Writing Across Cultures and Contexts:
International Students in the Stanford Study of Writing

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August 2005

A Monograph in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of *Master of Arts*

Approvals:

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Abstract

Through case studies of eight international students at Stanford University in the Stanford Study of Writing—a five-year longitudinal research project created to study the depth of college writing at Stanford—this monograph explores international students' use of linguistic and cultural codes in language usage, writing style, cultural expectations. Social cognitive theory of writing is used to show how environmental and social influences play an large role in international student writing as a cultural product of their own experience. An analysis of interview transcripts, writing samples, and survey responses, shows that cultural factors have the most significant affect on the development of international student writing at Stanford. Moreover, the background of international students and perceived expectations of their audiences seems to be the common link, connecting differences in language, writing, and culture to international students' as writers at Stanford. Implications from this study include learning to improve cross-cultural communication, enhancing writing support for students at the college level, and, finally, to raise awareness within the university community to embrace and incorporate new, hybrid forms of communication.

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For Danielle, my inspiration.

Prologue

During the summer of 2001, after two years of undergraduate study at Stanford University, I was ready to try something new: I was interested in working for an international non-profit to learn more about job opportunities in my area of study, International Relations. The non-existent intern-paycheck did not interest me, however, and a friend told me about a job opening in the writing department. What I did not know, as I started my job as the office assistant, was that the office was especially busy this summer. The Director of the Program in Writing and Rhetoric (PWR), Andrea Lunsford was kicking off a longitudinal study of writing designed to collect as much student writing as possible over the next five years.

This description of my haphazard beginnings in the PWR office is necessary to explain my surprise as I quickly became part of the writing department family. I was unaware that my characteristics/credentials as an undergraduate student at Stanford (the soon to be target population of the Stanford Study of Writing) would be in high demand that summer: I was the ideal experiment subject. As the preparations for the longitudinal study came into its final pilot phases, I was asked to complete surveys, to answer interview questions, and to submit writing online to test survey design and data collection technique. I provided feedback to the research team about survey timing, word-ordering, and formatting. More importantly, I got my first insider's look at the start of what is now the largest collection of both academic and self-sponsored writing in the history of English and Rhetoric. Although I did not know it at the time, this would be the beginning of my long-term research collaboration focusing on undergraduate writing at Stanford.

Four years later, reflecting upon my time with the Stanford Study of Writing (SSW)—as a graduate student now working as a co-researcher on the Study—I am amazed at

how much I have learned and continue to learn about writing, writers, and the complex relationship between writers and the contexts in which they write. In fact, contributing as part of the research team piqued my interest in the development of college writers and inspired my master's project on this topic. As a student in International Comparative Education, I was particularly interested in the subset of international students out of the 189 randomly sampled students from the class of 2005 in the Stanford Study of Writing.

Motivated by earlier research, I began this monograph with the purpose of exploring the writing development of international students, though, at one time, I did consider expanding my project to all of the students in the SSW data set so as not to limit the study. Nevertheless, after delving into the research investigation, including a review of the literature and survey analysis, I realized that very little research focuses on the writing development of international students in the United States and even fewer resources exist on campus for undergraduate international students experiencing difficult transition and acculturation to the United States academic system. As a result, I turned my focus back to international students, for a discussion of writing practices and personal experiences across the college years.

Without a doubt, the opportunity to become a critical researcher of writing at Stanford across *my* college years and a contributor to a new and expanded definition of writing has influenced my own development as a writer and my notions of "traditional" academic writing. The monograph that follows is simply a taste of the diverse forms of academic discourse emerging from students in the university, international in particular. My hope is that this study will shed light on the ways to embrace and encourage students to bring all of their discursive resources—traditional or what may be considered slightly out of the ordinary—to bear on the many intellectual challenges of academia and beyond.

Introduction and Purpose Statement

Multicultural and multilingual students at the college and university level present diverse approaches to reading, writing, and critical thinking, often based in the patterns of their home languages and cultures. Frequently, these students may use different ways to convey ideas logically and persuasively than those with which English-speaking faculty and students are familiar. Kennedy (1998) discusses textual arrangement of the type most used in academic prose:

> "Arrangement" in traditional Western rhetoric concerns the division of work into identifiable parts that perform specific functions: The "proemium" or introduction should get the attention, interest, and good will of the audience; the "narration" should provide the audience with background and necessary fact to understand the argument; the "proof" should identify the question at issue and the thesis, followed by supporting arguments. It may also refute the arguments of an opponent. The final part is the "epilogue," which should recapitulate the main points made earlier and stir the emotions of the audience to belief or action. (p. 7)

Multilingual and multicultural students may not present knowledge and ideas according to this typical academic pattern, and as a result, they often find themselves and their written or spoken work either misunderstood and/or underappreciated. Furthermore, Bizzell (2002) describes that academic forms of writing in the "traditional academic community create discourses that embody a typical worldview [that] speaks through an academic persona who is objective, trying to prevent emotions or prejudices from influencing the ideas in the writing" (p. 2). From a sociolinguistic perspective, cultural clashes of this type serve social functions marking and building relations of affinity and distance, and inclusion and exclusion, across social groups (Buell, 2004).

But what happens to student writing at an institution such as Stanford University that is publicly renowned for its commitment to student diversity and excellence in research at the

international level? Stanford University welcomes a diverse body of undergraduate students, "with different backgrounds and experiences to create a dynamic environment in which to learn and live" (Undergraduate Admissions, 2005). The admission process is not blind for international students, but the university carefully considers the applicants and how they might contribute to the campus community. Upon arrival at Stanford, international undergraduate students receive support from organizations such as the Becthel International Student Center (I-Center) through orientation to describe administrative procedures and to introduce students to campus services. Beyond orientation, the I-Center provides workshops, annual celebrations, and support for international student organizations (Bechtel Center, 2005). From this perspective, it would appear that the international student body is valued specifically for the diversity it brings to campus, in terms of cultural experience and perspective.

On the other hand, Stanford University is recognized as a leading research university worldwide and boasts a community of scholars that includes, "16 Nobel laureates, four Pulitzer Prize winners and 24 MacArthur Fellows" (Stanford University, 2005). In such an environment, how might students' writing converge or come into conflict with the dominant narrative of these leading researchers and scholars? Although the university is committed to research at the international level, launching a new wide-ranging International Initiative in 2005 (Stanford News Service, 2005) and with the creation of new innovative training programs for practitioners across the world, such as the Stanford Democracy Fellows Program (Mumford, 2005), undergraduate students enter the university to encounter a particular discourse community with specific preferences and expectations for student writing and speaking in the academic context.

Students at the undergraduate level are in the formative stages of their academic development. All students must learn to join the language community of the academy in order to succeed. Yet until recently, "people in the academic community have usually been male, European American, and middle or upper class" (Bizzell, 2004, p. 1) and students from diverse backgrounds, such as student from different cultures and countries, indeed bring diverse discourse practices from their home communities to the university. This is particularly true for the eight case study students highlighted in this study, who came from eight different countries around the world (where they conducted the majority of their education) until their acceptance at Stanford. These case study students are part of the random sample of 12% (189 students) of the Class of 2005 who were selected and agreed to participate in the Stanford Study of Writing (SSW), a five-year longitudinal research project created to describe the depth and breadth of college writing at Stanford.

Writing this monograph just after the graduation of the Class of 2005, I had the opportunity to interview the case study students prior to graduation and to investigate surveys and to explore writing samples submitted over four years for the Stanford Study of Writing. My goal is to present the conflicts international students face in their experience at the university and how writing development occurs within the social context of university. Alternative forms of discourse are developed when international students must learn the language of academia and adopt particular ways of knowing while at the same time drawing on their unique international perspectives and experiences. Identifying and acknowledging "differences" in approaches to writing and learning at the university lead to recommendations on how to incorporate new conventions into "traditional" academic discourse and to improve writing instruction and support across the curriculum.

Background: Stanford Study of Writing

The Stanford Study of Writing (SSW)[1] is a five-year longitudinal study which began in the fall of 2001 to collect as much student writing as possible from 12 percent (189 students) of the incoming undergraduate class of 2005. Initially, 15 percent of the class was randomly selected and invited to participate in the SSW, but three percent declined the offer. The purpose of the SSW is to study change in student writing over time and to see what type of writing students do—both academic and self-sponsored—and for what purpose. To gather rich descriptive information from the SSW cohort, all students were asked to submit writing samples and surveys, and a sub-group of 35 students volunteered to participate in annual interviews. Data collection began upon matriculation through graduation and will continue until the students' first year out of college. Data collection is scheduled to end Spring 2006.

In conversation with the Principal Investigator of the SSW, Andrea Lunsford, about the impetus for this research project she explained that the Study was designed "because the time was right." As Director of the newly designed Program in Writing and Rhetoric at Stanford University, Professor Lunsford was eager to learn more about student writers at Stanford and the changing nature of writing and rhetoric in the university. The university provided generous funding to get the study off the ground, and at that point, the SSW research team was pulled together to create a research design that would seek to answer some of the most salient questions concerning undergraduate writing at Stanford University.

The SSW research team approached this longitudinal study from a different perspective than that taken to date by other researchers. As mentioned previously, rather than a convenience or volunteer sample, a random sample of students was purposely elicited

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[1] The Stanford Study of Writing is used interchangeably and affectionately with "the Study."

to assure that the group is representative of the 2005 class at large. Furthermore, this is the first large-scale, long-term study to gather writing in an electronic that provides functionality necessary to search the database in diverse and complex ways. The SSW dataset also differs from others by including self-sponsored writing, including journal and diary entries, emails, poetry, PowerPoints, writing for community organizations, videos, music clips, and writing in languages other than English. Currently, students have submitted 10,554 pieces of writing and multimedia, completed approximately 1,000 surveys, and participated in 150 hour-long interviews. In short, the SSW seeks to collect the most comprehensive and varied database of student writing to date in order to describe and analyze student writing across all disciplines and beyond the academic context. The ultimate goal is to use the findings of this study to inform the way writing is defined, taught, and evaluated in colleges as well as to lay the groundwork for additional research.

This monograph project is a sub-study of the Stanford Study of Writing. I draw my data from the SSW data set and, although a few comparisons are made with non-native students in the Study, the primary focus of my project is the data collected from the sub-group of international students. By utilizing data collected from international students in the SSW between the years 2001 and 2005, my study is both longitudinal and focused. Instead of describing writing development over time for a general student population or discussing approaches to writing in various international contexts or for second language learners, this monograph incorporates both approaches to discuss various aspects of culture, language, and experience that influence the writing of international students at Stanford University.

Research Questions and Argument

Descriptive in nature, this research project explores the writing processes of eight international undergraduate student writers at Stanford University. The study focuses on students' negotiation of linguistic and cultural codes that may include issues as simple as word choice or as complex as determining which larger textual or cultural codes dominate the writing process. I present three main research questions—descriptive, exploratory, and interpretive—with the goal of learning more about the social significations of rhetorical codes and how they reflect and produce social identities, relations, and contexts for international student writers. The questions are as follows:

Generally speaking, what is the writing experience for international undergraduate students at Stanford University?

Where and how do international students utilize code-switching—either intentional or non-intentional—in their writing and in their social experiences in college?

How does the use of linguistic or cultural code-switching influence the development of international student writing over the college years?

Rhetorical and other discourse practices may be multilayered and contradictory. As such, a narrative account from the students about writing at Stanford University is necessary to uncover complexities in student experience and social factors that contribute to their development as writers. Although Casanave (1995) and Prior (1998) show that first and second language writers both encounter difficulties as they work to learn the multiple and fluid codes found in disciplinary fields, the international students in this study face unique challenges in learning how to write with authority in the academic context.

International students in the academic setting are likely to use code-switching in the broad social context of language and discourse. Studies show that writers switch codes to communicate with friends and family or to vary tone or style to match audience expectations,

but "this variation is mediated by the writer's own understanding of language use, of the context, of social relations, and of aspects of identity" (Buell 2004, p. 100). Therefore, the use and recognition of code-switching should vary among students depending on the level of awareness and attentiveness to language use and cultural differences.

Awareness and sensitivity to the demands of the academy is a skill most students learn over time and I expect students' discursive practices will slowly converge with academic discourse preferences in their fields of study. Although discourse may converge, due to the rich cultural background international students bring to the university, I argue that the writing development of the case study students will be influenced mostly by codes linked to diverse arenas of social life and cultural experience. Carroll (2002) shows that writers are not isolated individuals reaching within themselves to produce original writing, but rather, "they are more fluid, pulling together bits and pieces of language to accomplish social and cultural goals" (p. 24). In this process to pull together bits of language and experience to accomplish goals, cultural differences or "code-shifts" between cultural beliefs and behaviors play a very important role in influencing perspectives on and practices of writing over time.

The purpose of this study is to consider the range of discourse practices appropriate for the changing rhetorical context in U.S. higher education. That is to realize that when multilingual and multicultural students enter the academy, they are not the only ones who need to learn the conventions and assumptions of U.S. academic discourse; everyone in the U.S. academy needs to reassess assumptions about discourse practices as they come into contact with unfamiliar forms of writing and speaking. By identifying and acknowledging "international discourse," this monograph's objective is to raise awareness within the university community of new, hybrid forms of communication.

In order to build a framework to support and enrich the questions set forth by this study—longitudinal in nature yet focusing on a small population of multicultural and multilingual students—literature is drawn from composition studies and sociolinguistics. The literature review is divided into three sections—writing in a longitudinal perspective, writing process and development, and writing in cross-cultural contexts—to bring to bear the most salient research and debates in the field. Although the literature is varied, the variety of the data available and the diversity of the students showcased in this study require that I present multiple perspectives and methodologies. In this way, this literature review serves as a springboard to allow for a more nuanced and sophisticated approach to studying writing experiences of international students at Stanford University.

Writing in a Longitudinal Perspective

Early longitudinal research in composition studies was designed to show "an 'all around' picture" of student writing, as Braddock, Lloyd-Jones, and Schoer (1963) called for in their study, *Research in Written Composition.* In the same year, Loban (1963) published his fourteen-year longitudinal study, *Language Development: Kindergarten through Grade Twelve,* which helped shape both theories and research approaches to writing. Other important studies following students over time—though no one matched Loban's 14 year project—include Emig's (1971) study of twelfth grade writers, Britton, et al.'s (1975) study of the writing and writing processes of students 11 to 18 years old, and Stock and Robinson's (1989) work on literacy and classroom conversations.

More commonly, however, longitudinal studies of writing focus on small groups of students whom researchers follow over several years. Sternglass (1997), in her study of basic

writers at City College in New York, follows nine basic writers over six years, collecting students' academic writing, making classroom observations, and conducting regular interviews with participants. Along with studies of basic writers, who are perhaps the most frequently studied population of college writers (Lunsford, 1978, 1979), scholars have also followed students of color (Balester, 1993; Krater, Zeni, and Carson, 1994) and ESL students (Li and Cumming, 2002; Spack, 1997). In contrast to studies that removed students from their regular writing processes and environments, these studies aimed not to evaluate or judge student writers, but to track and describe development in a natural setting.

The largest study to examine how college writers adjust, adapt, and develop over time is a four-year longitudinal study recently completed by Nancy Sommers at Harvard. For this study, Sommers invited all members of the class of 2001 to turn in all of their academic writing over four years; from a group of 400 volunteers, Sommers chose 65 students whose print-based portfolios of written coursework and interview transcripts comprise the Harvard Study data. Sommers' major goal is to fully describe the development of academic writing— and especially academic argument—across the majors and disciplines at Harvard (1999, 2000, 2001). Although, as with the other long-term studies of college writers, this study only focuses on students as writers of a narrow range of conventional academic texts.

To date no large-scale longitudinal study has inquired into the relationship between students' academic and non-academic or self-sponsored writing, nor has any long-term study given careful and extensive consideration to the range of genres and media with and in which students compose. The Stanford Study of Writing is the first study to undertake this task. Currently, the only research published from the project explores the relationship between writing and performance at Stanford University (Fishman and Lunsford, forthcoming). My

research project builds upon these beginning stages of analysis from the Stanford Study of Writing; however, this study will be the first to look specifically at cultural influences on writing from the SSW dataset.

Writing Process and Development

Longitudinal studies of writing explore change over time, but more specifically, these studies intend to uncover the processes students undertake in composing their written work and how these activities contribute to their development as writers. Although not the first research to attend to the composing process, Janet Emig's (1971) longitudinal study, *The Composing Processes of Twelfth Graders,* set the stage for what is called "the process movement" in composition research and teaching. As a pedagogical initiative "process" emphasizes a shift away from a focus on finished texts as objects of analysis and imitation toward the more practical questions of how people do the behind-the-scenes work of writing. Process pedagogy, which puts high value on invention, revision, and peer and teacher response during drafting, has changed the character of writing instruction in schools and colleges in the United States.

Herrington and Curtis (2000) fall within this paradigm with their study that focuses on the process of four "basic writers" over two years at the University of Massachusetts. The experience of these student writers reveals that the term "development" does not necessarily connote positive improvement or change, as it might suggest. In the conclusion of the study, the authors do not claim that any of the students graduated from college as writers of flawless prose. Instead, "development" is a process where students are writing with more authority and a sense of purpose in communicating with readers. Development as writers and people are thus interdependent, where the students are "neither products nor agents of change but

prisoners of cultural influence and background" (p. 358). This definition of "development"

and the perspectives gained from these four students from various cultural backgrounds gives

a clue as to what to expect from the small group of eight students highlighted in this study. It

will certainly be interesting to note differences between the experience of "basic writers" and

the experience of writers at an elite university and to observe differences or similarities in

development over time.

Another study by Carroll (2002) at a midsize independent university, Pepperdine

University, follows 20 students in their writing development over four years. Results of the

study conclude that complex literacy skills develop slowly as students choose or are coerced

to "rehearse new roles" as students and individuals in the university. This particular research

project is significant in learning that understanding the literacy demands placed on students

could help teachers teach more effectively. Carroll deducts from her findings that, students

do not learn to write "better," but "they learn to write differently, to produce new, more

complicated forms addressing challenging topics with greater depth, complexity, and

rhetorical sophistication" (p. xiv). Students of all different levels are shown to experience

development in their writing over the college years, whether with enhanced sophistication in

style or functionally as students learn to write differently across the curriculum, but these

changes are as much connected to students lives and goals outside of the classroom as from

their experience inside the classroom.

Writing in Cross-Cultural Contexts

Differences do exist, however, in student writing "process" and stages of

development as investigated in the field of contrastive rhetoric. Contrastive rhetoric is the

term used to describe the linguistic, organizational, and presentational choices that

multicultural and multilingual student writers make that differ from the choices that native-English students make in their written work. The whole notion of "contrastive rhetoric" began in 1966 with Robert Kaplan who, along with other writing instructors, discovered that the writing patterns of international students who had recently come to the United States were much different from the writing patterns of native writers. By closely analyzing compositions written by English-as-Second-Language (ESL) students, Kaplan realized that the differences he noted were not simply grammatical or surface matters, but underlying differences, including "paragraph order and structure" (Kaplan, 1987, p. 277). He then compared ESL cultural practices to typical Western practices and found many interesting rhetorical trends and deviations (Piper, 1985). Student writers from Anglo-European languages seemed to prefer linear developments, whereas student-writers from Asian languages seemed to take a more indirect approach, coming to their points at the end of their papers. The paragraph development in writing done by students from Semitic languages tended to be based on a series of parallel organization of coordinate, rather than subordinate clauses, whereas students from Romance and Russian languages tended to prefer extraneous material (Connor, 1997). In short, Kaplan was able to suggest that rhetorical structure is not universal, but culture-dependent.

Contrastive rhetoric moves beyond sentence-level lexical and syntactical issues to examine cultural influences on written text. The approach seeks to understand where and how learners of new rhetorical codes come to create border forms or new combinations of writing that neither follow patterns from the first language or culture nor follow the usual patterns of the target language. Gloria Anzaldúa (1987) and Victor Villanueva (1993) describe and demonstrate how writing can be hybrid or fused when language and discourse

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and rhetoric from different traditions come together. Arguments set forth by these authors on the significance of code-switching and alternative forms of discourse alone warrant investigation of the factors motivating such complex fusions of expression.

While looking for "differences" and "contrast" in student writing, Bizell (2002) and Royster (2002) caution researchers in identifying forms of discourse as "alternative." Bizell argues that "alterative" forms of academic discourse have "always been knocking around the academy" (p. 1). Instead of examining "hybrid" discourse, Bizell calls for a turn of attention towards a "mixing" of alternative academic discourses. Royster echoes this concern, calling on instructors to "position literacy instruction as helping students to understand and to participate flexibly in multiple discourses, especially academic discourses" (p. 28). Discussions of alternative forms of discourse in the academy are limited, yet such discussions are important as they start moving towards an understanding of the actual goals for development of students writers in college and potential future directions of new forms of discourse to be negotiated among students and teachers.

Many of the studies about writing in cross-cultural contexts focus on a broad range of cross-cultural students—from students of color to immigrant student populations—but few studies have focused specifically on international students in the university. Helen Fox is one scholar who specializes in international student writing for graduate students. Fox (2002) addresses the challenges international students face in their writing by describing that it is "not writing styles per se, but tendencies to display learning and intelligence in a way that is sophisticated and interesting and sensitive to particular audience expectations" (p. 60). In a different study, Fox (2004) shows that international students have a preference for indirect forms of discourse, with a tendency to promote the goals of the group versus those of the

individual, and these students value ancient knowledge and wisdom.   While Fox has contributed greatly to the understanding of cultural issues in academic writing for graduate students, she only focuses on graduate students and does not discuss undergraduate international students in her research.

Another international study by Foster and Russell (2002) describes the writing style and systems of six different countries in the world. Each study is confined to a description of particular writing conventions for the particular countries, such as the Lycée University program in France or student tracking in Chinese high schools. The U.S. is not represented in this study, nor does the study discuss the implications of the interactions between two different writing systems or how their social contexts influence student writers. On the other hand, several recent studies (Fu, 1995; Cai, 1999) have shown interest in Asian student writers in the United States. Although these studies discuss the influence of culture on the different forms of writing in the United States, once again, these studies take place at the high school level and are not applied to undergraduate writers or writers from other cultures.

My study is unique in that I look at writing from a longitudinal and an international perspective. I seek to find how international student writing evolves over the college years whether in line with or in contrast to traditional academic genres and typical world perspectives. Similar to Bartholomae's (1985) observations that "each student has to learn our language, to speak as we do, to try on the peculiar ways of knowing, selecting, evaluating, reporting, concluding, and arguing that define the discourse of our community" (p. 460), I expect that international students must learn the language of the university and learn to use it convincingly. The research that follows will investigate this process, exploring how people form a shared language and participate in academic discourse together.

Conceptual Framework

An ongoing debate in rhetoric and composition over how to represent literate actions of writers as a shared experience, an integrated social, cognitive, and cultural process produces a challenge in framing this study. As Brandt (1990) suggests, the field of composition studies has struggled to resolve a split between social and cognitive views of writing for years. Social oriented research, however, is the most appropriate lens for this project to explain the degree to which literacy is embedded in and shaped by cultural processes. This framework is in line with such scholars as Keith Gilyard (1991), Glynda Hull and Mike Rose (1989, 1990), Jabari Mahiri (1998), and Shirley Heath and Milbrey McLaughlin (1993)—to name a few—who attempt to move beyond cognitive analyses that fail to account for social context or social analyses that fail to account for agency, situated knowledge, and individual difference.

The social activity view of literacy puts language itself in the background as it focuses on the social contexts in which literacy tasks occur. Gee (1990) argues that "the focus of literacy studies cannot be, and ought not to be, on language or even literacy itself as traditionally construed. Rather the focus must be on the social practices" (p. 137). Gee points out how achieving effective participation in a discourse community means being fully aware of the ways of using language that are taken for granted in that community. By forming an awareness of the values and interests of various discourse communities, students can move back and forth between contexts where diverse discourses are valued, contributing to their overall development as writers, thinkers, and learners.

In order to talk about the process of students' changing awareness of text in various social contexts, I use the social cognitive theory of writing (Flower, 1994). The social

cognitive view of literacy accounts for the diversity and complexity of literate action located in the social world and, thus, fundamentally structured by the shape of the environment. Figure 1 demonstrates this relationship:

Figure 1: Model of Discourse Construction[2]

Social Context   Discourse   Language

Purpose and Goals   Activated Knowledge

Writer   Awareness

Writer's Mental Representation

Text

Reader's Mental Representation

Reader   Awareness

Purpose and Goals   Activated Knowledge

Social Context   Discourse   Language
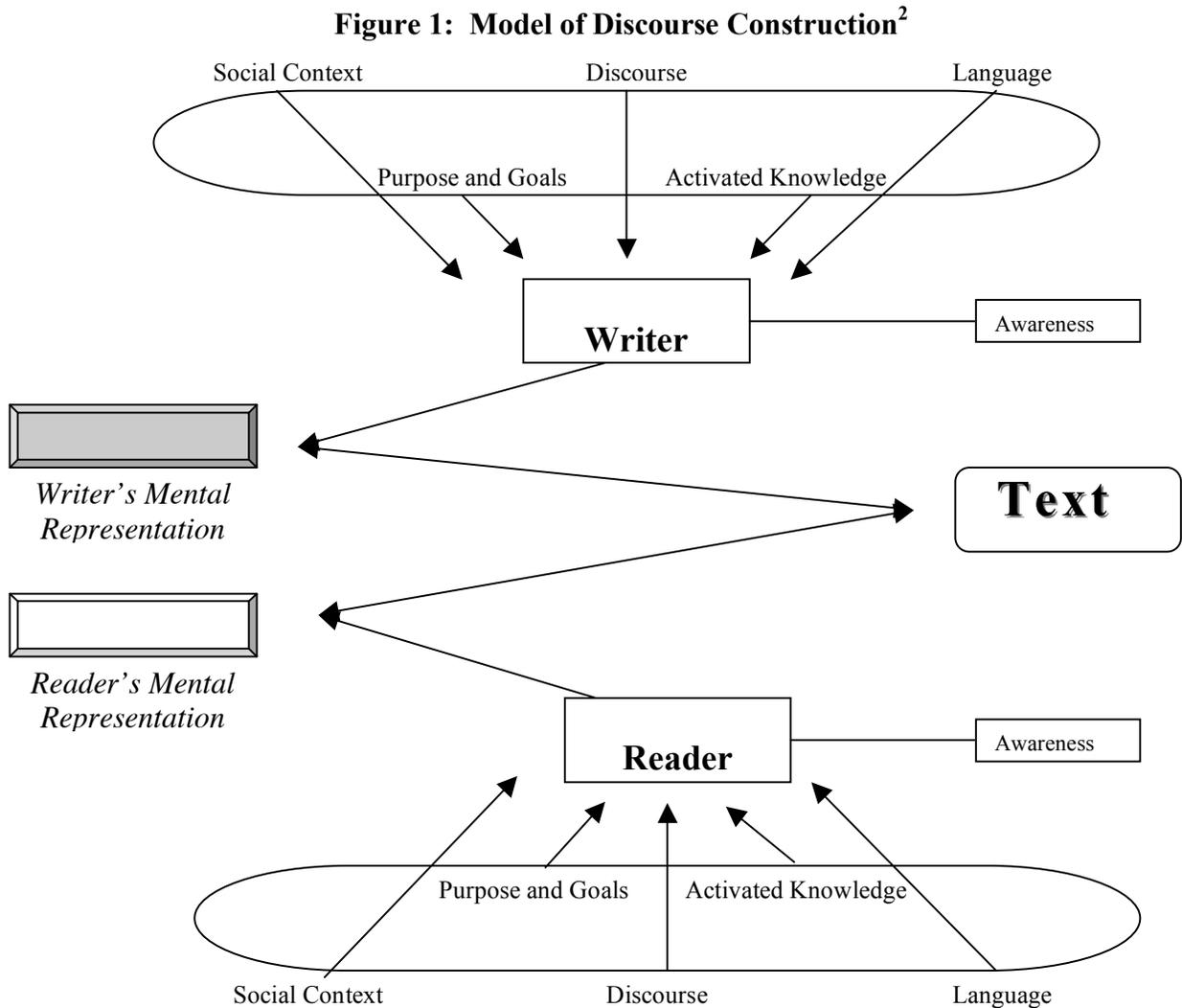
   The social cognitive model shows that both readers and writers construct meaning within the broader context of a social and cultural context of language and discourse. These form an outer circle of influence in conjunction with a more immediate circle of general purposes, specific goals, and activated knowledge linked to the text of the writer. In this

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Figure adapted from <u>Reading-to-Write: Exploring a Cognitive and Social Process</u> by Linda Flower, Victoria Stein, John Ackerman, Margaret Kantaz, Kathleen McCormick, and Wayne Peck. Oxford University Press.

model, both readers and writers are socially shaped and individually formed. However, the link between personal/public contexts and text require an understanding of the internal representations people build represented by the boxes on the left. These mental representations are important in that they account for crucial differences in the ways individual writers and readers interpret shared social expectations or the ways students interpret a task or a teacher's response. Finally, awareness, represented by the small boxes on the right, is a feature that shows how writers or readers may be highly conscious or only vaguely aware of their own constructive process and the forces operating on it and within it. The "zig-zag" relationship between writer and reader demonstrate the iterative, ongoing, non-linear process of understanding the goals and meaning of the writer/reader and learning new ways to produce and interpret text in a socially constructed context.

This model is useful in understanding the significance of the social forces that support and defy students' writing abilities across different academic contexts. The social cognitive framework is also useful in theorizing why international students—coming to the university from different social environments, discourse conventions, and language traditions—might differ in their approach to writing. All of the possible factors influencing the production of text are amplified. The development of the writer in the production of text is therefore constantly changing according to their social context, the context of others, and the growing awareness of expectations within a given community. The students in this study, from different cultural backgrounds and with different goals and future plans, will have different writing experiences. But this model will help to explain why international students might share a common experience in negotiating meaning at the university and in creating alternative approaches to learning and writing both in and out of the classroom setting.

Data and Methods

A qualitative, case study methodology is used in this study to learn as much as possible about the rhetorical context in which students negotiate meaning and produce written texts. In particular, I follow the case study model set forth by Meriam (1988), who identifies three case study types: "(a) descriptive (narrative accounts); (b) interpretative (developing conceptual categories inductively in order to examine initial assumptions); and (c) evaluative (explaining and judging)" (p. 183). I focus collectively on the descriptive and interpretative case study methods, shying away from the evaluative model of investigation. The purpose of this study is to describe international student writing and experience, not to track writing "improvement" over time.

The descriptive data collected in this study is limited to eight international students at an elite university and, therefore, the data has its limits. One such limit lies in the insularity of the investigation and the difficulty of extending findings beyond these eight students to other international students at Stanford or at any other institution of higher education. Data is also limited by the selective material provided by each student and the selection of data presented in this study. The intention of this investigation is to understand the unique interaction of these particular international students at Stanford over the past four years and, to borrow from Geertz (1973), to "inscribe social discourse," transforming past events "into an account which exists in its inscription and can be reconsulted" (p. 19). The stories constructed from this inscription are useful because they help us to understand what happened and to some extent what happens to international students during the writing process from matriculation to graduation at Stanford.

Data Source: International Case Studies

Eight international students were selected for this case study from the overall sample of 189 students in the Stanford Study of Writing. The SSW randomized data set is representative of the entire undergraduate class of 2005 where five percent of the whole population is international and five percent of the SSW sample is international (see Table 1). Eleven international students in total are in the SSW data set, and although I invited all eleven students to participate in this research project, only eight of the eleven agreed to contribute time for interviews and provide access to their online writing portfolios. Of the three students not included, one graduated early and currently lives in Europe, and the other two were not available for interviews due to time constraints.

Table 1: Class of 2005 and Stanford Study of Writing Demographic Comparison

	Stanford Class of 2005 (%)	Study of Writing Participants (%)
White/Caucasian	43.6	43.0
African American	10.3	6.4
Asian American	24.0	21.0
International	5.0	5.8
Mexican American	10.0	4.2
Asian East Indian	N/A	4.8
Native American	1.9	--
Other Hispanic	1.8	1.6
Other	N/A	2.1
Multiple Ethnicity*	N/A	14.4
Unidentified	3.4	1.6

International students, for this study, are defined by the same criteria used by the Stanford Study of Writing: international students are students who conducted the majority of their schooling in a country other than the United States. Students are not categorized by

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* The apparent discrepancy between the percentage of African Americans in the Class of 2005 and the SSW sample is accounted for by the fact that Stanford does not allow students to check more than one ethnicity or race, while our demographic survey did allow for multiple choices.

their citizenship status, as categorized by the university, but rather, students are self-identified as international students through the demographic survey (see Appendix A) completed in the first year of the Stanford Study of Writing.

Data Collection: Interviews, Surveys, and Writing Samples

Data collecting includes interviews conducted prior to graduation, with supporting evidence from writing samples and qualitative survey responses over four years. The range of data collected is driven by Buell's (2004) notion of "inter-rhetoric," to understand all of the potential resources that learners of new rhetorical codes draw upon to produce new combinations and transformations of writing that "neither mimic the code they are learning nor the code they already know" (p. 102). The diverse data collection framework anticipates heterogeneity within and across student writing, and as a result, triangulation is applied to both data collection and analysis to get the maximum return on insight and interpretation from the data collected.

All eight case study students participated in an interview during spring quarter 2005. Each interview lasted one hour and the interview followed the same protocol as the Year 4 interview (see Appendix B) with the addition of one question: *Why did you decide to study abroad at Stanford?* The rest of the interview questions remained the same for continuity with the rest of the SSW interview sub-group and for further comparison between the international and the non-international population. Interview questions are divided into three parts, including general questions about writing change over time, questions particular to the academic context about writing process and writing pedagogy in the classroom, and finally, questions concerning self-sponsored writing practices outside of the classroom.

Although interviews are the main source of data for this study, I also refer to four years of SSW survey information provided by each student about confidence in writing, types of writing conducted, and use and evaluation of web sources, among other topics (see Appendix C). All participants in the Stanford Study of Writing are asked to fill out the surveys on an annual basis to the SSW database. The SSW surveys are longitudinal in that they have maintained consistent over four years, but in later surveys open-ended questions are incorporated to learn more about students' area of study and upper level coursework.

Finally, I have access to the writing portfolios of all eight students. All students in the Stanford Study of Writing submit writing—both in-class and self-sponsored—to the database. Some students submit more writing than others and the distribution of academic versus self-sponsored writing varies greatly between students. Over time, the area of study has proven to be one of the main factors contributing to differences in submissions among students. Not surprisingly, students majoring in the Humanities and Social Sciences tend to submit more writing while technical majors in the Sciences and Engineering tend to submit less. Each student has been asked to be as comprehensive as possible in their submissions, and consequently, the portfolios are viewed as such: a snapshot of student writing over time deemed appropriate and representative by each individual student.

Methodology: Interview Methodologies and Interpretive Analysis

The challenge of this study was to find the most appropriate methodology to digest the diverse types of data and the vast amount of data available for analysis and synthesis. I chose to adapt the mixed-method "ethnographic, interpretive, intertextual" approach put forth by Marcia Buell (2004) to enrich an understanding of codes and code-switching in written texts. This particular framework is quite useful since it is designed to study salient rhetorical

differences that are not limited to the modes of organization, style, and forms of argument, but also "involve specific topical resources with deep intertextual roots, use of metaphors and other tropes, complex voicing, ideologies, and so on" (p. 102). Because of the complex interaction of language and social factors, theories in code-switching offer fertile ground for analyzing how multiple discourses co-exist and a blend of identities emerge as writers define their writing and talk. In this way, Buell explains that the code-switching framework applies to both second-language and first-language learners because writers share the same basic challenges and draw on the same basic resources and strategies in their textual and rhetorical work. The only difference is that the magnitude of the challenges and the nature of the specific resources may differ greatly for second-language learners or, in this case, for international students.

The mixed-method methodology consists of (1) ethnographic interviews to elicit participants' perceptions of, and reflections on, language use; (2) interpretive analysis of text (interview transcripts, surveys, and written text) to identify codes where code-switching is occurring; and (3) intertextual analysis which involves an explicit comparison of multiple texts and data sources to identify or confirm patterns of codes and code-switching within and among participants. This methodology also fits in with the overall goal of this case study to describe the narrative accounts of the students' experience at Stanford and to interpret the conceptual categories of code-switching patterns across student writing.

To capture the students' narratives as accurately as possible, I transcribed all eight interviews word-for-word. Although transcriptions are an imperfect depiction of the interview conversation, in that it is only a written representation of a live communication, care was taken to include notes for inflection, emphasis, and body language. After

transcription and close reading of the transcripts, each file was uploaded to the NVivo qualitative software program for coding and analysis. Each interview transcript was coded using an emergent coding method (Cohen, et al., 2000) for differences that emerged in language use, writing style, and cultural attitudes. Although these particular themes emerged from the text of the interview transcripts, these broad themes are also verified by literature on cultural influences on written texts (Connor, 1996; Kaplan, 1966).

In coding for the themes or rich features, I looked for conventions repeated within and across texts and I searched for patterns that reflected the particularities of the undergraduate writing at Stanford, with special attention to features that were "international" or "non-native." I utilized a recursive and circular bottom up (data-based) analysis through multiple coding of the same interview transcripts for coding verification. Categories were defined and redefined to guide the coding process, and the final definitions are provided in the text below. After code re-verification, I calculated frequencies of the occurrence of the three thematic categories within each transcript.

"Language differences" are defined by the circumstances in which speakers switch back and forth between two separate languages or dialects to include or exclude other participants, to portray a particular nuance or to establish solidarity (Schecter & Baylety, 1997). Code-shifting in language is one of the most explored phenomena in sociolinguistics and ethnography of communication, where historically scholars focused on verbal communication. Interviews were coded for language differences when students switched to a different language during the interview, experienced difficultly finding the right term in to express the topic at hand, or when the student described an instance of switching back and forth between different languages in their writing or experience as students at Stanford.

Code-switching, however, is not limited to changes in language or dialect. Hymes (1974) defines code-switching as "alternate use of two or more language varieties of a language, or even speech styles" (p. 103). Under this definition, even when writers use what is recognized as a single language, ways of using language vary. Hence, a separate coding was developed for style-shifting, or "difference in writing style" that was identified by as an alternative technique from the "traditional" style and structure of academic argument. Examples include, deviation from the linear essay structure, variations in writing genre, and differences in tone and emphasis in writing for both academic and non-academic contexts.

The basic notion of a code may seem relatively straightforward when we are looking at shifts between languages or distinct dialectical varieties, but language is also linked to complex arenas of social life. Differences in cultural expectations and preferences may take the form of competing identities that simultaneously emerge (Goffman, 1981; Leander & Prior 2004). When speakers or writers switch codes, whether adeptly or with difficulty, they have the potential to influence their identity and affiliation on multiple levels. To mark cultural influences on student writing, "cultural differences" are coded by distinct worldviews or cultural experiences in line or in conflict with life as an international student.

Finally, the third method used is "intertextual analysis" to further enrich and validate data findings. Discourse patterns between transcripts reveal similar vocabulary, phrases, or patterns of expression that may bring to light shared experience and writing construction among the international community. Writing and surveys are used to confirm or clarify data points and to showcase examples of instances mentioned during the interviews. All steps in the methodology work collectively as an eco-system, however, intertextual analysis is the foundation for a comprehensive interpretation of texts in their context.

Findings and Discussion

In finding out as much as possible about the eight international case study students, I turned to basic demographic information as the point of departure for the investigation. Of the eight case study students, three are from Latin America, two from Asia, and one from Eastern Europe, Australia, and Africa, respectively. Six of the eight students learned English as a second language, and all speak a language other than English. Only two of the eight students are male (only four of the eleven international students in the SSW are male). The majors of the students include Economics, Management, Science and Engineering, Computer Science, and Mechanical and Chemical Engineering (following the trend of international students in the U.S. who tend to major in technical degrees). Other majors represented are Human Biology, one the most popular majors for undergraduates at Stanford, and Science, Technology and Society which is growing in popularity as an interdisciplinary degree. The Humanities and Social Sciences are also represented with Drama and Anthropology (See Table 2). From this glance, the international case study students appear very different from each other. All students come from different backgrounds and study different degrees, even though the majority of the majors are technical in focus.

Similarly, all eight international students provided slightly different reasons for choosing to study in the U.S. However, their responses seem remarkably similar to any other student at Stanford. Explanations ranged from family members suggesting they apply to the university to being attracted to strong subjects at Stanford, such as bio-tech or engineering, to being rejected from all of the other schools to which they applied. One differentiating factor is that three of the eight international students received scholarships from their home countries to study at Stanford (one military scholarship and two merit scholarships). All

three students are expected to return home to give back service to their country in return for scholarship support.   For all of the students, however, the choice to study in the U.S. was a conscious decision to travel far away from home to pursue new challenges and opportunities.

Table 2: International Case Study Student Demographic Profiles

Case Study†	Country	High School Type	Major 1	Major 2, Minor, or Coterm*	First Language	Home Language	Other Language
Amiya	Australia	International School, Melbourne	Economics	Minor: Science, Technology, and Society	English	English, Kashmiri	----
Anne	Taiwan	Castilleja, U.S. Local	Human Biology	----	Mandarin	Mandarin	English, Japanese
Carlo	Costa Rica	International, Costa Rica	Science, Technology, and Society	Major 2: Drama	Spanish	Spanish	English
Izel	Mexico	Public School, Mexico	Anthropology	----	Chol, English	Spanish, English	Italian, French
Linah°	Lesotho/Botswana/ South Africa	International School, South Africa	Computer Science	----	Sesotho, English	Sesotho, Setswana, English	Shona
Lu°	Singapore	International, U.K.	Mechanical Engineering	----	English	English	Chinese, German
Mercedes	Chile	International, Chile	Human Biology	Major 2: Computer Science	Spanish	Spanish	English
Simona°	Romania	Public School, Romania	Management, Science, and Engineering	Coterm: Chemical Engineering	Romanian	Romanian	English

† Case study student names are pseudonyms.
* A 'coterm' is an undergraduate who works towards an undergraduate and master's degree simultaneously.
° This sign denotes students who received scholarships to study at Stanford.

The majority of the students studied at international high schools in their home countries. International schools often have curricula similar to private schools in the U.S. and have a reputation for sending students abroad. Other students were motivated to study in the U.S. because of lack of resources at home. As Simona, who went to a public high school in Romania, stated during an interview, "many of the students would go to international

Chem Olympiads and get all of these medals and then they went and studied in the U.S. It was kind of a trend…schools in Romania just didn't have the equipment available for us." Thus, through preparation or necessity or both, the international case study students were positioned to study at Stanford.

Although high school experiences prepared the case study students to apply and get accepted at Stanford, all students report some degree of culture and academic "shock" upon entrance the university as undergraduate students. As Linah explained, she spent two years in South Africa studying Cambridge Advanced levels in math, chemistry, and physics, and it was an educational shock to her system to go from doing "almost no writing to having to write something every single week and do voluminous reading." Yet this finding could also be generalized for most incoming students at Stanford. Longitudinal findings from all 189 students in the Stanford Study of Writing suggest that students' confidence is lower in the first year of college and steadily increases. Figure 2 demonstrates this progression in confidence over time, by gender, for the entire SSW data set.

Figure 2: SSW Writing Confidence Over Time by Gender
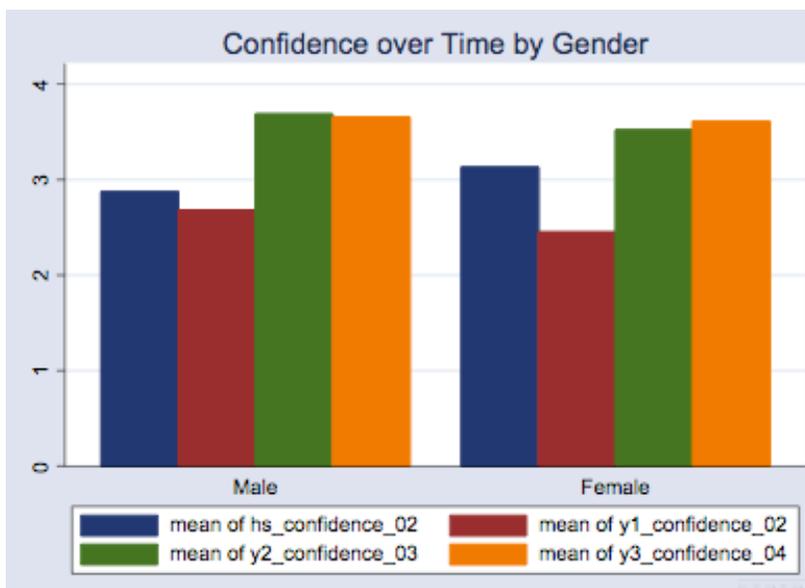
In discussing the broad themes of writing experience for the international students in this study, other findings resonate with survey data from the SSW as a whole. For instance, results of longitudinal surveys show that confidence in writing correlates with choice of major. More confident writers tend to major in the Humanities and less confident writers major in Math and Science (see figures 3 and 4). Mercedes' confidence in her writing influenced her decision to double major in Human Biology and Computer Science and to focus her studies on the more technical aspects of Biomechanical Computation. In a first year survey, Mercedes notes that her confidence is "low," and in her response to a second year qualitative survey questions comparing her high school writing to her college writing she states, "I did better in high school, it was more coherent and had more spirit."

Figures 3 and 4: How First and Second Year Confidence Impacts SSW Choice of Major
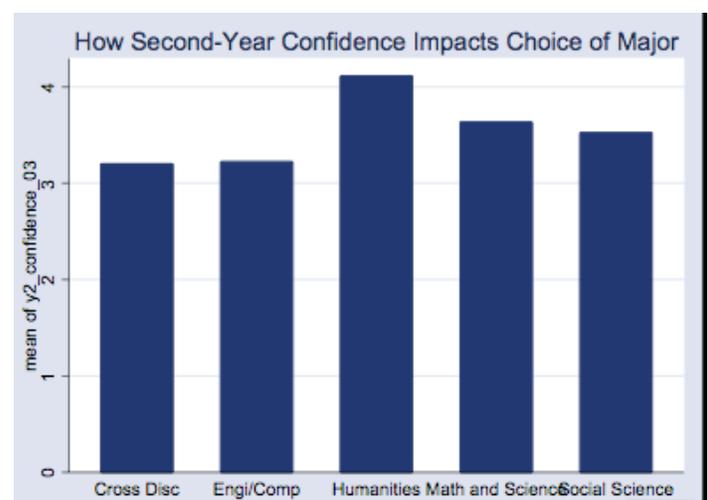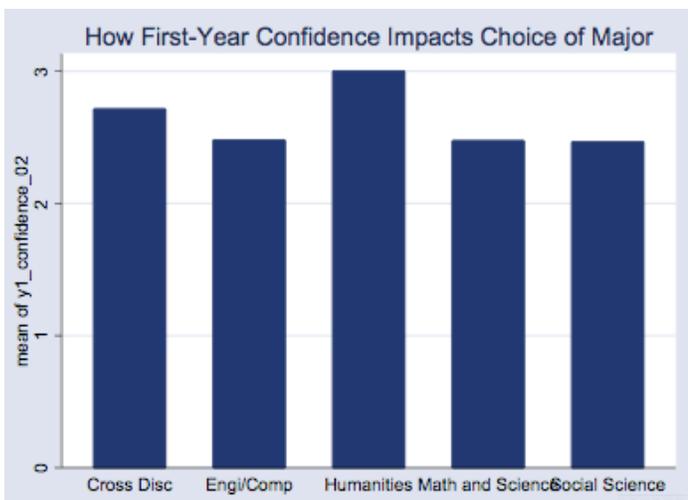
Looping back to the first research question about "international student writing experience," it appears that the experience of international undergraduates is not dissimilar to the rest of the undergraduate population at Stanford, or at least the random sample of students

in the SSW dataset, in terms of confidence and choice of major in relation to their

confidence. During the spring of 2005, when the international interviews took place, I also

conducted 35 interviews with non-international students from the SSW interview sub-group.

I started to become attentive to shared patterns in international student writing that felt

"different" from the native student experience. My goal from this point on was to identify

codes or points of contrast in the international interviews that I could recognize as uniquely

part of the international student writing experience and development over the college years.

These points of contrast or instances of "code-switching" will be the focus of the remainder

of the findings section. An overview of the code categories and findings are presented and

then I discuss each of the three thematic codes with embedded description and interpretation.

Findings Overview

Although I interviewed all of the students in the SSW interview sub-group, my

findings only focus on the eight international student interviews. In reviewing the

transcripts, as the social cognitive theory of writing would suggest, the social context in

which students write played a large role in the construction of meaning and writing for all

eight international students. The code categories, which try to encompass these broad social

contexts, are separated into three themes, language differences, writing style differences, and

cultural differences. These themes follow the model set forth by conceptual framework to

explain how language, discourse, and social context influence the writer's goals and activated

knowledge as written text.

I calculated the occurrence of each thematic code in each of the interview transcripts

and the results are provided in Table 5. I show these results mostly as a springboard for the

discussion of the qualitative interviews, supported by writing samples and survey responses.

As Bakhtin (1986) suggests, the meaning of a text cannot be finalized because they are always part of historical dialogues, always open to further interpretation. The goal of this analysis then is not to definitively state the boundaries of monolithic codes and what type of switch occurs, but to explore the discursive possibilities that are presented in the interviews. By examining where disjunctures to expectations or convention occur, I hope to show multiple levels where meaning is located and reproduced. These numbers are, at the very least, subjective, but they do show that international students are very much aware of differences in their approaches to writing and communication in the university

Table 2: Number of Times Students Mention Three Key Issues in Interview Transcript

	Language	Writing Style	Culture
Amiya	3	5	8
Anne	9	3	6
Carlo	1	3	6
Izel	8	7	7
Lu	9	5	8
Linah	7	9	15
Mercedes	4	6	9
Simona	5	9	4
Totals	**46**	**47**	**63**

From a side-by-side comparison of the three thematic categories, difference in language use and writing style are noted about the same on average between students and cultural differences have the greatest number of occurrences across student interviews. Differences in cultural perspectives and preferences play a large role in students writing experience at Stanford, but possibly even more interesting, is the finding that *all* international students report perceived differences in language, discourse, and culture across the college years. In the sections that follow, I will discuss each individual category and, in the summary, explore the interaction between all three categories and the significance of code-

switching—between international and U.S. conventions— for the development of international undergraduate student writers.

Variation in Language and Communication

Individuals construct a social reality, a way of seeing the world, through language. The case study students have a particular understanding of language and language in context, and these perspectives are important in learning about the way students write and communicate in the academic context. Students switch languages to match audience expectations, but their use and recognition of code-switching varies according to the students' awareness of language and language use in social interactions.

Table 3: Number of Times Students Mention Language Issues in Interview Transcripts

	Language
Amiya	3
Anne	9
Carlo	1
Izel	8
Lu	9
Linah	7
Mercedes	4
Simona	5
Totals	**46**

The majority of the students in this study speak English as their second language (ESL students are highlighted in grey in table 3), but students' attentiveness to language does not necessarily correlate with second language speakers. For instance, Lu and Linah, who speak English as a first language, still frequently mention having issues with language and the use of language in everyday conversation. Lu is keenly aware of his Singaporean accent which resulted in him narrating only 20 percent of a class video project because, as he put it, "I don't like the way I sound, especially when it's recorded…yeah, he's the Singaporean."

Linah, on the other hand, struggles with aspects of identity in relation to language, as she told me, "I am always going to be too English sounding to be really African or really black or really this or really that, but too educated to be African enough." With this in mind, I do not focus this section on second language learners because all students speak at least one language other than English and, at least for these students, the social significance of language is more important than whether or not English is a second or first language. Instead, I showcase students' general experience with language and language differences.

Code-Switching Between and Among Languages

Several of the case-study students mention instances of code-switching between languages. This is important in showing all of the various ways that students feel comfortable in language or uncomfortable in any given the situation. Lu, for example, only uses Chinese at Stanford when he "wants to keep a public conversation private." Lu told me that sometimes, Singaporeans like to "ham it up" and speak "Singlish" to other Singaporeans:

> *Have you heard of that before? Sometimes we have our own private language so it sounds so different from English that people think you are speaking Mandarin or something. And most of us modulate, so when we speak to each other in a group that's dominated by or even if there are people that are non-Singaporeans but it's dominated by Singaporeans we revert to how we speak at home. But when speaking to Americans or anyone else we try to speak a little better in general, like we try to use the verbs 'to be' and stuff like that.*

Lu goes on to explain that even though Singaporeans "don't sound like they know English" they usually write "ok." Due to Lu's high level of awareness of his accent, he usually avoids in-class presentations. However, Lu's most meaningful experience at Stanford is a video documentary he recorded on a bike trip across California. He told me he was proud of the video, even though his voice was included, because it was for "personal purposes" and it would help him to be more "entertaining."

Izel also uses several different languages for communication purposes. Izel speaks in Spanish when communicating with friends, and in fact, during our interview, she was interrupted by a phone call and switched seamlessly into Spanish. Izel continued in the interview to tell me that communicating with friends can be frustrating. She wishes that everyone "could speak a common language." Izel uses a range of languages in her interpersonal relations and also as a personal outlet she writes in her journal in Spanish. In Mexico Izel would journal in English, but now she makes a conscious effort to write in her native language as a relief from the constant thinking and conversing in English.

Linah also experienced some frustration in the usage language, but in her case it was a lack of a "common language," in her written work. Linah describes one particular occasion when she spent a 15 minute tutoring session defending her use of a word that was a "perfectly good word" in South Africa, where she went to high school, but did not exist in the vocabulary of her tutor. Linah continued to tell me more about the encounter, "not mixable, like oil and water are *immisble.* It's words that are dead or archaic in American English that I always had to defend. It shattered my already meager confidence." Linah's use of language, even if in English, is marked as "different" whether in her speaking or writing, influencing her perspectives on and comfort with language and what it reflects.

Anne switches fluently between three languages, but explains that she is "more comfortable in Mandarin and English than Japanese," but she is still more comfortable speaking in Mandarin than in English. Although Anne uses English for most of her daily conversation, she still feels uneasy in English stating that, "when I speak, especially in English, the way I think and the way I speak come out differently." Anne prefers writing to speaking, telling me that, "When I am in class and I think of something that I want to say, I

prefer to write it down and give it to the professor rather than ask it in class." Switching

between languages and/or modes of communication, thus, plays an important role in the

negotiation of the personal and the public in the use of language and ease in communication.

Code Switching as a Connection to Home

Written and spoken ability in various languages create a space for communication

with friends and faculty at the university, but also a link with home. Language serves as a

connection to home for Simona, who communicates with her family in Romania through

email and instant messaging. In response to a question about language use for

correspondence, Simona explains that she does not speak English with her family, she speaks

Romanian, but there are a lot of phrases she can now express better in English. This is also

true for her language of expertise as an engineer. Although Simona has expressed interest in

returning home to work as an engineer in Romania, she is concerned that many of the

technical terms that she has learned will not be relevant. Since Simona has been trained as an

engineer at Stanford, there are many technical terms that she only knows in English.

Mercedes communicates almost exclusively in Spanish outside of the classroom; she

talks to her friends in Spanish, writes emails in Spanish, and conducts personal writing in

Spanish. In describing her most meaningful writing, she told me told me that it was poetry in

Spanish that was published when she was in high school. Mercedes holds a deep connection

with home, and wishes that she could write like she did in high school, which is confirmed

by a junior year survey that her "writing has gone downhill since high school." Mercedes

connects language to a location where she is more comfortable and at ease with words,

which, in her case, is in the context of her home country.

Code-switching between languages or language varieties is significant for international students because many perceived "differences" are tied to national or regional particularities. Unfortunately, these particularities do not always meet audience expectations or the audience is not always aware of the discomfort these students might have in communicating in a particular language or in a particular form. For example, Izel's getting tired of speaking in English or Linah's preferring to use a familiar spelling might be misunderstood. Furthermore, differences in language use appear to be a key point of tensions between what is acceptable or possible at the university and what is acceptable or possible in the students' home countries. Simona will struggle as an engineer in Romania due to her lack of technical fluency in Romanian and Mercedes struggles in her English academic writing due to her perceived lack of fluency in U.S. academic writing conventions.

Differences in Writing Style and Structure

The case study students not only experienced differences in language usage, but also differences in perspective and approach in their written communication, in terms of style and structure. This section focuses on the international students' reflections on writing, specifically in the academic context, over the college years. Several of the students realized that changes in writing could be attributed to different expectations in the transition from high school to college, like Izel who expressed frustration with her lack of writing experience in Mexico: "When I came to Stanford, I was like, 'how do I write 5 pages about this!' because I didn't really know how to write. I didn't do much writing in high school." Other students discussed changes in the ways of writing, from writing mostly in pen and paper to composing almost exclusively on the screen. The most extreme example of this is Linah, who describes going to school in her "formative years" in Zimbabwe where there was a

drought and "when there's not so much water and you are using recycled paper it means that there is a shortage of paper…you really had to ruminate over your ideas because what you write is final." Linah is now a Computer Science major and describes her pages and pages of computer code as "extravagant." Beyond these differences in writing, attributed to the transition from high school to college or changes in written forms, the students discuss concrete differences in writing worthy of attention.

Table 4: Number of Times Students Mention Writing Issues in Interview Transcripts

	Writing Style
Amiya	5
Anne	3
Carlo	3
Izel	7
Lu	5
Linah	9
Mercedes	6
Simona	9
Totals	47

Of interest in the frequency tabulation of "writing style differences" are Izel, Linah, and Simona, who note the most differences in writing across the college years. These three students have the most unconventional academic backgrounds in comparison with the other case study students. Simona attended public school in Romania; Izel spent her last two years of high school in a public school in Mexico, but switched back and forth between English missionary schools and home schooling; and Linah finished her last two years of high school at an international school, but attended four schools in four years in two different countries (Zimbabwe and South Africa). The other five students went to high school at international schools in their home countries, with the exception of Lu who studied in England for his last

two years of high school. This finding certainly suggests academic background seems to influence the approaches students take in their writing tasks.

Writing Style Differences

No doubt, Simona's background influenced her perspectives on writing. Simona explains that she attended a high school for math and science and that it was a "different school system where writing was a different style." Simona says that the Romanian style "drags on," describing a piece of poetry or literature rather than analyzing the work for recurring themes. As a result, Simona struggled with the style expected in the Humanities core at Stanford:

> *I keep thinking of IHUM [Introduction to the Humanities] – sorry, this is going to sound very bad, but I keep thinking about why we have to torture that poor author? You know? Poor thing, you are taking whatever he wrote and twisting it in every possible way to come out of it with some sort of semi-original interpretation…it's just like, sometimes, IHUM was really a stretch for me.*

Simona expressed frustration with U.S. academic conventions and the emphasis on "original thinking." The move from a style based on description and explanation to invention and originality created challenges for Simona. Though in a third year survey, comparing her second year writing to her first year writing, she said her second year writing was a lot better and "though painful" the mandatory first-year writing course helped her to "write better."

Linah expressed similar frustrations with differences in writing style from high school to college. She explains that,

> *The writing I had confidence in, well, I had a hard time bringing it to the classroom and leveraging it even though I was able to do that at home because the style of writing allowed a little more, I don't know, you could add a few more frills and trims, stylistically it was appropriate, but here it's not.*

Looking back, Linah finds that her confidence improves as she moves beyond her first year where she notes in a second year survey, "much improvement – I feel myself developing a

more perceptive eye, more analytical style and more fluid thoughts. I still have a long way to go though." During her senior year interview, Linah told me that she still struggles negotiating her creative style with the style expected at Stanford.

Amiya also noted a lack of creativity in her writing at Stanford compared to high school writing in Australia. Since her audience is her professor, she said she doesn't "really have to inspire him to read my papers because they have to read them anyway." Amiya looks forward to her job after graduation in finance because "there is a lot of creativity involved." In her interview, Amiya said that she thought her writing improved over time, but improvement was framed as "making fewer mistakes now" than she used to.

On the other hand, Mercedes, came to Stanford from Chile with a very formal writing style and noticed that after a few years her writing was "more fluid and a lot less formal." For Mercedes, "improvement" in writing was related to language in that words "would come more easily," but she also discusses a distinct change in tone in her writing although she said she "can't describe it." Later she expands to say that most of her challenges lay in learning the distinction between formal writing that is appropriate in her home country, conversational tone which she uses frequently in email, and the tone expected in academic papers. In her online writing portfolio, the majority of her submissions are email or personal writing because this is the writing style she is most comfortable with when writing in English.

Leaving Taiwan to attend high school in the U.S. before coming to Stanford, Anne noticed less changes in her writing style than the other case study students.   Anne continues to grapple with her ability in English and her confidence in writing and, as a result, she learns about the formal style of writing expected at Stanford by reading other students writing. In general though, Anne told me, "I think my high school prepared me really well for writing.

In my freshman year I did not have that much trouble with writing because the way I write."

In terms of writing style, Anne likes to know what the instructors expect, but she enjoys the flexibility provided by Stanford instructors in terms of organization and topic.

Writing Structure Differences

Difference in organization and structure is another point of contrast that students' identified when discussing their writing experience at Stanford. For instance, Izel enjoys writing in a style appropriate in Spanish, but the sentence construction does not have an English equivalent:

> *I write a lot of run on sentences which is something they do in Spanish that just doesn't work in English. So I end up writing, something my mom definitely taught me, about the sky, the birds, the trees, and the flowers, and she is like, honey, you have to put a period in there! Also in Spanish you can insert more planned words and it's witty to deconstruct words and it becomes witty to use bad grammar, but in a certain way, that I can't do in English. I don't know how to do that in English.*

Izel's tendency to write run-on sentences is related to her language preferences, but it also influences her academic writing structure. During her freshman year, a professor pointed out that she had a problem with her "subject-verb agreement" and Izel responded with, "is that all!". Izel is aware of differences in "structure" and this has contributed to her lack of confidence in her writing in the academic context.

Carlo has become more confident in his writing by graduation, but recalls that he was not prepared when entering college from Costa Rica for the "formal" writing in college. This sentiment was verified in a second year survey when he describes his writing process as "stagnant" and expressed frustration in learning how to write his ideas "as eloquently or at the level that is expected of me here at Stanford." Unlike Mercedes, Carlo's difficulties with formality was a structural issue where he notes that, particularly in his policy classes for his major in Science, Technology and Society, he had to learn how to "write very precise,

concise, writing that is very systematic." Carlo says that this type of writing contributed to his development as a writer because, coming into Stanford, he was "all over the place" due to the writing style he brought with him from Costa Rica.

For Lu, writing differences affected him in the opposite direction, in that he now has a hard time communicating at home in Singapore due to the particular structure of writing he learned as an engineer at Stanford. Lu tells a story about "writing a paper this past summer for a desk job in the navy and I was mildly criticized for writing like an engineer, like a bad engineer, overly complicating the things I was saying." This example shows that differences in writing structure may not only create challenges in writing in the academic context, but also when students go back to their home countries and try to communicate with others.

The experience of international students in their academic writing at Stanford suggests that most students adapt to the writing style and structures of the university, but that the case study students did come to Stanford with particular ways of thinking, writing, and "making meaning" distinct to their own cultural experience. Thus, the background of the international students, in particular, should be taken into account as it affects students' perspectives on writing and analysis. In limiting the writing styles accepted in the university, students become frustrated, such as Simona who struggles with U.S. academic conventions, or they lack motivation, like Amiya who abandons her creative side in order to meet the demands of her professors. Furthermore, differences in structure, in organization or syntax, leaves students frustrated and may hinder or at least influence the development of student writers. Finally, these findings show that the particular ways of communicating at Stanford University, at least for the engineering department, are not necessarily shared with

professionals in other countries. Students are inundated with the writing conventions of their areas of study at Stanford, but this might not always be appropriate in other contexts.

Cultural Expectations and Adaptations

Writing takes place in particular social contexts and the particular social context and expectation of international students at Stanford University is that they bring diversity to the campus community. International students do indeed bring a wide range of worldviews, but these are not always properly interpreted or understood. The social cognitive theory of writing explains that the "mental representations" of writers and readers are crucial in how social expectations are shared and interpreted. In the case of the international students in this study, however, many expectations are not shared and mutual representations are often lost in translation. Thus, social context is important in the formation, reproduction, *and* resistance to text and findings provided in this section show that cultural context greatly influences the experience of international student writers at Stanford.

Table 5: Number of Times Students Mention Cultural Issues in Interview Transcripts

	Culture
Amiya	8
Anne	6
Carlo	6
Izel	7
Lu	8
Linah	15
Mercedes	9
Simona	4
Totals	**63**

In coding for cultural differences in the international transcripts, Linah makes the most references to cultural differences. This finding seems to result from the fact that Linah is particularly sensitive and aware of her rights and responsibilities as an African student

studying in the U.S. on a scholarship from her country. During her sophomore year, Linah

even took time off from school to contribute time to AIDS advocacy because it was

meaningful to her. Linah explains her decision: "I mean I come from a country where one

third of the population are HIV positive. So here I am paying tax payers money on

education, an extravagant and elite education, and it didn't feel applicable or contextual to

home." Although cultural differences were discussed at great length during my conversation

with Linah, all students in this study have experienced some level of cultural clash or

difference during their experience at Stanford in expectations of others, in adapting to the

university context or in the demands of the home country on the education of the student.

Cultural Expectations

The expectations placed on international students to contribute to "university

diversity" do not always match the interpretations or desires of students. In a writing

response, Linah, recalls her first invitation to attend dinner at a professor's house at Stanford:

> *By the time all of the guests had arrived, I realised I was the only black person in a
> room of white middle-aged professionals. When my turn came around to introduce
> myself, I said I was a freshman studying computer science, following the model of the
> other guests who had introduced themselves before me. It was then that my professor
> intervened and said, 'No, tell them where you're really from!'. I then realised the
> answer to the question of why I had been invited was perhaps not because of my
> academic performance in his class – I was to be the cultural centre-piece for the
> evening. I cleared my throat, a little taken aback by why my first identity had been
> rejected. 'I am Linah from the small mountain kingdom of Lesotho in southern
> Africa.' I folded my hands across my lap hoping they weren't expecting me to dance
> or break into song. I sighed and thought to myself, welcome to America.*

Linah's experience at the dinner party is one example of the distinct scripts that are written

for students who are different from the mainstream, middleclass, Western college student.

Although international students are praised and acknowledged for the diversity they bring to

campus, the categorization of these students as the "other" creates boundaries between the

academic community and those who are "different." Linah continues to write in her response, "tonight your race is an exotic trump card, but tomorrow it's a curse." Linah not only wrote about this instance but she also brought it up in her senior year interview, as this particular professor has left a lasting impression on her about the potential for miscommunication and misunderstanding between students and faculty.

Mercedes, who also is very aware of cultural differences, describes a tension between racial categorizations and culturally expected behavior. Mercedes is Chilean by ethnicity and racially Japanese. Although she recognizes the diversity in cultural backgrounds of students at Stanford, she still notes that a lot of emphasis is put on physical appearance. She told me that not only are unfair expectations placed on students by their physical appearance, but that the richness in cultural interactions is lost as a result:

> *I sort of felt that a lot that could be said about cultural diversity was missed by sort of racial profiling. I mean, just by looking at me, part of it was that a lot of my friends were Korean but born in Ecuador or Chinese but born in Brazil and they have both Brazil and Chinese values and they put together those cultures.*

Mercedes' dual identity as Chilean *and* Japanese loses meaning when flattened out to anything other than multi-dimensional and unique. Physical appearance does not always reflect Mercedes' cultural beliefs and she thinks "much more could be done with cultural diversity than ethnic diversity because ethnic is often related to unimportant variables."

Cultural Adaptations

In general, international students have unique worldviews, but the assumption is that students will adapt to or already believe in the same worldview as presented in classes. In addition to the cultural expectations drawn from her physical appearance, Mercedes also experienced difficultly with adapting to U.S. policy perspectives in the classroom. During her first year at Stanford, Mercedes planned on studying international relations, but she was

bothered by class discussions of U.S. foreign policy in Latin America. In response to class

conversation, Mercedes said, "oh my god, I can't believe they are saying this!". Mercedes

did not have a problem with the workload; rather, she explains, the problem was in the

content, where she had a difficulty looking at things "from a U.S. perspective." Mercedes

now majors in Human Biology and Computer Science, but still finds the expectations of

others "too stressful," explaining that "the pace of life here is just different." Mercedes feels

that Stanford students focus too much on the future and too little on the present.

Consequently, Mercedes decided to apply to Bio-Informatics graduate programs outside of

the U.S. to have a change of pace.

Carlo also plans to leave the U.S. to study in England for his graduate studies. He

explains that he is "less and less enthusiastic about the United States because of stuff that has

to do with international students. It's not exactly a warm place." Carlo directed his concerns

and "lack of enthusiasm" towards the new regulations of the U.S. government, saying that:

> *I don't have many international friends that I talk to about this, but it's flying into the*
> *country and going through immigration and having to have a picture taken and two*
> *finger prints scanned sort of feels like you are getting arrested, like you are getting*
> *booked at a police stations. The fact that they track our major and things like that*
> *through SEVIS, there's actually a huge debate right now about doing this for all*
> *students including Americans, but of course nobody really cares that they are doing*
> *this for international students.*

Carlo's discomfort with new U.S. government regulations draws from the double standard

placed on international students in the university with the tracking measures implemented

over the past four years. Students are expected to adapt, but sometimes it is not that easy.

Izel also identified differences in perspective at Stanford, but mostly a difference in

approach to education. She finds the U.S. a "much more individualistic culture. It's your

personal space, it's your research, it's your rights, it's your, I mean, it's just the rights of the

individual." In relation to intellectual property issues at Stanford, Izel recalls the first time her professor walked out of the room during a test, trusting the Stanford Honor Code to prevent cheating. Izel questioned out loud, "and everyone is doing the work?" she then went on to say that, "In Mexico, if the professor walked out of the room, are you kidding me, it would be different." Collaboration is considered much more loosely in Mexico, but over time she has adapted to the American model. Izel also mentioned that she was paying a lot for her Stanford education and wanted to make the most of it and learn as much as possible which involves more thinking and original work.

Adapting or changing behaviors to fit the university environment is something all of the case study students encountered at Stanford, but Amiya experienced less difficulty with U.S. conventions because, as she explains, "in terms of politics here, the economic situation, this is my whole view on things." In Australia, Amiya read literature and reports from the U.S. and her family also now live in the U.S. Amiya describes her viewpoint in that, "the U.S. is so diverse and welcoming as it is that I think I feel much at home here." Amiya does, however, have different perspectives than the majority in the U.S in terms of her religious practices. Although Amiya grew up in Australia, she is ethnically Indian and, religiously, practices Hinduism. At Stanford, Amiya is the president of the Hindu club and also designed and led an Alternative Spring Break on multi-faith approaches to service.

Culture in Context

Cultural interests tend to emerge in students' self-sponsored activities. Anne, who attended high school in the U.S., felt a desire to share her experience in the U.S. with people at home in Taiwan. Anne is currently in the process of writing a book she hopes to write in dual translation in English and Chinese discussing the application process to Stanford, life at

Stanford, and her recent decision to attend Harvard for a PhD in Biology. Anne said she had never thought about writing the book until she started to journal her thoughts "about school, America, etc.," but soon realized that the book would be beneficial for people in Taiwan. She felt it was important that Taiwanese students be able to learn from her experience.

Simona also focused much of her energies at Stanford towards projects related to her home country, Romania. In response to an interview question about her most important piece of writing at Stanford, Simona selects her research paper about architecture in Romania in her first-year writing class. She appreciates this piece of writing because she "got to talk about Romania." During her senior year, Simona studied for her master's degree in Chemical Engineering simultaneously with her undergraduate in Management Science and Engineering. During this time, Simona also managed to conduct her senior research project on the healthcare system in Romania. Simona felt an affinity for the project because "if it would actually be applied, it would help people that I know and people that I care about and from that point of view, it makes it more interesting." Simona adapted well to the Stanford community (she will begin her PhD at Stanford next year in Chemical Engineering), but her experience at Stanford is closely tied to her dedication to people and politics in Romania.

Lu graduated as an engineer at Stanford, but he also wanted an understanding of the humanities and the "whole canon of Western works." Lu enrolled in the intensive first-year humanities program, Structured Liberal Education (SLE) Program, to learn more about the U.S. academic culture. Lu felt that he was doing a service for his country, since he was sent on a military scholarship by the Singaporean Navy who wanted "to make sure that they have educated officers, but also that we have connections with people here. I think it's more human relations training they send us here for." Although Lu did not experience as many

tensions with the U.S. system or culture as other international case study students, he went through his college years aware of the responsibilities awaiting him in Singapore that come along with getting his education from Stanford.

Too often cultural misunderstandings play a significant role in the cultural experience of the international students at Stanford: the value of individual international students are overshadowed by the country or ethnicity they represent; policy perspectives are talked about with the assumption that all students will share the same views; and classes are taught with the belief that all students work towards the same goals in their academic endeavors. Special recognition of international students based on their background, as a "cultural centre-piece," may be more discouraging than encouraging and the extension of classroom conversation to foreign policy arenas, such as a discussions of U.S. foreign policy in Latin America, without considering the perspectives of all of the students in class may be more harmful than good. "Differences" in culture influence students' academic work by pushing students to the perimeter of the academic discourse community or hindering a diversity of perspectives by encouraging students to mimic the dominant discourse. Moreover, international students must negotiate their experience at Stanford with their responsibilities at home. The international case study students in this study recognize the privilege associated with studying at Stanford the responsibilities they have as a result and these cultural pressures and motivations surface in students' pursuits both in and out of class.

Findings Summary

The international students' interview transcripts offer a mountain of data open for interpretation and discussion. The three thematic categories used in this study, language differences, writing differences, and cultural differences, provide just one approach to

synthesizing the data available. Yet, the results from each theme are useful in showing that international students are unique in their experience in college, especially in terms of writing and communicating in the academic context. Coding of interview transcripts suggests that cultural differences are the most salient factor in students' perceptions of "difference" in their academic experience, but I would like to expand this interpretation, in light of the findings, to discuss the broader significance of social context on the development of international student writers in college. From the findings, the background of international students and perceived expectations of their audiences seems to be the common link, connecting differences in language, writing, and culture to international students' experience as writers at Stanford.

As discussed in the conceptual framework, writing is located in a social world and, therefore, writing is influenced and shaped by our environment. Students' writing relates to all of the cultural resources students bring to the table and how they use them to frame a given situation. "Code-switching" influences the development of international writers in that students are constantly changing codes depending on social context and writing development follows a similar non-linear pattern. It is the increased awareness of these differences that allows students' to overcome challenges and or create new forms of communication that push students one more step further in the development process as writers.

This process is not one-sided. Code-switching coincides with the increasing awareness of the values and interests of various discourse communities. Given the diverse background of international students, international writers and native readers simply have more ground to travel to meet in a place to form shared expectations and interpretations. Once students and instructors learn how to travel this distance then there will be improved understanding and communication.

Implications

Stanford University is one of the most diverse universities in the country or perhaps even in the world and, consequently, administrators and instructors at Stanford have a lot to learn from the academic experience of international undergraduate students. Even though the eight students in this study were selected out of a random sample of the class of 2005, I would be exaggerating to claim that these students speak for the rest of the international undergraduate student population at Stanford. This research project has taught me that all international students are unique in what they bring to the campus community. However, there are still lessons to be learned from the commonalities in writing and experience of this small group of eight. International students *are* different and improvements *can* be made to integrate international thought and perspective into writing pedagogy at Stanford and other universities across the country.

For the practical implications of my study, I turn my attention back to the classroom. I put forth the same question posed by Jacqueline Royster (1996) in asking, "How can we teach, engage in research, write about, and talk across boundaries *with* others, instead for, about, and around them?" (p. 38). Writing pedagogy is challenging for most instructors at the college level. Attention to student writing and, perhaps even more importantly, student writers is time consuming. It is difficult to focus on student writing, including drafting, consultations, and revision, with an already jam packed syllabi and a classroom full of students. However, findings from this study suggest change is possible. I make a few recommendations for increased support at the university level, and in addition, small changes can be made in classroom pedagogy to identify and recognize unique codes and approaches to writing to improve the experience of student writers in the everyday academic context.

Course Offerings and University Support

All of the students in the case study experienced some level of "academic shock" during their first year at Stanford University. Currently at Stanford, graduate students have the option to take a course that teaches U.S. academic writing conventions, but such a class is not yet available for undergraduate students. Offering an optional "academic writing" course for undergraduate students that could be taken in conjunction with the mandatory first- and second-year writing curriculum could ease students' anxieties and provide additional support and instruction for written coursework outside of the mandatory writing curriculum. Although undergraduate students at Stanford have the option to go to the Stanford Writing Center for individual advice and tutoring, a structured course on the different writing conventions in the university could provide a forum for students interested in learning more about the topic and additional practice for those in need. This course could be open to international students, in particular, but also to any other student interested in getting credit for practicing their writing and learning how to incorporate their own personal voice in the (what may at times seem rigid and intimidating) language community of the university.

Additional instruction and practice are usually always good suggestions for change and improvement, but I realize that resources are necessary to provide additional institutional support for students. Although Stanford is, generally speaking, a resource rich university, including new classes to an already intensive writing core curriculum may not be reasonable. And this recommendation certainly would not be appropriate for universities with limited resources and teaching staff. In this case, the university administration should be pro-active in directing international undergraduate students to courses and resources already available. For instance, several of the students in the case study cited taking public speaking classes as

a crucial component to their development as writers, for purposes of organization, clarity, style, and presentation. The Stanford University Program in Writing Rhetoric should be commended for a recent change in its curriculum to have the second-year writing course focused specifically on oral communication and multi-media, but even if these classes are not available, international undergraduates should be made aware of speaking, as well as writing resources on campus. Providing students with support in writing and speaking allows students to exercise all of their rhetorical muscles in creative ways, thus easing the transition to college-level coursework and contributing to their overall development as writers.

Classroom Pedagogy

Beyond structural changes at the university level, instructors can take an active stance in their classroom to create an open dialogue with their students. By gathering materials about the cache of cultural resources a student brings to the table, instructors can capitalize on the strengths of each individual student. Findings of this study show that international students bring in a broad range of resources in language, writing, and cultural experience that should be recognized. Differences in communicating, thinking, and understanding are hard to detect—sometimes students are not even aware of these differences—and as a result instructors need to find a way to offer additional office hours or to create alternative channels of communication. Through discussion, instructors can encourage students to incorporate different languages or writing styles into their writing that is both exciting and inspiring for the student and acceptable for the teacher. If writers are asked by instructors to comment on the context in which writing takes place, strategies can be formed to build awareness on both sides opening possibilities for innovative and inclusive writing pedagogies.

One of the most promising implications of this study, however, is the potential for instructors to incorporate cultural experience into classroom conversation and coursework. In reality, much of student exploration at the university takes place outside of the classroom and these experiences need to be accounted for in the classroom. According to the social cognitive theory of writing, which this study is based on, social context matters. For international students in particular, differences in cultural perspectives and worldview are often amplified due to their background and they are keenly aware of these differences. Many students look to activities outside of the classroom to contribute to their home countries or the world at large. For instance, Linah describes her experience negotiating her role as an African woman living in the U.S. and advocating for HIV/AIDS crisis in Africa: "The experience taught me a lot about being an African, and a woman, and the complexity of the task of finding a politically, culturally, and ideologically fitting niche in the U.S." Such experiences are paramount in a student's development as thinkers, writers, and people, and teachers should allow students to bring outside interests into coursework or class projects. Forming a shared social reality can make room for new forms of expression and new ways of communication to express cultural perspectives through writing.

In sum, the academic community should learn that international students go through in becoming part of the academy; integrating with a diverse community, building a sensibility to work with others, and learning other ways of seeing the world. It is discourse, not knowledge that is powerful in academic contexts and by providing students support and learning to listen to students, powerful forms of discourse will emerge from the academy that are distinct, insightful, and indeed necessary.

Conclusion

Undergraduate students come to the university from different cultures and different countries. They speak different languages and practice different religions. Nevertheless, they all must learn to participate in the academic community together and with scholars and researchers at the university level. This collision of people and perspectives provides a fertile ground for innovation and the creation of new ideas. The students in this study learned how to negotiate their roles in the university to form new ideas and understandings, but the findings of this study show that during the process of developing complex literacy skills is exactly where students need the most support. They deserve support in learning the ways of the university and, more importantly, support in communicating personal preferences and/or cultural differences so that instructors and students can learn from each other and become better, more informed, and more tolerant as a result.

The focus of this study is on writing because the academic community is literally a community of writers who read and readers who write. Learning to read and write academic prose is then a matter of learning conventions, such as whom to cite and when to do so, for these conventions are part of the cultural repertoire of all academics. Therefore, the reading and writing of academic prose forms a shared cultural knowledge. International students have a different shared knowledge. Upon entering the university, international students' writing and language are markedly different, yet practices seem to converge over time. International students, at least the students in this study, who learn to take in and adapt to the conventions of the university are successful. But this is not without a cost. The finding that two of the eight students will leave the U.S. for graduate school, due to cultural clashes and incongruities, alone calls for a careful reconsideration of cultural inclusion in the classroom.

As international students become more familiar with academic discourse and the writing expected of them, they also become more confident and comfortable in their academic writing. This study, however, has similar findings to past longitudinal studies in that the development of student writers is not a linear process. Students seem to have more difficulty in their writing at times and less difficulty at other times. It is when a writing style is identified as "wrong" or an "error" *without* awareness of the cultural context of these "differences" that confidence is damaged and creativity is hindered. But from the experience of the students in this study, it appears that alternative forms of writing and communication are not lost; they are simply transformed and transferred to other locations. Diverse forms of communication are shifted outwards towards students' self-sponsored activities—from leading the Stanford Hindu club to writing a book with dual translation in Chinese and English. Alternative forms of discourse then are still "floating" around the university, but for the case-study students, these forms occur mostly outside of the classroom context.

Recognizing the ability of international students to use their cultural resources to build bridges between university conventions and personal preferences and academia and the extracurriculum is therefore an important and necessary piece of the puzzle in unraveling the complexities and contradictions students face throughout their development as writers and learners in the college years. Future research could extend this study by looking at a larger group of international students at one school or a comparison of students at different institutions.   Further studies might also consider a side-by-side comparison of international students to native students exploring similarities and differences in writing practices, both in and out of the classroom. This study is just a starting point, but an important one in redefining what it means to write and communicate in cross-cultural contexts.

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Appendix A: Demographic Survey

First Name: _____
Last Name: _____
Signature: _____   Date: _____

Campus Contact Information

Email: _____   Phone: _____
Address: _____
City:_____   State: _____   Zip: _____

Home Address Information

Address: _____
City:_____   State: _____   Zip: _____

Nationality/Ethnicity
US citizen (yes or no): _____
Country of Birth: _____

Self Description (please choose any or all that apply):

____ American Indian
____ Asian-American/Oriental/Pacific Islander
____ Asian East Indian
____ Black/African-American
____ Mexican-America/Chicano
____ Puerto-Rican
____ Other Hispanic
____ White/Caucasian
____ Other

Language History

First Language: _____
Home Language: _____
Other Languages (s): _____

Education History

High School: _____
High school Location: _____
High School GPA: _____
Verbal SAT: _____

Math SAT: _____

Writing AP: _____

Literature AP: _____

International Baccalaureate Exam: _____

Parents' Education

Father's education (degree): _____   Mother's education (degree): _____

Father's work: _____   Mother's work: _____

Use of Technology (please choose any or all that apply)

_____ I own a computer

_____ My family owns a computer

_____ I had access to computers in high school

_____ I am taking (or have taken) one or more classes in a computer classroom

_____ I use the Internet regularly

_____ I know how to create a web page

_____ I use a word processor to complete most of my written assignments

_____ I use assistive technologies for my writing/reading

Freshman year/fall quarter classes at Stanford (please list)

Intended Area of Study Freshman Year: _____

Are you involved in any extracurricular activities that allow you to use your writing abilities? (yes or no) _____

If "yes" please describe these activities:

Appendix B: SSW Y 4 Interview Questions

Looking Back/Looking Forward Questions:

1. What is your major(s)/minor(s)? Are you planning to co-term or attend graduate school? *If yes:* What discipline or field do you plan to study? *If no*: what are your current plans for next year?

2. Did writing play a role in your choice of major and/or future plans? How do you see yourself as a writer in your major field? Do you see yourself (your writing self) differently when you write in your major and in other subjects? Has your perception changed over time? If so, how?

3. Describe the types of assignments you have received and/or the amount of writing have been asked to do in your upper-level courses. What kinds of research are you asked to do (i.e., primary, secondary, field research)? Do you see any connections between the writing you did in your first-year courses and the writing you do now? Do you see any differences?

4. What Writing in the Major course(s) have you taken? What kinds of writing did you do in WIM, and how did WIM focus on the process of writing? What were the most important writing experiences and skills you took away from WIM? How has the writing you did in WIM related to writing you've done elsewhere in your major (e.g., as a foundation, complement, culmination, etc.)? What has WIM added to your overall writing experience at Stanford?

5. Have you studied off-campus over the summer or during the academic year at Stanford? *If yes*: What kinds of writing did you do in your classes or program? What kinds of writing did you do extracurricularly? Have your off-campus experiences affected your writing or how you think about writing? *If yes*: How so?

6. Are you writing an honors thesis or a senior project? *If yes*: Describe your research and writing process. Does your process involve peer review? Revision? Presentations? What kind of instruction do you receive? How does this capstone writing experience compare to other writing you do in your major?

Class-Related Questions (process, production, and pedagogy):

7. Describe the process you typically go through in responding to a writing assignment. How has your writing process changed since you started at Stanford?

8. What peer work do you do for class-related writing assignments? Have you done any collaborative writing? Did you have a study group? *If yes*: How did working collaboratively affect your own writing process?

9. What electronic sources of information (websites, databases, blogs, etc.) do you use for writing assignments? How do you evaluate these various resources? Describe other multimedia technologies you use, such as email, IM, bulletin boards, etc. Has your use of these resources changed over the past four years?

10. What kinds of web-based projects (websites, blogs, online questionnaires, online video, etc.) have you done in your classes over the past four years? Have you given any multimedia and/or oral presentations? Have you used any audio or visual elements (images, graphs, charts, maps, clip art, sound clips, etc.) in any of your assigned writing (either online/on-screen or on paper)? Did you receive any technology support for your technology-based projects? *If yes:* Describe what kind of help you got and where?

11. In your classes (not counting WIM), what kinds of instruction or preparation have you received for completing assignments successfully? Have you been asked or required to revise? Have you made use of the Stanford Writing Center or any other writing resource? If so, how? Looking back over the past four years, what could your instructors have done to improve their instruction in terms of writing?

Out-of-Class Writing Questions (what, where, and how):

12. What kinds of writing do you do outside of your coursework (i.e., writing for extracurricular activities, work-related writing, applications and/or proposals, personal writing, anything else)? Is any of your extracurricular writing collaborative? Do you do any multimedia writing outside of class? *If yes:* How does your out-of-class multimedia use *and* production differ from what you do in class? Do your out-of-class activities affect the way you think about writing?

13. Describe any performances that you contributed to during the past year (e.g., dorm skits or plays, campus theater, spoken word, radio, vocal or instrumental music, Tai Kwan Do, social dancing). Have your experiences with performance influenced how you think about writing?

14. How much time you spend do you spend on your out-of-class activities versus your class-related work? Do you spend any time on Instant Messenger and email? Has your use of IM/email changed since you started college? Does your writing in IM and email writing differ from your academic writing? Do any of these activities affect your class-related work? Do any of these activities affect your academic writing?

Writing Reflection Questions:

15. Have issues of intellectual property (use of digital media, citation of sources, etc.) played a role in your writing and/or multimedia production. Do intellectual property issues affect your writing or your thinking about writing (either in class or out of class)? Have any of your instructors addressed intellectual property topics?

16. In your college work in general, what is writing most useful for? What do you use writing for, both in and out of class? What types of writing helped you the most in developing your writing abilities? What type of skills did they hone?

17. How would you define effective writing? Has your definition changed since your first year? Do you see yourself as an effective writer? Is effective writing the same as "good" writing? How would you describe your confidence in your own writing? Is there a difference between your confidence in your in-class writing and your confidence in your out-of-class writing? Has your confidence level changed since you arrived at Stanford?

18. Describe your most important and/or most successful writing experience this year (or during your time at Stanford). Why was it so successful? Compare it to your least successful writing experience. Why was it unsuccessful or unsatisfying?

19. What writing experiences do you wish you had at Stanford? What writing experiences do you hope you have before you graduate? Is there any writing or writing related activity you want to learn, participate in, or accomplish?

Stanford Study of Writing Questions:

20. Describe your experience as a participant in the Stanford Study of Writing. How has your participation influenced your time at Stanford, if at all? How much of your writing have you submitted? If you did you *not* submit *all* of your writing, could you please describe the kinds writing you did not submit and why? We still have one more year of data collection: do you plan to continue your participation next year?

21. We are planning to make a CD with all of the writing you have submitted to the Study, in addition to your interview recordings. Is there any specific functionality that you would like on this CD (functions such as, word search, search by date, by class name, by department)? Is there anything else we can do in terms of information you would like on the CD? Where would like us to send your CD?

22. Do you have any suggestions and/or requests for us as we enter the last year of data-collection?

Appendix C: SSW Year 4 Survey Questions

My academic major(s) is (are) _____ and _____.

My academic minor(s) is (are) _____ and _____.

I plan to graduate (or I have graduated) in <u>fall/winter/spring/summer</u> of <u>2003/2004/2005</u>.

My plans for next year include (please check all that apply):

___ Travel	___ MA	____Law School	____MFA
___ Job	___ PhD	____ Dentistry School	____ Fellowship
___ Co-term	___ MBA	____ Medical School	Other
_____			

If you are still taking classes at Stanford, please list your classes for this year (2004-2005):

During Fall Quarter this school year (2004-2005), I was enrolled in the following courses (*please include off-campus study)*:

_____
_____
_____
_____

During Winter Quarter this school year (2004-2005), I was enrolled in the following courses (*please include off-campus study)*:

_____
_____
_____
_____

This quarter, Spring 2005, I am enrolled in the following courses (*please include off-campus study*):

_____
_____
_____
_____

I am writing a senior thesis or senior project: Yes or No in _____ Department.

The title of my thesis is:_____

Please Note: In the following questions about class-related writing, "writing" includes a wide variety of forms of writing: lab reports; academic essays; creative writing; proposals; emails; multimedia projects; collaborative writing; presentations, etc.

The amount of writing required in the following courses for this academic year was or is:

	Large		Moderate		Small	N/A
	5	4	3	2	1	0
Humanities (e.g., English History, Philosophy	___	___	___	___	___	___
Math and Sciences (e.g, Calculus, Biology, Chemistry)	___	___	___	___	___	___
Social Sciences (e.g., Political Science, Economics, Psychology, Anthropology	___	___	___	___	___	___
Engineering and Computer Science _____	___	___	___	___	___	___
Writing-in-Major Senior Project_____	___	___	___	___	___	___

The expectations of instructors and faculty in the following courses for the quality of writing at Stanford are:

	High		Moderate		Low	N/A
	5	4	3	2	1	0
Humanities (e.g., English History, Philosophy	___	___	___	___	___	___
Math and Sciences (e.g, Calculus, Biology, Chemistry)	___	___	___	___	___	___
Social Sciences (e.g., Political Science, Economics, Psychology, Anthropology	___	___	___	___	___	___
Engineering and Computer Science _____	___	___	___	___	___	___
Writing-in-Major Senior Project_____	___	___	___	___	___	___

I receive clear instruction in how to write effectively for my following courses:

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	N/A
	5	4	3	2	1	0
Humanities (e.g., English History, Philosophy	___	___	___	___	___	___
Math and Sciences (e.g, Calculus, Biology, Chemistry)	___	___	___	___	___	___
Social Sciences (e.g., Political Science, Economics, Psychology, Anthropology	___	___	___	___	___	___
Engineering and Computer Science _____	___	___	___	___	___	___
Writing-in-Major Senior Project_____	___	___	___	___	___	___

The following questions address your confidence in your class-related writing. Please try to be as accurate as possible in your responses.

1. My confidence in my writing ability during my first year (2001-2002) at Stanford was

very high	high	moderate	low	none
5	4	3	2	1

2. My confidence in my writing ability now (2004-2005) is

very high	high	moderate	low	none
5	4	3	2	1

3. My confidence in my ability to write well in my major is

very high	high	moderate	low	none
5	4	3	2	1

4. My confidence in my ability to write well across various academic disciplines is

very high	high	moderate	low	none
5	4	3	2	1

The next questions in the survey should reflect your writing in class-related writing this year.

5. I have been asked to produce the following kinds of writing **in my classes** this year (check all that apply):

__ lab reports
__ lab notebooks
__ problem sets
__ reflection papers
__ analytical essays
__class presentations
__ creative writing
(fiction, poetry, short stories, etc)
__ grant and research proposals
__ slide shows (PowerPoint)

__ annotations and
   annotated bibliographies
__ summaries
__ outlines
__ research papers
__ group writing
__ peer review
__ computer code
__ opinion papers
__ blogs

__ Web site(s)
__ listserves (mailing lists)
__ bulletin board postings
  (PanFora, etc.)
__ journals
__ close readings
__ proposals
Other: please specify

6. In my writing assignments, I think about the audience(s) that I am addressing

always	often	sometimes	rarely	never
5	4	3	2	1

7. My instructors ask me to address different audiences in my writing assignments

always	often	sometimes	rarely	never
5	4	3	2	1

8. I use scholarly online databases (Socrates, First Search, Lexis-Nexis, etc.) for my writing assignments

always	often	sometimes	rarely	never
5	4	3	2	1

9. When I do use such online databases, I find them to be useful resources

always	often	sometimes	rarely	never
5	4	3	2	1

10. I use the Web (Yahoo, Google, etc.) to find information/sources for my assignments

always	often	sometimes	rarely	never
5	4	3	2	1

11. When I do use the Web, I find it to be a useful resource

always	often	sometimes	rarely	never
5	4	3	2	1

12. I receive writing assignments online (email, coursework, blackboard, etc.)

always	often	sometimes	rarely	never
5	4	3	2	1

13. I submit writing assignments online (email, coursework, blackboard, etc.)

always	often	sometimes	rarely	never
5	4	3	2	1

14. I receive online feedback (email, Web posting, tracking in Word, etc.) from my instructors

always	often	sometimes	rarely	never
5	4	3	2	1

15. I read and respond to other students' class-related writing informally

always	often	sometimes	rarely	never
5	4	3	2	1

16. I participate in assigned group projects and/or collaborative writing

always	often	sometimes	rarely	never
5	4	3	2	1

17. When writing, I apply what I learned in PWR

always	often	sometimes	rarely	never
5	4	3	2	1

18. When writing, I apply what I learned in WIM

always	often	sometimes	rarely	never
5	4	3	2	1

19. I use the following visual elements in my class-related writing assignments (check all that apply)

__ tables   __ photographs   Other (please specify): _____
__ charts and graphs   __ illustrations   _____
__ audio-visual clips   __ clip art   __ none
__ reproductions of art   __ drawings
__ reproductions of art   __ drawings

20. I have created the following multimedia texts in my class-related work

__ Web pages   __ video files   Other (please specify): _____
__ audio files   __ slide shows   _____
__ film   (Power Point)   __ none
__ posters   __ blogs

21. The total number of pages that I have submitted for my classes this year is about:

    __ 0-10   __ 41-60   __ 100+
    __ 11-20   __ 61-80
    __ 21-40   __ 81-100

22. The total number of presentations (slide shows, posters, etc.) that I have done for my classes this year is about:

    __ 1-3   __ 10-12   __ none
    __ 4-6   __ 12-15
    __ 7-9   __15+

In this section of the survey, please provide information about your **out-of-class writing** activities. "Out of class writing" includes writing for extracurricular activities, work-related writing, applications or proposals, performances, and personal writing.

23. I do the following kinds of writing out of class (check all that apply):

__ letters   __ journalism   __ blogs
__ e-mail   __ chat room   __ bulletin board postings
__ instant messaging   __ creative writing   __ freelance
__ work-related/ professional   __journal or diary   __ none
    writing (resumes, cover letters, etc.)   Other (please specify): _____
__ slide shows (PowerPoint)   __ group writing   _____
__ Web pages   __ listservs
__ computer code

24. My confidence in my out of class writing is

     very high   high   moderate   low   none
         5   4   3   2   1

25. In my out of class writing, I think about the audience(s) that I am addressing

     always   often   sometimes   rarely   never
       5   4   3   2   1

26. I participate in group projects and/or collaborative writing in my out of class writing

     always   often   sometimes   rarely   never
       5   4   3   2   1

27. I use the following visual elements in my out of class writing. Out-of-class writing includes any writing that you do out of personal and for extracurricular purposes (check all that apply):

__ tables   __ photographs   Other (please specify): _____
__ charts and graphs   __ illustrations   _____
__ audio-visual clips   __ clip art   __ none

28. I have created the following multimedia texts out of class. Out-of-class writing includes any writing that you do out of personal and for extracurricular purposes (check all that apply):

__ Web pages   __ video files   Other (please specify): _____
__ audio files   __ slide shows   _____
__ film   (Power Point)   __ none
__ posters   __blogs

In the following questions, please reflect on your **both** your class-related and out of class writing.

29. I use the following resources for help with my writing (check all that apply):

__ peer tutors (Stanford Writing Center)   __TA or instructor office hours
__ lecturer support (Stanford Writing Center)   __ Disabilities Resource Center tutors
__ Undergraduate Advising Center tutors   Other (please specify):
__ friends   _____
__ family   __ none

30. I do my best writing in: (choose only one):

__ scientific writing/lab reports   __creative writing   __ application/fellowship essays
__ academic essays/papers   (fiction, poetry, etc.)   Other (please specify) _____
__ e-mails/instant messaging   __ journal/diary entries
__ Web pages/blogs   __ presentations (posters, PowerPoint, etc.)

31. On average, the total number of emails that I write per day is about
    __ 1-5   __ 16 - 20   __ none
    __ 6-10   __ 21 - 26
    __ 11-15   __ 26+

32. On average, the total number of hours I spend on Instant Messenger per day is about
    __ 1-3   __ 10-12   __ none
    __ 4-6   __ 12-15
    __ 7-9   __15+

33. What type of writing or writing activities helped you the most in developing your writing abilities? What type of skills did they help you hone?

_____
_____
_____

34. What are the main differences between your class-related writing and out-of-class writing?

_____
_____
_____

35. What extracurricular activities are you involved in? Has your participation in out-of-class activities changed in time spent or types of activities) since you started at Stanford?

_____
_____
_____

36. What writing experiences do you wish you had at Stanford? Is there any writing or writing related activity you want to learn, participate in, or accomplish before you graduate?

_____
_____
_____

These final questions are about your submissions to the Stanford Study of Writing Database. This will support the research team in understanding the true amount of writing at Stanford, whether you were able to submit that writing to the Study database or not.

33. As a participant in the Stanford Study of Writing, what amount of your total writing (class-related and out of class) have you submitted to the online database?

all	most	some	a little	not very much
5	4	3	2	1

34. If you did not submit all of your writing, could you please describe the kinds of writing you did not submit and why?

_____
_____
_____