CHAPTER 12

IN RESPONSE TO TODAY'S "FELT NEED": WAC, FACULTY DEVELOPMENT, AND SECOND LANGUAGE WRITERS

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With increased awareness of the presence of second language writers in courses and programs across the disciplines comes increased requests for faculty development focused on second language writing. Drawing from scholarship on second language writing pedagogy and theory, as well as the author's experience as an instructor of ESL writing and a WAC program director, this chapter presents approaches to working with faculty on issues related to L2 writers. After discussing alliances WAC program leaders can make with other groups on campus who work with L2 writers, this chapter presents a framework for thinking about the differences in L2 writing when compared to writing by native English speakers and approaches for working with faculty during consultations and workshops, with specific attention to shifting faculty perspectives on L2 writing from a difference-as-deficit stance (Canagarajah, 2002) to a difference-accommodated stance, and ultimately, a difference-as-resource stance (Canagarajah, 2002). Throughout the chapter, specific workshop activities and materials are shared.

> My experience with teaching ESL students is that they have often not received adequate English instruction to complete the required essay texts and papers in my classes. I have been particularly dismayed when I find that they have already completed 2 ESL courses and have no knowledge of the parts of speech or the terminology that is used in correcting English grammar on papers. I am certainly not in a position to teach English in my classes. (The problem has been particularly acute

> with Chinese/S. E. Asian students.) These students may have adequate intelligence to do well in the courses, but their language skills result in low grades. (I cannot give a good grade to a student who can only generate one or two broken sentences during a ten-minute slide comparison.)
>
> —Professor of art (as quoted in Zamel, 1995)

> For the research paper for the English class they are in for getting your writing skill better, so they will be more patient. But for the computer science class, no. They expect you to know everything, to have good writing skills. If you do not that's not their problem, right? You should go back to the ELI [English Language Institute].
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> —Undergraduate student enrolled in writing-intensive course
> (quoted in Wolfe-Quintero & Segade, 1999)

> Teachers in the disciplines who are told they do not need to know about grammar in order to use writing in their classes feel betrayed when faced with a non-native speaker's grammatical and syntactic tangles in a writing-to-learn assignment. Many WAC directors themselves feel at the edge of their competence in dealing with such situations.
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> —Susan McLeod & Eric Miraglia, 2001

The above passages illustrate a growing tension in Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) program administration: faculty are becoming increasingly aware of (and perhaps frustrated by) the presence of second language (L2) students in their classrooms and reach out to WAC program leaders for direction, L2 students enrolled in writing-intensive courses want more writing support from their instructors across the curriculum, and WAC program directors are not always sure how to respond. [1] Though research that engages both WAC and L2 writing has proliferated, the question that remains central to WAC program administrators is the question of how to implement faculty development focused on L2 writing. We have seen a number of what I term "calls to action" (Cox, 2011) —calls by scholars, typically L2 writing scholars, for WAC campus leaders to pay more attention to L2 writers in our program administration, scholarship, and faculty development (Cox, 2011; Hall, 2009; Johns, 2001; Matsuda & Jablonski, 2000). The special issue of *Across the Disciplines*, "Writing across the Curriculum and Second Language Writers: Cross-Field Research, Theory, and Program Development" (2011), which I co-edited with Terry Myers Zawacki, begins to address questions of how to develop linguistically and culturally inclusive program administration, how to inform WAC research with L2 writing scholarship, and how to investigate the writing practices and experiences of L2 students as they write across the curriculum, as does this edited collection.

But questions around how to implement faculty development remain. How can WAC program directors help faculty who come to us with concerns and questions about working with L2 writers? What do we tell faculty about L2 writing pedagogy, culturally sensitive approaches to writing assignment design, and approaches for responding to and assessing L2 student writing? How do we convince faculty not only to infuse their pedagogy with writing, an already challenging task in some cases, but also to create linguistically and culturally inclusive classrooms? And how do we WAC professionals, who often feel "at the edge of [our] competence" in this area (McLeod & Miraglia, 2001), convince ourselves that we know enough about L2 writing to do so? In this chapter, I draw from research on L2 writing development and pedagogy, as well as my own experiences as a L2 writing scholar and a former WAC program director at Bridgewater State University,[2] to share approaches to working with faculty on issues related to L2 writers. While research and theory on working with L2 writers inform this chapter, I highlight practice—concrete activities, sources of information, and handout materials that WAC program directors and L2 writing specialists can use during faculty workshops and consultations.

ONE INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

Bridgewater State University (BSU) is a teaching-mission comprehensive master's state university with, as of fall 2011, 11,294 students (with 9,552 at the undergraduate level), 316 full-time faculty and approximately 900 adjunct faculty (BSU, 2011b). I launched BSU's WAC program in spring of 2007, a program that the provost asked me to initiate in response to a newly implemented core curriculum that required that students complete a series of writing-intensive courses. Like other regional universities and community colleges, BSU enrolls relatively few international visa students: between 2006 and 2011, there were between 97 and 120 of these students enrolled (BSU, 2011b). And also like most universities, BSU does not keep track of the number of US resident L2 students. However, the local region from which 95% of BSU students are drawn (BSU, 2011b) is rich in linguistic and cultural diversity, as it is home to many immigrant communities. School profile data from the cities and towns that surround BSU show that between 21.4% and 43.9% of the students use English as a second language with 52% of these students speaking Spanish as their first language (Massachusetts Department of Education, 2011). Given this diversity, from the start of BSU's WAC program, attention to L2 student writing was interwoven into WAC programming, faculty development workshops, and faculty consultations. Below, I describe how I found allies to partner with in this work.

NATURAL ALLIES

Those charged with starting a new WAC program are often cautioned by experienced WAC directors to first get a lay of the land: pay attention to who on campus is already invested in student writing, who in the past has already worked on WAC initiatives, and who is doing related work in faculty development. We know that it is critical to do this groundwork before initiating a new WAC program so that we don't step on toes, so that we build on work already done, and so that we create a network of allies, critical for collaboration. This step may be even more important for initiating faculty development related to second language writing. Unlike other areas of writing, WAC directors are often not the experts on campus when it comes to L2 students. Many campuses have an English Language Institute (ELI), an English as a Second Language (ESL) Program, ESL sections of first-year composition, an international student services office, a diversity center, and/or a center for international and global partnerships. At BSU, I worked with Second Language Services (an office that sets up conversation partners for international L2 students), the First Year Writing Program, the Office of Teaching and Learning, the Office of Institutional Research, the Office of Institutional Diversity, and the Office of Undergraduate Research when creating and implementing faculty development related to L2 writing and writers. These partners and allies helped me find information about L2 students at BSU, provided venues for faculty development on L2 writing, and collaborated with me to promote linguistically and culturally inclusive pedagogy. Many of these offices are natural allies for WAC, while some of the others, like the offices related to linguistic and cultural diversity, may not typically be thought of as WAC allies, and yet they too can be powerful partners in creating culturally and linguistically inclusive pedagogies.

An important first step for WAC directors interested in creating such programming is to reach out to those directing, staffing, and teaching within programs like these, for several reasons: (1) to learn from information gathered on international and/or multilingual students on your campus; (2) to learn about other faculty development efforts related to L2 students; and (3) to form partnerships for researching L2 writers on campus and offering faculty development. These stakeholders, who share a focus on or interest in multilingual and multicultural students, may be brought together as a working group or taskforce, or, if there isn't the means to organize a formal group, serve individually as potential collaborators whom the WAC director may call upon to co-lead a workshop or present on a particular topic during a workshop.

But what expertise do we, as WAC program directors, bring to this group? In addition to our knowledge of faculty development and the institutional landscape, the important piece we bring is our perspective on student writing. Many ELIs, ESL courses, and ESL sections of first-year composition (FYC) are led from an applied linguistics perspective and focus more on the structure of the English language—grammar, usage, syntax, vocabulary—and on other language skills—speaking, listening, and reading—than on writing (Matsuda, 1999; Zawacki & Cox, 2011). In fact, at first, conversations on ESL writing with this group may focus solely on grammar, with requests for the WAC director to enforce *grammar across the curriculum*, a perspective reflecting a structural view of language. As I will discuss further, however, the philosophies of many WAC programs—with their focus on writing as process, as a form of expression and communication, and as a mode of learning—are effective pedagogies for supporting L2 writers.

A FRAMEWORK FOR FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

In my experience as a WAC director, I have found it critical to first understand the assumptions that underlie faculty attitudes toward L2 writers before deciding on an approach for working with faculty. As reflected in the quote from the art professor used to open this chapter, faculty who come to us to discuss L2 student writers may first come out of frustration with the number of surface-level errors in the writing, with writing that appears disorganized, and with writing that seems uncritical. Canagarajah (2002), in *Critical Academic Writing and Multilingual Students*, has argued that these frustrations emerge from a tendency to see the writing of native English speaking (NES) students as setting the bar, so that differences in L2 writing are then seen as problematic, as indicative of "deficits" in L2 student writing. This "difference-as-deficit" stance is the perspective taken when L2 writers' "distance from the English language and Anglo-American culture has been treated as depriving them of many essential aptitudes required for successful academic literacy practices" (p. 217). Canagarajah argues that this perspective affects not only how L2 students' writing is viewed, but also how their thinking is viewed: "Some have gone further to stigmatize multilingual writers as illogical in thinking and incoherent in communication, by virtue of their deficient L1 and native culture" (p. 217). In fact, in her research on faculty attitudes on L2 writers, Zamel (1995) observed that faculty sometimes conflated what they termed "bad language" with "insufficient cognitive development" (p. 509), equating linguistic ability in a second language with intelligence. (Some of the faculty interviewed by Ives et al. [this volume] expressed this very concern.) Canagarajah (2002) suggests that, in place of this "limiting" stance, we move toward a "difference-as-resource" stance, in which we "respect and value the linguistic and cultural peculiarities our students may display, rather than suppressing them" (p. 218). In this stance, the focus shifts from deficits to strengths, emphasizing what L2 students *can* do with language rather than what they cannot.

While research that maps the linguistic strengths of L2 students is scant, there are a few points we can draw from the literature. In her study on L2 student-faculty interactions, Leki (2006) reported that faculty described L2 students as having stronger vocabulary acquisition skills than NES students, giving them an advantage when learning discipline-specific discourse (p. 143). Leki (2006) also reported that faculty in her study noted the "cultural sophistication" of L2 students, due their cross-cultural experiences (p. 143). Jordan (2008), in his study of the rhetorical competencies of L2 students, has described the ways in which they draw on their cross-cultural knowledge as well as rhetorical skills when working with NES students in peer review groups. Further, given the experiences L2 students have had writing across multiple cultures, educational systems, languages, and communities, it stands to reason that they have gained rhetorical flexibility, astuteness, and savvy (Cox & Ortmeier-Hooper, 2008).

During faculty development, my goal is to move faculty toward the difference-as-resource stance. However, the leap from difference-as-deficit to difference-as-resource is a large one, so I find it useful to consider a third, middle stance: difference-accommodated. In this stance, faculty understand that there will be syntactic, rhetorical, and cultural differences in L2 writing, but seek to accommodate L2 students in some way. While the difference-as-resource stance asks faculty to transform their pedagogy, the difference-accommodated stance asks them to make adjustments to their pedagogy, representing an important incremental step. Below, I describe how I move faculty from a difference-as-deficit approach toward a difference-accommodated approach, and, ultimately, a difference-as-resource approach.

MOVING FACULTY FROM A DIFFERENCE-AS-DEFICIT STANCE

The best approaches to addressing frustration with L2 writers, I find, are to create empathy for L2 students and share information about L2 writing development. One of the most valuable strategies for creating empathy is to put the faculty member in the L2 writer's shoes, using an activity first suggested by Leki (1992) in *Understanding ESL Writers.* So, for example, when I lead a workshop on L2 writing, I begin by asking participants to raise their hand if they ever studied a foreign language. Usually, all hands go up. I then give a freewriting prompt. (My most recent prompt, given to writing center tutors on the heels of a winter storm that cut off power to most of the area—in fact, the campus was running on generators when I arrived—was this: "Write about an experience or memory related to snow.") First, I ask participants to respond to the prompt in their second language and tell them they will have five minutes. I say everything I would usually say when giving students a freewriting prompt: Don't worry about grammar or word choice; I won't be collecting these; you won't be required to read this aloud; write without stopping; if you run out of things to say, write, "I can't think of what to say next" until something comes to you. After five minutes of freewriting, I ask them to respond to the same prompt in their first language. After another five minutes, I ask them to do one more freewrite: to reflect on the differences between the two experiences, focusing on how they felt during the two experiences, what they wrote about each time, and the length and level of depth of each piece. I then ask participants to report out, based on this reflection. Invariably, participants tell me that they felt much less stress writing in their first language, that even though I told them not to worry about grammar and word choice, they did worry about these issues when writing in their second language, that they could not write about what they wanted in their second language because they didn't have the vocabulary to express it, that their writing in their second language was far briefer than the writing they produced in their first language, that they felt embarrassed when they got stuck when writing in their second language, because they didn't even have the ability to write "I can't think of what to say next." This is a highly effective exercise, as the comments I've just listed are the same ones I hear from L2 students.

At BSU, I had an advantage over many WAC directors at other institutions in that I not only directed a WAC program, but I also taught sections of FYC designated for ESL writers. So, when the faculty describe their frustrations in trying to write in a second language, I tell them how their experiences mirror those experienced by students in my classes. Workshop leaders do not need to have direct experience with L2 students to make this move. Instead, they may follow this exercise with materials that present the voices of L2 students or information on L2 writing development and language acquisition, and then ask participants to reflect on how the information presented connects with their experience during this exercise.

The voices of L2 students shared during the workshop may come from a variety of sources: surveys conducted on your campus, quotes by L2 students captured in the literature, literacy narratives by L2 writers (published or from campus), or films (either publicly available or from campus). The allies I described above may be good resources for such materials. Below, I have provided samples from a workshop handout that I compiled from a language and literacy questionnaire given to an ESL section of FYC (see Appendix A for the full handout):

> I have never taken a class that focuses only on writing. In my ESL classes we did very short writing assignments. The longuest [sic] piece of writing I've written in English is one paragraph. In my ESL classes we read short paragraphs and answered basic questions. [...] It is easier for me to understand English when I hear it or read it. It is more difficult for me to speak and write because I have trouble choosing the correct words. —Mexican student, who took ESL courses at a college in California
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> I haven't received any writing instruction in English. I studied reading for TOEFL Test, so the longest text I've read English is TOEFL text book. —Japanese student, who went to an English Language Institute in the US
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> [In this course] I hope I achieve English obstacles in my life as much as I can.
>
> [In this course] I would like to learn writing as American. Sometimes I write dialy [sic] in English but I can't do well so I would like to practice.

These voices, describing the students' past experiences with writing in English and goals as writers, inform faculty about their own students, as well as create empathy. I have also created handouts from published material. The following are examples from a handout I created drawing on Zawacki and Habib's (2010) article on the experiences of L2 students writing across the curriculum (see Appendix B for the full handout):

> In America, when I write totally different style of paper, the professor say, "Where are you from? How did you get into this college? Your writing is behind the line, so you can't really catch up to the class." So, I don't know how to figure that out. —Yoon, student from S. Korea
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> I would really love to learn nice words, because I do have ideas, and I do want to put something down, but I am short of words. —Ayesha, student from Pakistan
>
> When you ultimately succeed in writing is when you have your own accent. When I speak, my accent reflects who I am and where I come from. Well, I want my writing to reflect me in that way. —Tonka, student from Bulgaria

Studies by Zamel (1995), Zamel and Spack (2004), and Leki (1995, 1999, 2001, 2007), along with chapters in this collection, can also provide powerful voices of L2 students.

I have also made of use of videos and literacy narratives that are available publicly. A video I often turn to is *Writing Across Borders*, written and directed by Wayne Robertson and produced by the Oregon State University Center for Writing and Learning and Writing Intensive Curriculum programs, which features L2 undergraduate and graduate students as well as L2 writing scholars speaking to such issues as second language acquisition, culturally distinct patterns of organization, and cultural approaches to argument and critique, as well as information on how to respond to and assess L2 writing. I have shown the entire 32-minute video during a workshop or sometimes just one of the 10-minute sections (each section is available on YouTube). Several literacy narratives are also available, through publications and YouTube. The following literacy narratives, for example, are all by first-year L2 students:

- Jun Yang's "Lost in the Puzzles" (2010), describes the student's challenges moving between Chinese, English, and "Chenglish," which she describes as the "language of birds" (published in Cox, Jordan, Ortmeier-Hooper, & Schwartz, *Reinventing Identities in Second Language Writing*)

- Jean Mervius' "I Am a Survivor" (2011), describes the student's experience surviving the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, and then negotiating immigration to the US, learning English, and becoming a college student.
- Wilson Castillo, "Losing Was Never an Option" (2011), describes the student's experience immigrating alone to the US from the Dominican Republic at age 11, without knowing English, to escape poverty and illiteracy.

These kinds of videos and literacy narratives help faculty understand the challenges of learning a second language from the perspectives of L2 students. Whether I use a handout or video material depicting voices of L2 students, I follow up on this material by asking participants to write about what surprises them, how these voices connect to their experiences working with L2 students, and what questions these passages raise for them about second language writing.

It is also important to share information from the literature about L2 writing development, as faculty need not only to have empathy for L2 writers, but also to understand that L2 writers are not a monolithic group but have a wide range of linguistic, educational, cultural, and literacy history backgrounds that have an impact on language acquisition, and that language acquisition itself is a long and complicated process. Further, some faculty will be more persuaded by data and research than by narratives and testimony by L2 students. To provide information about L2 writers and writing, I use a handout I created that highlights key differences between two broad categories of L2 students—international visa students and permanent resident students—and that also focuses on the complexity of learning and writing in a second language that cuts across these two L2 categories (see Appendix C for the handout). My goal with this handout is to show that second language acquisition is a long process and that native-like writing cannot, and should not, be the goal. In fact, it is unethical to demand native-like (or error-free) writing from L2 students. To do so is to require L2 students to do something that NES are not required to do: pay for copy-editing, as writing centers, rightly so, do not provide copy-editing services for students (a fact that some faculty may not know). I also want faculty to question the goal of asking L2 students to write in standard written English. I point out that, just as we expect L2 students to speak with an accent, we can expect them to write with an accent (a point also made in Leki, 1992, and Zawacki et al., 2007). I use the following example: if we were to go to a conference presentation given by a multilingual speaker, and if we were to comment that the presentation wasn't very good because the speaker spoke with an accent, we'd be seen as prejudiced. And yet, it's been seen as acceptable to make a similar kind of statement in relation to differences in writing that are related to written accent.

It is also important to share with faculty data on L2 students on campus, particularly the number of L2 students enrolled at the institution, the numbers of students enrolled in each program, and national origins and languages of these students. All institutions are required to maintain data on international visa students, and this information is typically available through the institutional research office. In fact, universities often include information about the number of countries and languages represented on its campus as part of their advertising campaigns to showcase the institution as multicultural and globalized. These data are also collected on the *Open Doors* website, which makes available profiles of different states as well. It is more difficult to come by data on residential L2 students, as admissions offices are prohibited from collecting data on student linguistic background or English language status, as this information may be used to discriminate against students from minority groups. However, for institutions that draw heavily from the local region, you may construct a picture of the residential L2 population of students on your campus by collecting data on local K-12 school systems through the Department of Education (DOE) website, since school districts do collect information on the number of English Language Learners (ELL), English Limited Proficiency (ELP) students, countries of origin, and home languages. It's also possible that an ESL office, the first year writing program, or the writing center on your campus collects language data on L2 students. Many of the available sources of data, however, are limited in the information they provide. For instance, with respect to information found on DOE's website, according to the terms used by the DOE, a student may move from ELP to ELL, but once tagged as ELL, the student will always be marked as ELL, even if that student exited the ESL programs while in elementary school. Further, this data will tell you little about the students' literacy experiences—their experiences with reading, writing, speaking, and listening in their different languages. For this type of information, you may need to construct a survey that asks students to report on various strengths and experiences with English. A powerful example of such a survey, developed by Angela Dadak at American University, is available at http://wac.colostate.edu/atd/ell/cox.cfm.

WORKING WITH FACULTY TO ACCOMMODATE DIFFERENCE

Once faculty learn more about L2 writers and feel empathy for these students, they are generally ready to make changes to their pedagogy to accommodate them, but their first reaction may be that they feel overwhelmed. They may tell you that they feel that they have to start over—that they feel that everything they knew about supporting student writers has to be thrown out the window. Not true. Research has shown that many of the same pedagogical approaches for writing in an L1 are effective for supporting writing in an L2. Second language students benefit from clear and detailed writing assignments (Hirsch, this volume; Reid & Kroll, 1995), from seeing samples of student writing from the same assignment (Hirsh, this volume; Leki, 1995), and from teacher-student conferences on their writing (Ewert, 2009; Phillips, this volume). It has proven beneficial for L2 students to receive feedback focused on expression and communication as well as structure, grammar, and usage (Goldstein, 2005; Hyland, 1998; Jacobs, Curtis, Braine, & Huang, 1998; Phillips, this volume; Reid, 1994; Truscott, 1999; Wolfe-Quintero & Sedage, 1999), participate in peer-review groups (Berg, 1999; Tsui & Ng, 2000; Zhu, 2001), and engage in writing-to-learn activities (Fishman & McCarthy, 2001; Phillips, this volume). However, there are adjustments that faculty can make to their pedagogy that will better support the L2 students in their courses, particularly in relation to giving feedback, peer review, writing-to-learn activities, writing assignment design, and evaluation of writing assignments.

FEEDBACK TO L2 STUDENT WRITING

The advice WAC specialists tend to give to faculty when working with any student – comment on both content issues and structural issues, focus on two or three "error trends" in a draft rather than comment on every error, and give both positive feedback and feedback oriented toward revision—also work to support second language students. I have noticed, though, that faculty often leave this advice behind when reading and responding to L2 student writing. Faculty unaccustomed to giving feedback to L2 writers tend to take either a hands-off approach, reading past all errors and responding only to content, or a heavy-handed approach, marking every syntactic, usage, and grammatical error (Matsuda & Cox, 2009). Neither approach is very helpful, as the first doesn't help a student improve as a writer, and the second can be overwhelming to the writer. Second language students, do, however, require feedback on English language issues, as they are still in the process of acquiring the language. Ferris, a leading scholar on error feedback in L2 writing, has demonstrated that most L2 students need only to have their errors pointed out to them, through circling or checkmarks in the margins, and then they can edit their own work (Ferris, 2002; Ferris & Roberts, 2001). Research has also shown that L2 students tend to assume that feedback on their writing is focused only on English language issues and not on discipline-specific issues and so tend to revise only at the surface level. For this reason, it's important that instructors distinguish between the two types of comments (Cox, 2010) and that they also indicate to students that they are, in fact, interested in and value what the students have to say.

PEER REVIEW

While the processes of giving and receiving peer feedback, as well as simply seeing peers' drafts-in-progress (Kietlinska, 2006), have all been shown to be effective for L2 writers, there are pedagogical approaches instructors can use to enhance the experience for L2 students, approaches that are useful to share during faculty development. Research has shown that international visa students tend to be unfamiliar with the process of peer review and tend to trust teacher feedback over peer feedback (Kietlinska, 2006; Nelson & Carson, 1998; Zhang, 1999) and also that, in peer review groups that include both NES and L2 students, the NES students tend not to trust comments from L2 students (as indicated in some of the student comments reported in Fredericksen & Mangelsdorf [this volume]) and L2 students have difficulty finding openings to offer oral comments (Zhu, 2001). It may be that the instructor also doubts the value of contributions by L2 students in the peer review process. However, L2 students have strengths in commenting on rhetorical moves in writing (Jordan, 2008) as well as grammatical issues. International students in particular, who learned English through grammar drills and translation (Reid, 1998), have training in the grammatical structure of English, unlike most NES students. Therefore, in order to maximize the benefits of peer review, it is important the instructor prepare students by explaining to the class the value of peer review, the role of peer review in the writing process, and the value of comments from L2 students (Berg, 1999).

Further, the instructor should let students know the extent to which they should comment on surface-level issues and how they should attend to these. In early drafts, students can be advised to pay attention to higher-order concerns (HOCs), such as idea development, focus, and overall organization, and only comment on grammatical issues that get in the way of comprehension. In later drafts, students can be advised to pay attention to lower-order concerns (LOCs), but to focus only the two or three types of errors that are most disruptive to the reading experience. Since L2 students do often need additional time to read and respond to drafts, it is helpful to require students to exchange drafts ahead of the workshop and/or to provide adequate time in class to respond to drafts (a strategy described by Fredericksen & Mangelsdorf [this volume]). It is also helpful if the instructor provides worksheets that include specific questions to focus the feedback, so that students can provide both written and oral commentary, an approach that draws on multiple language strengths.

WRITING-TO-LEARN ACTIVITIES

Writing-to-learn activities, such as freewriting, double-entry journals, and tickets-to-leave, all support L2 student learning (Hirsch [this volume]) as well as their facility in writing in English. It is important to remind faculty that writing produced by L2 students during these activities should be treated the same as writing by NES students: as a low-stakes activity meant more for the eyes of the student than for the instructor. I have seen well-intended instructors take a red pen to L2 students' low-stakes writing, feeling compelled to attend to English language issues. As it would for any student, this move raises the stakes of the assignment, which may impede learning. As these writing activities are meant to facilitate thinking, and not all L2 students can think fluently in their L2, L2 students can be encouraged to use their first language during writing-to-learn activities (Bean et al., 2003; Hirsh & DeLuca, 2003) as well as early in the drafting process (Murphy & Roca de Larios, 2010; Ting, 1996). Because it takes more time for cognitive processing in a second language, it is also a good idea to ask instructors to provide additional time for in-class writing-to-learn activities, or to assign writing-to-learn activities as homework, so that L2 students can work at their own pace.

WRITING ASSIGNMENT DESIGN

In addition to these pedagogical approaches, during faculty development workshops, we should encourage faculty to design writing assignments that are culturally inclusive. In her ethnographic research on undergraduate L2 writers in courses across the curriculum, Leki (1995) came across writing assignments that "required an implicit and sophisticated knowledge of everyday US culture that was far out of the reach of a student just arrived in the US" (p. 241). Instructors often assign projects that ask students to draw from US history and pop culture, in an effort to help them connect course content with what they already know. However, an assignment that does this kind of connection can turn what might be a personal reflection or reader response assignment for an English L1 student into a research assignment for an L2 student. We would not want to discourage instructors from giving these kinds of assignments, but instead to expand the options for the assignment, so that students are invited to draw on personal experience and knowledge based in the US or in another country. (See Hirsch [this volume] for examples of assignments that allow undergraduates to draw on knowledge from daily life) and see Phillips [this volume] for details on how a graduate student drew on knowledge related to his home country to be successful with course projects). To address assignment design during workshops, I hand faculty descriptions of three or four assignments and ask them to look at them through the lens of an L2 student. Which assignment is the most culturally and linguistically inclusive? How can the assignments be adjusted to become more inclusive? This activity invariably leads to rich conversations about multilingualism, multiculturalism, and assignment design.

EVALUATION OF WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

When I was a WAC program director, the question I heard most from faculty on my campus was, "How do I assess L2 students in a way that is fair to all students in my class?" (See Ives et al. and Zawacki & Habib [this volume] for faculty perspectives on fairness in evaluating L2 writing). First, faculty should be made aware that L2 students are doing something much more difficult than are English L1 students: they are learning and being evaluated on their learning in a second language. To make evaluation truly equitable, faculty would need to ask English L1 students to complete writing assignments in a second language. Second, we should point out to faculty that L2 writing, when compared to English L1 writing, will almost always appear to fall short. In his landmark article, "Toward an Understanding of the Distinct Nature of L2 Writing: The ESL Research and Its Implications," Silva (1993) reviews 72 research reports that compare English L1 and L2 student writing, to state that L2 writing has been shown to be "less fluent (fewer words), less accurate (more errors), and less effective (lower holistic scores)" (p. 200) and that L2 writing is "strategically, rhetorically, and linguistically different in important ways from L1 writing" (p. 201). It would be unfair to evaluate L2 writing using the same criteria for length, grammatical accuracy, and overall organization as would be used to evaluate English L1 students. However, for most faculty across the curriculum, length, number of surface errors, and organization aren't all that they are looking for when they give a writing assignment. They are also looking at the ways in which students meet the learning outcomes of an assignment, and in most courses across the curriculum, learning outcomes don't include writing for length, grammatical accuracy, or organization. My advice to faculty, then, is to create a rubric focused on learning outcomes. One part of the rubric may focus on "presentation," which may include length, editing, and citation format, but even here, I advise faculty to be flexible in terms of required length (asking for a range of page lengths, say five to seven pages), and to focus on readability, rather than error-free writing. In my rubrics, I include this statement: "The writer edited areas pointed out by readers, particularly areas that readers found confusing due to grammatical issues." L2 students can be expected to edit areas of their drafts pointed out by readers as being incomprehensible due to grammatical errors. I also encourage faculty to ask students to hand in, along with the final draft, the first draft, feedback from peers and/or the instructor, and a cover letter that explains what was revised and why, and that reflects on what the student would revise further had there been more time. Looking through this "mini-portfolio" will help the instructor better assess the progress the student has made as a writer through the project, how the writer revised and edited using reader feedback, and what the writer knows about writing that s/he can't quite enact at this time.

To address the issue of evaluating L2 writing during faculty workshops, I hand out an assignment description, a rubric (based on learning outcomes, with one area focused on presentation, as described above), and two or three samples of student writing. I select the samples so that one is practically error-free but has little depth or rhetorical sophistication and one is riddled with surface-level errors (but none that render the message incomprehensible) but displays depth of understanding and rhetorical savvy. I ask the participants to evaluate each essay, using the rubric, and then discuss their choices. Each time I've done this, faculty first talk about the error-free essay as being the strongest until someone points out that, according to the rubric, the error-laden essay is the strongest, leading to a rich discussion on what we prioritize in student writing.

The approaches I have described in this section can be seen as taking up Universal Instructional Design (UID) strategies—adjusting pedagogy so that it meets the needs of a broad spectrum of students, including L2 students, a framework that has proven useful in rethinking writing pedagogy for students with disabilities (Dolmage, 2008). Canagarajah (2002), as well as Horner and Trimbur (2002) and Horner, Lu, Royster and Trimbur (2011), has been challenging compositionists to go further than just accommodating difference, but to value difference, and to create writing pedagogy that builds on the strengths of multilingual and multicultural students, a challenge that faculty across the curriculum face as well. Similar to Canagarajah's call for faculty to assume a difference-as-resource stance, Horner, Lu, Royster and Trimbur (2011) propose that compositionists take up a "translingual approach [which] sees difference in language not as a barrier to overcome or as a problem to manage, but as a resource for producing meaning in writing, speaking, reading, and listening" (p. 303). These two approaches call on faculty to create curriculum that builds on the rhetorical, cultural, linguistic, and literacy resources of student writers. In the following section, I explore the complexity of designing linguistically and culturally inclusive pedagogy that draws on L2 students' strengths as learners and writers.

WORKING WITH FACULTY TO BUILD ON L2 STUDENTS' STRENGTHS

The field of composition-rhetoric is currently grappling with the question of how to create pedagogy using a difference-as-resource stance. Little has been published in this area, though two CCCC pre-conference workshops have focused on this question. In 2010, in "Building on Their Strengths: Advocating for L2 Writers through Teaching, Administrating, Mentoring," workshop participants focused on "the theoretical framework of 'difference-as-resource' (Canagarajah, 2002) as a heuristic for exploring how writing instructors and writing program administrators can create pedagogy and programming that builds on the rhetorical, cultural, linguistic, and literacy resources of second language writers" (Cox et al., 2010). In 2012, the question was brought to bear on WAC in a workshop titled, "Embracing the Richness of Multilingualism through WAC/WID: Re-envisioning Institutional Leadership, Advocacy, and Faculty Support." During both workshops, participants struggled to translate this rich area of theory into practice.

If we are working at the edge of our knowledge in this area in composition-rhetoric, how can we work with faculty across the curriculum to create linguistically and culturally inclusive pedagogy? In discussing how the "translingual approach" would be enacted in composition-rhetoric, Horner, Lu, Royster and Trimbur (2011) say this:

> In short, new work, in which many faculty cannot yet claim expertise, will be demanded of both faculty and their students. That is the challenge of embracing a translingual approach, and its promise: the necessity of working on writing collaboratively with our students, our current colleagues, and those who can become our colleagues amid the realities of a translingual nation and world. (p. 309)

Horner, Lu, Royster and Trimbur (2011) thus call on composition scholars to collaborate with colleagues and students to create linguistically and culturally inclusive pedagogy. I call on WAC leaders to take the same approach when working with faculty across the curriculum, an approach not dissimilar to one taken when the WAC movement was just getting off the ground. Russell (2006), in his introduction to *A History of Writing Across the Curriculum: Composing a Community*, describes the WAC movement as "an extraordinary example of grassroots change in education" (p. 3). When the movement began, as Russell tells us,

> [it] did not have an elaborated theory but rather a few powerful ideas, which might be summarized as "Writing to learn; learning to write." Nor did it have a single curricular agenda, but rather a wide range of possible models, to be adapted or rejected according to local institutional needs and personalities. (p. 5)

WAC leaders are accustomed to taking these "few powerful ideas" and "possible models" to faculty across the curriculum and trusting faculty to do the hard work of translating these ideas and curricular models into pedagogy that supports their disciplinary and classroom contexts. We WAC program leaders do not need to have all of the answers, only the questions, the seeds of pedagogical change, which faculty then take up and use to transform teaching and learning across the curriculum. An initial step WAC leaders might take is to gather like-minded faculty and begin the conversation by posing the following questions:

- How we can design writing curricula that invites students to draw on their multiple languages, cultures, literacy experiences, and areas of rhetorical knowledge as resources?
- How we can value students' "written accents" in our curricula?
- Where, in your discipline, does pedagogy that builds on the strengths of linguistically and culturally diverse students already exist? Where, in your discipline, does "written accent" or writing that draws on multiple languages already exist? How can these examples of pedagogies and texts be used to showcase multilingualism and multiculturalism as part of your field?

But what can we offer faculty as curricular models of linguistically and culturally inclusive pedagogy? I suggest that we ask faculty to pay attention to the ways in which L2 students in their courses reshape assignments. In "Coping Strategies of ESL Students in Writing Tasks Across the Curriculum," Leki

(1995) tells us that in order to succeed, L2 writers often "rewrit[e] the terms" of writing assignments, giving the example of Julie, a business major from France, who negotiates a history assignment on a novel's representation of US southern women in the 1950's—an assignment that assumes deep cultural and historical knowledge of the US—by adapting the assignment to instead focus on the novel's female character she could most connect to as an international student (p. 243). Rather than see these reshapings of assignments as "errors" or "misunderstandings," we may see them as clues to approaches to creating pedagogy that builds on L2 writers' strengths.

CONCLUSION

Russell tells us that the first WAC programs "began with faculty in various disciplines sitting down to talk about a felt need—poor writing (or thinking) among students" (p. 11). The model that WAC leaders turned to was the faculty workshop—a model that Russell describes as "egalitarian": "The faculty workshop was a place to share ideas and practices, not a place to learn from an expert, ordinarily" (p. 11). Today's "felt need" is the question of how to work with L2 writers, and faculty from across the curriculum are turning to WAC program leaders for guidance. Though WAC directors often are not experts in L2 writing studies, we do have expertise in bringing faculty together around the same table, sharing a "few powerful ideas" about student writing, learning from what is already happening in classrooms across the curriculum, and engaging faculty in collaborative inquiry into pedagogy. Fulwiler (2006) tells us that when asked why he and WAC colleague Art Young continue, even a decade into retirement, to help colleges and universities develop WAC programs, he answers, "because exploring good ideas with interested colleagues is the most exciting work we've learned to do" (p. 167). Linguistically and culturally inclusive writing pedagogy is currently theory that is waiting to be translated into practice, and that pedagogy can only be created in collaboration with faculty across the curriculum. This is, indeed, an exciting time to do WAC work.

NOTES

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2. While writing this chapter, I left Bridgewater State University to become a Multilingual Specialist at Dartmouth College, where I develop writing support and oral presentation support for L2 international graduate students and teach writing courses in the Institute for Writing and Rhetoric.

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APPENDIX A: VOICES OF BSU ESL STUDENTS, FROM AN ENGL 101 SURVEY

In response to, "Please describe the writing instruction in English you've received."

- I have never taken a class that focuses only on writing. In my ESL classes we did very short writing assignments. The longuest [*sic*] piece of writing I've written in English is one paragraph. In my ESL classes we read short paragraphs and answered basic questions. [...] It is easier for me to understand English when I hear it or read it. It is more difficult for me to speak and write because I have trouble choosing the correct words. —Mexican student, who took ESL courses at a college in California
- I haven't received any writing instruction in English. I studied reading for TOEFL Test, so the longest text I've read English is TOEFL text book. —Japanese student, who went to an English Language Institute in the US
- The writing basically has three parts: Introduction, body, and conclusion. Introduction has hook, background, thesis. Body has usually three paragraphs. Each paragraph's first sentence usually is the thesis of the paragraph. It's better has [*sic*] transition words for each of these three paragraphs. The last paragraph is conclusion. It is good for writer to repeat the thesis in another words. —Chinese student, attended an English Language Institute I attended high school in Cape Cod, 2 years.
- My longest piece written in English is 2-3 pages. —Cape Verdean student, immigrated to the US two years ago.

In response to, "Please describe the reading instruction in English you've received," and "What kinds of reading have you done?"

- First, read the first and last sentences of each paragraph. Second, read the questions and then go back to the paragraph to find out the answers. Skip the new words if you haven't seen before or you can according to the context, try to guess the meaning of the words that you don't know. I have red [*sic*] short novel, SAT reading, TOEFL reading, and newspaper. —Chinese student, attended an English Language Institute
- I'm reading "Art History." There are so many technical words so at first, I need to check these vocabrary [*sic*] and after that, I need to read two times. It takes a lot of time but understanding the content of textbook is the most important. —Japanese student, attended an English Language Institute

In response to, “What do you hope to learn in this course?”

- I hope I’ll get more writing skill in draft that that [*sic*] I wrote before. In addition, I wanna [*sic*]express notion or an abstruct [*sic*] concept because I’m poor at those expression on the draft.
- I hope I can speak English fluently and can write easily.
- I want to improve my writing skills so I could write properly in other classes.
- I hope I achieve English obstacles in my life as much as I can.
- I would like to learn writing as American. Sometimes I write dialy [*sic*]in English but I can’t do well so I would like to practice.

APPENDIX B: L2 STUDENT VOICES FROM ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

These voices are from Terry Myers Zawacki and Anna Habib’s (2010) research on the experiences of linguistically and culturally diverse students across the curriculum at George Mason University.

> In America, when I write totally different style of paper, the professor say, “Where are you from? How did you get into this college? Your writing is behind the line, so you can’t really catch up to the class.” So, I don’t know how to figure that out. —Yoon, student from S. Korea

> I had my initial friction between the cultures here when I was told over and over again “you know you have to cut down, clean up your paragraphs.” I was very offended because I came with a lot of confidence behind me and suddenly I find that it is totally different. But it didn’t take me long to catch up though. I realized any nice language I use is wasted; no one is going to look at it in that way. —Kanishka, student from Sri Lanka

> “My strength in Spanish,” Diana said, “is my personal style of how to write, and that’s something that people like. And my grammar and vocabulary in Spanish are really good. In English, definitely, I would like to have more vocabulary, so I can do that [same thing].”

> I would really love to learn nice words, because I do have ideas, and I do want to put something down, but I am short of words. —Ayesha, student from Pakistan
>
> When you ultimately succeed in writing is when you have your own accent. When I speak, my accent reflects who I am and where I come from. Well, I want my writing to reflect me in that way. —Tonka, student from Bulgaria

APPENDIX C: BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT L2 WRITERS AND WRITING

International students: These are visa-holding students studying in the US for a set amount of time, usually with plans to return to the home country afterward. In general, international L2 students:

- Have a wide range of experiences with English in home country; some students will have studied English since elementary school while others will have studied English for only a few years
- Undergraduates tend to be high-performing students from privileged backgrounds (Vandrick, 2010); graduate students tend to come from a wider range of socioeconomic backgrounds
- Tend to have learned English "through their eyes" (Reid, 1998), though grammar exercises, memorization of vocabulary, and translation
- Tend to have limited experiences with writing, speaking, and listening in their second language
- May have enrolled in an English Language Institute (ELI) prior to enrolling in college, which tend to teach formulaic approaches to writing (thesis-drive, five-paragraph essays)

Permanent resident students: These are students who moved to the US for a wide range of reasons, including seeking a US education, opportunities for work, and political unrest or war in their home country. In general, among permanet resident students:

- Some will have studied English in home country; others will have only learned English after arriving
- Some will have literacy in first language; others will have had their education disrupted by war and political unrest

- Some will live in ethnic enclaves, using their primary language in their homes and communities
- Many will have experience in US public schools, ranging from one or two years to longer enrollment
- Most tend to have learned English primarily "through their ears" (Reid, 1998), through American TV, pop culture, and socializing with peers
- Many will have had limited experience with writing, as high school ESL programs focus on oral communication over written, and ESL students tend to be placed in low tracks in high school, where the emphasis is on grammar and worksheets over extended writing (Fu, 1995; Ortmeier-Hooper, 2010)
- ESL permanent resident students jumped through many hoops to make it to college, so they tend to be driven, high-performing students who take advantage of resources available to them at the university

What is generally true about L2 college writers?

- It takes five to seven years of being immersed in the target language to become fluent in that language (Cummins, 1981)
- Fluency ≠ Native-like; L2 students will retain a "written accent" which may never disappear (Valdés, 1992)
- L2 college writers have written across multiple languages, educational systems, cultures, and rhetorics, building important rhetorical knowledge Section III WAC Practices and Pedagogies Transformed