Marcia Pally, Helen Katznelson, Hadara Perpignan, and Bella Rubin

WHAT IS LEARNED IN SUSTAINED-CONTENT WRITING CLASSES ALONG WITH WRITING?

ABSTRACT: *What changes occur in students of college writing classes as they learn writing skills? While much research has focused on skills development or on the pedagogical and linguistic factors that promote it, this study looks at changes in personal development and relationships with others. An earlier study of Israeli students in English as a Foreign Language writing courses found significant changes in eight areas of personal development, independent of a variety of teaching methods. The present study, moving to English as a Second Language as well as varying the setting, focuses on one method: Sustained Content-Based Instruction. Once again, there were significant, positive changes in personal growth and relationships, with five areas emerging as common to both studies. These areas pertain to the essential goals of higher education, including learning the meaning of learning and developing critical thinking. The study suggests that Sustained Content-Based instruction may contribute significantly to students' growth. These findings could have vital bearing on the goals and design of academic writing courses, and on the integration of writing courses for non-native speakers into higher education.*

INTRODUCTION

Background and Purpose

Many university resources, both pedagogical and financial, are invested in enabling non-native English speakers to function productively in English in their academic communities. Thus, much research

Marcia Pally *teaches at New York University and Fordham University. She is general editor of* Sustained Content-Based Teaching in Academic ESL/EFL: A Practical Approach *(Houghton-Mifflin, 2000) and the author of* Screening English: Studying Movies for Reading, Writing, and Critical Thinking *(Pearson, 1997), an ESL/EFL textbook using film studies to develop critical thinking and writing.* **Helen Katznelson** *teaches Academic Writing in the English Department of Tel Aviv University and is an EFL teacher trainer at Beit Berl College, Israel. Her major research interests are modes of feedback to second-language writing, the affective factors in writing performance, and predicted and unpredicted learning outcomes of writing practice.* **Hadara Perpignan** *taught Composition to English majors at the Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and is currently lecturer in Academic Writing in English as a Foreign Language to MA and PhD candidates at Bar-Ilan University, Israel. Her research interests include the assessment of both reading comprehension and writing and also the dialogic aspects of feedback and revision.* **Bella Rubin,** *a Senior Lecturer in the Division of Foreign Languages at Tel Aviv University, Israel, is the Coordinator of Academic Writing for Ph.D. students and English for the Executive MBA Program. Her current research interests are the interface of reading and writing as well as the interaction of cognitive, affective, and behavioral factors in the learning process.*

on non-native speakers understandably focuses on improvements in the students' English and academic skills, and how these improvements may be fostered. By contrast, rather than focus on these academic skills, we have looked at changes that occur within the students' personal development and relationships–that is, changes not in the students' writing but rather in their personal growth which occurs as they learn how to write. In this study, we are concerned with *student awareness* of this growth rather than with teacher assessment of their skills (or, for that matter, teacher assessment of personal development). Changes in personal development and relationships may occur without student awareness. Indeed, self-awareness is often a later step in development, and so it indicates a certain maturity of personal growth, which we were looking for in student reports. Awareness contributes to the students' ability to make use of their personal growth in their writing classes, in other disciplines and outside the academic context.

Since proficiency in academic English will allow non-native speakers a place in the mainstream of the student body (where English is the language of instruction) and in the research and publishing worlds, investigations into the writing of non-native speakers have rightfully focused on the writing skills that have been achieved (Belcher & Braine; Cumming 375-397; Norris; Shaw 86-95; Shaw & Ting-Kun Liu, 225-254). Recently, researchers have discussed possible shifts in academic literacy goals that have resulted from changes in current means of communication such as global Internet use (The New London Group, 60-92). However, students' personal development is worth examining as well, since it may eventually lead to better learning. In addition, acknowledgment of such personal changes by faculty and curricula developers may contribute to a broader interpretation of the educational goals of English writing programs as a whole.

The present study continues a previous exploratory investigation of the personal changes emerging in academic writing courses in two Israeli universities where English is taught as a foreign language. In that study, these changes were initially defined as "any outcome of English as a Foreign Language writing courses which may have an impact on aspects of students' lives other than their writing in English." These were termed "by-products" of the writing courses (Katznelson, Perpignan, & Rubin 141-159). In keeping with our focus on student awareness, the researchers reported on learners' perceptions of these "by-products" and explored their nature through an open-ended questionnaire and qualitative analysis of student responses.

The results of the exploratory study, particularly regarding the wealth and range of the "by-products," led us to wonder which factors influence their development. Are they linked to teaching method, to setting, to number of hours of instruction, or to learning or teaching style? Would other "by-products" or factors influencing them emerge

in other settings? It is only when more studies are conducted with different students, teachers and settings that these questions can begin to be answered. It is with the intention of further exploring this still enigmatic phenomenon that the present study was undertaken.

Literature

Our view of learning in writing courses includes emotional and social maturation as well as cognitive development, a perspective that goes back to Hilgard in 1948 and remains an important area of language exploration. Continuing this historical overview to the present day, Lewin noted in 1964 that changes in the cognitive structures of learners can be due to two different types of forces, "one resulting from the structure of the cognitive field itself, and the other from certain valences (needs and motivations)" (83)--the latter stressing personal growth, or the intrapersonal aspect of learning. Other researchers such as Rogers recognized and promoted the interpersonal or social factor in learning. According to Rogers, through the facilitating social conditions of "realness, prizing, and empathy" and through constructive trust among all the participants in the learning situation, "The student is on his way, sometimes excitedly, sometimes reluctantly, to becoming a learning, changing, being" (115).

One way of looking at these changes is through the point of view of the learner. A precedent for this perspective is found in studies by the Goteborg Group (Gibbs, Morgan & Taylor 123-145), specifically one study by Marton, Dall'Alba and Beaty (277-300). These researchers identified six distinct levels within the student's perceptions of learning. Among these, the most complex and most rare was "changing as a person" (283-284), which was defined by the students as "seeing something in a different way" or "[seeing] oneself as a more capable person." These researchers suggest further that "regarding oneself as a more capable person implies a fundamental change from seeing oneself as an object of what is happening ... to seeing oneself as an agent of what is happening " (293). This view is in tandem with the beliefs about learning and agency put forth by Paulo Freire in his work on critical pedagogy, and with Pennycook, in his work on critical pedagogy specifically with second language learners. Pennycook sees it as connecting "the microrelations of TESOL (Teaching English as a Second Language) — classroom, teaching approaches and interactions — with broader social and political relations" (331). We see the changes in the personal growth and relationships of our learners, developed along with the declared goals of our courses and defined as "by-products," as having possibly far-reaching effects. That is, by becoming agents of change in their own lives, our students may effect changes in

the larger political and social context as well. This as a goal of education has been highlighted in recent research by The New London Group and by Cope & Kalantzis as well as others,

> We need to see the English curriculum not only in its traditional role of preparing students for [the] future, but to see the curriculum, and the people who experience it, as making and shaping that future through their competent and confident action. (Kress 3)

The Exploratory Study

The original investigation was a participant observation study of 72 students' perceptions of "by-products" from their academic writing courses, designed for those studying English as a foreign language. Although the courses followed a variety of teaching approaches, they consistently required the writing of academic papers in English on topics from the students' respective fields of research (such as biology, literature, history, etc.). Learners' perceptions of course "by-products" were elicited through two open-ended questions, which had been previously piloted on an equivalent population.

> *1) What areas of writing in English do you feel you have made progress in?*
> *2) Are you aware of any other outcomes related to your participation in this course (aside from your development in writing in English)? Whatever your response, please explain.*

Though participant observation studies are never free from experimenter bias, the questions here were open-ended in order to reduce it. The researchers were anxious for the students themselves to indicate if there were any "by-products" at all and if so, to generate comments on them. To this end, students were not asked to check items on a list but rather to write freely, generating their own categories of response, or if they chose, not to write at all. The researchers hoped that thus the categories and sub-categories of "by-products" would be derived from fresh learner perceptions as much as possible. Additionally, these responses were coordinated with open-ended interviews with ten learners, reflective journals by the teachers, an evaluation by three raters of pre-and post-course timed essays (White 30-45), and with the measurement of the students' writing apprehension which is considered to possibly affect writing (Daly 43-82; Madigan, Linton & Johnson 295-307; Shaver 375-392). The Daly-Miller Writing Apprehension Scale was used (Daly & Miller 242-249).

The qualitative analysis of responses to the two open-ended questions showed that "by-products" of similar types were perceived by learners, irrespective of teacher factors, learner factors, course content, and number of course hours. Of the 405 responses, content analysis of the answers yielded 125 distinct topics of response, which were interpreted and categorized by consensus into three main categories, Perceived Writing-in-English Outcomes (146 responses), Perceived Writing-in-General Outcomes (132 responses) and Perceived "By-Products" of Writing Courses (127 responses). Only 3 students (N=72) responded that they did not perceive any "by-products." It is interesting to note that the total number of responses corresponding to changes NOT related to Writing-in-English (249) was close to double that of those related to Writing-in-English. This seems to indicate that the phenomenon of perceived "by-products" was indeed widespread.

Only brief mention can be made here of the findings of the earlier study (Appendix A, Figures 1 & 2). The first category of findings, Perceived Outcomes in Writing-in-English, as expected mainly reflected the goals of the course, which had been made explicit throughout the instruction. The second category, Perceived Outcomes in Writing-in-General, confirmed that students perceived transfer of their English writing skills to their writing in their mother tongue (Aykel & Kamisli 69-105). Most central to this study are the "By-Products" perceived by the students, which are presented in Appendix A, Fig. 3. Responses expressed changes along the entire continuum of personal development, from change in knowledge and skills not in course goals (e.g., "improve listening") to "change as a person" (e.g., "increased self-control and patience toward others," "becoming more creative in other areas of my life"). In sum, changes ranged from the practical to the more holistic and "transformative" in that the changes in the learners' growth as a person could lead them to become agents in their own further development, with effects on their communities and environment.

The Present Study

In the earlier study, students reported personal changes in classes with different teachers, learners, course contents and hours, and to some extent differing teaching methodologies. Yet, because the changes found are so central to the broadest goals of education, we wondered whether they (or which among them) would recur in other academic writing contexts. Recurrence might suggest that these changes are not dependent on the circumstances of the previous study and possibly that there is something in the nature of academic writing courses that supports changes of this type. Such a finding would have significant bearing on

the goals and design of academic writing courses, and on the integration of writing courses for non-native speakers into higher education more generally. In the present study, the setting was shifted from two Israeli universities (English as a Foreign Language) to two in New York (English as a Second Language) where a specific teaching approach is used, Sustained Content-Based Instruction. Common to both studies is that courses focused on writing academic English.

Sustained Content-Based Instruction: Definition and Description

Although evolved from content-based teaching, Sustained Content-Based Instruction distinguishes itself from theme-based classes and linked classes. In theme-based classes, an approach commonly taken in composition classes for native and non-native speakers, topics vary frequently, and in linked classes, each English class is paired with a sister content class. By contrast, Sustained Content courses are themselves English classes for non-native speakers in which one discipline is followed over time, as it is in a content class, and language skills are learned and practiced through the authentic academic readings and assignments as support is given by the language teacher (Kasper 309-320; Pally 1-18; Vygotsky). In college settings, Sustained Content classes aim at teaching "transferable" language knowledge (Flowerdew 305-316; Widdowson 27-36)--that is, skills common to academic disciplines and which undergird discipline-specific work (a partial taxonomy of transferable academic skills is found under Academic Skills, Appendix B). As Belcher noted in her analysis of 14 areas of study, "There are differences as well as similarities across disciplines . . . there are also generic commonalities in the explicit critical writing in diverse fields" (139; see also, Bensley & Haynes 41-45). Once students have been exposed to these transferable skills, they are in a position to learn genre- and domain-specific conventions in content classes or in writing classes for students majoring in one discipline (Cope, Kalantzis, Kress & Martin 231-247; Hyon 693-722). In English classes where student majors vary, criteria for content selection are, that the content be part of the core curriculum of the university or that it be familiar generally to college-educated people (Environmental Studies, for instance, but not Laser Techniques of Cell Staining).

Rationale for Sustained CBI

Teachers and researchers have come to Sustained Content teaching in response to a gap between the skills taught in many English classes for non-native speakers and the skills these students need for

university study. These skills range from a grasp of academic argumentation to a lack of rhetorical strategies appropriate for academic/professional work (Kasper 147-157; Smoke). Leki & Carson, for example, found that language classes often asked for personal reaction papers but not for "text responsible" writing where students demonstrate that they have grasped a text's claims, concepts and information (81-101; 39-69). Moreover, for non-native speakers, developing writing in English is a process of *language socialization*–that is, identifying the language, literacy and pragmatic skills of a discourse community and practicing them so that they become both competent and comfortable with them, and perhaps identify as members of that community (Barton, Hamilton & Ivanic; Kramsch 133-154; Pierce 9-32). Though students craft their identities from the many communities to which they belong and from the many texts they encounter, in the academic context, the "voices" expressing those identities must be distinctive yet appropriate to the academic community. Thus, Sustained Content teaching seeks to familiarize students with academic modes of expression by simulating academic activities. Working through the texts and activities of academic work, students develop the voice, sense of self and skills that are particular to it. Many of these skills cannot be developed without reading and writing extensively in one area (such as the synthesis of sources or research requirements and conventions)–that is, without developing some *content-area expertise.*

The Sustained Content Courses of the Present Study

This study looks at four advanced, Sustained Content courses taught over three semesters in 2000. Of the 43 international students studied–from the Caribbean, Central and South America, Asia, the Middle East, and Southern and Eastern Europe— all but five were enrolled in university degree programs. As the students were new to the U.S., the classes studied a course titled, "The American Mind: Assumptions, Myths and Contradictions" (see Appendix B for an overview of the curriculum). Course content was divided into units, each content unit paired with an academic skills unit. Each skill was *modeled* (Cumming 375-397) using the first reading in a unit, then *explained* (Carrell 727-752), and then *practiced* by the students as they worked through later readings and writing assignments within the unit. Thus, students advanced through progressively more complex units of content-skill sequences.

Method of the Present Study

The two open-ended questions of the earlier study were compared with student responses in non-structured learner interviews,

teacher journals, evaluations of student work, and measurement of the students' writing apprehension. These questions were here given to students in the Sustained Content classes during the last week of the semester. Questionnaires were anonymous and analyzed as in the earlier study, yielding six achievements in course goals (Appendix C) and 20 that developed as "by-products" (Appendix D). The 20 "by-products" were gathered into six clusters. As in paper-and-pencil studies of this nature, the data here reflect lowest response levels. That is, the actual number of students who experienced a change in their personal development might be the same as recorded in the questionnaires (with no students experiencing a change other than those reporting it) or the actual number may be higher (other students experienced it but did not think of it at the time of the questionnaire).

As in the earlier study, students were asked about how well they achieved course goals. But in keeping with our focus on their awareness of personal changes, record was not made of teacher or department assessment of student writing or other measurements of specific English language skills. We were concerned to hear what the students had to say about themselves, their personal growth and their awareness of it.

FINDINGS

Question #1: Student Perceptions of Achievement of Course Goals

Student comments to the first question suggest that students identified course goals and perceived substantial learning in these areas. Student identification of course goals is important feedback for teachers and curriculum and program developers; it indicates whether students believe they have learned what educators set out to teach. Moreover, noticing new abilities may help students use them. Failure to identify course goals at the time of the questionnaire does not necessarily mean that students did not notice them, as awareness of what one has learned may emerge at various times and phases. But positive identification of course goals suggests their salience to students.

In the present study, course goals were that students be able to analyze university-level texts, write papers using the structures and argumentation appropriate to academic work, and develop the subskills that support these goals, among them a command of grammar appropriate for academic writing, the acquisition of academic rhetorical devices and note-taking/research skills. Students reported significant achievement in these skill areas (Appendix C).

Question #2: Student Perception of "By-Product" Achievements

Student responses to question 2 (Appendix D), suggest findings summarized here briefly and discussed in detail below:

* as in the earlier study, students reported learning that was not explicit in course goals—that is, they reported "by-products"
* of the eight "by-product" clusters in the earlier study, five were found common to both: Learning the Meaning of Learning, the Development of Critical Thinking, Affective Outcomes (increased confidence, enjoyment of learning), Improvement in Skills Not Explicit in Course Goals and Increased Genre/Discipline Knowledge. While some overlap may inevitably exist among clusters, each focuses on a predominantly different area of personal development that students described.
* student responses enhanced our understanding of the role of Sustained Content teaching in personal development. They revealed the unanticipated finding that courses in the previous study had in part also relied on Sustained Content teaching, and that the Sustained Content aspects of the courses may be partly responsible for the personal changes in students.
* student responses suggested that different teaching methodologies also yield different personal development
* student responses suggested that different settings yield differences in personal development
* two categories of responses that appeared in the previous study did not emerge significantly in the present one and require further investigation.

DISCUSSION

The Presence of "By-products" in Both Studies

A central concern of this study was the influence of six pedagogical conditions on personal growth that develops as students work on course goals. Those conditions are: setting (English as a Second Language, English as a Foreign Language), teaching methodology, the teachers themselves, the learners, course contents and course hours (from 24-84 contact hours per semester). In the previous study, "by-products" developed in English writing classes in spite of differences in four of the conditions: the teachers, students, course contents, and course hours. In the present study, five of the same "by-product" clusters emerged in spite of the additional differences in the settings and teaching methodologies. This finding is especially striking as *all but 3 of the 115* students (the total for both studies) reported these "by-products." This supports the suggestion, potentially rich for academic pro-

gramming and goals, that there may be something in tackling the requirements of English writing classes that bolsters these personal developments in non-native speakers.

"By-products" Common to Both Studies

Five clusters of "by-products" were common to both studies, suggesting an emerging pattern linking these particular "by-products" to academic writing classes for non-native students. The first, *Learning the Meaning of Learning,* is a vital category, nearly half, 43%, of all responses in the present study. This level of response suggests that students, in learning how to grapple with research and writing in English, also learn something about what it means to learn in general. Student comments indicate that they see how to apply this learning to challenges both in and outside the classroom. Student descriptions of Learning the Meaning of Learning include:

* what one learns in one area of life can be helpful in another
* "studying in general," "commitment," "professionalism" and "being rigorous in the use of evidence in life" are "important"
* "avoiding avoidance" and "appreciating" challenge
* attending to comments/feedback (not only to one's grade); using comments to learn from one's mistakes ("I am more aware of figuring out those mistakes which I made the my first draft and have ability to correct those mistakes by myself")
* "speaking out and asking questions"
* assessing the instruction one gets–what is "good teaching" for the individual student, what arouses and stimulates interest, what is beyond one's ability or below it.

Learning the Meaning of Learning also includes such traditional study skills as time management ("The class helped me organized myself and set priorities") or learning the importance of the computer as a research/writing tool.

The Development of Critical Thinking appeared in the present study as a sub-cluster of Learning the Meaning of Learning (20% of responses). Though definitions of critical thinking vary in the pedagogical literature, examples of what students meant by it here include, "I learned the way of thinking in English," "I learned especially to ask questions in the readings," and "Analysis! Analysis! Analysis! This is the most great part that I learned from this semester. It is not only help my reading, grammar and writing but also the thinking" (emphasis original). Some students emphasized the immediate practical aspects of critical

thinking: "It's going to be a lot of help for me to deal with more papers coming in the future," while others had broader growth in mind, "This is the first time in all my years studying school has made think."

Affective Outcomes, or those most associated with student feelings, included increased confidence in studying (14% of students) and discovering that learning can be fun (9% of students), echoing responses in the earlier study (28% of students). Embarking on academic/professional work can be anxiety-provoking for many students and more so for those studying in a second or foreign language (Ferris 315-339). Thus, having the chance to improve academic skills such that confidence increases and learning is even seen as fun may lower anxiety, which in turn may ease learning (Krashen). At least 9% of students extrapolated their experiences in English class to the notion that learning in general can be fun, and some (also 9% of students) reported that their English writing class increased confidence in their ability to "make it" in life, feelings that also may support academic and professional advancement.

Other students reflected on the interaction among confidence, enjoyment of learning and personal growth: "This class gets me fun. It makes me attend every day, which is wonderful for me and for my parents... I used to be actually an introvert. However, the class has made me more introvert. I'm joking. Yes, I'm joking. Now I'm able to say jokes which sometimes makes classmates laugh out loud. It's kind of because of this class. I'm having fun studying."

Improvement in Skills Other than Those Stated Explicitly in Course Goals suggests that the writing classes investigated here imparted a wider range of skills than were evident in course curricula/descriptions, and that skills are learned not only in the courses, class units or sequences designed to teach them. For instance, both studies showed improvement in oral communication in classes that focus on reading and writing. In the present study, nearly half (43%) of the students reported improved speaking skills; nearly a quarter (23%) reported improved grasp of mass media (tv, radio, and pop music) which relies on improved listening comprehension and familiarity with the culture. Both are needed in academic life, to comprehend lectures (including the asides, humor etc.) and to participate in discussion, debate and professional gatherings.

Increased Genre/Discipline Knowledge appeared markedly (42% of students) and not surprisingly in the present study where Sustained Content teaching was the method of instruction. As with student comments on course goals (question 1), this is important feedback for teachers and curricula programmers, indicating that students believe they learned what teachers intended to teach. But this finding is important for another reason as well. Increasing student grasp of one discipline may facilitate their grasp of others in and outside the classroom. That

is, as they learn the "transferable language knowledge" through the study of one discipline, including sophisticated concepts and vocabulary, lines of argumentation, and rhetorical conventions, they may then be in a position to apply them to later study.

In the earlier study, where a number of teaching methodologies were employed, increased genre/discipline knowledge was surprisingly also suggested by 10% of students. This finding led us to look again at student research and writing in that first study, and we noticed that here too, papers relied on the continuity and accretion of content, though these writings classes were not explicitly identified as Sustained Content courses. This changed our understanding of the relationships among content, writing and "by-products," discussed in the next section.

Sustained Content and Personal Development--An Unanticipated Finding

The central premise of Sustained Content teaching is that, by engaging authentic academic tasks in their English writing classes, students will gain academic skills which can then be applied to other academic/professional contexts–in short, that students grasp something about learning and writing overall by learning to write on one academic subject in depth (Nunan Chapter 2; Van Lier Chapter 1). In light of this goal, it is noteworthy that, though student comments are at minimum response levels, more than half of all students in the present study (53%) and nearly half of all their responses (43%) remarked on Learning the Meaning of Learning. Thus, by tackling one academic subject in depth, students reported that they learned not only skills specific to that subject but important ways to approach learning in and out of the classroom. Thirty-five percent reported on the development of critical thinking (35% of students), a skill key to academic/professional work in English. Other significant components of Learning the Meaning of Learning include: increased ability to study other subjects, such traditional study skills as time management, and increased ability to assess "good teaching"—to know when intellectual interest is aroused, when material is at an appropriate level, when the teacher "takes students seriously." These abilities are, again, central to academic/professional success.

Critically, the present study revealed an unanticipated finding regarding the effects of Sustained Content teaching on personal development. The courses in the earlier study, from the points of view of the teachers, were not Sustained Content courses as teachers did not develop Sustained Content curricula, readings, etc. Only one class ap-

proximated a Sustained Content curriculum, made up of English majors who studied a number of literary works together in order to write critical, academic papers for the English Literature department. All the remaining classes in the earlier research had within them students from many departments, each seeking to communicate in English about his or her major field of study. No common content was used in these writing classes. Nevertheless, from the students' point of view, these courses did rely on Sustained Content, as students wrote their papers on their major subjects. That is, to fulfill assignments in their writing classes, each student wrote about his/her area of expertise–*a Sustained Content experience for individual students if not for the teachers.*

It is possible that the personal development common to both studies—such as Learning the Meaning of Learning or Development of Critical Thinking—was supported by the Sustained Content approach used in all classes, even when unwittingly. For the authentic texts and tasks allow students to grapple with actual academic demands–to explore reasoning and study skills through practice and trial-and-error. In other words, a Sustained Content approach, in demanding authentic academic work, may provide challenges of sufficient complexity and reach to allow personal growth to occur. We do not mean to suggest that other approaches do not, only that all meaningful personal growth requires work that extends the self beyond what is known and comfortable into new areas, and that Sustained Content teaching may offer students an opportunity to apply themselves in this way.

"By-products" Resulting from Differences in Teaching Methodology

Though student responses show five "by-product" clusters common to both studies, they also suggest that the differences in teaching methodology influenced two "by-products": Increased Genre/Discipline Knowledge and Broadening Knowledge Base. In the present study where Sustained Content was the teaching method, 42% of students reported gaining genre/discipline knowledge ("The content of every reading material is very helpful for other classes in some way," "I can develop the concept of American society. Before taking this class, I just had illustions or mistake"). In the earlier study, by contrast, most students did not share a common curriculum but rather studied the content for their papers in their content classes. Thus, though they were writing under Sustained Content conditions, they understandably did not often identify their English writing class as the source of "genre or discipline" information (10% of students).

However, in the process of writing their papers, students in the

earlier study discussed their work with classmates so that they learned a bit about each other's majors. Thus, 9% of students reported "broadening their knowledge base" about different disciplines. This finding did not appear in the present study since discussing students' majors was not a feature of the course and so students would not likely mention such discussion as "by-products" of it.

"By-products" Reflecting Differences in Setting

As teaching English in a country where it is the main language (the U.S.) differs in some ways from teaching it where it is not (Israel), differences in "by-products" were expected to emerge. The students in New York (23%)--but not in Israel–reported increased ability to grasp the mass media as a result of their English course, and greater ease socializing with those around them (18% of students). Four percent of the New York group reported greater ease "expressing myself with people coming from different countries" using English as the *lingua franca*. Eighteen percent reported increased ability to grasp the content of other classes, since they were conducted in English, and 14% reported increased confidence in doing so.

Not surprisingly, though the Israeli students reported more ability and confidence in using English, they did not report greater ability or confidence in grasping other classes, as they are given in their native language. However, a considerable number of the Israeli students reported that learning to write in English improved their mother-tongue academic writing, a finding that appears to be linked to their Learning How to Learn and to Develop Critical Thinking. The New York group did not mention mother-tongue academic writing; to our knowledge they were writing academic papers only in English at the time of the study. Whether improved writing in English will influence mother-tongue writing at a later date suggests another area of research.

Responses Requiring Further Investigation

Two categories of responses that appeared in the earlier study did not appear significantly in the present one: Team Work and Listening to Others. As in the earlier research, classes in the present study relied on team work for a range of projects, and students received feedback both from their classmates and from the teacher. It is thus curious that only two students mentioned "working in groups" in their discussion of Learning the Meaning of Learning, and no students mentioned Listening to Others. Reasons why are purely speculative and point to future research to determine if these responses emerge elsewhere, and why or why not.

CONCLUSION

In this study, the perception of "by-products" among non-native English speakers has emerged in two very different settings, both with a focus on academic writing. Although creative writing has long been seen as a tool toward personal growth, especially in mother tongue classes, academic writing has not been considered in this light perhaps because of its traditional focus on skills. Yet in both settings reported on here, a wide range of personal changes were perceived by students. We were naturally led to wonder whether such perceived changes would be reported by students in other English courses for non-native speakers, such as those emphasizing oral/aural skills or reading comprehension? Would these changes be perceived by non-native speakers in content classes or native speakers in their mother-tongue writing classes? It is our view that the point of view of the learner is worthy of continued investigation.

In the present study, exploring the influence of different teaching methodologies on personal changes revealed that one methodology, Sustained Content teaching, might foster important changes in the learners. Though courses in the earlier study were not Sustained Content from the teachers' perspectives, students in both studies wrote their papers on subjects which they had studied in a sustained way. (The papers in the earlier study were based on students' content-area expertise in their majors.) Thus, students in both studies practiced their writing skills as they were working with a sustained system of concepts, becoming more knowledgeable about them as they became more articulate. We wonder if the practice in authentic academic skills made possible by Sustained Content provides the kind and extent of the challenge needed for the emergence and recognition personal growth. This would suggest not that Sustained Content teaching is the one way to achieve personal development but rather that, as growth emerges from grappling with ideas and skills one does not yet have, Sustained Content is one opportunity for this grappling that is beneficial in the academic context.

One could speculate that it is through "by-products" such as "Learning the Meaning of Learning" that bridging the gap between the "two worlds" can take place, the world of English for non-native speakers and the world of other university courses (Leki & Carson 39-69). If this is so, the Sustained Content approach warrants increased exploration and pedagogical emphasis both for its contribution to traditional academic skills and to their "by-products."

In addition, a study of "by-products" may add to the controversial debate on the transferability of language skills (Berman 29-46; Cumming 81-141). Student responses here indicate that several kinds

of skills transfer indeed occur, at least from their points of view. The New York group indicated transfer of language and other academic skills to their content classes in English, and the Israeli students indicated transfer of writing and reading expertise to study in their mother tongue. Student awareness of their academic progress in English writing classes and how they can use it in other classes is an area for future investigation.

These conclusions add to our understanding not only of the role of Sustained Content teaching on personal development but also more generally of the role played by English writing classes for non-native speakers in fulfilling the broader objectives of the university. This role includes developing the whole human being and our readiness,

> to think of the curriculum overtly and directly in relation to likely social, economic, political changes, in relation to likely futures, and in [its] thinking of the English curriculum as a central means of intervention, as a crucial factor in participating in the construction of those futures. (Kress, 15)

If our courses do reveal "by-products" of such significance for the academic and personal development of students, then it is possible that these personal changes could in turn effect changes in the larger sociopolitical environment. Inasmuch as a university plays a transformative role in the society in which it is situated, the repercussions of the "by-products" could be indeed far-reaching.

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APPENDIX A

Perceived outcomes in writing in English

Subcategories (Total: 146)	**Examples taken from Student Responses**
Grammar (morphology and syntax) (48)	***varied and suitable verb tenses***
	improved sentence structure
Academic Writing (41)	***using different tone and hedging***
	awareness of audience style of argumentation
	distinguishing between academic and personal writing
Vocabulary Development (22)	***awareness of the power of each word***
Making Connections (14)	***connecting sentences correctly***
	more varied connections between words

Figure 1

Perceived outcomes in writing in general

Subcategories (Total: 141)	**Examples taken from Student Responses**
Content and Structure (67)	***writing an abstract paragraph construction***
	constructing a thesis/defining an issue
	transfer of knowledge of structure of articles to Hebrew writing
Learning to Write (process) (17)	**Revision:** ***not being satisfied with the first draft***
	Planning: ***self-confidence in controlling own writing using discipline rather than intuition for writing***
	Monitoring: ***using suitable rules critical reading of own writing***

Awareness of Self in the Writing Process (15)	***taking responsibility for what you write***
Expressing Ideas Coherently (16)	***expressing ideas logically***
General Writing Skills (19)	***transfer of writing skills from one assignment to another***
Acquiring a Voice (7)	***positioning self vis-à-vis other writers developing an authoritative personal voice***

Figure 2

Perceived "by-products" of writing courses

Subcategories (Total: 127)	**Examples taken from Student Responses**
Other Skills (57)	***oral presentation techniques***
	analyzing scientific papers' use of a specific on-line internet writing tool
Affective Outcomes (19)	***overcoming fear of speaking***
	starting to like the English language
Teamwork (14)	***increased self-esteem generating ideas through group work***
Learning the Meaning of Learning (10)	***feeling of belonging to academic community***
	feeling committed/dedicated to own work
	paying attention to the writing and not to the grade
Listening to Others (8)	***accepting positive criticism***
Increased Genre/Discipline/Media Knowledge (7)	
	encountering different genres of writing from different disciplines
	comparing language of literature to language of film
Critical Thinking (6)	***achieving a critical perspective***
Broadening of Knowledge Base (6)	***using opportunity to learn about work of other students***

Figure 3

APPENDIX B

Course Outline: ***"The American Mind"***

Content:

Chapter 1: Individualism and its Contradictions

Academic Skills:

reading:

* find the main idea of each paragraph
* find and chart key terms
* find and chart rhetorical conventions (strategies of definition, comparison, contrast, exemplification, etc.)
* developing private dictionaries
* find the main idea of an article or chapter
* identify kinds of main ideas (describe, persuade, etc.)

writing:

* brainstorming
* writing a main idea for paper—introduction to types of main ideas/papers
* writing assignments

Content:

Chapter 2: The Ups & Downs of Pragmatism

Academic Skills:

reading:

* find the introduction, middle and conclusion of a reading
* find main & supporting points of the "middle" of a reading
* find evidence of the "middle" (examples, data, etc.)
* find and chart transition sentences
* develop an outline of a reading—outlines, note-taking

writing:

* developing an outline for your paper/essay
* writing assignments (for papers or essay exam writing)
  —definition/description essay: brainstorm, main idea, outline(claim and support)
  —argument essay: brainstorm, main idea, and outline (claim and support)

Content:

Chapter 3: The American Economy: Wealth & Poverty

Academic Skills:

reading:

* develop your research chart
* variations on the classic outline:
  —different sequences for main points, supporting points and evidence (inductive, deductive, etc.)
  —implied points

writing:

* summary writing: using your outline to write a summary
* paraphrasing

* writing assignments
  — summary writing and paraphrasing
  — argument essay: brainstorm, main idea, and outline (claim & support)
  — persuasive essay: brainstorm, main idea, outline (claim and support)
* citations and bibliographies

Content:
Chapter 4: Immigration in America: Need & Suspicion
Academic Skills:
reading:
* note when readings/sources disagree
* identify rhetorical conventions that show disagreement
* note when you disagree with a reading
* challenging/questioning a reading (the question-outline)
writing:
* writing assignments
  —compare/contrast essay: brainstorm, main idea, outline
  —synthesizing texts (research chart) and summarizing contrasting texts

Content:
Chapter 5: Education: Genius & Illiteracy
Academic Skills:
reading:
* questioning readings & "refute opposing opinion" strategies
writing:
* writing assignments
  — "refute opposing opinion" strategies: brainstorm, main idea and outline
* revision

Content:
Chapter 6: The Arts: The Jewel in the Crown, the Thorn in the Side
Academic Skills:
Consolidation of Skills:
reading:
* key terms
* outlining, note-taking
* questioning/challenging readings
writing:
Assignments for research papers or essay exams:
* brainstorm
* main idea
* outline (claim & support)
* summary/paraphrasing
* synthesizing readings (research chart)
* compare/contrast strategies
* refute opposing opinion strategies
* revision

APPENDIX C

Present Study: Responses to Question #1
Learning Skills Stated in Course Goals

(surface errors retained in student responses)

improvement in academic writing (95% of students) — "I learned how to organize an essay and it worked on my papers for major courses" —"I have become aware of the structure of English. . . . As this structure is very difference from that of Japanese writing, the training I took in this class was/is useful for writing." —"I have become more aware of mistakes in writing."	**improvement in text analysis** (49% of students) —"The most important thing in which I feel I have made progress was . . . to pick up the important parts of articles, which process a hard time for me." —"I never thought I'd be able to read or write in English. I was completely lost and now, after three month, my ability to read improved in a way that I am not thinking in my own language." —"The more writing skills I learn, the more reading I can understand."
improvement in grammar (63% of students) — "I made progress in analyzing and combining complex sentences." — "I think that grammar exercise is more effective for me . . . This was the first time that I've ever divided the sentence. At first, I didn't understand how these kind of study helped me, but I recognized that these kinds of study help me read articles and books easily."	**improvement in academic vocabulary** (34% of students) —gains in "vocabulary in use."
improvement in connections/transitions (25% of students) — "I learned to combine between the sentences," — "I can connect sentences to make them seem union."	**improvement in note-taking and research organization** (20% of students) —"I find it [research chart] useful in any field of writing. I have already started making a research chart when I write an essay in my course work."

APPENDIX D

Present Study: Responses to Question #2
Changes that Develop as "By-products" of Course Goals

Individual gains are measured in percent of students (S) as no student made more than one response within a category. The clusters are measured in percent of total responses (R), as a single student may have remarked on more than one category within the cluster.

Student Perception of "By-products" (Total R = 104)

improvement in speaking 8 S or 18%	confidence in studying at college 6 S or 14%	grasp of professionalism required by university work 2 S or 4%
assessing "good" teaching 8 S or 18%	increased ability to study other subjects 8 S or 18%	understanding of writing 1 S
learning how to "think" 4 S or 9%	learning that learning can be enjoyable 4 S or 9%	confidence in ability to succeed in life 3 S or 7%
learn to ask questions 4 S of 9%	learning how to find answers/study skills 6 S or 14%	increased genre/discipline knowledge 18 S or 42%
increased ability to to interact socially 8 S or 18%	improvement in reading/ viewing/hearing mass media 10 S or 23%	appreciation of a challenging job 4 or 9%
learn from mistakes 4 S or 9%	learn what is beyond one's present ability 3 S or 7%	learn what is below one's present ability 2 S or 4%
interacting with people from different countries 2 S or 4%	skills for NNS in U.S. 1 S	

Clusters:

Learning the Meaning of Learning (43% of R)

study skills=6 S or 14%
learn to think=4 S or 9%
appreciate challenge= 4S or 9%
ask questions = 4S or 9%
good teaching=8 S or18%
learn from mistakes=4S or 9%
beyond ability=3 S or 7%
below ability=2 S or 4%
professionalism=2 S or 4%
increased ability to study other subjects=8 S or 18%

Development of Critical Thinking (20% of R)

ability to ask questions = 4 S or 9%
assessing good teaching = 8 S or18%
learning to think = 4 S or 9%
learning from mistakes = 4 S or 9%

Affective Outcomes(13% of R)

confidence in studying = 6 S or 14%
confidence in life =3 S or 7%
learning is enjoyable= 4 S or 9%

Interpersonal Skills Development(9% of R)

in general = 8 S or18%
with people from other countries = 2 S or 4%

Increased genre/discipline knowledge Explicit (17% of R)

8 S or 18%
8 S or 18%

Improvement in Skills Not in Course Goals (27% of R)

speaking:18 S or 42%
improved grasp of mass media: 10 S or 23%