The Reading-Writing Relationship:

Three Teaching Approaches Designed Using Reading and Writing Activities to Develop Persuasive Discourse in Adult ESL Writing.

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Abstract

This thesis examines the supportive relationship between reading and writing. Using persuasive discourse structure, the study explores whether reading and writing taught together in context enhance writing more than if each of these modes is taught separately. The thesis focuses on the interactive approach to reading and writing as explained by Shanahan (1984). To explain the structure of the persuasive mode in writing Kinneavy's (1983) classification of discourse types is used. According to Kinneavy (1983) the writer's purpose establishes the discourse type. He states "The aims of discourse determine everything else in the process of discourse" (p. 48).

The study examined the hypothesis that using both reading and writing activities improves writing more than using reading or writing activities separately. Thirty seven students from Intermediate ESL levels participated in this project. The subjects were divided into three groups: Reading, Writing, and Reading and Writing Group. Univariate statistics were computed on the pre-post difference scores to investigate the effects of the three approaches to writing. In the results, it was found that Reading and Writing group showed gains, although non-significant, in discourse structure whereas the other two did not show the improvement.

Since it was difficult to control for L_2 proficiency as intermediate students may have possessed varied L_2 proficiency levels, this research explored whether the writing effectiveness was constrained by low L_2 proficiency. Thus the research question dealing with correlation between L_2 proficiency and the results on the writing tasks revealed a positive correlation, although non-significant.

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CHAPTER 1

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The current theories of language learning stress that language is learned holistically in context. Also, the proponents of the Whole Language theory assert that the four language modes - speaking, writing, listening and reading are mutually supportive. This thesis explores the relationship between reading and writing in that reading and writing taught together in context enhance writing more, in regard to the discourse structure, than if each of these modes is separated i.e. when writing is taught alone. This thesis focuses on the interactive approach of reading and writing or the Bidirectional Hypothesis, which includes "the claim that reading and writing are interactive, and also claims that they are interdependent as well" (Eisterhold, 1990, p. 92).

In acquiring L_2 literacy, adult ESL learners have two primary sources from which to construct a second language system: knowledge of their first language (interlingual input) and input from the second language (intralingual input) (Eisterhold et al., 1990). This study deals with intralingual input since the focus is on discourse structure that may be different for each individual's L_1 writing system. Learning L_2 literate skills such as writing, students interact with their own writing/composing as well as with others' writing, (i.e. professional writing for this study), in order to develop their composing skills. Using others' writing the writers can create their own ideas by comprehending those of others (Rivers, 1987).

The review of literature in the next section provides support for the Bidirectional Hypothesis from the following theoretical and empirical sources: theories of reading and writing processes, research in reading-writing relationships, the Bidirectional Hypothesis as explained by Shanahan (1984) and text structure as a factor in reading and writing. Further support is provided by researchers dealing with the similarities in the processes involved in composing and comprehending expository text.

A study undertaken in this thesis to investigate the Bidirectional Hypothesis of reading and writing was conducted using reading and writing activities to develop the persuasive discourse in writing of 37 adult ESL learners with different L_2 proficiency (Intermediate 4 level at the Community College). The results of the study support the bidirectional hypothesis or that instruction in the structure of persuasive discourse in both reading and writing has more beneficial effects on persuasive writing than either instruction in reading or writing alone.

Theories of Reading and Writing Processes

Schema Theory in Second Language Reading

Reading is viewed presently as a kind of dialogue between the reader and the text. These types of interactive models of reading assume that skills at all levels are interactively available to process and interpret the text. The focus now is on the comprehender (listener or reader) and not the language to be comprehended (Carrell et al., 1983, 1988). Schema theory shows the importance of the reader's background knowledge within a psycholinguistic model of reading.

The written text provides directions for readers as to how they retrieve or construct meaning from their own, previously acquired knowledge.

Efficient comprehension requires the ability to relate the textual material to one's own knowledge. The process of interpretation is guided by two modes of information processing: bottom-up and top-down. Bottom-up processing is called data-driven and top-down is called conceptually driven. Both types of processing occur at all levels simultaneously (Rumelhart, 1977). The readers activate an appropriate schema against which they try to give a text a consistent interpretation. What is understood is a function of the particular schema that is activated by the reader during the processing of the text. Carrell (1987) refers to two types of schemata: content schema and formal schema. The content schema is defined as the background knowledge of the content area of a text, and the formal schema is defined as background knowledge of the formal, rhetorical organizational structures of different types of texts (such as simple stories, scientific texts, newspaper articles and so on). Second language readers bring background knowledge that may be culture-specific, and their efforts may fail if they do not process the appropriate schemata necessary to understand a text. The formal schema or knowledge of the rhetorical organizational structures of different types of texts can be the most difficult for adult ESL learners who have diverse language and cultural backgrounds.

According to Kaplan (1966) "rhetoric varies from culture to culture and even from time to time within a given culture" (p. 2).

The Theory of the Writing Process

Zamel (1987) states that writing is a process through which meaning is created or in other words a process of discovery. We write about what we know or what we remember; therefore, one of the processes of writing is memory retrieval. Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) in their theory of writing speak of one model which they call Knowledge Telling. Writers need to be able to retrieve content from memory. For this process they need cues. The topic, discourse schema, and text already produced may act as cues. This process does not ensure that the appropriate content will be retrieved. The appropriateness of content will depend on the cues and on the availability of information in memory (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987). The writer may possess the required discourse schema or may only possess elements of the schema. For example, for an opinion essay the immature writer may only possess a schema for writing a statement of belief (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987). Their second model is called Knowledge Transforming which can be described as the interaction between text processing and knowledge processing. Just as the new reading theory which refers to the interaction or process between the text and the reader, both knowledge telling and knowledge transforming refer to the mental processes by which the texts are composed. Bereiter & Scardamalia stress that "it is common to think of cognitive strategies as operating on mental representations such as representations of ideas, of goals, of structural features, and of language" (p. 322). Since most of the composing strategies operate on the mind, availability of suitable mental representations is a significant issue in writing competence.

As mentioned in the description of reading theory, readers must activate an appropriate schema from memory to interpret the text and in composing, the writers need to activate an appropriate schema from memory. The writers are using different cues in writing than in reading but retrieving the same mental representations.

Reading and Writing: Correlational Studies

When two things are correlated, they share certain elements in common. The elements that reading and writing might share are perhaps the background knowledge regarding content or form that is stored in memory and activated during the process of reading or writing, and certain abilities and strategies that are involved in the processing of reading and writing. In the top-down mode, the strategies such as problem analysis or goal setting (in order to create meaning) may very well be used in both the skills of comprehending and composing. In the bottom-up mode, the strategies at the word and sentence level may be parallel; for example, certain word recognition skills in reading help spelling in writing. There are numerous correlational studies linking: 1) reading achievement and writing ability (Campbell, 1990; Hill, 1982; Lazdowski, 1976; Stewart, 1978), 2) reading experience and writing ability (McConnell, 1983; Janopoulos, 1986), 3) reading ability and syntactic complexity in students' compositions. (Stewart, 1978; Stotsky, 1983). Pimsarn (1987) found two significant correlations: 1) A statistically significant correlation between students' reading ability levels and their writing ability levels (the below average readers are poor writers). 2) There is a statistically significant difference in the ESL college students reading achievement differentiated by their writing ability levels (holistic scoring). Flower and Hayes (1980) theorize that "extensive reading affects a person's ability

to write: a well-read person simply has a much larger and richer set of images of what a text can look like" (p. 28).

In their research using a regression analysis of the data, Grobe and Grobe (1977) found that reading skills and writing ability were systematically related. Getkham's (1989) research results indicated that able readers produced texts that were more organized and higher in overall quality.

The Influence of Reading on Writing

Competence in written language as in spoken language comes from acquisition (Krashen, 1984) and not from studying the rules that describe written language but from large amounts of self-motivated reading for interest or pleasure. Krashen stresses that we acquire the written form by understanding the messages encoded in written language or by reading for meaning so that we gain unconscious feel for written language, consequently acquiring the code. Although Krashen's hypothesis is not tested, other researchers show a relationship between L_1 pleasure reading and writing ability and the lack of relationship shown between grammar study and writing ability. Exposure to printed material alone facilitates the unconscious learning of writing skills; the reader may model his own writing after the author's and be less likely to produce incomplete sentences or grammatical errors (Grobe & Grobe, 1977). Belanger (1987) found that studies of written composition which have used free reading as the control treatments provide indirect evidence that free reading is as effective as writing practice or grammar study in improving written composition. In his research Belanger (1987) also found that teaching prose structure and story schemata as reading treatments resulted in some significant differences on

reading and writing measures. Spack (1985) contends that if students read literary works, they can become aware of different ways writers create texts. Matthews et al. (1945) stress the importance of the use of the reading materials for the students to acquire "inductively" a knowledge of correct usage. Frank Smith in his book, Writing and the Writer, maintains that "reading seems to be the essential fundamental source of knowledge about writing, from the conventions of transcription to the subtle differences of register and discourse structures in various genres" (Smith, 1982, p. 177). He goes on to say that the development "of composition in writing cannot reside in writing alone but requires reading and being read to" (p. 195). Written text provides many linguistic resources other than grammatical ones - for example "literate" vocabulary and organizational structures of discourse (Farr, 1986). She remarks that a number of studies have begun to show that children draw upon these resources from written text to learn how to write what is considered good. Moreover, Austin (1983) found that supplying a full rhetorical context for reading and analysis does assist the writing. Therefore, students need experience with text (e.g. reading or being read to) to gather resources (Farr, 1986). As indicated the above researchers relate reading and writing, pointing to the fact that reading positively influences writing. The above studies are examples illustrating the effects of the process by which the input of data (reading material) is used by L_2 learners to aid their language acquisition (writing) since a very important source available to learners acquiring literacy skills in L_2 is input from the L_2 (Carson et al. 1990)

The Influence of Writing on Reading

If reading influences writing development then the next question would be: Does writing influence reading? Though very brief, the following findings will address the issue.

Thomson's (1985) research with low reading ability students showed that writing treatments increased students' vocabulary and total reading scores. Oehlkers (1971) found that students who receive early training in creative writing achieve equally as well in word recognition as those who concentrate principally on reading activities. Freedman and Calfee (1984) theorize that reading is a subset of writing and it can be developed completely through writing instruction. Kettlewell's (1985) study confirmed writing as a recursive process, reading as a major component of the process, and that skilled and unskilled writers are readers of their text.

Similarities in Reading and Writing Strategies

Comparing reading and writing strategies, Aulls (1986) claims that both reading comprehension and composing require highly active participation on the part of the learner. He continues by saying that just as in reading, so as in writing "to become an expert writer, the novice must be able to engage in and go beyond sentence processing" (p. 40). Both reading and writing require the learner to identify a goal and specify steps toward achieving it (Aulls, p. 41). Augustine (1981) explains that "reading is not simply the inverse of writing" (p. 224). She continues by saying that both reading and writing proceed from the same base of competence and "like reading, ... writing is a psycholinguistic game" (Augustine p. 228).

Spack (1985) compares reading and writing strategies by defining reading comprehension as "an interactive process between the reader's background knowledge and the text" (p. 706). She concludes that the text provides the reader with directions for constructing meaning and as students write and revise drafts, they interact with their own text and learn that the act of writing can itself generate ideas. Moreover, Aulls states that "to become an expert reader or an expert writer, the learner must involve himself in and beyond sentence processing and production and shift attention to acquiring and using knowledge of text structure," (Aulls, 1985, p. 40).

All the findings cited in this paper so far indicate a connection between reading and writing, in their theories, processes and strategies. The numerous correlational studies, and studies demonstrating that reading influences writing or writing influences reading, unquestionably support the bidirectional hypothesis or that both skills affect each other somewhat. No evidence was found to contradict the above statements.

Reading-Writing Relationship: Bidirectional Hypothesis

According to Bélanger (1987) reading and writing are both aspects of general language competence and anything which alters one will affect the other. Works of Shanahan (1984) and Shanahan & Lomax (1986) provide support for the Interactive Model or Bidirectional Hypothesis, the most complex model. According to this approach reading and writing are interactive, influencing each other differently at different stages of development. Shanahan and Lomax (1986) propose that reading-writing studies need to consider this relationship between the two modes as a "constellation of interrelated processes that utilize a number of knowledge bases"

(p. 116) In other words, there are multiple relations which change with the development of writing or reading or both. Shanahan (1984) found in his work with grade five learners that "as students become more proficient the nature of the reading-writing relationship changes... It appears that at any given point of development, reading and writing consist of both dependent and independent abilities" (p. 475). Moreover Shanahan and Lomax found that the reading-writing model is superior to the writing-reading implying that more reading information is used in writing than vice versa. Shanahan theorizes that reading and writing could be related by shared cognitive processes or cognitive structures; also he suggests that "integrated instruction might allow for maximum achievement in both reading and writing, with maximum efficiency" (Shanahan, p. 475). Another study to support the bidirectional hypothesis was conducted by Lowe (1985) who studied reading/writing behaviours and obtained results showing that deficiency in using analytical skills adversely affects the performance of reading and writing tasks. One could add that since analytical skills are cognitive processes which both reading and writing share, then improving writing analytical skills will eventually improve reading and vice versa.

The Bidirectional Hypothesis and Expository Text Structure

Taylor and Beach (1984) in their study of adolescent students contend that "text structure is an important common element in both the comprehension and production of expository text" (p. 145). They say that "competent reading or writing of expository text is the ability to deal with text as a whole and reflect on the logical relationship among superordinate and subordinate ideas rather than to deal with expository text as a set of separate sentences" (p. 136). Expository text

reflects underlying mental processes involving logical and quasi-logical thinking. (Britton, 1985).

Text structure provides the logical connections and organizational patterns in text that help readers to identify and writers to tie in the essential propositions and to subordinate some ideas to others. It appears that knowledge of text structure influences the performance of both readers and writers (Hiebert et al., 1983). Some of the factors that contribute to the difficulty in the comprehension and production of expository text are as follows: 1) the presence of unfamiliar concepts or a high level of abstraction, 2) the need to organize thought into an integrated whole, 3) the need to develop arguments with sufficient examples or details (Taylor & Beach, 1984). The same researchers found that students who are sensitive to text structure have a better memory for the material read than students who were not sensitive to the text structure. Their research (Taylor & Beach, 1984) also shows that university freshmen who were identified as less competent writers incorporated minimal text structure into their persuasive writing. Other research such as Kelley's (1984) findings indicated that instruction in expository composition contributed to growth in both reading comprehension and writing achievement. Bracewell et al. (1982) claim that discourse comprehension and discourse production are not opposites but may occur in a task environment. The authors assert that it is not possible to have either a pure discourse production or a pure comprehension task. Bracewell et al. state that the reader uses text structure to infer a writer's conceptual structure and a writer must produce a text that is able to sustain a reader's inferences about the underlying conceptual structure. To summarize I will relate a passage by Belanger (1987) who states that "Among empirical studies, the most promising reading and writing treatments have been those which have taught prose structure

directly: sentence and paragraph analysis, story schemata and hierarchical summaries. Apparently the study of prose structure both enables students to improve their understanding of what they read and helps them to present their own ideas more clearly in writing" (p. 17).

Reading-Writing with Different L_2 Proficiency

There are not many studies in this area, but the ones available indicate that reading ability transfers more easily from L_1 to L_2 than does writing ability (Carson et al., 1990). The two factors that affect L_2 reading and writing (according to Carson et al.) are 1) the learner's L_2 language proficiency and 2) the interaction of first language literacy skills with second language input. The authors stress that there is interlingual transfer of literacy skills. They quote Cummins (1981) who contends that "there is a cognitive/academic proficiency that is common to all languages and that this common language proficiency allows for the transfer of literacy-related skills across languages" (p. 246), provided there is exposure to L_2 either in school or environment. However, Kaplan (1966) explains that there are differences in the way different languages use text organization. The native speaker possesses a wider variety of structures and chooses the appropriate one for the context whereas "the non-native speaker does not possess as complete an inventory of possible alternatives, and does not recognize the sociolinguistic constraints on those alternatives, and does not recognize what sorts of constraints a choice imposes on the text which follows" (Kaplan, 1966, p. 11). Jones & Tetroe (1987) found that low proficiency seems to constrain the effectiveness of the writing process and to reduce the quantity, but not quality of planning (p. 55).

The second source available to learners acquiring literacy skills in a second language is input from the L_2 (Carson et al. 1990) and is referred to as intralingual input. Based on their studies of Japanese and Chinese students Carson et al. found L_2 reading and writing scores tended to increase as L_2 proficiency increased, but L_1 reading and writing scores tended to decrease as L_2 proficiency increased. In other words, they suggest that teachers should not rely on L_1 literacy transfer as L_2 proficiency reaches higher levels. The L_2 proficiency of the subjects in this study was measured in order to see whether in fact writing scores increase with higher L_2 proficiency.

CHAPTER 2

BACKGROUND TO THE TEXT ANALYSES USED IN THE STUDY

Persuasive Discourse

In order to explain persuasive discourse for analytical purposes, such discourse theorists as James Moffett (1983 [1968]) and James Kinneavy (1971) were consulted. Moffett categorizes writing in terms of time and space between writer and reader; "the very activity of the discourse - thinking, speaking, informal writing, or publishing - is essentially determined by the distance in time and space between speaker and listener." (Moffett, p. 32) Kinneavy, on the other hand, is concerned with the writer's purpose. "The aims of discourse determine everything else in the process of discourse. What is talked about, the oral or written medium which is chosen, the words or grammatical pattern used - all these are determined by the purpose of discourse." (Kinneavy, p. 48). Kinneavy's approach of differentiating among modes of discourse and his description of the persuasive mode was chosen. Kinneavy defines persuasive discourse as a kind of discourse "which is primarily focused on the decoder and which attempts to elicit from him a specific action or emotion or conviction." (Kinneavy, p. 211). Moreover, Kinneavy stresses that it is essential for the encoder, reality, and language itself to become instrumental to the achievement of some practical effect in the decoder. Kinneavy considers private conversation, books, newspapers, radio, television and periodicals to be instruments of persuasive discourse, and on the other hand, he holds political propaganda, advertising, religious preaching and less common, "safety warnings, education to citizenship or honesty, attempts to cajole a board of trustees to adopt a new manufacturing technique and so on" (p. 218) to be examples of

persuasive discourse. According to Kinneavy, the structure of persuasive discourse includes the following: topic (entrance), background information (narration), main idea (proposition), points (division), supporting detail for the thesis (confirmation), destruction of opponents' arguments (confutation), and conclusion. A different type of discourse such as a narrative is described by Patricia Johnson (1986) as having six different categories: setting, beginning, attempt, reaction, outcome and ending.

Another source consulted is the study on the development of persuasive communication strategies by Delia et al. (1979). They conducted research based on the assumption that development of the ability to produce listener - adapted messages proceeds through a series of phases. Delia (1979) along with Clark developed a message analysis system for classifying persuasive strategies. Strategies were coded at one of four levels, with the lowest level designating messages in which the persuader did not demonstrate awareness of the persuasive target's perspective.

Level 1 - persuasive request made with no support, or request made unstated

Level 2 - distinct perspective but only from the persuader's point of view

Level 3 - awareness of the audience's perspective and anticipation of the counter-arguments

Level 4 - focusing on the advantages to the target

In general, research (Knudson, 1991; Connor, 1987) indicates that the student's sense of audience may play a role in his or her ability to write persuasively. Also studies done with L_1 learners point to difficulty students have with persuasive writing (Knudson, 1991; Kean et al.,

1987; Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1985; Prater & Padia, 1983). Prater and Padia (1983) examined the effects of three modes of discourse on student writing performance at two elementary grade levels. They compared expressive, explanatory and persuasive compositions at grades four and six. Consistently with the researchers' hypothesis student writing performance varied significantly across modes of discourse. "Persuasive writing tasks were found to be the most difficult type of writing for all subgroups" when compared with expressive and explanatory tasks (Prater & Padia, 1983, p. 127). Kean et al (1987) explain "Unlike the writer of a referential document who only attempts to describe world events, the writer of a persuasive document attempts to initiate or change such events. By selectively manipulating facts and relationships among facts, the writer of a persuasive letter, memo, or technical report hopes to prompt some choice or action from an audience." (p. 95).

Persuasive Discourse Text Structure Cross-Culturally

Kaplan (1966) has already pointed out that there may be profound cultural differences in the organization of compositions. The following studies of German, Polish and Chinese persuasive discourse confirm this assumption. Gramberg (1989) compared automobile ads from Germany and the USA using both pictures and text. The findings show that the German ad talks directly to the reader using conversational-type text whereas the American ad is clearly constructed as a monologue, focusing on the product alone. German uses more personal pronouns and an identification of buyer and seller belonging to the same group. The principal order of the German ad, according to Gramberg, is built similarly to the devices of turn-taking in a conversation. Another study done by Carter (1986) demonstrates differences in discourse

organization in persuasive writing between Polish and American English. While teaching composition at a university in Poland, Carter found that Polish students use persuasive discourse organization which tends to "coil and turn" about a central concept in contrast to American English which promotes linear discourse. He claims that the structure of a Polish essay used commonly by students "opens with a problem to be analyzed or a question to be answered." (p. 7). The body of the work examines alternative answers from a variety of viewpoints; then in the conclusion an answer is offered which could be considered as a thesis. Carter (1986) further explains that "there is a certain playfulness in Polish student essays because they are not really trying to persuade the reader;" rather, they want "an exchange of views on serious topics." (p. 9).

In the study done by Chen (1986), the differences in the discourse structures of English and Chinese argumentative essays are manifested in the length of clauses, the relationship of propositions within paragraphs (subordinate, coordinate, superordinate), the relation of subtopics to main topics, and the amount of detail in subtopics. Moreover, Sui Kwai-Peng (1986) confirms the preceding with similar findings from Chinese students learning English. His subjects experienced difficulty writing argumentative compositions in contrast to writing narratives.

In view of the above mentioned studies one may conclude that the persuasive mode may be difficult for L_2 learners and that persuasive strategies along with discourse organization would appear to be a useful element in the writing curriculum.

Research objectives

The aim of the study is to examine the hypothesis that using both reading and writing activities improves writing more than using reading or writing activities separately. In chapter one, the connections between reading and writing were reviewed. As reading and writing are both aspects of general language competence sharing multiple relations between them (Shanahan and Lomax 1986), they are mutually supportive.

Intervention into reading and writing suggests that teaching text structures may result in improvement in both reading and writing ability, Taylor and Beach (1984), Belanger (1987). In his critical review of Reading and Writing connections, Belanger (1987) stresses that in order to improve writing by using reading treatments or to improve reading by using writing treatments one must address structural elements common to both. These elements should play a major role in both reading and writing. Thus this study focuses on one major element, structure of persuasive discourse, common to both reading and writing. The structure of persuasive discourse as per Kinneavy includes: topic (entrance), background information (narration), main idea (proposition), points (division), supporting detail for the thesis (confirmation), destruction of opponents' arguments (confutation), and conclusion.

The second research question in this study addressed the correlation between L_2 proficiency and the results on the writing task. Although learners can acquire a second language without becoming literate in that language, literacy in L_2, on the other hand, is influenced by L_2

proficiency (Carson et al. 1990; Jones & Tetroe, 1987). Carson et al. contended that L_2 reading and writing scores tended to increase as L_2 proficiency increased.

The choice of persuasive discourse used in this study was based on the fact that persuasive discourse was not widely taught at the intermediate level in the setting where the research took place. Most of the students, then, would not have had any experience with persuasive discourse in their L_2 classes. Also, the findings indicate that persuasive discourse is found to be the most difficult task type of writing (as compared to expressive and explanatory tasks [Prater and Padia, 1983]). Knudson (1991) reviews Prater and Padia's work and explains that persuasive mode of discourse is more complex because it requires the students' well developed sense of audience. Also she found that children (in her study) do not have a well-developed schema for written persuasion.

Given their level of proficiency, the ESL students would have similar difficulties, such as poorly developed schema for written persuasion and insufficient audience knowledge or awareness; therefore, this type of discourse was considered to be the best choice for the study.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

In order to examine research question one or whether using both reading and writing improves writing more than using reading or writing activities separately, and to examine research question two or whether low L_2 proficiency constrains persuasive writing ability, the following methodology was used.

Participants

Sixty three students from Intermediate ESL levels participated in this project. The intermediate level ranges from level one to level four (each lasting 6 weeks). A student entering intermediate level one would have had either six months of ESL intensive training (5 hours/day) or be able to communicate orally and in writing with fluency, although his or her language may still lack linguistic accuracy somewhat. The participants were taken from intermediate level four. This would indicate that at the end of level four, (which is the time when they had written their post-test), the participants would have had an additional six months language training, totalling to one year of intensive ESL training. The time frame assigned for this study was Winter 1993. The students were enroled in the intensive English as a Second Language Program at Algonquin College six weeks in duration. They attended school five hours per day (a total of 150 hours). During that time about 10 hours were spent on conducting the research in the classroom.

The participants were randomly divided into 3 groups of 21 students:

Group I: Reading Activities

Group II: Writing Activities

Group III: Reading and Writing Activities

The participants were adult ESL students, most of whom were preparing for post-secondary education in Canada or abroad: some may have had undergraduate or graduate degrees. The age range was from 18 to 50 years; although, most students fell between the ages of 21 and 40. They came from 17 different cultures. There were 7 French Canadians, 7 Somali, 13 Spanish, 9 Polish, 4 Chinese, 1 Japanese, 2 Arabic, 1 Greek, 1 Vietnamese, 1 Korean, 2 Bulgarians, 1 Punjabi, 2 Persian, 1 Lithuanian, 1 Czech and 1 Croatian student. The majority (41 students), except for the French Canadians, has been in Canada less than 2 years. No student (except French Canadians) has been in Canada longer than 5 years. Forty nine students have studied English in Canada for a year or less. Only 3 students have studied more than 5 years.

Forty four participants had post-secondary experience from their country. Twelve had secondary education and one only had elementary. All students were initially placed in the program level according to their performance on the Algonquin Placement test. In regard to gender the population sample comprised about 54% women and 46% men. For each class participating the subjects were randomly assigned to treatment group. This procedure was designed to minimize the teacher group interaction.

Materials

In order to determine the participants' second language proficiency, a cloze test was prepared based on Aitken, 1977. According to Aitken (p.59) "Recently, considerable interest has been shown in the use of cloze tests as measures of overall language proficiency in foreign language." Construction of the test involved choosing a self-contained passage of approximately 375 words. The passage was selected carefully so that there would not be excessive demand on the students' knowledge of the content matter. Every seventh word was deleted. Using scoring such as: an exact word=2, not exact but consistent with the author's message=1, not consistent with the meaning or incorrect=0. A mark (there are 50 blanks x 2 for exact word) was assigned for the subject's results on the proficiency test (Based on Aitken, 1977). For further information see appendix B for the cloze test.

The materials for the instructional activities were chosen from post-secondary sources or the newspaper (The Ottawa Citizen). The reading materials were as follows: two persuasive essays from post-secondary texts used for teaching writing, a letter to the editor from The Ottawa Citizen, an ad from an intermediate textbook for ESL students, a sales letter from a post-secondary writing text and Sophie Beare's model essay for persuasive writing. Each reading and writing task had an instruction sheet to provide for consistency in instruction among the three classes.

Three student questionnaires were administered to obtain socio-cultural background information and information about each student's reading and writing habits before and during the study.

The purpose of the three questionnaires was to gather enough information in order to explain some of the anticipated data findings. Questionnaire #1 (Appendix A1) dealt with student's educational background, literacy habits and L_2 knowledge. Questionnaire #2 (Appendix A2) addressed the language skills of the participants: Speaking, Listening, Writing and Reading. This information could reveal whether writing was considered a difficult skill or if the students had any particular difficulty with it as compared to the other skills. Questionnaire #3 (Appendix A3) investigated other out of school reading and writing activities that the participants could have been involved in while the research was conducted.

Procedure

Students from each class participating were randomly assigned (the names on strips of paper were drawn at random by the researcher who did not know the students) to one of the groups - reading, writing, or reading and writing. Thus each class had three groups equal in number. For example: if a class had 21 students, then they were divided randomly into three groups of seven. The experiment was conducted by three ESL teachers using their own classes. The three ESL teachers were trained by the researcher in conducting the six activities/lessons. Each activity whether reading or writing was accompanied by a task sheet. The training involved a discussion regarding the task sheets in order to provide all participants with a consistent instruction. A similar procedure was undertaken with the two markers (the researcher and another ESL professional). Both markers discussed the grids and then marked a few compositions in order to compare their results.

During the first week the students filled out the questionnaires, did the cloze test to determine their proficiency and wrote a persuasive letter (pre-test) on a topic "You have received a letter from your employer explaining that the company wants to save money so they are firing many people. You are one of them. Write a reply persuading them to change their mind." This particular topic was chosen because students (not the participants) tended to prefer it in the previous classes. During the second week the participants were given six lessons. All groups were using the same type of strategies but using reading or writing activities following Kinneavy's (1971) approach to text organization: topic, background information, main idea, points, supporting detail for the thesis, destruction of opponents' arguments, and conclusion. The teaching approach was based on Chimombo's techniques described in "Towards reality in the writing class" (1987). She uses a group approach in teaching discourse structure for the purpose of engaging "in genuine communication." She provides six lessons in teaching argumentative writing: 1) identifying opinions, 2) identifying supporting evidence, 3) checking for logic of the arguments presented, 4) producing their own opinions, 5) finding the appropriate evidence to support these opinions, 6) presenting their own logically argued letters to the editor (p.204). The following lessons used in this study closely resemble Chimombo's.

Lesson 1 consists of first identifying the opinions of the writer and the evidence that he or she has produced to support these opinions (by the reading group). In writing only, the students identify their own opinions and evidence. The students work in groups of four or five to discuss these points.

Lesson 2 stressed the forming of proposition (main idea) or direction in a persuasive message. Students (reading group) read the letter to the editor and discussed the background information and the main focus of the writer. In writing only group the students were presented with a topic "Misunderstood cultural traditions of others can lead to prejudice and fear." They discussed and expressed their opinions. Then they wrote a beginning paragraph.

Lesson 3 focused on the evidence or points supporting the writer's main idea or usefulness of the persuasive request. In reading, students examined a persuasive essay and in writing they completed the topic given "_____ is an ideal exercise." The writing group wrote two or three paragraphs on the topic.

Lesson 4, the participants found supports and elaboration for their main points or evidence. Reading groups examined the model essay, "Foreign Language Study," as to the structure. The writing group discussed and wrote an essay, "Every university student should study a foreign language to receive a B.A."

In Lesson 5 the participants (in the writing group) anticipated objections by the reader and provided their arguments or elaboration. The writing group wrote an essay on the topic "Should a woman work outside the home?" The reading group read an essay, "Should a woman work outside the home?" describing how the writer anticipated objections by the readers and how he dealt with them.

In Lesson 6 the participants attempted to give a suggestion or summary to appeal to the target's perspective articulating the advantage of the desired behaviour or action. The reading group reviewed the structure by reading and discussing the sales letter. The writing group composed a sales letter.

The above mentioned six lessons took approximately six hours to complete. The proposed time frame is based on Knudson's (1991) 14 days with 20 minutes per day (totalling to 4 hours and 40 minutes).

Following the six lessons, the post-test, a persuasive letter, was administered a day after the completion of the activities. The topic was "Write a letter to O.C. Transpo or an essay on the topic: Each bus stop should have a bus shelter since Ottawa winters are severe." This topic also was a favourite topic in previous classes.

Three Instructional Writing Approaches

1. Reading and writing activities whereby students read passages or models of persuasive writing discussing in groups the structure of the given discourse and writing individual persuasive messages or compositions. The teaching approach was based on Chimombo's model (1987) "Towards reality in the writing class" as explained in the procedure.

2. Reading activities only: the students read letters or essays of persuasive writing without any opportunities to write. The reading activity was done in groups to provide for more participation and involvement (Chimombo, 1987).

3. Writing only activities consisted of writing only, whereby students were not presented with reading passages but required to compose persuasive messages or essays. The writing activities were done in groups to provide for participation, involvement, and practice in persuasive writing, but the final product was prepared individually. The group activity included brain storming for ideas, conferencing to edit for content, editing for structure and language.

Text Analyses Used in this Study

The text analyses in this study focus mainly on text structure (Kinneavy's model), persuasive strategies (Delia et al), and problem-solving text structure process (Connor, 1987).

The first analysis is based on Kinneavy's (1971) structure of persuasive discourse such as 1) entrance or introducing the topic, 2) narration or background information, 3) proposition, 4) division, 5) confirmation, 6) confutation, and 7) conclusion.

The next analysis includes the Delia, Kline, and Burleson (1971) persuasive strategy scale which is as follows:

The Delia, Kline, and Burleson Persuasive Strategy Scale

Level I: No Discernible Recognition of and Adaptation to the Target's Perspective.

0. No statement of desire or request; no response given.
1. Unelaborated request.
2. Unelaborated statement of personal desire or need.

Level II: Implicit Recognition of and Adaptation to the Target's Perspective.

3. Elaboration of necessity, desirability, or usefulness of the persuasive request.
4. Elaboration of the persuader's or persuasive object's need, plus minimal dealing with anticipated counterarguments.
5. Elaborated acknowledgement of and dealing with multiple anticipated counterarguments.

Level III: Explicit Recognition of and Adaptation to the Target's Perspective.

6. Truncated efforts to demonstrate relevant consequences to the target of accepting (or rejecting) the persuasive request.
7. Elaboration of specific consequences of accepting (or rejecting) the persuasive request to one with characteristics of the target.
8. Demonstrable attempts by the persuader to take the target's perspective in articulating an advantage or attempts to lead the target to assume the perspective of the persuader, another person, or the persuasive object.

This analysis assessed the level of persuasive strategies used by the subject in dealing with the target audience.

The third analysis focuses on the text structure in terms of the problem-solving cognitive processes as described by Ulla Connor (1987). Connor proposes that the goal of the writer is to change the reader's initial position to the final position intended by the writer. This goal is achieved through a series of sub-goals. The writer typically goes through the following structural units: 1) situation (background information); 2) problem (undesirable condition); 3) solution (desirable condition); 4) evaluation. This last analysis can be integrated with the first.

	Connor	**Kinneavy**
1)	Situation	entrance (including the topic) background information
2)	Problem	proposition (main idea) division (points) confirmation (supporting detail for the thesis) confutation (destruction of opponents arguments)
3)	Solution	desired effect
4)	Evaluation	conclusion

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSES AND RESULTS

Introduction

Since the study was exploratory in nature, the written tasks were assessed not just for structural elements but for other criteria such as persuasive strategies, process of writing persuasive messages and overall impression. These other features were to verify if other aspects of persuasive discourse improved as well, even though they were not emphasized in the instruction. Four measures or grids were used for the assessment of the persuasive writing.

Although the study began with 63 participants, only 37 completed the full set of tasks. The reading group ended with 10 subjects; the writing group had 14 and the reading and writing 13. The number of tasks (8 in total: pre-test, six activities or lessons, and post-test) contributed to this high mortality rate. If a student missed a particular task, the only option was to exclude the individual from the study. Any attempt to do a make-up assignment could have affected the overall results.

To examine the data, an initial phase of the analysis included use of descriptive statistics; in addition, Pearson correlation analysis was conducted for the four dependent variables (overall impression, process, strategies, structure) and proficiency (cloze test). Univariate statistics were then computed on the pre-post difference scores to investigate the effects of the approaches to writing (the three groups). The decision to conduct the analysis on difference scores to assess

pre-post change was based on the recommendations given by Zumbo, Williams and Zimmerman (1993) who maintain that difference-scores methods of analysis are viable in the pre-post design. Since the study deals with more than one dependent variable, separate ANOVAS were done as suggested by Huberty and Morris (1989). Type I error was divided by four (.05/4) in order to interpret each ANOVA for each variable; however, correlation was tested at .05. Even if a more liberal approach was undertaken to interpret each ANOVA at .05, there were no significant statistical differences.

The Writing Assessment Grids

The writing samples (pre-test, post-test) were assessed with four grids (explanations follow). The raters were the researcher and another ESL professional trained by the researcher (see procedure for details). The scores from both raters were summed and averaged. If the scores differed by more than 1 point, the score was settled by a discussion between the raters.

Overall Impression

Each writing sample was first assessed on a scale of 0 to 5 as to its overall impression (see below). This type of assessment is widely used because of "its efficiency" (Reid, 1993). Reid states that "in large-scale readings, with appropriate training, raters can score substantial numbers of papers reliably in a relatively short period of time" (p. 238). The purpose of using this technique in the study was to get a score which employs a reader's full impression of a text without trying to reduce her or his judgment to a set of recognizable skills. This score was correlated with other scores on different grids (see table 3).

Scoring guide for overall impression

5 - demonstrates clear competence in writing

4 - demonstrates competence in writing

3 - demonstrates minimal competence in writing

2 - demonstrates some developing competence in writing

1 - suggests incompetence in writing

0 - demonstrates incompetence in writing

* Competence is defined here as the ability or ease with which the writer uses language on both the rhetorical and syntactic levels to bring about the desired effect.

Persuasive Strategy Scale

As described in Chapter 2, persuasive strategy scale as developed by Delia and Clark (1979) was used to determine whether the participants improved in their persuasive strategies after completing the six activities. Although the aim of the study was to improve the student's structural units in the persuasive writing (as per Kinneavy's model), analyzing strategies would indicate whether the instructional activities enhanced the persuasive discourse structure or discourse strategies. Discourse strategies are employed in all modes of communication (listening, speaking, reading and writing); however, discourse structure based on Kinneavy's model seems more obvious in writing than in the other modes.

Problem Solving Process (Situation-Problem-Solution-Evaluation)

Ulla Connor (1987) views the production of argumentative text as the cognitive process of problem-solving (persuasive discourse is closely related to argumentative type) since "the goal of the writer is to change the reader's initial opposing position to the final position that equals to the position of the writer". p. 59 (Connor, 1987).

Structural Units Scale

The focus of the instructional activities was directed to structural units as explained by Kinneavy (1971). The text was divided into: 1) the topic 2) narration or background info 3) proposition 4) division 5) confirmation 6) confutation 7) conclusion.

Each unit was rated on a scale from 0 to 3. 0 being no statement and 3 being thorough development. The total number of points for structural units was 21. This type of scoring was employed as it provided a better means to separate categories (Knudson, 1991).

Analyses

In table 1 or in the first phase of analysis Descriptive Statistics for the cloze test is provided. This particular cloze test had been field tested/tried over several months. The cloze test for the population sample appears to have some characteristics of a normal distribution which was not anticipated. Although the students were at the same level (Intermediate 4), they varied in their

knowledge of the language a great deal. This variability could have had a great impact on the process of writing persuasive messages.

TABLE 1
Descriptive Statistics for the cloze test

N	37	
Mean	55.4	
SD	14.2	
Med	56	
Range	60 (23 - 83)	Max = 100

In table 2, Means and Standard Deviations using difference scores are provided for the four variables. Since the focus was on structure and not on strategies and process, it does indicate that combining reading and writing activities (Group 3) is beneficial particularly for structure. The mean for structure for Group 3 (M = 4.2) is the highest. According to table 2, the mean for overall impression is higher for Group 3 (.91) than for the other two groups.

TABLE 2
Means and Standard Deviations for the Four Variables of the Assessment for Persuasive Writing using Difference Scores

	n	M	SD	Maximum Score
Overall Impression				
Group 1	10	0.82	0.63	1.5
Group 2	14	0.67	0.50	1.5
Group 3	13	0.91	0.78	2.0
Strategies				
Group 1	10	0.85	1.0	3.0
Group 2	14	0.61	1.0	2.5
Group 3	13	0.74	0.82	2.0
Process				
Group 1	10	2.1	1.6	5.5
Group 2	14	2.1	1.8	5.0
Group 3	13	2.0	2.2	5.5
Structure				
Group 1	10	2.9	3.7	8.0
Group 2	14	2.9	3.5	7.0
Group 3	13	4.2	3.9	9.5

In table 3, a positive correlation between the change in various aspects (overall, process, strategies, structure) of persuasive writing was found. Pearson Correlation Coefficient (N=37, α =0.05) indicated small correlation, although non-significant between proficiency (cloze test results) and process 0.33, and between cloze test results and structure 0.28. Since the correlation was calculated using difference-scores, difference-scores being the difference between post and pre-test, and all dependent variables showing an increase, one can see a trend that as structure improves so do the other aspects of writing such as strategies, process and overall impression. However non-significant correlation was found between proficiency (cloze task) and the four dependent variables. One reason could be the small increase in difference scores for each variable due to the task difficulty and other factors as described below table 3.

TABLE 3

Pearson Correlation Matrix

	Proficiency (Cloze task)	Overall	Process	Strategies	Structure
Proficiency	1.000				
Overall	0.119	1.000			
Process	0.326	0.596*	1.000		
Strategies	0.119	0.435*	0.654*	1.000	
Structure	0.276	0.548*	0.712*	0.682*	1.000

r = .418* α = .05

Since r = .418 and falls between $r \leq -.418$ or $r \geq +.418$, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. The next phase involved using Univariate Method (SAS). When analysis of variance was conducted with group versus structure (dependent variable), the results showed gains in structure, although non-significant ($F(2,34)=0.516$, $p=0.6012$).

As mentioned by Knudson (1991) and Prater and Padia (1983) persuasive writing is more complex than either explanatory or expository writing. Glynn et al. (1982) contend that high cognitive demands put on the writer of a persuasive message "may tax a writer's processing capacity and 'block' the foundation of ideas" (p.557). According to Glynn et al. (1982) processing capacity is defined as "the limited pool of energy, resources, or fuel, by which some cognitive operations or processes are mobilized and maintained" (p.557). To produce a final draft of persuasive writing, a writer needs to a)generate arguments b)separate them c)place arguments into sentences d)comply with mechanics (punctuation, spelling) e)(for ESL students only) encode the information into their second language or deal with L_1/L_2 transfer.

Another important factor that may have affected the persuasive writing is the diversity in perception about the persuasiveness of an argument which can vary greatly from individual to individual and from group to group (Glynn et al. 1982). Keeping in mind that an ESL student's perception is highly influenced by his or her cultural background (Kaplan, 1966) one can conclude that the writers' perception in this study most likely varied in regard to the persuasiveness of different arguments. The written products were analyzed without any reference to cultural influences.

Feedback from the Participants

1. Use of L_2 (Spoken only) outside the school setting

When asked about their use of English (L_2) outside the school setting, 60% said they used English with friends, 38% used it at work, 32% used English at home and 35% said they used it while speaking to neighbours.

2. Literacy habits in L_1

In regard to their reading habits, 10% of the participants did not read anything in their own native language, while 68% read 1 to 2 hours per day. Only 24% read less than 30 min. per day. All, except one reported they wrote letters in their native language. 36% reported they wrote other things in their language such as notes, journal or diary, or homework.

3. Writing skills

When asked about their writing in English outside of school, 37% wrote personal letters in English and 23% wrote business letters. Approximately 70% of the participants reported that they had difficulty with writing (sometimes or frequently) while 46% said that writing was their weakest skill. About 67% of participants reported that they were able to write adequately class notes and job applications. Both of these tasks do not require composing

skills. However only 19% said they could write business letters and 28% said they could write essays (both tasks require composing skills). Comparing the results to reading, only 8% of the participants reported that reading was the most difficult.

4. Reading and writing activities during experiment

All of the participants (100%) reported that they read the newspaper in English. Approximately 76% of them read newspaper ads, 43% read junk mail and 43% read novels or other texts. In regard to writing outside of school, 30% of them wrote business letters associated with job search or their children's school. 19% wrote letters to their friends in English. Approximately 50% of all participants wrote letters to their families in their own native language.

5. Informal feedback given to the teachers regarding the research

All feedback was positive as the participants enjoyed taking part in this research. They felt that the activities were worthwhile. One person replied that it was too short. When asked if the study helped them with persuasive writing, all of them replied yes, except for a few from the reading groups who said that they did not write so they did not improve. When asked if they would participate in a similar experiment, all replied yes. Although a few students said that they participated to help the research, most said that they liked it because it was a learning experience.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS: DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

Discussion and Summary of the Findings

This study's orientation was both quantitative and exploratory. From the quantitative point of view, descriptive statistics revealed that the scores for each variable fell within the normal distribution. The normal distribution of the cloze test results is somewhat disappointing in that there appears to be diversity in the students' language proficiency, even though all students were at the high intermediate level. One explanation may be that the students are promoted to the next level based on their achievement of content knowledge in a level rather than their performance (according to school records). Thus low language proficiency or low scores on cloze task of some students may have added extra constraints to their learning of persuasive writing affecting the group results. On examining each variable by group, Group 3 showed gains in structure, though non-significant (see Table 2). Since the focus was on structure and not on process or strategies of persuasive writing, it is not surprising that this variable indicated a change as demonstrated in descriptive statistics.

The teachers and some of the students participating in the study reported that the time frame was too short for the participants to internalize the persuasive text structure. Perhaps an additional two or three activities would have been helpful in consolidating the required skills. As previously discussed, persuasive writing was found to be one of the most difficult modes of discourse to learn (Prater and Padia, 1983). They compared persuasive writing to explanatory and expository writing, researching effects of modes of discourse on writing performance in

grades 4 and 6. Another factor that may have contributed to the difficulty in learning text structure were the ESL students' cultural differences. Text structure of the persuasive discourse varies according to cultural differences (Kaplan, 1966; Gramberg, 1989; Carter, 1986; Chen, 1986). All of the mentioned researchers found that persuasive discourse varied across cultures. For example, Carter (1986) pointed out that some cultures (Polish) show inability to deal with the persuasive style because of their cultural bias (associating it with propaganda). Moreover Gramberg (1989) found the manner of persuasion can be affected by a specific organizational pattern such as turn taking, common to conversations (German ad).

Another factor contributing to the difficulty, may be the students' sense of audience which plays an important role in their ability to write persuasively (Knudson, 1991; Connor, 1987). The student needs to evoke a certain behaviour in the reader thus his/her awareness of the reader is essential.

Finally the demand from both content and structure putting constraints on the writer's processing capacity limits his or her effectiveness. The writer has to deal with more than just generating ideas. He or she has to perform several operations a) generation of arguments b) sequencing c) encoding into sentences d) dealing with mechanics, and for ESL students e) dealing with cultural information.

Thus all or some of the factors mentioned may have contributed to a rather modest increase in scores for Group 3 post-test in persuasive structure. However, the difference is greater than for the other two groups (reading only, writing only) or for other variables (strategies, process,

overall). One can conclude that using both reading and writing to teach structure appears to improve writing more than using reading or writing activities separately.

For the exploratory orientation, the study attempted to discover more about the effects of reading and writing taught together to help ESL students acquire persuasive discourse. Correlation between L_2 proficiency and the results on writing tasks were examined. The findings indicate that in regard to structure and process variables, there is a gain, although non-significant. Pearson Correlation Coefficient for process is 0.35 and structure 0.36 ($\alpha = .05$, $n = 37$). It could be explained that participants were more successful learning discourse structure when their language knowledge was stronger. Also the participants were improving more in their process (situation - problem - solution - evaluation) when their language proficiency was higher. The lack of correlation between persuasive strategies and language proficiency reveals the difficulty the writer has with audience awareness. Grid #1 (Persuasive, Strategy Scale) requires the writer to take the reader's perspective, implying an in-depth knowledge of the audience.

Implications for Further Research

Various questions/issues were raised while the data from the study was examined. The emphasis in this study was centered around the structural units of persuasive discourse (entrance, background knowledge, proposition, division, confirmation, confutation and conclusion) as explained by Kinneavy (1971). However persuasive strategies as described in persuasive strategy scale by Delia and Clark (1979) could be more thoroughly researched using writing tasks, since Delia & Clark (1979) used communication mode. Delia and Clark deal with

audience awareness which is essential in content generation and sequencing. Audience awareness (a component of persuasive strategies) is another topic that could be investigated to explain some of the cultural difficulties L_2 students experience in composing persuasive messages. Moreover, the effectiveness of peer editing or review on audience awareness could provide some insight to developing strategies in writing persuasive messages. Rosenblatt (1988) found positive gains in writing using peer review. In this study the students did not know the markers; they knew that their classroom teachers were not going to grade their pre and post tests. Thus there was really no relationship between the reader and the writer. It could be interesting to explore the socio-cultural factors such as the relationship between the writer (student) and the reader (teacher) and its effect on persuasive writing. Another important issue could be the students' orientation toward the topic: Does the student's agreement or disagreement with the topic affect his effectiveness in persuasive writing?

Although there have been numerous studies done connecting reading and writing in L_1, not enough research has been done in L_2. Not much research deals with the approaches of how to effectively integrate both reading and writing in an ESL class.

From some of the oral feedback given after this study, one could replicate this approach/study and use it over a longer period to see if the results are more significant.

Implications of Teaching

Research cited in the first chapter suggests that reading and writing or even the whole language framework (all modes) should be used interactively in teaching L_1. Certainly L_2 writing and/or literacy instruction should follow the same course. However the background knowledge, that an adult ESL learner has and a child learning L_1 literacy has are not comparable in either quantity or quality. Unlike the child, the adult may have acquired literacy in his or her L_1 and thus possesses literate skills but unable to use them effectively due to weak L_2 language skills or cultural differences in text organization between his or her L_1 and the target language (Kaplan, 1966). Kaplan stresses that there are differences in discourse organization/structure across cultures. It may be rather difficult or almost impossible to teach discourse structure in writing without using reading. Therefore combining reading and writing to teach discourse structure is not only beneficial but it may be necessary.

This study indicated that integrating reading and writing appears to be beneficial. In regard to the correlation between language proficiency and learning discourse structure the study indicated positive correlation (although non-significant). A teacher needs to consider the student's language proficiency. If the language proficiency is low, the writing process and the quantity of planning may be constrained (Jones and Tetroe, 1987). It would be advisable not to expect much writing improvement with weak L_2 proficiency, or it would be to the students' benefit to work on their general language skills before trying to learn persuasive discourse structure.

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Appendix A1

QUESTIONNAIRE #1

Student Identification Number _____

1. What is your native language? _____

2. What other languages do you speak? _____

3. How long have you been in Canada? _____

4. How long have you studied English in Canada? _____

5. Did you study English before you came to Canada? _____
   How long? _____

6. How many years of schooling did you receive in your country?
   Elementary School _____
   Secondary School _____
   College (post-secondary) _____
   University _____
   What, if any, was your area of specialization? _____

7. Do you read books, newspapers, magazines in your language? _____
   If yes, on what subjects? _____

8. How much time do you spend on reading? _____ /per day
   _____ /per week
   _____ /per month

9. Do you write letters in your native language? _____

10. What other writing do you do in your language? _____
    _____

11. Do you write in English outside of school? _____
    If yes, what kind of writing? (Circle the appropriate answer)
    - business letters
    - personal letters
    - other writing (explain) _____

Appendix A2

QUESTIONNAIRE #2

Student Identification Number: _____

1. In which ESL course are you presently registered? _____

2. Are you registered in other ESL courses? Yes ☐ No ☐
   If yes, which one _____

3. How long have you studied English? _____

4. Do you speak English at home? Yes ☐ No ☐
   or at work? Yes ☐ No ☐
   If yes, with whom do you speak? family ☐ friends ☐ neighbours ☐
   other ☐ (please specify) _____

5. How would you rate your ability in English in each of the following skills? (Check)

	Speaking	**Listening**	**Writing**	**Reading**
I have no trouble whatsoever				
I have very little trouble				
I sometimes have trouble				
I frequently have trouble				

6. When I SPEAK in English, I am able to express myself well in the following situations:

   ☐ social gatherings
   ☐ on the telephone
   ☐ at school/to the teacher
   ☐ to business people
   ☐ to strangers
   ☐ other (specify) _____

7. When I LISTEN in English, I can understand almost everything in the following situations:

☐ telephone conversations
☐ social conversations
☐ lectures
☐ television
☐ radio
☐ strangers talking
☐ other (specify) _____

8. When I READ in English, I am able to read with good comprehension:

☐ novels
☐ magazine/newspaper articles of general interest
☐ textbook chapters in my field of study
☐ application forms
☐ short stories
☐ other (specify) _____

9. When I WRITE in English, I am able to write adequately the following:

☐ class notes
☐ application and other forms
☐ essays
☐ business letters
☐ other (specify) _____

10. I think my weakest skill in English is:
(Check one)

☐ Listening (understanding speech)
☐ Speaking
☐ other (specify) _____
☐ Reading
☐ Writing

Appendix A3

QUESTIONNAIRE #3

Student Identification Number _____

1. In the last six weeks did you read (outside of school) any of the following in English? (Circle the appropriate answer)

   - novels
   - junk mail
   - newspaper
   - advertisements
   - other (explain) _____

   Did you read
   ☐ a little?
   ☐ some?
   ☐ a lot?

2. In the last six weeks did you write (outside of school) any of the following in English? (Circle the appropriate answer)

   - business letters
   - other writing (explain) _____

   Did you write
   ☐ a little?
   ☐ some?
   ☐ a lot?

3. Did you do any reading or writing in another language that you have not mentioned above?
   (Check the appropriate answers)

   ☐ yes ☐ no

   If yes, did you read or write
   ☐ a little?
   ☐ some?
   ☐ a lot?

   Please explain
   _____
   _____
   _____

Appendix B

CLOZE (Adapted from Put It in Writing by D. Blot & D. Davidson Heinle & Heinle Publishers, 1988.)

Instructions: In the exercise below every seventh word has been taken out and blanks put in their place. Your job will be to guess which word has been left out of each space and write that word in the blank.

REMEMBER THESE THINGS:

1. Write only ONE word in each blank.
2. Try to fill in every blank. Guess if you do not know.
3. You may leave difficult blanks and come back to them when you have finished.
4. Spelling mistakes will not be marked wrong.
5. Write neatly please.
6. Take as much time as you need. You will be given 45 minutes to complete this exercise.

Example

Hawa was born in Somalia. She came to Canada with her sister last year.

Let's try the following example together.

When Hawa arrived in Ottawa, she _____ not speak English. She decided to _____ an ESL course so that she _____ communicate with the native speakers of _____.

CHI LIN's ESCAPE TO FREEDOM

I had to get out. I couldn't stay in my country _____ longer. A new government had taken _____ the year before and I hated _____. If I stayed, I would join _____ antigovernment movement, and sooner or later _____ soldiers would kill me or put _____ in prison. No, I had to _____. I had to be free. One _____ while my parents, brothers, and sisters _____ sleeping, I got up and left _____ house. I couldn't tell them where _____ was going, but it was so _____ to leave them without saying good-bye. _____ walked until daylight, then hid under _____ tree and slept. When night came _____, I got up and continued walking. _____ travelled this way for three weeks, _____ at night and sleeping in caves _____ under trees during the day. I

(_____ want to meet anyone who might _____ me. And I was afraid _____ be seen by the police or _____ who constantly patrolled the countryside.

I _____ very little to eat. Sometimes I _____ some wild fruit, other times some _____ growing on farmland. Once I killed _____ chicken. But often I went to _____ hungry. I was becoming weak, but, _____ I thought of the freedom that _____ for me on the other side _____ the river, I found new strength _____ I kept going.

Finally, on one _____ dark night I came to the _____. Hearing it before I could see _____, I began to run towards it. _____ I stopped and didn't move. I _____ dogs barking. A patrol was coming _____ the river bank. Maybe the dogs _____ sense me. I quickly hid behind _____ bushes, afraid to move or _____ breath. They came closer. I could _____ three dogs and a half-dozen soldiers. _____ the dogs stopped and began sniffing _____ air. One of the soldiers looked _____ the bushes where I was hiding. _____ heart was pounding. I was sure _____ would discover me. But then the _ _____ started moving again and the patrol _____ by.

I waited until I couldn't _____ the barking of the dogs any _____. Then I waded into the river and swam to the other side.

Appendix C1

PERSUASIVE WRITING GRID #1
(Persuasive Strategy Scale)

Delia, Kline and Burleson 1971

			Score
Level III	8.	Demonstrable attempts by the persuader to take the target's perspective in articulating an advantage or attempts to lead the target to assume the perspective of the persuader, another person, or the persuasive object.	8
	7.	Elaboration of specific consequences of accepting (or rejecting) the persuasive request to one with characteristics of the target.	7
	6.	Truncated efforts to demonstrate relevant consequences to the target of accepting (or rejecting) the persuasive request.	6
Level II	5.	Elaborated acknowledgement of and dealing with multiple anticipated counterarguments.	5
	4.	Elaboration of the persuader's or persuasive object's need, plus minimal dealing with anticipated counterarguments.	4
	3.	Elaboration of necessity, desirability, or usefulness of the persuasive request.	3
Level I	2.	Unelaborated statement of personal desire or need.	2
	1.	Unelaborated request.	1
	0.	No statement of desire or request; no response given.	0

Score _____

_____
Student identification number

Appendix C2

_____
Student number

PERSUASIVE WRITING GRID #2

Structural units	**Level**	**Score**
Entrance (introduction)	0 1 2 3	
Background information (explaining the situation)	0 1 2 3	
Proposition (main idea)	0 1 2 3	
Division (at least 2) (supporting points)	0 1 2 3	
Confirmation (evidence for supporting the points)	0 1 2 3	
Confutation (destruction of opponent's arguments)	0 1 2 3	
Conclusion (summary & evaluation)	0 1 2 3	
	Total	_____ / 21

Explanation:

0 - not pertinent
no statement

1 - limited development - ideas confused or disconnected
2 - adequate development - relevant to the topic but lacks detail
3 - thorough development - knowledgeable, fluent, ideas clearly stated/supported

Appendix C3

_____
Student number

PERSUASIVE WRITING GRID #3

I Situation + Problem + Solution + Evaluation Structure (Problem-solving Process)

Criteria	Level	Score
Situation (introduction, main idea)	0 1 2 3	
Problem (evidence supporting opponent's arguments)	0 1 2 3	
Solution (desired effect - induction only)	0 1 2 3	
Evaluation - induction (directive)	0 1 2 3	

Total _____
12

Explanation:

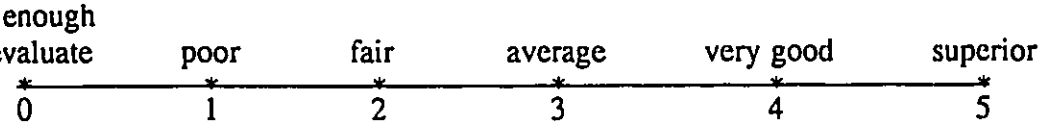
0 - no response
not pertinent

1 - limited development - ideas not clearly stated, some confusion

2 - adequately developed - ideas stated, lacks detail

3 - thorough development - clearly stated, definite evidence of the detailed development

II Overall Impression



Score _____

Appendix D1

PRE-TEST PROMPTS (Possible topics)

Students will be given one topic from the following:

1. You have received a letter from your employer explaining that the company wants to save money so they are firing fifty people. You are one of the them. Write a reply persuading them to change their mind.

OR

2. Write a persuasive essay explaining your position on the topic: All education should be free for all students. You want to persuade the readers to your way of thinking.

OR

3. Write a persuasive essay on the following topic: Many T.V. commercials insult women.

OR

4. The TOEFL examination should not be required when applying for university admission. Write a persuasive essay or letter explaining your recommendations or your position and try to influence the admission department.

POST-TEST PROMPTS (Possible topics)

Students will be given one topic from the following

1. Canada needs to have more relaxed immigration policy. Many people who are not safe in their own countries cannot claim refugee status. Write a persuasive essay.

OR

2. Write a persuasive essay on the following topic: Success in school depends on one's hard work.

OR

3 Write a persuasive essay on the following topic: Children who watch too much T.V. learn to be violent.

OR

4. Write a letter to O.C. Transpo or an essay on the topic: Each Bus stop should have a bus shelter since Ottawa winters are severe.

Appendix D2

READING (ONLY)

1. The Gold Star Breakfast (ad).
2. Coverage damaging (newspaper - a letter to the editor).
3. The Life you save (essay).
4. Foreign language study - a pre-requisite for a B.A. (essay).
5. Should a woman work outside the home? (essay)
6. Sales letter (ad/letter) (House sitting).

WRITING (ONLY)

1. The Gold Star Breakfast (ad).
2. Misunderstood cultural traditions of others can lead to prejudice and fear (essay).
3. _____ is the ideal exercise.
4. Every university student should study a foreign language to receive a B.A.
5. Should a woman work outside the home?
6. Sales letter (house sitting).

READING AND WRITING

The participants will cover the first three topics using reading only activities and the last three topics using writing only.

Appendix D3

INSTRUCTION

Lesson 1 - Identifying opinions (one's own or the writer's), describing and analysing the introduction in reading or writing.

Reading - The Gold Star Breakfast (ad)
(see the handout)

Writing - The Gold Star Breakfast (ad)
(see the handout)

Lesson 2 - Background Information and the Main Idea.

Reading - Coverage Damaging (newspaper - a letter to the editor)
- students will discuss the background information and the main focus of the writer.

Writing - The students will be presented with a topic "Misunderstood cultural traditions . . ." They will discuss and express their opinions. Then they will write a beginning paragraph.

Lesson 3 - Division or Main Points

The Life you Save (essay)

Reading - The students will look for the points supporting the main idea. How did the writer persuade them? How was clarity and firmness achieved?

Writing - A writing prompt is given _____ is an ideal exercise. Brain storming - in groups - coming up with different exercises. The students will discuss what kind of persuasive writer they respect. How can someone convince them? Then they write/complete the topic and write two or three paragraphs on the topic given.

Lesson 4 - Confirmation or evidence for the supporting points

Foreign Language Study - a pre-requisite for a B.A. (essay)

Reading - Students read the essay and find supports and elaboration for the main points. Go over the introduction, the main idea, main points. Students can express their own opinions regarding the above topics.

Writing - In groups students will discuss the topic and how they're going to write a persuasive essay paying attention to the introduction, the main idea, main points and elaboration.

Lesson 5 - Confutation - anticipating objections by the audience

Should a woman work outside the home? (essay)

Reading - In groups the participants will describe how the writer anticipated objections by the readers and how he dealt with them. Discussion could follow with the participants explaining their own opinions and what objections they anticipate.

Writing - For the same topic as reading the students will write a short essay focusing on the anticipated objections by the reader. The essay should have the structure by this time. This activity is done in groups.

Lesson 6 - Conclusion (directive) or articulating an advantage and achieving a desired effect

Sales letter

Reading - The students will review the structure (by describing it). Emphasize how the writer attempts to take the reader's perspective in articulating an advantage.

Writing - Compose a sales letter on house sitting - focusing on the structure.

Appendix D4

A PERSUASIVE ESSAY (MODEL)

Foreign Language Study - a pre-requisite for a B.A.

Sophie Beare

To be used in classroom teaching

Global interaction among nations, whether political, economical or educational, has intensified with the advancement of technology. People today participate, not just in international trade, but in international co-operation which demands the public's awareness of and empathy for various cultural differences. Cultural stereotypes are no longer accepted. There is a constant need for ordinary men and women to acquire insights and skills for dealing with other cultures. Possessing sensitivity to other cultures and their values can lead to more jobs for Canadians with our firms investing abroad, not to mention the services dealing with the flow of foreign students to our universities and community colleges generating income for the needed budgets of our institutions. The fundamental question today is: how can Canada and its educational institutions better assist its university graduates in acquiring some of the skills for the increasing cross-cultural interaction? Surely by encouraging all B.A. students at universities to study at least two years of foreign language or demonstrate foreign language proficiency (equivalent to an intermediate level) by passing a test, a university would fulfill its commitment to developing global communication.

A student's knowledge of a foreign language would have immediate use. Just south of U.S.A., the entire continent's population consists of Spanish or Portuguese (Brazil) speakers. Canada

has two official languages, and citizens who speak both French and English enjoy more opportunities for employment in some sectors of the country. Even though English is considered the worldwide language of business, many North American firms abroad employ foreign people because hiring a North American is not considered practical or economical. Knowing the foreign language in question can enhance one's communications with the international firm's employees. The individual speaking the required language would in all probability, quickly advance within the company.

Since Japan's technological success has brought that country to a position of great importance in world economy, many contacts are made between Japan and Canada. An individual travelling to Japan and possessing survival Japanese would find the trip more satisfying and gain respect from the Japanese citizens. With access to many parts of the world today, one can travel for either business or pleasure; and comprehending the local language can intensify the traveller's enjoyment.

A very important consideration in learning another language is that of acquiring an awareness of another culture. Language and culture are interrelated, with language being defined as an expression of one's thinking or behaviour. Thus learning another language can expand the learner's knowledge of that culture. While learning Chinese, for example, one will discover that this language has no simple equivalent for the assertive English "yes" but rather a complicated repetition of the verb. This peculiarity in Chinese may explain some of the crosscultural communication barriers between North Americans and Chinese.

Learning Polish, one will discover that this language has seven ways of translating the English "you". Each form of "you" in Polish explains the social status of the listener and the relationship of the listener to the speaker. That relationship, whether formal or informal, or whether or not the listener is addressed with respect by the speaker, is defined in the communication between people conversing. The language portrays some of the values held by the Polish speakers.

The English language has expressions that were derived from various interests of the speakers, in certain regions; according to Robert McNeil, in The Story of English, English is rich in various colloquial expressions related to card games or gambling such as "fair play", "big deal", "not playing with a full deck", "poker face", "go for broke" and so-on. As illustrated, knowledge of another language can open doors to understanding another culture.

A third important reason why a university graduate should have some knowledge of another language: to consider oneself educated, one needs to show some communication skills beyond one's immediate environment. People in many parts of the world speak many languages, sometimes three or four. Educated people are often described as more tolerant of others and more understanding of their environment. Of course, one can acquire these skills through foreign language learning and exposure to another way of life. Also a traveller speaking a foreign language will be admired or highly esteemed by the speakers of that language. Learning another language helps the student understand his own, since many concepts are explained through translation and comparison.

For the reasons shown above, any student who wishes to obtain a B.A. from a Canadian University, would study a foreign language for two years at the university or demonstrate foreign language proficiency through a written test (equivalent to an intermediate level). Intermediate level can be achieved by a learner who comprehends approximately 80% or more of the conversational language and is able to express himself, with some grammatical errors, 80% or more of the time in a conversation with a native speaker. In other words, a student must demonstrate a good survival knowledge of the spoken and written language.

The selection of the language can be left to the student, provided that the university or other institutions offer it. Of course, a student who had lived abroad and could demonstrate, either by a test or by the necessary documents, that he has an equivalent of an intermediate level, then that would be acceptable. In choosing languages, a student should keep in mind that the ten most widely spoken languages, according to Paul Pimsleur in How to Learn a Foreign Language, p. 22, are Mandarin Chinese, English, Russian, Spanish, Hindi, Arabic, Portuguese, Bengali, German and Japanese. For Canadians, French may be another alternative.

Because language (native or foreign) is used for communication purposes to allow people to say things to each other and express their feelings about each other, it is essential in the everyday life of each individual. As the world draws people together for communication exchange and co-operation, the need for speaking more than one language increases. It is imperative, then, that a university graduate receiving a B.A. possesses minimal knowledge of a foreign language, requiring him or her to study it for two years.

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