and comments that I expect to see	Stunted growth, sensitive	As above		SL? LD?
4	I'd rather have them correct it without me being present	Stunted growth, wounded	Papers are "corrected" by responders	Traditional formal	Traditional formal Resists process
5	Many times I get response back from people who evaluate my writing like how to make my writing more accurate, need more details and they always tell me that I have unnecessary information in the paper	Stunted growth, initiation	Writing response is negative critique	Traditional formal, Process -response	
6	It makes me feel very low meaning unable to write anything well	Stunted growth, sensitive	Writer response is judgement of the person, not just the writing		process
7	I am a student that needs serious help writing a paper of any subject	Stunted growth	Writing critique indicates a deficiency in the student	Traditional formal, process	
8	I am an individual that has strong feelings for my writing	Caring writer	A person is more than their writing	personal	
9	It hurts me most of the time when I get my evaluation paper back	One who wants to do well	Writer response is a judgement of the person, not just the writing		Process
10	Most of the corrections are from writing unnecessary information into the paper	Stunted growth, initiation	Writer response is negative critique	Traditional formal	Possible LD, SL
11	I usually have the information in the wrong location of the body of the paper	Stunted growth	There is a correct way to organize a paper	Traditional formal	Possible LD, SL
12	I am a writer that use a lot of times writing my class papers	Hard worker	Efforts should bring improvement	Bootstraps	Possible LD, SL
13	I try to start ahead of times so I will be ready to turn the writing assignment in on time	Competent student		Process	
14	I decided to start ahead of times because of the numerous corrections that I feel that I might have to do to do an accurate writing assignment	Stunted growth	Strong efforts should bring about good papers	Process, bootstraps	

15	Through out the semester I like to improve my writing abilities so I can be a better writer	Stunted growth	Writing classes can improve writing skills	Traditional formal, process. bootstraps	
16	I look forward of quitting the weakness that I have writing papers	Stunted growth	Effort overcomes writing deficiencies	Traditional formal, bootstraps	
17	I also know that all the weakness and problems might not be taken care off at once	Stunted growth	Writing is a complex process	SL defocot, LD medical	
18	But I feel that I can improve those weaknesses	initiation	Writing improves with effort	Bootstraps process	

	UNIT OF ANALYSIS LEN's Writing Conference Microanalysis #4	IDENTITY	IDEOLOGY	DISCOURSE DRAWN ON	DISCOURSE RESISTED / OMITTED
1	I: Do you have any concerns about your writing?	Process teacher	Students have concerns about final drafts for academic classes	Process (time for revision of drafts) Traditional formal	
2	Oh, well, it's just that my writing is different from others.	Stunted growth	Writing must meet academic standards	perhaps drawing on academic discourse which judges, compares, measures	
3	I: In what way do you think it is different?	Process teacher	Students can identify qualities of writing	Process instructor—conference stage	
4	Ummm... the styles that I use for writing	Initiation	Writing differs among students	Traditional formal	
5	like I talk faster than I write	Stunted growth, LDM	Writing involves skills different from speaking		LD, ESL
6	And I jump like into may areas of unnecessary information	Stunted growth	Unnecessary information is a problem in academic assignments	Traditional formal	
7	It's like keeping track and also going faster than my hands	Stunted growth, LDM	Writing involves skills different from speaking	euphemistic discourse on LD,	
8	So I make like lots of grammatical errors and stuff like that	Stunted growth, LDM	Errors result when one's cognitive abilities are deficient or different	Traditional formal LD medical	SL writers often show linguistic difference
9	I: Have you gone over to the writing center	Process instructor	Writing centers are safe, helpful places for student writers	Process, Traditional formal	
10	No, well, sometimes, but not really		Writing centers are not helpful places		Process
11	Because I don't like to have anybody, strangers, read my paper writing	Stunted growth	Writing centers are not staffed with people who understand all writers		Resists process discourse / philosophy, i.e. labs help with writing drafts
12	I: How come?	Process teacher	Writing centers are helpful places	Process	Resists anti-process
13	I don't know				process

14	It's just that someone may say something bad to me	Stunted growth, sensitive	People judge difference harshly		Process discourse regarding writing labs
15	If I don't know the person I'm not going to have the person read my writing	Stunted growth	Critiques of one's writing is painful	Traditional formal	process
16	Because of the fear of the response that I'll get back	Stunted growth.	People are more than their writing	Multicultural	process
17	<b>I: Fear of response? Tell me what you fear</b>	Process teacher	Response groups help people understand their writing	Process	
18	I have a feeling like my writing is too vague	Stunted growth	Writing should be clear	Traditional formal	
19	Or, you know, needs a lot of corrections and stuff like that	Stunted growth	Writing should meet a standard	Traditional formal	
21	And the person might feel that his writing is...				
22	Or think that his level is low	Stunted growth	A person is more than his writing		
23	Stuff like that				
24	Or it's not on the level it should be at	Stunted growth	Writing should meet a standard	Traditional formal	
25	That's why I don't have anybody that I don't know read my Writing	Stunted growth	People are more than their writing	multicultural	Resisted Process writing's response groups process
26	Because of like the fear of the response that I'll get back	Stunted growth	Response can be very painful		

line	UNIT OF ANALYSIS LEN'S FINAL LETTER Microanalysis # 5	IDENTITY	IDEOLOGY	DISCOURSE DRAWN ON	DISCOURSE RESISTED / OMITTED
1	Dear Mrs				
2	It is hard to evaluate myself in any of my classes when the works are writing assignments, journals		Writing assessment is complicated		
3	It would be a lot easier if there are exams than my grade would be based on the grades on my exams				
4	But I preferred this kind of format that includes no exam, because I do not do well on exams		Learning disabilities affect performance	LDM	
5	I have a psychological problem taking exams	LD student	As above	LDM	
6	It is a long story which does not belong in the letter so I will not discuss it				
7	Basically, I have Attention Disorder Deficit	LD student	Learning disabilities affect performance	LDM	
8	I see myself as a student who is trying hard to complete my college education with many kind of difficulties in my way	Hard-working, LD	Strong effort can overcome difficulties	Bootstraps	
9	I am trying my best to do the best I can on the writing assignments		As above	Bootstraps	
10	Even though writing is not something that I am great at but there are times I enjoy writing about interesting topics	Satisfaction			
11	I like writing about interesting topics that readers and audience will enjoy	Satisfaction	Writing should be personally interesting	Expressivist	
12	I like writing about childhood story that other kids can relate to sometime in their life	Satisfaction	Writing should be personally meaningful	Expressivist	
13	I am a writer that likes to express my childhood stories to those that can relate to my childhood stories	Satisfaction	As above	Expressivist	
14	I live a difficult and different life from many American kids	bicultural	Life in America is unlike other places	multicultural	
15	One thing about me is that I don't let any one read my writings because of my fear of getting bad comments, remarks from the readers	Stunted growth	Response is criticism of the writer	Traditional formal(often)	process
16	I hate in-class group work that includes students reading other students papers		As above		process
17	I know it helps tremendously because it has helped me in some of my classes		Response groups can help improve drafts	process	
18	I just don't like to have someone I don't know read my writing	Stunted growth	Response is criticism of the writer		process
19	The reader might tell me that my paper needs specific corrections but at the same time the reader say in his or her mind that my writing is weak, poor	Stunted growth	As above	Traditional formal	process
20	I know my writing is not to the level of others	Stunted growth	There are levels of acceptable writing	Traditional formal	process

21	My format of writing papers for classes is that I must have an outline of what I want to write about	initiation	There are steps to good writing in a linear fashion	Traditional formal, process	
22	It makes it a lot easier for me to write down an outline by putting what I want to write in order	Initiation	Idea development is a step to good writing	Traditional formal, process	
23	Having the outline in order keeps me in order of writing the paper		As above	"	
24	But somehow, I tend to fall off in the middle of the paper by putting unrelated information in the paper	Stunted growth / LDM	Writing is not linear for some people	Traditional formal/ LDM	
25	It is one of several weaknesses that I have writing papers	Stunted growth / LDM		Traditional formal, LDM	
26	As a bilingual student, I can help other bilingual students that are in the process of learning the English education	Bilingual	Bilingual students have certain needs	SL	
27	I can work with them by showing them what I used to learn the English language	Bilingual	Experience is a good teacher	SL	
28	It is not an easy language to learn especially when writing it professionally	Bilingual	Academic writing is difficult for SL students	SL	
29	It take lots of practice and hard (work) to be able to catch those small grammatical errors	Stunted growth / bilingual	Strong effort overcomes difficulties	Traditional formal, bootstraps	
30	Sincerely,				

APPENDIX E  
MICROANALYSES OF MANDY

line	UNIT OF ANALYSIS	IDENTITY	IDEOLOGY	DISCOURSE DRAWN ON	DISCOURSE RESISTED / OMITTED
1	Mandy "Who Am I?" Microanalysis # 1				
2	Who am I as a writer Hmmm				
3	This question has had me in deep thought for the past twenty minutes or so				
4	And I still don't know how to answer the question				
5	I don't usually consider myself to be the best writer	Stunted growth or initiation	There are different levels of writing ability	Traditional formal	
6	I usually get jammed up when I have to write a paper because I have a hard time getting started	Stunted growth?	Introductions are important in writing	Traditional formal	
7	I think that the introduction should be the most powerful part of an essay	Initiation	Introductions are a key component of essay writing	Traditional formal	
8	I can sit for hours in front of a blank screen with ideas of what I'm going to write about, but I just don't know where to begin	Stunted growth	The belief that an intro must be so good can cause a kind of writer's block	process	
9	After all, if the introduction doesn't grasp the reader's attention why would they want to continue reading the essay	Initiation	Introductions are so important that without a good one, a reader won't continue	Traditional formal	
10	But once I get started, I can babble on forever	Competent, satisfaction	Drafting is easy	Process ? expressivist	
11	No matter what the topic is, I can find some point to argue, discuss, or question, for pages	Competent . satisfaction	Writing comes easily	Expressivist, Traditional formal	
12	However, this often gets me into trouble with run on sentences, and other grammatical errors	Stunted growth	First drafts need editing	Traditional formal	Process (one draft only)
13	Especially with organization	Stunted growth	As above	Traditional formal	
14	That's what I don't understand about writing				
15	I know that there has to be standards and guidelines,	Initiation	Rules are important in writing	Traditional formal	
16	But I don't understand how someone is allowed to have the authority to judge and grade someone's writing ability		Writing should be about individual expression	Expressivist	Traditional formal
17	After all, isn't writing supposed to be a form of individual expression	Individualistic	Writing is about individual expression	Expressivist	Traditional formal



18	I mean, I understand that one must be grammatically correct and organized in their ideas so that the reader may be able to understand and follow the writer's train of thought		Initiation		Writing must meet certain standards	Traditional formal			
19	But what if I said that this is how I think								
20	I write as I think and what I think	Individualistic			Writing is individual expression	Expressivist			
21	I don't make first drafts and so on	Competent			Multiple drafts are unnecessary		Process		
22	When I write, I sit down at my desk, turn on my old school word processor, and I start to write as the thoughts enter my mind	Competent			Writing is letting ideas flow	Expressivist	Process		
23	I cannot sit down, brainstorm ideas on paper, organize them an outline and then start writing	Competent			Writing is not a process	Expressivist	Process		
24	I've been forced to oblige by this method all through my secondary schooling, and I would get nothing accomplished	Resister			Writing is not a process		Process		
25	Anyway, after I write all that I can in one session, I turn off my word processor, and forget about my writing until the next day	Freewriter			Drafting is a first step	Process			
26	Then, I reread what I have written and I move paragraphs and sentences to form a more organized essay	Process writer			Redrafting is a step in the process	Process, Traditional formal			
27	However, I rarely edit my actual writing						Process-edit, Traditional formal process		
28	After all, if I wrote an idea down, then that was my idea				First ideas are important ideas	Expressivist			
29	I always have faith in my first thoughts	Competent				Expressivist	Process, traditional formal		
30	Once I start to second-guess at something, I always end up being wrong				Original thoughts are best	Expressivist	Process -revision		
31	It's the same way when it comes to my writing				Writing is not a process	Expressivist	Process -revision		
32	I'm not sure if I answered your question								
33	However, everything that I have written is straight from my mind and onto ink	Honest person			First drafts are honest	Expressivist			
34	I guess that is the best way to describe my abilities as a writer	Competent							
35	I write how I think and what I am feeling	Individualistic			Writing should express one's beliefs	Expressivist			
36	This way, I don't waste my time pretending to be what I am not	Honest			Writing should express genuine feeling	Expressivist	Traditional formal		
37	And I don't waste the reader's time by presenting ideas that are not genuinely mine	Honest			As above	Expressivist - "authentic"			

L	UNIT OF ANALYSIS MANDY'S JOURNAL Microanalysis # 2	IDENTITY	IDEOLOGY	DISCOURSE DRAWN ON	DISCOURSE RESISTED / OMITTED
1	Brenda Ueland "Everybody is Talented..." (Title and author of assigned readings)				
2	This article really touched me				
3	I undoubtedly believe that everyone is original and creative in their own way		Every writer is unique and special	Expressivist	
4	However, criticism kills this creativity and self-expression	Individualistic	Criticism frustrates creativity	Expressivist	Traditional formal
5	Ueland addresses all the issues I have about writing and teaching				
6	Many teachers have killed my passion for writing with the use of their power to criticize my writing	Individualistic	Criticism quells enjoyment of writing	expressivist	Traditional formal
7	Although I internally believe that it doesn't matter what they think, they are the ones grading me		Evaluation is a part of academic writing	Traditional formal	
8	My academic career depends on their opinion		Grades determine one's academic worth	Traditional formal	
9	I don't think this is fair	Individualistic	Grades should not determine individual worth		Traditional formal
10	Pablo Neruda - "Memoirs"				
11	I think that Neruda's passion for writing and words is beautiful	Admirer of expressivism	Passion for writing is important	Expressivist	
12	The way he speaks of the many uses for words and how he brings words to life is inspiring		Good writing is inspiring	Expressivist	
13	Anais Nin "The New Woman"				
14	Like Neruda's piece, Nin's article also speaks of her passion for writing				
15	I think that it is so inspiring to read these words				
16	"When I don't write, I feel my world shrinking"		Writers can inspire	Expressivist	
17	She gives us such a vivid image of this passion		(as above)		
18	I wish that I could feel this way about writing	Satisfaction	Passion for writing is important	Expressivist	
19	In a way I think I do but writing for school kills it	Expressivist writer	academic writing destroys passion	Expressivist	Traditional formal
20	I enjoy writing when I know I won't be graded on it	Satisfaction	Writing assessment kills passion for writing		Traditional formal
21	I like to write my feelings down because it helps to deal with them	Expressivist writer	Writing expresses true feeling	Expressivist	

22	I used to write in diaries all the time when I was a child	Competent, satisfaction			Expressivist	
23	It was my therapy	Expressivist writer	Writing is about feeling		Expressivist	
24	Now writing is a task	Resister to academic writing	Academic writing kills passion (as above)		Expressivist	Traditional formal
25	I don't even have a diary anymore because after I do all of my required work, I don't want to write anymore					Traditional formal
26	Amy Tan- "Mother Tongue"					
27	I can thoroughly relate to this article	SL speaker	Articles that relate to ESL issues provide important, empathic information to SL speakers		multicultural	
28	Both of my parents speak "broken" English and I speak "broken" Korean	Daughter of Korean-speaking parents	There is a correct way to speak a language		Traditional formal, multicultural	
29	Therefore, my parents and I have difficulty communicating with each other		Incorrect language use hinders communication		Traditional formal	
30	I often find myself reconstructing my English so that my parents will understand	Bilingual	SL speakers have different needs		SL	
31	Sometimes I even speak "Konglish," a collaboration of English and Korean	Bilingual	Language can be adapted to be effective		SL	
32	I get offended when I hear people, comedians, etc. mocking Asians because they speak with accents.	Minority	Being criticized is painful		multicultural	
33	I want people to understand that a person is not stupid because they cannot speak perfect English	Bilingual	Imperfect English does not signify lack of intelligence		SL	
34	I think that my mother feels embarrassed to speak to some people due to her "broken" English	Bicultural	Imperfect English can be embarrassing		SL	
35	As did Amy Tan, I often have to pretend to be my mother when calling a company or writing a letter	Bicultural	Standard English is required in certain situations		Traditional formal	
36	I often wish that I was able to speak Korean better so that I could fully communicate with my parents	Marginal speaker of Korean	Fluency of language assists communication		SL	
37	I often feel that my parents and I don't really know each other because we can't talk about certain things		Fluency lessens communication gaps		SL	

line	UNIT OF ANALYSIS Mandy's writing conference Microanalysis #3	IDENTITY	IDEOLOGY	DISCOURSE DRAWN ON	DISCOURSE RESISTED / OMITTED
1	When I think of writing – I really see writing as like someone's individual expression		Writers have a unique voice	Expressivist	
2	And I think if someone writes in a certain way that another person doesn't agree with, it doesn't mean it is wrong	Initiation	Individual writers decide own writing style	Expressivist	
3	You know, I think that is just their style	Initiation	Each writer is unique	Expressivist	
4	But a lot of people are like, "No, that is wrong, you shouldn't have done it like that. Like you have to go by this structure"	Initiation	Writing is frequently judged as "wrong"	Traditional formal	
5	And I personally just don't understand like how they can put limits and structures and like borders and walls around writing.	Initiation	Writing should not be bound by rules	Expressivist	Traditional formal
6	You know because writing is just writing, and that is what I don't understand		Writing is an individual thing	Expressivist	
7	Like my teachers are like, "No, this is wrong, you shouldn't have done it like that"	Initiation	Many educators believe there is a right way to write	Traditional formal	
8	And I have teachers like rephrase my words and that really upsets me	Conflict	Word choice is up to the writer	Expressivist	Traditional formal
9	And I am like, you know, if I wanted it like that, I would have wrote it like that	Conflict	Writers should be the final judge of their own work	Expressivist	Traditional formal
10	But this is how I saw it, you know, so that is why I wrote like this	Conflict	People's personal views shape how they write	Expressivist	"
11	And they will reword me and then, to me, that ruins my paper, you know	Conflict	Corrections ruin true expression	Expressivist	"
12	Like it is not mine anymore	Conflict	Others revisions destroy authenticity	Expressivist	"
13	I: And especially when they are telling you these are criteria after you have written the paper. They set the rules and you are like, "Where were you before I wrote this"	Process instructor	Instructors who grade/change papers relying on criteria they have not shared can be problematic for students	Process	
14	Because even like for my roommates and my friends, like we are constantly writing papers and everyone just complains	Initiation	College requires academic writing	Traditional formal	
15	Like I don't know what my professor wants	Initiation	Professors are unclear about writing criteria	Traditional formal	
16	In a lot of my journal writings that I do for my other classes, I just write it because I know that is what she wants to hear	Initiation	Writing must please audience, evaluator	Traditional formal and could be others	
17	Like you know, that is just so pointless	Conflict	People should write for themselves	Expressivist	Traditional academic

18	<b>I: You mentioned because English is your second language, you feel more conscious of it sometimes. Do you feel more conscious of the structures at times?</b>	Instructor	Second language issues can cause problems for students needing to use traditional formal discourse	Traditional formal, SL	
19	Yeah, sometimes, because it is different, sometimes				
20	Like I have been to school here since the beginning	Native English speaker	Being bilingual does not mean one doesn't know English well	SL	
21	I never went to a different school	American student	English is the language of American schools		
22	<b>I: I didn't even think of you as a second language student</b>	One with assumptions about SL students	A student's oral language & writing can indicate second language issues	Traditional formal, SL	
23	But it is hard because my parents don't speak it much	Daughter of non-English speakers	Children whose parents do not speak English face unique difficulties	SL	
24	They speak Korean	Bicultural			
25	Because they say we are in this culture, we have enough connection with the English language outside the home	Bicultural woman	Home is a place to preserve the Korean identity (as above)	Personal/ cultural (anti-assimilationist)	
26	And the only place, I think, that teaches like the Korean language and the Korean culture is inside the house	Bicultural	(as above)	Personal/ cultural (assimilation-ist)	
27	So they will talk to us in Korean and everything	Bicultural	(as above)	Personal/ cultural	
28	And like sometimes, I will catch myself and I will be like wow, that is just not right	Bicultural	Bicultural identity can be confusing	Cultural	
29	It's like confusing and there is no need for me to be confused because I am more educated in English than I am Korean	Bicultural, stunted	As above	Multicultural	
30	But sometimes I will feel like, like my mind just makes a switch	Bicultural	As above	ESL	
31	And you know I guess it is something like in me	Bicultural	As above	Multicultural	
32	I don't even know				
33	But like it happens		As above		
34	<b>I: Actually it is so wonderful for you, and when you have second language students, you can articulate that and share it, you share it so beautifully</b>	Instructor	Personal history can be a valuable teaching tool		
35	<b>I: You could write a good article sometime, you know, like the Amy Tan one we read</b>	Instructor	Connecting experience to class readings may help students better understand issues		
36	I really liked that article because I totally related to it	Bicultural	Good assignments connect to life	Multicultural	

37	You know, like I read it and I was like, wow, that makes a lot of sense	SL speaker	Bicultural and SL issues can be seen in Tan's writing and provide material for SL students to identify with	SL, multicultural	
38	And it is weird, because even like a few weeks ago, my roommate was saying something about one of his TA's who really couldn't speak English and had an accent		Non-natives use language differently		
39	And how like it is kind of hard to understand her		Difference can be difficult		
40	And I got like all upset	One who objects to cultural bias	Prejudices exist regarding SL speakers	SL	
41	And that is when it hit home and I looked at him				
42	That person is probably more intellectual than you are	SL speaker	People with accents are often judged as less intelligent	SL	
43	But it is just the language	SL speaker	Language difference does not mean unintelligent	SL, multicultural	Traditional formal
44	That's all it is			SL	
45	There is a language difference		As above	SL	
46	You know it is nothing more than that		As above	SL, Multicultural	
47	My parents are very intelligent people, you know	Daughter of intelligent people	As above	Multicultural	
48	But they just can't speak English	Daughter of non-English speakers		SL	
49	And why should they have to, you know?	Conflict	People should be able to choose how they want to communicate	SL, multicultural	
50	I: If I say it, it doesn't mean as much because you are just another teacher saying it	Instructor	Peer experience aids understanding		
51	I: but if you say it, people hear it - and also within the classroom you will make you students feel it- because you understand it to your toes - this whole sense of how language shapes how people think about you	Instructor	Peer stories can be more powerful than texts		
52	And sometimes it is weird because I will be talking with my friends				
53	Most of my friends are white	Non-white			

54	So they don't like go through the same things that I did.	Non-white	White people do not face the issues of non-white students	Multicultural	
55	I was talking about this with another Korean friend that I have				
56	And we were like no one will understand what it is like to be Korean unless you are Korean	Korean	One has to be in the culture to really understand it	Multicultural	
57	Like it is a completely different experience	Bicultural	Cultural history shapes views	Multicultural	
58	Korean parents in our generation are exactly the same, especially the ones that immigrated here	Daughter of Korean immigrants	As above	Multicultural	
59	But they haven't been changing with the Korean culture and like Korea is so different now	2 <sup>nd</sup> gen. Korean-Am.	As above		
60	Like I go back like every three years and it changes every time go back		Culture are continually changing	Personal, cultural	
61	But our parents aren't there to experience it so they are holding on to their old traditional culture here like it is exactly the same and it is not	Daughter of traditional Korean parents	Cultural history shapes views	Personal, multicultural	
62	Some of my friends will be like, "What are your parents talking about -- you are American you have been raised here like all your life"		Americans do not understand bicultural life	personal	
63	But I am not American	Korean-Am.	Bicultural is an identity	Multicultural	
64	I am Korean American	Korean-American	As above	Multicultural	
65	I am never going to say that I am not Korean just because I have been raised here my entire life		As above	Multicultural	
66	Just because I can speak the English language and everything	English speaker	Language is only one aspect of culture	Multicultural	
67	And it's funny to have some people think that I don't want to be Korean	Korean-American	Americans can be ethnocentric		
68	Like it doesn't make sense to me		There is no sense in denying who you are	Multicultural	

line	UNIT OF ANALYSIS MANDY'S FINAL LETTER Microanalysis # 4	IDENTITY	IDEOLOGY	DISCOURSE DRAWN ON	DISCOURSE RESISTED / OMITTED
1	Upon review of my writings, I found that I have more success when I am able to take time to reflect	Initiation	Writing is a process enhanced by time to reflect	Process	
2	This is evident when comparing my work, such as the Issues Paper and Peer Review to the in-class writings	Initiation	Reworking drafts improves writing	Process	
3	I am more of a creative, free writer and therefore enjoy writing reflective pieces.	Expressivist writer	Creative and personal writing is different from academic writing	Expressivist	
4	This may be attributed to my past experiences in the academic classroom		Academic experiences shape one's view of writing		
5	As a high school student, I was profoundly affected by the teachings of my senior year Humanities teacher, Dr. S.		Teacher-mentors affect student views about writing issues		
6	He has instilled a philosophy based on creativity and free will, which guided my work	Expressivist writer	Expressivist philosophy puts power in the hands of the writer	Expressivist	Traditional formal
7	Dr. S. insisted that our personal experiences were to be reflected in our writing	Expressivist writer	Good writing reflects an individual's personal experience	Expressivist	Traditional formal
8	He believed that a person's writing should reflect their persona character and thus insisted that we write at our own will		Good writing reflects the essence of who one is	Expressivist	
9	Dr. S. believed that a writer's voice should be apparent in his/her work		Each writer has a unique voice	Expressivist (could be process)	
10	Therefore, I have the tendency to write my thoughts as they are		Writing should reflect personal views	Expressivist	
11	This in turn deters me from re-drafting my writing	Expressivist writer	Redrafting masks true feelings and ideas		Process
12	I have found that when I begin to edit my work, I start to make changes in which I change my original ideas into those that I believe that the reader wants to read	Initiation	Redrafting means shaping writing to audience	Traditional formal, process	
13	As a result of this process, my work no longer is a reflection of my originality and becomes another person's ideal	Initiation	Writing should not be about pleasing one's audience		Process, traditional formal
14	However, as I entered the college academic classroom, I have found that Dr. S's teachings contradict the expectations of the professors I've encountered	Initiation	Academic writing has rules	Traditional formal	
15	At the college level, many professors prefer the standard structure in which to write		Professors prefer standards and guidelines	Traditional formal	



16	This standard does not allow for an individual to express their creativity and requires a person to follow strict guidelines when writing	One who understands writing	Individuality is lost in traditional formal writing	Expressivist	Traditional formal
17	Therefore, I have struggled when writing papers at the college level	Initiation	Writing to guidelines is a struggle		
18	I no longer enjoy writing, and view it to be more of a task, than a form of my individual expression	One who prefers expressivist writing	Academic writing is not about individual views	Expressivist	Traditional formal
19	The difficulty that I experience when I am writing results from my inability to transfer my thoughts onto paper	Stunted growth, Initiation	Writing clearly what one thinks can be difficult	Possible SL, traditional formal process	
20	In most cases, this is due to the fact that I am attempting to organize my ideas to the expectations of the reader; in most cases, a professor.	Initiation	Writing to another's standard takes practice	Traditional formal	
21	In other words, I know what it is that I wish to state, but am required to rephrase my ideas to appear more intellectual.	Initiation	Using language to please professors is a part of writing in college. How you say something is important to professors.	Traditional formal	
22	As a result, I often feel disheartened and incompetent when writing.	Stunted growth	Writing to a standard can make one feel incompetent	Traditional formal	
23	I have always experienced difficulty in the area of grammar.	Stunted growth	Correct grammar is a part of good writing	Traditional formal	
24	I often think that this may be directly caused by the fact that English is not my native language.	SL speaker	Second language speakers use English differently	SL	
25	As an immigrant to the states, I was immediately registered into kindergarten, and therefore was pressured to learn the language at an expedient rate.	Immigrant, ESL speaker	Second language speakers face unique language issues		
26	However, because my family had always addressed each other in our native tongue at home, I had to learn to distinguish the difference between the grammatical design of my native language and the English language	SL, bicultural	People who are not native speakers face issues with grammatical structures in English	SL, multicultural	
27	As an ESL student, it was difficult for me to learn the complicated rules of grammatical sentences	SL student	English is difficult with its complicated rules and especially difficult for someone who speaks it as a second language	SL	

28	Therefore, because I was able to pass my courses without effectively learning grammatical tasks, I am experiencing even greater difficulty at the college level	Stunted growth	ESL students may not learn grammar the way native speakers do and therefore have more difficulty using it in college where the expectations are higher	ESL	
29	When my works are reviewed during peer response groups, errors in grammar and spelling are always emphasized	Stunted growth	Peer response groups often focus on editing issues	Process, Traditional formal	
30	However, I have found this to be beneficial			process	
31	Although I have always been uncomfortable by the idea that another peer was to read my work, I have found that they contribute constructive criticism, which can improve my work	Initiation	Peer review is painful	process	Some resistance to process
32	In addition, because I tend to refrain from editing my writing, it is helpful that my peers are able to correct my grammatical errors before my work is evaluated by a professor	Process writer, stunted growth	Peer editing is helpful	Process, Traditional formal	process
33	As a result from my experiences in the academic classroom, I feel that I am able to transmit what I have learned onto my future students.	Future teacher with experience helpful experiences	Experiences can enhance teaching		
34	I feel that it is more important for a student to gain confidence in their ability to write than to be able to conform to my expectations.	Expressivist teacher	Confidence is more important than correctness	Expressivist	Traditional formal
35	I feel that no one has the authority to criticize a person's individual expression.	Conflict	Personal expression need not conform to other's expectations	Expressivist	Traditional formal
36	This is not to say there is not a need to follow certain guidelines.	Initiated	Guidelines are a part of writing	Traditional formal	
37	However, it is essential that a person's individuality and past experiences be recognized and accepted	Conflict	Individuals expressed should be expected	Expressivist	
38	Therefore, as a teacher, I would understand my students struggles in being able to transfer their thoughts onto paper.	Bicultural	Multicultural views make teachers better	Multicultural	
39	I would encourage my students to write as they wish for their writing voices to be heard.	Future expressivist teacher	All voices should be respected	Expressivist	
40	I would emphasize the fact that my expectation of their writing is limited to their creativity and that I expect my students to be honest when expressing themselves.	As above	Honesty and creativity are what a teacher should expect in student writing	Expressivist	

41	I would also express that I expect each individual to write for his/her own audience, which is not limited to what (s)he believes will be me, as his/her teacher	Conflict	Teachers should not be the main audience	Could be Process, expressivist,	Traditional formal
42	My students will be encouraged to write according to their own criteria, because I believe that no one is more critical of a person, than the self	Conflict	Self reliance in writing is important	Expressivist	Traditional formal

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Atwell, N. (1987). *In the middle: Reading and learning with adolescents*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Boyton Cook.
- Bartholomae, D. (1986). Inventing the university. *Journal of Basic Writing*, 5, 4-23.
- Bartholomae, D. (1993). The tidy house: Basic writing in the American curriculum. *Journal of Basic Writing*, 12, 4-21.
- Bartholomae, D. (1995). Writing with teachers: A conversation with Peter Elbow. *College Composition and Communication*, 46 (1), 62-71.
- Berlin, J. A. (1987). *Rhetoric and reality writing instruction in American colleges, 1900-1989*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Berlin, J. A. (1988). Rhetoric and ideology in the writing class. *College Composition and Communication*, 50 (5), 477-493.
- Berlin, J. A. (1992). Poststructuralism, cultural studies, and the composition classroom: Postmodern theory in practice. *Rhetoric Review*, 11, 16-33.
- Bhargava, R., Kumarbagcho, A., & Sudarshan, R., (Eds.). (1999). *Multiculturalism, liberalism and democracy*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Bizzell, P. (1986). What happens when basic writers coming to college? *College Composition and Communication*, 37, 294-301.
- Bizzell, P. (1999). Hybrid academic discourses: What, why, how. *Composition Studies Freshman English News*, 27 (2), 7-21.
- Bizzell, P. (2000). Basic writing and the issue of correctness, or, what to do with "mixed" forms of academic discourse. *Journal of Basic Writing*, 19 (1), 4-12.
- Bloome, D. (1991). Anthropology and research on teaching the language arts. In *Handbook of research on teaching the English language arts*. New York: Macmillan.
- Britzman, D. (1990). The terrible problem of knowing thyself: Toward a poststructural account of teacher identity. *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*, 9, Fall, 23-46.
- Brodkey, L. (1992). Articulating poststructural theory in research on literacy. In R. Beach, J.L., Green, M. L. Kamil, & T. Shanahan (Eds.), *Multidisciplinary perspectives on literacy research*. Urbana, IL: NCTE, 293-318.

- Bruch, P., Marback, R. (1997). Race identity, writing, and the politics of dignity: Reinvigorating the ethics of "Students right to their own language." *Journal of Composition Theory*, 17 (2) 267-81.
- Cheever, N. A. (1999). Re-visioning the peer conference: Critical language awareness and with eighth graders. (Doctoral dissertation, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 1999) *Dissertation Abstracts International*, UMI Microfilms No. 9950141.
- Cherryholmes, C. H. (1988). *Power and criticism: Poststructural investigations in education*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Clifford, J. (1987). Ideology into discourse: A historical perspective. *Journal of Advanced Composition*, 7 (1), 121-130.
- Comfort, J. R. (2000). Becoming a writerly self: college writers engaging black feminist essays. *College Composition and Communication*, 51(4), 540-549.
- Cook-Gumperez, J. (1993). Dilemmas of identity: Oral and written literacies in the making of a basic writing student. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 24.4, 336-56.
- Davies, B. (1993). *Shards of glass: Children reading and writing beyond gendered identities*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
- Elbow, P. (1981). *Writing with power*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Elbow, P. (1991). Reflections on academic discourse: How it relates to freshmen and colleagues. *College English*, 53 (2), 135-136.
- Elbow, P. (1995). Being a writer vs. being an academic: A conflict in goals. *College Composition and Communication*, 46, 72-83.
- Elbow, P. (1997). High stakes and low stakes in assigning and responding to writing. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, 69, 5-13.
- Ellsworth, E. (1989). Why doesn't this feel empowering? Working through the repressive myths of critical pedagogy? *Harvard Educational Review* 59 (3), 297-324.
- Fairclough, N. (1995). *Critical discourse analysis: The critical study of language*. New York: Longman.
- Fairclough, N. (Ed.). (1992). *Critical language awareness*. New York: Longman.
- Fairclough, N. (1993). *Discourse and social change*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

- Fine, M. (1992). *Disruptive voices: The possibilities of feminist research*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Foucault, M. (1972). The discourse on language. In *The archaeology of knowledge and the discourse on language* (A. M. S. Smith, Trans.). New York: Vintage Books.
- Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings 1972-1977* (C. Gordon, Ed.). New York: Pantheon.
- Foucault, M. (1984). *The Foucault reader* (P. Rabinow, Ed.). New York: Pantheon.
- Fox, T. (1990). *The social uses of writing: Politics and pedagogy*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Fox, T. (1993). Basic writing as cultural conflict. *Journal of Education*, 172, 65-83.
- Freeman, D. E. & Freeman, Y. S. (1994). *Between worlds: Access to second language acquisition*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Freeman, R. D. (1998). *Bilingual education and social change*. Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters LTD.
- Fulkerson, R. (1990). Composition theory in the Eighties: Axiological consensus and paradigmatic diversity. *College Composition and Communication*, 41(4), 409-429.
- Gay, P. (1998). Dialogizing response in the writing classroom: Students answer back. *Journal of Basic Writing*, 17(1), 3-17.
- Gee, J. (1990). *Social linguistics and literacies: Ideology in discourses*. London: Falmer Press.
- Gee, J. (1999). Discourses and latecomers.  
<<http://www1.appstate.edu/~moorang/wwwboard2/messages/52.html>> 2/8/99.
- Gee, J., & Crawford, V. (1997). *Two kinds of teenagers: The discourse of social class in two interviews*. Draft from Clark University, Worcester, MA.
- Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures*. New York: Random House.
- Hacker, D. (1995). *A writers' reference*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Hairston, M. (1992). Diversity, ideology, and teaching writing. *College Composition and Communication*, 43(2), 179-193.

- Harris, J. (1995). Negotiating the contact zone. *Journal of Basic Writing*, 14(1), 27-43.
- Harris, J. (1997). *A teaching subject: Composition since 1966*. New Jersey: Prentice.
- Hedgcock, J., & Lefkowitz, N. (1994). Feedback on feedback: Assessing learning receptivity to teacher response in L2 composing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 3(2), 141-163.
- Herrington, A., & Curtis, M. (1999). *Persons in process: Four stories of writing and personal development in college*. Urbana, IL: NCTE.
- Holland, D. (1997). Selves as cultured: As told by an anthropologist who lacks a soul. In R. D. Ashmore & L. Jussim (Eds.), *Rutgers series on self and social identity, Volume 1*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- hooks, b. (1994). Confronting class in the classroom. In *Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom*. New York: Routledge.
- hooks, bell. (1989). *Talking back: Thinking feminist, thinking black*. Boston: South End Press.
- Hymes, D. (1980). *Language in education: Ethnolinguistic essays*. Washington DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.
- Ivanic, R. (1990). Critical language awareness in action. In R. Carter (Ed.), *Knowledge about language in the curriculum: The LINC reader*. London: Hodder and Stoughton.
- Ivanic, R. (1994). *Writer Identity* (Working Paper series No. 65). Center for Language in Social Life.
- Ivanic, R. (1997). *Writing and identity*. Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Janks, H. (1999). Critical language awareness journals and student identities. *Language Awareness*, 8(2): 111-122.
- Jones, D. (1999). *A pragmatist approach to academic discourse: Teaching the conflict over "stuff B.S."* Paper presented at Annual Meeting of the Conference on college composition (50<sup>th</sup>, Atlanta, GA, March 24-27, 1999).
- Jonsberg, S. D. (1993, March-April). *Rehearsing new subject positions: A poststructural look at expressive writing*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Conference on College Composition and Communication (44th San Diego, CA, March 31-April 3, 1993).

- Jopling, D. A. (1997). A self of selves. In U. Neisser & D. A. Jopling (Eds.) *The conceptual self in context*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Kamberelis, G., & Scott, K. D. (1992). Other people's voices: The coarticulation of texts and subjectivities. *Linguistics and Education*, 4, 359-403.
- Labov, W. (1982). Objectivity and commitment in linguistic science: The case of the Black English trial in Ann Arbor. *Language in Society*, 11(2), 165-202.
- Lakoff, G. (1997). Why Lakoff needs psychoanalysis: On cultural ambivalence and concepts of the self. In U. Neisser & D.A. Jopling (Eds.). *The conceptual self in context*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Lather, P. (1991). *Getting smart: Feminist research and pedagogy with/in the postmodern*. New York: Routledge.
- Levin, D. E. (1996). *The Postmodern turn in research on basic writing: Historical and discourse analysis*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of New York at Buffalo.
- Luke, A. (1995-96). Text and discourse in education: an introduction to critical discourse analysis. In M. Apple (Ed.) *Review of research in education* (pp. 1-48). Washington, DC: American Education Association.
- Lu, M. (1987). From silence to words: Writing as struggle. *College English* 45 (4), 37-448.
- Lu, M. (1991). Redefining the legacy of Mina Shaughnessy: A critique of the politics of linguistic innocence. *Journal of Basic Writing*, 10, 26-40.
- Lu, M. (1992). Conflict and struggle: The enemies or preconditions of basic writing? *College English*, 54, 887-913.
- Macrorie, K. (1988). *The I-Search paper - - Revised edition of searching writing*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- McComiskey, B. (2000). *Teaching composition as a social process*. Logan, UT: Utah State UP.
- McLaren, P. L., & Lankshear, C. (1993). Critical literacy and the postmodern turn. In C. Lankshear & P. L. McLaren (Eds.), *Critical literacy: Politics, praxis, and the postmodern* (pp. 379-419). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Murray, D. M. (1984). *Rhetoric and composition: A sourcebook for teachers*. Richard L. Graves (Ed.). NH: Boynton Cook. 89-94.



- Nin, A. (1976). The new woman. In *In favor of the sensitive man and other essays*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich.
- Norton, B. P. (1996). Social identity, investment, and language learning. *TESOL Quarterly*, 29(1), 9-31.
- O'Leary, M. E. (March 31 - April 3, 1993). *A voice of one's own: Born, achieved, or thrust upon one?* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Conference on College Composition and Communication, 44th, San Diego, CA ED 360 633.
- Parekh, B. (2000). *Rethinking multiculturalism: cultural diversity and political theory*. Cambridge, MA: University Press.
- Rose, M. (1985). The language of exclusion: Writing instruction at the university. *College English*, 47, 341-359.
- Sarup, M. (1989). *An introductory guide to post-structuralism and postmodernism*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press.
- Shethar, A. (1993). Literacy and empowerment? A case study of literacy behind bars. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 24(4), 357-372.
- Shiffrin, D. (1996). Narrative as self-portrait: Sociolinguistic constructions of identity. *Language in Society*, 25(2), 167-201.
- Shor, I. (1992). *Empowering education: Critical teaching for social change*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Sizer T. R., & Sizer, N. F. (1999). *The students are watching: Schools and the moral contract*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Solsken, J. (1993). *Literacy, gender, and work in families and in school*. Norwood: NJ: Ablex.
- Solsken, J., Willett, J., & Wilson-Keenan, J. (2000). Cultivating hybrid texts in multicultural classrooms: Promise and challenge. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 35(2), 179-212.
- Sperling, M., & Freedman, S. W. (1987). A good girl writes like a good girl: Written responses to student writing. *Written Communication*, 9(9), 343-369.
- Spigelman, C. (2000). *Across property lines: Textual ownership in writing groups*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP.
- Straub, R. (1997). Students' reactions to teacher comments: An exploratory study. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 31(1), 91-119.



