Learning Academic Languages

An Analogical Approach to Student Writing Development in Higher Education

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Abstract

Denne masteroppgaven har som mål å beskrive problemene som oppstår rundt undervisning av akademisk skriftspråk i høyere utdanning på en måte som setter språkformen og studentenes opplevelse av den i fokus. Dette blir gjort ved å først beskrive forskjeller mellom språkformer som blir brukt i forskjellige sosiale og profesjonelle kontekster, med spesiell vekt på standardiserte språkformer, hvorfor de oppstår, og hvordan de blir brukt i forskjellige settinger. Formålet ved dette er å kunne etablere og beskrive de merkbare praktiske og strukturelle forskjellene mellom sosial språkbruk og språkbruk innenfor akademia, for så å sammenligne problemene som oppstår når man forsøker å lære uerfarne studentskribenter å forholde seg til dem. Disse problemene blir sammenlignet med problemene som blir studert innenfor språktilegningsstudier, med det formål å kunne beskrive prosessen å lære seg særlig spesialiserte språkformer innenfor ens eget førstespråk med terminologien som blir brukt til å beskrive tilegning av andrespråk. Fokuset er på Engelsk akademisk skriftspråkopplæring, men ideene er ment å kunne være overførbare til andre språkkulturer.

Oppgaven inkluderer også en spørreundersøkelse som ble utdelt til to grupper studenter med relativt lite erfaring innenfor høyere utdanning. En av gruppene skriver akademiske tekster på sitt første språk, mens den andre skriver med utgangspunkt i et lært fremmedspråk. Formålet er å kunne vise til spesifikke forskjeller i hvordan de to gruppene forholder seg til akademisk skriftspråk, og om de eventuelle forskjellene har grunnlag i språkerfaringene deres eller opplæringen de har fått.

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Abbreviations

SWE – Standard Written English

EFL – English as First Language

ESL – English as Second Language

L1 – First Language

L2 – Second Language

FLA – First Language Acquisition

SLA – Second Language Acquisition

LAD – Language Acquisition Device

UG – Universal Grammar

WiD – Writing in the Disciplines

WAC – Writing Across the Curriculum

Introduction – Preliminary clarifications and categorizations

The challenges students experience with academic writing has been studied to some degree for the past 50 years in the U.S. (Villanueva 2003) and for the past 25 years by European researchers (Delcambre & Donahue 2012). Even though a great deal of progress has been made, there are still a great deal of issues emerging from the experiences students have with academic writing, and their instructors' attempts at addressing them. This thesis, and the questionnaire-based study framed within it (addressed in chapter 3), will address the process of learning and teaching English academic writing in its earliest stages in higher education. We will look at two separate approaches – the English composition course of one U.S. institution for higher education, namely Eastern Connecticut State University, comparing it to that of a similarly motivated course in English studies at a Norwegian institution, the University of Bergen. The reason for choosing two different countries is to gain insight into the teaching methods of English academic discourse in different linguistic environments, and the way the different student groups respond to their instruction.

The overall to address the process of learning to write academically in similar terms as those used to address the process of acquiring new languages and linguistic knowledge. In order to do so, the topic will be addressed in three stages. First, we will look at some sociolinguistic understandings of how language is employed in different social and cultural settings, and how these applications create contextual changes to linguistic form. This is done in order to address how differences in vernacular and standardized uses of language develop differently, and the challenges vernacular speakers can experience in learning the standardized forms when these differences become significant. Second, we will discuss theories and concepts found in the studies of how first- and second languages are learned. This is done in order to provide a deeper understanding of how we acquire linguistic knowledge. Third, we will attempt to use the terms, concepts, and models discussed in the second stage to the issues identifies in the first stage, in order to see if the process of

discourse learning can be addressed in the same terms as those used to describe language learning.

It should be noted right away that this thesis will not assert that the process of learning new discourse varieties, such as academic writing, is directly comparable to the process of learning new languages. The purpose of the project is rather to categorize the two as more general processes of acquiring new linguistic knowledge, and attempt to address the issues of one with the terminology and theories of the other. It can therefore be seen as an attempt at analogical reasoning, done with the purpose of providing new ways to address the issues related to academic writing instruction.

The topic will be discussed using ideas from multiple areas of study – the psycholinguistic theories of language acquisition research, the sociolinguistic fields of composition and writing studies, discourse- and genre studies, and studies in L1 and L2 university writing. There exist many parallels between the challenges facing teachers of academic discourse and the findings of those studying linguistic development in both young and old language learners. By connecting and transferring ideas between these fields, we gain a broader, deeper, and more sympathetic understanding of the state of mind of students engaging in writing at the university level. This project will attempt to identify, map, and discern the different challenges English as First Language- (henceforth EFL) and English as Second Language (henceforth ESL) students undertaking English academia might face at the earliest stages of instruction. Doing so will enable teachers of English writing and academia in general to gain a deeper understanding of the difficulties their students are having, and take a more effective pedagogical approach to the structuring of their teaching and evaluation based on the nature of these difficulties.

Since the aim of the project is pedagogical in nature, there needs to be a certain degree of tangibility to the ideas and assertions being made. This is more difficult than it may seem, seeing as many of the terms this study will work with have either ambiguous or multiple meanings and connotations. Addressing writing in classrooms on two continents further complicates this matter, as there are cultural differences in practices, expectations, and terminology between European and American approaches to writing and writing studies (Castelló & Donahue 2012). Even the term "academic" can be troublesome to apply, as it

carries different connotations and is not universally applicable in across different discourse communities (Russel & Cortes 2012 and Delcambre & Donahue 2012). Though the study will not be making any definite assertions towards the legitimacy of any existing interpretation, the terms in question need to have an established meaning within the perimeters of this article and its study. There also needs to be an understanding of the overarching purpose of the study as a whole – to understand the challenges students face in attempting to learn a method of expression that is currently unavailable to them, and which requires great effort from them if they are ever going to achieve fluency. The themes and theories used as a basis for structuring the understanding come second to the task itself. Since the study and survey will use terminology and theories from multiple areas of study, a limited amount of focus will be put on each aspect not directly informing the subject and ideas of the survey, and will therefore not equally incorporate all approaches within the fields. This is purely a result of the issue of limited time and pages.

One of the major contributing fields to terminology, theory, and concepts in the text is composition studies, a field that arose in the middle of the 20th century with the purpose of addressing the challenges facing teachers of English writing courses in American universities (Castello & Donahue 2012). Though the field has since evolved into more focused areas of attention, the contributors in this field set the stage for the modern discussions about writing classrooms, as well as help give shape to terms such as *academic writing*, concepts such as *audiences* and *writing process*, and theories on writing as a process of personal expression rather than as a task to produce a product.[1] The understanding of these ideas as used in this article will be based on and reference this work. Some of the concepts have developed further since they were brought up in the field of composition studies – most notably the new categorizations of *academic-* and *scientific writing* and the study of Writing in the Disciplines and Writing Across the Curriculum (see Castelló & Donahue 2012) – the

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[1] See the publication *Cross-Talk in Comp Theory* (Villanueva, ed. 2003) for deeper insight into the names and theories that inform composition studies. Many of the authors and works included in there is referenced in this study.

original reflections still provide an insightful understanding of the way students treat and understand writing differently than their teachers.

Academic as a term in this project, and its function in concepts such as *academic writing* and *academic discourse*, will be based on work done within both composition studies and its application in newer work in applied linguistics and writing studies (see Castelló & Donahue 2012). Some, for example Nelson and Castelló (2012), use *academic* to cover the writing done by both students and teachers in higher education, while others such as Rinck and Boch (2012) separate the two groups with the terms *academic* and *scientific* writing for students and teachers respectively (Russell & Cortes 2012). Here the term will be applied to both groups, with the implication that the primary motivation behind the composition process of both groups is to relate information to people in academic discourse communities. Academic writing in this thesis is therefore to be understood as epistemic writing done by members, students or otherwise, in discourse communities associated with institutions of higher education. The reason for this is both one of necessity and convenience, and will be explored and explained further in chapter 1, which will describe how we can address *the Academic Standard* (my own term) as a language variety.

Though there will be an emphasis on standardized language varieties and discourse communities in this article, the purpose of the project is not to advocate for or against any in- or exclusion of grammaticalized dialectical items in academic writing, regardless of their frequency in other varieties of written or spoken discourse. Any indication otherwise is either accidental or a misinterpretation of the intention of the text. The project will however address some adverse effects of insisting on standardized varieties of English in writing education (see Elbow 1999 and Baugh 2009). The arguments will in no way try to oppose the adherence to standardized forms of language in structured writing exercises. On the contrary – standardization is vital in order to ensure equal expectations for all who attempt to produce universally understood discourse. The issue that standardization raises however is that the varieties developed from it are not equally accessible for speakers of different social and vernacular forms of the language being standardized (Baugh 2009). This makes the process of learning and producing standardized language forms different for EFL students than it is for ESL students (see Matsuda 1999 and Canagarajah 2006), for whom the English

acquisition process has most likely relied on reading, writing, and reciting texts written in adherence to a standard variety (Lightbown & Spada 2011). EFL students have the advantage of having naturally developed familiarity with vernacular varieties that exist within English, and the contextual differences that occur when using language in different settings. The term *language variety* refers to the different vernacular and standardized varieties of a language that exist within a linguistic community (explored in section 1.1 and 1.3). English academic writing adheres to a range of expectations towards vocabulary, formulation, structuring, and grammar that separates it from the standardized varieties in much the same way as many vernacular forms are separated from a standard variety, which is the main motivation for the use of the term *The Academic Standard* in this study. There are whole areas of study dedicated to looking at writers learning, teaching, and producing academic discourse, and countless publications aiming to explain to the less experienced how to write academically. Despite this, work aiming to explain academic language as either a distinct language variety (see Snow 2010) that all university students are required to adhere to has yet to produce one concise term that fits within it the expectations put towards students when they are told to compose. The implications of this along with other related issues are explored in section 1.4, which will be dedicated to establishing and describing the Academic Standard as a language variety.

This study will not attempt to discredit or favor any of the major language acquisition models, but will use ideas from various approaches in order to explain and relate certain ideas from the other fields that will be addressed, more specifically those from the field of composition studies. Though the nature of language and how humans acquire it is still a heavily debated topic (Lightbown & Spada 2011, Gleason & Ratner 2013, and Ellis 2015), the different ways we consciously apply and structure language in social interaction and composition will be considered as a type of learned behavior and structured form of interaction. The reason for this is simply that the survey conducted for and framed within the article will address how institutions treat writing as something that needs to be taught, an act that needs to be carried out in a certain way, and how the students respond to the instruction they receive. As mentioned, chapter 2 will look at the variety of theories that exist on how humans learn language, and explore some of the implications they pose on how

we relate to and through language use, which we will do using the ideas discussed in the field of composition studies among others. Before we do this, however, we need to look at a feature of English academic discourse that separates it from other forms of expression through language – the strict standards that shape its production and reception, and how this affects its accessibility to student learners.

1. The Academic Standard

The Academic Standard will be a working term throughout the article, and refers to the expectations towards quality, structure, vocabulary, and grammar in English academic writing and discourse. Its purpose in this article and the survey framed within it is to present written academic discourse as a discernible language variety that needs to be learned the same way regional and national standard English varieties are taught to both EFL and ESL learners in educational settings. To justify this application, the term needs to be understood based on three separate ways by which language and language use is categorized, distinguished, and studied in the field of sociolinguistics. This section is dedicated to explaining some of the ideas and terms within these studies, their history, and their roles in language societies.

In 1.1 I look at Ferguson's (1959) ideas on diglossia as a linguistic phenomenon and how the status of the varieties of English in academic discourse has changed and continues to do so. Subsection 1.2 addresses the idea of discourses and how they affect the development of language and identity (Hyland 2009), and the implications this has on writing instruction and use in different contexts. 1.3 contains a look at the concept of bidialectalism and its metaphorical and practical applications to issues such as linguistic identity and language learning and use (Hazen 2001). In the concluding section, these ideas will be brought together and put in the context of one another in order to identify common themes and ideas, which will then be used to create a definite description of what the Academic Standard is, and what its function is within this project and the classroom strategies this article aims to inform.

1.1 Diglossia and the emergence of academic English

Ferguson (1959) was among the first to address and describe what has come to be understood as a common and natural linguistic phenomenon. His article describes how diglosias occur in countries and communities where multiple variants of the same or different languages are used simultaneously for different purposes, and the historical or social motivations that underlie the status and function of each variety. He summarizes the phenomenon as;

> a relatively stable language situation in which in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include a standard or regional standards), there is a very divergent, highly codified (often grammatically more complex) superposed variety, the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes, but is not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation. (Ferguson 1959: 245)

Ferguson's assertion is based on how groups of people, referred to as "speech communities" (addressed in section 1.2), switch between using different languages or different standardized or vernacular varieties of the same language in different conversational contexts (Ferguson 1959: 233). In the case of the U.S., a variety of languages and language varieties are used conversationally by a large part of the population, but English is by far the most popular spoken language in the country. Even though it has not been federally established as the official language, English is the official language of most U.S. states, and almost all governmental functions use English for their purposes (Ryan 2013). English therefore is categorized as a "H" for "high" language in U.S. society, with languages such as Chinese, Spanish, Arabic, German, and French being "L" (low) languages despite being spoken by large groups of people living in the country (Ferguson 1959; Ryan 2013). If we focus on English alone, and its use in different communicative contexts, we see a hierarchy in the various contextual uses of English in the U.S. as well, as there are different expectations towards formality and professionalism in different contexts of language use. This is also apparent in how written English is used as a means of communication. Now that so much English communication happens over the web or via messaging on mobile devices,

Standard Written English (SWE for short) takes the place of the "H" language, with written vernacular varieties containing abbreviations, vulgarity, and lack of attention to spelling falling in the "L" category. The communicative channels that utilize SWE, like media, literature, political-, and academic discourse, are therefore the perpetuators of this language situation. Academia has the most stringent rules of all regarding adherence to SWE in all aspects, with additional expectations towards vocabulary, structure, and presentation of argument. Because of these expectations, the English used in academic written discourse serves as the superposed variety in the description above. This is roughly the current diglossic state of the U.S. linguistic hierarchy, but it has not always been the case. English becoming the "H" language of communication in the U.S. was a process of transition in many areas where language is used. Even in U.S. academia, English was once considered an unimportant and unsophisticated language variety by the majority of the academic community.

Nowadays, it seems obvious that English studies should be both carried out and written about using English – after all, that is the language the studies are named after and refer to. However, this was not always the case. English only became the language of academic discourse in American higher education through a gradual transitioning from the classical languages, namely Latin and Greek. This transitioning took place in the mid- to late 1800's, and led to substantial changes to the U.S. educational system and its emphasis on writing practices. Horner and Trimbur (2002) explore the process, as well as its results and implications in their award-winning essay *English Only and U.S. College Composition.*[2]

Until the end of the 19th going into the beginning of the 20th century in the U.S. the languages of academia – and therefore the 'H' languages of American society – used to be the classical languages Latin and Greek interchangeably. In the mid 1800's however, this attitude started to change drastically. With English already having started to replace Latin

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[2] Horner and Trimbur's essay was awarded the Richard Braddock award in 2003 for most outstanding article on writing or the teaching of writing in the CCCC (Conference on College Composition and Communication) journal, *College Composition and Communication* (CCC). More information about the award and a list of other winners is available on the National Council for Teachers of English (NCTE) website – www.ncte.org/cccc/awards/braddock

and Greek in many disputations, orations, and writing practices among students, institutions such as Harvard and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology began granting degrees without the requirement of Greek and Latin as a part of the instruction. In addition, the entrance requirements for Greek and Latin were abolished at many colleges and universities (Horner & Trimbur 2002: 598). These changes in attitude resulted in a gradual abolishment of the classical languages all together. Up until this point, the only proper instruction in English writing was by means of translating Greek and Latin into English. As the importance of these languages eroded, the universities started placing more of an emphasis on the student's abilities at written English. To improve the writing skills of incoming students the first-year writing courses became implemented, starting at Harvard in 1885. This put pressure on the schooling system as a whole, and instruction in elementary and secondary school gradually shifted from a system of education through reading and recitation and started to emphasize instruction in standard written English – "the assumption resounds throughout the Harvard reports that the proper preparation for the "advanced work" in college is mastery of written English" (Horner & Trimbur 2002: 599–600).

In addition to a shift in language use in English studies and general academic discourse in the U.S., universities experienced periods of increased influx of students from lower social backgrounds into higher education. This happened especially during the times after the civil war in the 1860's, after World War II when GI's returned home from fighting in Europe, and when open admissions became a fact in the 1960's (Elbow 1999). These new students brought a variety of dialects and differences in levels of literacy into the writing classrooms, which led to an increased focus on teaching "correct" language in all levels of education, emphasizing grammar and vocabulary (Elbow 1999: 360). These changes resulted in a first-year English writing course eventually becoming a required part of an undergraduate degree in most U.S. institutions for higher education (Castelló & Donahue 2012: xvi).[3] Currently taught under the labels ENG100 (or ENG100p) and ENG101 in most

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[3] Though a universal (federal) description of the course requirements regarding content, goals, and completion was unobtainable, research showed a common thread between multiple university websites and course

U.S. institutions, these writing courses eventually led to all academic discourse in U.S. institutions being performed in Standard Written English (henceforth SWE).[4]

The previous role of English in U.S. academia was non-essential. Its main function was translation and informal communication outside of the structured presentation of academic knowledge and text, which consisted in reading and reciting texts written in the classic languages. The status of English, and the reason it still lingered in the consciousness of the academics who were learned in the classics, was the remaining political, social, and cultural ties to the British (see Fisher in Alego 2001). The American education system based all their studies on English literature in texts by British authors and, up until around the nineteenth century, sought to emulate what was considered "the sophisticated manners and language of London" (Fisher 2001: 66). There had however since the mid eighteenth century been made efforts to "Americanize" the standard English brought over from England in the form of grammar books. These books were widely used in the U.S. schooling systems, and gained a great deal of popularity on their own even outside of educational settings (Fisher 2001). One could speculate that these efforts are what inspired the efforts to abandon the classical languages for the up-and-coming American Standard, especially since British English scholars had already largely made the swap (Kirtley 2007), but this would have to be studied on its own. What we see today however is that SWE has now completely replaced the classical languages as the "superposed variety" in the language hierarchy Ferguson (1959) describes, with Latin, Greek, and other classical languages receding into the status of specialized areas of study (Horner & Trimbur 2002). This means that the U.S. has developed what Horner and Trimbur refers to as a "tacit language policy of unidirectional English monolingualism", which is reified and furthered by the insistence of English being used in all higher educational writing activities (2002: 594). English as a term supplies both the 'High' and the 'Low' varieties in the American language community. It covers all instances

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descriptions that stated they needed to be taken within the first 30 credits, and their aims were almost identically described.

[4] Standardized- and standard English within this study refers to U.S. standard English, as the text deals with composition in American universities and is written in accordance to this variety.

of use, describing everything from the "superposed variety [in the diglossia]" used in formal communication and the "regional primary dialects of the language" used in everyday conversational contexts (Ferguson 1959: 234) and the "very divergent, highly codified (often grammatically more complex) superposed variety", referring to its use in academia. This development, though naturally occurring, has firmly established

English as the de-facto majority language, and the self-reinforcing nature of the "English Only" system that has been put in place after the removal of the classical languages has to a degree stagnated the possibility for new language hierarchies (Horner & Trimbur 2002). This has some potentially significant implications on the societal structure and the way people relate to the language – for the first time, the language of knowledge and power in the U.S. is the same as that of the majority populace's native language, only with more stringent rules and expectations for performance. This means that any literate English speaker with a thesaurus and a bit of patience could potentially not only read and understand, but also participate in academic discourse without any need for second-language instruction. Despite how this alienates a relatively small group of non-English speaking residents, the vast majority of people living in the U.S. will have access to the "language of power and prestige" (Elbow 1999). Thus, in theory, the metaphorical gap between those producing and communicating knowledge about the world and those living in it is easily bridged and gaining access into the world of academic research and rhetoric is simply a task of mastering SWE. In practice however, we see the emergence of a completely new range of sociopolitical ramifications affecting how the English languages, and especially their vernacular varieties, are perceived, used, and prioritized differently in social and professional contexts. This is particularly visible in the first-year writing programs of in American universities and colleges, as vernacular terms or 'spoken' language structures are firmly and systematically disqualified from written texts during the evaluation process (Elbow 1999).

Ferguson's (1959) idea of diglossia shines a light on a sociolinguistic phenomenon most of us take for granted – how a standard will always accumulate the most influence in a linguistic environment. This is a common theme in languages worldwide (add reference), but it is important to note the effects it can have on vernacular speakers of the language in question. Changing the superposed language variety from Latin and Greek to English in

academic settings dispersed with the problem of teaching students a second language used only for academia, but it did not remove the issue of language instruction from the process of academic enculturation. Instead, it changed the issue from one of language learning to one of *discourse* learning, which raises a range of new aspects of their instruction that need to be considered and addressed. Teaching discourse conventions is more than an issue of teaching formulation and structure in language performance; it requires a willingness to change ones perspective on a very personal level. The proposed, and current, solution to the issue, having students write more and in different ways is an inadequate approach, which is made painfully apparent by the continued necessity for, and the issues arising from, the first-year writing programs at U.S. and other English-teaching institutions. These issues are what initially sparked the interest in composition studies, which have informed many of the ideas we now use when discussing Englishes, especially written Englishes, in sociopolitical and hierarchical terms. Central among these is the concept of discourses, the study of which has developed fields on its own, and which can reveal details of how languages work contextually, individually, socially, and cognitively.

1.2 Discourses – language and identity in context

When Ferguson describes diglossia in his article, he refers to people belonging to 'speech communities', and the changes they incorporate to their language or the language they use in different conversational contexts. The concept of speech communities in academia is not an uncommon one, and is still being used in linguistic studies looking at dialectical features and variety in vernacular language use. The exact definition of the term has however proven hard to pin down, and the ambiguity of its connotations make it a difficult term to use with any precision (see Hervey 1991 for a summary of some main issues). Some of the main problems with the
'speech community' come from its implication of people belonging to or identifying with a single community of speakers, when people are naturally able to adjust and switch between different speech patterns and language varieties, allowing for communication with people from wide varieties of linguistic backgrounds. The matter is further complicated when trying

to incorporate the use of written languages as a means of communication, as SWE is no one's native dialect, and therefore no one's natural speech community. SWE, along with any English variation, is not acquired naturally through the process of first-language acquisition, and will therefore have to be learned as an additional dialect later (visited further in section 1.3). Speech community therefore becomes insufficient as a term to describe the intricacies behind learning, possessing, and utilizing the ability to communicate with multiple groups of people using a range of language varieties and platforms. In the time after Ferguson wrote about diglossia in 1959, *discourse* and the related *discourse communities* have been taken up by sociolinguists as terms more accurately able to describe this process, as well as what enables and drives it.

Before we get into what the terms such as community and identity have come to mean in the context of writing studies we need to establish what discourse is and how it affects language use. Gee gives the following understanding of the term;

> To appreciate language in its social context, we need to focus not on language alone, but rather on … Discourses. Discourses include much more than language. [They] are ways of behaving, interacting, valuing, thinking, believing, speaking, and often reading and writing that are accepted as instantiations of particular roles … by specific groups of people … Discourses are 'ways of being in the world'; they are 'forms of life' (Gee 1996: viii).

Since language is such a defining part of how we act, interact, and think, separating discourse from language use is practically impossible. We therefore get two main distinctions of how discourse functions in relation to language; (1) it regulates the production of language by individuals and groups in different contexts and (2) it influences the perception of language by individuals and groups in different contexts. Gee (1999) further distinguishes between 'big D' and 'little d' discourse. Hyland (2009) offers an overview of how these distinctions function, and describes 'little d' discourse as referring to language as we use it to enact our identities of students, teachers, workers, or academics in specific contexts (2009: 21). 'Big D' Discourse on the other hand cover a broader set of connotations, including the ways we think, act, and speak as a part of how we display who we are as people within specific- and across all contexts (2009: 21–22). Based on this distinction he asserts that Discourse (note

the capital 'D') "is a way of being… the institutions, activities and values which we constantly recreate through discourse as members of social groups" (Hyland 2009: 22).

Discourse is applied both to instances of language use *and* to the overarching social expectations that determine the production and reception of language. All language speakers know how to vary their language for different conversational and written contexts. This is part of how language works both socially and professionally, and how we understand that certain types of behavior are appropriate and necessary in certain contexts and not in others. This allows us to separate language use into various categories based on reoccurring pragmatic and syntactic elements found in various contexts. The study of these elements as they occur contextually is called *discourse analysis*, which "is a way of studying language in action" (Hyland 2009: 20). Sociolinguists who study discourse take one of three main approaches to the task, namely textual, contextual, and critical. The purpose of this treatment of language in use is to identify the "dynamics and conventions which pattern particular social situation" and "consider the institutionalized ways of thinking which define our social boundaries" (Hyland 2009: 20–21). Each approach focuses on language production in different contexts and the choices that underlie recurring patterns within genres and groups. This allows us to identify situations, groups, and genres where typical instances of language production occur, which we can divide into either discourse communities or discourse contexts, depending on the frequency of participation of members and means of language moderation and negotiation. For example, a grocery store fits into the category of discourse contexts, as there are certain socially determined rules that govern one's conduct while inside one and interacting with workers or other shoppers. The people working in a grocery store however form a discourse community. They communicate amongst each other frequently, share common goals and motivations that govern their behavior and language, have written and unwritten rules that govern the interaction between each other and customers, and use a certain vocabulary typical of their workplace which might have been negotiated through social interaction, and/or affected by company policy.

Hyland's description of academic discourses provides insight into how discourse communities are established and how they function;

> [Academic discourses] evoke a social milieu, where the writer activates specific recognizable and routine responses to recurring tasks. Texts are constructed in terms of how their authors understand reality. These understandings are, in turn, influenced by their membership in social groups which have objectified in language certain ways of experiencing and talking about phenomena. (2009: 46)

A participant's 'authenticity' when participating in a discourse community is measured in the response from the intended audience, which might consist of other members or an outside audience. Acceptance is an affirmation of one's identity as a member of that community. Each literate person will inevitably participate in multiple discourse contexts and communities over the course of their life. The transitioning into some communities will come naturally to most speakers, such as families, groups of friends, classrooms, and workplaces, as these are socially and contextually motivated and often rely on daily face-to-face interactions. Other discourse communities, especially those which communicate primarily and professionally in writing, have roles and rules that are more abstract, and these have to be learned and followed in detail in order for the discourse to pass as authentic. This is particularly true for academic discourse communities.

It is by this understanding of the term that we can separate academic discourse from other instances of language production in society – the structuring of the text, the vocabulary used, the way the topic is addressed and presented, the way research is implemented and sources credited, and how the audience is considered and treated by the author. All of these are conventional elements that need to be considered and handled correctly by the composer in order for the text to be accepted as an authentic instance of academic discourse – for the author to be accepted as fulfilling the role of an academic – and the only group of people with the authority to make this evaluation are other academics of the field being addressed (see Hyland 2009, Prior & Bilbro 2012, Nelson & Castelló 2012, Castelló & Donahue 2012, and Russell & Cortes 2012). There are few discourse categories with as many and as stringent rules and conventions as those required by academic discourse. Because of this the process of becoming an academic is long and strenuous, something students often have to learn the hard way.

English replacing the classical languages as the language of academia in American higher institutions of learning has not removed the necessity for language instruction; it simply changed the issue to a need for discourse instruction (Elbow 1999). Though this made the task easier on one hand, in the sense that no EFL student now need learn a second language, it brought about a completely new set of challenging implications we have yet to conclusively map and address. The attempts at these issues and how they affect students undergoing academic instruction received little significant attention until the 1960's, when Huddleston, Hudson, and Winter began conducting studies into the linguistic properties of scientific English (Hyland 2009: 3). From then on, the research has expanded massively and now distinguishes and addresses different genres and fields, student and teachers' discourses, research papers on various levels of proficiency, and even discourses used in various social contexts (Bartholomae 1986, Elbow 1999, Hyland 2009, and Castelló & Donahue 2012). As a result of this research we now have a broader understanding of terms such as discourse communities, discourse conventions, academic communities, enculturation, identity, and voice, which have all shaped and changed our understanding of how written language works and how it is treated and approached by different groups of people (Castelló & Donahue 2012). This knowledge has shaped our understanding of how and why student writers struggle in their initial stages of writing instruction, and contributed to significant changes in how writing instruction and writing in general is taught and addressed in writing classrooms.

Certain academics have addressed these issues differently, which has led to a variety of suggested approaches to the enculturation of students into academia. Even though their point of departure and emphasis differ, there is a common theme developing among the conclusions each approach arrives at. Some, such as Elbow (1999), emphasize the issue of fluency, asserting that the students struggle with composing because the language of academia is unfamiliar to those used to formulating thoughts and expressing them through vernacular spoken varieties. His proposed solution to this is to allow students to write initial drafts in their own vernacular English varieties and later revise to conform to SWE. Others, such as Bartholomae (1986), emphasize the issue of unfamiliarity with one's audience, arguing that the students' flawed idea of 'the University' and its communities leads them to

overemphasize the aspect of self-presentation and vocabulary in their writing. He argues, similarly to Elbow (1999), for the reinforcement of a student's construction of argument in context rather than the enforcing of particular language conventions to frame argument, as the former leads more naturally to acquiring an academic mindset than the latter. Some see it as an issue of how the perception of writing as an activity influences strategies and performance, arguing for or against the treatment of writing as leading up to an inevitable product that needs to be 'complete' rather than as a continuous process of self-expression that is inevitably cut short by outside pressure (see Murray 1972, Perl 1979, Sommers 1980, and Breuch 2002). The various sides in this discussion argue either for the structured teaching of finished writing examples through analysis of published texts and assimilation of the structural elements that make them work, or for the encouragement of expression without emphasis on 'correct' language as a way to develop academic approaches to reading, writing, and revision. These two approaches and the conclusions drawn from them show us the divide in how the issue of teaching academic discourse is being addressed; should it emphasize the development of individual cognitive abilities, or the cultural and social forces that govern the discourse production within its community (Flower 1989)? Working from the overview provided by Hyland (2009) and Gee (1996; 1999) and discussed above, one solution would be a combination of the two approaches, as the individual cognitive abilities need to adapt to and participate in the cultural and social parameters that define the discourse community the students aim to participate in. This is what is meant by *academic enculturation* (Prior & Bilbro 2012), and it highlights the main difference between the issues of language learning and discourse learning in structured educational settings. Language learning is a process that can be approached in a number of ways, one of which is through *immersion.* Immersive language learning is usually discussed in relation to second language learning, and is realized through participation (by the learner) in a social environment where the target language (the language the learner is attempting to acquire) is used by native (or at least more proficient) speakers. Discourse learning however can be achieved *only* through immersion, as the contextual conventions and restrictions used by a discourse community is in a constant state of fluctuation, and the only way to gain insight into the current rules of engagement, and indeed to participate in its changing, is to join the conversation.

Based on what we established earlier regarding how discourse and discourse communities are shaped and function, discourse learning as a process depending on immersion should be fairly self-explanatory. If one is to produce discourse that will be accepted as contextually authentic by the audience (community) one addresses, a certain amount of familiarity with the conventions is necessary, and the only way to gain this familiarity is through participation in the discourse of the community. This creates a slightly paradoxical problem for students attempting to learn academic discourse; how will they be able to immerse themselves and participate in academia if the only way to participate is by adhering to the conventions they have not yet learned? Finding a way to address this issue is in no way a new topic of discussion. Kirtley (2007) points out that as early as the fifteenth century, when English scholars started incorporating the English vernacular language in academic writing (conducted mainly in Latin at the time), the issue of accessibility to academic discourse among 'lowly commoners' (vernacular speakers) was a debated topic. She references a fictional debate between a Clerk and a Lord, in which the Clerk argues that those who do not know Latin should simply learn it, while the Lord "argues that an unlearned person operating in an unknown field could not know the questions to ask nor the persons to who they might turn for guidance" (Kirtley 2007: 253). She then parallels the core issue this fictional debate embodies with the one brought up by Bartholomae (1986), who addresses the somewhat counterintuitive practice of asking students to perform academic writing long before they can be expected to have learned it. His assertion is that the main issue 'basic writers' (students with little to no experience with genre- or discourse-specific writing) face is the inability to relate to the audience they are told to address due to a lacking proficiency and experience with the 'language' of 'the University'.

> They must learn to speak our language. Or they must dare to speak it, or to carry out the bluff, since speaking and writing will most certainly be required long before the skill is "learned." And this, understandably, causes problems. (Bartholomae 1986: 5)

Herein lies the biggest challenge of discourse learning, which again makes it a slightly different issue than that of language learning. Since the only way to master a discourse is to immerse oneself in its conversation and adapt its conventions, enculturation

into academic discourse communities is a time- and effort-demanding process that takes years of study to achieve. It also requires that the person attempting to participate is fluent in the language the community uses, which in the case of English academia is Standard Written English (explored further in section 1.3). Students, however, are told to start writing even before they start their university education program, and long before most have learned to write in accordance to SWE without at least some difficulty.[5] There is therefore little to no room for some of the more important aspects of second language learning –such as quiet observation, the development of metalinguistic awareness and general knowledge, and contact with proficient speakers – particularly in a structured setting (Lightbown & Spada 2001). The result of all this pressure early on is a fascinating phenomenon in academia – *academic bullshit*.

Academic bullshit, also referred to as *Engfish*,[6] is described as a misrepresentation of the self, the result of a writer having to address and express opinions on a topic they know little or nothing about (Eubanks & Schaeffer 2008 and Smagorinsky et.al., 2010). It is a common occurrence in student writing, especially in the earlier stages of instruction, as the writer has had limited time to become familiar with the topic of their assignment, and possess little to no knowledge of the conventions of academic discourse beyond an impression gained through required readings. The writer that produces academic bullshit stands outside of the discourse community they attempt to address, and is therefore incapable of producing authentic academic discourse. An appropriate metaphor here would be to picture the student on a stage about to perform a song they have heard only occasionally – regardless of how

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[5] This statement refers to what is often labeled "placement writing" or something similar, which is a text-sample required from the applicant by some universities to assess the students' skill-level with writing. This is often done, like in the case of ECSU, in order to decide whether the student can enroll in the standard first-year writing course (ENG100) or if they need to be enrolled in the variety that offers more structural support (ENG100P) in the form of tutoring. Bartholomae (1986) refers to samples from these types of texts in his article.

[6] The term Engfish was coined by Macrorie in his (1970) book *Telling Writing,* and refers to "the spuriously elevated language seemingly endemic to school writing" (Smagorinsky et.al., 2010: 369).

good of a singing voice they might possess, the performance will be halting at best if they cannot recall the words.

Academic bullshit, especially that produced by students, can be categorized as academic discourse produced outside of the context of a discourse community. A number of the conventions that make up the 'language' the student is attempting to emulate might be in place, but not all, and the disconnect becomes apparent when the text is presented to a 'native speaker'. Bartholomae (1986: 19) takes note of this lack of familiarity in the various excerpts he analyses in his article, and arrives at the conclusion that "the writer must get inside of a discourse he can only partially imagine". In the case of students, the production of academic bullshit is inevitable due to their unfamiliarity with the full range of conventions and restrictions that go into producing academic texts. It can however also be the result of conscious awareness of these expectations, and the ability to tailor a rhetoric that adheres to them. Pinker describes texts like this as "high-follutant gobble-di-gook" used by academics in "the softer fields" to make up for a lack of substance in the topic they address (*Intelligence Squared* 2014, accessed 19 November 2017). Eubanks and Schaeffer (2008) offer an example of this phenomenon in a quote from Dave Barry in their article;

> You should be a sociologist, he says, if you can dress up the fact that children cry when they fall down in words like these: "Methodological observation of the sociometrical behavior tendencies of prematurated isolates indicates that a causal relationship exists between groundwards tropism and lachrymatory, or 'crying,' behavior forms." (Eubanks & Schaeffer 2008: 373)

They take it a step further than Pinker however, indicating that academic bullshit is not only a symptom of lack of writing skill or conscious manipulation of the 'rules' in place, but rather a result of the systematic insistence upon them. Furthering this attitude inevitably becomes the job of writing teachers in composition classrooms, as well as for tutors working in writing/tutoring centers. The texts produced by someone unfamiliar with the constricting conventions of authentic academic discourse become a halting parody at best. Teachers and tutors therefore have to identify the shortcomings of the text and steer the students in the direction they feel will benefit them, if only in the context of one assignment. If performed well enough, the text might receive some acknowledgement in the form of positive feedback

from the more experienced writers they write for. However, until the student has learned to write and revise independently in accordance with the conventions of the community they aim to address their work will never truly live up to the Academic Standard.

The main reason why the conventions of a discourse are so difficult to learn is the level of personal investment necessary to complete the process. Immersion into a linguistic culture not only facilitates the acquisition of its language, but also creates a space for the learner within it. By participating, the learner creates an identity within the community they inhabit, even if only temporarily, and their success is determined by their willingness to embrace this identity. In the beginning stages of writing instruction, the students are purposefully labeled as *inexperienced*, *student*, or *basic* writers (see Bizzell 1978, Bartholomae 1986, Chase 1988, and Elbow 1985, 1987, 1993, 1999). These labels stick with them and affect how their writing is received, and unless they purposefully invest the time and energy it takes to acquire the necessary skills to ascend from them they will always be categorized as less-than-capable. Graff (1999) however points to a lack of incentive to do so, along with a general suspicion towards intellectualism in American culture, as the largest inhibitors of student development in academic endeavors. He argues that "students recognize the personal and cultural power that comes with mastery of the conceptual and communicative competencies the academy has to offer", but that it comes "at the cost of a personal makeover that may not look attractive, especially when there are no guarantees" (Graff 1999: 140). Considering the self-reinforcing and sustaining nature of academic writing, this attitude is understandable (see Bizzell 1978). The only place where academic discourse is used is within the communities of the academy. Any student enrolling simply to get a degree will therefore not feel much need to learn to write academically, other than to pass writing assignments over the course of their enrollment. This attitude will however limit the student's potential for participation in and understanding of the work that informs and motivates large parts of social, corporate, and political progress (Hyland 2009). Academic inquiry, and the knowledge it creates, informs many of the decisions made in political policy making, infrastructural development, business management, and public media. The challenge of academic discourse instruction then becomes making students aware of this ability to view the world around them in broader terms. This requires a

willingness to accept changes to one's linguistic identity, and actively participate in the process of applying these changes. As we will be addressing in section 1.3 however, linguistic identity is an issue that needs to be understood as something more than an individual's relationship to language.

As Hazen (2001: 86) points out, attempting to identify a speaker's dialect based on a few socially salient features present in their discourse is an easy way to misplace the speaker into a dialect variety they do not belong to. Since English academic writing is based in the use of SWE (as discussed in section 1.1), the similarities in regards to syntactic, pragmatic, and grammatical structures are significant. There are however many different levels of acceptability towards vernacular terms in the discourse produced in academia and other genres based in the use of SWE. This is evident in literary texts, both fiction and non-fiction, and the language used in public media channels. In addition, production of authentic academic discourse implies extensive background knowledge and mastery of a wide range of conventions regarding structure, vocabulary, and presentation of argument. Insufficient attention to these aspects of academic writing creates what was referred to earlier in this section as *academic bullshit* or *Engfish*, as an experienced writer in the discourse community addressed would be able to identify the text as inauthentic (see Nelson & Castelló 2012). With these distinctions in mind, we can establish academic writing as a separate variety of language (or 'dialect'), based on, but not the same as-, SWE. One of the primary characteristics of English academic discourse is the amount of stringent conventions that is expected in its production. As we addressed in the previous section, this is why it is so difficult to master, and even more difficult to teach. People who fluently communicate in accordance with the conventions of their fields have all committed a significant amount of time to learning these conventions. Before doing so however they first had to learn to structure their language in adherence to the grammatical conventions of SWE, a process that can be equally challenging for speakers accustomed to relying on vernacular varieties. Using this distinction, we can assert that SWE becomes the language that the language variety, or 'dialect' known as the Academic Standard is based on. To explain this, we need to look at the applications of the term *bidialectalism*, put it in the context of cultural diglossias favoring

standardized language varieties, and address the implications this has for the development of linguistic identities in language learners.

1.3 Bidialectalism – linguistic variety and identity

The term *bidialectalism* is derived from the concept of bilingualism, the ability to speak and understand two or more languages with near fluent proficiency (Hazen 2001). The term is also applied to the teaching of Standard English in educational settings to speakers of vernacular varieties (*Merriam-Webster* 2017, accessed 19 November 2017). Its practical applications help us understand how people from different linguistic (and discourse) communities, i.e. speakers of different varieties of the same language, are still able to understand each other, often without having to adjust their speaking patterns. In the case of English however, with its many global varieties, there is a great deal of dialectical variation, to the point where two speakers of vernacular English varieties cannot be assumed able to communicate without adjusting their speech patterns. Bidialectical competency in the form of familiarity with standardized varieties therefore helps bridge the gap between speakers of different vernacular dialects. This, in addition to ensuring literacy, are the main beneficial aspects of instruction and enforcement of Standard English in schools. This practice has however been questioned by some researchers in the fields of composition theory and pedagogy, as a mandatory adherence to standardized varieties in educational settings can sometimes be damaging to students ability to perform (see Elbow 1999 and Baugh 2009).

Baugh (2009) identifies an issue of unequal access to quality education, especially among the poorer demographic, as a problem that underlies an issue he refers to as *linguistic risk*. He examines some of the problems that arise from the development of linguistic diversity in the U.S., and how it affects people differently as they enter the educational system. A core focus in his study is on the linguistic situation of black people in the U.S., especially speakers of the African American Vernacular English (AAVE), and the social and political inequalities that put them at a greater than average risk of failing in the U.S. educational system. Elbow (1999) identifies issues of a more cognitive nature. He describes a situation where his students struggle to formulate and present ideas in a language variety

that is inherently unfamiliar to them. The forced emphasis on structure and correctness, both in the pragmatic and grammatical sense, creates a situation that inhibits the students' natural cognitive structuring of ideas through language. This issue echoes a lot of the themes Baugh (2009) brings up, as the sample Elbow (1999: 359) provides in his article has a heavy vernacular structure. The issues addressed by Baugh and Elbow both stem from the fact that there are no native speakers of standardized language varieties – it always has to be learned to some degree, and for some vernacular speakers the process is more demanding than for others.

The issues Baugh and Elbow discuss tell us a great deal about the difficulties of linguistic identity a speaker might experience in a cultural diglossia such as the one present in the use of English in the U.S. (see section 1.1). The insistence on using Standard English as the language of structured instruction only perpetuates this linguistic culture (see Horner & Trimbur 2002 and Kirtley 2007). Most succeed at acquiring some level of proficiency in standardized English varieties, but some do not, and the current sociolinguistic circumstances will automatically put them in a position of crippling linguistic inadequacy.

The position of SWE in the current cultural diglossia in the U.S. (and increasingly globally, see Crystal 2005) is comparable to the position of Latin in Britain in the early Middle-Ages. The production, referencing, and publication of academic and scientific work was exclusively done in Latin, and any texts written in vernacular English was not considered a part of the academic discourse at the time. Kirtley (2007) describes the situation in some detail, and her findings are almost directly comparable to the current state of SWE versus vernacular-based English discourse today. Consider this quote from her article:

> … it was Latin that held the title of cultural powerhouse in the medieval era; English was the ugly duckling used by commoners and idiotae (those who understood only one language). (Kirtley 2007: 255)

Though the quote is not directly transferrable into the current day, if we replace Latin with SWE it echoes a great deal of what Hyland (2009) identifies in his description of the sociopolitical role of SWE-based discourse. SWE holds an elevated status in the cultural diglossia present in English linguistic communities, which is maintained by its use in all

public, structured, and formal discourse contexts. We already established that every speaker of a language has the ability to understand at least some other varieties of that language with little difficulty, so the concept of "idiotae" from Hazen's quote is somewhat inapplicable. The possible transfer of this concept would be to change the description to mean 'those who utilize only vernacular language varieties'. The reasoning behind this is that English was synonymous with 'vernacular' at the time Hazen (2007) references, and most informal writing activities today are 'vernacularized', meaning they create and utilize vernacular grammatical and lexical structures and spelling (Crystal 2009). This distinction helps provide a reference for how the same essential cultural bias is applied to SWE in the U.S. today as was applied to Learned Latin in England back in the early Middle-Ages. This is exemplified by its current use in academia, in most political discourse both domestically and internationally, and by its use in the majority of public media and entertainment platforms (Ryan 2013). Hazen (2001) points out how this attitude can be damaging, referencing a comment made by Adler regarding how, in the educational approach to bidialectalism, "the perdurable quality of diverse cultural dialects is recognized, but the use of Standard English to sustain our national culture is also valued" (Adler 1993: 23). This type of statement implies that without the adherence to a standard a nation's culture, as perpetuated by language, cannot be accurately measured (Hazen 2001). Though this attitude might seem highly controversial, it permeates much of our understanding of how culture is communicated. The authors that contribute to the various canons of 'English literature', both contemporary and historic, are measured and categorized by their adherence to standardized forms such as American English, Irish English, British English, and so on. Even Chaucer, who wrote in a time where all English literature was by definition vernacular literature (Kirtley 2007), is categorized as having composed using 'Middle English'. These attitudes have developed as an inevitable result of the printing press, and the standardization of language that comes from mass production and consumption of edited prose.

Kirtley (2007) points out that any change to a cultural diglossia has to be initiated by participants fluent in the culturally dominant language. She refers to it as an issue of bridging the gap between *scientia*, the language of the head, and *sapientia*, the language of the heart. While her point refers to the medieval roles of Latin and English, the issue is again

transferrable to the modern cultural diglossia in English. Only a person with a deep familiarity with the conventions of academic discourse will be able to break away from them, i.e. include vernacular features in their writing, and still be found agreeable by other members of the discourse community. The medieval authors Kirtley (2007) presents as having achieved this bridging of the vernacular and the scientific are Osbern Bokenham and Julian of Norwich. These authors, both learned in scholarly Latin, deliberately composed texts in vernacular English, "[utilizing] *scientia,* the traditional learning associated with Learned Latin, and *sapientia,* the knowledge that arose from [their] own bodily experience, to compose a text that posits a challenge to the male clerics" (Kirtley 2007: 261). More current examples of scholars who bridge this gap are Peter Elbow and Steven Pinker. These scholars both intentionally produce texts that breaks with the traditional conventions of academic 'style' in order to relate to a broader audience (see Elbow 1985, 1987, 1993, 1999, 2008, and Pinker 1994). Elbow (2008: 520) even admits that "throughout [his] career, it turns out that [he's] been trying to give ownership of writing to everyone – that is, to democratize or vernacularize writing". He explains his motivation as such:

> I was bothered by the gateway power that teachers have in institutional classrooms to determine a student's experience of writing and to judge whether writing is good or bad. I'd had too many intimations that school settings sometimes actually harms writers, and that teacher verdicts were often untrustworthy. (Elbow 2008: 520)

Elbow (1993, 1999) argues against the institutional practice of insisting upon conventional writing practices, as he sees them as too constricting for the students to be able to develop a positive relationship to their writing. Seeing as most institutionalized writing practices assume an adherence to standardized language forms, this might include the insistence upon SWE in composition. Elbow is however referring to the personal relationship that develops between writers and the texts they produce, and how the interference of an outside authority might disrupt a writer's feeling of 'ownership' of their own discourse (see Elbow 1993, 1999, and 2008). This inevitably becomes an issue of vernacular versus standardized language use, as the alienation of the writer's own vernacular language variety will inevitably have an impact on their ability to express 'themselves' (Bizzell 1978,

Bartholomae 1986, Elbow 1985, 1987, 1999, Canagarajah 2006, Kirtley 2007, and Eubanks & Schaeffer 2008).

Though it could be argued that an emphasis on standardized language varieties might suppress and alienate vernacular language variety in certain areas of language production (see Elbow 1999, Hazen 2001, Kirtley 2007, and Baugh 2009), it is not necessarily a bad development. Referring back to a point made in the introductory part of this paper, standardization of language is vital in order to ensure equal expectations for all who attempt to produce universally understood discourse. Taking into consideration some of the issues related to diglossia addressed in section 1.1, it is also an unavoidable part of sociopolitical development of language and language use. This is particularly true in today's society, as the extent to which we rely on our ability to communicate internationally has made us depend on some degree of common linguistic understanding (Crystal 2005). Second language learning, especially in structured settings, is also based on translation of meaning from a standardized variety of the learner's native language to a standardized variety of the target language (Lightbown & Spada 2011 and Ellis 2015). Questioning the insistence on standardized language instruction in schools is therefore a counter-productive endeavor; it will only serve to limit students' ability to consume and relate information on a large scale. The issue then is not whether or not to strive for bidialectalism through teaching standardized language, but how to get the students to invest the time and energy necessary to learn. Students need to accept, as Graff (1999: 140) put it, "the cost of a personal makeover that may not look attractive, especially when there are no guarantees", because apart from the effort it takes to learn there are inevitably personal linguistic side-effects of acquiring and regularly conducting discourse in standardized language varieties.

As touched upon in the previous section on discourse, instances of language use can be seen as processes of establishing, negotiating, or realizing ones role in various social and professional contexts (Hyland 2009). The authenticity of the discourse produced, and therefore the role one is attempting to realize, is measured by the response of the other members of the discourse community being engaged or addressed. Speakers who are able to command more languages or varieties of the same language will be able to address and negotiate with more discourse communities than those who are not. They will therefore be

able to potentially establish a more diverse range of linguistic and personal identities. This is based on the assertion that there exists an inseparable relationship between language use and identity construction. This is not something all scholars in the fields dealing with language acquisition and learning agree upon, but Norton (1997: 409) points out that "L2 educators need to take this relationship seriously". Norton goes on to explain why as such;

> The questions we ask necessarily assume that speech, speakers, and social relationships are inseparable… In this view, every time a language learner speaks, they are not only exchanging information with their interlocutors; they are also constantly organizing and reorganizing a sense of who they are and how they relate to their social world. They are, in other words, engaged in identity construction and negotiation. (Norton 1997: 410)

Going off this assertion it is natural to assume that the vernacular variety a speaker first acquires plays a major role in their construction and portrayal of their primary identity. A speaker's primary vernacular dialect is, in both linguistic and social terms, the most effective indicator of where they learned to speak, and will therefore shape a large part of their perceived and portrayed linguistic identity. Standardized language forms are constructed using features from vernacular varieties than can be geographically located, but they inevitably exist and develop separately from these linguistic environments. Utilizing standard language varieties fluently therefore removes the presumptions that arise from the presence of vernacular features. This is especially true for written language, as there are no visual cues attached to the interaction between writer and reader (explored further in chapter 2). If done well, this allows the speaker/writer to completely reinvent their identity in the relative context (see Bizzell 1978). As Baugh (2009) and Elbow (1999) point out, learning how to properly conduct discourse in SWE is a demanding process for many native English speakers, and in the process the learner might lose touch with their native vernacular English variety. It is however a fundamental prerequisite to participation in the discourse of most fields of academic research, international business and trade, and international politics. Without the necessary capabilities with SWE, the student will not be able to even begin the process of adapting the many and restricting conventions necessary to produce authentic academic discourse in any field.

In my view, bidialectal abilities are therefore essential prerequisites for EFL speakers who want to engage in academic discourse, just the same way ESL speakers' bilingual abilities determine their ability to participate in English academic discourse. Though the conditions that make it so are determined by the academic discourse communities themselves they nevertheless need to be followed, even for those, like Elbow (2008), who wish to change them (Hazen 2007). Though the personal linguistic changes needed might seem intimidating for students (Graff 1999), they still need to be aware of the implications striving for academic literacy might pose for their sociocultural linguistic development (Robinson-Pant & Street 2012). Without acknowledging the changes they will need to incorporate to their linguistic habits and identities, as well the deep level of commitment needed to apply these changes, students will never be able to acquire the necessary skills for engaging in authentic academic discourse. They will never, as Bartholomae (1986) puts it, "learn to speak [the University's] language" – the Academic Standard.

1.4 Conclusions – the Academic Standard as a language variety

The current cultural diglossia favors SWE as the 'H' language variety in the U.S., and increasingly internationally (see Crystal 2005). As such, SWE provides the basis for the discourse produced in most structured and formal discourse contexts, including academia (Hyland 2009). Though discourse conventions can be identified in most contextual instances of language use, few, if any, discourse communities expect adherence to as many and as stringent conventions as those negotiating ideas and knowledge through academic inquiry. As such, reading, understanding, and participating in the discourse of an academic community is only possible after acquiring extensive knowledge of the conventions that govern their discourse. This is a demanding task even for native vernacular speakers of the language the discourse is based in (Bartholomae 1986, Elbow 1999, 2008, Baugh 2009, and Castelló & Donahue 2012), because it requires fundamental changes to how they understand and use language, as well as an awareness of how these changes affects their linguistic and sociocultural identities (Bizzell 1978, Graff 1999, and Hyland 2009). The amount and nature of the new linguistic knowledge a student needs to acquire before being able to fluently

produce authentic academic discourse are comparable to those facing learners of a non-native language (Elbow 1987, 2008, Graff 1999, Eubanks & Schaeffer 2008, and Baugh 2009). Even the grammatical structures used in academia, as well as how strictly they are adhered to, differ greatly from the grammatical variety seen in vernacular language use (Hazen 2007 and Baugh 2009). On the basis of this, we can compare the teaching and acquisition of academic literacy to the teaching and learning of non-native languages.

The Academic Standard functions as a label for the language proficiency a student needs to acquire in order to participate in academic discourse. Seeing as conventions of academic language use vary greatly between fields of study, countries, and even within institutions, it is meant to be applicable in any relevant context as the standards expected of a publishable text. The term is needed because of the ambiguity of terms already in place, and their range of applications. Terms like Academic Language, Academic English, and Language of Science, though already available and used to describe academic discourse, also refer to language use in areas such as elementary school instruction, and general conversation on academic topics (Snow 2010). The Academic Standard therefore offers a narrower scope of language use and quality, making it simpler to categorize the goals of academic language instruction.

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2. Language Acquisition and Learning

The previous section dealt with our sociopolitical and personal relationships to language, language use, and different varieties of language, as well as establishing the function of the Academic Standard as a language variety. This section will address our understanding of how we acquire language, and how we apply this knowledge when developing methods of language instruction. It will also address the issue of literacy in relation to language teaching and learning, as this issue is inevitable when talking about strategies for academic discourse instruction (as explored in section 1.2 and 1.3).

Section 2.1 will provide a brief summary of some of the major language acquisition models, their background, and a quick evaluation of their ability to adequately explain language acquisition. The section will be concluded with a sub-section (2.1.5) containing some reflections on the models and their relevance to second-language and writing instruction, as well as a summary of their main differences. In section 2.2 we will look at research into second-language acquisition, learning, and instruction. This will include how and why the learning process differs from first language acquisition, research into the second-language acquisition (SLA) process, and conclude with reflections on the teaching of standardized language varieties to develop literacy. Section 2.3 will look at writing as a method of expression that needs to be learned, how it differs from other contextual methods of expression, and how writing instruction might be considered in the context of language learning and teaching strategies. The goal of this section is to provide a gradual transitioning from what we know about language learning to a look at how we teach writing, with the intention of gaining broader insight into writing as a type of language production that needs to be learned. Combining the topics in this section with the issues we addressed in the previous section will provide deep insight into how writing functions differently than other methods of expression in contextual rhetorical situations (Bitzer 1979?). This will hopefully provide some new insight that can be used to determine and address the difficulties students

experience when attempting to produce academic discourse in both native and non-native languages.

2.1 The models and theories of language acquisition

Language is a fundamental part of human existence. As we discussed in section 1, it is how structure the world around us and construct and convey our own sense of selves. It is also one of the most complex cognitive processes the human brain is capable of engaging in. Despite this, children are almost universally able to acquire at least one language in their earliest stages of cognitive development. Figuring out how this is possible is the focus of researchers working with language acquisition studies. Various fields in psycholinguistics and cognitive studies have developed a diversity of theoretical approaches, both pertaining to the behavioral psychology and linguistic processes that go into language production and understanding. The goal of these theories is to determine and describe the mechanisms that allow a child to acquire natural languages at the rate and with the degree of success apparent across all cultures and languages (Pinker 1979).

Modern studies of language acquisition started in the early 1900's, when Vygotsky studied the interactions between young children and adults and concluding that language develops primarily through social interaction (Lightbown & Spada 2011). His assertions, along with the cognitivist studies of Piaget in the same period, forms the basis for some of the interactionist approaches to language acquisition. The field of language acquisition research however went largely unrecognized by public attention until the 1950's, when B.F. Skinner (1957) published his ideas on Verbal Behavior, laying the groundworks for the behaviorist approaches to language acquisition. His book sparked a range of responses from other researchers in the field of behavioral psychology as well as some harsh critical reviews from researchers in other fields (Palmer 2006). The most famous critical review was that of Chomsky (1959), who wrote an almost aggressive 33-page long review where he systematically challenged what he saw as the core principles of Skinner's arguments (Palmer 2006: 255). Chomsky later published his own ideas on *Universal Grammar* (1965), and proposed the existence of a *Language Acquisition Device* (LAD) as a component of the brain

specifically for language acquisition. The component has in recent years been redubbed the *language faculty*, and been described as having "a genetically determined initial state [for each individual] … similar enough across the species… so that we can sensibly speak of the common initial state of the language faculty" (Chomsky and Place, 2000: 13). Chomsky's arguments presented in his review of Skinner's book, along with his continuing research and assertions in the following decades, forms the basis for the linguistic approaches to language acquisition. In the past few decades the field of language acquisition research has grown substantially into a rich and diverse field. It uses concepts and ideas adapted from areas of study ranging all the way from biology to fields of cognitive psychology, and has developed a wide range of approaches to describing the language acquisition process.

The current models are now divided into four main categories of theoretical approaches – linguistic approaches, behavioral approaches, interactionist approaches, and gestural- and usage based approaches. Each of these models rely on different internal and external aspects of human behavior, evolutionary history, and cognitive abilities in their assertions of what makes language acquisition possible, and take very different approaches to their experimental testing of hypotheses. As of yet, none of the approaches have been able to conclusively describe how language acquisition happens and what cognitive abilities enables it. The accumulative data from each and all of the fields have however given us a much deeper understanding of how the development of linguistic abilities happen, and what internal and external factors participate in the process of development.

2.1.1 Behaviorist approaches

The behaviorist approaches assert, as the name suggests, that language is just one of many human behaviors. Learning how to speak is no more of a unique process than learning how to eat with utensils or play instruments. What enables language learning in the behaviorist view is the child's interaction with the world around them and adult speakers. Roughly explained, this interaction is seen in terms of conditioned stimulus, such as observed objects or behaviors, and conditioned responses in the form of words and phrases that accompany these experiences. The child gradually learns the connective relationship between the

stimulus and responses attached to them, and they eventually start testing their knowledge by naming items and people, and describing actions and experiences. These "tests" are how the children acquire grammatical knowledge. After listening to how adult speakers structure grammatical sentences, the children gradually build up a repertoire they can use in their construction of linguistic items, and the corrective feedback they receive from adult speakers gradually steers their development to the point of fluency.

Behaviorists descriptions of development of language avoid any explanations relying on any internal or implicit knowledge or abilities and place a heavy emphasis on the environment as the source of everything the learner needs (Lightbown & Spada 2011). They do not however wholly deny the existence of genetic predispositions in humans. Behaviorists agree that behavior is based in the brain and that understanding the neural communicative system within the human body and brain is essential to understanding behavior and development of behavioral tendencies (Bohannon & Bonvillian 2013). Skinner (1957) himself referred to these types of predetermined traits as *genetic endowments*, and points to numerous genetically determined behaviors and processes in multiple species to explain his position. What he argued against was that these genetically determined predispositions steered the development of social behaviors, asserting that they developed through conditioning in the form of exposure to external stimulus. Language is seen in terms of social behavior, and the development of linguistic capabilities are therefore not predetermined by any biogenetic structures. The behaviorist attitudes in various fields reflect this distinction. What behaviorists reject are therefore assertions of genetically determined cognitive structures and mechanisms that have no physical correlate, such as grammar (Bohannon & Bonvillian 2013), and that these are the deciding factors in acquiring language behaviors and abilities (Elbow 1987 and Lightbown & Spada 2011).

Behaviorist ideas on verbal behavior gained massive support following Skinner's publications on the topic. The strategies developed by researchers in its field had a great influence on language teaching methods in the mid-late 1900's, especially in North America (Lightbown & Spada 2011). The arguments they employ to explain language acquisition have however been the subject of heavy criticism. Some of the assertions and research methods are insufficient in explaining how infants acquire first-languages, especially with

the almost universal level of progress and success observable across languages and cultures. This observation is based in how children's access to environmental input is too varied to be able to explain the observed consistency in developmental progress among children (Lightbown & Spada 2011 and Bohannon & Bonvillian 2013).

Behaviorists also fail in explaining some of the non-standard language structured children often produce. If language learning is a process of imitation and memorization, children should not be able to produce language structures they cannot have heard from proficient speakers. Children have however been shown to be able to take general grammatical rules and apply them to unfamiliar words and phrases, as well as displaying understanding of complex grammatical structures and identify ungrammaticality in other speakers' utterances (see Lightbown & Spada 2011: 16 for some examples). These capabilities cannot be explained by the normal input usually available in the environment of developing children. This among other observations lead researchers to conclude that the classic behaviorist approach to language learning was unable to explain how language acquisition in early childhood happens. The limitations of external stimulus in explaining linguistic development made researchers consider more innate capabilities as an explanation for how language acquisition happens.

2.1.2 Linguistic approaches

The linguistic approaches argue that humans are naturally predisposed to learning language from birth because of innate, genetically determined predispositions. These are comparable to human's abilities to walk and use their hands, and require little environmental contributions in order to develop. The foundation for this approach is Chomsky's (1965) ideas on innate and instinctive grammatical knowledge, *Universal Grammar* (UG), interacting with the *Language Acquisition Device* (LAD) in children as they process linguistic input from their environments (Lightbown & Spada 2011 and Bohannon & Bonvillian 2013). He based his observations in children's abilities to distinguish between grammatical and ungrammatical utterances, often despite of their lacking lexical knowledge.

A core motivation of linguistic approaches to language acquisition is the observation that all non-impaired children succeed at acquiring the grammatical knowledge of their native languages. They even acquire it at roughly the same rate and in predictable sequences, and succeed almost regardless of performance levels in other cognitive exercises. Children seem to be intuitively able to recognize grammatical structure in languages they are exposed to, and are able to piece together strings of utterances they have not explicitly heard using the basic grammatical forms of other utterances previously made available to them (Pinker 1994, Lightbown & Spada 2011, and Bohannon & Bonvillian 2013). On the basis of this observation, Chomsky and the linguists who agree with him argue that grammar exists independently from language use as a generative system that children have an inborn ability to understand and use in the process of linguistic development. This knowledge is referred to as *Universal Grammar* (UG) in the initial state of the child's development, and is a recursive system that interacts with the child's *language faculty* or *Language Acquisition Device* (LAD) as the child matures and attains new linguistic knowledge (Chomsky 1959, 1965, 1995, Pinker 1994, Chomsky & Place 2000, and Bohannon & Bonvillian 2013).

Though Chomsky's ideas have gained a great deal of support and developed a broad range of new research into the field of linguistics, his assertions about the innate language faculty have yet to be proven. Studies conducted on families with member suffering from dysphasia has produced findings that suggest that linguistic abilities can be predetermined by one or more specific genes (Pinker 1994 and Schoneberger 2010). One study conducted in collaboration with a family, referred to as the KE family, even produced a specific candidate gene, dubbed FOXP2, but further research "substancially weakened the plausibility that [it] served as a language gene, let alone a grammar gene" (Schoneberger 2010: 109). Chomsky's assertions regarding the LAD or language faculty as having a "genetically determined initial state" (Chomsky & Place 2000: 13) is therefore yet to be confirmed, and appears to need some restructuring of argument. Other findings also puts into question the extent to which the access to UG allows for acquisition of linguistic competence. Linguists acknowledge that modified input from speakers in the child's environment is necessary, but does not see it as the determining aspect of the child's language acquisition process. They "insist that the environment merely triggers the

maturation of the physiologically based language system (LAD), or sets certain parameters, but does not shape or train verbal behavior" (Bohannon & Bonvillian 2013: 198). Through studying children's contributions to emerging pidgin languages in the process of creolization in areas like Hawaii and Nicaragua, these assertions have gained some credibility (Pinker 1994). Other cases however call into question to what degree these abilities are genetically determined and to what degree they emerge from cooperative interaction with other speakers. Studies of hearing children of deaf parents, where the child is mainly subjected to spoken language input through TV and radio, show how important interaction is in the acquisition process. Without interaction with other speakers, children are incapable of acquiring grammatical and lexical knowledge at the same rate as others who interact frequently with- and receive modified input from fluent speakers (see Lightbown & Spada 2011: 22 for examples). Though this does not inherently disprove the assertions of innate predispositions that linguistic approaches are based on, it shows that the language acquisition process depends on interaction in order to be successful. These observations have lead researchers to approach language acquisition as an interaction between internal and external factors, emphasizing each equally in their description of the process of linguistic development.

2.1.3 Interactionist approaches

The interactionist approaches to language acquisition can be seen as a compromise between the behaviorist and the linguistic approaches. All the theories within this category consider both innate cognitive predispositions and environmental stimulus in their research to some degree. They emphasize the importance of each differently however, which is why there are multiple models within this approach to language acquisition research. This section will briefly cover three of these models; the cognitivist approaches, the social interaction approach, and gestural- and usage based approaches to language acquisition (Bohannon & Bonvillian 2013).

The cognitivist approaches to language acquisition are based in the research and observations of Swiss clinical psychologist Jean Piaget. His studies of developing children

and their emerging cognitive abilities, or "knowledge structures", lead him to understanding language as "a symbol system that could be used to express knowledge acquired through interaction with the physical world" (Lightbown & Spada 2011: 20). This approach is similar to the linguistic approaches in the sense that they rely on innate structures as determining behavior, including linguistic behavior, and see "the basic nature of language as a symbolic system for the expression of intent" (Bohannon & Bonvillian 2013: 205). They also support their arguments by pointing to universal orders of acquisition across language and environment. What separates them is however the cognitivists assertion that language and linguistic competence is not a separate innate capability in humans, but rather one of many separate abilities that arise as a result of more general processes of cognitive development. They argue that the linguists place too much emphasis on the final state of the child's linguistic development, their *competence*, and not on the developmental aspects of language acquisition;

> In their view, language acquisition is but one example of the human child's remarkable ability to learn from experience, and they see no need to assume that there are specific brain structures devoted to language acquisition (Lightbown & Spada 2011: 19).

Cognitivists therefore see linguistic knowledge as an emergent ability tied to the advances children goes through in their cognitive development, constructed both through interaction with their environment and as a means of interacting with their environment.

Their arguments are based in how the emergence of other non-linguistic cognitive abilities, such as symbolic play with objects, understanding of object permanence, and tool use, often coincides with the development of linguistic behaviors and attainments (Bohannon & Bonvillian 2013). As the child acquires new knowledge and understandings of the world around them, they will also develop the ability to construct linguistic knowledge that reflects this understanding. Observations also show that, like linguistic development, general cognitive development happens in a predictable order of stages, which gives some credibility to the cognitivist theory. For example, it has been observed that the dramatic increase in vocabulary that usually happens in the last half of children's second year "coincides in most

children with their attainment of the last stages of sensorimotor development" (Bohannon & Bonvillian 2013: 207).

Where the cognitivist approaches ultimately fall short is in their assertions of language acquisition being intrinsically tied to general cognitive developments. Even though certain linguistic milestones often coincide with the development and acquisition of other cognitive and physical abilities, it does not inherently prove any causal connection between them. In order to prove a relationship between the different developmental processes, certain cognitive milestones would have to be observed as always preceding specific linguistic developments. If a child then displays the linguistic knowledge before the cognitive development has occurred, then the hypothesis would be proven incorrect (Bohannon & Bonvillian 2013). This type of data is however hard to obtain, but studies generally suggest that some revision of Piaget's assertions might be necessary before any definite conclusions can be drawn (Bohannon & Bonvillian 2013: 208).

Social interaction approaches to language acquisition also base their arguments on a combination of internal cognitive abilities and environmental aspects of the process. There is however a strong emphasis on the role of social interaction in shaping both the structure and function of language in the learner. In this sense, they agree with the linguists that languages and language structures follow certain rules which separate linguistic behavior from other types of behavior. They do however agree with the behaviorist assertion that language emerges as a result of interaction with other speakers. Social interactionist therefore "believe that the structure of human language may have arisen out of the social-communicative functions that language plays in human relations" (Bohannon & Bonvillian 2013: 214). The social interactionist approach was pioneered by Vygotsky (see Vygotsky, Hanfmann, & Vakar 1962) who studied children communication among each other and with adults in Soviet schools in the 1920's and 30's;

> He argued that in a supportive interactive environment, children are able to advance to a higher level of knowledge and performance… He observed the importance of conversations that children have with adults and with other children and saw in these conversations the origins of both language and thought… For Vygotsky, thought was essentially internalized speech, and speech emerged in social interaction (Lightbown & Spada 2011: 20)

In the social interactionist way of viewing language, environmental influence is the primary source of grammatical knowledge and understanding. Grammar is not, as the linguists assert, the result of innately predetermined cognitive structures. Rather, grammar is likely a result of rote associations and mimicry of adult speakers, and is understood by the child using more general cognitive abilities such as pattern recognition and memorization (Bohannon & Bonvillian 2013: 215). They do not go as far as the behaviorists in their understanding of language being learned through conditioning and imitation. Rather, social interactionists see language as a result of an innate predisposition towards social behavior, and understands linguistic competence as arising from interaction with interlocutors at a similar or higher level of development. These interactions form a *Zone of Proximal Development* (ZPD), "a situation in which the learner is capable of performing at a higher level because there is support from an interlocutor" (Lightbown & Spada 2011: 47).[7]

Gestural and usage-based approaches are the result of a hypothesized relationship between the observed relationship between communicative pointing and gesturing and linguistic behavior. Advocates for this idea assert that language has its roots in a more basic form of gesture-based communicative behavior still present in some species of non-human primates (Bohannon & Bonvillian 2013). Spoken language is seen as a later development, relying on pre-established neural mechanisms shaped through gestural and sign-based communication over generations of selective evolutionary development.

Natural spoken languages in the gestural based approach happened as an extension of earlier forms of physical communication. Any innate predispositions towards language use therefore must have developed in the earlier stages when symbolic gestural communication was the main form. Later, these innate structures adapted the use of sounds in the communicative systems, which has gradually developed to enable the spoken language systems we primarily use today.

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[7] The concept of a *Zone of Proximal Development* originates in Vygotsky's (1934/1962) book *Thought and Language*, and is the key concept in his assertions of how linguistic knowledge is acquired through interaction in the early childhood language acquisition process.

2.1.4 Conclusions and afterthoughts

The approaches that differ the most in their assertions are the behaviorist and linguistic models. Each has a fundamentally different answer to the main question driving language acquisition studies – what makes it possible? – and base their assertions on opposite sides of two binary perspectives in language acquisition studies. These are the *innatist/nativist* perspective and the *empiricist* perspective, or simply the nature vs. nurture argument (Bohannon & Bonvillian 2013). How the emphasis is distributed between these two perspectives is essentially what separates the various models of language acquisition, and the behaviorist and linguistic approaches are generally binary in their assertions on whether linguistic abilities come from the child's genetic programming or its surroundings.

These categorizations and how they are approached in language studies might not seem intuitively relevant to some of the ideas discussed previously in this paper, namely the chapter on the Academic Standard. However, the theories of language acquisition make some assertions that inevitably have an effect of how we perceive language use. Depending on what model is considered, some important implication arise with regards to our abilities to learn and produce writing. If language learning is largely a process of influence of- and interaction with our environment, as behaviorists and some of the interactionist approaches assert, then language is inherently external in its nature. This means that without an audience interpreter, language production is an obsolete endeavor, especially in the acquisition process. Relation to audience will therefore be a fundamental part of what we acquire in our language acquisition process, which might naturally transfer to our abilities to produce written language. If, as the linguistic approaches assert, language acquisition emerges from universal internal mechanisms interpreting and categorizing information from our environments, then language is inherently internal. Audiences are therefore not a necessary part of language production; the primary "audience" is the speaker's own internal mechanisms and their functions in the acquisition process. Transferring this understanding of audience to the composition process might prove more difficult, as the speaker's primary discourse is the internalized "speech" used to structure and categorize knowledge about topics and concepts presented to them by their environments. It might also be that the

situation is reversed; that the absence of a physical audience otherwise present in externalized language production makes writing difficult with an empiricist perspective, while the nativist perspective thrives in the structured composition process. Elbow (1987) offers some interesting reflections on this topic.

These are naturally not the only implications that arise from distinguishing between internalized and externalized language acquisition processes. Some issues do however become more prevalent than others when the different approaches are considered in the context of academic discourse learning. This topic will be revisited in section 2.2.3, which will discuss ideas from the field of composition studies in relation to some of the approaches that have come out of SLA research. The issues of audience relations and awareness and interaction in language learning processes is however an important aspect to keep in mind as we move on to the next section.

2.2 Second language acquisition and learning

As discussed in the previous section, first-language acquisition (henceforth FLA) among children is usually successful and happens at roughly the same rate in all children and across all languages. The rate and success of second language learning however varies wildly, with some learners picking up new language skills with ease and others seemingly incapable of succeeding. Because of this, the presumptions that underlie the first-language acquisition models are largely inapplicable to second-language learning models. This is a most often the result of a few key factors – the established presence of linguistic knowledge in the form of the native language, the learner's varying ages and subsequent levels of cognitive maturity, differences in exposure to target language, and differences in motivating factors for learning. These factors, and how they are treated by researchers of second-language acquisition (henceforth SLA), will be the main focus of this section, as well as some of the implications that arise from the various ways researchers describe how the SLA process takes shape. Because the scope of SLA research is so broad, it would not be justifiable to include and describe all areas of study along with their development and focus. Instead, this section will provide a brief summary of the development of the SLA field as a whole (section 2.2.1), and

further focus more narrowly on the approaches and terms that will be relevant to this projects' focus of describing and informing academic discourse instruction and learning strategies (section 2.2.2-2.2.4).

Studying second-language acquisition and learning was not really done in any purposeful way until the 1960's, when researchers tried to use some of the ideas arising from first-language acquisition and apply it to the SLA process (Ellis 2015). How and why these models have been adapted, the role they currently hold, and the role of the first-language in SLA research will be addressed in section 2.2.1. Over the course of the past few decades the field of SLA research has developed into a diverse and challenging field with many interesting theories, ideas, and approaches to issues facing second-language teachers and learners. Most of what we understand about second-language learning has been shaped by studies in the fields of cognitive psychology and sociology (Ellis 2015; Lightbown & Spada 2011). The motivation behind the inclusion of other fields was the early discovery that the assertions that first-language acquisition research make about the cognitive predispositions, abilities, and developments of the language learner are often not transferrable to learners in the SLA process (Lightbown & Spada 2011, Bohannon & Bonvillian 2013, and Ellis 2015). The results of this transfer from a focus on existing FLA models into the adoption of ideas from other fields will be addressed in sections 2.2.2, 2.2.3, and 2.2.4, which will address the *cognitive-interactionist*, *cognitive*, and *social* aspects of SLA respectively. The concluding section, 2.2.5, will take ideas from the preceding sections and relate them to the ideas and strategies that shape writing and discourse instruction in higher education, and some research done on this type of instruction.

2.2.1 The role FLA research and the first language

Very few ideas found in the FLA focused research have been discarded in the adaption into SLA focused research, as most of the concepts are naturally transferrable. Interaction with fluent speakers, negotiation and establishment of meaning, producing output and receiving corrective feedback are emphasized as the enablers of language acquisition in both the FLA- and SLA-focused version of all the language acquisition models, even though they disagree

on the relative importance of individual aspects. The SLA perspectives have however adapted new approaches to some of these concepts in order to address the typically more pedagogical context of the SLA process, as well as the more advanced stages of the learner's cognitive developments. For example; in the FLA models, the output speakers produce and direct at children in order to encourage learning is referred to as *motherese* and *child-directed speech*, and features simplified vocabulary, heightened pitches, repetitive questioning, and lowered tempo (Bohannon & Bonvillian 2013: 215). Certain similarities can be drawn between this FLA phenomenon and what SLA researchers categorize as *comprehensible input*. This is a form of *pre-modified input* designed to cater to the learner's linguistic abilities, and includes more specialized focus on grammatical and lexical features at various stages of the acquisition process in order to enable learning (Ellis 2015). These terms will be further addressed and described in section 2.2.2. Despite the many situational differences between the first- and second-language acquisition processes, FLA research and models have had, and continues to have, a major influence on how researchers approached SLA studies. Through the decades, different models in FLA research have influenced the development of both teaching and research strategies in the SLA research field. Where and how these various models have contributed or fallen short have helped us develop a broader and more nuanced understanding of how languages are processed by our minds, and how our minds are shaped in turn by the processing and production of different linguistic structures.

In the early 60's and 70's, the structuring of second-language instruction was heavily influenced by ***the behaviorist perspective*** of language acquisition. Behaviorists asserted that having access to a natural language meant that the learners already have a tool to orient themselves and structure their developing knowledge of the world around them, which might interfere with their ability and willingness to adopt new linguistic knowledge (Lightbown & Spada 2011). This notion was based in the behaviorists view of language development as a process of habit formation, which led researchers working on the basis of behaviorist ideas to assert that habits formed in the first language would interfere with the development of second-language habits (Lightbown & Spada 2011). Behaviorists ideas on second-language learning therefore became tied to the ideas of the *Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis* (CAH for

short)[8], which claims that where the first- and target-language are similar, the learner should acquire the target-language structures with ease, and struggle where they differ. Researchers have however discovered that learners do not make the type of errors predicted by the CAH. The errors learners make are not, in fact, predictable on the basis of their first-language at all; rather, "adult second language learners produce sentences that sound more like a child's", and "many of their sentences would be ungrammatical if translated into their respective first-languages" (Lightbown & Spada 2011: 34). Learner's also acquire target-language structures in similar and predictable orders regardless of their first-language and how it compares to target-language (Lightbown & Spada 2011 and Ellis 2015). Teaching methods developed in accordance with behaviorist ideas – like repetition of linguistic structures and use of audiolingual material – still influence SLA classrooms all over the world, but are deemed inefficient for any purpose other than providing input of target-language structures. Though this is in no way an insignificant part of the SLA process, studies have found that repeated exposure to- and enforcement of linguistic structures alone is not enough to enable second-language learning (Ellis 2015). Some degree of interaction is necessary for the learners to acquire grammatical competence of the target-language. These findings led the focus of SLA research and second-language instruction models to pull away from behaviorist ideas, deeming them inadequate to explain the second-language acquisition process. This development happened in part due to the growing influence of the innatist and interactionist perspective on language acquisition, especially the linguistic models.

The linguistic models of language learning grew increasingly influential after Chomsky (1965) put forth his ideas regarding *Universal Grammar* and the *Language Faculty*. Though the concepts, terminology, and ideas used in linguistic research have been revisited and revised consistently as the debate over them has persisted, they still hold a strong influence in both first- and second-language acquisition research. As with the behaviorist model however, the linguistic model of first-language acquisition encounters some issues when attempting to transfer into the domain of second-language learning. These

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[8] The theories that became Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis were first described by Robert Lado in his (1957) book *Linguistics Across Cultures.*

issues arise from two main factors; the presence and influence of a native language, and wide variety in the age of the learners entering the SLA process. These issues have created a divide in the research community, specifically with regards to the role of UG in the SLA process. Some see it as problematic to apply the framework of UG to SLA, especially with learners who have passed their *critical period of development*, which is described as "a time in human development when the brain is predisposed for success in language learning" (Lightbown & Spada 2011: 68). These researchers have however been called to account by other academics, such as Cook (2003), who points to a 'logical problem' of second-language learning, *the poverty of the stimulus argument.* This argument is the foundation for all innatist approaches to language acquisition, and addresses "the evidence that learners eventually know more about the [second] language than they could reasonably have learned if they had to depend entirely on the input they are exposed to" (Lightbown & Spada 2011: 35). The problem was first brought up in Chomsky's (1959) critique of Skinner's (1957) Behaviorist ideas of first-language acquisition, and its implicit presence in the language acquisition process have led some researchers to conclude that UG must still be available to second-language learners. The issue among these researchers is whether the exact nature of UG might have been altered in the first-language acquisition process, which is still a topic of some debate (Lightbown & Spada 2011 and Ellis 2015).

Though the adapted linguistic approach to SLA raises some interesting points about the capabilities of second-language learners, their research on the matter tend to have a narrow focus in the development of their arguments. As pointed out by Lightbown and Spada (2011: 36);

> Researchers who study second-language acquisition from a UG perspective are usually interested in the language competence of advanced learners – their complex knowledge of grammar – rather than the simple language of beginning learners. They are interested in whether the competence that underlies the performance or use of the second language resembles the competence underlying the language performance of native speakers.

Through this approach, researchers try to figure out what specific linguistic knowledge the learners possess, as opposed to what they happen to use in random interactions using the

second-language. Though the linguistic approach has brought interesting insight into how second-languages interacts both differently and similarly from the first-language in the learner's minds once established, the heavy reliance on the presence of UG provides little help in understanding the acquisition process itself. Particularly, it fails to address the fact that providing large quantities of linguistic input and letting the learner's innate cognitive structures process it, the linguists short-hand description of first-language acquisition, is not enough to enable second-language learning.

The ideas presented in *the interactionist approaches* to FLA have had more success in their transfer to the field of SLA research than the behaviorist and linguistic models. This is largely because many of the ideas – especially those from the *cognitivist* and *social interactionist* approaches – were founded in research in cognitive and social psychology and development. These fields have had a huge influence on SLA research in recent years. In contrast to the linguistic ideas and their insistent reliance on UG, the interactionist approaches aim to categorize the processes involved in acquisition rather than the abilities of learners once proficiency is acquired, and use more general cognitive abilities and processes. In my description of interactionist approaches to FLA in section 2.1.3, three areas of focus were addressed; namely *cognitivist*, *social interactionist*, and *gestural- and usage based* approaches. The interactionist FLA ideas does not include the *gestural- and usage based* approach in their transfer to the field of SLA research, but the *cognitivist* and *social interactionist* approaches have both established a firm hold in the field. The approaches are however not seen in the same terms as their FLA predecessors. Instead, they have been subdivided into three areas of focus that together make up the bulk of the current SLA research. These three areas of focus, referred to as *aspects* of SLA research, will be addressed in sections 2.2.2-2.2.4.

The cognitive- and interactionist models have adapted to the many situational changes between the SLA and FLA process quite successfully as a result of the reconstructive and appliccable nature of their ideas. These adaptions and reconstructions are also what makes the interactionist perspective so effective as a basis for SLA research; their explanations of how learners question, negotiate, and revise the input they are exposed to and output they produce in the various stages of the acquisition process, and how knowledge

is constructed through this process have provided a nuanced and detailed understanding of how the SLA process plays out and should be addressed in various learning contexts. The various points of focus in SLA research are all based in terms and aspects developed through construction of FLA models. They have however been necessarily modified to address the various situational differences between the FLA and SLA process. Key among these is the presence and relative role of the learner's first-language throughout and after the SLA process.

The presence of the first-language influences the SLA process in a number of ways, and can serve both as an enabler and as a disruptive element to the learning process. As we discussed in section 1.3 on bidialectalism, the learner's first language will always shape both their personal and perceived linguistic identity. This is particularly true for more mature monolingual speakers, as all their personal, social, professional, and cultural experiences have occurred with the basis in their native languages. The older and more cognitively mature the learner is at the start of their SLA process, the more established the first language will be as a method for structuring, navigating, and addressing the world around them. This, among other things, is what leads to a phenomenon in SLA research referred to as *language transfer*, which refers to situations where "there is evidence that the linguistic features of one language influence those of another language" (Ellis 2015: 118). When the source of the transferred linguistic feature(s) can be traced to a second-language learner's native language, it is referred to as *L1 transfer*. Transfer is influenced by many different factors,[9] but does not affect all learners equally. A marked difference in the extent of language transfer is observed between older and younger learners, with younger learners generally showing far less L1 transfer in their L2 learning processes. This lends credence to the linguistics' idea of a *critical period of development*, and shows that the older the learner, the more established the first language will be in their minds, as well as their reliance on it in the SLA process.

Depending on what time and context the learning process takes place in, the presence of a native language fundamentally separates the SLA process from the FLA process, and it will affect the acquisition process on an individual level in all contexts. If, as is often the

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[9] For an in-depth description of L1-L2 language transfer, see chapter 6 in Ellis (2015).

case, the learning takes place in a second-language classroom after the age of 6, the learner will be able to ask questions about target-language items and structures, explain and translate intended meaning of performed target-language structures and receive feedback in their first language. This type of conscious participation in learning is not available during the FLA process, at least not until some level of first-language fluency is achieved. On the other hand, if the SLA process consists mainly of immersion through independent and unassisted efforts at learning through exposure to target-language, then the first language can still serve as a tool for metalinguistic reflection and point of reference in translational efforts. Either way, the first language will have a presence with- and serve some purpose to a second-language learner, regardless of what circumstances the process takes place in. At the point where a child becomes relatively fluent in their native language and develops reading skills, some comparisons can be drawn between the continued FLA process and the SLA process as a whole, as they will be able to consciously interact with more advanced linguistic structures and continue expanding vocabulary and diversity in their linguistic abilities. These types of interaction are categorized and described in the interactionist aspect of SLA focused research, which will be addressed in the next section.

2.2.2. The cognitive-interactionist pproach to SLA

Cognitive-interactionist SLA research does not address the social aspect of language acquisition to the same extent as the FLA approach it grew from. The interactionist research in the SLA field has instead developed a more centered focus on interaction as a concept, and the various ways interaction enables L2 comprehension. This includes identifying and categorizing various forms of interaction with target-language samples, and how this interaction enables and furthers cognitive learning processes (Ellis 2015).

The interaction approach to SLA distinguishes between three main constructs that describe how learners interact with target-language structures in the learning process; *input*, *interaction*, and *output*. How these constructs enable second-language exposure and learning for the learner has been informed by four main theories and their ideas; the *Input Hypothesis* (Krashen 1985) which "claims that acquisition takes place automatically and without

consciousness when learners are exposed to input made comprehensible through context and simplification", the *Interaction Hypothesis* (Long 1983, 1996), which "proposes that input and output modified through negotiation provides the best data for acquisition", the *Output Hypothesis* (Swain 1985, 1995), which "claims that acquisition is not just dependent on input, but that output – especially **pushed output** – also plays a role", and the *Noticing Hypothesis* (Schmidt 2001), which "claims that input works best for acquisition if learners pay conscious attention to linguistic forms and the meanings they convey" (Ellis 2015: 167). These key theories have supplied the terms the interactionist approach works with, as well as how they function in conjunction with each other to enable learning. This is illustrated in Figure 2.1 below.

Figure 2.1: Key constructs in the cognitive-interactionist perspective (Ellis 2015: 144)
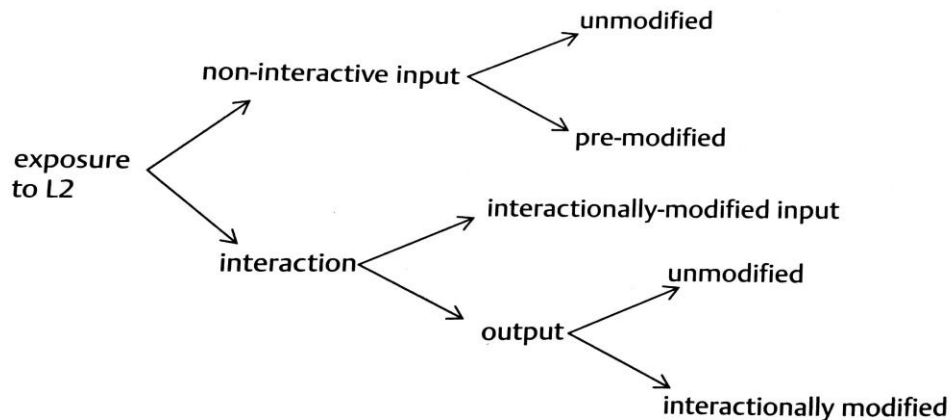
Non-interactive input refers to any target-language sample presented to the learner in a context where they are unable or not expected to answer. If this input it *unmodified* it occurs naturally within its context (usually social) and does not consider the learner's abilities. *Pre-modified* pays more attention to the form of the input in order to ensure effective communication (texts, instructions, information, etc.). *Interaction* refers to discursive exchanges between the learner and other usually more proficient speakers. These interactions can be structured so that the learner receives *interactionally-modified input* from the other participants, the necessity of which is signaled through conversational cues or

demonstrated lack of understanding from the learner. This type of input includes corrective feedback. The learner in turn produces *output*, which, if the learner attempts to reformulate based off feedback from their conversational partner can be *interactionally modified*. Learners can also produce modified output if they catch themselves making errors, or if they sense their initial utterance failed to match their intended meaning. All these constructs and their applicability to methods of exposure and expression are the parts of the interactionists understanding of what facilitates contextual comprehension of L2 forms.

A key issue in the interactionist perspective is the distinction between comprehension and acquisition of second-language knowledge. The interactionist approach distinguishes between the act of interaction with target-language structures in whatever form and the actual comprehension of these target-language structures in a way that shows that the learner has acquired target-language knowledge (Ellis 2015). In other words, there is a distinction between intake of information to the working memory, the attempted employment of information, and the implicit understanding of this information. The interactionists do address this issue in their studies actively, attempting to identify types of interaction that facilitates and enables acquisition better than others, as well as attempting to understand why. The terms are however not a part of the interaction aspect of SLA research, but refer to the cognitive processes behind learning, attention, and information processing.

2.2.3 Cognitive aspects of SLA research

The *cognitive* aspects on SLA focus less on the interactions that happen in the SLA process, rather investigating what internal mechanisms are involved in processing and storing input, and how these mechanisms enable learning. UG is found within this category, and is addressed as a *symbolist* (explained below) construct within the cognitive SLA field. The cognitive aspects are based in the field of cognitive psychology and its findings pertaining to internal learning processes. SLA researchers employ the findings from this field with the aim to "investigate the internal mechanism and processes involved in the representation of L2 knowledge and the way in which knowledge develops over time – i.e. acquisition" (Ellis 2015: 171). The field of cognitive SLA research is broad and varied, too much so for the

purposes of this paper. This section will therefore focus only on the two main paradigms of the field, as well as some of the key mechanisms which both focus areas agree have an influence on the SLA process.

Cognitive SLA is a divided field, where the concepts used in research and theory construction always have either a counterpoint or a conflicting idea that separates the researchers approaches on some core issues. Central among these are the *symbolism* and *connectionism* paradigms, which focus on different assumptions and descriptions of the mechanisms involved in learning and mental representations of L2 knowledge; "symbolist accounts seek to explain acquisition in terms of a set of abstract constructs – i.e. symbols – and the relationship between these constructs (Ellis 2015: 171). As mentioned earlier, UG is one of the linguistic constructs grouped in this category, but it functions differently than other symbolist language learning mechanisms. UG was developed by Chomsky as a linguistic term to explain why children were able to acquire a system as complex as grammar despite very limited access to stimulus; he saw interaction alone as insufficient for language learning to take place, and therefore posited that the innate knowledge presented in UG must be available. Other psycholinguistic constructs that figure in symbolism are the ones discussed in the previous section – input, comprehension, intake, acquisition, and output – and others such as *noticing* and *working memory*. Symbolist models use these constructs to produce *information-processing models* of language learning, which attempt to describe the process from perception and experience with L2 input to production of output, and posits that grammar gradually emerges through experience with target-language structures. In the connectionist accounts of SLA, "language is represented not in terms of symbols and rules, but as associations of varying strengths, derived from elements encountered in the input" (Ellis 2015: 172). Grammar is a result of these associations becoming so established they lead to rule-like linguistic behavior. The models within each paradigm all (except for UG) see language learning as dependent on the same mechanisms that enable any other type of learning process. They differ mostly in their understanding of what language is, and how linguistic knowledge is processed in the mind.

Both symbolist and connectionist approaches agree that there are two types of linguistic knowledge; *implicit*, which is the type of knowledge and skills learners acquire

but are unaware of how to explain, and *explicit*, which is the type of knowledge learners can explain how and why they have learned. Both approaches see the formation of implicit knowledge as the most important enabler of language learning, as it is needed for the speaker to be able to produce natural, fluent output. There is however a difference in the understanding of how these types of knowledge develop in relation to one another in the various models. Information-processing models treat the two types of knowledge as associated, but not similar. Second-language learning is viewed as a similar process to general skill learning, in that the knowledge presented to the learner is first understood as explicit knowledge, but that the processing of this knowledge over time and the grouping together of related linguistic features into knowledge 'chunks' can make the L2 knowledge become more implicit. Not all researchers working with information-processing models agree on this, however.[10] The connectionists treat the two types of knowledge as inherently different memory systems that deal with different types of linguistic knowledge. They also argue that the types of knowledge the systems generate varies depending on the learning context. A structured second-language educational setting will, for example, cause the learner to develop more explicit linguistic knowledge than if the learning happened in a more natural, immersive environment. However, as Ellis points out, connectionist researchers consider the learning processes responsible for the development of implicit knowledge to be so powerful that some amount of implicit linguistic knowledge is bound to be acquired regardless of learning context (2015: 177).

Another area of focus in cognitive SLA is the study of how the mind is able to process and represent two languages at the same time. The research into the matter addresses the issue of whether or not the two language systems are stored in separate areas of the brain or if they operate within the same neural network. Two separate forms of bilingualism have been developed from this research; *co-ordinate* bilingualism, where the two languages are kept separate, and *compound* bilingualism when the two languages are fused and operate in

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[10] Ellis (2015) presents the perspectives of three different researchers; Anderson, McLaughlin, and Skehan. The views of Anderson and McLaughlin appear to line up; declarative (explicit) knowledge can be processed into procedural (implicit) knowledge, but Skehan however "views the two systems as distinct and disconnected" (Ellis 2015: 175).

the same area of the brain. Recent studies suggest that the first- and second languages operate in the same areas of the brain, but "in distinct microanatomical subsystems within these areas" (Ellis 2015: 180). The degree of linkage between the two language systems also seem to depend on the learner's level of fluency; the more proficient the speaker is, the more the L2 circuits will overlap with the circuits in the L1 system. The implications of this will be addressed further in section 2.3.

A key topic in the cognitive study of SLA is the concept of attention, and how learners employ it in the process of acquiring linguistic knowledge. Schmidt (2001: 16) argues that "the orthodox position in psychology is that there is little if any learning without attention." In terms of SLA research, he asserts the following:

> the concept of attention is necessary in order to understand virtually every aspect of [SLA], including the development of interlanguages (ILs) over time, variation within IL at particular points in time, the development of L2 fluency, the role of individual differences such as motivation, aptitude and learning strategies in L2 learning, and the ways in which interaction, negotiation for meaning, and all forms of instruction contribute to language learning. (Schmidt 2001: 3, parentheses original)

Schmidt further describes the commonality in descriptions of the role of attention in different cognitivist accounts of L2 development, asserting that "common to these approaches is the idea that L2 learners process target language input in ways that are determined by general cognitive factors including perceptual salience, frequency, the continuity of elements, and other factors that determine whether or not attention is drawn to them" (2001: 6). Ellis (2015) describes Schmidt's work on attention as seminal in the field of SLA, and references him heavily in his own summary of the concept. He summarizes the six key characteristics of attention that Schmidt identifies in a table (see Table 2.1 below), and asserts that "attention takes place in working memory – wherein the learner selects which information to rehearse and suppresses other information" (Ellis 2015: 181).

Attention is therefore a vital concept within not only the cognitive models of SLA, but in SLA studies in general. Though not all researchers agree with all of Schmidt's assertions regarding the role and nature of attention in SLA as described in his *Noticing Hypothesis* (addressed in section 2.2.2), his extensive description of attention as an enabler

and its extensive role in general as well as specific learning processes is unavoidable when addressing the L2 learning process. With regards to the topic of this thesis it helps bridge the gap between the issues of language acquisition and discourse learning, and will be revisited in section 2.3. First, we will look at the social aspects of SLA in order to gain insight into the roles *context* and *identity* play in the L2 learning process.

Table 2.1: Schmidts' six key characteristics of attention (as described by Ellis 2015: 182)

Characteristics	Description
Attention is limited	Attention takes place in working memory which is limited in capacity. That is, only limited amounts of information can be processed at one time.
Attention is selective	This is the corollary of the first characteristic. Because capacity is limited, it is necessary to allocate attention strategically. For example, if the learners' attention is focused on meaning, it may be difficult for them to simultaneously focus on form. (VanPatten 1990).
Attention is subject to voluntary control	Learners can decide what to focus their attention on. Voluntary attention is top-down and directed at outside events. However, there is also involuntary attention which is experience driven; learners can attend to elements of the output without having any intention to do so.
Attention controls access to consciousness	The role of attention is to bring stimuli or thoughts into awareness. The process of focusing attention on specific stimuli or thoughts gives rise to the subjective feeling awareness (i.e. consciousness).
Attention is essential for the control of action	Novice behaviour requires controlled processing: expert behaviour can make use of automatic processing. Less attention is required for automatic than for controlled processing.
Attention is essential for learning	Attention is the mechanism that makes input available for further processing. However, not everything attended to enters long-term memory. Thus attention is essential for learning but does not guarantee it.

2.2.4 Social Aspects of SLA Research

The *social* aspects of SLA share similar understandings of the SLA process as the cognitive-interactionist perspective on FLA, but addresses the sources of input and engagements with

other speakers through interaction as the key enablers of learning Lightbown & Spada 2011 and Ellis 2015). Traditionally, the social aspects have been considered as activities that facilitate exposure to L2, but the focus for what enables actual acquisition has been placed on internal mechanisms processing environmental stimuli. Recent developments in the social SLA focused field emphasize social factors more than previously, and attempt to describe them as key enablers of L2 acquisition. This emphasis on social factors is an attempt at departure from a more cognitivist-centered approach to L2 learning, and is a fairly recent development. Because of this the social SLA field still contains a broad set of models and constructs, as well as different ways of treating constructs within models. These models are grouped into five approaches to social SLA – the *sociocultural*, which emphasizes the interactive element of construction of knowledge through mediation, and the *sociocognitive* aspects, which aims to describe the interrelationship between social and cognitive dimensions of language use in order to understand acquisition, the *conversation-analysis* approach, which focuses on conversation as the source of learning, the *social identity* approach, which sees interaction as a site of struggle to be heard and to speak, and finally *language socialization* theory, which asserts that language learning happens through socialization into a new community (Ellis 2015: 236). This section will not attempt to list and describe all the models within each approach, but rather offer a brief overview of what separates the social SLA approach from the cognitive, and then focus on two key social factors addressed as enablers of L2 acquisition in all models – *context* and *identity*.

A major motivation behind what Ellis (2015) refers to as "the social turn" in SLA research was an experienced lack of emphasis on the learner as an individual, and the conscious participation that individual learners bring into the process of L2 learning. The field argues that the cognitive-interactionist models treat the learners "as an abstract input-processing machine", while the social approach "insisted on treating learners as individuals who act on the world in different ways and who consequently manifest different learning trajectories" (Ellis 2015: 235). The field therefore heavily emphasizes the learners and their active roles in the learning process, which is seen primarily as a social activity. A summary of the principal differences Ellis have identified between cognitive and social SLA approaches is provided in Table 2.2 below. His summary shows that the learners' roles and

assertions regarding their predispositions is the key point separating the social from the cognitive models of SLA. As addressed in the introductory paragraph, the social SLA models still acknowledge the involvement of cognitive functions in the L2 learning process, they just see them as interrelated with the social dimensions of language use rather than as processing functions that operate separately from the interactions that generate the input they process. Looking at the individual learner's role as addressed consistently between the various social models of SLA, we can see how this interplay between the cognitive functions and the interactions of the learner enable language learning.

Table 2.2: Principal differences between cognitive and social SLA (Ellis 2015: 212)

Dimensions	Cognitive SLA	Social SLA
Scope	Focus on the universal aspects of L2 acquisition. Priority is given to linguistic competence.	Focus on the discursive characteristics of interactions involving L2 learners and how learning of both the icor and macro aspects of language is embedded in these interactions.
Social context	The structural view is dominant – the social context determines the L2 data made available to the learner and the learner's attitudes to learning.	The interactional view is dominant – the social context is seen as jointly constructed by the participants through interaction.
Learner identity	The learner is viewed as a 'non-native speaker'. Learner identity is static.	The kearner is viewed as having multiple identities that afford different opportunities for language learning.
Learner's linguistic background	The learnes has full linguistic competence in his/her L1.	Learners may be multilingual and may display varying degrees of proficiency in their various languages.
Input	Input is viewed as linguistic 'data' that triggers acquisition.	Input is viewed as contextually constructed: it is both linguistic and non-linguistic.
Interaction	Interaction is viewed as a source of input and an opportunity for output.	Interaction is viewed as a socially negotiated event and a means by which learners are socialized into the L2 culture.
Research methodology	Methodology is quantitative and confirmatory – inquiry is seen as 'scientific' and value-free, aimed at testing specific hypotheses with a view to making generalizations.	Methodology is qualitative and interpretive – emphasis is placed on uncovering the 'local agenda' through detailed analysis of naturally-occurring interactions. Learning is demonstrated by tracking specific learning objects over time to demonstrate that change has occurred.

A key point of emphasis within the social approaches is the learner's ability to participate in the construction of the social *context* in which learning takes place. This is what creates

opportunities for the learner to engage in second-language learning. The inherent assertion is that learners bring with them social factors into the language learning context and that these factors predetermine the possibility and process of L2 acquisition. As stated in Table 2.2 above, "the interactional view is dominant – the social context is seen as jointly constructed by the participants through interaction", as opposed to the more structuralist views assumed in the cognitive models. This view pulls the emphasis away from the setting in which the learning takes place as a source of input, placing it instead on the specific interactions the learners engage in when determining what types of input and interactions are available to them in the L2 learning process.

> All L2 learning is 'situated' and local. Learners learn discursive practices and the linguistic forms linked to them in the particular situation in which they experience them. Language is tied to contexts and can only be modified or extended through experiencing the use of routines and linguistic forms in the same or new contexts. Above all, learning is seen as an ongoing process, not a product. (Ellis 2015: 236)

Context is therefore seen as more of a situationally negotiated interplay between the learner (or learners) and the source (or sources) of input rather than specific settings in which interaction occurs. Language learning happens as a result of the routinization of the interactions that shape these contexts, and is an ongoing process of adaption and construction of linguistic experiences.

Seeing as the goal of social SLA research is "an emic approach that investigates how individual learners behave in specific social contexts and how they think about themselves in these contexts" (Ellis 2015: 237), *identity* inevitably becomes a central concept in the study of the L2 learning process. The learner's identity is seen as dynamic and changing, both as a result of interactions and as a means of creating new interactions in order to enable learning. This is in stark contrast to the cognitive approach to SLA, which takes a much more categorical approach to the concept of learner identity (see Table 2.2). The social researchers broader view on identity and its role in learning also includes the interactions that establish learning contexts, as the learner is able to negotiate their own identity within these interactions. Social SLA researchers see this as the way learners engage with and create new opportunities for learning. Most social SLA models do not, however, see the L2 learning

process as the development of a new form of identity, or even as a process of adding a new language.

> It involves the development of a hybrid language system and identity sometimes referred to as 'third space' where learners find themselves mediating between their languages and cultures in their interactions with different speakers. From this perspective, learners can no longer be seen as directed at acquiring a 'target language'. Rather, they develop a **transitional identity** and a 'translingual competence'. (Ellis 2015: 236, bolds original)

The implications of this understanding of identity construction, negotiation, and transitioning will be discussed further in section 2.3.

The last thing from the social SLA field we will address is the concept of *acculturation*. This term comes from one of the earliest models of SLA to emphasize the social aspect as determining to the learner's success, namely Schumann's (1978) *acculturation model*. He saw the learners' ability and incentive to acculturate to the target language community as determining for their potential to acquire the new language. Whether or not the learner was able or willing to do so determined their social distance from the target language group, and Schumann posited eight social factors that influence to what degree the learners are separated from the target language community. These will be listed and discussed further in section 2.3.

2.2.5 Summary and conclusions

Each of the three aspects of SLA mentioned in this section highlights different parts of a very complicated process, one even more encompassing and demanding than the FLA process both for the learners, teachers, and researchers of the L2 process. Any complete theory of SLA must address all three of these aspects in order to cover the full scope of issues that arise in the process of acquiring and employing a new language with any degree of fluency. That, however, is a task beyond the scope of this thesis, so this section will be concluded by offering a brief summary of the key terms discussed above, and how they can help us gain a deeper understanding of how the SLA process unfolds.

All theories of L2 acquisition agree that *interaction* is a key enabler of SLA. The argument is centered around the specific role it plays in obtaining *input*, if any types of input might be more beneficial than others, and how much input of any kind might be necessary in order for learning to take place. Another angle is the role of the learner in enabling, producing, and shaping interaction by producing *output*, and what role this plays in the learning process. The information that comes from these interactions is processed by cognitive functions. If you subscribe to the *symbolist* approach to cognitive SLA, then these functions are specific, symbolic structures in the mind that process incoming data in a way that enables learning, such as UG. The *connectionist* cognitive models on the other hand see the process as recognizing recurring elements in incoming data and generating associations which are strengthened through frequency of exposure. Either way, this information is stored in a way where the linguistic information is available either as *explicit*/*demonstrative* knowledge of target language features, or as *implicit*/*procedural* knowledge of target language forms. What gets stored as which and how long the information is available to us depends on frequency of use and exposure, as well as which elements receive the most *attention* from the learner.

The social aspects of the language learning process have also been found to be an important area of study. The *context* in which the learning takes place, as well as the role the learner plays within it, is a key part of the learning process, and what shapes the specific L2 experience of the learner. What shape the context takes is a result of the learner's *identity*, which is dynamic and changing through the interactions the learner has with other speakers, and can be negotiated by the learner in order to generate new opportunities for learning. One of the ways learners can negotiate their social identities is by seeking to *acculturate* to the L2 environment, which Schumann (1978) saw as an essential prerequisite for successfully acquiring the target language.

All of these issues echo some of the topics addressed in sections 1.2 and 1.3 earlier in this thesis, where we discussed, among other issues, how context shapes the language employed by the speakers, how this can lead to the establishing of discourse communities, and how transitioning between two unlike discourse communities can be a challenging process. The approaches discussed in section 2.2 as a whole are therefore relatable to the

process of discourse instruction discussed in section 1.3 and 1.4, which will be the topic of the next section. The goal of this is exploring new ways to consider the process of learning and adapting new linguistic strategies in a broader sense. As addressed in section 1.2, discourse learning and the challenges learners face when attempting to enter new discourse communities are not directly comparable to those facing language learners. However, the core challenges of both issues are similar; they both address a process of learning and applying new linguistic and structural knowledge which, if successful, will gain the learner the opportunity to participate in new discourse communities. Because of this, and as addressed in section 1.4, the process of acquiring new linguistic abilities, and the constructs we call upon to describe this process, are applicable to the process of discourse learning, and can therefore be used to inform the strategies of discourse instruction – more specifically the instruction aimed at helping students achieve the Academic Standard.

2.3 Academic writing instruction and learning

This section will focus primarily on writing, the studies done on writing and its functions in the context of academic discourse instruction and development, and the teaching of writing for academic and more general purposes. First, section 2.3.1 will provide insight into how U.S. researchers have studied, and consequently explained, writing as a concept, how it is used and understood as a tool for expression and learning, and how it is taught as such in academic classrooms. Section 2.3.2 will then bring in some European research done on students' acquisition of academic writing skills in higher education contexts. The purpose of this is to be able to explain the process of developing and employing compositional skills in academic discourse, and the steps taken by instructors in their attempts to enable this development. Section 2.3.3 will be the concluding section, and will revisit some of the ideas brought up in sections 1.2 and 1.3 regarding the Academic Standard and its function as a language variety, and apply some of the terminology brought up in the previous sections on language acquisition to the process of academic discourse learning and instruction. The goal behind this, as mentioned in the introduction, is to develop an analogical understanding of

academic-discourse learning as a process comparable to language learning, enabling us to address its instruction in similar terms.

2.3.1 Composition studies in the U.S.

The field of composition studies, as it developed in the U.S., did not start addressing writing as a process until the early 1960's. Up until then, the strategy of the composition classrooms of higher education had simply been to provide students with samples of exemplary literature, analyze and explain the aspects of the texts that made them so successful, and ask the students to incorporate these aspects in their own writing. As Villanueva (2003: 1) puts it:

> The process was rather like having students watch and discuss a videotape of a prima ballerina and having the students attempt the same dance, with the students then being evaluated based on how well they approximated the ballerina's performance – without knowing how the ballerina came to master those steps. No attention was given to the process of arriving at the product.

The view on composition as a process came from a meeting between American instructors and teachers of composition in British universities, who had been focusing on writing as "a process of individual development, a matter of self-discovery" (Villanueva 2003: 1). From then on, the focus of composition studies became analyzing and explaining the methods employed by writers when they write, instead of emphasizing finished written products or pedagogical strategies.

This shift in attention led researchers such as Bartholomae, Bizzell, Bruffee, D'Angelo, Ede and Lunsford, Elbow, Emig, and many more,[11] to look at the strategies of writers in all stages of development; some (see Elbow 1985, 1987 for some examples) turned to their own writing processes, identifying the steps they, as experienced writers, made from the point of initiating research to completing and submitting articles for review. Others (for example Emig 1977, Perl 1979, and Bartholomae 1986) turned to a more methodological

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[11] See Villanueva (Ed. 2003) for a more inclusive list. Most of the research into Composition Theory included in this project is based in his publication of collected articles; *Cross-Talk in Comp Theory*.

study of the writing processes of less skilled student writers, attempting to identify and categorize the various parts of their composition processes in order to address where their approaches and understandings enabled or hindered their expressive abilities. Others again (see Sommers 1980) turned to a comparative approach, putting their own or their peers' writing processes up against those of their students in order to identify specific differences that might later be addressed during instruction. These types of studies and the following research led to newfound understandings of the various stages of the composition process. Various researchers addressing the process at varying levels and stages have assigned these stages different names, but there seems to be a common understanding of three main stages in the process. For the purposes of this paper we will use the terms put forth by Murray (1972), who describes these three main stages in the composition process as *prewriting*, *writing*, and *rewriting*. Put shortly, prewriting is the research and planning stage, writing is the drafting stage, and rewriting is the editing stage of the composition process. These three terms therefore effectively comprise all the ways the writer interacts with, processes, and modifies input from other writers and produces their own output.

The continued study of the composition process and the resulting findings led to new instructional strategies in the first-year writing classroom in U.S. universities, all of which increased the emphasis on the process of writing rather than the intended completed products. The research on writing in other contexts than the first-year programs later developed further into two areas of focus; *Writing Across the Curriculum* (henceforth WAC) and *Writing in the Disciplines* (henceforth WiD) (Delcambre & Donahue 2012). These are complementary strands of research, addressing similar issues but emphasizing differently the effects of the specific contexts and how they shape the students' development of writing processes. The necessity of this distinction highlights the important point that not all academic discourse instruction addresses the development of academic fluency on similar terms. WAC- and WiD based instruction emphasize differently the *role* of writing in the development of skills in academic discourse. WAC emphasize "the unique affordances offered by writing, and supporting students' acquisition of writing as a meaning-making tool" (Delcambre & Donahue 2012: 131). This centers the act of writing as a vital part not only of learning to express knowledge, but also as a tool for *acquiring* the knowledge being

expressed. WiD-based instruction on the other hand tend to focus more on the conventions of the specific area of academic discourse they exist within to enable the students to effectively 'enter into' the work of the field (Delcambre & Donahue 2012: 131). Though there are overlapping interests in these approaches, the differences of focus can impact the relationship the students might develop towards the writing they produce, and towards epistemic writing in general. How these different approaches can affect the students' experiences of academic writing will be addressed in section 3.2.

2.3.2 European studies of student writing

European research on writing instruction in higher education contexts is a relatively new field, and has focused on slightly different issues than the American composition studies. As discussed in the previous section and in sections 1.1 and 1.2, the composition research addresses writing as an activity, and explores the issues that arise from this approach as they pertain to writing instruction. The concept of writing in general has however been addressed from many angles both in the U.S. and in Europe. This includes sociological studies, studies in cognitive psychology, discourse analysis, and genre analysis (see Russel & Cortes 2012, Prior & Bilbro 2012, Mateos & Solé 2012; Robinson-Pant & Street 2012, Rinck & Boch 2012, and Delcambre & Donahue 2012 for different discussions of the topic). Describing all these approaches, their origins, and their findings would be too big a task for this section. Rather, we will look at some of the terminology used to address the transitional processes identified by some of the researchers of student writing in development in Europe that do not come up in the American composition studies.[12] Key among these topics is the process of *enculturation* (Prior & Bilbro 2012), which will be used as a point of departure for how various researchers address their study of students' developing levels of expertise in writing.

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[12] This assertion is observational, and based in the readings done primarily in Villanueva's (ed. 2003) *Cross-talk in Comp Theory* and in Castelló and Donahue's (eds. 2012) *University Writing: Selces and Texts in Academic Societies.* I have in by no means gone through the entirety of the literature in the field of U.S. composition studies, nor have I covered the vast amounts of European research into student writing in higher education, but they appear to address separate issues and concepts in their studies.

Prior and Bilbro argue that *"academic enculturation* has often been taken up as the one-way transmission of relatively stable cultural knowledge from experts to novices" (2012: 20), but do not ascribe to this view themselves. Instead, they "understand enculturation to refer to the totality of processes that are involved in the ongoing production of cultural forms of life", and thus:

> [They] see academic enculturation from this perspective as nothing less than the dialogic formation of academic disciplines and professions within dynamic cultural-historical fields. [They] take academic enculturation to be a fundamentally semiotic process, to involve semiotic (re)mediation (see Prior & Hengst 2010) at every level, from how learning happens to in situated contexts to how disciplinary knowledge circulates and is represented across different media. (Prior & Bilbro 2012: 20)

They further narrow their focus down to a specific attention given to writing, and the *literate practices* (as addressed by Robinson-Pant & Street 2012; and Lea 2012) "that weave together writing, reading, talk, observation, and action to achieve what we typically and metonymically call writing" (Prior & Bilbro 2012: 20). Enculturation, then, becomes a loaded term to address the totality of aspects surrounding the transitional process students go through from entering into higher educational settings to eventual participation in an academic field of research, as well as the effects their entry into the field has on the continued development of disciplinary practices. This understanding of the term will be readdressed in the next section.

According to Prior and Bilbro, the research on academic enculturation has developed from three basic questions;

1) What is the content of academic enculturation? In other words, what knowledge and/or practices are being learned and developed?
2) Where (in what spaces or what kinds ofs paces) is academic enculturation happening?, and
3) How does academic enculturation (learning/development) happen?
   (Prior & Bilbro 2012:20).

Regarding the first question, they describe three ways researchers have studied the content of academic enculturation. First among them is the approach taken by Rinck and Boch (2012), which "involves varieties of language, registers, textual genres, rhetorical features,

and/or semiotic forms (language plus visual and other semiotics) that are associated with disciplines and professions" (Prior & Bilbro 2012: 21). Rinck and Boch take a textual approach in their research, addressing the issue of developing authorial voice at various levels of expertise, and how writing instruction affects the students understanding and subsequent experience of academic writing. More specifically, they look at the enunciative strategies of experienced and compare them to less experienced writers, including how they manage point-of-view in the text as well as how the different groups incorporate and/or cite sources. Their goal is to "examine students' enculturation to research writing and to question training in, and through, research writing" (Rinck & Boch 2012: 112). Their research and findings will be revisited in the next section.

The second approach to content Prior and Bilbro describe is likened to that of Delcambre and Donahue (2012), which "conceptualizes the content of academic enculturation as practices, what people (again recognized experts or students) *do* as they engage in disciplinary work" (Prior & Bilbro 2012: 21, formatting original). Delcambre and Dunahue's study addresses the students' own understanding, reflections, and experiences with the writing they produce in higher education. Rather than taking a textual-analysis approach to determining their writing habits and understanding of conventions, they interview and survey the students at different developmental stages to see how their understanding progresses along with their experiences. By doing so, they aim to "provide insight into student perception of the writing produced, the challenges and obstacles, and the transitions that the students experience", their purpose being

> to explore [the students'] sense of this writing in ways that allow us to describe their experiences in writing as they move through higher education, as well as the writing activities they perceive and how this perception develops our understanding of academic-scientific university genres. (Delcambre & Donahue 2012: 129)

Delcambre and Donahue's study and findings have inspired some of the questions included in my own questionnaire, and will be addressed in section 3.1.

Both the first and second approaches address pedagogical issues and methods of inquiry into them. The third approach Prior and Bilbro describe addresses a different issue:

[it] sees the content as identities and social formations, taking up enculturation as the remaking of the person (i.e., not simply adding some skill set to a person, but altering the person's personality or identity as such), the remaking of the discipline (i.e., as the ongoing historical working out of what the discipline might be), and /or the renegotiation of broader social identities and power in the specific settings of academic work. Research in this approach is generally ethnographic and sociocultural. (Prior & Bilbro 2012: 22)

Researchers such as Castelló and Iñesta (2012) and Robinson-Pant and Street (2012), employ approaches that emphasize these themes, inquiring into higher education as a context for development of self, its direct and indirect influences on literate practices the students are faced with, the students' development and experience of self in their writing, and writing as a sociocultural activity. Some of these issues echo some of the topics discussed in sections 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3, as well as the social approaches to SLA covered in section 2.2.4, and will be revisited in the next section.

The second question for inquiry into academic enculturation concerns the spaces in which enculturation takes place. The concept of 'spaces' of enculturation is often conceptualized as the setting (i.e. the writing classroom/assignment) in which the learning takes place, as well as the institution (i.e. 'the university') which hosts this setting. It also takes more abstract approaches, addressing and defining named disciplines and categorizing them in terms of emic boundaries. One of the ways this topic has been conceptualized is exemplified in this thesis; section 1.2 dealt with the concept of discourse communities, and the following sections described the sociocultural and sociopolitical function of academic discourse as produced and promoted by the communities that identify themselves as part of 'the university'. The approach employed in this thesis has however aimed at describing and clarifying the 'space' of enculturation, while research addressing it as an issue questions their roles as a context for students to explore and develop new social identities.

The third question for inquiry into academic enculturation concerns the learning of the information that drives enculturation. Prior and Bilbro (2012: 27) state that "theoretically, learning is widely understood as some kind of appropriation of practices from, or through interaction with, other people, cultural artifacts, and (natural or made)

environments". However, they also point out that "much of the work on academic enculturation has been either silent on how such learning happens, or seems to presume that such learning is transparent, that transmission (e.g. awareness-raising) of, say, language patterns in a genre will suffice to promote learning" (Prior & Bilbro 2012: 28). Coincidentally, this is one of the central topics of this thesis, albeit indirectly, as it attempts to relate the ideas used to describe language learning, which is primarily concerned with *how* learning happens, to the process of discourse learning. This will be the goal of the coming section, which will bring together the ideas and issues covered in this thesis as a whole. This includes the subjects of chapter 1, concerning how and why the Academic Standard can be understood as a separate language variety, and the language acquisition theories of sections 2.1 and 2.2, which covers the research done on how languages are learned. The goal of this is, as stated in previous sections, to offer a way of addressing how the issues surrounding academic discourse learning can be seen in the same terms as those addressing the issues of language learning.

2.3.3 Discourse learning and language learning processes

Sections 1.2 and 1.3 of this paper dealt with different ways people use and relate to language in various contexts, and why a nuanced understanding of contextual language use is an essential part of linguistic knowledge. As addressed in section 1.1, we can identify linguistic variety based on sociopolitical functions of the employed discourse. These issues were described in terms of cultural diglossias (sections 1.1 and 1.3), discourse conventions and communities (section 1.2), and bidialectal abilities (section 1.3). The central topic for this discussion was the function of standardized language varieties in different discourse communities, how these communities often develop highly specialized conventions to the language varieties they employ, and how learning these varieties might be more challenging for some speakers than others. This is how we established the understanding of the Academic Standard, and its function as a language variety that students tasked with composing academic texts for assignments have to adhere to. Looking at the two approaches to university-writing instruction mentioned in section 2.3.1 – the more general approach to

learning how to both express oneself and to express one's *self*, versus the approach motivated by instilling explicit knowledge of conventions and how to employ them – some immediate parallels become apparent between the description of structured academic discourse learning and the mechanisms that researchers in the various SLA fields discussed in section 2.2 have identified in their approaches. First among these is the potential for *interaction*, which was described in section 2.2.2, and what type of interaction is facilitated and encouraged in the two writing-instruction models.

As stated in the introductory section of this paper, academic writing is to be understood as epistemic writing done by members, students or otherwise, in discourse communities associated with institutions of higher education. All writing done by students enrolled in introductory-writing courses at any university are therefore grouped within this category; regardless of their current ability to adequately express ideas in a matter consistent with the underlying expectations of the Academic Standard (see section 1.4), they are instructed in (i.e. exposed to target language) and expected to attempt to produce written academic discourse as a part of their required course participation. This writing usually occurs within the context of an assignment, which acts as both the most immediate source of motivation for the student to produce *output*. This output is then later evaluated by a more proficient speaker (the professor, lecturer, or a tutor), and the student is given feedback (corrective or otherwise) in the form of either a draft with comments, graded paper with comments, or simply just a grade. This process serves as the main source of interaction for the students. Depending on whether or not the activity is treated as a process, the student will be able to receive *interactionally-modified input* in the shape of corrective feedback on a draft from either the lecturer or a tutor. On the other hand; if the instruction emphasizes the structure of completed products in their approach to writing then there might be little to no time set aside for this type of interaction, and the student might not be able to produce the type of *interactionally-modified output* that is essential to their ability to acquire target-language knowledge.

The process of engaging with target-language structures in the form of lectures and readings followed by the production and subsequent review writing fits easily into the interactionist constructs presented in Figure 2.1 in section 2.2.2. How the data that comes

from this interaction is processed however is a more complicated issue to address. Assuming that the instructional methods employed in the classrooms, combined with the students' own experiences and focus in writing, is the main source of target language input, then what type of input they receive is determined by the course approach (section 2.3.1). If the course is primarily convention driven, like a WiD structured course would be, then the input is most likely going to be processed and stored as explicit/procedural knowledge, while the more process driven approach of WAC courses might generate more implicit/procedural knowledge. Explaining how this knowledge is processed and employed further in order to enable acquisition of specific L2 knowledge depends on what language acquisition model the approach is based in.

Using the ENG100 courses as a reference point, we can address what types of target language input the students might pay the most *attention* to in their earliest interactions with target-language forms. Going off Schmidt's (2001) *Noticing hypothesis* (addressed in sections 2.2.2 and 2.2.3), the input the students pay the most conscious attention to is what will determine their development of L2 proficiency. In any type of academic writing instruction, the subject of attention is most likely going to be related to the dimensions of writing the students find to be the most important. Which dimensions these are, however, and why they find these specific dimensions of writing to be the most important will however be of importance to their further development. This is addressed in the study which will be the topic of the next section, and the data collected from the questionnaire will help inform this issue.

With regards to how the social approaches to language acquisition apply to the process of writing instruction and development in higher education, there is a high level of applicability. Section 2.2.4 briefly addressed Schuman's (1978) *acculturation model*, which describes how L2 learners' willingness and ability to acculturate to the target-language group will impact their ability to learn the target language. He lists eight social factors that determine the learner's social distance from the target language community, which measures the potential for the learning situation to enable L2 learning. These factors are:

1 Social dominance – i.e. whether the L2 group is politically, culturally, technically, or economically superior (dominant), inferior (subordinate), or equal to the target language group.

2 Integration pattern – i.e. whether the L2 group assimilates (gives up its own lifestyle and values in favor of those of TL group), seeks to preserve it lifestyle and values, or acculturates (adopts lifestyle and values of TL group while maintaining its own intra-group use).

3 Enclosure – i.e. the extent to which the L2 group shares the same social facilities (low enclosure) or has different social facilities (high enclosure).

4 Cohesiveness – i.e. the extent to which L2 group is characterized by intra-group contact (cohesive) or inter-group contact (non-cohesive).

5 Size – i.e. whether the L2 group constitutes a numerically large or small group.

6 Cultural congruence – i.e. whether the culture of the L2 group is similar or different from that of the TL group.

7 Attitude – i.e. whether the L2 group and TL group may hold positive or negative attitudes towards each other.

8 Intended length of residence – i.e. whether the L2 group intends to stay for a long time or a short time.

(Ellis 2015: 208)

The learning situation is categorized as either 'good' or 'bad' based on which and how many of these factors score positively or negatively. With regards to the general situation for students in higher education, the situation is categorically bad. As discussed throughout section 1, the students all belong to a L2 group which is socially inferior (factor 1). In addition, there is high enclosure in the L2 group (factor 3), which is very cohesive (factor 4), significantly larger than the target-language group (factor 5) and culturally very different (factor 6). In addition, most students intend to stay in the target-language context for limited periods of time (factor 8). The only factors without negative outcomes are the integration patterns (factor 2) and the two groups attitudes towards one another (factor 7), and the only reason for this is because they cannot be determined without specific observational data.

In terms of social *contexts*, there is little to no ability for the students to participate in the construction of the context in which learning takes place; they are placed into learning classrooms, and told to produce a certain type of output through the distribution of writing assignments. The student might be able to participate in interactionally determining his role as an active or passive student in the classroom context, but the instructor has most if not all the power to deterimine what types of information and subsequent learning opportunities

might come from this. As far as *identity* goes, it is predetermined by their status as 'students' in both the local social contexts of the classrooms and the larger social environment of the higher education institution. Their identity is only dynamic insofar as their transitioning between courses and grade levels, and their various levels of expertise.

Even though this application of social SLA terminology to the students' experiences with writing instruction yields negative results, their functionality in addressing the issue is undeniable. The issues that arise from the application above are in no way unfamiliar in the studies of issues in writing instruction. As discussed throughout chapter 1, a key issue in academic discourse instruction is the students' ability and willingness to enter into a discourse community which employs an inherently unfamiliar language variety in their interactions. As addressed in Graff's quote in section 1.3, the process of assimilating or acculturating (see factor 2 above) to the target-language group comes "at the cost of a personal makeover that might not sound appealing to some, especially since there are no guarantees" (1999: 140). Baugh (2009) and Elbow (1993, 1999) also address the issues directly comparable to those of 'bad' learning situations in terms of Schuman's acculturation model. The issue of social distance is therefore highly relevant to the issues of student writers, and the type of research done on *academic enculturation* (section 2.3.2) can be used as a way to relate these social SLA topics to the process of discourse learning.

As a finishing point, we will look at the transferability of the general process of language development over time to the topic of discourse learning. In the quote from Schmidt (2001: 3) included in section 2.2.3, he infers that attention is involved in all aspects of language acquisition, including the establishment and development of what he refers to as *interlanguages*. Interlanguage here is used to refer to the learner's language competence at different stages in the acquisition process. Lightbown and Spada state that "analysis of a learner's interlanguage shows that it has some characteristics influenced by previously learned languages, some characteristics of the second language" and that "interlanguages have been found to be systematic, but they are also dynamic, continually evolving as learners receive more input and revise their hypotheses about the second language" (2011: 80). Lightbown and Spada further describe the development of interlanguage as a process of moving from paying careful attention to explicit linguistic knowledge in something they

refer to as 'careful style', to eventually being able to employ this linguistic knowledge in their more casual 'vernacular style' as the knowledge becomes more routinized.

Applying the concept of interlanguage as described above to the observations made by Bartholomae (1986) in his observation of the language employed by inexperienced student writers, as well as the data presented by Rinck and Boch (2012) on the enunciative strategies of less- versus more experienced writers, we see similar types of issues arising. These are, in the case of Bartholomae's analysis of student texts, influences from other rhetorical strategies, as well as a noticeable influence from the students' limited understandings of the 'target language'. Rinck and Boch's (2012) study identifies progressive changes to students' writing styles and rhetorical strategies as they progress to higher levels of expertise. They assert that these initial difficulties students have with research-initiating writing "are due at least in part to the fact that this kind of writing require a progressive application of genres that impose a characteristic lexicon and phraseology" (2012: 120). *Progressive application* here infers a process of learning and familiarization over time, as they "consider academic literacies from a developmental perspective, as cultural, socio-institutional and cognitive familiarization of genres of research and research-based writing used in academic and disciplinary communities" (2012: 113). Applying this understanding of the process of enculturation (section 2.3.2) to Lightbown and Spadas' understanding of the systematic, yet dynamic development of learners' interlanguages, we can easily see parallels.

Since this thesis deals with the development of discursive abilities rather than strictly language learning, the term 'interlanguage' therefore has to be reconsidered. This can be done by applying Gee's (1999) and Hyland's (2009) descriptions od discourse, as referred to in section 1.2. They distinguish and explain two types of discourses; 'little d' discourse, which refers to conscious employment of language in order to act out roles and identities in specific contexts, and 'big D' discourses as covering the way we think, act, and speak as how we imagine ourselves both within and across all contexts. If we imagine a transitional relationship between these two concepts where the features of 'little d' discourses become parts of our 'big D' discourse as we routinize them, we can compare it to Lightbown and Spadas' description of the transitional relationship between 'careful style' and 'vernacular

style' as an explanation for how interlanguage develops. A fitting analogical term for describing the discourse employed by students at transitional levels of expertise in academic writing might therefore be *interdiscourse*.

As this section has shown, there is an undeniably high level of applicability of ideas and terminology employed in language acquisition research to the issues addressed in writing studies and the study of issues students experience with writing instruction. It is important to keep in mind, as stated in previous sections, that the purpose of this comparison is not to infer that language acquisition and discourse learning are inherently similar issues. Rather, as stated in the introduction, the goal of this thesis is to show correlative relationships between how we can address the issues similarly, in hopes that some of the ideas from one field can help inform and develop both the theoretical understanding and practical application of the topics of the other. The next section describes one practical way of combining the separate issues within the same type of study, in hopes that the data might exemplify the assertions made in this section.

3. Questionnaire and Data Analysis

This section will describe and analyze the data from a survey conducted as a part of the research for this thesis. A questionnaire was distributed among two groups of students: participants in ENG100 College Writing courses at Eastern Connecticut State University, and Norwegian-speaking students of English studies at the University of Bergen. The purpose of the study was to see what types of attitudes the two groups of students had towards English academic writing, to what degree they immerse themselves in academic work, and how they relate to writing they produce in university- or classroom-specific settings. A determining function of the questions in the questionnaire was to make the responses relatable to all aspects of academic language production and learning addressed in sections 1 and 2 of this paper. To achieve this, the questions were modeled after studies and descriptions of approaches in both the writing/composition studies field and language acquisition and learning approaches. Section 3.1 will provide an overview of the goal and structure of the questionnaire, including a description of what aspect of academic language learning the questions aim to address, how they address these aspects, and their limitations in addressing these aspects correctly. Section 3.2 will then look at the two student groups individually, compare and contrast them primarily in terms of their separate linguistic and scholastic background, determine what types of responses we might expect from them based on these aspects, and analyze the data from their responses. Section 3.3 concludes the section with a discussion of the possible sources of discrepancies and/or reasons for similarities in the way they responded, and relate the data points to the topics discussed in the previous sections of this thesis.

3.1 Design and purpose of the questionnaire

The overarching goal of the questionnaire was to measure the students' understanding of-, attitudes towards-, and subsequent relationship to the Academic Standard as a language variety they are in the process of learning, and their potential for success based on how well said understanding matches the expectations put towards academic discourse production (addressed in section 1.4). In order to achieve this, the questions aim to address the students' academic language experiences from three angles: namely the amount of *interaction* with academic prose, specific *understanding* of academic discourse and vocabulary, and personal *relationship* to the writing they produce. The questionnaire itself consists of 15 functional questions and a 16th question asking the students for feedback. The fifteen questions can be roughly divided into three parts addressing the three aforementioned angles in turn. There is however some degree of overlap in the applicability of some questions to each angle. Where, how, and why these overlaps occur will be addressed after the description of the parts and questions in the questionnaire.[13]

The first part of the questionnaire (questions 1–4) addresses *interaction*, and asks the students about their reading and writing habits, specifically of English texts. The questions also distinguish between time spent reading and writing in general and their time spent reading and writing edited prose, as the text read or written in personal or socially motivated contexts – i.e. text-messages, informal e-mails, or note-taking – might not employ the conventions expected and emphasized in more formal contexts. The purpose of this is to get a measurement of how much time the students spend on assigned readings and writing exercises, as well as determining their amount of experience with SWE (addressed in section 1.2–1.4). The underlying assumption is that any student who maintains a productive focus on their studies will spend a minimum of about 1-2 hours per day reading and/or writing edited prose, thus providing adequate exposure to- and interaction with 'target-language' forms (section 2.2) to enable learning. Students who invest less time than this will have a

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[13] For a full list of the questions in the questionnaire, see Attachment 1. The data sets are included in the subsequent attachments, Attachment 2 being the ECSU students' responses, and Attachment 3 the UiB students' responses.

harder time achieving academic literacy, as they are spending an inadequate amount of time immersing themselves in the target-language. The more engaged or specially interested students might spend 2-3 hours or more per day.

These questions function as determiners for how much the students interact with academic language on a daily basis, as interaction with target-language forms and speakers (see sections 2.2.2 and 2.2.3) is a vital enabler of language acquisition in all learning contexts. As a precautionary measure, it will be assumed here that at least some of the reading or writing done by the more invested students – i.e. those committing 2–3 hours or more per day to reading or producing edited prose – is for leisurely rather than academically motivated purposes, as students who actively set aside time for reading probably do so at least partly for personal- rather than purely scholastic purposes. Though this is not necessarily an issue in and of itself, it needs to be taken into account in data analysis. In a purely practical sense, this is because of how chapter 1 of this thesis drew a distinction between general SWE texts and the type of SWE employed in academically motivated prose. More specifically however, it needs to be taken into account because of the issue of *acculturation* and *enculturation* addressed in sections 2.2.4, 2.3.2, and 2.3.3, the issue of *transfer* mentioned in section 2.2.1, and in part because of the issues regarding social and professional relationships to language and discourse (Elbow 1986, Gee 1996, 1999, Norton 1997, Graff 1999, and Hyland 2009) addressed in sections 1.2 and 1.3. Students who engage more in leisurely reading and writing might develop broader vocabularies and more effective syntax and rhetorical skills, which offers major benefits to students in the introductory levels of writing instruction. This is especially true for ESL students, as near-fluent level expertise of English, especially if this has happened through exposure to SWE, will eliminate most of the issue of language from the learning process. The epistemic functions of literary prose as compared to academic prose are however largely incomparable. A student who prioritizes literary prose in their reading exercises therefore gains little to no advantage in learning the structural aspects of academic prose, and might even struggle with transitioning from a creative to a more structure-centered writing activity.

The second part of the questionnaire (questions 5–12) addresses the students *understanding* of academic language. This includes both purely vocabulary understanding

and their experience of the more general structural aspect of academic discourse. The questions were inspired by Lightbown & Spada's (henceforth referred to as L&S in text) placement-questions for determining a learner's available learning context and subsequent L2 learnability potential (2011: 29). They list a total of ten questions for consideration, the last seven of which have informed the formulation of the questions in this questionnaire. L&S's questions number 3 and 4 address the learner's metalinguistic awareness and general world knowledge;

> 3 How well developed is their metalinguistic awareness? Can they define a word, say what sounds make up that word, or state a rule such as 'add an -*s* to form the plural? 4 How extensive is their general knowledge of the world? Does this knowledge enable them to make good guesses about what a second language interlocutor is probably saying? (Lightbown & Spada 2011: 29)

These questions help determine the learner's ability to understand L2 input both explicitly (question 3) and implicitly (question 4), which are key aspects of both language- and discourse learning. These two questions have informed questions 5 and 6 of the questionnaire, which are two of the more engaging questions of the questionnaire as a whole. Question 5 asks the students to provide synonyms or a description of the meaning of 4 words – *propose*, *context*, *discipline*, and *academic*. These words all have various degrees of ambiguous meanings, especially *academic* (as discussed in the introduction and section 1.5), and are often used in academic discourse. As the Academic Standard is not a language variety in the same sense as another language is for an L2 learner, L&S's use of metalinguistic awareness in terms of grammatical knowledge is not directly transferrable to this study. Metalinguistic awareness is therefore treated here as an understanding of contextual pragmatic functions of words and their meanings. With regards to L&S's reference to "general knowledge of the world" in their fourth question (see reference above), the types of descriptions the students provide of these words will help determine their explicit knowledge of- and familiarity with academic texts, i.e. target-language forms, as well as offer an impression of their ability to discern between epistemic and social applications of language. An ideal description of one of the words' meaning, say *propose*, would be something along the lines of; 'to suggest or put forth. Also used to describe the act

of asking for someone's hand in marriage'. The student would then display awareness of the practical function of the verb as used in more formal settings, including academic discourse, while also acknowledging the typical social application of the word. This would demonstrate that the student possesses metalinguistic awareness in the form of an explicit understanding of how context affects pragmatic functions of lexical items. This understanding would make them better able to adapt depending on which discourse community they interact with.

The motivation behind this question is to measure the students' level of 'fluency' in academic language. A more developed awareness of- and ability to address the effects context have on meaning is beneficial when dealing with more advanced target-language samples. It will also better prepare them to address the expectations put towards them by their teachers in higher-education classrooms. Seeing as the questionnaire was distributed to students in a classroom, the assumed context for the students' interaction with target-language forms is the academic discourse presented to them, as well as what they produce for class-related purposes. The later questions (6–15) in the questionnaire address this explicitly, as we will see later.

The sixth question of the questionnaire asks the students to read two samples of academic texts from two authors who write with very differing rhetorical styles, and then choose which one they see as more 'academic'.[14] There is also a third option for students who see both textual samples as equally academic in style. Sample 1 is a short excerpt from Peter Elbow's (1993) article *Ranking, Evaluating, and Liking: Sorting out Three Forms of Judgement*. As discussed in section 1.3, Elbow makes a point of writing in a more vernacular style than most other academics, which is the reason for the choice of him as the first sample. His rhetoric heavily employs reference to self in the first person as well as in first-person plural, and though it is clear he possesses a broad vocabulary he uses relatively approachable language and methods of expression, with relatively few technical terms. In addition to this, there are no references present in this excerpt from the text. The second excerpt is from Stephen R. Anderson's (2008) *English Reduced Auxiliaries Really Are Simple Clitics*. Anderson has a much more objective and impersonal way of presenting his arguments than

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[14] To see the text excerpts, see Attachment 1. Both articles are included in the list of references.

Elbow, and relies heavily on technical terms. He also references two other authors in this excerpt of his text, one of which is the description of another researcher's approach to the topic he is addressing. His subsequent refusal of the other researcher's ideas is, however, done in the first person, but in a much more declarative way than the style Elbow employs as he states explicitly that it is his personal opinion.

The purpose of this question is simply to gauge the students' understanding of academic discourse. If they are under the stereotypical impression that academic texts generally consist of impersonal writing styles, heavily references other works, and employs advanced language as a method of persuasion, they will choose Anderson's text.[15] If, however, they have a more developed understanding of academic discourse as an ongoing conversation between members of various fields of research, as well as the knowledge that the conventions underlying the discourse produced vary from field to field, will probably choose the 'both' option. The following question (question 7) asks the students to explain their choice. These two questions are inspired by L&S's fourth question, regarding the extent of the learner's "general knowledge of the world". They also aim to provide an understanding of the specific presumptions students have of the target language when they enter higher education classrooms, which will affect their attempts to use it in personal expression.

The next questions (8 through 12) in this part of the questionnaire ask the students about their own personal experiences of and in the classrooms. They address, in turn, their ability to understand the curriculum and assignments of their classes (question 8), if they feel they have enough time and resources available to complete assignments before deadlines (question 9), when and what type of feedback they receive (questions 10 and 11), and what type of feedback they wish they received more of (question 12). These cover L&S's questions 6–10, which address the learner's environment, the expectations placed on the learner, availability of- and motivation behind the corrective feedback they receive, as well as availability of modified input. As discussed in section 2.2, all these aspects are key enablers of L2 acquisition, and also play a determining role in students' development of

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[15] See Bartholomae (1986) for a discussion of the types of issues that come up in the texts of students who possess these types of presumptions about academic writing.

academic literacy. As discussed partly in section 1.3 and more thoroughly in sections 2.2.2-4, 2.3.2, and 2.3.3, successful enculturation requires not only the learner's willingness to participate and adapt to the new linguistic environment, but also participation by proficient L2 speakers as sources of interaction, feedback, and modified input. These questions therefore help provide a broader understanding of the academic environment the learners' experience, and subsequently whether or not it is sufficient to enable their acquisition of the Academic Standard.

The immediate and obvious limitations of these questions is that their inspiration (Lightbown & Spada 2011: 29) specifically address the contexts and environments of learners of second languages, while this questionnaire addresses students in a process of adopting, furthering, and specializing previously established language skills. As such, there will be discrepancies in the foundational presumptions underlying the purpose and functionality of the questions in the two contexts. Some of the terminology and concepts, such as 'corrective feedback' (L&S questions 8 and 9), 'modified input' (L&S question 10), and the learner's ability or lack thereof to take time to make observations before being "expected to speak" (L&S question 6) are more or less directly applicable in both language- and discourse learning processes. L&S's use of the term 'metalinguistic awareness' addressed above, however, is one example of the types discrepancies that arise when attempting to transfer these ideas. The result of this is that the questions in this questionnaire cannot address too specific issues, as this would reduce the general applicability of ideas from the field of language acquisition research to the more nuanced and complicated issues of teaching and learning academic discourse. The general nature of these questions and the data they produce will however serve as indicators for what directions further research might take, and which aspects of language acquisition research prove to be less applicable to discourse learning processes than others.

The third part of the questionnaire (questions 13–15) address the students' personal *relationship* to the writing they produce in and for higher-education courses. It does so however in an indirect way. The students are not asked directly to describe how they feel about what they write for their courses, but rather to relate what they focus on during the composition process. Their responses will reveal whether the students see the writing they

produce as instances of self-expression on the one hand, or if they see their work simply as required assignments and complete them based off what they think would receive a favorable evaluation. Responses indicating the former would imply the students have a more personal investment in their academic work, while the latter suggests they consider it no more than a form of test-taking. The purpose of this approach is to determine which dimension of writing the students pay the most conscious attention to, to get an impression of the level of investment the students have in developing their epistemic language skills, and whether this investment is of a personal or economical nature. As addressed in sections 2.2.4 and 2.3.3, what aspect of writing the students pay the most attention to will affect their ability to learn the 'target language', which in this case is the Academic Standard. In addition, as addressed in sections 1.2, 1.3, 2.2.3, 2.2.4, and 2.3.3, the underlying motivations for changing or adding linguistic abilities inevitably affects one's general understanding of the world, ability to relate to it, and one's own perceived and displayed identity.

The questions are based off a study conducted by Delcambre and Donahue (2012) on Belgian and French students. Their study aimed to map the students' experiences and understandings of the texts they produce relative to their respective fields and levels of study. A separate study was also done on U.S. students, but using different methodology and with slightly different aims. The overarching purpose of the project as a whole was to "offer different ways to understand concrete manifestations of students' writing experiences as theorized [earlier in their article]" (Delcambre & Donahue 2012: 138). Since their study addressed slightly different issues than mine, reformulations of their original questions were necessary.

Question 13, 14, and 15 in my questionnaire were based off Delcambre and Donahue's questions 1, 3 and 4 respectively. The original formulation of their question 1 reads "in your current studies, what types of writing do you produce?" (Delcambre & Donahue 2012: 147). This has been adapted for question 13 of my questionnaire and changed into a multiple-choice question which reads "in your current studies, what types of texts do you usually write for assignments? Check any genre you feel apply" (see Attachment 1). They are then given 5 options – *Essays*, *Research articles*, *Stories*, *Reviews*, and *Response papers* – and can check multiple boxes for their answer. The motivation behind the changes

and subsequent form of the question is twofold; first to determine which genres the two groups usually write in, including where these genres differ. What types of texts the students indicate writing on regular basis will also enable us to gauge what type of relationship they might have with the writing they produce, including their establishment of authorial voice and sense of 'self' in their texts (see section 1.3, 2.2.4, and 2.3). If one of the student groups indicate that they usually write essays and stories, we can assert that they might be used to employing a more vernacular rhetoric, as these genres allow for more personal approaches to descriptions, examples, and points of view (Elbow 2008). If the other group of students then indicate that they usually write research articles and response papers, they will be used to a much more epistemological rhetoric where they employ a more objective structure and written voice. The differences in responses here will provide a good reference point for discussion when analyzing the data from the following two questions, which will measure what concerns and priorities the students bring with them into the composition process.

Question 14 of the questionnaire is based off Delcambre and Donahue's question 3, and concerns what the students pay the most attention to in their own writing. Their original question asks; "In the writing you produce at the university, to what do you pay the most attention?" (2012: 147), and provides the table in Figure 3.1 below with the instruction to "indicate the five most important dimensions, from number 1 (most important) to number 5 (least important)" (2012: 148). The adapted question featured in this project's questionnaire has an interactive drag-and-drop format with the same purpose. It asks the students; "In the writing you produce for your classes, what do you pay the most attention to? Take a moment to read over the options listed below, then drag them into the box and put them in order of importance, 1 being most important and 10 being least important to you" (see Attachment 1). The dimensions are similar to the ones used by Delcambre and Donahue, but with a few edits in the formulations. The largest changes are the removal of 'handwriting', as most writing exercises are done on computers, and addition of 'citing authors' and 'citing texts' to the *Formal clarity* dimension. This change also led to the removal of *Citations* as a separate dimension. The *Style* dimension was also removed because of its vague nature, and because the *Clarity of discourse*, *Articulations*, and *Originality* dimensions cover most

Figure 3.1: Delcambre and Donahue's dimensions of student writing (2012: 148)

	Expressing personal opinion
	Originality
	Clarity of discourse—introductions, conclusions, examples
	Formal clarity (handwriting, formatting, paragraphing...)
	Technical correctness (syntax, word choice, spelling, etc.)
	Discussion of required reading
	The accuracy of your answer
	Reformulation of the texts you read
	Style
	Articulations (connections, transitions) among the parts of your text or between concepts, ideas presented
	Citations (citing authors, citing excerpts from texts)
	Knowledge

of what I understand to be the dimension's intended meaning. Other changes include specifying 'to assignment' in the *Accuracy of answer* dimension, slight reformulation of the *Reformulation of the texts you read* dimension along with the addition of 'and include in paper', and changing the *Knowledge* dimension to the more specific *Displaying knowledge on the topic*. These changes bring the dimensions down from 12 in Delcambre and Donahue's version to an even 10 in the present questionnaire. In addition, though the question asks the students to list the dimensions in order of importance from 1 to 10, it also says they are only required to rank at least six dimensions in order to complete the question. The purpose of the reformulation of the question and specific dimension aims to make the question address the students more directly. This is meant to encourage them to list their own personal priorities in their writing process rather than what they feel their evaluators might prioritize while evaluating, which is addressed by the next question.

Question 15 of the questionnaire is based off Delcambre and Donahue's question 4, and concerns the students' understanding of what their evaluators emphasize when judging their written work. Delcambre and Donahue's original question asks the students; "Indicate the three dimensions of writing which determine, according to you, the grade you receive from the person who corrects your writing. Classify these in order of importance" and encourages them to relay three dimensions from the previous question (Delcambre & Donahue 2012: 148). In the present questionnaire, the question reads; "Of the options on the previous question, pick the three options you think your professors find most important in the writing you produce", and provides a check-box list of all the dimensions the students were asked to rank in the previous question. Comparing the highest ranked dimensions of question 14 to the options the students pick here will show how the student separate their writing from the evaluation process. This is a vital part of determining what type of relationship the students have to the writing they produce – if the three options picked here are the same as the highest ranked dimensions in the previous questions, we can assert that the students' main concern is what their evaluators will think of their writing, rather than what they personally can get from developing their skills in epistemic writing. This would indicate that they view their writing exercises in largely the same terms as other forms of test-taking, not as an exercise in personal expression.

The approach these three questions take to gauging the students' relationship to their writing provides insight into the how the two students groups relate to their writing differently and/or similarly. The main purpose is to gauge whether or not they see their writing process as a method of expression of knowledge, exploration of knowledge, or expression of self. If, for example, the students indicate that they prioritize dimensions relating to the more personal aspects of writing – such as *Expressing personal opinion*, *Originality*, and *Displaying knowledge on the topic* – we can assert that they are invested in the writing they produce as an expression of self. Depending on how the answers to what they personally focus on overlap or deviate from what they experience their professors focusing on, we can determine how their higher-education experiences encourage these attitudes. This will provide a measure of the students' motivation for learning academic discourse, whether the motivation comes from the instruction or the students themselves,

and how it predisposes them to achieve eventual academic literacy (discussed in sections 1.2, 1.3, 2.2.4, and 2.3).

The most immediate issue of these three questions is their sizes, especially question 14. As they appear towards the end of the questionnaire, the students might answer them a bit impatiently and not spend the time to give accurate responses. This will have to be considered when analyzing the data. The responses will however provide good indications for how the students experience their writing in the context of their educational setting. The genres they engage in are usually decided by the university course program, and will inadvertently affect how they relate to the composition process – essays, especially in U.S. institutions, allow for a much more personal approach to the presentation of ideas, arguments, and theories than the more stringent conventions of research articles or examination papers of Norwegian universities.[16] The more personal engagement underlying essay writing encourages a more intimate connection between the writer and the writing process. This could be beneficial as an initiator of the development of an academic mindset (see sections 1.4, 2.2.4, and 2.3.2, and 2.3.3), as the students are taught to engage in the discourse as- and for themselves rather than simply for the sake of recasting information on their professor's terms.

As mentioned in the introduction of this section, there is some overlap in the function of the questions with regards to what types of issues they address. These are the most apparent in question 10 and 11 of the questionnaire. I have categorized these questions as being in the second part of the questionnaire, addressing the students' understanding of academic writing. These questions ask the students if and at what times in the writing process they receive feedback from their professors, and what types of feedback they receive if they do. These questions were primarily included here because they, like the preceding questions in this part, are inspired by Lightbown and Spada's list of 10 questions. In addition, they can provide insight into the students' understanding in the sense that they ask what type of

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[16] This observation is based off personal experiences; having attended both universities where the questionnaire was distributed – the U.S. institution for an undergraduate program and the Norwegian for a master's degree and psychology courses – the differences I experienced incited the interest in the issues addressed in this thesis.

information they are provided by the 'fluent' language instructor in the classroom context. They can however also function as a way to measure and determine how much and what kind of *modified input* the students receive, which figures into the interaction aspect the first four questions were modeled to address. In addition to these questions, it can be argued that questions 1 and 3, asking how much writing the students do and what portion of it is edited prose, address the students' relationship to their writing in addition to the original purpose of measuring their interactions with the target language. Students who indicate that they spend a significant amount of time writing might have a very established sense of themselves as authors, which can affect the relationship to the academic writing they produce and how they respond to feedback on their assignments. Students who spend little to no time writing outside of required assignments on the other hand might have little to no personal investment in the writing they produce, and therefore not a determinable relationship to it. This overlap is however slightly less direct than the dual function of question 10 and 11, as one could use the data to make assertions about their relationships to academic writing but not to draw any informed conclusions. It will however be interesting to see whether or not there is a correlation between the students' expressed levels of interaction and their inferred personal relationship to academic writing in the classroom context.

Though some of the questions have dual functions, the overlaps are coincidental, and do not take away from the function of the questionnaire as a whole. If anything, it adds to the questionnaire's function within the overarching issue of this thesis – explaining and addressing writing instruction in higher education in terms of language acquisition concepts and models. The separation of focus between the three 'parts' of the questionnaire is done mostly for practical purposes. Each part of the questionnaire allows us to measure the most important enablers of language acquisition – availability of input and interaction, type of input and interaction, the students' understanding of academic discourse both as a discourse and with regards to their level of academic literacy, and their relationship to the process and subsequent products. All of these factors will have an effect on their individual motivations for learning, which subsequently will impact their potential for achieving fluency.

The overarching purpose of the questionnaire as a whole is largely inspired by the Lightbown and Spada's intention behind their ten questions – to determine the context for

L2 learning and the learner's characteristics, and use this information to determine the L2 learnability potential. When combined with Delcambre and Dunahue's (2012) study of students' experience and understanding of academic writing in different contexts and at different stages of development, the questionnaire effectively bridges the gap between what we know about issues of language learning and how we study student development of academic writing processes. The data from this questionnaire should therefore provide a nuanced and insightful understanding of the students' experience with academic discourse on all levels of engagement, which will help determine their potential for eventually achieving the Academic Standard.

3.2 The students and their experiences

The questionnaire was distributed among two separate student groups at two separate times – a group of Norwegian students taking a course in English grammatical development at the University of Bergen (henceforth UiB for Universitetet i Bergen) during the spring semester of 2017, and two groups of American students in ENG100 classes at Eastern Connecticut State University (henceforth ECSU) during the fall 2017 semester. A total of 11 students from the UiB group and 13 students from the ECSU group responded to the questionnaire. The questionnaire was also made available to them in a way that ensured no personal, individual contact between them and myself as the lead researcher; the UiB students were addressed by myself from the lecturer's podium on two separate occasions during a break in their course and provided the link and password on the projected screen, while the ECSU students received the link per e-mail from the professor of their ENG100 course. No participatory compensation was offered to the UiB students, while the ECSU students were offered extra credits towards their course evaluation by their professor should they choose to participate. The possible effects this might have had on participation and subsequent responses will be addressed later. Each student logged in and filled out the questionnaire on their own accord, without any guidance or offer of support should they have questions. This was done to ensure that the students answered honestly and on the basis of their own understanding of the questions and experiences with what they were asked about, rather than

risking them being influenced by my own or the ECSU professor's opinions, knowledge, or expectations of the topic.

The groups were chosen for two main reasons – to gain insight into how EFL and ESL students might experience English academic discourse differently, and where these differences might occur, and to gain insight into how two different approaches to writing instruction might affect the students' understanding of- and abilities with writing in higher education. In this section, we will look at the students' experiences with writing instruction in higher education. The students at both universities have all participated in a mandatory course in academic writing, both being taught under the same label; ENG100. The courses at each university are however structured differently, and these differences might have an influence on how the students understand and approach the questionnaire questions. We will then look at the student groups individually. Section 3.2.1 will address the ECSU students and 3.2.2. addresses the UiB students. The individual descriptions will include assessing their linguistic background, their scholastic background, and how these might affect their experiences with English academia, and make individual assessment of the student groups' experiences. Using this information we will make some preliminary predictions of what types of answers we might get from the two groups based on what has been discussed in this section and in section 3.1 as a whole. Section 3.2.3 will provide an overview of the responses from both groups. Section 3.3 will then reflect on the data and draw some final conclusions for this chapter.

The ENG100 course at Eastern Connecticut State University takes a general approach to the writing they instruct, as they aim "to provide [students] with a solid set of writing skills and strategies that can serve [them] throughout college and in the world of work" (*ENG100 or ENG100Plus?* 2011). Over the course of their semester the students are instructed to compose various types of texts in stages of drafts, read each other's drafts to provide feedback, and refer to writing tutors to get feedback on their texts. At the end of the semester they are required to compile a portfolio of texts they have written over the course of the semester, along with a letter where they reflect on their experiences and perceived progression as writers. This type of writing instruction can therefore be categorized as a WAC-motivated course (see section 2.3.1). The course emphasizes the development of an

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understanding of writing as a process of continuing reflection and exploration, not necessarily tied to any specific set of conventions even though some adherence to academic writing conventions is expected. It further encourages the students so see the texts as an extension of themselves, as well as a means of measuring their developing experiences as academics.

The ENG100 course at the University of Bergen has a more specialized purpose than the structure of the ECSU class. The course aims to teach the students the very specific conventions and approaches employed in two distinct fields of English studies represented at the university – literature and linguistics. The course is therefore divided in two; the first half of the semester is spent addressing the methods of analysis and composition commonly found in English literature studies, and the second focuses on the research and methodology employed in English linguistic studies. The goal is for students to be able to "employ linguistic tools and techniques in writing of academic texts in English concerning linguistic topics", as well as "use oral and written skills in the study of literature as an academic discipline" (*Introduction to English Studies* 2017; translated from Norwegian). The students are tasked with writing two 1500-word texts, one for each of the addressed fields, and are evaluated based on their performance in both papers. It is not specified in the course description whether or not the course includes any work-in-progress focused activities like the draft reading and commenting included in the ECSU ENG100 course. The course description only specifies that a draft of each of the papers needs to be submitted and approved in order for the students to qualify for the semester exam. This course therefore employs a clear WiD-type approach to writing instruction (see section 2.3.1), as it aims to prepare the students specifically for further work in the English studies offered at UiB. There is little to no attention paid to the self-reflective and explorative dimensions of writing emphasized in the ECSU course; the writing instruction is offered purely for practical purposes.[17]

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[17] It should be noted that the description of this course is based solely off the course description on the UiB page and brief conversations with the professors teaching the course. While I have participated both as a student and as an in-class writing tutor in ENG100 courses at ECSU, I have no personal experience with the ENG100 course at UiB.

Addressing the differences in experience the two student groups have had with writing instruction can help provide insight into how different approaches to the teaching of academic writing affect the students' relationship to the writing they produce. Fostering a more personal engagement with the writing might help the students see their writing as an extension of the process of academic exploration, rather than just a culmination of the research they have already compiled. On the other hand, emphasizing a more convention-driven approach might help the students develop a more structured approach to epistemic writing. In the U.S. field of composition studies, this issue is addressed as the difference between teaching writing as a process versus teaching it as a product (addressed in sections 1.1 and 2.3.1), and it will be interesting to see how two qualitatively different approaches might produce different understandings and relationships to university writing between the student groups. There are however other differences between the two groups that will weigh heavily on their experiences with academic writing, especially English academic writing.

As discussed in section 1 and its subsections, the linguistic backgrounds of students entering into higher education settings will always have an effect on their experience and understanding of the language employed in academic discourse. This is true even if (perhaps especially if) the academic discourse is performed in the same language as the students' first language. We established in section 1.1 that the cultural diglossia in English-speaking societies favors the Standardized varieties for formal expressive purposes, while the vernacular dialectal varieties are rarely utilized outside of social contexts. SWE has asserted itself as the preferred language variety across English cultures, and as such has become the main vehicle for English academic discourse production (discussed in sections 1.1–1.4). This will therefore be the language both student groups in this study will be expected to adhere to in their writing exercises. Any English-speaking student entering into higher education where academic discourse is presented and conducted in English therefore needs to have some level of preestablished familiarity with SWE in order to be able to get an effective start on learning the conventions underlying the Academic Standard (section 1.4). However, the separate student groups have not had the same type of training in and experiences with English writing before entering higher education. These differences must be addressed for us to understand how they might affect the students' experiences with university writing.

3.2.1 ECSU students background and predictions

The American student group attending ECSU will have been introduced to SWE during previous years of schooling as a part of their learning to read and write, and have been tasked with basic academic activities such as literary analysis and essay writing as part of their high school English instruction. The extent of their involvement and level of proficiency will however vary as they move on to higher education settings. This might place them at a disadvantage in the introductory writing classrooms, where the emphasis might be placed primarily on their syntactical and pragmatic abilities rather than developing their grammatical proficiency. The ECSU ENG100 course does employ a preliminary placement test in order to measure the proficiency levels of their students. Based on their performance in this test they are assigned to either ENG100, which is the basic introductory writing course, or ENG100P (P = Plus), which includes two additional hours per week in the form of a weekly writing-lab course meeting where two writing tutors are present and available to assist in addition to their professor. In addition to this, much of the time in their regularly scheduled classes is set aside for the students to be able to write or read over and provide feedback on other students' assignments. This way, whatever lack of structural and grammatical abilities some of the students might possess can be addressed alongside the other aspects of their writing instruction as the semester progresses.

As discussed in section 1.3, the biggest issue for vernacular speakers of English in adopting the conventions of English academic writing is their unfamiliarity with the form, both in terms of the strict grammatical features of SWE and the syntactical expectations of academic discourse. Depending on what vernacular varieties of English the students might be familiar with, and how different these varieties are from SWE, the adaption of an academically structured style of writing and thinking might be a bigger challenge for the students than the introductory writing course is equipped to address. As Graff (1999: 140) indicates, the adaption of an academic writing process and style "comes at the cost of a personal makeover that may not look attractive" to the students, and that is given that they realize the full scope of the expectations that go into producing and presenting authentic academic discourse (sections 1.3, 1.4, 2.3.2, and 2.3.3). Going off what Bartholomae (1986)

notes about the writing samples he discusses, students entering into the university often have a very skewed understanding of what expectations their professors have towards the writing tasks they perform, and therefore emphasize the wrong aspects of their writing (see section 1.3). With these considerations in mind, we can make some rough assumptions of how the ECSU students might respond in the different parts of the questionnaire. After these predictions have been presented, we will see if their actual responses confirm them. The full data set for the ECSU students' responses is provided in Attachment 2.[18]

In the first few questions, concerning how much English reading and writing the students do on a daily basis and how much of it is edited prose, we can go off the assertion made in section 3.1. Any student who wishes to maintain a productive focus on their studies will spend at least 1-2 hours each day reading and writing edited prose. Since the ENG100 courses at ECSU are structured to provide ample time for personal writing, the students might indicate that they spend more than this. Their responses also depend on how conscious the students are about grammar and syntax in their more casual writing, such as note-taking and text-based messaging. As we mentioned above, the ECSU students were offered extra credits towards their final evaluation in the course by their professors, so we will have to assume that the collected responses are from students who are concerned about performing in their college courses. Because of this, we have to address the predictions based on two different assumptions; first, that they will be the type of students who take extra care in the reading and writing they do, and will most likely spend more time on it than less engaged students, or second, that they are the type of student who are concerned about their abilities, or be unwilling to invest the same amount of time and effort in their schoolwork, and therefore want to boost their chances of receiving a passing grade. Predictions will be made for each type of student group separately, but data will be discussed conjointly.[19]

Concerning the students' amount and type of *interaction* with target language forms (question 1–4), we would expect the students in the first category, the 'focused students', to

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[18] Because only one of the students from either group responded to the optional Question 16, its data has not been included in either of the data compilations in Attachments 2 and 3.

[19] The reason for this is that, since the questionnaire responses were anonymous, there is no way to determine whether the students who responded belong to either of these categories of students, or if a combination of the two responded.

indicate that they spend an average of around 2–3 hours reading, and another 2–3 hours writing edited English prose. The reason for the high number here is because they would most likely include note-taking for their daily courses into account in their estimates, which significantly adds to the potential time spent writing per day. The other group, the 'concerned students', might also spend a great deal of time reading and writing edited prose, but we will place their estimates a bit lower due to our inclusion of the less willing students in this category, so at around 1–2 hours for each activity. We can expect that if they spend a significant amount of time reading and writing, they will indicate that most of the reading and writing they do is in edited prose, as consuming and producing academic or other edited texts tend to be time demanding processes.

A high focus on reading and writing would mean that the students possess a considerable *understanding* of academic discourse and its language form. It would also indicate a basic understanding of genre differences in literary versus academic texts, as well as an awareness of variation of style within academic writing. However, since both the categories of students we distinguished above are very inexperienced with academic writing, some care needs to be taken in what to expect from their understanding of the four terms they are asked to define in question 5. The more focused students might provide an understanding of the terms applications in more formal texts, but they learned and use English primarily in social environments. A majority of social definitions will therefore be expected. With regards to question 6, asking them to pick which of two texts they see as more 'academic', American university writing, especially in the introductory writing courses, often emphasize the development of a more personal relationship to their writing, and encourage a more personal essay-style in their writing assignments (discussed in section 1.1). Both student categories will probably therefore either choose Elbow's text, or the 'both' option after reading the provided text-samples. With the structure of the ENG100 course being so supportive they will likely indicate experiencing little to no difficulty understanding the lecture topics or finishing assignments in time (question 8–9), and that they receive mostly satisfactory feedback from their professors both before and after the assignment is finished (questions 10–12).

Concerning the students' *relationship* to the writing they produce, we can expect indications of personal investments in the texts they produce. As indicated in the previous paragraph, American university writing is often based around essays, so we can expect most if not all the students to choose this genre in question 13. This genre also encourages a more personal approach to writing than for example research articles and reviews, which will probably affect the students experience and understanding of academic writing conventions. Based in this, the students could indicate that they focus on either of two sets of dimensions in question 14. If they are confident in their own writing skills, they will probably place the *Clarity of discourse*, *Formal clarity*, and *Articulations* as the top three priorities, and the *Technical correctness*, *Displaying knowledge on the topic*, and *Reformulation of read texts* as the least important. These are the types of dimensions a student who has a firm grasp on what they want to say, as well as confidence in their epistemological writing skills, will prioritize in their writing. If the students are more self-conscious and worried about the impression they might give their professors, they might have a more convention-driven focus in their writing. The list of prioritized dimensions would most likely be a reversal of the suggestion above for such students, and they might replace the *Displaying knowledge* and *Reformulation* dimensions with *accuracy of answer to assignment* and *discussion of required reading*. Seeing as these students are very inexperienced, the last combination of responses should be expected. In addition, seeing as it is a part of the ECSU ENG100 course plan that the students are provided continuous feedback from both professors and tutors while writing for their assignments, and the questionnaire was distributed within the context of this course, there should be few discrepancies between what the students focus on and what they think their professors expect to see in their writing (question 15). The students might however also consider the experiences they have in other classes when responding to question 15, which could affect which dimensions they pick. This might also affect their responses to question 10 and 11 which asks what type of feedback they receive and at what time, seeing as there is an "depends on what class the assignment is for" option available.

3.2.2 UiB students background and predictions

The first point that needs to be addressed regarding the Norwegian students is that they were not enrolled in the ENG100 course at UiB at the time the questionnaire was distributed to them. This course is only offered during the fall semester, and the survey was, as stated above, distributed in the spring 2017 semester. There were two reasons for this – first and most importantly was the limited time and resources. The questionnaire itself was not completed until the end of the fall 2016 semester, after being reviewed by the professors participating in UiB's work-in-progress seminar for master students in the English Linguistics program. At the time of completion, the semester was over. The data collected in the following spring semester was done in a classroom consisting of about 60 students, two thirds of which had participated in the ENG100 course the semester before. The hope was that the majority of the responses would be from these students. The data will however be considered on the basis of the two-thirds representation in the class, and reviewed with the assumption that one third of the students have varying degrees of experience with English academic writing.

As addressed in sections 1.2, 1.3, and 2.3, the experiences of ESL student with standardized English varieties are different than those of EFL students. This assertion is based in the use of standardized language samples in foreign-language instruction in schools, which is maintained throughout the various levels of schooling. In the Norwegian school system, English is a part of the compulsory core curriculum from grade 1 (age 6–7) to 11 (age 16–17), and becomes a selective course for the last two years of the general-studies curriculum in the Norwegian upper secondary school.[20] All students who go through the Norwegian schooling system therefore gain at least a basic understanding of English. Only those who include English as a selective course for 12th and 13th grade in upper secondary education qualify for English programs in higher education, so all students who participated in the study can be assumed to have at least 13 years of experience with English education, in addition to the fall semester of 2016. Most of this education is centered around reading,

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[20] For a more detailed insight of the Norwegian schooling system, see the pamphlet provided by the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research. Link is provided in the list of references.

writing, and reciting English texts, written in adherence to standardized forms, though very little of it is epistemic writing in the form of essays or research articles similar to that expected in higher education programs. It must however be considered that these students specifically chose to enroll in English studies for their higher education, which means we can assume they are above-averagely interested in the English language, and are therefore most likely proficient speakers and writers of English, if not academically experienced. On the basis of this, we can make the following predictions regarding their responses.

With regard to their *interactions* with target language forms (questions 1–4), we can assert that since they are enrolled in an English-studies program, all their assigned readings and writing exercises will be in English. Going back to the assumptions regarding how much time devoted students might spend on their schoolwork, we expect these students to indicate spending similar amounts of time reading and writing English texts as the U.S. students – roughly 2–3 hours per day for each activity. This includes note-taking in classes, as well as while reading in their personal time. Since the UiB students' primary source of structured English linguistic development has been the classroom, we can assume that more of the writing and reading they do is convention driven than for the U.S. students, who consistently use English for social purposes as well as structured expression. A larger amount of the English the UiB students interact with will therefore presumably be edited prose.

In terms of their *understanding* of academic writing, the Norwegian students might have encountered a relatively larger amount of formal vocabulary in their experiences with English than the U.S. students, as a larger portion of their sum-exposure to English has been through structured, standardized texts. The Norwegian students, though less fluent in English, might therefore show a better understanding of the terms introduced in question 5. When it comes to the text samples in question 6, it is hard to say what the students might choose. Seeing as they have had a very convention-focused introduction to academic writing in their ENG100 course we might infer that they will chose Anderson's more conventional text, or perhaps the 'both' option. Their explanations of their choices will provide interesting insight on this point. With regards to how they experience their lectures and assignments, and the feedback they receive on their writing (questions 8–12) both from ENG100 and other courses, the general UiB class structure does not emphasize work-in-progress exercises. In

addition to this, especially in undergraduate programs, most classrooms are significantly larger than those at ECSU,[21] so there is less opportunity and motivation to ask questions during lectures, and less time available for individual assessment and follow-up on progress on their larger assignments. Because of this, we can assume that their responses to these questions will be that they have slightly more difficulty understanding the lectures and assignments than the ECSU students, mostly receive feedback after assignments are due, and that they might find this feedback lacking.

With regards to their *relationship* to their writing, considering the points discussed above, the students will most likely indicate a less personal relationship to their writing than the U.S. students. They might still indicate that most of their writing assignments are essays (question 13), but this would most likely be because their understandings of the other genres (see Attachment 1) might make them seem irrelevant to undergraduate-level work. They will most likely emphasize dimensions such as *Accuracy of answer to assignment*, *Displaying knowledge on the topic*, and *Formal clarity* in question 14, as the majority of their writing-centered instruction focus on end-of-semester assignments and examinations. These aspects will most likely be chosen based on what they understand their professors and other evaluators expect from them, so we can expect them to choose the same three dimensions or similar in question 15.

Since there is no way of telling what type of students might have responded to the questionnaire before the data from both groups has been reviewed, the predictions made here and in the section addressing the ECSU students are largely based on personal impressions and the topics discussed in the preceding sections. Whether or not these are accurate will show to what degree these issues can be discussed without measuring them up against the students' actual experiences. Their responses will offer insight into the experiences and potential difficulties they have with the academic writing they are tasked with in their respective higher education institutions, which will help us understand how to better address them in terms of the topics of this thesis.

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[21] ECSU English courses typically consist of between 20 and 30 students, while the UiB courses tend to be between 40 and 60 students. Again, this is based on personal experiences and conversations with staff at each university.

3.2.3 Questionnaire responses

A total of 13 students from the ECSU group responded to the questionnaire, while only 11 students from the UiB group completed it once started. The data here will only serve as a minor indication to what types of trends we could expect to see in larger samples from these types of student groups. This section will go through the responses of both groups simultaneously, addressing each question in turn. [22] A discussion of the results will be provided in the next section.

Of the thirteen American students, as many as 6 indicated that they spend *more* than 3 hours each day writing in English, and another 5 students indicated they spent 1–2 hours each day. They further indicated that they spend a decent amount of time reading English texts, with 4 spending 1–2 hours, 6 spending 2–3 hours, and 3 spending more than 3 hours each day. By comparison the Norwegian students were more evenly distributed, but ended up in the lower end on time spent writing with 4 claiming to spend less than one hour a day, 3 spending 1–2 hour, and 2 each indicating 2–3 and more than 3 hours each day. They did however indicate a higher amount of time spent reading English texts than the American students, with 5 indicating that they spend more than 3 hours per day, and the rest of the options receiving 2 responses each. The two groups responded pretty much equally regarding how much of the writing they do is edited prose. All the responses were distributed between the 'all', 'most', and 'little' options, with a distribution of 3, 6, and 4 in the ECSU group and 2, 6, and 3 among the UiB students. On the question of how much of the reading they do is edited prose, however, the two groups responded very differently. A large majority of the student group, with 8 responses, indicated that 'little' of the reading they do is edited prose. Of the remaining 5, four of them indicated 'most', and only one chose the 'all' option. The Norwegian group was much more evenly distributed by comparison, with 4 picking the 'little' option, 5 chose the 'most' option, and 2 indicating that 'all' the reading they do is edited prose.

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[22] The full data sets are provided in attachments 2 for the ECSU students and 3 for the UiB students.

On the students' understandings of the words provided in question 5, the UiB students provided both more consistent responses, and more formally correct understandings of the words than the ECSU group. In their definitions of the word *Propose*, the American students provided a wide range of definitions from "give show", "idea", and "motivation reason", to the more correct "offer" or "suggest offer". One of the students provided an explanation reading "to make an offer of some sort like I propose this position to you instead of this one", which shows an understanding of the practical applications of the phrase. The UiB students provided much more consistent answers, most of which were simply "suggest". Two of the Norwegian students provided the social understanding of the word as the act of asking for someone's hand in marriage, which is interesting seeing as none of the Americans referred to this application of the word. These types of responses recurred for the word *context*, with the ECSU students' responses ranging from "statement" and "anything that we read or write" to "situation or background" and "background information, details". The UiB students' responses were a bit less consistent in on this word, varying from "connection", "understanding", and "a summarization of what the text is about" to "situation", "bigger picture wholeness", "surroundings", and other more in-depth and accurate descriptions of the term. Though their responses to this word were more varied and less accurate, the UiB students still showed a more generally accurate understanding of the definition and applications of the word.

The term *discipline* provided some interesting responses, in the way that both the student groups provided very consistent responses, but very different understandings of the term. The ECSU students referred to the words' definition as 'establishing obedience or correct behavior', with descriptions such as "learning to obey the rules", "self-control strictness", and "studious, hardworking". Only two of the American students referred to its application as meaning 'field or area of study', describing it as "-teaching-direction" and "a form of knowledge". The latter application of the word was the main definition referred to by the UiB students, with descriptions such as "subject", "profession", and "area, field". One student referred to this application of the phrase, but in terms of athletic rather than scholarly disciplines with the description "branch sport". Three of the Norwegian students referred specifically to the application of the word as referring to disciplining someone with the

descriptions "order", "how well an individual will follow rules", and "to learn someone, ie. A child the right behavior", while one description, "behavior", was unclear, but will be assumed to imply this application. The definitions provided for the word *academic* were consistent and similar in both student groups, with almost all responses referring to something related to school/schooling, education, or higher education. There were however slight differences in specificity in the two groups, with the UiB students referring more consistently to "higher education" and "theoretical, research based", while the ECSU students referred to more general word such as "school", "education", and "grades and school work".

Question 6 and 7 was where the students showed the largest divide in the two student groups' responses. In question 6, eight out of the thirteen ECSU students chose Elbow's text, two chose Anderson's, and three chose the 'both' option. In comparison, none of the UiB students chose Elbow's text, while 9 of them picked Anderson's, and the remaining two chose the 'both' option. It should be noted, however, that some of the reasons provided by the American group in question 7 indicates that they had some issues reading the texts in the images, which some have indicated directly affected how they made their choice. In addition, only two of the students clarify which text they chose (Elbow's) before they explain their reasons for choosing it. The data from this group is therefore not reliable enough to draw any specific conclusions, but will still be addressed in the next section. Among the students in the UiB group, however, the complete avoidance of Elbow's text makes it easy to distinguish which text is being addressed in question 7, and the two who chose 'both' also clarify this in their response. The Norwegian students' responses also offer some interesting points of discussion for the next section.

In question 8, the ECSU students indicate with a clear majority, 10 yes to 3 no, that they find "the lectures and assignments [they] receive clear and easy to follow and interpret", while the UiB students are a bit closer, with 7 yes and 4 no. Both groups indicate that they have adequate time to research and write before their deadlines in question 9, the ECSU

group with a 11 yes to 2 no majority, and the UiB group with an 8 yes to 2 no majority.[23] In question 10-12, however, the students again separate in their responses. Question 10 asks the students to indicate at what time they receive feedback on their assignments. As many as 10 of the ECSU students replied that they receive feedback 'along the way', while the remaining 3 choosing the 'depends on what class the assignment is for' option, meaning none of the students receive feedback 'only when the assignment is over'. Of the 11 UiB students, however, only one indicated receiving feedback 'along the way', with the remaining ten splitting evenly among the two other options. In the following questions, the ECSU students largely indicated receiving feedback regarding both grammatical issues and content (question 11) and were largely satisfied with the feedback they receive (question 12). In their responses to question 11, the UiB students also indicate the feedback they receive concern both content and grammar, but the responses vary more both with regards to what contexts the feedback is provided and method of delivery. There is also more variation in their response to question 12, with some indicating they receive the feedback they feel they need, while others express some concerns either with the timing or that the feedback does not adequately explain how they can improve.

Both groups indicate primarily writing essays in question 13. The ECSU group however responded with a wider variety of other genres than the UiB group. Since this question allowed them to pick more than one option, there were a higher total number of answers than students for both groups, meaning that at least some of the students in each group chose more than one option. The 13 American students registered a total of 30 responses between the five options. All of them chose the essay option, 6 of them also indicated "research papers", 1 indicated writing "stories", 4 crossed off "reviews", and another 6 picked "response papers". In comparison, the UiB students totaled only 14 responses, 9 of which were for "essays", 2 for "research articles", 1 for "reviews", and 2 for "response papers". This means not all the Norwegian students feel essays are and appropriate

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[23] It is not known why there are only 10 out of the 11 total responses registered on this question, as it shows as "mandatory" in the questionnaire settings. All the other questions have however registered all eleven responses.

terms for the genre of articles they write, and none of them feel they are tasked with creative writing exercises such as stories.

In question 14, where the students were asked to rank which dimensions of writing they focus on in their writing, the answers again showed an interesting amount of overlap. The ECSU students ranked the *Accuracy of answer to assignment* dimension as their most important, with an average ranking of 3.5. Following this came *Displaying knowledge on the topic* with 4.15, and *Originality* with 4.55. It should be noted however that even though *Originality* ranked third on average, it received more number-one rankings than all the other dimensions, with a total of 4, and that the fourth ranked dimension, *Clarity of discourse*, received an average ranking of 4.58, placing it just .03 points behind *Originality*. The three lowest ranked dimensions were *Technical correctness* with and average rank of 5.92, *Expressing personal opinion* with 6.15, and *Reformulation of texts you've read and include in paper* with 7.27. American students' top three ranked personal dimensions does however not include the dimension that received the most votes in question 15, where they were asked to pick the dimensions they thought their professors found most important. Highest ranked here, with 7 votes, was the *Formal clarity* dimension, which they themselves ranked fifth with an average of 5.23. Their own top three dimensions each received 5 votes, as well as the *Clarity of discourse* dimension.

The UiB group also ranked *Accuracy of answer* highest, with an average ranking of 2.45, followed by *Clarity of discourse* with 2.9 and *Displaying knowledge on the topic* with 3.78. Where the Norwegian students differ from the Americans however is in their ranking of *Originality*. While the ECSU students ranked it first more times than the other dimensions, and third on average, the UiB students placed it third-to-bottom with an average of 7.33. Their bottom two were however the same as the American students with *Expressing personal opinion* averaging 7.5 and *Reformulation* at the bottom with 7.88. The Norwegian students also indicated a different emphasis in their own writing than what they perceive their professors to focus on. Their two highest voted dimensions in question 15 were *Accuracy of answer*, similarly to their own, with 9 votes, and *Displaying knowledge* on second with 5 votes. The third highest here however was *Formal clarity* with 4 votes, one more than their own second-ranked dimension *Clarity of discourse* received.

3.3 Conclusions

With regards to the predictions, there was a high degree of consistency overall between the predicted and provided responses. The most noticeable point of discrepancy between the ECSU predictions and responses was the majority of the students indicating that "little" of the reading they do is edited prose (question 4), while it was predicted that most of the reading they do would be school related, and therefore of edited texts. This could be the result of an underestimation of how much time the students spend on social media, where the interactions and text-posts are often written in more vernacular style. It can also be a result of the students misunderstanding "edited prose" as meaning strictly books and articles, as these were brought up as examples in the question. Either way, the response indicates that the students take little initiative to engage with target-language input, or at least see themselves as not doing so, which could have unfortunate consequences for their ability to develop target-language literacy (discussed in sections 2.2.2, 2.2.5, and 2.3.3). The definitions they provided in question 5 also displays a much more vernacular than formal understanding of the words listed, which might be connected to their response in question 4. This point will be addressed further later in this section.

In the UiB groups' responses, there were two points where the predictions differed noticeably. The first discrepancy came up in the responses to the very first question, regarding how much time the students spent writing in English on average each day. Since the question specifically included note-taking, text-based messaging, and assignment writing, they were predicted to answer mostly in the 2–3-hour range. Most of the students however indicated spending less than 2 hours per day, with 4 of them even indicating "less than 1 hour", the same amount as the "2–3 hour" and "more than 3 hours" alternatives combined. It seems it might have been a bit ambitious to assume they spend so much time writing in English, especially considering Norwegian would be their primary language for socially motivated written communication. Another point this prediction failed to address, though it was brought up in the predictions for question 14, was that most of the writing assignments at the UiB English undergraduate programs are end-of-semester examinations

and assignments, which means the students probably devote less time to writing over the course of the semester. Seeing as this limits the amount of output the students produce, as well as how regularly they produce it, it could have adverse effects on their ability to progress as writers, as well as the rate of acquisition of target-language forms (addressed in sections 2.2.2, 2.2.4, 2.2.5, and 2.3.3). The students did however indicate spending about the same amount of time reading English as the ECSU students did, and that most of it is edited prose. Combining this with the relatively high level of formality in the definitions provided in question 5 indicates sufficient exposure to L2 features, but more data would be needed to draw any conclusions.

The second point of discrepancy was with regards to their experiences with lectures, assignments, and feedback on assignments. Though the students did indicate, as predicted, slightly higher difficulty understanding lectures and assignments, they indicated more variety in their responses with regards to how much feedback they get and at what times. Five of the eleven students indicated that they only receive feedback along the way, which was the response we expected the majority to give, but the same number of students chose the "depends on what class" option, and one even indicated receiving feedback "along the way". As a result, the descriptions of the type and timing of the feedback they received were much more varied than predicted, and offered some unexpected insight into the experiences of this group of students. The most interesting aspect of this was how similarly the UiB students responded to the ECSU students on these points, which was otherwise a rare occurrence.

The points where the two student groups indicated the highest similarities in understandings or priorities were in the answers that appealed more to their personal concerns as students, such as the writing dimensions they emphasized in their own writing and the types of information they felt were lacking in the feedback they received. The similar concerns regarding the feedback they receive were all reflecting basic aspirations of higher performance in order to achieve better grades. The writing dimensions they emphasize similarly, *Displaying knowledge* and *Accuracy of answer*, directly relate to achieving more favorable evaluations, so this similarity is not surprising. These specific similarities are

simply a result of the thing all respondents across both groups have in common – they are students.

Another interesting similarity is how both student groups voted the *Formal clarity* dimension into the top-three factors they perceive their professors to emphasize in their writing – the American students even ranking it highest – while it reached neither of their own lists of highest prioritized dimensions. Considering the clarifying elements of the dimensions were slightly different in the two questions[24], the students might have related to its implied connotations differently in each. Another possible explanation might be classroom experiences; if the students have experienced a relatively high amount of instruction in or feedback on issues relating to formatting, citations, and structuring of paragraphs, they might see perceive their professors as assigning its role in academic writing as having more value than they themselves do. If so, this could be a symptom of the *social distance* issue described in section 2.3.3. Further research into how these dimensions are discussed in the classrooms and addressed in feedback would provide some interesting insight on this topic. The last of the similarities of note between the two groups is how they devalue the *Expressing personal opinion* dimension of academic writing, both ranking it second to last in their lists of emphasized dimensions. Considering almost all respondents across both groups indicated that they write essays as part of their higher-education writing assignments, a slightly more personally loaded genre than say research articles, we might have expected to see this dimension scoring a bit higher. This particularly applies to the American students, whose ENG100 course program actively encourages more expressive writing and often relates the assignment topics to personal experiences. Seeing as academic discourse is essentially large-scale conversations between members of fields of knowledge, arguing for or against points they *personally* see as more or less valid, this attitude should ideally be reflected in the students' understandings of academic writing. Why it is not could be a result of any number of reasons, some of them addressed in section 3.1 regarding process- versus convention-driven writing instruction, and others covered by researchers cited in this thesis, but not included as part of the topics addressed (see Elbow 1993 and

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[24] Question 14 described it as *Formal clarity (formatting, paragraphing, citing authors, citing texts)*, while the content of the parentheses were shortened to *formatting, citing, paragraphing, etc.* in question 15.

Rinck & Boch 2012, for some examples). Most of the interesting points of discussion in this data set is however not in the similarities between the two student groups, but rather in the points where they differ. What these differences are, and the possible reasons for them, can be informed by many of the issues discussed in the previous sections of this thesis.

There were three major differences in the way the two student groups responded. These can be most easily addressed in the responses to questions 5, 6, and 14. Since the previous paragraph deal with the similarities in the responses regarding dimensions of writing, we will continue addressing question 14. One of the most noticeable differences between the two groups was how they ranked the *Originality* dimension. In the UiB students' list it was one of the lowest ranked dimensions, with an average of 7.33, just .55 above the *Reformulation* dimension, which both groups ranked lowest. The ECSU students however ranked it third, as well as giving it more top rankings than any other dimension. This might be a result of the very different approaches to writing instruction represented at the two universities. The more convention-driven approach to writing instruction found in the UiB ENG100 is designed specifically to prepare the students for further studies at the university, while the ECSU course approaches writing with the more general purpose of "providing [the students] with a solid set of writing skills and strategies that can serve [them] throughout college and in the world of work" (ECSU ENG100 course description). These are directly comparable with WiD and WAC structured courses (see section 2.3.1, 2.3.3, and 3.2), and can understandably create very different understandings of writing in higher education. Seeing as question 13 shows the ECSU students engage with a much wider variety of genres in their university writing assignments than the UiB students, we can assume that this attitude is a result of a more general understanding of what academic writing is, and therefore what the role of the author is within academic texts. The UiB students have much narrower experiences with writing instruction, and therefore emphasize structural dimensions over the more creatively inclined. This is further demonstrated by the difference in response to question 6.

Not one of the UiB students picked Elbow's text as being "more 'academic'", which is most likely a direct result of their explicitly conventional understanding of what academic writing is. The explanations for why they chose Anderson's text, provided in question 7,

confirms this, as most of the comments allude to the inclusion of references, appearance of formality, using "relevant terminology", "higher lexical density", and "better syntax" as determining factors for their choices (see Attachment 3). The three ECSU responses that were determinably in favor of Elbow's text however point to more general features of the text to justify their choice, such as it being "clear and concise", how it "goes into depth in each reason given", and that "the way it was written […] the passage was put together well". Some of their other descriptions, though hard to ascribe to either of the texts specifically, point to similar features like how the text "provides thought and evidence to that claim", and was "clear to read and understand" (see Attachment 3). These descriptions indicate fundamentally different approaches to determining what makes a text academic – the UiB students determining based off structural features of the text as a whole, while the ECSU students focus more on the epistemological efficiency of the language. However, because of the small sample size, it is unclear whether this general attitude is a direct result of the type of the instruction the students have received. Another possible source of these attitudes could be more general differences in attitude to the language being employed. The UiB students have a more fundamentally formal English background as a result of their experiences learning it in structured classroom settings (section 3.2.2), while the ECSU students all learned it through and primarily use it for social interaction (sections 2.2.2, 2.2.3, and 2.3.3). This might create different understandings and expectations towards the language as a whole, as the responses to question 5 indicates.

The responses in question 5 provided interesting insight into how different linguistic and cultural backgrounds can generate different types of explicit linguistic knowledge. The two groups did not simply provide different definitions for the words provided, but there was a striking amount of consistency in the responses of each group. The UiB students showed a much more formal understanding of the four words, generally more able to provide either more than one application or precise descriptions of single applications for the various words. In addition, more of the students provided the same synonyms in their descriptions of the words' meanings (se especially responses for "propose" in Attachment 3). This is a clear indication the students have established a more formal set of explicit English knowledge based on learning through similarly structured instructional methods, i.e. the

Norwegian schooling system. On the other hand, the ECSU students provided both more vernacular definitions and social applications of the words, as well as a much wider range of synonyms and explanations of meaning. "Discipline" and "academic" did show more consistency in responses and accuracy of responses, but the meanings provided for "discipline" referred almost exclusively to one application of the word as a means of harsh teaching or punishment. These types of responses reflect a broader set of explicit linguistic understanding, which is the type we can expect to get from a group wit varied linguistic backgrounds. One possible reason for this is how the two groups of students relate differently to the standard forms of English.

As addressed in section 1.3, the teaching of standardized varieties to vernacular speakers of a language is referred to as establishing *bidialectalism* in speakers. Bidialectalism is metaphorically derived from *bilingualism*, which refers to the establishment of two separate languages in one speaker. These two terms, bilingualism and bidialectalism, essentially covers the differences in how the two student groups experience and acquire the linguistic content of SWE. The purpose of question 5 was, as addressed in section 3.1, partially to determine what Lightbown and Spada referred to as *metalinguistic awareness*, referring to the learners' abilities to "define a word" (2011: 29). Metalinguistic awareness therefore refers to the learner's explicit linguistic knowledge (see section 2.2.2), and is used as a method of determining the learners' ability for acquiring L2 proficiency. Even though it was clarified in section 3.1 that metalinguistic awareness as a concept is not directly applicable to the process of discourse learning, the purpose of question 5 was to take the essential function of the term and apply it to the process of acquiring academic discourse, or 'target-language' proficiency. In the case of the UiB students, the original term is applicable and relevant, and any issues they display can be categorized as lack of metalinguistic awareness to a degree. The ECSU students however are not in the process of developing bilingual abilities, but *bidialectal* abilities, as in acquiring proficiency in standardized variety of their vernacular language. In their responses in question 5, however, they display a heavy reliance on vernacular and social rather than formal understandings of the words they were presented with, meaning that they either are not aware of the more formal definitions of the words, are unable to recall them, or simply referred to their

vernacular understanding on the term in order to offer a description. This can be related to another issue addressed in section 2.2.1, regarding some of the ways a learner's first language can interfere with the acquisition of target-language features and items. One of the terms used in this discussion was *language transfer*, which is used when "there is evidence that the linguistic features of one language influence those of another language" (Ellis 2015: 118). In order to draw a metaphorical understanding of how the differences in responses between the two student groups, we can therefore apply these terms in order to relate the issues a second-language group might experience in testing of metalinguistic awareness to the issues of the 'second-dialectal' group in this context. They would however be tested on their 'metadialectal' awareness, and experience 'dialectal' transfer as a disruptor of acquisition.

It is clear from the responses of the two groups that they have significantly different understandings of what academic writing entails, and have been introduced to two very different approaches to explain the concept. The incorporation of approaches to measuring learners' predispositions for acquiring second-language forms yielded interesting comparative result in the two groups, as well as highlight the different linguistic experiences they bring into their responses. It is clear that the different approaches the students have experienced in their writing instruction have provided quite different points of departure for the students' further development towards acquiring the Academic Standard. In order to determine what types of challenges these two different starting points might bring to the learning process, further comparative studies of the students in transition would have to be conducted. On the basis of the data collected from such studies, we can further compare the process of discourse learning to the transitional stages of language learning addressed in section 2.1 and 2.2.2.

4. Conclusions and Directions for Further Research

This thesis set out to address the issues surrounding writing instruction in higher education in a way that appears underrepresented in more traditional approaches to the topic. The method of this approach was twofold; first, the thesis discussed sociolinguistic research into changes in language as employed in different social, political, and professional contexts, and how these changes cause significant variety of forms within languages, as well categorical divisions in how and where these forms are used. This was done in order to explain how members utilizing one form of a language within this spectrum might experience the other forms as unfamiliar and unrelatable, with the largest degrees of separation potentially making the two forms seem almost unrelated. This was how we established the Academic Standard as a language variety, as well as explaining some of the issues vernacular speakers of a language might bring to the process of learning it. Second, the thesis provided an understanding of the way researchers in various fields have addressed and attempted to describe how the process of learning languages unfold, both historically and more currently. This was done in order to establish a set of concepts, models, and ideas with which to address the complicated process of teaching and learning the preestablished conventions of the Academic Standard.

As addressed on multiple occasions, the goal was never to infer that the process of learning a new discourse variety is the same process as learning a new language. At best, the two issues can be compared on the basis that they are essentially both processes involving the acquisition of new linguistic knowledge, as well as the ability to apply this knowledge in practice. The goal was simply to look for possible ways the two processes could be addressed in similar terms, in order to either provide a basis for new ways of understanding one or both issues, or to provide a starting point for further comparative research. Though this is an ambitious task, the paralleling of issues, theories, and terminology is undeniable, and section 2.3.3 showed various ways in which the issues surrounding academic

enculturation, among others, could be described in terms of models and concepts particularly from the field of second language acquisition research. In addition to this, section 2.1.5 referred to one way that the issue of *audience*, as addressed in composition studies, already has been reflected upon using concepts from first language acquisition research (see Elbow 1987).

All in all, this thesis has demonstrated a clear connection between the issues students experience in higher education with relating to the "language of the university" (Bartholomae 1986). Further research will have to be done in order to determine its applicability to writing classroom strategies, but the ideas presented here offer plenty of places to start. Key among these would be to study the specifics regarding the issue of social distance between the students and their professors addressed in section 2.3.3. Putting these in the context of some of the academic enculturation research mentioned in section 2.3.2. Other approaches could be to expand upon some of the analogical terms presented in this thesis, i.e. *interdiscourse* and *metadialectal awareness*, in order to further develop their applicability to the transitioning from introduction to fluency with academic writing.

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Attachments

Attachment 1: Questionnaire layout and questions

*
On average, how many hours per day do you spend writing in English? This includes all types of writing, including texting, e-mails, assignment, personal note-taking, etc.

○ Less than 1 hour

○ 1–2 hours

○ 2–3 hours

○ More than 3 hours

---

* On average, how many hours per day do you spend reading English texts? This includes all types of texts, including messages, e-mails, books, news articles, academic articles, blog posts, etc.

○ Less than 1 hour

○ 1–2 hours

○ 2–3 hours

○ More than 3 hours

---

* Of the writing you do, how much of it is done in a way where you focus on spelling and grammar?

○ All

○ Most

○ Little

○ None

---

* How much of the reading you do is edited prose, i.e. books, articles, and other types of texts that have been revised before being made accessible to you?

○ All

○ Most

○ Little

○ None

---

* Read the following words, and provide 1–2 synonyms or a description of your understanding of the words in the boxes below. 1. Propose

```
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│                             │
│                             │
│                             │
└─────────────────────────────┘
```

* 2. Context

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┌─────────────────────────────┐
│                             │
│                             │
│                             │
└─────────────────────────────┘
```

* 3. Discipline

```
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│                             │
│                             │
│                             │
└─────────────────────────────┘
```

* 4. Academic

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┌─────────────────────────────┐
│                             │
│                             │
│                             │
└─────────────────────────────┘
```

* Which of these text excerpts do you find to be more 'academic'? If you find them equally academic, select the 'both' option.

* Why did you find the text you chose to be the more academic text? OR Why did you find them equally academic?

* In your opinion, are the lectures and the assignments you receive clear and easy to follow and interpret?

○ Yes

○ No

In your opinion, do you feel like you have access to enough research and time to prepare and write your writing assignments before they are due?

○ Yes

○ No

* When you write your assignments, do you get feedback from your professors along the way or only when the assignment is over?

○ Along the way

○ Only when assignment is over

○ Depends on what class the assignment is for

* What type of feedback do you generally get from your professors? Do they usually comment on your grammar or the content of your papers?

* Is there any type of feedback you wish you received more of from your professors?

* In your current studies, what types of texts do you usually write for assignments? Check any genre you feel applies.

☐ Essays

☐ Research articles

☐ Stories

☐ Reviews

☐ Response papers

* In the writing you produce for your classes, what do <u>you</u> pay the most attention to? Take a moment to read over the options listed below, then drag them into the box and put them in order of importance, 1 being most important and 10 being least important to you.

Expressing personal opinion
Originality
Clarity of discourse – introduction, conclusions, examples, etc.
Formal clarity (formatting, paragraphing, citing authors, citing texts)
Technical correctness (syntax, word choice, spelling, grammar, etc.)
Discussion of required reading
Accuracy of answer to assignment
Reformulation of texts you've read and include in paper
Articulations (connections and transitions) among the parts of your paper or between concepts and ideas you present
Displaying knowledge on the topic

Drag your choices here to rank them

Choose at least 6 choices to rank them

* Of the options in the previous question, pick the three options you think your professors find most important in the writing you produce

☐ Expressing personal opinion

☐ Originality

☐ Clarity of discourse – introduction, conclusions, examples, etc.

☐ Formal clarity (formatting, citing, paragraphing, etc.)

☐ Technical correctness (syntax, word choice, spelling, grammar)

☐ Discussion of required reading

☐ Accuracy of answer to assignment

☐ Reformulation of referenced texts

☐ Articulation (connections and transition between parts of text and ideas within text)

☐ Displaying knowledge on the topic

Is there anything else you want to say that you feel was not asked for in the previous questions? Please use this box to explain what and why you feel it's relevant to the topics addressed in this questionaire.

[Done]

100%

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Attachment 2: Data sets for ECSU students questionnaire responses

Question 1:

On average, how many hours per day do you spend writing in English? This includes all types of writing, including texting, e-mails, assignment, personal note-taking, etc.

Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
Less than 1 hour	1	7.69%					
1-2 hours	5	38.46%					
2-3 hours	1	7.69%					
More than 3 hours	6	46.15%					
Total	**13**	**100 %**					

Question 2:

On average, how many hours per day do you spend reading English texts? This includes all types of texts, including messages, e-mails, books, news articles, academic articles, blog posts, etc.

Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
Less than 1 hour	0	0%					
1-2 hours	4	30.77%					
2-3 hours	6	46.15%					
More than 3 hours	3	23.08%					
Total	**13**	**100 %**					

Question 3:

Of the writing you do, how much of it is done in a way where you focus on spelling and grammar?

Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
All	3	23.08%					
Most	6	46.15%					
Little	4	30.77%					
None	0	0%					
Total	**13**	**100 %**					

Question 4:

How much of the reading you do is edited prose, i.e. books, articles, and other types of texts that have been revised before being made accessible to you?

Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
All	1	7.69%					
Most	4	30.77%					
Little	8	61.54%					
None	0	0%					
Total	**13**	**100 %**					

Question 5:

Read the following words, and provide 1-2 synonyms or a description of your understanding of the words in the boxes below.

1. Propose

11/08/2017	29346906	Idea
11/07/2017	29311449	motivation reason
11/06/2017	29263209	goal intent
11/06/2017	29255491	motivation
11/06/2017	29238729	Give show
11/05/2017	29221410	To put forward an idea
11/04/2017	29208811	Offer
11/04/2017	29208300	offer request
11/03/2017	29191903	-suggest -offer
11/03/2017	29189303	To make an offer of some sort like I propose this position to you instead of this one
11/03/2017	29188250	reason for writing an assignment
11/03/2017	29187609	Ideas,
11/03/2017	29187572	Suggest Offer

2. Context

11/08/2017	29346906	Information
11/07/2017	29311449	condition
11/06/2017	29263209	text background
11/06/2017	29255491	statement
11/06/2017	29238729	Text, what the article is saying and included in it
11/05/2017	29221410	The material of a subject.
11/04/2017	29208811	Subject
11/04/2017	29208300	material text
11/03/2017	29191903	This is the situation of what an event, person, place or thing is in.
11/03/2017	29189303	Situation or background
11/03/2017	29188250	anything that we read or write
11/03/2017	29187609	Background information, details
11/03/2017	29187572	Background

3. Discipline

11/08/2017	29346906	Tought
11/07/2017	29311449	order strictness
11/06/2017	29263209	strictness self-control
11/06/2017	29255491	obeying rules
11/06/2017	29238729	Punishment
11/05/2017	29221410	A form of knowledge
11/04/2017	29208811	Rules
11/04/2017	29208300	self-control strictness
11/03/2017	29191903	-teaching -direction
11/03/2017	29189303	Learning to obey the rules
11/03/2017	29188250	A person that follows rules and instructions
11/03/2017	29187609	Studious, hardworking
11/03/2017	29187572	Control

4. Academic

11/08/2017	29346906	Education
11/07/2017	29311449	school education
11/06/2017	29263209	university college
11/06/2017	29255491	educational
11/06/2017	29238729	Scholarly educational
11/05/2017	29221410	Scholary
11/04/2017	29208811	School
11/04/2017	29208300	scholarly student
11/03/2017	29191903	-education -hardworking
11/03/2017	29189303	Education, classes
11/03/2017	29188250	Grades and school work
11/03/2017	29187609	School, grades
11/03/2017	29187572	Educational

Question 6:
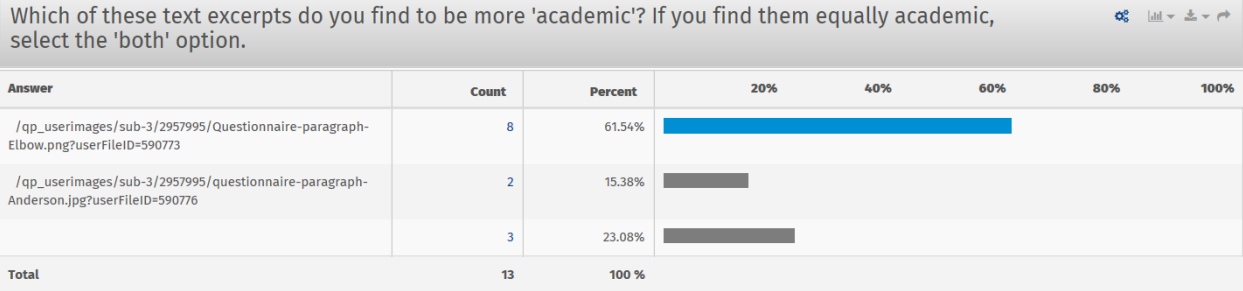
Which of these text excerpts do you find to be more 'academic'? If you find them equally academic, select the 'both' option.							
Answer	**Count**	**Percent**	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
/qp_userimages/sub-3/2957995/Questionnaire-paragraph-Elbow.png?userFileID=590773	8	61.54%					
/qp_userimages/sub-3/2957995/questionnaire-paragraph-Anderson.jpg?userFileID=590776	2	15.38%					
	3	23.08%					
Total	**13**	**100 %**					

Question 7:

Why did you find the text you chose to be the more academic text? OR Why did you find them equally academic?

Why did you find the text you chose to be the more academic text? OR Why did you find them equally academic?		
11/08/2017	29346906	I found that text more acedemic because it is more clear to read and understand.
11/07/2017	29311449	i feel like people can learn more from a picture
11/06/2017	29263209	I chose this one because I could actually read parts of the article.
11/06/2017	29255491	wasn't fully able to read text image was blurry
11/06/2017	29238729	The text I chose seemed to be more cause and effect
11/05/2017	29221410	The way it was written, how the font was clear and the passage was put together well. And the diction that was used in the context.
11/04/2017	29208811	I couldn't really read them, especially the second one.
11/04/2017	29208300	Because it has a beginning, middle and then a conclusion
11/03/2017	29191903	I found the first one more academic because, it was clear and concise. Also I found it more academic because it made more sense.
11/03/2017	29189303	Because the first text goes in depth in each reason given
11/03/2017	29188250	it was the easiest to read
11/03/2017	29187609	It had an idea and it goes off on it and explains it in detail. It provides thought and evidence to that claim.
11/03/2017	29187572	More formal

Question 8:
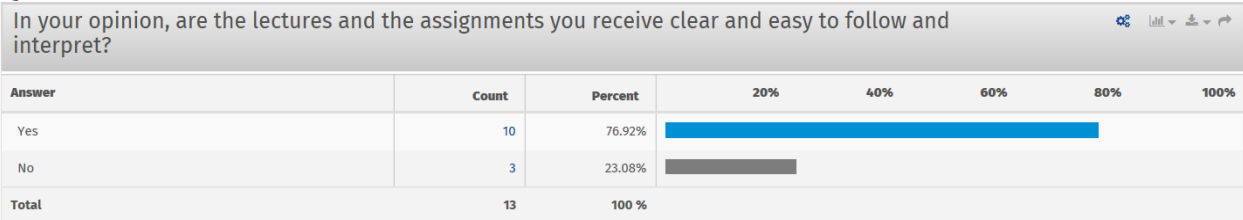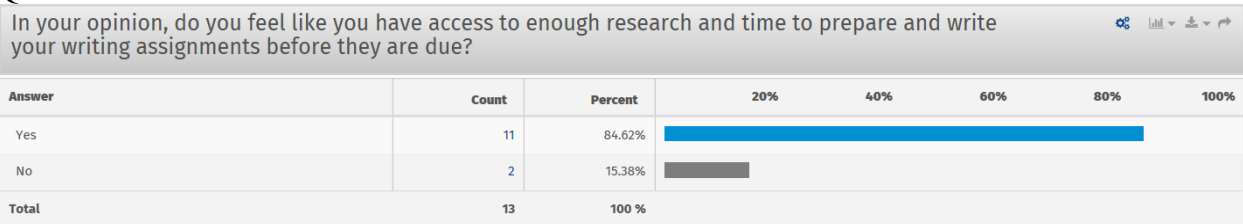
In your opinion, are the lectures and the assignments you receive clear and easy to follow and interpret?							
Answer	**Count**	**Percent**	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
Yes	10	76.92%					
No	3	23.08%					
Total	**13**	**100 %**					

Question 9:

In your opinion, do you feel like you have access to enough research and time to prepare and write your writing assignments before they are due?							
Answer	**Count**	**Percent**	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
Yes	11	84.62%					
No	2	15.38%					
Total	**13**	**100 %**					

Question 10:

Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
When you write your assignments, do you get feedback from your professors along the way or only when the assignment is over?							
Along the way	10	76.92%					
Only when assignment is over	0	0%					
Depends on what class the assignment is for	3	23.08%					
Total	13	100 %					

Question 11:

What type of feedback do you generally get from your professors? Do they usually comment on your grammar or the content of your papers?

		What type of feedback do you generally get from your professors? Do they usually comment on your grammar or the content of your papers?
11/08/2017	29346906	The type of feedback I get from my
11/07/2017	29311449	they usually comment on m grammar and way i can improve the writing.
11/06/2017	29263209	My professor have few comments about grammar but they mostly comment about the content of the paper.
11/06/2017	29255491	Feedback on how to elaborate on topic, and ways to unfold on topic and dig deeper
11/06/2017	29238729	She comments and helps us plug in the criteria we need for the assignment
11/05/2017	29221410	It depends on the professor.
11/04/2017	29208811	Content of papers
11/04/2017	29208300	Edits on drafts we turn in or one on one help.
11/03/2017	29191903	They comment on grammar, as well as ways that I could make my writing stronger by adding in information in places.
11/03/2017	29189303	They comment on both context and grammar
11/03/2017	29188250	comments on how to improve your paper and grammar corrections
11/03/2017	29187609	They don't normally comment on my grammar. The type of feedback I get is to be more specific.
11/03/2017	29187572	Comments that help me expand my writing and grammar

Question 12:

Is there any type of feedback you wish you received more of from your professors?

Is there any type of feedback you wish you received more of from your professors?

11/08/2017	29346906	N/A
11/07/2017	29311449	not really
11/06/2017	29263209	They might give me ideas on how to structure the paper.
11/06/2017	29255491	n/a
11/06/2017	29238729	No
11/05/2017	29221410	I enjoy getting useful feedback of all areas I can work on in a paper.
11/04/2017	29208811	No, not really.
11/04/2017	29208300	No
11/03/2017	29191903	I wish I received more feed back on how to get a higher grade and how to really earn an A.
11/03/2017	29189303	Not really my professor is doing great
11/03/2017	29188250	more feedback for grading to see where we stand on the paper
11/03/2017	29187609	No. I feel like the feedback they provide helps me and makes me a better writer.
11/03/2017	29187572	What type of grade I'm at while writing the paper so I can work harder to improve it

Question 13:

In your current studies, what types of texts do you usually write for assignments? Check any genre you feel applies.

Answer	Count	Percent
Essays	13	43.33%
Research articles	6	20%
Stories	1	3.33%
Reviews	4	13.33%
Response papers	6	20%
Total	30	100 %

Question 14:

In the writing you produce for your classes, what do you pay the most attention to? Take a moment to read over the options listed below, then drag them into the box and put them in order of importance, 1 being most important and 10 being least important to you.

	Average Rank
Expressing personal opinion	6.15
Originality	4.55
Clarity of discourse - introduction, conclusions, examples, etc.	4.58
Formal clarity (formatting, paragraphing, citing authors, citing texts)	5.23
Technical correctness (syntax, word choice, spelling, grammar, etc.)	5.92
Discussion of required reading	5.27
Accuracy of answer to assignment	3.5
Reformulation of texts you've read and include in paper	7.27
Articulations (connections and transitions) among the parts of your paper or between concepts and ideas you present	5.83
Displaying knowledge on the topic	4.15

Data table:

Rank Value	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8		9		10	
Expressing personal ...	7.69%	1	0.00%	0	15.38%	2	7.69%	1	7.69%	1	15.38%	2	15.38%	2	0.00%	0	20.00%	2	20.00%	2
Originality	30.77%	4	7.69%	1	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	7.69%	1	0.00%	0	23.08%	3	10.00%	1	0.00%	0	10.00%	1
Clarity of discourse ...	7.69%	1	23.08%	3	15.38%	2	0.00%	0	15.38%	2	7.69%	1	7.69%	1	0.00%	0	10.00%	1	10.00%	1
Formal clarity (form ...	15.38%	2	0.00%	0	23.08%	3	15.38%	2	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	15.38%	2	20.00%	2	10.00%	1	10.00%	1
Technical correctnes ...	0.00%	0	15.38%	2	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	23.08%	3	23.08%	3	15.38%	2	20.00%	2	0.00%	0	10.00%	1
Discussion of requir ...	15.38%	2	0.00%	0	7.69%	1	7.69%	1	7.69%	1	23.08%	3	0.00%	0	20.00%	2	0.00%	0	10.00%	1
Accuracy of answer t ...	15.38%	2	23.08%	3	7.69%	1	15.38%	2	23.08%	3	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	10.00%	1	0.00%	0	0.00%	0
Reformulation of tex ...	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	7.69%	1	15.38%	2	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	7.69%	1	20.00%	2	40.00%	4	10.00%	1
Articulations (conne ...	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	7.69%	1	30.77%	4	15.38%	2	7.69%	1	7.69%	1	0.00%	0	20.00%	2	10.00%	1
Displaying knowledge ...	7.69%	1	30.77%	4	15.38%	2	7.69%	1	0.00%	0	23.08%	3	7.69%	1	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	10.00%	1

Question 15:

Of the options in the previous question, pick the three options you think your professors find most important in the writing you produce								

Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
Expressing personal opinion	2	5.56%					
Originality	5	13.89%					
Clarity of discourse - introduction, conclusions, examples, etc.	5	13.89%					
Formal clarity (formatting, citing, paragraphing, etc.)	7	19.44%					
Technical correctness (syntax, word choice, spelling, grammar)	2	5.56%					
Discussion of required reading	1	2.78%					
Accuracy of answer to assignment	5	13.89%					
Reformulation of referenced texts	2	5.56%					
Articulation (connections and transition between parts of text and ideas within text)	2	5.56%					
Displaying knowledge on the topic	5	13.89%					
Total	**36**	**100 %**					

Attachment 3: Data sets for UiB students questionnaire responses

Question 1:

On average, how many hours per day do you spend writing in English? This includes all types of writing, including texting, e-mails, assignment, personal note-taking, etc.

Answer	Count	Percent
Less than 1 hour	4	36.36%
1-2 hours	3	27.27%
2-3 hours	2	18.18%
More than 3 hours	2	18.18%
Total	11	100 %

Question 2:

On average, how many hours per day do you spend reading English texts? This includes all types of texts, including messages, e-mails, books, news articles, academic articles, blog posts, etc.

Answer	Count	Percent
Less than 1 hour	2	18.18%
1-2 hours	2	18.18%
2-3 hours	2	18.18%
More than 3 hours	5	45.45%
Total	11	100 %

Question 3:

Of the writing you do, how much of it is done in a way where you focus on spelling and grammar?

Answer	Count	Percent
All	2	18.18%
Most	6	54.55%
Little	3	27.27%
None	0	0%
Total	11	100 %

Question 4:

How much of the reading you do is edited prose, i.e. books, articles, and other types of texts that have been revised before being made accessible to you?

Answer	Count	Percent
All	2	18.18%
Most	5	45.45%
Little	4	36.36%
None	0	0%
Total	11	100 %

Question 5:

Read the following words, and provide 1-2 synonyms or a description of your understanding of the words in the boxes below. 1. Propose

1. Propose

05/04/2017	23279057	Suggest
05/04/2017	23266870	Suggest
04/20/2017	22687723	Suggest
04/05/2017	22331108	suggestion
04/04/2017	22323626	To ask for hand in marrige What you need to do to Get engaged
03/28/2017	22164517	suggest
03/28/2017	22163487	Suggest, to suggest a course of action.
03/28/2017	22163398	Meaning Goal
03/28/2017	22163370	Request, ask
03/28/2017	22163354	Suggest
03/28/2017	22163324	Suggest Being engaged

2. Context

05/04/2017	23279057	A summarization of what the text is about
05/04/2017	23266870	What forms the setting of an idea or an event, what you need to have full comprehension of it
04/20/2017	22687723	Bigger picture Wholeness
04/05/2017	22331108	connection
04/04/2017	22323626	Story What it's about Content
03/28/2017	22164517	situation
03/28/2017	22163487	What the situation was when something was said or done.
03/28/2017	22163398	Surroundings Take into considering
03/28/2017	22163370	Surroundings
03/28/2017	22163354	Understanding
03/28/2017	22163324	History Time and place

3. Discipline

05/04/2017	23279057	Behavior
05/04/2017	23266870	Specific subject
04/20/2017	22687723	Subject
04/05/2017	22331108	profession
04/04/2017	22323626	To learn someone, ie. A child the right behaviour
03/28/2017	22164517	area, field
03/28/2017	22163487	How well an individual will follow rules.
03/28/2017	22163398	Subject Something you are mastering
03/28/2017	22163370	Knowledge about something or specializing in something
03/28/2017	22163354	Order
03/28/2017	22163324	Branch Sport

4. Academic

05/04/2017	23279057	Texts with well used grammar about relevant, researched topics
05/04/2017	23266870	Theoretical Someone who has an univesity degree
04/20/2017	22687723	Educated Formal
04/05/2017	22331108	scientific
04/04/2017	22323626	School related To learn
03/28/2017	22164517	theoretical, research based
03/28/2017	22163487	If something is described as academic then you will learn something if you participate.
03/28/2017	22163398	Higher education Syntax
03/28/2017	22163370	School, high level studies
03/28/2017	22163354	Formal
03/28/2017	22163324	Study Student

Question 6:

Which of these text excerpts do you find to be more 'academic'? If you find them equally academic, select the 'both' option.							
Answer	**Count**	**Percent**	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
/qp_userimages/sub-3/2957995/Questionnaire-paragraph-Elbow.png?userFileID=590773	0	0%					
/qp_userimages/sub-3/2957995/questionnaire-paragraph-Anderson.jpg?userFileID=590776	9	81.82%					
	2	18.18%					
Total	**11**	**100 %**					

Question 7:

Why did you find the text you chose to be the more academic text? OR Why did you find them equally academic?		
Why did you find the text you chose to be the more academic text? OR Why did you find them equally academic?		
05/04/2017	23279057	I felt like it was better formulated with a greater stucturure than the latter
05/04/2017	23266870	They are both quite heavy to read, they use specific terminology and long sentences. the both include a conclusion
04/20/2017	22687723	The 2nd presents its sources along its way. It also uses relevant terminology more than the 1st.
04/05/2017	22331108	The second text showed more respect to other opinions on this subject.
04/04/2017	22323626	Text nr 1 used words such as "I", "because", "we". He uses I to much, in text 2 it's only being used in the end. He's sentences was also really long. Looking at text 2, overall it looks more tidy, I find it more persuasive to read. There's being used different people and in () it sais the year, which I connect to more "serious" writing, when it has actually facts.
03/28/2017	22164517	references
03/28/2017	22163487	Both of the texts seemed to discuss their topics similarily
03/28/2017	22163398	More references, better syntax,
03/28/2017	22163370	it had higher lexical density and looked more academic on my phone..
03/28/2017	22163354	It was more formal
03/28/2017	22163324	Because it had a smaller font and it looks messier.

Question 8:

In your opinion, are the lectures and the assignments you receive clear and easy to follow and interpret?							
Answer	**Count**	**Percent**	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
Yes	7	63.64%					
No	4	36.36%					
Total	**11**	**100 %**					

Question 9:

In your opinion, do you feel like you have access to enough research and time to prepare and write your writing assignments before they are due?							
Answer	**Count**	**Percent**	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
Yes	8	80%					
No	2	20%					
Total	**10**	**100 %**					

Question 10:

When you write your assignments, do you get feedback from your professors along the way or only when the assignment is over?							

Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
Along the way	1	9.09%					
Only when assignment is over	5	45.45%					
Depends on what class the assignment is for	5	45.45%					
Total	11	100 %					

Question 11:

What type of feedback do you generally get from your professors? Do they usually comment on your grammar or the content of your papers?

What type of feedback do you generally get from your professors? Do they usually comment on your grammar or the content of your papers?

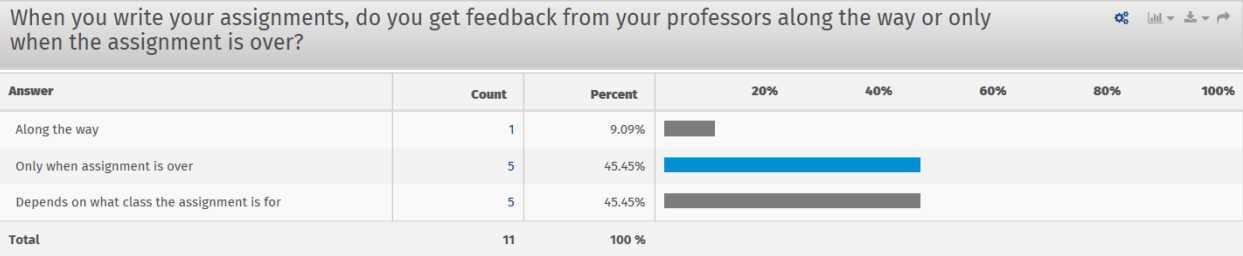| 05/04/2017	23279057	They comment on both, but in literary essays, I get most comments on the content of the text
05/04/2017	23266870	Depends. Usually mistakes are pointed out, but grammar is usually only commented upon i linguistic courses
04/20/2017	22687723	Usually, they just comment the content. However, there has been some cases where my grammar has also been corrected, which is nice.
04/05/2017	22331108	Not usually
04/04/2017	22323626	Yes, altough we haven't had any obligatory asignments, they do comment on the non-obligatory papers, which is great.
03/28/2017	22164517	depends on the assignment and course, but usually both
03/28/2017	22163487	Content of the paper.
03/28/2017	22163398	General feedback. Ticked off boxes 'high' 'medium' 'low' level
03/28/2017	22163370	Yes
03/28/2017	22163354	Both
03/28/2017	22163324	Depends on the class, but usually the content (unless it is a grammar course).

Question 12:

Is there any type of feedback you wish you received more of from your professors?

Is there any type of feedback you wish you received more of from your professors?

05/04/2017	23279057	I am happy with the feedback I get.
05/04/2017	23266870	Feedback during a paper writing process, instead of after its finished.
04/20/2017	22687723	None that comes to mind.
04/05/2017	22331108	Examples on how to make reason for arguments rather than wich answers that is more or less correct
04/04/2017	22323626	What's good to write on the exam, whats not etc
03/28/2017	22164517	No, I like the feedback I've gotten so far. It's been useful for further studies in the courses.
03/28/2017	22163487	No
03/28/2017	22163398	How the text could be better written
03/28/2017	22163370	How to do better.
03/28/2017	22163354	No
03/28/2017	22163324	Feedback in class, to everyone. E-mails

Question 13:

In your current studies, what types of texts do you usually write for assignments? Check any genre you feel applies.								
Answer	**Count**	**Percent**	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%	
Essays	9	64.29%						
Research articles	2	14.29%						
Stories	0	0%						
Reviews	1	7.14%						
Response papers	2	14.29%						
Total	**14**	**100 %**						

Question 14:

In the writing you produce for your classes, what do you pay the most attention to? Take a moment to read over the options listed below, then drag them into the box and put them in order of importance, 1 being most important and 10 being least important to you.

	Average Rank	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Expressing personal opinion	7.5										
Originality	7.33										
Clarity of discourse - introduction, conclusions, examples, etc.	2.9										
Formal clarity (formatting, paragraphing, citing authors, citing texts)	4.64										
Technical correctness (syntax, word choice, spelling, grammar, etc.)	5.27										
Discussion of required reading	4.89										
Accuracy of answer to assignment	2.45										
Reformulation of texts you've read and include in paper	7.88										
Articulations (connections and transitions) among the parts of your paper or between concepts and ideas you present	5.6										
Displaying knowledge on the topic	3.78										

Data table:

Rank Value	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8		9		10	
Expressing personal ...	9.09%	1	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	27.27%	3	0.00%	0	12.50%	1	25.00%	2	37.50%	3
Originality	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	18.18%	2	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	37.50%	3	12.50%	1	12.50%	1	25.00%	2
Clarity of discourse ...	9.09%	1	36.36%	4	18.18%	2	18.18%	2	0.00%	0	9.09%	1	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0
Formal clarity (form ...	9.09%	1	9.09%	1	0.00%	0	27.27%	3	27.27%	3	9.09%	1	12.50%	1	12.50%	1	0.00%	0	0.00%	0
Technical correctnes ...	18.18%	2	9.09%	1	9.09%	1	9.09%	1	0.00%	0	9.09%	1	12.50%	2	25.00%	2	25.00%	2	0.00%	0
Discussion of requir ...	18.18%	2	0.00%	0	18.18%	2	0.00%	0	9.09%	1	9.09%	1	0.00%	0	25.00%	2	12.50%	1	0.00%	0
Accuracy of answer t ...	36.36%	4	27.27%	3	9.09%	1	9.09%	1	18.18%	2	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0
Reformulation of tex ...	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	9.09%	1	9.09%	1	25.00%	2	0.00%	0	25.00%	2	25.00%	2
Articulations (conne ...	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	9.09%	1	18.18%	2	27.27%	3	18.18%	2	0.00%	0	12.50%	1	0.00%	0	12.50%	1
Displaying knowledge ...	0.00%	0	18.18%	2	36.36%	4	0.00%	0	9.09%	1	9.09%	1	12.50%	1	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0

Question 15:

Of the options in the previous question, pick the three options you think your professors find most important in the writing you produce				⚙ ▥▾ ⬇▾ ➦

Answer	Count	Percent	20% 40% 60% 80% 100%
Expressing personal opinion	2	6.45%	
Originality	0	0%	
Clarity of discourse - introduction, conclusions, examples, etc.	3	9.68%	
Formal clarity (formatting, citing, paragraphing, etc.)	4	12.9%	
Technical correctness (syntax, word choice, spelling, grammar)	3	9.68%	
Discussion of required reading	3	9.68%	
Accuracy of answer to assignment	9	29.03%	
Reformulation of referenced texts	0	0%	
Articulation (connections and transition between parts of text and ideas within text)	2	6.45%	
Displaying knowledge on the topic	5	16.13%	
Total	**31**	**100 %**	