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Patterns of Integrating Reading and Writing Skills in ESL College Composition Classes

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This study examined patterns of engaging in "reading in connection to writing" (hereafter reading-writing practices) in the context of two ESL college composition classrooms. The purpose of this study was to explore whether the L2 proficiency level could be a key construct in explaining similarities and differences in reading-writing practices which students engaged in during the composing process. Multiple sources of data collected over the semester included interview protocols, written products, and observational notes. The results showed that the three proficiency groups under examination differed widely in the ways reading was connected to writing and in the types of intermediate texts produced during the composing process. The students in the high proficiency group produced more intermediate texts through an engagement in reading-writing practices connected to each other. On the contrary, the students in lower proficiency groups engaged in a limited range of reading-writing practices without support of intermediate texts. This study provides insight into the different ways ESL college students coordinate reading and writing while composing essays.

[ESL/reading and writing practices/intermediate texts/composing process]

I. INTRODUCTION

Reading has gradually become a more important part of the ESL writing classroom although the amount of reading and ways of using reading texts vary according to the academic contexts where reading and writing interact. Recently, in many ESL composition classes, reading has served as a key component of the writing classroom and has necessarily been incorporated into college students' composing processes. This paradigm shift towards a reading-writing integration in the composition classroom has been

motivated by two decades of research that both disciplines should be taught together (Grabe, 2003; Hirvela, 2004).

However, the current trends toward integrating L2 reading and writing in university L2 composition classes provide both opportunities and challenges for classroom application (Grabe, 2002; Prowse, 2003). There are at least two challenges to classroom application. First, despite the strong convention that reading-writing instruction goes hand in hand, there has been little empirical research conducted in L2 contexts to support it. Specifically, we as teachers do not know the specific ways L2 learners use reading in light of their own writing purposes. Second, we also do not know how our learners apply the instructional integration of reading and writing to their literacy learning. To understand the role of reading in the writing process, we need to know how L2 learners coordinate reading and writing practices while composing their essays.

The lack of understanding individual differences in the ways students use reading in their writing has been a serious challenge to most of the developmental academic writing programs for basic writers. While practitioners in L2 college composition classes have struggled to develop an effective way to integrate reading-writing instruction, less attention has been paid to ESL learners, who are the very source of individual variables.

Studies on the "L2 language proficiency level" have contributed to explaining the performance aspect of the reading-writing connection. Many empirical studies examined the role of L2 proficiency in reading and writing abilities and found that these abilities differed widely according to the L2 proficiency level (Bosher, 1998; Flahive & Bailey, 1993). These studies, though demonstrating the overlapping of reading and writing abilities, are quiet about the way students integrate reading into their writing practices during the composing process. To address this gap in research, this study uses L2 proficiency as a construct to understand individual differences in reading-writing practices.

The present study is different from the works done by other studies in that it examines patterns of reading-writing practices across proficiency groups and over an extended period of time. By examining the pattern of integrating reading and writing practices, this paper explores the connection between L2 proficiency and reading-writing pattern in the context of the L2 composition class. In this respect, this study may assist our learners to be effective writers by teaching them how to use reading in light of their own goals as writers.

The main context for this study is the developmental writing program for ESL college writers, an essential component of an urban university writing program in the U.S., which consists of two main courses, English 11 and English 21. First-year college students are placed into English 11 based on a formula that is weighed by a placement essay, Descriptive Tests of Language Skills (DTLS), reading and writing scores, high school GPA, and SAT verbal scores. For ESL students who do not have SAT scores, the SAT is replaced by the TOEFL (Test of a Foreign English Language) in the formula. English 21 is

a three-credit course designed to guide basic ESL writers into academic discourse to help ESL students become members of the academic community. This course can be understood as a reading-to-writing class in that it combines reading and writing through thematic units and puts greater emphasis on classroom discussion of reading texts and writing products.

This study addresses some of the questions left unexamined by previous research on L2 reading-writing relationships: the role of the L2 proficiency level as a construct to understand learner differences in integrating reading and writing practices. Hence, the research questions proposed are as follows:

1. What, if any, are the similarities and differences in patterns of reading-writing practices ESL college students in different proficiency groups engage in during the composing process?

2. How do the students in each proficiency group coordinate reading and writing practices to compose their own written texts in an ESL college composition class?

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

1. Theoretical Perspective

The theoretical aspect framing this study is a '*cognitive and social perspective of the reading-writing relationships*' (Flower, 2002), which emerges from various disciplines, including psycholinguistics, cognitive psychology, and reading and writing research. The cognitive and social aspects of reading-writing relationships emphasize the interdependence of a cognitive dimension of literacy and sociocultural knowledge through interaction and the social practice of the classroom culture (Grabe, 2001; Nelson & Carson, 1998). This perspective views literacy practices as an interaction between the cognitive and social process (Flower, 2002; Flower, Long & Higgins, 2002). Such a theoretical orientation provides insights into how reading and writing are connected through literacy experiences as an individual and as a member of a larger learning community (Kamhi-Stein, 2003).

The centrality of this theoretical orientation is the inseparable connection between the cognitive and social dimensions of literacy practices (Hirvela, 1999, 2004). In line with this argument, Eskey (1993) claims that literacy practices must be understood as a process that is not only cognitive but social as well. Since languages involve sets of rules and conventions acquired through participation in social activities (Martin, 2002), the

connection between reading and writing practices is viewed as the interaction between the cognitive and social dimensions of literacy. From this perspective, the cognitive interaction between the individual and the text is embedded in the social context (Applebee, 1984; Smith, 2004).

The view of writing process as reading-writing interaction illustrates how L2 learners engage in reading in connection to writing while composing their essays. And written intermediate texts produced through an engagement in reading-writing practices serve as a means for processing information during the composing process (Johns & Mayes, 1990; Olson, 2005; Reid, 1998).

In this respect, reading-writing practices are shaped and reshaped in a specific way as L2 learners approach different stages of literacy development (Horowits, 1986). It suggests that the pattern of reading-writing practices changes toward a more integrative continuum over time (Flower, 2002). Hence, the present study examines whether the L2 proficiency level can be a key variable in explaining learner differences in integrating reading and writing in the context of ESL college composition classes.

2. Literature Review

L2 learners bring their expectations about literacy, the teaching and learning of literacy, and academic discourses to the L2 classrooms. L2 learners also bring traditions from different discourse communities (i.e., values, attitudes, and practices of their home cultures). These factors shape the L2 learners' approach to reading-writing practices and strongly influence their ways of engaging in literacy practices even in the mainstream composition classroom.

In examining cross-cultural differences in reading-writing practices in the composition classroom, Kaplan (1988) has argued that research in contrastive rhetoric could provide insight into why writers from a particular language background engage in L2 reading and writing in predictable patterns (non-English patterns). In the context of the composition classroom, Schecter and Bayley (1997) examined the role of L1 home cultures in L2 reading and writing and concluded that practices of students' own home cultures strongly influenced their L2 reading and writing. Some earlier work by Ricento (1987) and Chin (2007) also illustrated the same point by showing that learner differences in literacy experiences could have a powerful impact on the ways students use the reading in their writing.

As an attempt to explain learner differences in reading-writing practices, Spivey (1990) found that proficient college readers performed differently from less proficient ones in terms of the way they selected the content and integrated these ideas in their writing. She showed that ways of using source information differed widely according to L2 proficiency

level, suggesting that an ability to use ideas from the reading text could be part of the writing process. In a similar study, Spivey and King (1989) found greater differences among grade levels in selecting important information from the texts and elaborating a writing plan. It indicates that proficient students often produce written intermediate texts while writing from reading texts. Lim (2006) showed that more proficient learners were different from less proficient learners in terms of generating texts and ideas through an engagement in reading-writing practices.

As Olson (2005) has illustrated, students engage in similar but different stages of cognitive development when using the reading text in their writing. This implies that teachers can enhance the written literacy of less proficient learners by applying the learning approach shared by more proficient learners to less able learners. Olson's study, however, focused more on the quality of reading sources cited, providing limited information about the process in which learners select, organize, and allocate reading sources into their own written products.

Kennedy (1985), in his study involving three fluent and three less fluent college learners, examined how students differed in their reading practices when composing an essay. He found that both groups of students differed in their ability to use sources. More proficient readers engaged in a variety of reading-writing practices (i.e., taking notes, making reading summaries) and revised their essays to integrate ideas from reading texts into their own writing. But the less proficient readers engaged in a limited range of reading-writing practices during the composing process. Instead, they depended heavily on quoting material from reading texts in their essays. In the context of the L2 composition classroom, Johns and Mayes (1990) examined L2 learners' abilities to summarize reading texts and found that the low-level students tended to utilize more copying than transforming while high-level students were better able to synthesize main ideas into a coherent summary.

Prior studies have illustrated the important role of language proficiency in explaining individual differences in literacy practices. However, the specific ways in which reading and writing practices are connected to each other have not been examined (Lee, 2000). In an attempt to address the lack of research on this connection, this study explores the role of L2 proficiency level in understanding L2 students' patterns of integrating reading and writing practices during the composing process.

III. METHOD

1. Research Design: Teacher Research

To explore how students engaged in reading-writing practices while composing their essays, the current study was conducted in my own teaching classroom context. In general, teacher research is driven by a classroom teacher's desire to improve his/her own instructional practices through an investigation of problems specific to the classroom (Mill, 2002; Stringer, 2004). This type of research stresses that classroom research should be an integral part of the teacher's work rather than of work one carried out by outsiders. Freeman (1998) provides methodological rationale for teacher research:

> *To truly make research a central part of teaching, we as teachers must redefine research.* For teacher researchers, the process focuses on what is going on in classroom teaching and learning, and knowledge established reflects this understanding. Thus, teaching seeks knowledge in students as its end; research seeks knowledge of teaching-learning processes as a means toward an end (p.7).

This proposition provides a rationale for repositioning teachers' work under teacher research and for how teacher research fits into and contributes to my study. First, teacher research has provided benefits to classroom teachers who must respond to changing profiles of their classes and who must develop new teaching strategies and approaches to meet the diverse needs and learning practices. Teacher research can help classroom teachers empower themselves to become active participants by taking on the role of researchers.

2. Participants

The participants involved in this study were limited to students from two sections of English 21 at an urban university where the teacher-researcher taught. English 21 is part of a developmental writing program for ESL students. The participants were placed in English 21 classes according to a formula that weighed various factors such as placement tests, SAT verbal scores, high school percentile, and performance on multiple choice tests. Twenty students from two sections of an English 21 agreed to participate in the study and signed the consent forms after each individual learned about his/her rights as a research participant from the researcher. Table 1 provides a description of the subject profiles.

With regard to the participants, some students were immigrants who came to the U.S. with their families for economic or political reasons, while others were international students who came to the U.S. to pursue their academic goals. Table 1 illustrates the nature of L2 classrooms characterized as heterogeneous. The two sections of English 21 consisted of 20 students who came from 10 different countries. For both sections, students' ages and years in the U.S. were widely distributed, showing a wide range of differences in terms of age and the number of years in the U.S. The students' linguistic backgrounds were also diverse, suggesting that they would have literacy experiences in different discourse communities.

TABLE 1
Characteristics of Informants in Each Section

Section	Total Subject	Placement Score	Years in US	Native Country(# of student)
Section I	Female: 4 Male: 6	Mean: 65 Range: 51~79	Mean: 5.0 1.0~13.0	China(2), India(1), Korea(2) Liberia(1), Nigeria(2), Vietnam(2)
Section II	Female: 3 Male: 7	Mean: 64 Range: 53~77	Mean: 2.4 1.0~5.0	Albania(1), China(3), Hong Kong(1) Korea(2), Nigeria(2), Taiwan(1)

Note: The placement score is on 100-point scale and is computed based on a university formula that equally weighs four measurements: a placement essay, a high school GPA, a SAT verbal score, and Descriptive Tests of Language Skills (DTLS).

The L2 proficiency level indicated by the "Placement Score" from Table 1 also differed widely across the students, ranging from 51 to 79, which would be used as reference scores to classify students into three different proficiency groups (see the data analysis section, for a detailed procedure).

3. Data Collection and Procedure

1) Data Collection

The data were collected through four methods over a semester. First, an interview protocol was used to collect data on students' reading-writing practices that they undertook in each stage of the writing process (i.e., the drafting and revising processes). These interview data, the primary data in this study, were invaluable for the researcher who could not directly observe the students' practices that took place at some previous point in time. Semi-structured, retrospective interviews were conducted to have each interviewee recall and then reconstruct from memory types of practices they had engaged in. Since an interview with a student was later compared and contrasted across the students, the researcher employed a semi-structured interview format that consisted of a series of

questions designed to elicit specific questions on the part of the respondents. Although the time spent on an individual interview varied according to students, on average, it took about 30 minutes. During the interview, students were asked to describe types of reading-writing practices students engaged in and the way reading and writing were connected during the composing process.

Second, throughout the semester, the students were required to submit five sets of essays in which an essay set consisted of a draft and a final essay. Students' written products were needed, in part, to examine their reading-writing practices reflected in their essays and to analyze integrative patterns emerging from the written products. Third, transcripts from audio-taping of classroom practices were used as a secondary data source to understand ways students engaged in various reading-writing practices in class. In particular, those classroom practices provided formal and informal knowledge about how students integrated reading in their writing. Twenty sections of the classroom discussion class were tape-recorded over the 16-week semester.

Finally, observational data were used as a secondary data source to gain insight into students' ways of integrating reading and writing during the classroom practice. The researcher focused on how students created written intermediate texts (i.e., note-taking, writing notes, reading summaries, and peer-revision notes), which could serve as a means to produce their own written products. These written intermediate texts produced through an engagement in reading-writing practices provided valuable information about the specific ways reading and writing were connected during the composing process.

2) Classroom Procedure

English 21 was one of the courses in the developmental writing program for ESL college writers, an essential component of an urban university writing program. The teacher, also the researcher, was an experienced ESL composition instructor who had been teaching writing for three years. This three-credit course was designed to develop a student’s argumentative writing through a sequence of classroom practices linking reading and writing activities. The classroom practices were focused on argumentative academic writing, primarily on writing issues beyond the sentence level. Sentence-level difficulties were discussed mainly with individual students, but some grammar lessons were designed to handle some problems shared by many students. Classroom activities included reading and writing discussions, conferences with the teacher, and peer critique, as well as class discussions of strengths and weaknesses of individual student’s drafts.

Throughout the course, the students were supposed to write five argumentative essays (2-3 pages and double spaced) for a 16-week semester based on a thematic unit. A major theme (life and death) was divided into four topic areas. At the beginning of the semester, a

theme and related topics were given to the students. Content for short papers came from topics of animal liberation for the first paper, abortion for the second, death penalty for the third and euthanasia for the fourth.

In class, the students read and discussed various articles on each topic from the textbook to learn how to integrate ideas into their own writing. On the short papers, students were asked to take a clear position on each topic, present the issue to readers, and develop an argument for confirming or challenging reader's views on the issue. The students were also required to use at least one of the writers as evidence from the text that would support their positions. In this course, the students wrote one draft of their essays and revised it once. After the students submitted their drafts, there were peer critique classes where the students read fellow classmates' drafts and provided critical analysis. Also, an individual conference with the teacher about the current draft was mandatory.

Each draft received two forms of feedback in the revision stage of the writing process. The students had a chance to revise their drafts through peer revision classes and through the individual conferences scheduled to help them. In the peer revision class, the students in each group read and discussed each other's drafts to evaluate relative strengths and weaknesses of the peers' writing. Also, the students could revise their drafts by utilizing feedback from the teacher. Thus, reading and classroom practices were designed to assist students' writing in various ways, serving as an essential part of the writing process in the ESL college composition class.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

1. Proficiency Groups

In grouping students according to their proficiency levels, all of the placement scores (from 250 students in all sections of English 21) were used to determine the criterion ranges. Using a target population group as reference values to determine a criterion ranges of L2 proficiency, the criterion to be used in grouping the students in the composition classes was identified. Percentages were used to determine cut-off points for the three ranges of proficiency scores to which an equal number of students were assigned according to the ranks of their scores. The three cut-off points to determine the three proficiency groups are as follows:

50 ~ 63 (low proficiency group: 7 students)
64 ~ 74 (middle proficiency group: 7 students)
75 ~ 84 (high proficiency group: 6 students)

2. Analytic Approach to Data Analysis

Upon completion of the data collection, the researcher analyzed the data according to several different schemes and conducted interpretive analyses using the "Constant Comparison Method" (Dye, Schatz, Rosenberg, & Coleman, 2000; Patton, 1990). First, an analysis started right after the data associated with the first writing assignment were collected. All the data from the first interviews, the first essays, audio-tapings of classroom practices, and classroom observations associated with the first writing assignment were transcribed. Using those data, the researcher identified the types of reading-writing practices the students engaged in, and then incidents of those practices were categorized into reading-writing patterns. Two patterns emerging from the data were defined as a) patterns specific to the individual students and b) patterns specific to the groups.

The first category was defined as learner-specific patterns not shared by the group members. The second category referred to group-specific patterns shared among the students in each group. For example, when a particular reading-writing practice was shared by group members, this incident was categorized into the group-specific pattern. Any incident not shared by group members was assigned to the learner-specific pattern.

Second, once patterns applicable to each category were identified through analysis of the first interview data, these patterns were then used to generate subsequent data (focus for data collection). This process of generating data was extended to five sets of writing assignments completed during a 16-week semester. Data from all sources served as the baseline data to analyze students' ways of using reading in their writing. Throughout the ongoing process of collecting data, patterns were generated and compared across the proficiency groups using the Constant Comparison analysis (Dye et al., 2000; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Finally, interview data were described to interpret the ways the students coordinated reading-writing practices during the composing process.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this section, the reading and writing practices used by the students are first identified, and then the patterns emerging from these practices are discussed. Different ways the reading and writing practices were connected to each other were compared and contrasted across the proficiency groups.

1. Reading and Writing Practices

For the purpose of coding the reading and writing practices, a system of taxonomy was developed by reading through the transcripts, identifying incidences of reading-writing practices, and then categorizing those into various types and subtypes. Investigator triangulation was accessed using inter-rater agreements. One independent rater who had taught the same course coded the students' interview data. A wide range of practices described in Table 2 illustrates that composing an essay was a complex process of creating intermediate texts through an engagement in reading and writing practices.

TABLE 2
Taxonomy for Coding Reading and Writing Practices

Categories		Description
Reading Practices		
Surface Reading	-	Read texts without communicating a specific purpose.
Read with Purposes		
Skimming	-	Skim to get the general sense of a passage or a work: students have a general question about the whole text such as "will this passage be useful to me?".
Looking for patterns	-	While reading, students look for patterns in a passage or works that the authors often use in developing their ideas.
Developing argu.	-	Look for main and supporting ideas to create an argument.
Citing evidence	-	Read a passage or a work to integrate sources from it into the writing.
Reread Texts	-	Reread texts in light of the writing purposes during the composing process.
Read Drafts	-	Reread a draft for the purposes of revision.
Read Types of Notes	-	Read types of notes (class notes, reading notes, writing notes, peer revision notes) during the composing process.
Writing Practices		
Write Outlines	-	Jot ideas in their notes making an outline before engaging in writing.
Write Class Notes	-	Take notes on what the teacher says and what other students say in class.
Write Self-Revi. Note	-	Students write which kinds of changes they have to make in their revision based on the teacher's comments on their drafts.
Write Peer Revi. Note	-	In peer review class, students take notes on their peers' comments.
Write Drafts	-	Write rough drafts on the given topic.
Revise Drafts	-	Students elaborate their rough drafts during the revision process.
Interactive Practices	-	Students negotiate difficulties they encounter through interaction with experts (i.e., tutors in the writing center) or more able learners.
R/W Practices		
Write Reading Notes	-	While reading, students take notes about the topic to summarize it.
Make Annotation	-	While reading, analyze the text by making marks on the margin of the text.
Review/Revise Notes	-	Revise types of notes students create during the composing process.
Memory Notes	-	Carry a substantial part of the information in the memory while reading.

Note: The R/W Practices denotes reading and writing practices occurring in connection to each other.

Table 2 summarizes 16 different practices that the students undertook while composing their essays. The literacy practices which the students undertook during the composing

process were classified into three types: reading, writing, and reading/writing practices that contained subcategories for each practice. Written intermediate texts were defined as types of texts students produced during the composing process (between the beginning and the end of the writing assignment).

1) Reading Practices

The reading practice category summarizes types of reading practices the students engaged in during the composing process. These practices included "surface reading," "read with writing purposes," "reread texts," "read drafts," and "read types of notes." Since the identification and an analysis of the students' reading practices were based mainly on self-reported descriptions, there were some limitations to the information gathered. Specifically, students might not have fully described, might not have remembered, or might have decided not to report what they did.

The first sub-category identified was "surface reading," which was defined as a reading activity that did not produce written intermediate texts. Also, the researcher did not observe any evidence of reading articles for specific purposes during class. "Read with purposes" was defined as a student's reading practice that clarified a specific writing purpose and produced a corresponding written intermediate text as evidence for that practice. The students often used reading texts for their specific writing purposes.

It was known that students had a variety of purposes specific to their writing tasks. The purposes identified were "skimming," "looking for patterns," "developing an argument," and "looking for citation evidence." This suggests that students, while reading the reading articles, look for specific information appropriate to their own writing purposes. The students often read source texts, their drafts, or types of notes they created. These sub-practices revealed a variety of actions involved in reading practices. In this respect, the students' reading practices should not be understood as just one action but a series of interactions with the texts.

The multiplicity of reading practices and sub-practices explained above contrasts with the earlier research. In the literature, the students' practices in reading texts are often described as a single activity (Many, Fyfe, Lewis, & Mitchelle, 1996; Torrence et al., 1999; Wolfe, 2001). More importantly, the role of written intermediate text produced during the reading practices was not illustrated. As shown in Table 2, the intermediate text, such as "annotated reading" and "reading summaries, " often served as a vehicle to connect reading practices to students' writing purposes.

2) Writing Practices

The category of writing practices includes types of writing practices the students engaged in during the composing process. The sub-practices identified were "write outlines," "write class notes," "write self-revision notes," "write peer revision notes," "write drafts," "revise drafts," and "interactive practices." The sub-categories of writing practices reported in Table 2 are consistent with prior research done in this area (Torrence, Thomas & Robinson, 2000). These practices identified were associated with the types of notes the students created during the composing process. The students reported that they wrote outlines before engaging in writing during class as well as writing peer revision notes during peer revision classes. Also, the students engaged in some sub-writing practices, such as "write self-revision notes" and "interactive practices," to improve their drafts during the revision stage. Unlike "write peer revision note" that occurred in class, "write self-revision notes" was the practice the students engaged in outside the classroom.

The majority of the students undertook at least one type of note-writing while composing an essay and invested a considerable amount of time in creating various types of notes, which would serve as a basis for developing their own essays. The written intermediate texts produced during the writing activities were "class notes," "revision notes," and "writing outlines." Unlike prior studies that limited the writing practices to students' essays (Carson, 2000; Greene, 1993; Hirvela, 2004), this study extended the analysis to the written intermediate texts. It is suggested that producing intermediate texts is an ongoing process of generating, developing, and incorporating ideas into student texts.

3) Reading/Writing Practices

The category of reading/writing practices refers to the practices that the students engaged in reading and writing practices simultaneously. This category is an important finding because previous studies did not highlight the role of reading/writing practices in composing an essay. Practices that connected reading and writing were "write reading summaries," "make annotations," "review/revise notes," and "memory notes." The students, while reading the articles, often made notes to summarize what they read (i.e., writing reading summaries). The students also read and revised types of notes to reshape information (i.e., review/revise notes), or wrote specific comments on the margin of the texts (i.e., make annotations). A practice like "make annotations" clearly illustrates how the interaction of reading and writing can occur simultaneously during the composing process (Wolfe, 2001). For example, some students, while reading an article, paraphrased sentences or made specific notes on the margins that could be used by them as resources.

An intermediate text that has not been identified in prior studies was the "memory notes." Some students, while reading, produced a hypothetical text (i.e., some form of the intermediate text students created in their memories) by carrying a substantial part of the information from the articles in their memory. An analysis of the students' written texts showed that some information was often carried in the form of memory notes and was used as a part of the students' essays.

4) Group Similarities and Differences in Reading-Writing Practices

The interview and other data were analyzed to examine group differences in reading and writing practices involved in the composing process. The results indicate that although the students create intermediate texts through an engagement in various reading-writing practices, types of reading-writing practices differ widely across the proficiency groups. Such differences provide insight into the ways reading and writing are connected to each other across the groups and into instructional practices applicable to L2 composition classrooms. Table 3 below compares and contrasts the types of practices and intermediate texts produced across the proficiency groups. As described in Table 3, all of the students in each group devoted a considerable amount of time to reading the reading texts (all of the students in each group), writing their drafts (all of the students in each group), and revising their drafts (all of the students in each group). As this pattern indicates, the students primarily engaged in reading the articles, writing their drafts, and revising these drafts during the composing process.

TABLE 3

Reading-Writing Practices and Intermediate Texts across the Proficiency Groups

	Proficiency Groups		
Category	Low Gr. (7 Students)	Middle Gr. (7 students)	High Gr. (6 Students)
Reading Practices			
Read texts	7(all)	7(all)	6(all)
Surface reading	5(,B,C,D,E,G)	3(D,G)	0(none)
Read with purposes	2(A,F)	5(A,B,C,E,F)	6(A,B,C,D,E,F)
Read feedbacks	7(all)	7(all)	6(all)
Read drafts	3(A,B,D)	6(A,B,C,E,F,G)	6(all)
Read notes	2(C,D)	4(A,B,E,G)	5(A,C,D,E,F)
Reread texts	0(none)	3(B,C,D)	5(A,B,D,E,F)
	Mean: 3.5	Mean: 4.7	Mean: 5.7
Writing Practices			
Write drafts	7(all)	7(all)	6(all)
Revise drafts	7(all)	7(all)	6(all)
Write class notes	2(C,D)	5(A,C,D,F,G)	6(all)
Write self-revision notes	0(none)	5(A,B,C,E,G)	6(all)
Write peer revision notes	3(A,B,D)	4(B,C,D,G)	5(A,B,D,E,F)

	Mean: 2.7	Mean: 3.5	Mean: 4.8
Read/Writing Practices			
Write reading summaries	2(B,E)	3(A,B,E)	5(A,B,C,E,F)
Revise reading notes	0(none)	2(B,E)	5(A,B,D,E,F)
Review reading notes	0(none)	2(C,D)	6(all)
Make annotations	1(A)	3(A,D,F)	6(all)
	Mean: 0.4	Mean: 1.4	Mean: 3.7
Intermediate Texts			
Memory notes//Elaborated	3(A,D,E)	4(A,D,E,G)	4(A,C,D,F)
Reading summaries//Elaborated	1(A)//0	3(B,E,F)//0	4(A,D,E,F)//2(A,B)
Annotated texts//Elaborated	1(A)//0	3(A,D,F)//1(B)	3(A,B,E)//2(A,B)
Writing outlines//Elaborated	1(C)//0	3(B,D,E)//0	6(all)//3(A,B,F)
Classroom notes//Elaborated	2(B,D)//0	4(A,C,F,G)//0	6(all)//3(A,D,F)
Revision notes//Elaborated	0//0	4(A,B,C,E)//0	6(all)//3(A,D,E)
Peer-revi. notes//Elaborated	1(B)//0	3(B,C,E)//1(A)	5(A,B,C,D,F)//1(B)

Note: Numbers in Table 3 denote the number of students corresponding to each item, and letters in parentheses denote the students who engage in the corresponding practices. “Elaborated” refers to types of intermediate texts revised or rewritten during the composing process.

This simple pattern shared by almost all the students seems to indicate that composing an essay is a linear process of connecting a sequence of those practices, as Rohman argued (1965). Looking closely at the specific ways the students in each proficiency group engaged in various support practices, however, a more complex composing process was revealed. For example, while reading the articles, the students in the higher proficiency groups often performed other support activities, including a) reading with specific writing purposes, b) writing reading summaries, or c) making annotations. It suggests that students often produce written intermediate texts through an engagement in various reading-writing activities while composing their essays.

With regard to reading practices, each proficiency group differed in terms of specific reading practices. As expected, the higher proficiency groups (i.e., the middle and high proficiency groups) tended to engage more in reading in light of their writing purposes. As shown in Table 3, the numbers of the students engaging in "reading with specific purposes" were 2/7, 5/7, and 6/6 for each proficiency group, respectively. The higher proficiency groups also dominated the low proficiency group in terms of engaging in other reading activities, such as "read drafts," "read notes", and "reread texts." Most of the students in the high and middle proficiency groups, for example, engaged in these activities while only a few students in the low proficiency group did so.

The three groups also differed in the types of writing activities. The students engaged in the four types of note writing, such as "write reading notes," "write class notes," "write self-revision notes," and "write peer revision notes." The middle and high proficiency groups tended to create various types of note writing during the composing process. As indicated in Table 3, the average writing practices (i.e., the numbers of activities per student) for each group were 2.7, 3.5, and 4.8, respectively.

With respect to reading/writing practices, each group differed in "writing reading summaries," "reviewing notes," and "making annotations." Table 3 clearly shows that the higher proficiency groups tended to engage more in reading/writing practices relative to the low proficiency group. It indicates that proficient students tended to engage more in reading in connection to writing practices. For example, while all the students (6/6) in the high proficiency group engaged in "making annotations," only some of those (3/7) in the middle proficiency groups and a few (1/5) in the low proficiency group did so.

The students, while engaging in reading-writing practices, produced various types of intermediate texts that could serve as a vehicle to write their own essays. The types of intermediate texts produced were "reading summary notes," "annotated texts," "writing outlines," and "types of writing notes." The low proficiency group was different from the other two proficiency groups in producing the types of written intermediate texts. Specifically, the low proficiency group produced less intermediate texts than the other two groups. On the other hand, the two proficient groups were active in producing written intermediate texts, but they differed in terms of elaborating these intermediate texts. "Elaborated intermediate texts" refers to types of notes revised and rewritten by students and the unique characteristic distinguishing between the high and low proficiency groups. As Table 3 indicates, more proficient students not only produced a variety of intermediate texts but also elaborated these written texts, which would serve as a means to compose their own essays.

2. Reading-Writing Patterns across the Groups

The purpose of this section is to examine whether L2 proficiency could help explain the specific ways reading and writing practices are connected to each other. The researcher categorizes the reading-writing patterns emerging from the data and conducts an interpretative analysis to describe the pattern using interview data.

1) Writing-Intensive Pattern (Low Proficiency Group)

The 7 students who scored between 50 and 63 in the university placement formula were assigned to the low proficiency group. The reading-writing pattern shared by the low proficiency group was characterized as a "writing-intensive pattern," under which the students worked mainly on composing their essays with a minimum level of supporting practices. This writing-intensive pattern describes the practice of writing an essay in isolation of other reading practices. For example, the reading-writing practices student B-1 (i.e., student B in group 1) undertook were "surface reading," "write a draft," "write a peer revision note," and "revise a draft." He read the articles without specific writing purposes

and other support practices and devoted most of the time to directly writing his essay. He engaged in a limited range of reading-writing practices during the composing process, and these practices occurred in isolation and did not lead to other support practices.

The writing-intensive pattern, described as a "surface reading-a few intermediate texts-writing" illustrates the ways the students in the low proficiency group composed their texts with little engagement in other types of support practices. As shown in column 1 of Table 3, the students' engagement in reading was limited to reading the source articles without other reading practices (i.e., reading summaries, annotating texts, or reading and identifying with specific purposes). Similarly, the students' writing practices were directly related to composing their own texts without support from intermediate texts (i.e., types of writing notes). No one other than student A in the low proficiency group created "writing outlines" (1/7) or "writing self-revision notes" (1/7).

The students in the low proficiency group also did not engage in self-initiated revisions that often required subsequent reading-writing practices, but responded directly to the teacher's comments. A few intermediate texts other than memory notes produced in the low proficiency group were a reading summary (student A-1), an annotated text (student A-1), a class note (students B-1 and D-1), and a peer revision note (student B-1). But, no students produced a variety of intermediate texts that were common in the high and middle proficiency groups.

This clearly indicates that the students in this group composed their essays by engaging in a limited range of reading-writing practices and devoted most of their efforts to composing essays without support of intermediate texts available to them. This pattern shares a similar idea with the pattern of "read/remember/write" (Many et al., 1996) and "think-then-do" (Torrence et al., 2000) in that the range of reading-writing practices students undertook was limited.

The following excerpts from the interview protocols illustrate how the pattern shared by the low proficiency group was skewed toward writing the essays with little support practices and few intermediate texts:

> *I am very good at reading the articles, and reading discussion in the class really helps a lot. So I don't too much worry about reading, but I worry about writing. That is the reason I spend so much time on writing my draft.* (B-1, February 9, 2005)

> *Right after I read the reading texts, I start to write my draft so that I can spent as many as time on writing my draft.* (A-1, February 9, 2005)

> *While I revise my draft I spent most of the time on correcting my draft based on your (the teacher's) comments.* (C-1, February 9, 2005)

> *Reading texts gave me some information about both sides of argument [over animal liberation], but I did more writing than reading because writing an essay require skills that I have to develop.* (E-1, February 11, 2005)

The descriptions above illustrate why the students engaged in a limited range of reading-writing practices and produced only a few intermediate texts. It suggests that less proficient students do not know how to use reading texts in their writing purposes, thus leading to reading and writing practices occurring in isolation. This result provides pedagogical implications applicable to classroom teaching. For less able students, teachers should structure classroom practices where these students negotiate difficulties through an interaction with more able learners. Also, teachers could provide tasks that involve both reading and writing practices simultaneously (i.e., reading summaries or reading journals).

2) Integrative Reading-Writing Pattern (Middle Proficiency Group)

The middle proficiency group consisted of 7 students who had the placement scores ranging from 65 to 74 points. As shown in Table 3, the average numbers of the groups were 4.7 for reading practices, 3.5 for writing practices, and 1.4 for reading/writing practices. This reflects that the students in the middle proficiency group started to recognize the interdependence of reading and writing practices.

The integrative pattern, or "purpose reading-intermediate texts-writing," illustrates how reading practices occur in connection to other writing practices during the composing process. The types of written intermediate texts produced by this group were "reading summaries" (3/7), "annotated texts" (3/7), "writing outlines" (3/7), "class notes" (4/7), "self-revision notes" (4/7), and "peer revision notes" (3/7). Those intermediate texts would serve as vehicles to develop students' writings during the composing process.

The students in this group created various types of written intermediate texts and used these intermediate texts by reading them during the drafting and revision stages. The students engaged in reading practices with specific writing purposes that often led to subsequent support practices, such as annotating texts, making reading summaries, and writing reading notes. As shown in Table 3, the majority of students engaged in "reading with specific purposes" (5/7), "reading types of notes" (4/7), "writing reading summaries" (3/7), and "making annotations" (3/7). The following excerpts from the students illustrate how reading-writing practices occurred in connection to each other.

> *When I read the articles, I try to look at how the authors refute the counterclaim because I still have problems with it. So, I usually write down how to refute the counterclaim when I reading the textbook.* (A-2, interview data, February 9, 2005)

> *I summarize the articles whenever I read and use it to start my essay [introduction of an essay]. A summary gave a very good idea.* (C-3, interview data, February 9, 2005)

> *I wrote my comments on the reading article when I read it [the article]. Then, I don't need to read a whole article again. It [annotated reading] is a very good to check some points when I write a draft.* (D-2, interview data, February 9, 2005)

> *I made a [reading] note when I read the textbook because I don't know how to develop their argument and refute counterclaims. I summarize how the authors define and develop their thesis.* (E-3, interview data, February 9, 2005)

These examples illustrate how a sequence of reading-writing practices was connected to each other, reflecting the students' attempts to improve a particular aspect of their writing. Specifically, the reading-writing practices were related to the refutation of counterclaims for student A-2, the introduction of the thesis for student C-3, and the argument development for student E-3. These students were efficient writers in that they recognized the relative weaknesses of their writing even before composing essays and tried to improve particular aspects of their writing.

The integrative pattern suggests that classroom teachers further help the students by teaching how to elaborate intermediate texts they produced. Through this elaboration process, the students can use intermediate texts more effectively to develop these as part of their own writing.

3) Elaborated Pattern of Reading and Writing (High Proficiency Group)

6 students in the high proficiency group who scored greater than 75 points dominated those in the two other groups in terms of types of support practices they undertook. The students, for example, engaged in almost all support practices available to them during the composing process. The average number was 5.7 for reading practices, 4.8 for writing practices, and 3.7 for reading-writing practices.

The elaborated pattern of reading and writing, or "reading with purposes-elaborated intermediate text-writing," revealed that each practice influenced and was influenced by other practices. It suggests the dynamic relationships that existed among various reading-writing practices. Under this elaborated pattern, the integration of reading and writing appeared to be recursive to elaborate the written intermediate texts. This result is compared with the students in the two other groups who were engaged in a sequence of practices but who seldom repeated the same practices over the course of the writing assignments. In this

respect, the elaborated pattern shared by the high proficiency group can be described as a recursive integration of reading-writing practices.

The students in this high proficiency group differed in terms of elaborating intermediate texts. More specifically, while a few students in the low and middle groups (0/7 and 2/7, respectively) elaborated written intermediate texts, all of the students in the high proficiency group elaborated at least one type of written intermediate texts. It suggests that more proficient students continued to seek support through a wide range of practices they engaged in. They recursively engaged in support practices and moreover, repeated those practices at any point during the composing process. For example, student B-4 read the article and wrote a reading summary during the drafting stage. However, he repeatedly revised the summary note by rereading the same article during the revision stage. This demonstrates how students engage in the recursive reading-writing pattern to elaborate the written intermediate texts.

The recursive characteristics observed here are quite similar to the writing process argued in some prior studies (McGinley, 1992; Torrence et al., 2000). They argued that the writing process occurred in a much more elaborated and recursive fashion, moving frequently between the practices. The following excerpts from interview transcripts clearly illustrate how more proficient students elaborate written intermediate texts through the recursive pattern of reading-writing practices.

> *Before I start a writing essay, I read and reread what I wrote on my notebook. These notes have many things to consider because most of them were not clearly understood. So, I try to rephrase what I wrote in the notebook to help me understood. I know this take much time and time-consuming but I do this because I believe it really help me to write good essay. And in many times I use this [elaborated intermediate text] in my essay as part of my essay.* (student A-4, interview data, February 9, 2005)

Similarly, student B-4 described her practices of elaborating intermediate texts.

> *Before revising my draft, I usually read my class notes one more times and make another note. It takes a lot of time because I am thinking about how to use it [an elaborated intermediate text] in my essay.* (Student A-4, interview data, February 13, 2005)

The students in the high proficiency group not only repeated reading-writing practices recursively to elaborate written intermediate texts but often incorporated those into their own texts as well. The elaborated pattern suggests an important teaching practice in that

more able students can play a critical role as teachers or tutors in class. Group work or pair work (novice-expert) is a good approach to teaching how to combine reading and writing practices. Specifically, students can have an opportunity to negotiate difficulties and expertise through an ongoing interaction with peers.

VI. CONCLUSION

The present study explores whether L2 proficiency can be a key construct to explain similarities and differences in reading-writing practices involved in composing process. The pattern for the low proficiency group was best characterized as a writing-intensive pattern, which illustrated a linear cycle of "surface reading-few intermediate texts-writing." This pattern indicates that L2 proficiency plays an important role in understanding reading-writing practices followed by less proficient students. Less proficient students tended to engage in reading practices that were isolated from other writing practices. It suggests that less proficient students may not know how to explicitly create written intermediate texts appropriate to their writing purposes, choosing not to engage in such support practices. The writing intensive pattern shares similarities with the "read/remember/write" pattern (Many et al., 1996) and the "think-then-do" pattern (Torrance et al., 2000).

The students in the middle proficiency group shared similar pattern, or "purpose reading/intermediate texts/writing." Under this integrated pattern, the students engaged in reading with specific writing purposes, and reading practices occurring in conjunction with other writing practices. Also, types of written intermediate texts produced could serve as a basis of their writing during the composing process. The role of written intermediate texts has not been addressed by other studies (Kennedy, 1985; Many et al., 1996; McGinley, 1992). At best, McGinley (1992) has showed learner differences in terms of the repertories of reading-writing practices involved in the composing process.

The elaborated pattern of reading-writing practices, or “purpose reading/elaborated intermediate texts/writing,” suggests that more proficient students continued to seek support by engaging in a wide range of reading practices. This pattern was recursive in that the proficient students quite often returned to the same practices they had engaged in to elaborate types of written intermediate texts. In addition, the students often incorporated the elaborated intermediate texts as part of their own writing. Flower & Hayes (1981) and McGinley (1992) have provided evidence supporting this elaborated pattern. More specifically, Flower and Hayes (1981) indicated that the sequence of reading-writing practices involved in the composing process was frequently broken and that the writing process was highly recursive. Similarly, McGinley (1992) described this elaborated pattern as “linear and nonlinear qualities with respect to reading and writing activities (p.233).”

The current study strongly supports the pedagogical notion that in L2 classrooms it is important to focus on L2 learners, who provide unique data unattainable from any objective measurements (Hirvela, 2004; Kamhi-Stein, 2003). The results also provide some implications applicable to instructional practices. First, classroom teachers should provide tasks that lead students to produce written intermediate texts during the composing process. Classroom assignments, such as making reading journals, making reading summaries, or in-class quizzes about the article, are good examples of methods to support the integration of reading-writing practices.

Second, as suggested by the data collected in this study, student abilities to produce written intermediate texts are closely related to L2 proficiency. This strongly suggests that practitioners need to create an instructional environment conducive to negotiating expertise and difficulties through classroom practices. Practitioners may use a high-low perspective pair (i.e., peer critics) as one of the teaching strategies that moves less proficient students to a higher level category. Finally, classroom teachers should provide an opportunity for students to elaborate written intermediate texts they produce. In this respect, the tasks should have students not only produce written intermediate texts but also develop these texts as part of their writing through an elaboration process. For example, some tasks targeted at elaborating reading summaries and developing these summaries as part of the texts can help students connect reading-writing practices in light of their writing purposes.

One of the contributions is that the present study provides a clear explanation of how L2 proficiency is linked to students' reading-writing practices. However, the findings should not be taken as conclusive evidence since there are many learning contexts (i.e., ESL, EFL, EAP). In this respect, similar research replicated in different learning contexts is strongly encouraged.

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APPENDIX A

Interview Protocol

Participant's Name: _____

The purpose of this interview is to understand how you integrate reading-writing practices while drafting and revising your essay. Specifically, I want to know the types of behaviors you undertake and the ways you connect those practices when selecting and organizing the source contents and integrating the sources into you own essay. Please take time and try to remember what you were doing when you write your essay.

1. The Drafting Stage:

1) Types of Practices Students Engage in and the Corresponding Purposes

(1) Please remember the steps or processes you experienced while you wrote your draft. Can you describe types of practices you engaged while preparing for your draft? Any reading and writing you undertook could be practices, such as reading the assigned articles, reading the class notes, or writing a draft.

(2) Based on your description, you wrote your draft through a sequence of those practices [list types of practices mentioned by a student].
(3) If so, what was the purpose of undertaking each practice [list one by one] while writing your draft? In other words, how did each practice above help you compose your draft?
(4) Among the total amount of time you invested in completing your draft, what proportion of your time did you allocate to each behavior?

2) Reading-Writing Practices related to Classroom Discussion of Reading Assignments

(1) How did the classroom discussion of reading articles help you prepare for your draft?
(2) Are there any particular reading-writing behaviors you undertook to use information discussed in the classroom? You can remember what you were doing in or out of the class.

2. The Revision Stage:

1) Types of Practices Students Engage in and the Corresponding Purposes

(1) Please remember the steps or processes you experienced while you wrote your final draft. Can you describe types of practices you engaged while preparing for your final essay? Any reading and writing you undertook could be practices, such as reading the assigned articles, reading the class notes, or writing a draft.
(2) Based on your description, you wrote your final essay through a sequence of those practices [list types of practices mentioned by a student].
(3) If so, what was the purpose of undertaking each practice [list one by one] while writing your final essay? In other words, how did each practice above help you compose your final essay?
(4) Among the total amount of time you invested in completing your final essay, what proportion of your time did you allocate to each practice?

2) Reading-Writing Practices related to Peer Revision Class

(1) How did the peer discussion of your draft help you prepare for your final essay?
(2) Is there any particular reading-writing practice you undertook to use information discussed in the peer revision class? You can remember what you were doing in or out of the class. In other words, how did you use or accommodate the peer's comments on use of reading sources (in terms of selecting and organizing reading sources and integrating sources into your own essay) when writing your final draft?

3. Written Products:

I want to know the way you select and organize particular reading contents and integrate those into your own writing. Look at your draft and think about the following questions.

1) Can you describe how you choose this particular content [point out the source used] from the reading texts?
2) What is the purpose of using this source? In other words, you use this source to do what? For example, you may use this to support your claim, give evidence, introduce the issue, etc.).

3) As compared with your draft, you change (do not change) your reading source. Why do you change it, and is there any particular reason for this change? Why do you organize the source material differently as compared with your draft?

Examples in: English
Applicable Languages: English
Applicable Levels: College

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