Exploring L2 Writing Strategies from a Socio-cognitive Perspective: Mediated Actions, Goals, and Setting in L2 Writing

DISSEDITION

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Abstract

L2 learners strategically and actively engage in their writing tasks while interacting with various available resources, including their learning goals and histories. The current study examined mediated actions in the writing of college-level Korean as a foreign language (KFL) students and re-conceptualized L2 writing strategies from a socio-cognitive perspective, particularly drawing on Engestrom’s (1999) Activity Theory, and the notions of mediation and agency. An important frame of reference was Lei’s study (2008) that examined English as a foreign language (EFL) learners’ writing strategies from the activity theoretical perspective. That study motivated me to explore similar issues in a different context, the KFL context. This qualitative comparative case study looked at the writing engagement of five KFL students taking an intermediate-level Korean course for an entire academic quarter running 10 weeks.

Using various sources of data (e.g., interviews, stimulated recall protocols, process logs, observations, writing autobiography, and students’ writing assignments), I categorized mediated strategies into four broad types and thirteen smaller ones: (1) artifact-mediated (the Internet-, native language (L1)-, and target language (L2)-mediated), (2) rule-mediated (self-constructed rules-, good writing criteria-, plagiarism rule-, and time-mediated), (3) community-mediated (native speaker-, prior experience- (foreign language learning, study-abroad, & L1 writing experiences), classroom
community-, and imagined community-mediated), and (4) role-mediated (author- and language learner-mediated) strategies. The findings corroborated the claim that L2 writing is a mediated activity occurring from interactions of learners and environment: the learners’ interactions with the environmental mediators were themselves an important component of L2 writing processes. Also, the study found that the KFL learners’ strategic and agentive selection of the resources was strongly related to the fulfillment of their goals. The multicultural learners’ different goals, including long-term goals, learning histories, and cultural backgrounds (heritage vs. non-heritage) necessarily caused individual differences in terms of mediated actions, engagement with the assigned writing tasks.

The study revealed several mediators that merit our attention within the context of KFL, among which the most important ones that impacted on the KFL learners’ writing processes were the imagined community and plagiarism. The findings imply that the KFL programs will need to provide information regarding communities that learners can possibly participate in and offer systematic instruction on plagiarism, including writing practices with models or paraphrasing or rewriting practices. For this study, Engestrom’s Activity Theory (1999) was useful to explain learners’ social processes interrelated with their cognitive processes, interactions and contradictions between the mediated-strategies, and the learners’ creating processes of mediators. As also revealed in Lei’s study (2008), Activity Theory seems to have considerable value as an analytical tool in the L2 writing context.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Foreign or second language (L2) learning is a developmental process of L2 learners’ interaction with an environment full of mediational means, such as the Internet, printed materials, (online) dictionaries, peers, teachers, rules or conventions, classrooms, and native language (L1). By interacting with the diverse resources or mediators with certain goals in mind, L2 learners strategically participate in the L2 learning process and its associated way of thinking (Donato & McCormick, 1994; Lantolf, 2000; Lei, 2008; Wells & Claxton, 2002; Wertsch, 1991; 1998). As such, the L2 learning process consists of “a semiotic process attributable to participation in socially-mediated activities” (Donato, 2000, p.45), and the L2 learners can be described as “historically and sociologically situated active agents” (Block, 2003, p.109). This view of L2 learning and learners originates from a sociocultural theory of learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Rogoff, 1994; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1991), and a number of L2 studies have adopted sociocultural approaches to explain L2 learning. Particularly, it is believed that sociocultural theory is useful to explain various learning situations in this age dominated by electronic tools and resources, such as the Internet (Prior, 2006; Wells & Claxton, 2002).

Historically speaking, L2 learning has been examined and discussed from a cognitive perspective. More recently, however, it has been argued that we cannot fully understand the nature of L2 learning, and many issues in L2 studies, by solely relying on
the cognitive approach, which focuses on analyzing what happens inside the learner’s mind and separates cognition from the context of learning. To obtain a richer understanding of the L2 learning process and add a meaningful complement to the previous and ongoing cognitively-oriented studies, it has been suggested that L2 researchers also need to explore learners’ cognitive processes by connecting them to the environment, and their relationships and interactions within the environment (van Lier, 2000; 2004). For instance, Ohta (2001) argued that, to avoid oversimplification and to understand the nature of L2 learning processes more fully, researchers should consider the learning processes as dynamic, socio-cognitive processes, in which “the social and cognitive interpenetrate one another” (p. 21). That is, in order to better understand learners’ mental processes involved in L2 learning, research may need to look at the learners interacting with the sociocultural context at hand: the analysis may include learners’ perspectives on learning and their mediated actions in their communities, their learning histories, goals and identities, and learning opportunities that the context affords, and so forth. Such an investigation of learners interacting with the environment is expected to provide clearer explanations of various issues related to L2 learning, since the learner, activity, and the world are inseparable and interdependent (Bakhtin, 1986; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Rogoff, 1994; van Lier, 2000; Wertch, 1991). As for the notion of ‘learning’, from a sociocultural perspective, “involvement and learning are synonymous” (Belcher, 1994, p. 24), meaning that learning occurs as learners participate in the sociocultural activities provided in the communities where they participate.
A number of L2 writing studies have looked at learners’ socio-interactive processes to explain the L2 writing processes and strategies they adopt (Abasi & Akbari, 2008; Belcher, 1994; Casanave, 2002; Flowerdew, 2000; Haneda, 2005, 2007; Hu, 2001; Lei, 2008; Leki, 1995; Li, 2007; Prior, 1998, 2001, 2006; Quellette, 2008; Spack, 1997). In these studies the researchers listened to and valued student writers’ own perspectives and found that, in general, the L2 writers learned how to write through actual practice, showing that learning of writing is a process of gaining access to their communities and becoming a better member of the communities. The studies offered insights into L2 writers’ efforts to conform to the norms as well as their resistance to the expected norms: the learners actively exerted their own agency to both adjust to the community norms and, where possible, to proactively change the environment. The socio-interactive approaches to examining L2 writing helped researchers discover that learners actively seek ways to overcome difficulties or challenges by adopting various strategies, and that it is important for educators to know their needs, goals, emotions and identities, and provide relevant support for effective learning to occur. Furthermore, the approach helped researchers realize that examination of L2 learners’ actions in their social context, or mediated actions, can explain the nature of L2 writing and its processes with more information and insights.

Triggered by the application of sociocultural theory in L2 writing research, recently, researchers have also made an attempt to re-conceptualize L2 writing strategies from a sociocultural perspective that also accounts for cognition (Lei, 2008; Li, 2007; Villamil & de Guerrero, 1996). The studies qualitatively looked at L2 writers in social contexts by
examining the writers’ actions and engagement in their learning contexts to understand their use of writing strategies. Vygotsky (1978) said that learners’ higher order mental processes, like writing strategies, are generated and developed in situated and mediated activity. Therefore, an in-depth exploration of learners’ mediated actions for writing and the particular contexts where they occur would be necessary to better understand the learners’ mental processes related to writing.

From the sociocultural perspective, writing strategies can be defined as “mediated actions” which learners consciously take to facilitate their learning to write and its use (Lei, 2008, p. 220). ‘Mediatedness’ or ‘situatedness’ includes the belief that “learning unfolds in different ways under different circumstances” (Donato, 2000, p. 47). The circumstances encompass individual learners’ different histories and goals, signs and resources they use, the assistance they provide and are provided, and so forth. Therefore, an exploration of L2 learners’ writing strategies from the sociocultural perspective can describe not only common tendencies running across the learners in a particular learning context, but also disparities in the strategy use between the learners associated with their unique learning histories and goals.

The L2 writing strategy studies framed within the sociocultural or socio-cognitive perspective have looked closely at L2 learners’ use of mediational means and their mediated activities, the communities that they interacted with, and the writing strategies they adopted based upon the observations and accounts of the learners. That is, with their interest in individual students and their actions, they took into account the role of cognition, while their focus on the social world inhabited by these individuals brought
into play the social dimension. For example, the case study of Lei (2008), deriving from Engestrom’s (1999) Activity Theory framework and the notion of mediation, explored how two proficient EFL undergraduate students at a Chinese university strategically mediated their writing processes with diverse resources, and identified four types of L2 writing strategies: artifact-mediated (use of the Internet, literary work, L1 & L2), rule-mediated (rhetoric-, evaluation criteria-, & time-mediated), community-mediated (campus community- & society-mediated), and role-mediated strategies (author- & language learner mediated). In addition, the case study of Li (2007), framed by the concept of Community of Practice and agency (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998), found that, for publication of a journal article in English, an EFL graduate student, Yuan, actively interacted with (a) the local research community, (b) the laboratory data, (c) his past writing experiences and L1 (Chinese), and (d) the global specialist research community (studying the literature to see rhetorical argumentation, borrowing expressions from the literature, and considering the expectations of the target journal and its readership). Also, the study of Villamil and de Guerrero (1996) reported that Spanish-speaking learners of English in Puerto Rico employed five types of mediating strategies for the peer revision process: they employed symbols and external resources (dictionaries, prompt sheets, teachers, classmates), used L1 (Spanish), provided scaffolding, resorted to interlanguage knowledge, and vocalized private speech.

Collectively, these studies showed that L2 writing involved not only the strategic mediation of various resources, but also the fulfillment of writers’ goals. Social-relatedness or social-interactive support was important to facilitate learners’ motivation.
for learning and self-regulation. The L2 learners’ learning process of multidimensional engagement with their community of practice, which involved specific categories of resources, revealed their agency and also showed that all the actions the learners took were important components of their writing processes that ultimately yielded a good piece of writing.

The endeavor to re-conceptualize L2 learners’ writing strategies within the socio-interactive framework has demonstrated considerable promise and needs to be continued by investigating more individuals from different backgrounds and within different learning contexts to enrich our understanding of L2 writing strategies and the overall nature of L2 learning (Lei, 2008). There exist general tendencies in strategy use regardless of contextual differences; however, there are also particular characteristics or patterns in the use of strategies appearing only within a particular learning context, since the development of strategies and use of them are deeply inter-related to learners’ socialization into a community of language learning and mediations (Donato & McCormick, 1994). The socio-cognitive approach will help us identify different strategy use tendencies among different learner groups, which will in turn help foreign or second language teachers to implement contextually-sensitive instructions and to deal with linguistically and culturally diverse learners more effectively. In addition, learners develop their own strategies in accordance with their unique life histories, learning goals, and communities that they interact with. An individual’s higher order mental processes, such as selective attention, intentional memory, planning, logical thought and problem solving, learning, and evaluation of the effectiveness of these processes, which are
categorized as learning strategies in the literature, are formed and developed in goal-directed, situated, mediated activity (Vygotsky, 1978). The individual differences in strategy use can be effectively explored through the socio-cognitively-framed case study approach, and the socio-cognitive inquiry would assist us in knowing more about learners’ unique needs and goals in L2 writing demonstrated in the different setting.

**Problem Statement**

To help L2 learners develop their L2 abilities effectively, it is necessary for educators to understand the learning strategies that they employ for learning and communication. Research has found that general characteristics of good language learners include “flexible and appropriate use of learning strategies” (Ellis, 1994, p.550). L2 learners consciously and deliberately choose a variety of ‘learning strategies’ to develop their L2 linguistic and sociolinguistic competence: they include memorization, repetition, translation, note-taking, deduction, grouping, elaboration, inference, selective attention, self-monitoring, self-evaluation, and so forth (Chamot, 1987).

As for the definition of learning strategy, Chamot (1987) defined *learning strategies* as techniques, approaches or deliberate actions that students take in order to facilitate the learning, recall of both linguistic and content area information. Oxford (1989) defined *learning strategies* as ‘behaviors or actions which learners use to make language learning more successful, self-directed and enjoyable’ (cited in Ellis, 1994, p. 531). Tarone (1980) distinguished three types of strategies: production, communication, and learning, and said that the strategies associated with language use, *production and communication strategies*, primarily involve the learners’ attempts to use their linguistic
system efficiently and clearly as well as to deal with problems of communication that arise in interactions. Tarone (1980) and Ellis (1994), however, claimed that the distinction between the language use and learning strategies is not clear, because it depends on the learners’ intentions, which are not easy to establish: it is not easy to tell whether a strategy is motivated by a desire to learn or a desire to communicate (see Ellis, 1994, p. 530). So, for example, when a researcher says that he or she intends to examine learners’ L2 writing strategies, it could mean that the investigation looks at how the learners engage in writing learning in L2 and, at the same time, how the learners engage in writing use in L2.

Traditionally, the studies of L1 and L2 learning strategies have adopted cognitive approaches in defining and examining them, and the domain of L2 writing strategy research has followed this same tendency. Within the cognitive framework, writing is described as a process that involves cognitive and meta-cognitive processes or strategies: planning, translating, reviewing, monitoring, generating ideas, organizing, goal-setting, evaluating, and revising (Cumming, 1998; Flower & Hayes, 1981; Hays and Flower, 1980; Sasaki, 2000; 2002; Zamel, 1983). The writing process is understood as a behavior of ‘planning-writing-reviewing’ from the cognitive approach. Zamel (1983) also described writing as a “non-linear, exploratory, and generating process whereby writers discover and reformulate their ideas as they attempt to approximate meaning” (p. 165).

As writing strategy research grows, researchers have suggested contextual factors, such as learner goals, writing tasks/purposes, L1 strategy use, L2 proficiency, and other settings should be considered to understand learners’ writing processes and strategy use
(Cumming, Busch, & Zhou, 2002; He, 2002; Hyland, 2003; Sasaki, 2000, 2002; Silva, 1993; You & Joe, 2002). However, despite the discussion of the contextual factors, the studies are still rooted in the cognitive perspective, in that learning is defined as ‘acquisition’ or ‘internalization of knowledge’ rather than ‘participation’, ‘knowing’ or ‘becoming a part of a greater whole’ (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000, p. 156). In addition, the scope of contextual factors (e.g., participants, setting, task, topic) discussed tends to be narrow, and they discuss the role of contexts with an assumption that human cognition and context are separate entities (Donato & McCormick, 1994), basing their studies on the input/output framework.

L2 learning is a process of becoming a member of the community that a learner belongs to or aspires to belong to. Learning, to a great extent, involves the learner’s desires and struggles for “participation,” “affiliation,” “belonging” (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000, p. 156), and “identity construction and negotiation” (Norton, 1997, p. 410), rather than being solely about a matter of acquiring a new set of grammatical or lexical forms. The cognitive approaches to L2 writing strategies help us to know ‘what’ mental processes are involved in L2 writing; however, their foci of investigation and contribution are not sufficient to fully illustrate learners’ processes of becoming members in their communities, reasons why they select specific strategies, actions writers actually take for writing, kinds of social interactions involved, and how the interactions are associated with their writing learning and use. An exclusive focus on the cognitive relationship between the writer and the writer’s internal world can thus fail to capture the metaphor of ‘participation’ or ‘becoming’, the social nature of writing. The becoming and
struggling processes can be most effectively explored within the framework of sociocultural approaches (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000). However, cognitive processes involved in writing are not denied; instead, the socio-cognitive approach connects the cognitive processes with social processes, which enables researchers to investigate ‘how’ questions with additional resources and information (Flower, 1994; van Lier, 2000).

In addition, contextual factors discussed in the cognitive approach tend to be limited in scope; thus, the findings from the cognitive perspective have limitations to fully describe the learners’ complex L2 writing processes. Contextual factors such as participants, setting, task, text, and topic that are defined and discussed in the cognitive framework are not sufficient to understand “the dynamic and heterogeneous nature of context” operating within the learner (Lei, 2008, p. 218). Also, the cognitive approach regards social contexts or the contextual factors as a mere “modifier of the internal activity” (Norton & Toohey, 2001, p. 308); the role of the contexts or social interaction tends to be superficially recognized and undervalued as an arena for L2 learning (Donato, 1994). Sociocultural theory, by contrast, describes L2 writing learning as involving “interplay between macro social structures and moment-to-moment practices” (Thorne, 2000, p. 224). The learners’ L2 writing practices are understood both in micro-level context (e.g., the course, disciplines) and in macro-level social factors (Casanave, 2002; van Lier, 2000, 2004). The sociocultural approaches to L2 learning explain micro processes of learning processes from larger social and historical contexts, and understand them as mutually influencing one another (Thorne, 2000). Of particular note in the socio-cultural approaches is mediational means, “carriers of socio-cultural patterns and
knowledge” (Wertch, 1994, p. 204; cited in Hall, 2002, p. 51). The linguistic or cultural tools and resources have been created by human culture, and the learners use them to respond to and make sense of the world. Thus, in the sociocultural approach, the examination of the mediational means and mediated actions becomes one of the important ways to explain micro-level processes of language learning in relation to the larger social and historical context.

Another limitation of the cognitive approach is that it regards contexts and human cognition as separate entities, discussing their dichotomous relationships based upon the *input/output model* or *transmission model*. For example, this way of explaining strategy use of L2 learners says that individual learner differences (beliefs, affect, learner factor, learner experience) and situational/social factors (L2, setting, task, gender) affect the types and quantities of learning strategies, which decides the learning outcomes, such as learning rate and level of achievement (see Ellis, 1994, p. 530). It explains learners’ strategy selection and use as a by-product of their cognitive style, personality, preferences, and limited contextual factors. The socio-cognitive perspective, however, sees learning as situated or mediated activity, meaning that learners, activity, and contexts mutually constitute learning all the time. Learners are immersed in an environment full of potential meanings, and the meanings become available gradually as the learners act and interact with the environment. As such, the socio-cognitive perspective describes learning as a developmental process of learners’ active dealing with the world and its meanings (Flower, 1994; van Lier, 2000). Looking at the active learners in their environment is, therefore, one of the important foci of the socio-cognitive approach for the understanding
of learning. The approach focuses on explaining learner contributions or “restructuring” processes in learning, while the cognitive approach tends to discuss what is external to learners (Platt, 1995, p. 40).

Therefore, in order to look at learning involving a process of participation, to broaden the scope of contextual influences on learning, and, by so doing, to examine mental strategies intimately interrelated with social processes, L2 writing strategy studies will need to incorporate the socio-cognitive approach into their investigations. As a result, the field will obtain a more thorough understanding of learner strategies in L2 writing. However, while socio-cognitive studies of L2 writing have become more common, these have been conducted primarily in English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts. In light of this heavy dominance of ESL and EFL related writing research (Ortega, 2004), research on writing in foreign language contexts (that is, languages other than English) is still relatively rare, though the situation is beginning to change (Manchon & de Haan, 2008). Research on writing in Korean as a foreign language is even more limited, despite the fact that Korean is becoming an increasingly popular language in foreign language programs, at least in North America. Thus, there is a need for studies that look at the issues discussed earlier within a foreign language, and specifically a Korean as a foreign language, context.

**Research Objectives and Questions**

The research purposes of the present study were to identify and explore mediated writing strategies that KFL learners used for their L2 writing, based upon Engestrom’s (1999) ‘Activity Theory Model’, and the concepts of ‘mediation’ and ‘agency’, as well as
the design, objectives, and findings of Lei’s (2008) study cited earlier. That study was a key basis for comparison for this study. Five volunteer KFL learners enrolled in the course Korean 509 (a third-year Korean Intermediate-Advanced course) were selected for the study. The study examined the use of the strategies that the KFL learners employed for K509 writing assignments (two descriptive, one argumentative, and final project paper), specifically looking at kinds of mediational means and mediations involved, interactions or conflicts between the identified strategies, and their relations with learning histories and goals of the learners. Multiple techniques were used to obtain meaningful results, such as interviews, observation, process logs, stimulated recall protocols, writing autobiographies, and writing samples. The study was able to identify common tendencies or patterns in the mediated actions running across the KFL participants, as well as differences between the participants. Each participant’s strategy use was examined in-depth to see if any differences existed between the L2 participants; for example, how the learners’ learning histories, backgrounds, and goals for L2 learning were interrelated with their mediated actions for L2 writing.

The present comparative study, therefore, was expected to provide a rich description regarding how the strategy use, learner, and learning contexts are interrelated in L2 writing activities. The research questions were as follows:

1. What kinds of mediational means do the KFL participants use for their L2 writing assignments? What are the purposes or reasons for using them?
2. What types of mediated writing strategies can be identified from the group of the KFL participants? Are they different from what Lei (2008) found from Chinese EFL learners?

3. Are there any conflicts between the identified strategies?

4. How are the KFL participants’ goals for L2 learning and ethnic or cultural backgrounds (i.e., heritage/non-heritage) inter-related to their mediated actions in writing?

**Significance of the Study**

First of all, the present study has importance in that it responds to a recent call for foreign language (FL) writing research from a socio-cognitive perspective. As noted earlier, whereas the field of ESL and EFL writing research has employed sociocultural theory for some time and somewhat extensively, it has been reported that a scant amount of foreign language (FL) writing research has been conducted with the framework of the socio-cultural or socio-cognitive perspective (Englert et al., 2006; Manchon & de Haan, 2008). By extending such research to the domain of Korean as a Foreign Language (KFL) writing instruction, the study enriches the research base for foreign language writing research. In such a situation, the present study responded to the current need of exploring L2 learners’ mediated actions in L2 writing within the socio-cognitive framework, by examining KFL learners’ writing activities with the *Activity Theory* and the concepts of *mediation* and *agency*. Through connecting the KFL learners’ socio-interactive processes and cognitive processes, the study explored in-depth mediational means they frequently used (e.g., the Internet, online dictionary, L1, L2, plagiarism rules, prior experience,
classroom community, imagined community, etc.) and the kinds of mediated actions, and interactions or conflicts between them. The study found that all the mediated actions in which the KFL learners engaged were important components of their writing processes, corroborating the claim that L2 writing is a situated or mediated activity: that is, learners, activity, contexts mutually constitute learning all the time. Adding to the study of Lei (2008) which focused on EFL learners in China, the present study with the KFL learners is expected to help L2 educators and researchers expand their current understanding of L2 learners’ use of writing strategies and its inter-relatedness with the sociocultural context.

Second, the study provides insights and information on L2 learners for the fields of teaching Less Commonly Taught Languages (LCTL) and Korean as a foreign language (KFL) pedagogy. According to the statistics provided by Modern Language Journal (MLA), LCTLs saw large increases in their enrollments since 2002, with 51% more Chinese learners, 126.5% more Arabic learners, and 37.1% more Korean learners in the institutions of higher education in the United States (Furman et al, 2007, p. 3). Along with the increasing enrollments in LCTLs, the area of foreign language pedagogy and research has evidenced a renewed interest in LCTL learning and pedagogy (Brown, 2009). The present study revealed some important characteristics of the LCTL learners, particularly Korean learners (e.g., highly motivated and experienced language learner), as well as their learning histories, affective aspects, goals, including mediated actions in writing. The findings are expected to help LCTL educators and researchers understand how LCTL learners construct understanding of the foreign language by interacting with
various resources, learning histories, and goals. This will, in turn, inform the KFL educators of more constructive ways in teaching learners with diverse backgrounds.

Furthermore, the present study’s qualitative exploration of each individual learner and comparisons between the learners allowed a rich description with regard to L2 learners’ writing processes. L2 learning activity was truly a complex process, involved with the environment, goals, agency, and sociocultural histories of learners. The examination of learners like the KFL participants learning the L2 with different learning histories, cultural backgrounds, and different goals helped illuminate more clearly variables and processes involved in L2 writing strategy use. The study added support to the belief that L2 writing strategy use is “firmly rooted in contingent, situated, and interactional experiences of the individual as a social being” (Firth and Wagner, 1998, p. 92; cited in Thorne, 2000, p. 224), and showed how the social world and affordances were “personalized” in individual writing processes (Prior, 2006, p.55). In this way it contributed to deeper understanding of foreign language learners’ strategy use while writing.

Also, the study was significant in the fact that it provided another opportunity to explore the use of Activity Theory as a theoretical framework for the investigation of second language writing. Most research involving Activity Theory and writing has been conducted in native language contexts, and that research has demonstrated considerable value in the use of Activity Theory. Using it as a theoretical framework in this study, as also occurred in Lei’s (2008) study, offered valuable insight into its potential as an analytical tool in the second language writing context.
Definition of Key Terms

1. **Writing strategies**: Traditionally, writing strategies have been defined as the deliberate actions that a learner takes to make writing tasks more successful. In the sociocultural perspective, all the higher order mental processes, such as voluntary attention, international memory, planning, logical thought and problem solving, learning, and evaluation of the effectiveness of these processes, are regarded as mediated activities occurring in learning situations (Donato, 1994; Lantolf, 2000; Vygotsky, 1978). Writing strategies are one of the higher order mental functions, and thus they are mediated or situated actions. Therefore, from the sociocultural perspective, writing strategies can be defined as “mediated actions which learners consciously take to facilitate their learning to write and its use” (Lei, 2008, p. 220).

2. **Mediational means (source of mediation)**: These are the tools and resources which people use to interact and communicate, or to accomplish a certain task in the community. For example, when a learner uses an online dictionary to look for meanings of vocabulary for L2 writing, the online dictionary becomes a mediational means, that is, a source of mediation. The mediational means can be visual, physical, or verbal. They include material tools (e.g., computer, online dictionary, textbook), a system of symbols (e.g., language), or the behavior of other people in social interaction. From a sociocultural perspective, almost all “human actions are mediated actions whereby we use linguistic and other cultural
tools and resources – *mediational means* – to move through, respond to and make sense of our worlds” (Hall, 2002, p. 51).

3. **Identity**: Identity is deeply related to learners’ desire – “the desire for recognition,” “the desire for affiliation,” and “the desire for security and safety” (Norton, 1997, p. 410). The learners’ identity needs to be understood in relation with the communities they interact with and mediations involved. The kinds of resources and communities that the learners interact with are associated with how they understand their relationship to the world and their possibilities for the future. The learners’ responses to questions such as “who am I?”, “what can I do?”, “to what extent can I make my English writing proficiency improved in this given situation?” need to be understood in relation to the resources available and their communities of practices. The learners decide on ways to use resources and environment to shape their own learning. The learners’ identity is socially constructed and changes in accordance with changing social relations.

4. **Agency**: Agency refers to one’s willingness to act within specific socio-cultural contexts. Agency is one of the central concerns in sociocultural theory. Individuals possess their own personal histories full of “values, assumptions, beliefs, rights, duties, and obligations” (Donato, 2000, p. 46). Since the learners bring to a task their own unique histories, goals, and capacities, they realize the task in different ways according to their own needs and goals (Roebuck, 2000). L2 research has explored learners’ different approaches to the same task; the learners interpreted and transformed the task by exercising their own agency. In
the sociocultural perspective, human activity is regarded as a complex process, determined by the context, the goals, and sociocultural histories of the learners. Agency is not an individual property; rather, it is “constantly co-constructed and re-negotiated with those around the individual and the society at large” (Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001, p. 148).

5. **Heritage learners of Korean**: Heritage learners of Korean refers to the situation in which “the learners have been raised in a home where Korean is spoken” and who “speak or at least understand Korean and who are to some degree bilingual in Korean and in English” (Valdes, 2001; cited in Kondo-Brown, 2005, p. 564). Heritage learners of Korean are those who have achieved some degree of bilingual proficiency. One clear distinction between heritage learners of Korean and foreign language learners of Korean (non-Korean heritage learners) is that the former begins learning Korean in the home, whereas the latter begins in the classroom setting (UCLA Steering Committee, 2000; cited in Kondo-Brown, 2005, p. 564).

**Assumptions of the Study**

I conducted the study with the following assumptions:

1. All the participants were able to self-report their writing strategy use, writing procedures, and experiences.

2. All the participants were honest in their recording of writing logs and writing autobiographies, as well as in their responses on the stimulated recalls.

3. All the participants were accessible for the entire period of the study.
4. The researcher’s biases were reduced by employing multiple data sources and analyzing them: interviews, process logs, stimulated recalls, observation, and documents (e.g., writing samples, writing autobiography).

Limitations of the Study

Some limitations of the study come from the methodological approach adopted: a multiple case study. Because of the small number of research participants (five), the research findings cannot be generalized to the larger populations (e.g., to all the foreign and second language learners at a university). Also, for the research participants, the current study selected only college students who had been learning Korean as a foreign language mainly in the university or language institute settings where systematic language instruction is provided. I think that other L2 learner populations (e.g., learning Korean mainly in the informal setting) could be different in terms of mediated actions in L2 writing, learning histories, and goals. In addition, as third-year learners of Korean, the participants had not yet developed a high level of proficiency in the language. This resulted in somewhat limited applications of their writing skills.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

In this chapter, I discuss some of the important tenets of sociocultural theory, because the socio-cognitive framework that I used for the present study was based on the sociocultural theory. This is followed by discussion on how the theory has provided insights for the studies of L2 learning, particularly L2 writing research. Afterwards, recent studies on L2 writers and their writing strategies explored from the sociocultural or socio-cognitive perspective are presented. The section illuminates reasons why the socio-cognitive perspective is useful to the area of L2 writing strategy research, and how the approach has contributed to the field differently compared to the cognitive approach. Furthermore, because the current study examined KFL learners’ writing strategy use, the last section presents information on the current KFL education in the United States.

Sociocultural theory and L2 learning

In their recent attempts to explore L2 learners and their learning processes from the sociocultural or socio-cognitive framework, L2 writing and strategy researchers have also adopted the perspective to examine the relationship among learners, writing processes, and global/local contexts (Abasa & Akbari; 2008; Belcher, 1994; Casanave, 2002; Flowerdew, 2000; Haneda, 2005, 2007; Hu, 2000, 2001; Lei, 2009; Leki, 1995, 2001; Li, 2007; Prior, 1998, 2001, 2006; Spack, 1997; Quellette, 2008; Villamil & de Guerrero, 1996). While the traditional cognitive approach explains learning as occurring mainly
inside the head and regards the context (e.g., setting, task, text, topic, etc.) as a separate factor indirectly affecting learning, the sociocultural or socio-cognitive perspective regards that learning processes cannot be fully explained if the studies focus on looking at mental, cognitive processes only, arguing that the context, perceptual/social activity and interaction are central to understanding of learning (Flower, 1994; van Lier, 2000). The ecological perspective of van Lier (2004) asserts that learners are immersed in an environment full of meanings, and learning is a process where the learners find the meanings or “develop effective ways to deal with the world and its meanings” as they interact with the environment or communities (p.246). Therefore, rather than focusing on what the learners acquire from learning tasks, such explorations also take into consideration the environment or communities the learners interact with and their relationships within them; this orientation has become an important focus of research examining L2 learning processes. This body of research has provided insights into the learners’ social processes associated with L2 learning and their relationship with cognitive processes.

Sociocultural theory was first conceived by L. S. Vygotsky, a Soviet psychologist, who worked in the 1920s and 1930s. Researchers in various domains began to see the usefulness of the theoretical tenets posited by Vygotsky and his followers, and the field of foreign and second language education also began to adopt, in the 1980s, the sociocultural approach to theorize L2 learning processes (Bakhtin, 1984; Engestrom, 1999; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Leont’ev, 1978, 1981; Rogoff, 1994; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1991; Wenger, 1998). The sociocultural approach has provided important
insights and information for the field of L2 learning and teaching. Some of the important foci of the sociocultural theory are as follows: (1) social interaction as a source of learning, (2) mediation, and (3) learner agency.

‘Social interaction’ as a source of learning

Vygotsky (1978) emphasized the primacy of social interactions and processes in human development: “The social dimension of consciousness is primary in time and in fact. The individual dimension of consciousness is derivative and secondary” (p. 30). He suggested that we should think of the nature of interdependence between individual and social processes in learning and development. Also, his theory implies that individuals’ cognitive and psychological processes can be traced to their interactions with others. Individual development, including higher mental functioning like the use of strategies for learning, has its origins in social sources. Valsiner (1987) describes this as Vygotsky’s “genetic law of development”:

*Every function in the cultural development of the child comes on the stage twice, in two respects: first in the social, later in the psychological, first in relations between people as an interpsychological category, afterwards within the child as an intrapsychological category.... All higher psychological functions are internalized relationships of the social kind, and constitute the social structure of personality* (p. 67; cited in Palincsar, 1998, p. 351).

At first, foreign or second language (L2) acquisition is quite alien or external, hard to understand, but learners take steps toward adopting that language for themselves.

*Internalization* occurs through the process of social interaction. The word ‘internalization’ means movement of language from environment to brain: the target language (L2) becomes an interactive and cognitive resource for the learners (Ohta, 2001). The learner’s
independence depends on the degree of internalization of the L2. Internalization thus involves “a growing level of control, or the ability to regulate interaction in the L2, and the growing ability to use the L2 itself as a tool of thought” (Ohta, 2001, pp. 11-12). The concepts of community of practice (CoP) (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1991) and guided participation (Rogoff, 1990, 1994), which explain learning as a evolving process of attaining affiliation or membership and proposing learners best learn needed knowledge in a community of practice, are perspectives expanded from Vygotsky’s ‘genetic law of development’ (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996, p. 192).

van Lier (2000) elaborated the notion of ‘social interaction’ discussed in the sociocultural perspectives (p. 247) by comparing it with the notion of ‘interaction’ presented by the cognitive interactionists (Long, 1996; Grass 1997, Pica, 1996). Long (1996) argued that “negotiation for meaning, and especially negotiation work that triggers interactional adjustments by the native speaker (NS) or more competent interlocutor, facilitates [the non-native speaker (NNS)’s] acquisition because it connects input, internal learner capacities, particularly selective attention, and output in productive ways” (pp.451-452). van Lier (2000) pointed out Long’s ‘negotiation’ or ‘interaction’ was discussed as a concept that provides “improved comprehensibility of input, enhanced attention, and the need to produce output” (p. 248), arguing that, in the cognitive approach, the role of social interaction tends to be understood as a separate factor or entity affecting the result of learning. Donato (1994) also pointed out that the cognitive approach tends to recognize the role of social interaction superficially and undervalues it as an arena for L2 learning.
In the sociocultural approach, however, social interaction itself is regarded as a major component of learning, rather than just a modifier of mental processes. Learning is viewed as a situated or mediated activity occurring through interactions of learners, activity, and contexts or environments. It contends that researchers should closely look at learners’ experiences and development that emerges from various interactional processes, along with their agency, learning goals and investments. The environment provides a host of opportunities for the learners: it is “full of demands and requirements, opportunities and limitations, rejections and invitations, enablements and constraints, in short, affordances” (van Lier, 2000, p. 253). The sociocultural perspectives examine activity, or an active learner interacting with the environment, for the investigation of issues in teaching and learning. From the pedagogical perspective, they propose that the learners should be provided with rich affordances that encourage their engagement for learning, and the learning opportunities should be accessible to every learner. In addition, the perspective regards the learners as actively engaging in learning processes by mediating themselves to other people and other learning tools; so, even non-participation is regarded as a process of activity, albeit in the form of resistance by the learners (Li, 2007; Morita, 2004; Norton, 2001; Spack, 1997; van Lier, 2000).

**Mediation**

One of the key concepts to understanding sociocultural theory is ‘mediation’ and the related notion of ‘mediational means’. From the sociocultural perspective, all human action is mediated action: we use linguistic and other cultural tools and resources, called mediational means, to respond to and make sense of our worlds (Hall, 2000, p. 51). For
Vygotsky (1978), semiotic mechanisms (including psychological tools) mediate social and individual functioning, connecting the external and internal, the social and the individual. Mediational means refer to “devices that intervene in the context of an interaction between human beings and the world of objects, events and behavior” (Block, 2003, p. 100). Vygotsky (1981) mentioned various semiotic (psychological or symbolic) mediational means: “language; various systems of counting; mnemonic techniques; algebraic symbol systems; works of art; writing; schemes, diagrams, maps and mechanical drawings; all sorts of conventional signs and so on” (p. 137). The means can be physical as well as verbal and visual. Nowadays, tools such as the computer, the Internet, hypertext, and electronic media (e.g., video) are increasingly recognized as important means or resources mediating communities and individuals and affecting the individuals’ ways of knowing. In sociocultural theory, all forms of higher order mental activity such as strategy use are mediated.

A study by Donato & McCormick (1994) shows that sociocultural theory, particularly the notion of ‘mediation’, can provide a good framework for an explanation of how L2 learners develop their learning strategies. The study examined strategy use of ten undergraduate students in a conversation course learning French as a foreign language, focusing on how the adoption of performance-based portfolio assessment influenced development of the students’ strategy use. For an entire semester, the students were required to provide evidence of their ability to use language functions introduced in the class (e.g., giving advice, refusing invitations, asking for information, etc.) in various forms such as cassette recordings, a piece of creative writing, a report on an out-of-class
project, a homework assignment, and reports on French films. Actual documentation of ability was critical rather than solely introspective accounts. Providing evidence and reflecting upon it was a routine aspect of classroom practice, and it was hoped that the use of the mediator, portfolio assessment, could give the students opportunities to create and develop L2 learning strategies. The study found that the use of evidence, i.e., the portfolio, made students evaluate their ability and progress increasingly based upon their own actual work. They situated their learning in concrete circumstances rather than abstract conjecture. Also, the mediator, portfolio, influenced the development and refinement of the students’ strategy use. The portfolio played an important role in mediating students’ strategy use and surroundings: it enabled the students to (1) evaluate past knowledge for relevance through self-assessment, (2) clarify and set goals, (3) select effective strategies to enhance task performance, and (4) provide concrete evidence of strategy use. The study demonstrated that learners’ development of language learning strategies was “a by-product of mediation and socialization into communities of language learning practices” (Donato & McCormick, 1994, p. 453). This view is different from the cognitive approach which explains learners’ strategy use as a phenomenon mainly occurring inside the head and being affected by personal cognitive styles, personalities, and preferences (Ellis, 1994). L2 learning is situated activity that is continuously under development, and the contexts are influential upon the learners’ strategy choice and use.

John-Steiner & Mahn (1996) explained that the mediational means are not invented by the individual in isolation, but they are “products of sociocultural evolution” (p. 193). The mediational means are one of important components of the larger cultural and
historical setting, and the analysis of people’s use of mediation or mediating action provides understanding of people’s cognitive processes and how the processes are connected with their social activities as well as settings or communities. Wertsch (1994) elaborated on the centrality of mediation in Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory like following:

[Mediation] is the key in his approach to understanding how human mental functioning is tied to cultural, institutional, and historical settings since these settings shape and provide the cultural tools that are mastered by individuals to form this functioning. In this approach, the mediatonal means are what might be termed the “carriers” of sociocultural patterns and knowledge (Wertsch, 1994, p. 204).

This suggests that learners’ participation in different communities and different opportunities or experiences of resource uses could lead the learners to different developmental paths in learning (Wertsch, 1991). From the sociocultural perspective, knowledge is not internalized directly; rather, the internalization is a process that involves the use of mediational means in communities of practices. By learning to use the semiotic tools and artifacts available to them through interaction with others, learners come to appropriate the culture’s dominant ways of thinking, reasoning and valuing as well. “Learning results from the integration of socially and culturally constructed forms of mediation into human activity” (Lantolf, 2000, p. 8). One of the important goals of sociocultural analysis and interpretation of learning is to understand how human mental processes and learning is inter-related to cultural, institutional, and historical contexts (Wertsch, 1991, 1998).
Agency

Sociocultural theory emphasizes that agency matters in language learning. Agency refers to “one’s socioculturally negotiated ability or willingness to act within specific sociocultural contexts” (Hall, 2002, p. 212). Learners are “more than processing devices that covert linguistic input into well-formed (or not so well-formed) outputs” (Block, 2003, p. 109). They engage in learning with their own agency, “actively engaging in constructing the terms and conditions of their own learning” (Lantolf and Pavlenko, 2001, p.145). Learning is a process involved with learners’ own unique histories, needs, goals, and capacities. Roebuck (2000) said that the task represents what the researcher or instructor would like the learner to do, and what the learner actually does to complete the assigned task is unpredictable. L2 studies have shown that learners play out their agency for their tasks, reinterpreting and transforming the given tasks, which suggests that teachers need to pay attention to learners’ needs, desires and aspirations for effective teaching and learning (Haneda, 2005; Lei, 2008; Li, 2007; Morita, 2004; Roebuck, 2000).

It has been also argued that a learner’s ultimate attainment of L2 proficiency is strongly associated with the learner’s agency (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000; Bown, 2009). Pavlenko and Lantolf (2000) argued that agency and intentionality is crucial in adult L2 learning processes, while a child’s first language (L1) acquisition tends to be given. L2 learning processes involve a long, painful, and exhaustive experience; so, without a firm intention or decision, it is hard for a L2 learner to attain high language proficiency. They further argued that it is ultimately through the learners’ own intentions and agency that they decide whether to go through the long linguistic and cultural learning processes. For
example, some immigrants may develop a certain level of “functional proficiency” (p.170) in the L2, for example to the extent that they are just functional enough in their workplace, while maintaining strong ties to their own language and traditions, instead of pursuing a native-like level fluency in the target language and culture. A study by Khaldieh (2000) found that less-proficient L2 writers of Arabic tended to resist making a conscious effort to practice and use appropriate language structures when developing an essay: the negative attitude and lack of practice hindered the development of their Arabic writing proficiency toward a higher level.

In addition, learners’ proactive engagement directing their efforts, thoughts, and feelings toward the attainment of their goals is believed to be critical to the development of self-regulation (Bown, 2009; Zimmerman, 2000). Bown (2009) studied Russian as a foreign language (RFL) learners’ engagement in self-instructed learning (individualized instruction), and found that effective learners were aware of their role as agents and exercised agency by actively shaping the learning environment (e.g., creating structure/planning and opportunities to communicate in the target language) and by coping with negative emotions such as anxiety, frustration, and discouragement. The study found that the learners’ sense of agency helped regulate their motivation and their learning processes.

Furthermore, agency is socially constructed through interactions with other people. A study by Bown (2009) found that relationships with instructors influenced self-regulation and motivation of learners of Russian in the Individualized Instruction context. Positive relationships with instructors boosted the learners’ motivation for learning and
efforts to regulate behaviors, but negative relationships impeded motivation and self-regulation. In the context of the non-classroom setting, where learners were largely isolated from other students, support from instructors and other Russian speakers was an important mediator for the learners’ self-regulatory processes where active contributions of the learners are critical. Khaldieh (2000) also mentioned that less-proficient AFL (Arabic as a foreign language) writers’ lack of practice and intentions to use diverse expressions and structures for their writing tasks was related to high levels of anxiety and frustrations; in particular, the negative emotions and attitudes were associated with teachers’ negative feedback they received.

The phenomenon of agency is interrelated to the issue of ‘identity’ that is changed in accordance with social relations. According to Norton (1997), identity refers to “how people understand their relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how people understand their possibilities for the future” (p. 410). Identity, she says, is related to “the desire for recognition, the desire for affiliation, and the desire for security and safety” (p. 410). Learning involves identity construction and negotiation, and learner agency is a complicated concept that cannot be separated from the relation with identity construction in sociocultural settings.

Socio-cultural theory examines the role that learner agency plays in language learning and explores how learners actively interact with and transform the world, not merely conforming to the world. David Block (2003, pp. 109-110) summarized five of the major tenets of learning and learners from the sociocultural perspective as follows:
1. Learners are historically and sociologically situated active agents, not just information processing machines. They are, in short, individuals and not automata, and over a lifetime they build up a historically and sociologically shaped stimulus-appraisal system along the lines of that described by Schumann (1997), which allows them to monitor and evaluate all forms of incoming stimuli according to their ever-changing experiential and episodic memory.

2. Learning is about more than the acquisition of linguistic forms; it is about learners actively developing and engaging in ways of mediating themselves and their relationships to others in communities of practice.

3. Learning can be as much about failing to develop as succeeding, and this failure may be in the form of non-participation. Non-participation, however, might be a process of active resistance by the learner, as when learners reflect and decide not to participate; a process of reactive resistance to attempts by target community members to marginalize the learner; or a passive process of acceptance of marginalization by target community members.

4. Agency is not an individual phenomenon; rather, it is always co-constructed via interaction with other agents.

5. Learning is part of the ongoing construction of self-identity (Giddens, 1991) and the consequent ongoing construction of a personal narrative.

In this section, some of the important tenets of sociocultural theory were presented. To summarize, sociocultural theory sees learning as a mediated or situated activity in which active learners interact with or mediate themselves with other people and
environments filled with affordances. Unlike the cognitive approach, the sociocultural perspective emphasizes that learning involves a process of affiliation or belonging, social interaction or context itself becomes an important component of learning, and learners are active agents behaving according to their own desires and goals. The current study on KFL learners’ mediated actions in L2 writing was framed with Activity Theory, specifically Engestrom’s (1999) Activity Theory, one of the sociocultural theories. The following section explains the Activity theory in detail, along with L2 studies explored from the Activity Theory.

**Activity Theory**

Vygotsky proposed that researchers should study beyond the individual, focusing their analysis on formation (e.g., history) and activity, to understand human psychological functioning. The original proposal of Vygotsky was further elaborated by Leontiev’s (1978) theory of activity later. In Leontiev’s theory, activity is not understood as just a simple way of doing things; rather, it is understood as a complex phenomenon where learners’ motives, intentions, and sociocultural settings/conditions are involved. Activity is doing something that is motivated either by a biological need, such as hunger, or a socially/culturally constructed need, such as the need to be literate in certain cultures. Needs and desires become motives once they become directed to a specific object. Motives are only realized in specific actions that are goal-directed (hence, intentional and meaningful), and carried out under particular special and temporal conditions (also referred as operations) and through appropriate mediational means. Thus, an activity comprises three levels: the level of motivation, the level of action, and the level of
conditions (Lantolf, 2000, p. 8). In short, “motive is about why something is done; action is about what is done; and operation is how something is done” (Block, 2003, p. 102). In sociocultural theory, activity, not the individual, is the most useful unit of analysis.

According to the Activity Theory, for example, a learners’ writing strategy use is not a phenomenon occurring solely within the individual but rather is constructed by the learning context and develops as the active individual participates in learning activities. For this reason, it is suggested that educators and researchers “discover,” rather than “predict,” learners’ activity since learners shape their activity based upon their particular goals, motives, and sociocultural histories, activity which is unpredictable prior to the conduct of research or instruction (Roebuck, 2000).

Activity Theory provides a useful perspective for teaching and learning. It suggests that education is not about transmission of specific bodies of knowledge and skills only, but it is also about “the development of understanding and the formation of minds and identities” (Wells & Claxton, 2002, p. 2). All actions taken by learners involve the whole person – body, mind, and spirit. Vygotsky (1987) asserted that “thought has its origins in the motivating sphere of consciousness, a sphere that includes our inclinations and needs, our interests and impulses, and our affect and emotions… A true and complex understanding of another’s thought becomes possible only when we discover its real, affective-volitional basis” (p. 282; cited in Wells & Claxton, 2002, pp. 5-6). Learners’ learning behavior, therefore, needs to be understood in relation to its sociocultural settings as well as their individual goals, emotions, and histories. Learners appropriate sociocultural practices and ways of learning through social interactions in communities,
and reconstruct and shape their own learning with agency, motives, goals, and unique personal histories: Wertsch (1998) said that learners are “agents-acting-with-mediation-meaning” (p. 485). Learning is a process of ‘becoming’ or attaining ‘membership’, and it is believed that the metaphor of ‘becoming’ or ‘participation’ can be explored effectively within the framework of activity theory (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000). Activity Theory also invites us to rethink and evaluate whether the current educational environment is playing a positive role as an “affordance” (van Lier, 2000, p. 252): whether the environment enables learners to motivate themselves for learning and thus it positively influences on the learners’ overall learning and identity construction.

A study by Haneda (2005) of JFL (Japanese as a foreign language) college students’ writing demonstrated that the individuals’ writing engagement and motivation for the writing learning were closely associated with their life histories, perceptions of the value of L2 learning, and future career goals they set. Jim, a Japanese Canadian student, took the advanced Japanese writing class to maintain and develop his heritage language proficiency and thus to become a fuller member of his local Japanese community. Since he aspired to be a successful member of the Japanese community, his priority in Japanese writing was to produce a “proper” essay that can be accepted in the community. So, he paid more careful attention to the ‘subtlety’ of the Japanese language than any other students in the classroom. Haneda further commented that Jim’s insistence on writing a proper essay could be also traced to his identity as a strong writer: he was very confident about writing in English. On the other hand, for Edward, a non-heritage student, the nuanced use of Japanese was not one of his priorities; instead, he thought that writing
practice in the Japanese class would help increase his overall Japanese proficiency and general writing ability. His motive for learning Japanese was directly related to his immediate goal (passing a foreign language test to get into a business school of his choice) and his career goal of becoming a successful English–Japanese bilingual business executive in a multinational company. His main focus was to learn vocabulary and grammar, and spoken and reading competence in Japanese were more important for him than writing to achieve his long-term goals. To Edward, the task of composing was still important, though because he thought that he was able to consolidate his vocabulary and grammar knowledge in Japanese through writing. The study found that the learners differentially invested their time and energy to master the target language in relation to their participation in various communities in the past, present, and the envisioned future. Haneda also argued that her study confirmed Leontiev’s Activity Theory: “same action (e.g., classroom writing tasks) realizes multiple activities” (p. 286). Furthermore, she commented that foreign or second language educators, particularly instructors teaching students voluntarily learning a foreign language, would need to know their students’ trajectories as well as goals for learning since those may have a significant impact on the way in which the students approach a particular task given in the classroom.

A study by Wang (1996) on ESL students’ writing applied Activity Theory to interpret the ways the students approached a class task. The study found that the same small-group task was realized in a different way depending on how the group members operationalized the goal of the activity. One of the tasks was to rank order a list of seven effects of excessive TV viewing as a group, from the most immediate to the most remote
effect, and to report their consensus back to the classmates and the teacher. Wang analyzed the discussion of the two groups and teacher talk, and found that the groups transformed the contents of the task and changed the rank-ordering rules. This made the teacher change the task for the class by abandoning the rules – ‘immediate-remote thing’ in favor of ‘just things that go together naturally’. Wang concluded that the study identified three emergent and differing operationalized compositions of the same classroom task: compositions in the two student groups and in the teacher. The students transformed the original task with their own goals, actions, cultural backgrounds, and beliefs into a new task. Wang suggested that teachers would need to pay attention to students’ orientations and multiple goals, rather than relying on task outcomes only, to fully understand students’ performance for a particular class task.

Mahn and John-Steiner (2002) argued that provision of a learning environment fostering mutual respect, trust and concern is important to learners, especially for high anxiety activities such as writing in the L2. To demonstrate the importance of the supportive learning environment and affective aspects in L2 learning, the authors cited Mahn’s study (1997) that reported what was found through a year-long exchange of dialogue journals with the researcher and his high school and university ESL students. The students wrote for 10-15 minutes at the beginning of the class on whatever topic they chose. In the journal, a number of ESL writers indicated that their anxiety was increased when the instructor emphasized form and mechanics rather than communicative intent. Their fear of making mistakes raised their anxiety level, and it inhibited their writing and caused further frustration. However, the students gained confidence through writing
dialogue journals in which they received the teacher’s interactive and encouraging comments, and finally the journal became “a vehicle for self-discovery” to them (Mahn and John-Steiner, 2002, p. 54). The students started to have confidence in L2 writing when they engaged in meaningful communication with the teacher regarding their writings. The participants said that ‘I saw a different side of the language. I realized that I could actually write in English. Not only I can write but I get compliments for my writing, and that’s very important to me’ (Aphrodita). ‘Sometimes when I wrote something, I think that people would not understand what I’m trying to say. Every time when I wrote journals and you write little comments on it I feel that I can express what I want to say’ (Pancha). The study shows that agency or willingness to act, confidence and motivation for learning are not located within an individual but are socially constructed and developed by learning context and evolve as the individual participates in learning activity. The study also dealt with the key role of ‘affect’ in thinking and action, one of the important aspects of the theory of Vygotsky and the Activity Theory that has been largely ignored (Wells & Claxton, 2002). According to Vygotsky (1989), knowing learners’ emotions is important because thinking and feeling “unite and enhance each other” to produce an outcome greater than either of them alone (cited in Rio & Alvarez, 2002, p.65).

This section discussed Activity Theory and L2 writing studies explored from the theory. The studies framed with the Activity Theory confirmed the belief that learners’ activity is not just a way of doing things but it is a complex process involving the learners’ motives, intentions, affect, personal histories, and sociocultural settings. Leontiev
Activity Theory has been adopted and developed by researchers, such as Wertsch (1985, 1991, 1998), Wells (1999), Engestrom et al. (1999), and also by L2 researchers such as Lantolf and Pavlenko (2001) and Donato (2000). Among the various versions of the Activity Theory, the current study adopted Activity Theory of Engestrom et al. (1999) to identify and categorize L2 writing mediated strategies of KFL learners. The next section describes Activity Theory in detail.

Engestrom’s Activity Theory (1999)

Engestrom (1999) expanded and enriched Leontiev’s Activity Theory by adding three more types of mediators: community, rules, and division of labor (or roles). He pointed out that researchers had paid little attention to the idea of mediation when discussing the concept of activity, arguing that researcher should seriously study mediators, since they are “integral and inseparable components of human functioning” (p. 29). As such, Engestrom’s Activity Theory Model deals with complexities of contexts as a research notion, and how the different components of the contexts relate to each other,
and to people (see Figure 1). Learners’ cognitive processes and their regulation processes are understood in association with mediations and connections they involve. Lei’s (2008) study of English as a foreign language (EFL) learners’ writing strategies used this model of Activity Theory to identify and explore actions in L2 (English) writing, and the study evidenced its usefulness for research on writing processes in a socio-cognitive context.

As seen in Figure 1, the model is useful in connecting learning activities with the physical and symbolic aspects of the environment where the activities occur. Hayes (2006) said that the Activity Theory model is helpful to describe and explore “purposeful actions” that a person or a group of people undertakes by relating the actions to the environments in which they take place (p. 37). In addition, according to van Lier (2004), the model is useful to show inherent contradictions and tensions between different influences in the setting, actual “dynamics of the interaction” and processes of learning (p.211). However, van Lier pointed out that the framework is “an etic mold into which the interaction is cast, rather than an emic reconstruction of the interaction in the situation” (p. 212). That is, to examine the emic reconstruction of the interaction in the mediated activity, researchers would need to employ qualitative research techniques investigating in-depth participants and context by listening to the stories of the participants themselves and exploring the uniqueness of the context involved.

Figure 1 offers a generic diagram of an activity system. It is a framework with seven elements, each of which is connected to every other element. **Subject(s)** refers to the people involved in the activity system, such as students and teachers. **Tools** include means or artifacts that people use, for example classroom instruction or assistance,
languages (L1 and L2), online dictionary, books, computer, and so forth. **Object or motive** refers to the (learning) goals of the people involved, and **division of labor** means the different roles that people play in the activity system (i.e., readers and writers).

**Community** refers to the social relations within the classroom or other local contexts people interact with, and also the broader community within which the classroom or the local context operates. **Rules or norms** are conventions like evaluation rubric/criteria or citation rules governing writing in the activity system. The last element, **outcome**, refers to the changes that the activity system produces, such as learning. In the activity system, all the mediators (objects/goals, rules/norms, community, and division of labor) and their mediations are interrelated and should be perceived holistically (Engestrom, 1999; Lei, 2008).

Lei’s study (2008) used Engestrom’s Activity Theory model and the notion of **mediation** to identify and explore proficient EFL learners’ writing strategies in the university context in China. She employed the techniques of interviews, stimulated recall, and process logs for data collection. The study found that the EFL learners used four types of mediated strategies: (1) **Artifact-mediated strategies** ((a) the Internet-mediated strategies: use of online bilingual dictionaries/thesaurus, searching for information online e.g., Google) (b) literary work-mediated strategies: read English novels, short stories, poems, newspapers, and magazines, and kept them in a notebook, reviewed, recited and remembered them. Later, adapted/borrowed from the literary works for sentences in writing in English, (c) **L1-mediated strategies**: used L1, Chinese, extensively in the pre-writing stage, to get information/ideas for writing, (d) **L2-mediated strategies**: studied
English grammar and vocabulary strenuously), (2) **Rule-mediated strategies:** ((a) Rhetoric-mediated strategies: (b) evaluation criteria-mediated strategies: (c) time-mediated strategies), (3) **Community-mediated strategies:** ((a) Campus community-mediated strategies: got help from a writing teacher and classmates, (b) society-mediated strategies: socialized with people outside the campus, communication with a former classmate, putting writings on the blog and get some comments from the virtual space), and (4) **Role-mediated strategies:** ((a) author-mediated strategies: (b) **Language learner-mediated strategies**). In addition to identifying and categorizing the strategies that the EFL learners mediated for their writing, the study found that the learners’ social-relatedness or interactions were important components of writing processes. It revealed that the development of the learners’ self-regulation capacity or autonomy (the cognitive domain) was mediated through various social processes. The mediated actions were all oriented toward the learners’ goals: the learners’ efforts and motivation for the use of strategies were enhanced since they valued their goals and worked proactively to achieve the goals.

Lei’s qualitative case study of L2 writing strategies in the EFL context, framed within sociocultural theory and more specifically a socio-cognitive view of writing, motivated me to conduct a similar study in a different context, the KFL setting, where such an approach has not been employed. Lei’s study re-conceptualized L2 learners’ writing strategies from a socio-cognitive perspective, thus offering an exemplary framework that describes a situated view of the processes and strategies the learners use for L2 writing while also accounting for what happens to them as individuals, i.e., the
cognitive domain. Lei’s study, with its roots in sociocultural theory, is distinguished from other studies that examined writing strategies from the cognitive approach in many respects. The next section reviews studies that examined L2 learners’ writing strategy use from the cognitive perspective as well as sociocultural or socio-cognitive perspective, differences between the two perspectives, and reasons why a socio-interactive or socio-cognitive orientation is needed in the area of L2 writing strategy research.

**Researching L2 writing strategies from a socio-interactive perspective**

L2 writing is emphasized in the L2 classroom because the practice gives learners opportunities to review, integrate and apply what they learned in class, and to develop writing proficiency for their use in real life, such as e-mail writing or journal writing in the target language. While completing the writing task, L2 writers experience many challenges and difficulties: the necessity to become equipped with appropriate knowledge regarding the assigned topic and genre, the complexity of the task, the culturally-based nature of the activity, lack of immediate feedback, lack of linguistic capacity in L2 to express thoughts in writing, linguistic and cultural differences between L1 and L2, and negative emotional responses such as anxiety, frustration, and an absence of self-efficacy which lower confidence and motivation for writing in the L2. Even the learners who are proficient in speaking, listening and reading can be preoccupied with low-level processes in syntax and vocabulary when writing in the L2 (Khaldieh, 2000). Also, learners who have achieved an advanced level of L2 writing proficiency can still experience instances when their self-image is threatened because of their relatively underdeveloped L2
linguistic abilities compared to their L1 (Bown, 2009). In short, writing in the L2 is not an easy task even for the proficient L2 learners.

In order to cope with the difficulties involved in L2 writing, L2 learners agentively and strategically use various mental and social resources. A study by Khaldieh (2000) on AFL (Arabic as a foreign language) writers found that both the groups of proficient and less-proficient writers of Arabic used a variety of learning strategies, such as affective (control of anxiety, frustration and attitude), cognitive (brainstorming, translation, mixed use of Arabic and English, imitation, consultation, creating/risk-taking, use of models, reserved attitudes), meta-cognitive (awareness and attention, monitoring errors, evaluating processes), and compensatory strategies (guessing, blank/English equivalent, circumlocution). The study reported that less-proficient L2 learners also employed diverse writing strategies, just as proficient writers did, even though they showed more negative attitudes toward writing tasks, less conscious efforts to practice and use target language structures, higher levels of anxiety and frustration, and lower L2 linguistic proficiency compared to the proficient learners. L2 writers, therefore, regardless of L2 proficiency, seem to engage in writing by exercising agency, “actively engaging in constructing the terms and conditions of their own learning” and actively using various strategies (Lantolf and Pavelenko, 2001, p.145).

Traditionally, the study of L2 writing strategies has adopted cognitive approaches to identify and examine learners’ writing strategies. Within the cognitive framework, L2 writing is regarded as a process that mainly involves cognitive and meta-cognitive processes: planning, translating, reviewing, monitoring and controlling progresses (Chien,
Zamel (1983) defined writing as a “non-linear, exploratory and generative process whereby writers discover and reformulate their ideas as they attempt to approximate meaning” (p. 165). According to Flower and Hayes (1981), writing consists of three components of cognitive processes or strategies: planning, translating and reviewing. Planning is about generating ideas, organizing, and goal-setting. Translating is the process in which writers put their thoughts and ideas from their plans into sentences. Reviewing involves reading and editing. All the three cognitive processes are under the control of monitoring, which is categorized as meta-cognitive processes, related to the ability to control and understand the use of cognitive strategies for progress and quality of writing. The cognitive approach focuses on examining an individual’s language related mental functions, abilities and intra-psychological activity. Thorne (2000), however, argued that second language learning is a process involving “the co-presence of intra- and inter-psychological activity, environments with histories, and an ongoing negotiation of social identity” (p. 224), suggesting a need for L2 research that connects learners’ socio-interactive and cognitive processes and examines their relationships.

As writing strategy research grows, researchers have proposed that contextual factors, such as learner goals, writing tasks, use of L1, L1 writing proficiency and strategy use, L2 proficiency, and learning settings, should be considered to understand L2 learners’ writing processes and strategy use (Brooks, 1985; Bosher, 1998; Cumming, 1989; Cumming et al., 1989; Cumming, Busch, & Zhou, 2002; He, 2002; Hyland, 2003;
Researchers reported that first language (L1) writing skills and strategies tend to be transferred to L2 writing (Brooks, 1985; Cumming, 1989; Cumming et al., 1989; Jones & Tetroe, 1987; Uzawa, 1996). The studies commonly found that the quality of L2 text is more strongly associated with the quality of learners’ L1/L2 writing strategies rather than with their L2 proficiency. Brooks (1985) found, from five unskilled ESL writers, that students who extensively had read and written in their native language were better at using their sense of audience, diverse composing strategies, and a fund of implicit models for L2 writing, compared to students who were not competent in L1. Cumming (1989) argued that L2 proficiency helps students to some extent but does not necessarily entail qualitative changes in the thinking processes or decision-making behaviors needed for composing in L2, proposing that ‘language proficiency’ and ‘writing proficiency’ should be distinguished in the case of L2 learners. However, Bosher (1998) found from her qualitative case study with ESL Southeast Asian college students that the L2 learners, placed in the same ESL level class, were all different in terms of writing strategy use regardless of their levels of L1 proficiency: the study suggested the importance of individual difference within the immigrant or international student population. For example, Leang, the student who had graduated U.S. high school and had been in the U.S. for the longest time among the participants, who were the least competent in L1, successfully employed academic writing strategies while reading and writing the assigned task, which is contradictory to Cumming’s claim.
Some researchers have argued that L2 proficiency is strongly associated with strategy use in L2 writing and the quality of writing (Khaldieh, 2000; Sasaki, 2000). As noted earlier, Khaldieh (2000) examined AFL learners’ use of writing strategies through their introspective reports, and found that both the groups of proficient and less-proficient writers of Arabic used diverse writing strategies such as affective, cognitive, meta-cognitive, and compensatory strategies. Based on this finding, the author concluded that the less-proficient writers’ quality of the L2 text was more related to their limited L2 proficiency rather than their use of writing strategies, arguing that their high levels of anxiety and frustrations, and negative attitudes toward L2 writing caused by the lack of L2 proficiency tended to aggravate the quality and quantity of their essays.

Supporting the influence of L2 proficiency on L2 writing, Sasaki (2000) reported, from her study of EFL writers in Japan, that novice L2 writers needed to pay much more attention to translating the generated ideas into English than expert writers did. Lack of L2 proficiency hindered the notices from writing longer and faster in the L2. In contrast to the novices, the experts used ‘rhetorical refining’ (choosing more appropriate words and structure) most frequently and used more ‘global planning’ strategy related to planning detailed, overall organization of the composition.

In addition, L2 writing studies have discussed L2 writers’ use of native language (L1) in L2 writing processes (Cumming, 1990; Kobayashi & Rinnert, 1992; Lay 1982; Roca et al., 1999; Wang & Wen, 2002). This research found that L2 writers used their L1 to search out and to assess appropriate wording, and to compare cross-linguistic equivalents (Cumming, 1990); to generate ideas, search for topics, develop concepts, and
organize information (Uzawa & Cumming, 1989); and to expand, elaborate, and rehearse ideas, and produce the pretext (Roca et al, 1999). A study by Wang & Wen (2002) found that Chinese EFL writers relied on their L1 when they needed to manage their writing processes, e.g., generating and organizing ideas, but relied more on the L2 for task examination and text-generating activities. Also, it was found that the L1 was used more in the narrative writing than in the argumentative writing, and the use of the L decreased with an increase in the writers’ L2 development.

The L2 writing studies mentioned above that incorporated contextual factors into the examination of L2 writing processes are framed within the cognitive approaches: a fundamental feature of the writing process involves planning, translating (formulating) and reviewing (revising). As L2 researchers increasingly recognize the importance of context in L2 learning and regard L2 learning as a situated or mediated activity in the sociocultural context, the field of L2 writing and strategy research has also started to see the studies explored from the sociocultural or socio-cognitive perspective (Haneda, 2005; Leki, 1995; Lei, 2008; Li, 2007; Villamil & de Guerrero, 1996). The studies pointed out limitations of the cognitively-framed L2 writing strategy research as follows: (1) failing to account for learning as ‘participation’ or ‘becoming’; (2) narrow view on contextual influence; and (3) separation of context and cognition.

The cognitive approach regards L2 learning as ‘knowledge acquisition’ and ‘concept development’, treating the human mind as a container to be filled with certain materials and the learner as an owner of the materials (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000; Sfard, 1998). However, L2 learning is also a process of becoming a member of a certain
community at the same time. For example, let’s assume that some learners engage in writing in the target language because they need to fulfill a foreign language requirement by taking a L2 writing class. They learn or acquire vocabulary and grammar knowledge to write: the L2 is a set of rules and facts to be acquired. At the same time the learners endeavor to write well in the L2 in order to become well-functioning members in the classroom and university communities by accomplishing the foreign language requirement.

In accordance with this involvement with the classroom and university community, the sociocultural approach focuses on investigation of the issue of “affiliation” or “belonging” and “language use in context” (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000, p. 156). The cognitive approach is crucial for the study of ‘what’ in second language learning, while the sociocultural approach attempts to reveal ‘how’ by examining learners’ interaction with others and environments. L2 learners writing in the target language frequently interact with peers, teachers, resources, and other mediators. Investigating the learners’ use of writing strategies in relation to their social processes from the socio-interactive perspective reveals important aspects regarding L2 writing processes that are difficult to discover from the cognitive approach, thus suggesting a need for research that combines an interest in the social as well as the cognitive realms.

In addition, Lei (2008) pointed out that the cognitive approach tends to deal with contextual factors that are not sufficient to encompass “the dynamic and heterogeneous nature of context” operating in learning (p. 219), and the approach separates human cognition and context, thus restricting and de-evaluating the role of context in learning.
Casanave (1995) suggested that learners’ writing processes should be examined across three levels of context: the local, historical, and interactive level. van Lier (2004) argued that context for learning involves the whole world, and learning should be understood in relation to the sociocultural affordances that provide grounds for learning activity. Human cognition and context are intertwined and interact so closely that their “boundaries are blurred” (Lei, 2008, p. 219). Therefore, researchers need to look at learners in their sociocultural context to fully understand their strategy use in L2 writing.

Several L2 writing studies have made an attempt to identify and categorize L2 learners’ writing strategies by examining their social processes, and the findings showed that L2 writing is a mediated activity rather than occurring solely inside the mind (Haneda, 2005; Leki, 1995; Lei, 2008; Li, 2007; Villamil & de Guerrero, 1996). Writing strategies from the sociocultural or socio-cognitive perspective can be defined as “mediated actions which learners consciously take to facilitate their learning to write and use of it” (Lei, 2008, p. 220). The socioculturally or socio-cognitively-framed strategy studies identified and categorized L2 learners’ mediated writing strategies in various contexts, mainly within EFL or ESL contexts: Spanish-speaking EFL undergraduates (Villamil & de Guerrero, 1996), ESL undergraduates and graduates (Leki, 1995), Chinese-speaking EFL doctoral student (Li, 2007), and Chinese-speaking EFL undergraduate students (Lei, 2008). The studies revealed what resources L2 learners mediated for their L2 writing and described qualitatively the learners’ own perspectives and thoughts by obtaining an “intra-view” of their writing processes. In addition, the studies are important in that they provided an important framework, categories of
mediated strategies in L2 writing, which can be a strong foundation for further investigation of L2 writing in a different sociocultural context.

A study by Villamil & de Guerrero (1996) found that social interactions between peers can contribute to L2 writing development. Drawing from the Vygotskyan perspective, the study examined what strategies ESL learners employ in the peer revision process. The participants were 54 intermediate Spanish-speaking college ESL students enrolled in a writing course in Puerto Rico, and interactions between the pairs of students during revision sessions were recorded and transcribed. The study found that the ESL students engaged in seven major socio-cognitive activities during peer revision sessions: (1) reading, (2) assessing, (3) dealing with trouble-sources, (4) composing, (5) writing comments, (6) copying, and (7) discussing task procedures. Also, the students made use of five different mediating strategies to facilitate their peer revision processes: (1) the students employed symbols and external resources (dictionaries, prompt sheets, teacher, and classmates) to complete the task at hand and to facilitate the writing of the final version, (2) they used their L1, Spanish, for various purposes: for making meaning of text, retrieving language from memory, exploring and expanding content, guiding their action through the task, and maintaining dialogue, (3) the students provided scaffolding to assist each other, (4) they resorted to interlanguage knowledge, their own rules, when revising or composing, and (5) they vocalized their private speech when composing and reading during interaction, and the private speech had two main purposes: to guide behavior or action and to release affective load.
The study by Villamil & de Guerrero showed that all the five strategies employed by the students during peer revision processes were mediated by semiotic or linguistic tools. By resorting to semiotic mediation such as symbols, dictionaries, the native language, verbal scaffolding, interlanguage knowledge, and private speech, the L2 students were able to gain control of the revision task. Also, the various kinds of socio-cognitive activities, mediating strategies, and social behaviors the participants displayed in the study implied that social interaction becomes “the spark that ignites cognitive processes” (p. 70). This supports Vygotsky’s view (1978), which describes “a close relationship between talk and writing and the importance of a research framework that leads to understanding how social interaction (e.g., peer talk) can contribute to writing development” (Di Pardo & Freedman, 1988, p. 122; cited in Villamil & de Guerrero, 1996, p. 53). In Vygotsky’s view of learning, human development depends on the contribution of instruction (e.g., assistance, imitation, and cooperation), and it plays a critical role in providing the individual with the psychological tools, usually semiotic in nature, that are necessary for higher mental functioning (Vygotsky, 1978). The study also pointed out that two novice learners were able to support and guide each other through dialogic interaction, supporting the notion of “mutual scaffolding” (Donato, 1994).

Leki (1995) investigated L2 writing strategies of five ESL students, three graduate and two undergraduate students, who were in their first semester of study at a U.S. university. The study qualitatively looked at what strategies the ESL students employed to cope with difficulties and challenges involved when they wrote for their regular course work, outside the ESL classroom. Leki presented ten categories of strategies that emerged
from the interviews and journals of the students, and listed them as follows: (1) Clarifying strategies (e.g., talking to teachers/classmates about the assignment); (2) Focusing strategies (e.g., re-reading the assignment several times, reading books and articles to concentrate on the topic); (3) Relying on past writing experiences; (4) Taking advantage of first language/culture; (5) Using current experience or feedback; (6) Looking for models; (7) Looking current or past ESL writing training; (8) Accommodating teachers’ demands; (9) Resisting teachers’ demands; and (10) Managing competing demands (managing course loads, managing work load, regulating the amount of investment made in a specific assignment, regulating cognitive load, and managing the demands of life). The study provided insights for ESL writing pedagogy; for example, it suggested a need for preparing ESL students for their regular class writing. Also, the study helped university educators to be more informed about what ESL students do to cope with their difficulties in writing and why they select the identified strategies.

Li (2007) examined an EFL third year doctoral student’s L2 writing process and strategy use for the publication of a research article. The research participant, Yuan, majored in Chemistry and pursued a doctoral degree at a major university in mainland China. In the university, the publication of articles in English-medium journals was a graduation requirement for doctoral students in some scientific disciplines, such as chemistry, physics, and astronomy. When Li requested participation for his research, Yuan had just started his first draft writing about the result of his laboratory research. The study by Li explored Yuan’s processes and experiences of writing the research article draft by looking at his process logs, texts, message exchanges, and post-hoc interviews.
The qualitative case study found that for the publication of the research article, Yuan actively interacted with the local research community (e.g., consultation with lab-mates, supervisor, group meeting/discussion, etc.), negotiated with the laboratory data, drew on his own experience/practice of writing research articles (e.g., taking lessons from his previous experience of RA writing, using his L1, Chinese, to sharpen meaning, etc.), and interacted with the global research specialist research community (learning from the literature (studying the literature to see rhetorical argumentation, borrowing from the literature, etc.), impressing the referees, and considering the expectations of the target journal and its readership). The study revealed what non-native English speaking (NNES) scholars might undergo for the publication of research articles in English-medium journals, and showed that writing for publication is a process of struggle involving both accommodating and resisting the expected norms and rules, a process that is much involved with ‘agency’ and ‘membership’.

Lei (2008) used Engestrom’s (1999) Activity Theory Model and the notion of mediation to identify and explore Chinese undergraduate EFL learners’ writing strategies. She raised the problem of identifying and discussing L2 writing strategies mainly from a cognitive perspective and re-conceptualized L2 writing strategies from the sociocultural framework using interviews, stimulated recall, and process logs. The study found that the EFL learners used four types of strategies: (1) Artifact-mediated strategies (a) the Internet-mediated strategies: use of online bilingual dictionaries/thesaurus, searching for information online e.g., Google) (b) Literary work-mediated strategies: read English novels, short stories, poems, newspapers, and magazines, and kept them in a notebook,
reviewed, recited and remembered them. Later, adapted/borrowed from the literary works for sentences in writing in English, (c) L1-mediated strategies: used L1, Chinese, extensively in the pre-writing stage, to get information/ideas for writing, (d) L2-mediated strategies: studied English grammar and vocabulary strenuously), (2) Rule-mediated strategies: ((a) Rhetoric-mediated strategies: (b) evaluation criteria-mediated strategies: (c) time-mediated strategies), (3) Community-mediated strategies: ((a) Campus community-mediated strategies: got help from a writing teacher and classmates, (b) society-mediated strategies: socialized with people outside the campus, communication with a former classmate, putting writings on the blog and get some comments from the virtual space), and (4) Role-mediated strategies: ((a) author-mediated strategies: (b) Language learner-mediated strategies)

Lei’s study that re-conceptualized L2 writing strategies within sociocultural theory and more specifically within a socio-cognitive framework showed that the “learners’ cognition exists not only within the confines of their bodies, but also in the sociocultural context” (p. 230). The EFL learners used cultural artifacts (e.g., the Internet, L1, L2, and English literary work); applied rules acquired from schools, the university, and society; socialized with people from different communities; and fulfilled their social roles. All these mediated actions were components of their writing processes that finally yielded good essays. The study discussed the participants’ use of L1 and literacy work for their L2 writing by relating them to the previous research, and also suggested that higher L2 proficiency enable L2 writers to be more skillful at mediating their writing. As for suggestions for future research, Lei pointed out that a greater variety of in-depth
investigations along similar lines are necessary in L2 writing research, in particular about writers’ agency, writing goals, and interactions between strategies. In addition, she argued that more individuals and contexts need to be included in the future strategy research to enrich our understanding on L2 writing processes. Especially, she mentioned that examination of L2 learners’ writing strategies from the local, historical, and interactive levels of context would be needed to gain in-depth and holistic understanding of individuals’ strategy use and differences between writers.

Lei’s study provides good reasons why it is worthwhile to continue to adopt socio-cultural theory and socio-cognitive lens to identify and explore L2 writing strategies. First, the study connected learners’ social processes and cognitive processes for the exploration of L2 writing strategies. It revealed what proficient EFL writers actually did when they wrote in the L2 and the reasons for their actions as well as the importance of them: it described qualitatively in detail the EFL writers’ mediated actions and the reasons for the mediated processes. The writing strategy research framed with the Activity Theory provided information about what resources/tools the L2 writers used in their own unique context, learning English in China where English is the most important foreign language (Lei, 2008, p. 221), and what roles the mediations played in L2 writing and interactions/conflicts between strategies as well. Additionally, the socioculturally-framed study showed that the learners’ use of strategies involved not only strategic mediation of various resources, but also fulfillment of their goals in the communities. Henry and Jenny in Lei’s study were determined to obtain high scores, to write good essays, and to enhance their writing abilities in short term. In the long term, they wanted
to pursue professional career in English, to become an English journalist and a university English teacher, respectively. Such goals were deeply interrelated to their selection of mediated actions, agency, and degree of investment in L2 learning. The study heightened the value of a further exploration of learner goals, investment, and mediated actions in different L2 writing contexts.

L2 writing strategy research framed with sociocultural theory and adopting a socio-cognitive framework like Lei’s study needs to be conducted in various contexts, as pointed out by Lei, to enrich our understanding of L2 writing strategies and diverse learning settings. Since the study of Lei (2008) was conducted focusing on the context of EFL (English as a foreign language) learners in China, different results about L2 writing strategy might be obtained by investigating a context involving KFL (Korean as a foreign language) learners, just as it could provide evidence similar to what Lei found. The case study of Lei provided valuable information about L2 writing learning in the EFL context; however, it raised a lot of questions, such as “What would be like in the context of KFL learners?”, “What kinds of strategies do they think important? “If they are different from those of EFL learners, in what aspects and why?”, and “How about in the multicultural learning context where heritage and non-heritage learners are learning a foreign language together?”, and so forth.

Englert et al. (2006) argued that “examination of writing from a sociocultural perspective needs to account for and attempt to understand the impact of culture and how the different cultural groups are socialized by and transform culture” (p. 217). L2 writing strategy research explored from the sociocultural perspective has not been extended to
research on less commonly taught languages (LCTLS) in English-speaking countries. Also, comparisons between diverse learners, for example heritage and non-heritage learners, on mediated strategies or actions related to L2 writing have not been made yet. A learner’s writing development is situationally dependent upon a particular social, historical, and cultural setting, and thus writing development could be a highly “idiosyncratic phenomenon” (Weissberg, 2005, p. 101); therefore, an exploration of different contexts and learners, and comparisons between the contexts and the learners, would be worthwhile in providing comparative information on various cases to the L2 writing field. The current study that explored strategy use of the group of KFL learners and, also, compared the mediated strategies between the learners who have different linguistic, cultural, and historical backgrounds enriches our current understanding of L2 writing strategy.

In addition, in the sociocultural approach, the role that ‘learner agency’ or intentions play in learning processes is one of the crucial foci of investigation. Agency is a co-constructed phenomenon, constantly renegotiated in relation to others and environment (Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001). Studies of L2 writing strategies from the sociocultural perspective need to further examine the role of agency playing in learners’ actions and motivations in L2 writing by looking at the learners in-depth in relation to their linguistic, cultural and historical contexts, and also by comparing diverse learners. The study by Lei (2008) found that the participants’ personal agency contributed to the fulfillment of their goals; they used similar resources differently or turned to different resources when mediating their writings. However, as Lei indicated, the study had some
limitations with respect to examining agency and differences in L2 writers in-depth, because the main objective of the study was to identify and explore L2 writing strategies, and the participants tended to be homogeneous: two proficient EFL college students. The current study with the KFL participants intended to explore the notion of learner agency by investigating the learners in relation to their linguistic, cultural, and historical backgrounds, and their mediated actions in writing. In English-speaking countries like the U. S. and Canada, foreign language classrooms tend to be multilingual and multicultural. It has been found that the multicultural L2 learners approach the same writing task differently according to their own agency and goals which are deeply inter-related with their life trajectories (Haneda, 2005). L2 learners bring to the classroom their own “personal histories replete with values, assumptions, beliefs, rights, duties, and obligations” (Donato, 2000, p. 46). With their unique personal histories and goals, the learners, the active and purposeful agents, actively interact with the environment and shape their learning. In these regards, the current comparative case study in the KFL multicultural setting was expected to more clearly illuminate the role of learner agency and goals in the mediated actions in L2 writing.

Also, Lei (2008) conducted her study under a kind of artificial condition (i.e., in a room with a specific writing task and recording writing processes), as she pointed out regarding her study’s limitations (p. 232); so, it was expected that researching L2 learners’ use of writing strategies in a more conventional writing situation, for example, looking at how L2 learners engage in writing assignments throughout an entire academic quarter, might produce different results. My study looked at KFL learners’ engagement in writing
assignments (four assignments) throughout the ten-week academic quarter. Since most of the writing assignments given in the advanced-level foreign language class are not timed or in-class tasks either, and, thus, normally students have a lot of time to complete them, it can be said that my study looked at how L2 learners normally write in the L2.

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Table 1. Lei’s Study (2008) and Current Study

Lei’s study (2008) was mentioned many times in this chapter because it gave valuable insights and motivation to the current study, and provided an exemplary framework for the study. However, there are differences between her study and the one reported here.
Unlike Lei’s study, I wanted to examine the L2 mediated actions of a group of KFL learners, explore the role that learner agency and goals play in the writing engagement of multicultural learners, and see how the KFL learners wrote in a ‘normal’ classroom situation, not in a laboratory. Table 1 provides a detailed comparison and contrast between the two studies.

This section of Chapter 2 reviewed L2 writing strategy research from the cognitive and sociocultural or socio-cognitive perspectives, and discussed the differences between the approaches. From the sociocultural perspective, L2 writing strategies are regarded as “mediated actions” that learners agentively select to facilitate their learning processes in a sociocultural context. The use of mediated strategies, thus, cannot be discussed without considering the context or environment where the activity occurs and the interactions between the learners and the environment. As Lei (2008) pointed out, the mediated actions in L2 writing would need to be explored in various L2 settings to enhance understanding of L2 writing processes. Matsuda (2003) also said that the field of L2 education would need to reflect the findings of research conducted in various instructional settings in order to design and implement the most effective L2 instruction in each context. The present study categorized and explored mediated writing strategies of KFL learners who were taking an advanced-intermediate level Korean course at a U.S. university. The socio-cognitive exploration of writing strategy use has not been extended to the LCTL learners yet, not to mention the learners of Korean. The findings are expected to be informative to the field of LCTL pedagogy, particularly Korean pedagogy, and more broadly to the field of L2 education as well. The next section presents some
important facts about the Korean language and KFL education in the U.S. This information is useful in understanding the study’s research setting, participants, and their target language.

**Korean as a foreign language (KFL) education in the U.S**

According to 2006 foreign language enrollment figures in the U.S. higher educational institutions, Korean enrollment was significantly increased, with 37.1% more students than in 2002 (Furman et al., 2007). Even though three major or commonly taught languages, Spanish, French, and German, make up 71% of the total foreign language learners in the U.S. post-secondary institutions, the significant enrollment increase in the Korean language, categorized as one of less commonly taught languages (LCTL), is worthy of attention (Brown, 2009). Two LCTL languages, Arabic and Chinese, saw the biggest increases in enrollments, with 126.5% more Arabic learners and 51% more Chinese learners since 2002, respectively. As a result, Arabic was recently excluded in the list of the LCTLs because of the drastic gain in the number of learners. The foreign language education field has seen the drastic enrollment increase in the LCTLs since the September, 2001 attacks and a subsequent governmental focus on critical language education after 9/11 for national security reasons. The critical languages refer to “languages spoken in regions and countries where the United States has sociopolitical, security, or economic interests” (Brown, 2009, p. 406). Many LCTLs belong to the critical foreign languages, including Korean, Chinese, and Arabic. The number of the learners of the critical language is expected to increase continuously, and thus foreign language pedagogy and its importance is increasingly recognized in the
second language (L2) acquisition field. Then, what kind of language is Korean? Let me briefly explain the demographic and linguistic aspects of the Korean language before presenting information on KFL education in the United States.

**The Korean language**

Korean is one of the world’s most commonly used languages, with approximately 72 million speakers. In the number of speakers, Korean is ranked as the eleventh among 3,000 languages in the world (Sohn, 2000). It is spoken as a native language by 67 million Korean people, 23 million North Koreans and 44 million South Koreans. Plus, Korean is spoken as a heritage language by 5.6 million overseas Korean residents, among them 2 million in China, 2 million in the United States, 0.7 million in Japan, and 0.5 million in the former Soviet Union. The number of non-Koreans in the world who want to learn Korean as a foreign language is also increasing.

In the United States, Koreans have become one of the fastest growing populations. According to Barringer and Cho (1989), the Korean population in the U.S. was 5,009 (2% of all Asian Americans) in 1910; 8,568 in 1940; 69,150 in 1970; and 357,393 (10.3% of all Asian Americans) in 1980. Also, U.S. Census conducted in the year of 2000 reported that Korean population (including mixed blood) was 1,228,427, 54% increase over the 1990 Census figure, 798,846. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Asian Americans constitute 4.3% of the total U.S. population, around 12 million, and Korean Americans comprise 11% of the Asian American community. In 1980, the Korean population in the U.S. ranked the fourth among the Asian minority groups, following Chinese, Filipinos, and Japanese populations. Currently, Korean Americans outnumber the Japanese
American population, which is approximately 800,000, and it is expected that in a few decades, only Filipinos will outnumber Koreans in the United States (Sohn, 2000). The Korean language is different from English in many respects. Some major features of Korean are as follows (Sohn, 2001):

First, Korean is categorized as belonging to the Altaic language family, which includes the Japanese, Manchu-Tungusic, Mongolian, and Turkic languages. It is commonly believed that since Korean and Japanese are grammatically similar to each other and the two countries share many common aspects of Asian culture, speakers of one language tend to learn the other with more ease and facility compared to the other linguistically-distant language pairs, for example English and Korean, or French and Japanese.

Second, the Korean vocabulary is composed of three components: native words and affixes (35%), Sino-Korean words (60%), and loan words (5%). Native words include words of daily necessities (food, clothing, and shelter), locations, basic actions, activities and states, lower level numerals, body parts, natural objects, animals, and so forth. Also, sound symbolic words (onomatopoeic and mimetic), idioms, and proverbs that reflect traditional culture and society belong to the native words. Also, most of the particles and affixes in Korean are from the native stock. Sino-Korean words are made from Chinese characters which are easily combined to coin new terms because of its ideographic and monosyllabic nature. Most institutional terms, traditional cultural terms, personal names, and place names are Sino-Korean words. There are about 20,000 loan words in Korean, of which almost 90% words are from English.
Third, Korean is an SOV language like Japanese. That is, it is a predicate-final language with the basic word order of Subject-Object-Predicate. In normal speech, the predicate (verb and adjective) comes at the end of a sentence or a clause, while all other elements, including the subjects and objects, must appear before the predicate. In the English sentence \textit{John plays tennis with Mary at school, John} is the subject, \textit{tennis} is its object. The other elements, \textit{with Mary} and \textit{at school}, follow the object. The Korean word order would be \textit{John school-at Mary-with tennis plays}. Korean particles which are equivalent to English prepositions always occur after the elements they are associated with, as in \textit{school-at} and \textit{Mary-with}. Korean particles are all postpositions. Also, all modifying elements, such as determiners, adjectives, phrases, and clauses, precede the elements they modify. Also, Korean is often called a situation or discourse-oriented language, in that contextually understood elements (including subject and object) are often omitted.

Fourth, Korean is called an ‘honorific language’, in that different forms of expressions and different speech levels are used depending on the person you are talking to as well as the person you are talking about. While interpersonal differences in terms of relative age, kinship, social status, etc., are ignored in English, they are systematically encoded in Korean. For example, use of honorifics in Korean is well shown in the following dialogue in English and Korean between a father and son saying good night.

\begin{tabular}{ll}
English & Son: Good night, Dad  
Father: Good night, John  
\hline
Korean & Son: aboji annyongi chumuseyo.  
\textit{(father peacefully sleep)}
\end{tabular}
In English, son and father use the same expression except for the address terms. However, in Korean, they use entirely different expressions. Not a single element is shared. The grammatical pattern of Korean honorifics is very systematic.

**KFL education in the U.S. University**

Sohn (2001) discussed in detail the history and characteristics of KFL education in the U.S. universities. KFL education began in 1930s in a few colleges, such as Columbia University and the University of Hawaii, with beginning level courses. Harvard University started to offer Korean courses in 1952, and UC Berkeley, the University of Washington, and Indiana University followed in the 1960s. Afterwards, in the 1970s, students were able to take Korean classes at, among others, SUNY Stony Brook, the University of Kansas, Pennsylvania University, Brigham Young University, Southern California University, etc. and, in the 1980s, from UCLA, Georgetown University, George Washington University, the University of Illinois, Ohio State University, Stanford University, Tufts College, the University of Maryland, the University Alaska, Brown University, Duke University, the College of William and Mary, the University of Chicago, and Cornell University, to name the best-known institutions. Overall, Korean language classes were offered in around 30 universities in the United States until the end of 1980s, and there has been a notable increase in the number of universities offering them since the 1990s, to the point where it is now reported that around 120 U.S. universities are offering Korean language classes (Sohn, 2001, p. 96).
The number of students, curricula (language and non-language courses), adopted evaluation methods and textbooks are diverse according to the unique needs of each Korean program. However, Sohn (2001) reports that universities with a large number of Korean-American students tend to offer various levels of Korean from beginning to advanced/distinguished levels of Korean, whereas ones holding a small number of Korean-American students tend to have beginning and intermediate Korean classes only. Students take Korean language courses to fulfill a foreign language requirement or an elective. Currently, over 80 percent of the U.S. universities require students to take foreign language courses for one or two years, and the number of heritage and non-heritage students who are interested in learning the Korean language and culture is increasing every year (Brown, 2009).

Students take a Korean class every day, around one hour, in the beginning and intermediate level, and around three hours a week for the advanced and upper level. For the beginning and intermediate level courses, most of the Korean programs have an instructor teach the whole classes, five hours a week; however, some Korean programs at Harvard University, UCLA, and Ohio State University employ what is called the FACT/ACT system: one instructor, usually a professor, teaches grammar and culture in English (mixed with Korean) two hours a week (FACT session), and the other instructor, usually TA, focuses on enhancement of student’s oral proficiency through the use of Korean only three hours a week (ACT session).

As for motivation for studying LCTLs, it has been reported that students tend to choose to learn LCTLs for the following reasons: students with specific research interests
related to the language; a spouse or friend who speaks the language; a desire to travel to the target language country; a recent trip to the target language region that sparked interest; and fulfillment of a foreign language requirement (Johnston & Janus, 2003).

Also, Brown (2009) compared CTL and LCTL students’ demographic and academic characteristics, and reported that LCTL students tended to have a “stronger heritage connection” to the target language than CTL students: more LCTL students reported that they heard and spoke the language as a child frequently (p. 415). Brown added that LCTL students seemed to take language classes in the university because most high schools have limited offerings in LCTLs. Therefore, majority of the LCTL students (92%) were taking the language as a third or fourth language. The study also found that LCTL students tended to choose the target language based on personal interests and intrinsic motivation, while many CTL students chose the language to complete a foreign language requirement. LCTL students in the study were “more experienced, more matured, more driven, and more motivated” than CTL students (p. 419).

In addition, it is worthwhile to pay attention to the impact of the so-called ‘Korean Wave’, called *Hallyu* (한류) in Korean, on the enrollment of Korean classes. Korean people use the term, *Hallyu*, to describe a phenomenon of “South Korean cultural exports, including popular music (called K-pop), TV dramas, movies, and video games, which have become widely popular among young people across Asia.” Some refer to the trend as “hallyu-wood” (CNN World, Farrar). China and Taiwan were the first locations influenced by the Hallyu, and the Korean Wave has also reached Japan, India, Thailand, and other parts of South-east Asia. Currently, Korean TV dramas are being broadcasted
in China, Japan, and South-east Asia (The Economist). The experts said that the Korean dramas and movies tend to appeal to Asians more than Westerns, because the typical themes of the dramas include “the family-friendly, Confucian teachings” and the values are shared with Asian people, especially with Chinese people (CNN World, Farrar). The Asians’ love for Korean cultural exports, Hallyu, impacted on the enrollment of Korean courses in the U.S. universities: an increasing number of students from China, Taiwan, and South East Asia have been showing their interest in Korean classes to better appreciate the Korean songs and dramas. As such, the Korean language programs need to know the populations’ characteristics, needs, and learning goals, and incorporate them into their curriculum and instruction, bearing in mind that the students may have different backgrounds with the language and different reasons for studying it.

It has been reported, however, that the majority of the students taking Korean classes are heritage learners or Korean Americans (Kim, 2001), that is, individuals who have some prior connection to the language, such as their parents speaking it at home. In the beginning level Korean classes, non-heritage learners tend to occupy around 20-30% of the total number of learners, while intermediate and advanced level classes tend to have far fewer non-heritage learners, less than 10%. However, there are exceptions: it is believed that more than 40% of the students are non-heritage learners in the Korean programs at the University of Arizona, Duke University, the University of Florida, Indiana University, SUNY Buffalo, Ohio State University, the University of Texas at Austin, etc. The intermediate and advanced level classes in those listed programs,
however, tend to have many more heritage learners than non-heritage learners (Kim, 2001).

Many Korean programs experience difficulties in teaching heritage and non-heritage students in the same classroom (Sohn, 2001). Korean heritage students who are equipped with good oral ability and a certain level of vocabulary, reading, and writing proficiency already (e.g., through prior participation in Korean heritage schools or their parents) tend to be placed in the intermediate or advanced level courses; if the students need instruction for development of basic level of oral proficiency they are placed into beginning or intermediate level classes. However, many heritage students placed in the beginning or intermediate classes are different from non-heritage students, in that they tend to already know the Korean alphabet (Hangul) and possess linguistic intuition, because they have been raised in an environment where they could hear and speak Korean from friends or parents since their early days. Those heritage students in the beginning level classes tend to think that it is a waste of time to study with textbooks and via activities which mainly focus on improvement of speaking and listening abilities. It has been reported that heritage speakers typically possess skills that non-heritage foreign language learners may never acquire at a native-like level, such as unaccented pronunciation, fluency in colloquial register, comfort with dialects, and sociocultural understanding (Brecht & Inglod, 1998; cited in Angelelli & Kagan, 2002).

Furthermore, it has been found that non-heritage students in the same classroom tend to be intimidated by the heritage students who already possess a certain level of listening and speaking abilities (Sohn, 2001, p. 97). Also, while the non-heritage students
need to invest a lot of time to learn a linguistic system and the rules that help them make sense of it, in many cases heritage speakers already possess the system and use them naturally even though they cannot explain or justify the rules often times, which makes non-heritage students often feel frustrated and self-inefficient (Angelelli & Kagan, 2002). Educators have recognized the different needs and motivations that the learners bring to the classroom, and to meet the different needs and improve the situation, some of the large Korean programs, e.g., at UCLA, UC Berkeley, and Columbia University, teach heritage and non-heritage students separately from the very beginning level of Korean classes. However, most of the Korean programs teach heritage and non-heritage students together in the same classroom for budgetary reasons.

Kondo-Brown (2005) studied difference in language skills between heritage and non-heritage learners of Japanese. The study found that Japanese heritage language (JHL) students with at least one Japanese-speaking parent were more advanced than the other groups not only in grammatical knowledge and listening skills, but also in reading proficiency: the three groups were JHL students with at least one Japanese-speaking grandparents but without a Japanese-speaking parent, JHL students of Japanese decent without either a Japanese-speaking parent or grandparent, and Japanese as a foreign language (JFL) student group. The Kondo-Brown’s study demonstrated that language use and skills of HL Grandparent and HL Descent groups were similar to those of FL students, suggesting that the two HL student groups’ learning processes could be viewed as being more like FL learning rather than HL learning. The author, thus, recommended
educators place HL students into proper classes and teach them considering the heterogeneous nature of the HL population.

**Conclusion**

Inspired by the principles and goals of sociocultural inquiry for the investigation of L2 writing strategy, the present study aimed to identify and explore Korean as a foreign language (KFL) learners’ writing strategies from the socio-cognitive perspective, particularly framing the inquiry within Engestrom’s (1999) ‘Activity Theory’, and the concepts of ‘mediation’ and ‘agency’. Five undergraduate learners of Korean in an intermediate-advanced Korean class volunteered for the study. The study was able to identify and describe some common tendencies as well as differences in the use of L2 writing strategies among the KFL learners. How the participants engaged in their writing assignments was examined by using multiple data gathering techniques: interviews, stimulated recalls, process logs, writing autobiography, and observation. Chapter 3 provides a detailed description of the study’s methodology, while in Chapter 4 the KFL learners’ actual use of strategies is reported in terms of the kinds of writing strategies employed, mediations involved with the writing assignments, interactions/conflicts between the identified strategies, and the role of learning histories and goals playing in the use of the mediated strategies. The study explored in-depth how the learning context, the L2 learners, and their use of writing strategies are interrelated. Chapter 5, the final chapter, summarizes the study’s main findings, addresses the study’s research questions, and offers recommendations for pedagogical practices and future research arising from the findings produced by the study.
Chapter 3: Methodology

My research purposes were to identify and explore writing strategies that KFL learners employ for their L2 writing. All the five students in my Korean 509 class (Intermediate-advanced) volunteered for this study, and their L2 writing strategy use was explored in terms of kinds of mediational means and mediations involved, types of writing strategies employed, and interactions/conflicts between the identified strategies. The present study also examined how the participants’ language learning histories, goals of L2 learning, and ethnic or cultural backgrounds were inter-related to their L2 writing strategy use. The study was expected to identify and categorize the strategies commonly used among the KFL participants, and also describe individual differences in the use of the strategies. My comparative study, also called a multiple-case study, aimed to generate a rich description of the interrelationships among strategy use, learner, and context in a KFL writing situation. The research questions were as follows:

1. What kinds of mediational means (e.g., the Internet, search engines like Google, Yahoo, online dictionary, L1, etc.) do the KFL participants use for their L2 writing assignments? What are the purposes for using them?
2. What types of L2 writing strategies can be identified from the group of the KFL participants? Are they different from what Lei (2008) found from Chinese EFL learners?
3. Are there any conflicts or contradictions between the identified strategies?

4. How are the KFL participants’ goals for L2 learning and ethnic or cultural backgrounds (i.e., heritage and non-heritage) inter-related to their mediated actions in writing?

To address the research purposes and questions described above, I believed that a case study, in particular ‘a multiple-case study’, would be the most appropriate and effective approach for the study. In this chapter, I explain why the multiple-case study approach was selected for the study, and I describe the selection of the research participants and the research setting in which the study took place. In addition, the chapter explains the study’s data collection techniques and its approach to data analysis. Afterwards, how validity and trustworthiness were established throughout the study is discussed.

**A Qualitative Case Study: A Multiple-Case Study Approach**

In L1 and L2 writing research, there has been a change in focus “from texts to the individual interactions and larger cultural, social, and historical contexts of writing practices” (Schultz, 2006, p.368). Students’ writing is seen not simply as a product of cognitive processes or strategies operating within their brain; rather, many writing researchers believe that students’ writing cannot be fully understood without consideration of the particularities of the contexts involved with the writing. For example, writing involves audiences, purposes/goals of a writer, purposes of reader(s), history, values, and intentions that the writer brings in to writing, and the nature of the assignments themselves as well as the contexts in which they are completed. Also,
writing involves identity construction processes, particularly relative to writing situations (Schultz, 2006). Qualitative research has helped teachers and researchers explore ‘writing as a social practice’ with success, and thus the multiple case study methodology is regarded as promising for a more thorough understanding of the nature of writing, including writing in the second language (L2).

Qualitative research, with its emphasis on inquiry-based approaches, is based upon an idea that “reality is socially constructed, complex, and ever changing” (Glesne, 1998, p.5). It focuses on exploring how people interpret their experiences in their communities of practice and construct the world around them, through in-depth and long-term explorations of the participants involved in the interactions which take place within the research settings being examined. Qualitative inquiry is, thus, “best at contributing to a greater understanding of perceptions, attitudes, and processes” (Glesne, 2000, p.24) and “more internally driven factors” (Leki, 1995, p. 241) involved in a phenomenon. Also, the method allows for inclusion of multiple contexts in which activity, in this case writing, occurs; so, it is useful to explain writing as situated or deeply embedded in various contexts of practice (Schultz, 2006, p. 360). Since my research on KFL learners was associated with exploration of social and affective processes related to L2 writing, and their relations with cognitive processes, a qualitative inquiry describing and explaining complicated contexts of learning was more appropriate than a quantitative approach, which would restrict its focus to “identifying sets of variables and seeking to determine their relationship” (Glesne, 2000, p. 24). To gain a deeper understanding of KFL learners’
engagement with L2 writing, it was necessary to move beyond what the quantitative approach would produce.

Among many qualitative research strategies, a case study approach was used for the present study, since the case study methodology focuses on context, learner, and relationships between them. These elements were considered essential for the kind of inquiry that would address the study’s research questions and thus led naturally to the case study approach. Also appealing, for the purposes of this study, was the array of data gathering procedures related to case study research, such as interviews, observations, and document analysis. Case studies are increasingly adopted in the field of language teaching, including L2 writing, and recognized as a powerful research method (Casanave, 2002; van Lier, 2005).

A case is defined as a “bounded system” in which its behavior is patterned (Stake, 2000, p.436). In the area of teaching English as a second language (TESOL), the case typically includes a person, a learner or a teacher, or an entity, such as a school or a classroom (Faltis, 1997). A case study looks in-depth at a specific person’s or entity’s experiences and perceptions pertaining to a specific issue, thus “revealing the wholeness of human system working in particular contexts” (Hyland, 2003, p. 263) and exploring its “complexities” (Stake, 2000, p. 436); it seeks to identify patterns and themes found occurring consistently in the case. Given this emphasis, the case study provides a rich context for understanding a specific phenomenon under study. According to Yin (2003), a case study is “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are
not clearly evident” by relying on multiple sources of evidence (pp. 13-14). According to van Lier (2005), the advantages of the case study approach include “attention to context,” rich description of a particular case’s details “within its natural context of situation” rather than in a laboratory, and it probes into its characteristics, dynamics, and purposes (p. 195).

Furthermore, van Lier (2005) argues for the case study approach as a tool to research how a person learns a second or foreign language and functions “in the real context,” citing Johnson (1992) as follows:

Case studies can provide rich information about an individual learner. They can inform us about the processes and strategies that individual L2 [second language] learners use to communicate and learn, how their personalities, attitudes, and goals interact with the learning environment, and about the precise nature of their linguistic growth (Johnson, 1992, p. 76; cited in van Lier, 2005, p.196).

In my research about L2 learners’ use of strategies in their L2 writing, the participants were agentive “central players” (Leki & Carson, 1994, p.42), and I needed to describe the particular contexts in which they operated as writers, and how the contexts were interrelated with the learners’ L2 writing processes and goals; thus, the case study approach was thought most appropriate for the study.

In addition, one of the goals of the case study is “to expand and generalize theories,” rather than generalizing the findings to the target population (Yin, 2003, p. 10). Also, “particularization” is more important than “generalization” in the case study (van Lier, 2005, p. 198). One of the important goals of the present study was to look at L2 learners’ mediated actions in L2 writing in the KFL context, and to further explore the sociocultural framework of strategy research that was used by Lei (2008) in the EFL
context. Lei’s case study (2008) provided insights and information for the present study, and I wanted to see if the framework used in that study as well as the principles and emphases of sociocultural theory could meaningfully explain the context and writing behavior of KFL learners. If differences existed between what Lei found and what this study found, the case study approach would enhance the possibilities for exploring and understanding those differences by looking closely at interactions and processes that occurred in the particular context of KFL as opposed to the EFL context. Here it is important to recognize that a learner’s writing development is situationally dependent upon a particular social, historical, and cultural setting, and thus literacy development is regarded as a highly “idiosyncratic phenomenon” (Weissberg, 2005, p. 101) that, by its very nature, lends itself to qualitative inquiry. Since the present study aimed to further explore Lei’s (2008) framework used to re-conceptualize L2 writing strategies and to expand the application of sociocultural theory, and, at the same time, to investigate a particular context in-depth, a case study format was deemed as more useful than any other research approaches available.

Furthermore, I chose to conduct a multiple-case study (also called comparative study), rather than a single case study, so as to describe common characteristics of the KFL participants’ writing strategy use with more substantial evidence and, at the same time, to look at individual differences associated with goals, agency and participant backgrounds. The present study aimed to identify some general common tendencies in the use of writing strategies in L2 running across the KFL participants as well as disparities between them. The evidence from multiple case studies is considered “more
compelling” than a single case study and thus the multiple case study is regarded as being “more robust” in comparison to a single case study (Herriott & Firestine, 1983; cited in Yin, 2003, p. 46); therefore, it was believed that there was a much better chance of conducting a meaningful and productive study than in a single-case design (Yin, 2003). According to Yin (2003), a single case study is used “when the case represents (a) a critical test of existing theory, (b) a rare or unique circumstances, or (c) a representative or typical case or when the case serves, (d) a revelatory or (e) longitudinal purpose” (pp. 45-46). My study did not intend to test an existing theory or hypothesis, nor explore a rare or unique case with a longitudinal purpose. Rather, this study intended to explore strategy use in the L2 writing of KFL participants, and to identify some similarities and differences across the participants about the strategy use; therefore, a multiple-case study was more appropriate than a single case study.

To support this multiple case orientation, for this study, five participants were selected. Selection of more than three participants is better than one or two, since a larger number has a greater opportunity to provide substantial and compelling support for the findings of common themes running across the participants in a particular context. Similarities or common themes found in more than three participants can be reported with “a greater certainty” than with one or two participants (Yin, 2003, p. 51).

Participants and Research Setting

Participants

A number of factors were involved in the selection of participants and a research setting. The present study was motivated in part by the belief that KFL learners might be
different from the EFL learners dealt with in Lei’s study (2008), and thus they would show disparities in the use of L2 writing strategies. For example, the KFL participants had been educated in the United States from their early days and chose to learn Korean as a foreign language, in fact as a third or fourth language, in the university that served as the study’s research site. This was a considerable contrast with Lei’s study of students in China studying English as a foreign language, since Lei’s participants lived and studied in a very different cultural and social setting than the American-based participants in this study. Furthermore, for Lei’s participants the foreign language involved, English, represented the most commonly taught foreign language in China and enjoyed a very high status as a result.

The participants in the current study were not studying a language with the local/national prestige or widespread use represented by English. This led to a second motivation underlying the selection of a research context and research participants. Even though they studied other foreign languages, such as Spanish, French or German, in their high school years (categorized as ‘commonly taught languages’ or CTLs), in college they selected a new foreign language, Korean, one of the less commonly taught languages (LCTLs), and studied the language up to the advanced-level. They could have selected the foreign language that they had studied in their high schools, like many other students do. The fact that they actively chose Korean as an additional foreign language suggested that they might be highly motivated to learn the Korean language, and not just for instrumental or practical purposes. They also had a genuine personal interest and
investment in the language, and so they were expected to be suitable participants for the study.

Also appealing was the fact that they were experienced language learners in the formal educational settings. This made them appealing participants for a study of this kind. In fact, Brown (2009) found in a survey study that LCTL students tend to be more experienced, more driven, and more motivated than their CLT counterparts. Thus, it appeared to me that the group of advanced-level Korean learners would possess their own uniqueness in mediated actions in L2 writing and thus merited investigation of the kind carried out in this study.

In addition, before the current study was conducted, it was assumed that the KFL participants might have different language learning histories and goals for L2 learning; so, each individual’s social interactions and mediations involved with L2 writing could be different, leading to different strategy use between the learners. They were different in terms of ethnic and cultural backgrounds: one Korean-American (heritage), two Chinese-Americans, and two American learners. They were learning Korean as a foreign language with different goals and interests: to maintain and further develop heritage language and cultural knowledge, to work for the U.S. government as a Korean-English translator, to fulfill a foreign language requirement or major requirement, to be more employable in the job market, and to better appreciate Korean movies, dramas or songs with improved Korean proficiency.

In terms of those who participated in the study, they were selected purposefully. I thought it would be best if I could work with students that I was teaching for my writing
strategy research, since I was teaching an upper-level Korean course and was well acquainted with the students in the course and what they might have to offer relative to the goals of the study. I informed my Korean 509 students of the participation opportunity, and all five students in my class expressed their willingness to participate in the research. Since I was their teacher of Korean, I was able to communicate with them frequently and share many points related to their Korean learning both in and outside the classroom. Choosing research participants well was crucial to gaining a deeper understanding of the important issues involved in the study and to maximize the amount of learning from the investigation (Patton, 1990; Vaughan, 1992; Yin, 1989; cited in Stake, 2000, p. 446). Regarding purposeful sampling, Patton (1990) contended that “the logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of research…” (p.169; cited in Glesne, 1999, p. 29). Stake (2000) said that the cases from which we can learn the most are those most accessible, since more time can be spent together. For all of these reasons, my research participants were the best choice for me to learn about the social processes related to writing processes and other related research issues. For the selection of the participants, I put balance and variety as important criteria, and opportunity to learn as the most important criterion.

To obtain the research participants, first, I gave my Korean 509 students an information sheet explaining the research and inviting participants for it at the very beginning of the academic quarter in which the study took place. As noted earlier, all of
the five students enrolled in the course wanted to participate in the study. After learning
of their willingness to participate in my study I interviewed each student, and based upon
the results of the interviews I chose all five students as my research participants. The
interview asked about their backgrounds, such as number of years spent studying Korean,
foreign language learning experience other than Korean, study-abroad experience (in
Korea), use of technology for L2 writing, and their degree of willingness to participate in
the study. I also consulted their writing assignments submitted for previous courses, as
my course was the third of a three course sequence. Korean 507 and Korean 508, which I
taught in the previous quarters, had preceded the 509 course. I had taught Korean at the
university serving as the research site since Autumn Quarter 2006, and for the academic
year of 2008 – 2009 I was an instructor of third-year Korean courses: Korean 507, 508,
and 509. Korean 507 and Korean 508 were offered in Autumn and Winter Quarter,
respectively, and Korean 509 was the last course offered in 2009 Spring (March 30 –
June 15, 2009) among the series of the third year Korean courses. All the participants had
taken the third year courses, and I had been their teacher for the previous two quarters
before the present research was conducted. Thus, I was well acquainted with the students
and had developed a comfortable rapport with them. This, too, was considered an asset in
conducting the study, since the researcher-participant relationship can play an important
role in qualitative research.

Among the five participants, four participants took the third year Korean courses
because they majored or minored in Korean (three major students and one minor student).
The students who majored in Korean were required to take all the three third-year Korean
courses, but those who minored in Korean were not required to take the third year courses; for them the courses were electives. One Korean heritage student took the third-year Korean series to raise his heritage language proficiency to a higher level, not to meet a major or minor requirement. As for the other participants, while they were taking the third year courses to meet program requirements, all had some degree of personal investment in the language. The following table provides a detailed breakdown of the participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Major &amp; Minor</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Ethnic background</th>
<th>Years of Korean learning &amp; Korean courses Taken</th>
<th>Study abroad (in Korea) experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mark</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>International Studies &amp; *Korean</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>White American</td>
<td>2 years K101-K103 K507-K509</td>
<td>Yes (Learning Korean)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>International Studies &amp; *Korean</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>White American</td>
<td>3 years K101-K103 K104-K206 K507-K509</td>
<td>Yes (Internship)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minsoo</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>Business &amp; Psychology</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Korean American</td>
<td>Korean spoken at home 2 years K101-K103 K507-K509</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tao</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>Actuarial Science &amp; *Korean (Minor)</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Chinese American</td>
<td>3 years K101-K103 K104-K206 K507-K509</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mee</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>Animal Science &amp; *Korean</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Chinese American</td>
<td>3 years K101-K103 K104-K206 K507-K509</td>
<td>Yes (Learning Korean)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Students’ Background Information I
Before moving on to a description of the research context, it is important to acknowledge possible limitations involved in a researcher studying her or his own students. This kind of research situation can cause complications in the research process. For instance, there is a potentially damaging power dynamic at work, since the researcher is also the ‘authority’ figure who is responsible for assigning the students’ course grades, while the students are answerable to the instructor as the person in charge. This can potentially compromise the integrity of the research process. In addition, a well-established relationship between the researcher and the participants, as existed in this case because the researcher had already taught the participants in two previous courses, can lead to unhealthy or unacceptable levels of subjectivity in the researcher’s responses to the data gathered. Familiarity can potentially cloud the researcher’s judgment. This can be especially problematic in the case of writing research, since the researcher is looking at the work produced by students through the eyes of a teacher as well as a researcher. This can lead to counterproductive analysis of students’ writing in which the roles of teacher and researcher may be unintentionally blurred. What a teacher and a researcher look for in analyzing written products and writing processes may not be the same, but it may be difficult for the researcher to know through which set of eyes s/he is responding to the data. In addition to complicating the data analysis process itself, this blurring of roles can result in interpretations of data that are not accurate or viable.

These potential limitations to studying my own class were carefully considered in the decision to use the Korean 509 course and these particular participants.
From a convenience perspective, there was no other section of Korean 509 being offered. More importantly, given the nature of what this study sought to investigate, my familiarity with the participants made it much easier for me to identify and analyze their approach to writing given all of the context already established through the previous courses. Already knowing about the students gave me an important entry point into their Korean writing. Furthermore, analysis of the students’ writing and evaluations of its quality were not part of this study, so that there was not a conflict between my roles as teacher and researcher. Other aspects of researcher subjectivity are addressed later in the chapter.

**Research Setting**

The study was conducted at a large, public (i.e., state supported), research-based university in the Midwest of the United States in the Spring Quarter of 2009. This site was selected because its Korean language program is a nationally known and respected program that provided the kinds of participants sought for a study of this kind. In addition, I was an instructor at that institution and so, from a convenience perspective, had ready access to possible participants.

The Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures (EALL) at the university selected for the study offered Chinese, Japanese and Korean language courses. Students who needed to complete foreign language requirement or majored/minored in East Asian Languages and Literatures took the Asian language courses. The Korean Department offered four levels of Korean language courses (these include only language courses):

1. First Year Korean (for beginners): Korean 101, 102, & 103
2. Second Year Korean (intermediate): Korean 104, 205, & 206
Third Year Korean (intermediate/advanced): Korean 507, 508, & 509

Fourth Year Korean (advanced): Korean 610, 611, & 612

The Korean program had adopted the ACT/FACT system for language teaching. Students took FACT classes twice a week. These classes were focused on grammar and vocabulary explanation and related exercises, and taught mainly in English. Three times a week, students took ACT classes conducted entirely in Korean and focused on conversational activities in various situations using Korean. The FACT/ACT system was strictly enforced in the first and second year Korean courses, but in the third and fourth year Korean courses, instructors tended to mix FACT and ACT sessions in one class session while mainly using Korean as the medium of instruction. This was based on a consideration of students’ needs and proficiency level. Korean was the preferred medium of instruction except in situations requiring explanations of complicated grammar or expressions. Here English was seen as more appropriate.

Like the other Asian language programs, the Korean Department offered major and minor opportunities. As explained earlier, to fulfill the Korean major requirement, students were required to complete Korean courses through the third year, whereas the third year courses were electives for minor students. The number of language courses and students enrolled in the Korean program were relatively smaller than those for the Japanese and Chinese programs, and the history of offering a major and minor in Korean was far shorter than the other Asian programs.

With regard to writing activities, third-year Korean students had more opportunities to write than first and second year Korean students. Whereas first and second year
courses were more focused on developing spoken Korean, the third (and fourth) year courses emphasized reading and writing activities to develop literacy skills and enhance overall Korean language fluency. Korean 509 students had to write four compositions as homework, and the kinds of writing included descriptive and argumentative (position/opinion) writing (see the writing assignment description). Writing topics were related to the textbook lessons that the students studied. For example, the third composition topic dealt with the use of technology in contemporary circumstances.

Before the writing assignment, the students read about modern technology (i.e., main text of Lesson 13 ʻ전기불과 호롱불 [An electric light and an oil-lamp light] and additional reading materials), learned words related to technology, and discussed the topic in the classroom. This pattern was used for the other writing assignments as well. In this way, writing assignments were given to the students to provide opportunities to review the lessons, apply what they learned in class, and learn and further explore new content and language through writing. Thus, writing was both an end—a target skill—and a means, that is, a way of reinforcing prior learning.

The writing assignment description below was included in the Korean 509 syllabus [see the details in Appendix D], and it explained in detail about the writings that students needed to submit to me. All the writing assignments were selected to examine for the present study: #1 & #2 are descriptive and #3 & #4 are argumentative writing. The participants wrote process logs [see Appendix B] for each essay and gave them to me along with their completed essays. As soon as the essays were submitted to me, each student came to my office and had a stimulated recall session which lasted around 30-40
minutes. After the recall sessions, I was in a position to identify and discuss some issues that needed more clarification and information. Each student wrote four process logs and had four stimulated recall sessions.

**Four Writing Assignments**

You will write four compositions during this quarter, including the final project paper. For the due dates, refer to the Class Content & Assignment table in pages 3 – 5. No late composition will be accepted. The specific writing topics and guidelines are as following:

**1. Writing #1**: We learned about Korean ‘설날’ in Lesson 14. How about New Year Day in the United States? Is the New Year Day of the United States similar to that of Korea, or different? Write some similarities and differences of the two countries’ New Year Day. (Due by 4/21)

**2. Writing #2**: Lesson 16 was about ‘Valentine’s Day’. Write about the origin of Valentine’s Day. It would be a good idea to use the Internet or other resources for more information. After writing about the origin of ‘Valentine’s Day’, describe how people in the U.S. spend the Valentine’s Day. In the last (one or two) paragraph(s), write your opinion about good aspects and/or bad aspects of Valentine’s Day. You could add your personal experience in this writing. (Due by 5/12)

**3. Writing #3**: Nowadays, an increasing number of people use computer and technology. For example, they shop online and communicate via e-mail or homepage (i.e., Facebook, Cyworld, etc.). If they have a cell phone, they can contact their friends anytime, anywhere. Do you think this (use of computer and technology) is beneficial to people? Or do you think this is damaging to people? Take your
position and provide reasons (with examples) that support your position.) (Due by 5/26)

(4) Final Project (Writing #4): 세계적으로 혹은 미국에 여러 가지 사회적인 이슈가 있습니다. 예를 들면, 성형수술, 외모지상주의 (외모가 제일 중요하다고 생각하는 생각), 자살, 사형, 이혼, 낙태, 환경오염, 교통문제, 경기침체, 부익부 빈익빈 (잘 살 수록 더 잘 살고 가난할수록 더 가난해지는 현상), 남녀차별, 인종차별, 등 사회문제가 많이 있습니다. 관심있는 이슈를 하나 선택하고 그 이슈에 대해서 리서치해 보세요. 그 이슈에 대해 설명한 후에 그 문제를 해결하기 위해서 사람들이 무엇을 해야 하는지 자신의 의견을 써 보세요. 또는 한 이슈에 대해서 리서치를 하다 보면 그 이슈에 대해 여러가지 입장 또는 의견 (positions/opinions)이 있는 것을 알 수 있습니다. 자신은 어떤 의견/입장에 동의하는지, 왜 그렇게 생각하는지 그 이유를 써 보세요. (In the world or in the United States, there are many social issues: plastic surgery, suicide, death penalty, divorce, abortion, environmental problem (i.e., air pollution), traffic problems, economic depression, discrimination against women, racism, etc. You can select any topic that is not listed in this guideline. Choose one issue and research about it. Explain the issue in one or two paragraphs, and write your opinion regarding what people should do to solve the problem or issue. Or you may find that there are different positions or opinions about the issue among people: write which position you agree on and specify reasons why you support the position/opinion.) (Due by 6/4)

Data Gathering Instruments and Procedures

Data for case studies come from a variety of sources, such as documents produced by participants, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant-observation, and physical artifacts (Yin, 2003, p. 83). The various sources of data are seen as “complementary,” and, thus, it is recommended that researchers use as many sources as possible for a good case study (Yin, 2003, p. 85). Hyland (2003) specified typical qualitative data collection methods for a case study of writing research as follows: (1) naturalistic and descriptive observation, (2) narrative diaries, (3) unstructured interviews, (4) verbal reports, and (5) texts and documents (p. 263). For the present study on
mediated actions in L2 writing, I used several following data gathering instruments, each of which is described in the following subsections. The data were collected for 8 weeks, from the middle of April, 2009 through the middle of June, 2009, while the students were enrolled in the Korean 509 class.

(1) Interviews

One of the most important sources of data in case study research is the interview (Yin, 2003). Through the interviews with participants, “researchers can learn what they cannot see and explore alternative explanations of what they do see”; this makes the interview technique special and important in qualitative inquiry (Glesne, 1999, p. 69). For this study, semi-structured and unstructured (in-depth) interviews were used to learn about participants’ L2 (Korean) writing strategies, foreign language learning experiences, perceptions and attitudes about writing, and so forth. At the very beginning stage of the study, I interviewed my participants with some guidelines (see Appendix [A]) to obtain general information about their L2 writing experiences. In addition to this semi-structured interview, I conducted in-depth interviews, for example, to clarify and expand on issues or questions raised during the course of the study. For example, each participant had four stimulated recall sessions after the completion of writing and submitting essays, and after the sessions I could have the in-depth interviews that helped me learn more about their writing experiences. The interviews possessed an open-ended nature which was “fluid rather than rigid” (Rubin & Rubin, 1995; cited in Yin, 2003, p. 89). Unstructured interviewing provided “a greater breadth of data than the other types of techniques” (Fontana & Frey, 2000, p. 652). Also, repeated interviews throughout the course of the
study increased the validity of the interviews. All the interviews, unstructured and semi-structured, were recorded and transcribed by me and two student assistants, who were proficient in English and Korean.

Use of participants’ narratives or stories that are told to researchers in the interview (and conversation) setting has been playing an important role in the field of TESOL and L2 writing (Casanave, 2002, 2005; Kanno, 2003; Pavlenko, 2002). By the very nature of the interview process, participants are encouraged, directly or indirectly, to provide stories about important events. Thus, the student writers’ narratives provide researchers with “deep understanding of students’ knowledge, decision processes, and affective states that can only be hinted at from non-narrative data” (Casanave, 2005, p. 25). This is a research technique for “seeing the world from the perspective of our participants” (Silverman, 2000, p. 824). Without the stories from the student writers, students’ decisions and thoughts could remain a mystery. In addition, narrative is a form of meaning making (Casanave, 2005; Polkinghorne, 1991). A series of isolated events become a narrative when student writers connect those events to form a story. Narrative “connects and configures parts of human experiences into meaningful larger chunks,” and this meaning construction process is a basic and crucial part of human real life (Casanave, 2005, p. 18). Pavlenko & Lantolf (2000) assert that personal narrative is “an important verbal artifact for bringing past events (i.e., occurrences involving other people) into the present and for projecting the present into the future” (p. 171). In so doing, people are able to make sense of what they do and what others do with them. Narrative is considered a powerful means for writing research. In this study, the participants’ narratives, gathered
through the unstructured interviews, helped me explore and better understand their histories, perspectives, and emotions involved in their use of writing strategies.

(2) Process logs

Another of the main sources of data for this study was process logs (see Appendix [B]), a form of writing in which participants describe how a task was accomplished. Previous studies have used process logs to examine how student writers accomplish writing tasks or acquire disciplinary academic literacy (Freedman, 1987; Lei, 2008; Li, 2007; Nelson, 1993; Riazi, 1997; Walvoord & McCarthy, 1990). I modified the content of the process logs used by Lei (2008) to suit the nature of the KFL research context.

The participants were asked to monitor and write about their actions related to writing in Korean before, while, and after writing. I told them that they would need to complete Section I in their pre-writing stage and Section II during their writing and revision time. They wrote the logs for four writing assignments. They typed the logs in English and sent the files to me by e-mail. Each log was used as a basis for subsequent interviews, and if any confusion or issues appeared in the logs, those were explored, and sometimes clarified through the interviews or e-mail communications.

The process log is known as one of best ways to obtain introspective data from research participants. Nunan (1992) argued for the inclusion of introspective data in educational research, asserting that “human behavior cannot be understood without incorporating into the research the subjective perceptions and belief systems of those involved in the research” (p. 54). Process logs or diaries have been widely used for the studies of students’ reactions to writing classes or the strategies that they employ to
complete their writing tasks (Hyland, 2003). The logs provide a rich account of participants’ reflections, revealing their social and psychological processes and views related to their writing experiences. Furthermore, the guidelines for the logs “help the participants to keep on task and supply a meta-language to talk about their experiences” (Hyland, 2003, p. 258). For example, a study by Li (2007) reported that the Chinese participant, Yuan, who wrote the process logs for the study, realized that writing the process logs was a fruitful experience to him. Through writing the process logs, Yuan found more clearly the difficulties that he faced while writing, often had a chance to summarize his writing experiences, and eventually concluded that being in Li’s study was worthwhile (pp. 61-62).

In the present study, process logs were very useful to see the intraview of the writing processes of my participants, through which I could understand their own perspectives on their writing processes. Also, like the participant in Li’s study (2007), my participants appreciated the opportunity to write the logs while they were writing: they told me that through the logs they could better know what they were thinking and doing while engaging in their writing assignments.

(3) Retrospective reports (stimulated recall; post-process oral observation)

The participants were asked to verbally recall, that is, reflect upon, their writing processes upon completion of their final version of each writing assignment and the process logs associated with it. This method is called retrospective reports or stimulated recall (or post-process oral observation), and this is often employed in L2 writing research. The use of verbal or written reports as data comes from the belief that the
process of writing requires conscious attention, and the thought processes involved in
writing can be recovered and retrieved, since humans have access to their internal thought
processes at some level and can verbalize those processes (Grass & Mackey, 2000;
Hyland, 2003). There are two types of verbal reports: concurrent think-aloud and
retrospective protocols or stimulated recall. The purpose of the method is to glean from
participants’ comments the cognitive processes and strategies they are using to
accomplish a task. It is believed that the verbal reports are useful to understand the
participants’ perceptions of their involvement in the task (Hall, 2002, p. 163).

For the present study, the retrospective think-aloud protocol was used because it
was a less disruptive method than the concurrent think-aloud (Bosher, 1998; Sasaki,
2000), and the stimulated recall was expected to capture a wider range of social actions
and perceptions involved with writing than concurrent protocols. Sasaki (2000) claimed
that the concurrent think-aloud method affects quality and content of the participants’
cognitive abilities while writing, but it tends to elicit better data from expert writers,
which means the method is not likely to be effective for beginners or for intermediate
level writers like those in this study. The stimulated recall method does not intrude on the
actual composing process, and “it does not lead participants to simplify or hold to the task
as concurrent think-aloud protocols might do” (Bosher, 1998, p. 213). Sasaki reported
from her study of EFL students that novice and expert writers produced useful amounts
of data equally well with the retrospective recall method. Since my KFL participants’
writing proficiency levels were intermediate (according to the ACTFL Guidelines) with
some variations within the level, I thought it would be safer to use the stimulated recall to obtain equal amounts of data from all the participants.

In addition, for my study, the retrospective think-aloud protocol was more appropriate than the concurrent protocol because the type of writing that I was interested in was not a timed-writing sample, such as a 30 minute essay exam. Rather, I looked at the participants’ writing assignment engagement which normally took at least two to three days to complete. During the course of the study, I found that all the participants spread their work over a few days rather than completing it in one sitting; therefore, it turned out that the use of the retrospective protocol was more appropriate for the present study’s purposes.

All the stimulated recall sessions were conducted on the very next day following their completion of writing in order to tap into their still fresh writing memories. I gave a specific deadline for each composition, but some of the participants submitted their assignments earlier than the deadline. In that case, they informed me of the time when they finished their assignment, and I asked them to come to my office the very next day for the recall sessions. Based upon the final product and process logs, the participants were asked to recall their composing processes, which took around 30 to 40 minutes for each assignment. Every protocol was audio recorded and later transcribed for analysis by two student assistants and me.

(4) Texts and documents: writing samples, literacy autobiographies, e-mail exchanges, etc.

Prior Writing and E-Mail
The participants’ L2 writing assignments (and exam essays) were collected and used for the retrospective reports and interviews. In addition to the K509 class writings, I could refer to the participants’ previous writing, since I had been their teacher of K507 and K508 courses, too. The participants also gave me all the notes (e.g., bulleted brainstorming ideas, organization of the draft, translation, etc.) that they took for their writings, information (e.g., web information printouts) they used, and first/second drafts, if they had any. If I needed clarifications or elaborations, I asked for them by e-mail as well. I communicated with my participants by e-mail for a year following the eight week data collection period, because I needed their confirmation and elaboration about what I understood about them. They quite willingly responded to my e-mail requests. All the e-mail communications were collected for analysis.

**Literacy Autobiographies**

In addition, right after receiving agreement on research participation, I asked the participants to write literacy autobiographies in their L1, English. The guideline for the literacy autobiography (see Appendix [C]) was provided at the time of the request. Literacy autobiographies can be a useful source of data, as shown in the study of Pavlenko (2001). For the literacy autobiography, the participants were asked to write about their past L1 and L2 writing experiences and education, current L2 writing experience, writing strategies that they usually employ (e.g., resources and assistance that they seek for writing), reasons/purposes for taking language classes, the role of writing in L2 learning, perceptions/attitudes about the KFL program, and so forth. These written narratives became an excellent source for knowing about each participant’s linguistic,
cultural and historical backgrounds at the beginning stage of the research. Also, the narratives were useful in corroborating common themes and patterns found in other sources of data, such as interviews and process logs. When I interviewed the participants for the first time to know about their backgrounds and L2 writing experiences (see the Appendix [A]), I could ask more questions based on the autobiography that they wrote. All the oral communications were audio recorded and transcribed for analysis.

(5) Observations and Field Notes

In a case study, observational evidence is often useful in obtaining additional information about the context and phenomenon being studied (Yin, 2003). Particularly, classes assigned for writing instruction or reading-aloud time (e.g., students’ oral reading of their compositions) was a main focus of observation. Since I was the participants’ instructor, I was able to observe their behavior in the classroom, but it was hard for me to make observations and teach at the same time. Even though it was hard, I cannot deny that the observation helped me understand more about the participants and their writing behaviors. Hyland (2003) asserted that introspective methods can provide reports of what participants say they think and do, but researchers need to incorporate methods that can offer actual evidence, such as observation, into their research. The direct observation method is a way of obtaining data “based on conscious noticing and precise recording of actions” (Hyland, 2003, p. 259). Prior to observing the classroom, I made a list of behaviors in which I was particularly interested. While observing, I used the list to note whether and how the behaviors occurred. If I could, I wrote detailed descriptions about the occurrences and my hunches and feelings around them as well. Immediately after the
observations, I typed the field notes in my computer with more details, as Emerson et al (1995) suggest that researchers write “field-notes as soon and as fully as possible after events of interest have occurred” (p. 14).

**Data Analysis**

Miles and Huberman’s inductive procedure (1994) was used to summarize and analyze the data collected from the various sources. Their procedure provided very detailed information for analysis of qualitative data based on numerous qualitative study examples. The inductive approach helped me to draw conclusions derived from comparative research based upon the themes or patterns identified from multiple sources of raw data: interview transcripts, field notes, participants’ literacy autobiographies, retrospective protocols and process logs that were a representation of the participants’ writing processes. Inductive approaches aim to obtain understanding of meaning in complex raw data by means of active processes in which researchers identify salient patterns or themes by reading data repeatedly and rigorously, and find connections between the patterns and the context (Brice, 2005). The classification process, also called ‘coding’, is essential in qualitative research, and the coding process runs all the way through the research processes (Merriam, 1998; Brice, 2005).

Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 9) summarized a set of analytic moves that can be used across different qualitative research types, and I followed their sequence of the procedures for analysis. First, all the interview recordings, stimulated recall protocols, and field notes were typed by me and two student assistants, and then the transcriptions, writing autobiographies, and process logs (autobiographies and logs were typed and sent
by e-mail by the participants) were read rigorously several times to identify categories and themes running across the cases and data. The coding and summary were done manually, and the labels for the categories were created by me with the help of reviewed literature and the ‘Activity Theory’ of Engeström (1999) that the present study was framed with. I wrote the codes and some notes in the margins of the transcriptions, autobiographies, and process logs. The codes were applied to “sentences, monothematic chunks of sentences or paragraphs”, as suggested by Miles and Huberman (pp. 64-65). The identified categories were combined or linked when the meanings were similar. I summarized the data in accordance with the identified categories, and the revision of the categories and recoding of the data were repeated until a satisfactory framework could be created to explain the participants’ use of L2 writing strategies. I began to isolate the patterns, commonalities and differences at the very beginning stage of the study and took them to the next interview and recall sessions. The whole process was “iterative or cyclical” rather than sequential (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 12). In fact, data collection, data reduction, and conclusion drawing processes were interactive, continuous, and cyclical, as shown in the Interactive Model of Data Analysis by Miles and Huberman (1994). The interactive processes enabled me to gradually elaborate a small set of generalizations that were consistent throughout the set of collected data.

Miles and Huberman (1994) defined qualitative data analysis as consisting of three activities: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. ‘Data reduction’ refers to the process of selecting, simplifying, and transforming the data of the transcriptions or field notes. While collecting data, researchers continuously engage in
various data reduction activities, such as writing summaries, coding, teasing out themes, making clusters, and so on. The researchers’ decisions on the activities of summarizing, coding and abstracting are all analytic choices. The data reduction/transforming process occurs until the final report is completed. ‘Data display’ is an “organized, compressed assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and action” (p. 11). It includes many types of matrices, graphs, charts, and so forth. Designing displays is an analytic activity, and better displays increase the validity of the analysis. Conclusion drawing and verification involve identifying and exploring “regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, causal flows, and propositions” (p. 11). This process starts at the beginning of research: vague and light conclusions become increasingly explicit and grounded toward the end of the research.

The three procedures of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification are “interwoven” before, during, and after data collection and make up the domain called ‘data analysis’ (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p. 12). Miles and Huberman presented a model illustrating the interactive and cyclical relationships among the three activities (see Figure 2). In my study, the coding of the data provided new ideas on the content of the matrices, and the designing and organizing of the data required further data reduction. Conclusion drawing processes started as the data reduction processes began, and as the data reduction and display activities went on together, the commonalities and differences between the participants became more explicit and grounded. The qualitative analysis was a continuous and iterative process.
In addition, ‘clustering’ or grouping and ‘pattern coding’ was based on the data, Engestrom’s (1999) ‘Activity Theory’, Lei’s (2008) categorization of L2 (EFL) writing strategies, and reviewed literature on second and foreign language writing. Engestrom’s Activity Theory describes that human activity is mediated by four interrelated contextual sources or factors: artifacts, rules, community, and division of labor or roles (see Figure 1). The current study’s categorization of the mediated strategies followed the theoretical model: (1) artifacts mediated (the Internet-, L1-, & L2- mediated), (2) rule mediated (self-constructed rules-, good writing criteria-, plagiarism rule-, & time-mediated), (3) community mediated (native speaker-, prior experience-, classroom community-, & imagined community-mediated), and (4) role mediated (author/writer- & language learner mediated). According to Yin (2003), one of the most effective strategies for case study analysis is to “follow the theoretical propositions that led to the case study” (p. 111). The propositions enable researchers to “focus attention on certain data and to ignore other data”, to help to organize the entire case study, and to answer ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions.

Figure 2. Components of Data Analysis: Interactive Model (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 12)
(p. 112). It is believed that the categories emerge from the interaction of theory and data (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

**Establishment of Validity and Trustworthiness**

One of the important considerations in qualitative research is to establish trustworthiness or validity throughout the study, so that research findings and interpretations are credible. To establish trustworthiness, I employed the procedures of (1) triangulation, (2) member checking, and (3) clarification of research bias (e.g., by writing a reflective journal) (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

**(1) Triangulation**

Use of multiple data-collection methods and multiple sources is one of the useful ways to establish trustworthiness (Davis, 1995; Lather, 1986; Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Glesne, 1999). The practice of using multiple sources of data and techniques is called ‘triangulation’. The purpose of triangulation is “not the simple combination of different kinds of data, but the attempt to relate them so as to counteract the threats to validity identified in each” (Berg, 1995, p. 5; cited in Glesne, 2003, p. 31). One of the major strengths of case studies is the opportunity to use many different sources of evidence, and findings or conclusions in a case study that employs several different sources of evidence are convincing and accurate (Yin, 2003). “The richer the data, the more believable the findings” (Glesne, 2000, p. 31). The current study relied on the following different sources of information: (a) interview transcripts, (b) process logs, (c) retrospective protocols (stimulated recall), (d) texts and documents (writing assignments, exam writings, participants’ literacy autobiographies), (e) e-mail communication and chatting
transcripts, (f) observations, and (g) field notes. These diverse sources helped me not only find recurring themes or patterns in the participants’ mediating strategy use, but also relate and corroborate them with certainty.

(2) Member checking

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), member checking is “the most crucial technique for establishing credibility” because the research processes and results are shared with the stakeholders from whom the data are originally collected (p. 314). Throughout the study, I shared interview transcripts and interpretations with my research participants to ensure that the participants were portrayed accurately. Member checking gave the participants an immediate opportunity to correct errors or challenge inaccurate interpretations. I communicated with my participants through e-mails or face-to-face, if any clarification of meaning needed to be made. Most of the time, member checking was embedded in the interview sessions. Member checking also provided the participants the opportunity to volunteer additional information: it stimulated them to recall additional items or points that were not mentioned at the first time. In this way, the member-check was a useful means of establishing credibility of research processes and results, obtaining more information, and respecting the research participants.

(3) Clarification of research bias (Reflection Journal)

I wrote a reflective journal throughout the study to monitor my subjectivity as a researcher. According to Glesne (1999), monitoring subjectivity does not mean that researchers try to keep it out; rather, it means that “the researchers increase their awareness of its virtuous capacity” (p. 109). Through the journaling process, I learned
about my own values, attitudes, beliefs, interests, and needs. Lincoln and Guba (1985) stated that knowing and describing a variety of information about the researcher ‘self’ is one of the essential aspects of qualitative inquiry. The total number of the journal entries that I wrote was forty three, and each journal was 150-200 words long.

In the journal, I recorded detailed descriptions of incidents, readings, observations or other events considered important to the research. Also, I recorded my feelings, opinions, and reactions to the incidents and events. I tracked my reflexivity processes, for example, by asking if I was honest with my participants, if I was promoting my own agenda or imposing it onto my participants, and thus if my biases or assumptions were affecting data collection, analysis and interpretation. At the beginning stage of data collection, I found myself being influenced much by the literature review that I had done, and that prior knowledge or agenda seemed to restrict my openness to more insightful, new data to some extent. The awareness enabled me to correct the situation promptly and let me focus more on listening to my participants’ voices, rather than trying to fit my questions into the existing literature. In addition, I often wrote about my difficulties in separating my roles as a researcher and an instructor in the beginning, but I found that toward the end of data collection I was becoming more and more proficient at controlling and managing the dual roles: the journal writing worked as a good mediator in recognizing problems and correcting them. As such, the recording and journaling helped me check my own assumptions, attitudes and beliefs, balance them with data obtained, document the events and insights that occurred during the process of data collection and analysis, and refer to and assess theoretical perspectives related to the study. This was
also how I attempted to create a meaningful and productive separation between my dual roles of course instructor and researcher and to control for a blurring of those roles during data analysis.

**Ethical considerations**

I followed a code of ethics and behaved in such a way as to not be intrusive in the participants’ lives, keeping in mind that “qualitative researchers are guests in the private spaces of the world” (Stake, 2000, p. 447). The participants’ privacy and confidentiality were protected and respected by using informed consent, pseudonyms, and through other negotiation processes. Also, since I respected my research participants as having agency and self-determination, and, also, as collaborators in the process of inquiry, negotiation of ethical decisions was one of the most crucial parts for the entire study. In reality, ethical considerations were inseparable from my frequent interactions with the participants and data. This was another area in which I addressed potential complications, as well as conflicts, between my dual roles as researcher and course instructor. Researching one’s own students is an ethical issue as a well as a complex variable in the research process, and maintaining an ethical stance in this regard was an ongoing priority for me throughout this study.
Chapter 4: Findings

This study drew heavily on Lei’s (2008) qualitative case study of EFL (English as a foreign language) learners’ mediated writing strategies. Lei identified four types of mediated strategies: artifact-mediated, rule-mediated, community-mediated, and role-mediated, and these provided a useful framework for the current study and for this chapter. In Lei’s study, the Activity Theory of Engestrom (1999) was the theoretical framework used to identify and categorize the mediated strategies, and that was the case in this study as well. However, where Lei looked at the EFL context, this study operated with the Korean as a foreign language (KFL) context. For a variety of reasons, that context was very different than the one explored in Lei’s study and produced some very different results. For instance, the KFL students had experienced far more writing instruction in their pre-college years than Lei’s EFL learners in China, and they had important study abroad opportunities not available to Lei’s participants. Thus, the circumstances under which they mediated target language writing were significantly different.

As explained in Chapter Three, there were five participants in the study. The following table summarizes important information about the participants, and the information will help explain the content of this chapter regarding the mediated strategies identified from the KFL participants and individual differences in the use of the strategies.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Major &amp; Minor</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Ethnic Background (Relationship to Korean)</th>
<th>Years of studying Korean &amp; Korean courses Taken</th>
<th>Purpose for studying Korean (&amp; Long-term goal)</th>
<th>Study abroad (in Korea)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mark</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>International Studies &amp; *Korean</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>White American (KFL learner)</td>
<td>2 years K101-K103 K507-K509 *Took Korean classes during the summer in Korea</td>
<td>To fulfill major requirement, to work for the Korean government</td>
<td>Yes (Taken Korean classes at a university in Korea)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>International Studies &amp; *Korean</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>White American (KFL learner)</td>
<td>3 years K101-K103 K104-K206 K507-K509</td>
<td>To fulfill major requirement, to make him more marketable</td>
<td>Yes (Did internship at a hotel in Korea)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Min-soo</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>Business &amp; Psychology</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Korean-American (Heritage learner)</td>
<td>2 years K101-K103 K507-K509 *Went to Korean heritage school, parents spoke Korean at home</td>
<td>To maintain and further develop his heritage language proficiency</td>
<td>No (Hoped to receive Korean instruction in Korea)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tao</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>Actuarial Science &amp; *Korean (Minor)</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Chinese-American (KFL learner)</td>
<td>3 years K101-K103 K104-K206 K507-K509</td>
<td>To fulfill minor requirement, to appreciate Korean movies and TV dramas</td>
<td>No (Hoped to receive Korean instruction in Korea)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Students’ Background Information II
As seen in the table above, the participants had received formal instruction in Korean for two to three years, and most of them were taking the third-year, upper-level, Korean courses for a major or minor requirement reason, except Minsoo, who was taking Korean to develop his heritage language proficiency. Also, the participants were studying Korean for various purposes: Mark wanted to work for the Korean government after graduation; Paul wanted to make himself more marketable by adding Korean fluency onto his existing foreign language abilities; Minsoo, the Korean heritage learner, desired to maintain and further develop his heritage language proficiency and cultural knowledge; Tao wanted to appreciate Korean movies and TV dramas with improved Korean proficiency; and Mee was thinking of working in Korea, particularly in a higher educational institution after her graduate study in the U.S. The different long-term goals
and backgrounds of the participants were associated with disparities in terms of mediations and learning foci, language skills most important to them.

This chapter reports results concerning each identified mediated strategy in writing found among the KFL participants (represented by pseudonyms) and provides representative samples of them. These extracts are drawn from various sources of the study’s data (e.g., written autobiographies, interviews, process logs, and stimulated recalls). Individual differences of the participants’ mediations, agency, and affect in writing that are related to their goals and histories are identified as well.

In the next chapter, Chapter Five, the study’s research questions will be addressed after a brief summary of its findings. This is where discussion and interpretation of the findings occur, following the reporting of them in Chapter Four. Afterwards, further discussion and conclusions will be made based on research done in the area of second/foreign language writing. Also, the chapter will present pedagogical implications and suggest recommendations for further research.

**Mediated strategies in L2 writing**

It was found that the KFL participants used four types of mediated strategies for their writing assignments: (1) artifact-mediated (the Internet-, native language (L1)-, and target language (L2)-mediated), (2) rule-mediated (self-constructed rules-, good writing criteria-, plagiarism rule-, and time-mediated), (3) community-mediated (native speaker-, prior experience-, classroom community-, and imagined community-mediated), and (4) role-mediated (writer/author- and language learner-mediated) strategies. Reasons for the mediated actions and degree of the use of specific mediators varied according to the
individuals’ learning histories and goals of Korean learning. Each mediated strategy type is discussed separately in the following pages.

**Artifact-mediated strategies**

All of the KFL participants used various artifacts to mediate their writing, such as the Internet, online/electronic/ paper dictionaries, their native language (L1, English), and various sources in target language (L2, Korean), such as textbooks, references, class handouts, past writings, and Korean songs and TV dramas. The degree of their use of the listed means was different depending upon individual learning goals; however, those identified above were the major mediational artifacts that the participants commonly used during the course of their writing, and also there were common purposes or reasons for using the listed means among the participants. Each of them is discussed below.

**The Internet-mediated strategies**

All the participants used the Internet, both in their L1 (English) and L2 (Korean), but mostly in the L1, to perform various functions related to their writing topics: to gather factual information, to confirm if what they knew was correct, to get ideas for writing, or to learn related words and phrases. Before or during writing, the participants typed topics or related phrases of the assignments on the search engines such as Google and gathered information that they thought might be useful. They put it together in one or two pages and printed them out, or they had the sites open while they were writing. To gather information, they used various search engines, including Wikipedia, Google, Naver, Yahoo, but Wikipedia was recognized as the best site for information and ideas by the participants. For example, Paul mentioned that the Wikipedia was full of resources, and
the information on the site was sufficient enough for language class writing assignments as following:

Researcher: So, you wrote here [in the process log] that you used Wikipedia.
Paul: Yeah, just because it has the most information, and it has everything. You can search anything.
Researcher: How about other websites?
Paul: Honestly from Wikipedia, if I don’t like what’s written there, I’d go to the work cited and there’s websites there. So I’ll just click those. I pretty much always use Wikipedia because it has other sites on the page of what you are looking at. Basically, Wikipedia has everything. (Paul, SR1, pp.5-6)

Researcher: So you used Wikipedia and typed Valentine’s Day for information?
Paul: Yeah, I think you just want to see our writing ability, not our sources, yes. Not for like a paper for my Korean 600 class, I’m not gonna use Wikipedia… But for our Korean writing, I think the information from the Wikipedia is enough. Yeah, you are worried about how I write, its not every little detail, like oh that’s not true, so. (Paul, SR2, p.4)

Plus, the participants searched for Internet sources in the L2, Korean, to learn and apply topic-related words and phrases to their writing, to check the accuracy of their existing knowledge on the topic, or to check out spellings. For example, Tao knew that there are two types of calendars in Korea but did not know those words in Korean. So, she went to Wikipedia, typed ‘Korean New Year’ in a search box, and selected and read a Korean text version on the topic. The Wikipedia site was providing information in all different languages. She finally found the words, 음력 (um; lunar calendar) and 양력 (yang-nyuck, solar calendar), from the Korean text for -nyuk her first essay on comparison of American and Korean New Year (Tao, SR1, p.2). Also, Mark often used a Korean website, Naver.com, to make sure that information that he already knew was correct. For example, while writing he was not sure whether Korean people eat 떡국 (tteok-gook; rice cake soup) in 설날 (sol-nal; Korean New Year) or in 추석 (chu-seok; Korean New Year).
Thanksgiving Day). So, he went to Naver.com and typed ‘설날 떡국’ in Korean and found a sentence ‘한국 사람들은 설날에 떡국을 먹는다 (Han-gook sa-ram-dul-eun solnal-e tteok-gook-ul mung-neun-da; Korean people eat rice cake soup in New Year)’ on the page. Thanks to the information he obtained from Naver.com, he was able to write the part that he was not sure of with more certainty and confidence. Furthermore, the participants checked word spellings on the Internet site by using Korean. For example, Minsoo, the heritage participant, actively used Korean when checking spellings of the words that he wanted to use for his assignments. Compared to the other participants, he used the Internet more often for spell-check, because in his brain he had lots of words that he had heard since he was very young but could not be sure of their spellings. He explained to me how he was checking spellings by using Google in the stimulated recall session of his final project paper:

(And [for revision] I search for the spellings of the words that I wrote in the paper in the Google, and I make sure that other people use the spellings that I used in the paper. For example, when I typed in the Google search box like ‘경제적 궁핍’ (kyung-jae-jeok Goong-pip; economic poverty/suffering) in Korean, I was able to check the spelling of the word and its usage in context as well. Most of time, I check for spellings only though. However, I think that the spellings provided by the Google could be wrong, because Google can give me the spellings of the people who don’t know Korean well (Minsoo, SR4, p.7)).

In addition, online bilingual dictionaries (e.g., Korean websites such as naver.com; yahoo.co.kr) were extensively used during the writing process for various purposes: to look up new words, to reaffirm the definition of words or phrases, to explore fine points
of words in context, and to look for or double-check spellings. Even to Mark, who loved to carry and use his small electronic dictionary, double-checking with the Naver.com online dictionary was an important procedure to select the most appropriate word and expression. Also, Paul, who loved to use a bilingual book dictionary, liked to visit the Yahoo online dictionary to look for the fine points of words and decide on the best one, when he was able to use a computer in the school library. The dictionary was the most useful resource for writing and best friend to the participants, as described in the following excerpts:

When I’m doing my writing assignments for Korean, the dictionary is my best friend. Any word I do not know I could refer to it (Mee, autobiography).

When I engage in Korean writing, I often ask my Korean friends for help. However, my first resource is my dictionary because I find it more advantageous to my writing improvement if I am able to come up with results on my own. I mainly use my dictionary to look up words as well as word context as my dictionary has plentiful sample sentences. I find this method the best for overall vocabulary retention as well as word-contextual improvement. In addition, there are times where I will consult the Korean website, Naver.com, for more sentence examples. Though I normally use these resources mainly when writing, I sometimes will use my dictionary during free time to help my vocabulary retention (Mark, autobiography).

I never use online translator; however, I do enjoy the variety of Korean online dictionaries that better assist me in finding the most sophisticated words to use throughout my paper (Paul, autobiography).

저는 모르는 단어 알고 싶을 때, 다른 단어 알고 싶을 때, 교정할 때, 그리고 문장이나 말이 좀 이상할 때 Naver.com 사전으로 체크해요. 스펠링도요. (I check with Naver.com online dictionary when I want to know words that I didn’t know, when I want to know different words (synonyms), when I revise and when sentences or words (that I wrote) are unnatural. And I use the dictionary for spellings, too) (Minsoo, Interview based on autobiography).

I used both of the Yahoo.co.kr online dictionary and Babel-fish translation site to pick right words for the vocabularies that I didn’t know before and to check for spellings (Tao, SR2, p.2)
To the participants, one of their major concerns in writing was to find the most appropriate words or phrases in their writing context. It was interesting to see that at the third-year level, they were still so driven to acquire more language and used the writing assignments for that purpose. It was found that they often referred to example sentences that the dictionaries provided in order to look for the most appropriate ones for their writing assignments. They studied, explored, and reaffirmed the usage of words or phrases by examining the sample sentences. For example, Mark learned that the particle 

\[-\text{을/를} (eul/reul; object particle)\]  

should be used for 

\[-\text{나타내다} (na-ta-nae-da; causative form of } \text{나타나다, na-ta-na-da; appear})\]  

instead of 

\[-\text{이/가} (i/ga, subject particle)\]  

through an example sentence in a dictionary. He was able to clearly differentiate 

\[-\text{을/를} \text{나타내다} (object + 을/를 + appear; have object appear)\]  

from 

\[-\text{이/가} \text{나타나다} (subject + 이/가 + appear)\]  

through the examination of the sample sentence:

Mark: Something that I wasn’t very sure about [here]. I wasn’t sure what particle like I should use in the sentence ‘사랑을 나타내다’ [sarang-eul na-ta-nae-da; ‘let love appear]. I used ‘을’ [eul; object particle]. Is that correct for that? 

Researcher: Did you come up with ‘을’?

Mark: For this, I looked up in my electronic dictionary and I looked up, you know, the verb ‘appear’ 나타내다, and used the example sentences and they had like 

\[-\text{을 나타낸다고 한다} (-eul na-ta-naen-da-go han-da)\]  

So, o.k. it must be ‘을’ so I found it there (Mark, SR2, p.2).

Minsoo, the Korean heritage learner, also often read and studied example sentences in the Naver.com dictionary to decide on better words for his papers. In the interviews, he kept telling me that he had heard of many words and phrases because he was raised in a home where Korean was spoken by his parents, but he also mentioned that he could not be sure of the exact usage of the words often times. He said that the example sentences of the
online dictionary were very useful whenever he needed to decide on more appropriate words or expressions:

근데 들어 왔는데 아직 항상 또 찾아야 되죠. 확인해야 되죠. 어떤 단어가 편할까 알고 싶어서 Naver.com 사전을 사용하고 example sentence 를 읽어 보면 모르는 단어의 뜻을 확인할 수 있어요. 필요한 단어도 보고 사전에 있는 문장을 읽어 보면서 공부해요.  
(I’ve heard of the words, but I should find them in the dictionary all the time to check out their meanings. I use Naver.com online dictionary to know which word would be the best for my writing, and I can confirm the meanings of unknown words when I read example sentences in the dictionary. I look for the words that I need, and also I study with the example sentences in the dictionary (Minsoo, SR4, pp.6-7)).

In the stimulated recall session of the final project where he wrote about the current economic depression of the United States, he reported that he changed to a word that was used in an example sentence in a dictionary instead of using a word he originally thought of:

Researcher: ‘주택부문’?  
Minsoo: 네, ‘Housing’이요. 다른 것을 썼는데 다른 단어 알고 싶어서 찾아봤어요.  
Researcher: 원래는 뭐 썼는데요?  
Minsoo: 그냥, ‘집부문’이요. 근데 그게 좀 이상해서 제가 찾아봤어요. Naver.com 사전에서 example 문장을 읽어 보면 모르는 단어의 뜻을 확인할 수 있고 다른 단어로 확실하게 쓸 수 있어요.  

(Minsoo: In this sentence, ‘2007년부터 주택부문이 감소해지는 바람에 미국 경제는 침체가 되었다’ (Because of the decrease of ‘housing area/category’ from the year of 2007, economic state in the U.S. became depressed), I found ‘주택부문 (Ju-taek-bu-moon; housing area)’ in the Naver.com dictionary.  
Researcher: 주택부문(housing area/category)?  
Minsoo: Yes, ‘housing’. I originally wrote a different word, but I looked up the dictionary because I wanted to know some different words.  
Researcher: What word did you originally write?  
Minsoo: Just, I just wrote ‘집부문’ (jip-bu-moon; the area of house). But I found it strange/unnatural, so I looked for another word. If I read the example sentences in
the dictionary, I can confirm the meaning of unknown words, and also I can use different words (i.e., synonyms) with certainty (Minsoo, SR4, pp.1-2))

Mee, a Chinese-American, frequently referred to the online dictionary to look for words, phrases and sentences. She said that she should have the Yahoo.co.kr dictionary site open during her writing time, telling me that “it’s because my vocabulary is not the best” (Mee, SR1, p.3). To make sentences, she often referred to the sample sentences of the dictionary, usually changing them around to make into her own sentences. According to her, the example sentences were “sample guidelines” that helped her to construct sentences (Mee, SR3, p.8):

Mee: Sometimes when it [the sample sentence] is not talking about what I want to talk about, I kind of change the words a little but use it as a sample guideline and stuff. If they were saying “something, something should be improved”, then that line, I just switch the word and put like, I don’t know, “technology should be improved”. So I just like stick words where I need them and then take out words if I don’t need them and stuff, so (Mee, SR3, p.8).

Mee: I didn’t know what like ‘worldwide’, how you would say that and stuff, so, um, yeah. And then like I think this sentence [발렌타인데이는 전세계적으로 인기가 많은 명절이다; Valentine’s Day is a popular holiday worldwide] was formed from a sample sentence they had online that looked pretty good, so I kind of like changed it around to kind of make it into a sentence kind of. In the dictionary they had a sentence that - it was talking about something else, but like the English meaning if you switch the words around would kind of work out if I kind of played with it. So that was from a result of me kind of playing around with the sentence (Mee, SR2, p.3).

In the stimulated recall sessions of the writings on Valentine’s Day and technology, Mee reported that she used the whole sentence from the dictionary, because she thought that the example sentence was a good one that might benefit her writing. She told me that it was hard for her to paraphrase the sample sentence and thought that paraphrasing could change the original meaning of the sentence. She thought that it was all right for her to
borrow the entire sentence from the dictionary as long as she could understand the
structure and meaning of the sentence:

Mee: This sentence, ‘발렌타인데이 같은 특별한 날에는 12 송이의 장미 가격이 수요가 많기 때문에 2 배 이상 격증 뛰었다 (On special days like Valentine’s Day, the cost of a dozen roses rose twelve-fold or more as a result of high demand)’ This was from the sample sentence in Yahoo.co.kr dictionary. I can’t remember what exactly I typed in that one. It’s like I just found that sentence. I thought it was good, so I just wrote down (Mee, SR2, p. 4).
Mee: This sentence, ‘기술의 진보는 대부분의 일상적인 일의 기계화를 가능하게 했다 (Technological advances have enabled most routine tasks to be automated)’ this was a sample sentence.
Researcher: You understand what this means, right?
Mee: Yeah, I thought this was a good sentence..... Sometimes I find it hard to paraphrase because it’s so hard to change around, and I think like what if I change it around it’ll mean something else, and so. There’s probably that experience sometimes (Mee, SR3, pp.8-9).

Researcher: So, do you use these example sentences too [pointing out the sample sentences of the online dictionary page]?
Mee: Yeah, if I find a good one, I use it. I don’t use it all the time. I just.. if I sometimes see a good sentence that might like benefit my writing, I would use the sentence, but like I don’t really use it all the time. But usually I just use it to look up the word that I don’t know (Mee, SR1, p.5).

Tao, another Chinese-American participant, also frequently referred to the sample sentences in the Yahoo.co.kr online dictionary as well as the ones in the Yahoo Babel Fish online translation site to write her sentences. The Babel Fish translator provided by the Yahoo website translates into numerous different languages. If learners type a word, phrase, or a sentence in their native language, they can obtain translated sentences in their target language. In fact, the Babel Fish translates texts up-to 150 words for the learners.
The following excerpts show how Tao made use of the Babel Fish translator to make sentences for her assignments.
I used online dictionaries (yahoo and babelfish). Sometimes I put the entire sentence in babelfish and see what they have. If I like it, then I take the whole sentence. Sometimes, I change the sentence a little bit. For example, 메시지를 전달하십시오 (Me-si-ji-reul jeon-dal ha-sip-si-o; please deliver the message) is changed to 메시지를 전달하고 싶으면 (Me-si-ji-reul jeon-dal-ha-ko si-peu-myeon; if you want to deliver the message, the pattern ‘-고 싶으면’ means ‘if you want to’). (Tao, PL3, p.2)

Tao: This sentence, ‘테크놀로지는 인간을 육체적으로 그리고 정신적으로 강화하기 위하여 이용된다 (Technology is used to enhance human lives physically and intellectually)’ This sentence.. ‘정신적으로’ is from Yahoo dictionary. The Babel Fish has a different word.

Researcher: Other sentences from Babel Fish?
Tao: And also, ‘테크놀로지는 사람들의 편익을 창조하기 위하여 존재한다 (Technology exists to create convenience to people)’. (Tao, SR4, p.4).

[Output of the Babel Fish Translator]
- 기술은 인간을 육체적으로 그리고 *지적이 강화하기 위하여 이용된다.
- 기술은 *사람들에게 편익을 창조하기 위하여 존재한다.

As demonstrated in the excerpts above, Tao used translated sentences as a foundation and changed them into the ones appropriate for her writing context. She obtained a collocation of ‘메시지를 전달하다 (me-si-ji-reul jeon-dal-ha-da; deliver a message)” from the Babel Fish, and attached –고 싶으면 (-ko si-peu-myeon; if you want to-) after the verb stem “전달하 (jeon-dal-ha)” of the verb “전달하다 (jeon-dal-ha-da)” to express ‘wish’. Also, in the sentence of ‘테크놀로지는 인간을 육체적으로 그리고 정신적으로 강화하기 위하여 이용된다 (Technology is used to enhance human lives physically and intellectually)’, she changed the original sentence a little bit: the original sentence had ‘기술 (gi-sul; technology)’ instead of ‘테크놀로지 (te-k-no-lo-gi; loan word, technology)’ and ‘지적이’ instead of ‘정신적으로’. She referred to the Yahoo dictionary for the word of ‘정신적으로 (mentally)’ and also thought that ‘테크놀로지’
was a better word than ‘기술’ since the word was used in the writing prompt and class reading materials. Plus, as for the sentence, ‘테크놀로지는 사람들의 편익을 창조하기 위하여 존재한다 (Technology exists to create convenience to people)’, when she typed her sentence in English, the translator gave her the sentence, 기술은 사람들에게 편익을 창조하기 위하여 존재한다. She changed “사람들에게 (to people)” to “사람들의 (people’s)” by using possessive particle ‘의(eui)’, resulting in a more natural and grammatically appropriate sentence. In this way, rather than just copying thoughtlessly from the translator, Tao selected words and phrases in the translator carefully judging based on her existing grammar knowledge and other resources such as dictionaries or reading materials.

As seen from the case of Tao, the online translator like the Yahoo Babel Fish site was one of the references for writing, but the translator was not recognized as a reliable resource by the participants. Tao used sentences from the Bebel Fish but modified them with her existing grammatical knowledge and words from other online dictionaries. Tao mentioned that the Babel Fish online translator just translated word for word; so, very often she found that the translated sentences did not make sense at all. She, thus, checked and further explored the meanings of the words used in the translator by referring to the Yahoo online dictionary, and finally decided on the words for her assignments. Like Tao, the other participants did not think that the online translator, including the Babel Fish, was a reliable tool for Korean learning. They did not use the translator because of its word for word, literal translation, often producing awkward, unnatural sentences. Tao
was the only participant who used the translator, probably because she heavily relied on the translation (from English to Korean) when writing. But again, she was using the online translator with a very skeptical attitude, by using more trustworthy resources like the dictionary all the time.

Furthermore, it was noted that the participants frequently used online dictionaries to check for spellings. In addition to the spelling of unknown words, they tended to check out the spelling of the words that they already knew or heard of, for the fear that they might misspell the words. For example, Minsoo, the Korean heritage learner, had a habit of checking the spellings of words that he wanted to use, even for the words that he already knew: in his head, he had a lot of Korean words and expressions that he had heard of but was not sure how to spell them. In particular, the online dictionary was useful for the participants to learn the spellings of foreign or loan words. For example, Mark mentioned that he always had trouble in spelling borrowed words, reporting that he used the dictionary for the spelling of 채팅 (chae-ting; chatting) (Mark, SR3, p.7) and 리투아니아 (Li-tu-a-nia; a name of country) (Mark, SR1, p.2). Mee also told me that she had to consult the dictionary to know how to spell loan words, such as 데이트 (dae-i-teu; date) (Mee, SR2, p.4) and 아이포드 (ai-pad; iPod) (Mee, SR3, p.5), mentioning that it was difficult for her to know the exact letters of loan words even though she knew their sounds. She added, for 아이포드 (ai-pad; iPod), the dictionary did not have the term, so she had to go to the site of Yahoo Korea and type the word, pretending that she was buying an iPod, then it came up. That spelling was an important issue for them at the third year level was an interesting finding.
To summarize, the Internet was an important mediational means to the participants in writing. They used Internet sites such as Wikipedia and Google to collect factual information and check the accuracy of their existing knowledge on the topic, to learn more about topic-related words or phrases, and to check for spellings. Plus, use of online bilingual dictionaries (i.e., naver.com; yahoo.co.kr) was important to them to learn about unknown words, to reaffirm the meaning of words and phrases, to check for the spellings, and to examine minute nuances or fine points of the words in which they were interested. Particularly, all the participants used example sentences that the online dictionaries provided in order to find the right words in their writing contexts. The sample sentences helped them to understand the usage of words in context and to use them in their writing with more certainty and confidence. The participants actively used the example sentences as “sample guidelines” to understand the Korean sentence structure and to construct grammatically correct sentences. In other words, they needed linguistic models, a finding that presents an interesting view of where they stood in the language acquisition process. They were at a stage in which input from models was an important mediator between what they already knew and where they wanted to be in their knowledge of Korean. It was also found that the online dictionaries were useful for the participants to check out spellings, including loan words.

Native language (L1)-mediated strategies

To all the participants, the native language, English, was an important mediator for writing: English was used to look for the meaning of unknown words and phrases, to obtain information and ideas for the writing topics, to organize thoughts and ideas (e.g.,
making an outline) more effectively, to think more clearly and profoundly (e.g.,
translation), and to boost confidence by decreasing the level of anxiety towards errors or
mistakes. While this reliance on English may not be surprising, it represents a useful
finding, as it might be expected that students in their third year of learning a foreign
language would be moving away from heavy dependence on the native language. That
these participants were still tied strongly to their L1, English, may say something about
the significant differences between Korean and English, thus necessitating a greater
dependence on the native language than might be found in the acquisition of a target
language that more closely resembles the native language.

The participants used their L1, English, when searching the Internet in order to
learn about unknown words, and to obtain information and ideas for their writing. Most
of the time, they used English-Korean online dictionaries to explore the meaning of new
words or phrase that they wanted to use for their assignments. Also, they typed topic-
related key words in English to seek for information or sample essays and to double-
check the accuracy of their existing knowledge on the topic. They read and used the
materials to write more informative and accurate essays content-wise. To the participants,
use of L1 was an important mediator to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in terms of
gathering right information and writing thoughtful contents, as reflected in the following
excerpts:

As I wrote the first paragraph about the history of Valentine’s Day, I copied and
pasted information from the Internet (English) so I did not have to read the article,
close the browser, and then type. Instead, since the information was pasted onto the
word document (English), I paraphrased the information, and then translated into
Korean (typed it in Korean while reading it in English below) (Minsoo, PL2, p.1).
I prepared my assignment in English, because it is easier for me to look for the information I want. If it’s in Korean, I have to translate the information to English and decide if I want to use it in my paper. It is much easier if the information I found is in English (Tao, PL1, p.1).

I looked through many sites (English) and borrowed the information that I think is interesting and combined it all into a paper (Tao, PL4, p.1).

In addition, English was used when the participants needed to think clearly and profoundly, and to organize information and thoughts for their papers. Mark and Minsoo did not develop paper outlines before writing: they told me that they just started to write and kept writing until they could not think any more, taking out what sounded awkward and adding details to complete the assignments. They tended to let the papers take their own shape, and their writing processes were much involved with mental translations.

While doing so, they thought sentences in English first and mentally translated them into Korean:

Mark: Especially for the first part here about the history of Valentine’s Day, since you know I learned it during high school I took the memory because, you know I think in English when I’m thinking about this memory from my high school, so I took it and basically I literally translated it in my mind from English to Korean. That’s how I came up with all the sentences here like ‘발렌타인 데이는 세계적인 명절이 되었다 (Valentine’s Day became a world-wide holiday)’. Those thinking in my mind, Valentine’s Day has become sort of a universal holiday, like you know world-wide holiday.. So I just thought of that, thought about how to say in Korean, and wrote it down. That was basically whole thinking for this paragraph. Again with this like Valentine’s Day is not only in the United States, it’s in China, Japan, Korea. I just thought of that in English and just switched into Korean (Mark, SR2, p. 1).

Mark: This sentence, ‘배가 불러서 토할 때까지 먹는다 (I eat till the point where I’m so full that I could throw up)’, I just thought of in English, you can say “I ate so full to that I felt like I was gonna throw up.. to the point where I was gonna throw up” This is how I translated that to Korean in my mind. I’m not that sure whether it’s correct or whether it flows well. Is this how to say in Korean? (Mark, SR2, p. 3)
Researcher: 이게 무슨 말이죠? 여기 프로세스 로그에 이렇게 썼어요. “I prepared for this assignment in both Korean and English: English helps me think of different transitions between paragraphs. 좀 더 설명해 줄 수 있어요?
Researcher: 아 그러니까 ‘게다가’, ‘반면에’, ‘결론적으로’ 이런 transition words 들을 먼저 영어로 생각하고 한국말로 써요?
Minsoo: 네. 항상 논문을 영어로 쓰니까요. 다른 course 에서는.
(Researcher: What do you mean by this? You wrote in this process log that “I prepared for this assignment in both Korean and English: English helps me think of different transitions between paragraphs” Can you explain this to me?
Minsoo: Yes. I use ‘반면에 (ban-myeo-ne; on the other hand)’, ‘결론적으로 (gyeol-on-jeo-gro; to conclude, as a result) a lot of times in the papers, so I tend to think those transitional words in English first. In English I think ‘on the other hand’ and then I translate it to ‘반면에’ in Korean.
Researcher: So, you think of those transition words in English first and then translate them into Korean?
Minsoo: Yes, because I write papers in English for other classes all the time (Minsoo, SR1, p.6).

Also, for the other participants, Paul, Tao, and Mee, the L1, English, was an important means to make outlines or brainstorm what they were going to include in the papers, and also to do translations. Paul developed an outline in English for every writing assignment, writing down main points with bullets for introduction, body, and conclusion paragraphs. He said, “It [writing an outline in English] is much quicker. Writing it in Korean takes more thought” (Paul, SR1, p. 7). In addition to the use of English for writing the basic outline, he also went through the process of mental translation, “thinking in my native language” throughout his writing, as Mark did (Paul, PL2, p. 1). Mee and Tao developed paper outlines in English with much more details than those of Paul, in order to organize their information and thoughts before writing:

I wrote my ideas down in English first because that way I could organize my thoughts without going all over the place (Tao, PL2).
Researcher: So, before writing, you wrote down these words and expressions [pointing out the notebook she used for the paper outline].  
Mee: Mhm. It helps me like compare, so I just wrote out some ideas for some bullet points and then put them together.  
Researcher: So this is brainstorming.  
Mee: Yes. (Mee, SR1, p.1).  

In addition, Mee and Tao tended to write their whole papers in English first and translate the sentences into Korean later. Due to a lack of time, they could not translate all the content of their papers, so half way through they turned to directly writing in Korean only. However, if they had more time, they wanted to invest their time more on the translation work. They thought that the literal translation helped them more clearly write their ideas, focus more on what they needed to write, overcome linguistic deficiencies, and reduce the amount of careless mistakes. Especially for their final project paper, they engaged in more translations than their previous writings, because the composition writing on a social issue and their opinion about it was more challenging than the other papers. Tao wrote about the issue of plastic surgery for her final paper, and she later translated the whole paper that she wrote originally in English into Korean. Tao and Mee actively used their L1 to overcome their limited linguistic capacity. The following excerpts reflect their thoughts about the translation processes:  

When doing my Korean writing assignments, I have to write out what I want in English first and then I go back and translate the writing (Mee, Autobiography, p.1).  

I started out writing in English for later translation into Korean, but halfway through I went straight to writing in Korean only (Mee, PL1). Usually, I try to write the English sentence and then Korean afterwards, but then I found out it takes too much time, so I just went straight from thinking in the head in Korean and just writing it all out and stuff (Mee, SR1, p.6).
I feel – I probably would make more mistakes if I were just writing it all out in Korean and stuff, so it might be better for me to the English translation first and then into Korean because like I might miss like a particle or like some important word that kind of completes the sentence. I feel I might be more careless if I wrote it straight out in Korean (Mee, SR1, p.7).

I definitely used English first for this assignment [final project, wrote about ‘abortion’] since it is quite a challenging topic to write about. Like since even if you write in English, it’s still kind of like a very intense topic to write about, so it’s kind of good to write down all thoughts in English first and then translate afterwards. Because to do it in Korean would be kind of hard (Mee, SR4, p.7)

When I do the Korean writing assignments, I usually first write the topic in English and then translate it into Korean. First, I research the topic online and then organize the information into an introduction, body paragraphs, and a conclusion. Then I write the topic in English but also keeping in mind how I would translate the specific sentences later. Sometimes, I would skip the step of writing the entire paragraph in English if I have a good outline of the paragraph. The process of translation is the longest and hardest because I need to use the dictionary to find unknown vocabularies and figure which grammar point I should use in order for the sentence to make sense (Tao, autobiography, p. 1).

In this topic [final project], there’s a lot of information and so I thought it would be more organized in this way [translation] (Tao, SR4, p.1).

Researcher: So, are you satisfied with this essay [final paper] more than the other three essays?
Tao: Yeah.
Researcher: So, what’s the good point of using the English to Korean translation for you?
Tao: Just.. we can see what it looks like in English. It’s easier to translate because you have the words there, you don’t have to think of words (Tao, SR4, p.7).

However, Mee and Tao considered the use of L1 and translation as the process that would need to be eliminated ultimately, even though the process was useful to them. They thought that their frequent use of English, including translation in writing, was an indication that showed their low proficiency in Korean. They hoped that that they could move away from using English as their Korean proficiency improved. Mee told me that she had to write out the whole draft in English first and translate it into Korean when she
took the first course of the third-year Korean series. She added that as her Korean proficiency level increased, she felt that she was using more and more Korean and not relying on English as much as she had done before. She wished that she could think in Korean and write directly in Korean, without thinking and writing in English in the future:

Researcher: So you wrote here [in the autobiography] that you use English many times for Korean writing.
Mee: Yeah, like, usually, when I first started K507, I had to really write the whole thing out in English first before translating into Korean, but I feel like as I went up levels I kind of don’t have to do that as much as compared to when we first started writing. Now I can have my thought in English in my head and write it out in Korean. So I could see some kind of improvement like as we go along, kind of.
Researcher: So do you think the use of English, your native tongue, not good for your Korean learning?
Mee: I think it’s better to really just try to use as much Korean as I could instead of using English, because then I’ll become too dependent on English like constantly try write out in English first. I kind of more like to put my mind into thinking in Korean style or way or something like that. So, I think it would be better if I know how to do that (Mee, interview based on autobiography, p. 3).

Mark, Paul, and Minsoo, who tended to engage in mental translation while writing, rather than literal translation, also thought that use of the L1 would not help them attain a higher level of writing proficiency in Korean. For example, Mark reported that he tended to think of sentences in English and mentally translate them into Korean while writing, but he tried to eliminate English in his whole process of writing so that his writing could have a natural flow. As Mark explained in an interview and his process log:

Mark: As I am still very much in the early stages of second language learning, I tend to think in English. For this assignment, however, I did my best to think in Korean. I find that when I get myself into a Korean way of thinking, my writing tends to turn out better than if I simply translate it from English (Mark, PL3).

Mark: I’m trying to eliminate English in the whole process.. think in Korean and write in Korean.. it tends to flow much more smoothly.
Researcher: Even prewriting stage, brainstorming stage, you don’t use English?
Mark: I try not to, as little as possible. If I don’t know a lot of vocabulary, then I would think in English, but more often than not, right now I try to think mainly in Korean.
Researcher: You wanna avoid the use of English when you write in Korean, right?
Mark: Right, from my experience it’s the best way to learn... to completely eliminate (it) in the process of language learning (Mark, interview based on autobiography, p.4).

One of the major reasons why the participants thought negatively about the use of translation involved linguistic differences between Korean and English. It was found that translation was hard and laborious work due to different grammatical structures and nuances of the two languages. Mee and Tao actively engaged in English to Korean translation throughout their writing processes, but often times they wrote in English first and then translated into Korean just for around the first half of an assignment, and then towards the end of the draft their writing was more like freestyle writing, directly writing in Korean. They said that translation took so much time and it was “the longest and hardest process” in the whole writing process, because they needed to find unknown words and at the same time figure out grammar points which were much different from those of English (Tao, autobiography, p.1). As seen in the excerpt below, Paul discussed difficulties of translation from English to Korean, mentioning his experience with the Spanish language, which was relatively easy to translate because of linguistic similarities between English and Spanish. Mark also mentioned that different word order between the two languages, English and Korean, made the whole mental process difficult, explaining why he tried to think and write in Korean only by immersing himself in the L2 environment. He reviewed vocabulary lists, articles, and class reading materials before writing in Korean so that he could get into the mode of composing in Korean:

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Paul: Yes, but I never fully write a paper out in English and translate it. I’ll just write down main points in English like for intro, I’ll talk about this… for second paragraph, how about this? Then I’ll just start writing from there. But it’s just completely in Korean, it’s not in English.
Researcher: So you use English in brainstorming stage.
Paul: Like really simple notes.. like Saint Valentine, the day, dates, year.. that’s it.
Researcher: Did you write first in English and translate into Korean when you were second year student or 1st year student? You don’t do it now, but..
Paul: Honestly I never did. I think that’s really hard. Because to me, it takes so much time thinking.
Researcher: How about when you learned Spanish.. didn’t you translate at all?
Paul: No, but translating in Spanish is a lot easier. So maybe I would have, but I can’t remember, but it’s very easy to go from English to Spanish.
Researcher: Word order is same?
Paul: Yes, and less rules, but in Korean, there are so many small nuances about the language; so translating like that would be really hard. I mean I did the translate when I was younger with Spanish when I was a third year, I got really good, and I would take whole Spanish articles and would translate them in English (Paul, interview based on autobiography, pp.1-2).

Researcher: You wrote here [process log #3] that you are doing your best to think in Korean.
Mark: Right. This is why before I start writing anything I will review vocab words or past articles like this to get me in the Korean way of thinking and get me in the mood to write in Korean.
Researcher: So you think that if you think in Korean then you think that it makes you a better writer?
Mark: Yes, it might not help a real significant amount, but I think it does help a little bit because Korean especially from English it’s very different. It’s a subject object verb language so the whole thought process is a just a little different. So I think it does help a little bit, but I’m not sure how significant it actually is (Mark, SR3, p.10).

Use of the L1, English, was an important mediated strategy to the participants for their writing: by using English, they looked for words and information, developed paper outlines or brainstormed before writing, and mentally and literally translated into Korean while writing. They used their L1 in order to explore the meaning of unknown words or phrases, to write more informative papers, to organize their thoughts and ideas more effectively, to think and write more clearly and profoundly, and to decrease the level of
anxiety about errors or mistakes. The L1 was used to compensate for their lack of L2 proficiency and was particularly useful for writing a challenging paper such as the final project, which involved selecting a social issue and writing opinions regarding the topic. However, the participants frequently indicated that the use of the L1 should be completely eliminated at some point in order to write a paper with more natural flow and native-like sentences. They believed that the use of L1 negatively impacted on their attainment of an advanced or distinguished level of proficiency in Korean writing. It was found that this belief was related to the fact that the English and Korean languages are linguistically, grammatically distant languages, which have many differences in grammatical and sentence structural features.

What is noteworthy about these findings concerning translation and L1 use is the dichotomy or conflict the participants experienced: needing the L1 and translation, on the one hand, but recognizing that this practice was not helpful in the language acquisition process on the other. In this regard the participants found themselves at a complex stage in the language acquisition process, one that they perhaps had to pass through in order to achieve the proficiency in Korean they desired.

**Target language (L2)-mediated strategies**

For the writing assignments, the participants actively used what they learned from textbooks, class reading materials (handouts), past essays, independent study work, and media (e.g., Korean TV programs, news, radio, songs, movies, or dramas). It was found that while writing, the participants often revisited textbooks and reading materials dealt with in class in order to examine how Korean people write and construct sentences, and
to apply vocabulary, grammar patterns, and sentence structures used in the readings to
their writing. The following excerpts show that re-reading or review of the Korean texts
helped the participants to learn not only words and grammar, but also sentence
construction and writing techniques as well. They all tended to think that reading and
writing are associated with each other: reading a lot in Korean would improve writing
proficiency. In other words, Korean was an important source of input for them:

Tao: In order to improve my Korean writing, I tried to familiarize myself with any
good writing techniques that are used in the main text we are learning in class. I
think reading can improve writing as well because we could use the sentence
structure used in the reading and apply to our writing (Tao, autobiography, p. 1).

Paul: During this process [of writing assignments], I may even look back onto
essays written by Koreans or articles we have discussed in class to assure my
sentence patterns make sense. Because I lack any formal training in writing Korean
essays, I tend to look at how Koreans have structured their sentences to better guide
me in my writing process. I have used all of my Korean textbooks from 101-509 in
order to help broaden the types of sentences and structures used in Korean (Paul,
autobiography, pp. 1-2).

Mee: I think the more I read from like Korean texts better it help me to have a feel
for how like sentences are formed and how to put words together; so I think like
reading a lot in Korean will help (Mee, interview based on autobiography, p. 3).

Researcher: So, do you think that the reading material helped when you wrote?
Mark: Absolutely, I wish we had done something like this all year. I really enjoyed
that because I really got to study it, and I learned a lot of words from that too, which
really helped.
Researcher: So, did you apply what you learned to here?
Mark: Yeah, there were a couple words I learned from this article. 신속히 (shin-so-
ki; promptly, rapidly) was one of them. 사치품 (sa-chi-pum, luxury goods), 필수품
(pil-su-pum; essential goods) the word was here. 영향을 주다 (young-hyang-eul ju-
da; influence, affect) too. This article was very helpful, yeah.
Researcher: So did you borrow some words here?
Mark: Yeah, I used like “통신 (tong-shin; communication)”. Like I had probably
heard that before, but I had forgotten it, so it helped to reinforce “통신”. I knew
“발전하다 (bal-jeon-ha-da; to develop)” but that kind of really helped to reinforce
“발전하다”. What else… “신속히”. Was there any other one? Like this “며칠 안에
(myeo-chi-a-nae; within a few days)” – I took that expression from here as well. So there were several expressions or words that I took from that article or the articles. It’s helpful overall in vocabulary retention. Like I said, I knew “통신” and probably if I had really thought about it, I maybe could have remembered it, but now reading an article like this, if now someone said “통신” I know it right away. I don’t have to think twice about it (Mark, SR3, p. 4).


(Minsoo: It was really a good review for me to read the material together in class. I came to understand how to use good vocabulary and make a good sentence after reading it. I knew it a little bit, but it helped a lot. From the article that we read in class, I used words like ‘혜택이 있다 (hae-tae-gi i-tta; there is a benefit)’, ‘문명의 이기 (moon-myung-ae i-gi; convenience of civilization)’, ‘필수품 (pil-su-pum; essential goods)’, ‘실현된다 (shi-ryun-dae-da; be realized)’ ‘전자우편 (jeon-ja-oop-yun; electronic mail/e-mail)’. I heard of them before, but I could use those words after reading this and learning the words. Reading this kind of article is good for me because I can use it. If I use the words from the reading materials in my essay, it’s easier for me to memorize them. I can easily memorize the words. I hope I can read this kind of material in class more often (Minsoo, SR3, p.3).

In addition, the participants studied Korean outside the classroom with various materials: they studied with Korean language books other than textbooks, read Korean news articles online listened to the radio, or watched Korean movies or dramas. In the stimulated recalls and process logs, they reported that they used what they picked up through the independent study on their compositions. For example, Mark, who studied Korean almost everyday at home, reported in the stimulated recall session that for his essays he used what he learned from the advanced-level Korean book that he was studying independently:
Researcher: You wrote here, ‘설날은 문화에서 아주 중요한 위치를 차지하고 있다’ ‘중요한 위치를 차지하다’ [Sol-nal, Korean New Year, occupies a very important space/role in Korean culture]?
Mark: To like occupy.. have an important space.. This expressions, I knew from,, you know we used to have the ‘Beginning 1’ and ‘Beginning 2’ Korean books, and then ‘Intermediate 1’ and ‘Intermediate 2’? I’ve done the advanced books on my own the Intermediate Advanced, and that expression came out a lot in those books, so I’ve learned through those.
Researcher: Yes.. So this is from your independent study?
Mark: Yes,
Researcher: O.k., so you memorize the expressions?
Mark: Yes, the best way for me to memorize this kind of stuff is that just keep reading over and over and I constantly review that book and just sticks.. and actually I remember it.
Researcher: O.K., so how much time you do invest for your independent study of Korean?
Mark: It differs from day to day, and it depends on how much time, you know, I have.. mid-terms always I don’t have a lot of time. But just for normal day anywhere from probably like two hours a day I spend studying, at least like reviewing vocabulary that I have learned, all the grammar patterns.. re-reading, discussions that you gave us looking for words that I don’t know, practice, and I listen to Korean radio online (Mark, SR1, p. 3).

Also, Mee reported that she wrote down what she learned from Korean songs and TV dramas, mentioning that watching the Korean dramas and listening to the Korean songs helped her learn Korean words. Outside the classroom, she loved to watch Korean movies and TV dramas and listen to Korean songs; in fact, her love for Korean dramas and songs motivated her to take Korean classes when she entered the university. In her notebook for the Korean class, I could see some lyrics of Korean songs which were theme songs of a popular Korean drama. She told me that she carried the notebook with her all the time in order to memorize the songs. To her, watching the dramas and listening to the songs were good ways to learn Korean: she said that she learned a lot of words and phrases through the Korean dramas and songs. She reported that she picked up some
words and phrases from the Korean dramas and songs, and applied them to her compositions:

Mee: “시간이 흐름수록 의미는 변했다 (si-ga-ni heu-reul-su-rok ui-mi-neun byun-hae-tta; as time goes by, meaning has been changed)”. This one was kind of interesting – like this line because I heard this line in a drama before, and I had to go back and look in the drama to find like kind of the correct order.
Researcher: Which drama?
Mee: It was “꽃보다 남자 (ggot-bo-da namja; Boys over Flower).” I don’t know if I did the right – did I use it correctly and stuff?
Researcher: Right, right.
Mee: I thought it kind of sounded pretty and stuff (Mee, SR2, p.3).

Mee: 좋아하는 사람한테 고백을 하고 싶으면… 고백을 하다.. (If you’d like to confess [your love] to the person you like.. ‘to confess’) Yeah, I was like – from like songs that I listen to – like a lot of Korean songs have this word in it, so I kind of knew that word in Korean.
Researcher: Did you hear – do you listen to Korean music?
Mee: Yeah, it helps – I think it really helps with my vocabulary and stuff. And then like yeah. But I think like watching dramas and listening to songs really helps a lot. So that’s how I learned a majority of what I know and stuff. ‘cause it’s like sometimes in class we learn a lot, but it doesn’t absorb as much as when you watch it on TV or listen to it in music. Like when it’s something you really like, you tend to absorb it, so that’s how I kind of learn a majority of it (Mee, SR2, pp.4-5).

The participants wanted to use what they picked up from various resources in real life, and writing assignments provided them with a good opportunity to apply them and thus “ingrain them into their head” (Mee, writing autobiography, pp. 1-2). They wanted to use vocabulary and grammar points that they newly picked up inside and outside the classroom on their papers, instead of using the same ones over and over again. To the participants, writing was a truly valuable venue where they could utilize what they already knew and experiment with what they would like to further explore, and after they used them once in their composition they could retain and recall them later more easily.
For example, Mee and Mark described the role of language use through writing in their autobiographies and interviews, as reflected in these excerpts:

Mee: I am really glad that this year while taking the Korean 500 level series, it allowed me the opportunity to write a lot. I think that this is a very valuable experience and I don’t think that my language ability would have improved without this experience. The usage of grammar in writing helps me to continuously keep grammar points in my mind and not lose them because lack of everyday usage. I think that writing in a L2 language really helps to improve the learner’s understanding of that language (Mee, autobiography, p.1).

Mark: This current academic year, 2008-2009, I am taking the 3rd year Korean courses at The Ohio State University. In these courses, we do a considerable amount of writing that, I believe, is extremely helpful given my current language ability. It facilitates not only writing skills, but overall language improvement due to the fact that one must conduct some research in order to write about some of the given topics. I will restate this because I believe it to be extremely important – the best way to get better at writing is to continue to write (Mark, autobiography, pp. 1-2).

Mark: Cause – Like I said “-는 것을 (-da-neun geo-seun)” is always in news articles that I read, and I really haven’t used it much if any. So it didn’t even come into my mind to think to use that expression. Now that I get what purpose it is – like this is the first time that I’ve used it in my own writing. Like I’ve seen it and when I read it, I can understand it, but I never had used it on my own. So now that I have it in my own writing, I think I’ll be able to recall it in the future (Mark, SR4, p. 6).

To sum up, the participants were very input-oriented, and they derived input from a wide array of sources. Here, as with their use of the L1 and translation, we see how the language acquisition process was still playing out for them. What is also interesting is how eagerly, and of their own volition (rather than instructions from teachers), they sought target language input and were prepared to learn from it. They actively reviewed textbooks and class reading materials for vocabulary, grammar points, sentence construction, and writing techniques. They all believed that reading is connected with writing, and a careful reading of texts positively influences writing. Also, they employed what they picked up from independent reading, Korean dramas, songs, and radio
programs for their compositions as well. It turned out that the writing assignments provided a good opportunity for them to try what they wanted to use and, through their use, to consolidate the newly acquired words, phrases, and grammar points.

**Rule-mediated strategies**

It emerged from the data that the participants engaged in four types of rule-mediated strategies: self-constructed rules mediated, good writing criteria mediated, plagiarism rule mediated, and time mediated.

**Self-constructed rules-mediated strategies**

A very interesting finding in the study was that the participants set their own rules or beliefs for effective foreign language learning, and these self-generated rules or guidelines influenced their behaviors in learning of Korean writing. In other words, they did not rely on teachers to tell them how to learn. As seen earlier in their self-generated use of target language input, their creation of rules that helped guide their language learning reflected their independence or autonomy as language learners. For example, Mark firmly believed that complete elimination of L1 use is the best way of learning a foreign language, and the belief influenced his engagement in Korean writing. His daily goal was to use Korean as much as possible in every learning situation, including speaking. He admitted, however, that most of time he tended to think of sentences in English first and then mentally translate them into Korean when writing, because his writing proficiency was still in the beginning or intermediate-beginning level. Even though he tended to use English while writing, he made every effort to create a ‘think in Korean’ mode before starting to write, by reviewing a list of vocabulary and phrases,
watching a Korean TV program or listening to the Korean radio (i.e., imbc.com). He said that such an immersion in Korean input before writing made him move into the mode of Korean thinking, recall words easier, and write more smoothly in Korean:

Mark: Before starting this assignment, as I always do, I watched a little bit of the Korean TV show ‘미녀들의 수다’ (Mi-neo-deul-eui soo-da; Talk with beauties/Female foreigners speaking Korean). Watching shows like this helps me get into the mode of Korean thinking. That is, it makes it easier for me to write more smoothly in Korean (Mark, PL4).

Researcher: So you always before you write, you try to immerse yourself in Korean input.
Mark: Like I just try and start get used to hearing Korean and thinking in Korean. It kind of helps jump start the engines so to speak. Like I’ll start recalling different words, and it just helps me get into a better – or helps create a better atmosphere. It’s more conducive to writing.
Researcher: Do you think that’s important for your writing in Korean?
Mark: Yeah, absolutely. ‘Cause sometimes if I just go – like I don’t know – if I’m – I’m trying to think of a good example. Like say I had a really long conversation with my parents or something on phone for an hour and then I try to go write something in Korean – I don’t know -- I just find it more difficult. I can’t really explain why. It’s just much easier if I expose myself a little bit beforehand to kind of just get myself into that way of thinking. I tend to remember words easier (Mark, SR4, p. 12).

Right before taking third-year Korean courses, Mark studied Korean in a Korean language institute attached to a university in Korea for two months. In the interview, he repeatedly mentioned that he learned a considerable amount of Korean in the two month stay in Korea. He thought that his improvement resulted from his frequent interactions with native Korean speaking people and sustained exposure to Korean input. His learning experience in Korea influenced the formation of the belief or rule, “the more you use the language, the more you get it”, as seen in the following excerpt:

Researcher: Then, the study in Korea, how did it affect on your Korean learning here?
Mark: Well, how do I say? When I was in Korea, I realized since I get to use Korean – well, obviously, if you use the language more often, you’re going to get better at it.
So as far as writing goes anyways, it really made me just I guess just try and learn as much as I can. That way I can test into the highest level when I get over there the more I’ll learn as far as speaking and listening and all that goes. As much as I can anyway, I don’t speak English to my roommate ever. Because I always get mad if he speaks English to me ‘cause obviously the more you speak it the better you’re going to get. So it really just made me kind of – yeah, I guess just focused. Just try really, really hard to get as good as I can while I’m here in the United States, and then plan on continuing that when I get to Korea (Mark, SR4, p. 12).

Mark was planning to study Korean again in Korea for a whole year at a university in Seoul, and on the last day of the class I heard that he was accepted into the Korean program with a scholarship. During the interview, he told me that the best and most efficient way to learn a foreign language is to go to the country that speaks the language, and he was acting according to his belief. While staying in the U.S., he tried to create an environment full of Korean input which is similar to that of Korea, by constantly reviewing vocabulary and grammar points, frequently interacting with Korean friends, and listening to the radio and watching a Korean variety show. Also, as for writing, he tried his best to ‘think in Korean’, directly writing in Korean without mental translation.

As for Paul, he strongly believed that “a native’s perspective is the best perspective,” and this belief influenced his engagement in writing (Paul, SR4, p. 6). He referred to the various resources including dictionaries, but also frequently met his Korean friend, Min-ji, to discuss his draft and to get some feedback. The other participants also interacted with Korean native speakers and referred to the various resources for better writing, but Paul tended to pay more attention to how his writing would be received by the Korean native speakers.

Paul: My editing process is mostly concerned with how my intentions in my writing are received by Korean native speakers (Paul, autobiography, p. 2).
After talking with Min-jí (my Korean friend) I find that I understand my essay a lot better (Paul, PL2).

He had a ‘fear’ of not knowing the actual meanings of words themselves, so he tended to rely on various online dictionaries to choose the right word in his writing context, but he thought that “only native eyes can correct and explain” the misgivings of his essays (Paul, PL2). To fix his problems in writing, such as word choice and sentence structure, he met with Min-jí. The following excerpts show his ‘fear’ or ‘anxiety’ towards writing and specific actions to overcome the negative feelings.

Paul: I do enjoy the variety of Korea online dictionaries that better assist me in finding the most sophisticated words to use throughout my paper. Additionally, one of my greatest fears is the actual meanings of the words themselves… are these words only used in a certain context? Will my sentences be read in a different light if I use one word over another? I feel these extremely fine points on words, meanings, and structure could greatly benefit my writing in Korean (Paul, autobiography, p. 2).

Q: Are there any problems in your writing? If yes, can you describe five major problems and how you handled them?

Paul: A: (1) **Word-choice:** I continue to run into this problem probably because I don’t have any social interaction in Korean/long period in Korean to learn. I find I have no natural instinct with words. To fix this I go to a native like Min-jí (pseudonym). (2) **My sentence’s intention:** I find myself wanting to say one thing but a reader will take it as something totally different. I also find myself using sentence structures that are only really appropriate during actual conversation and not in essays. I also use a native speaker to help me with this aspect (Paul, PL2).

For revision, I used my friend [Min-jí] to help me better my essay because only her native eye could correct and explain the misgivings of my essay (Paul, PL2).

Minsoo, the Korean heritage learner, thought that any heritage learners should know and learn their heritage languages and cultures, because they need to know their roots and their parents’ languages. This attitude or identity that he possessed affected his writing learning as well as Korean learning in general. When he was young, he did not want to
learn and use Korean because he strongly desired to get along with his American friends and “wanted to be more American” (Minsoo, autobiography). However, by the time of entering the university he began to think of taking Korean classes to learn his heritage language and culture, and by doing so to function as a Korean successfully in the community he belonged to. He answered a question asking about reasons for taking Korean classes as follows:

Minsoo: 한국어를 잘 하는 것이 중요한 이유는 한국 사람이니까요, 부모님이 한국에서 태어나셨고, 알아야 되죠 (Minsoo, interview based on autobiography, p.4).

Minsoo: The reason why I should speak Korean well is that I’m a Korean. My parents were born in Korea, and so I have to know the language (Minsoo, interview based on autobiography, p.4).

Whereas the other participants took third-year Korean courses because of minor or major requirement reasons, Minsoo too the classes because he truly wanted to maintain and further develop his Korean proficiency for personal reasons. With regard to writing, he thought that he should know how to use advanced-level, difficult words effectively as a heritage learner taking an intermediate-advanced level course. He hoped to be able to write like a college student in Korea. He considered writing assignments as an opportunity to learn new vocabulary, particularly advanced-level words that he had not yet learned or heard before (Minsoo, autobiography). While writing, he actively used online dictionaries to look for more difficult, advanced-level, words that could use for his writing, instead of continuing to use what he already knew.

Mee was a strong supporter of the idea that one can learn a foreign language effectively through songs and dramas, and she actively applied what she learned through them to her writing assignments. During the quarter when she participated in this research,
she was watching a Korean drama called “꽃보다 남자 (ggot-bo-da nam-ja; “Boys over Flowers”), and I found that in the back of her notebook she wrote down the lyrics of the songs in the drama. The notebook was the one that she used to write down useful expressions for the Korean class, particularly for writing assignments, and she always carried it with her during the quarter. She told me that she really liked the songs in the drama, searched for them on the Internet, and found the lyrics in a Korean website, Naver.com. The following excerpts show her use of Korean songs and dramas for her writing assignments.

Mee: “시간이 흐를수록 의미는 변했다 (si-ga-ni heu-reul-su-rok ui-mi-neun byun-hae-tta; as time goes by, meaning has been changed)”. This one was kind of interesting – like this line because I heard this line in a drama before, and I had to go back and look in the drama to find like kind of the correct order.
Researcher: Which drama?
Mee: It was “꽃보다 남자 (ggot-bo-da namja; Men over flower).” I don’t know if I did the right – did I use it correctly and stuff?
Researcher: Right, right.
Mee: I thought it kind of sounded pretty and stuff (Mee, SR2, p.3).

Mee: 좋아하는 사람한테 고백을 하고 싶으면… 고백을 하다.. (If you’d like to confess [your love] to the person you like.. ‘to confess’) Yeah, I was like – from like songs that I listen to – like a lot of Korean songs have this word in it, so I kind of knew that word in Korean.
Researcher: Did you hear – do you listen to Korean music?
Mee: Yeah, it helps – I think it really helps with my vocabulary and stuff. And then like yeah. But I think like watching dramas and listening to songs really helps a lot. So that’s how I learned a majority of what I know and stuff. ‘cause it’s like sometimes in class we learn a lot, but it doesn’t absorb as much as when you watch it on TV or listen to it in music. Like when it’s something you really like, you tend to absorb it, so that’s how I kind of learn a majority of it (Mee, SR2, pp.4-5).

Tao thought that “writing is a good tool to improve the language because one can learn something new each time one writes (e.g., new words and grammar)” and tended to use writing assignments to “study” vocabulary and grammar (Tao, autobiography). She was
born in China and moved to the United States when she was ten years old. She received ESL instruction for a couple of years, and it was very difficult for her to learn English at that time, especially writing. In the middle and high school years, English was the subject that she struggled with most and always had difficulty with grammar. So, she considered herself as “a bad writer” and did not enjoy writing in any languages, including Korean. Even though she decided to take third-year Korean classes because she wanted to continue to learn Korean to the advanced level, she did not enjoy doing writing assignments; however, she took the assignments as a chance to review, study, and learn vocabulary and grammar. So, it seemed that she approached the writing tasks as if she were taking an exam.

To sum up, all the participants constructed their own rules or beliefs with regard to foreign language learning, and acted according to the rules when engaging in writing. Mark firmly believed that use of L1 should be eliminated in learning of L2 for effective learning, so he tried to create a ‘think in Korean’ mode prior to writing and to write directly in Korean without mental translations. Paul thought that a native speaker’s perspective is the best one, so he tended to have his drafts proofread by his native Korean friend or discussed his word choice and sentence structure with her. Minsoo, as a heritage learner himself, took Korean classes and engaged in writing assignments particularly focusing on learning of high-level words, since he believed that maintaining and further developing heritage language and cultural knowledge is important to any heritage learners. Mee thought that songs and dramas were useful mediators for L2 learning, and actively used what she learned through them in her writings. Lastly, Tao actively used the
writing opportunities to ‘study’ vocabulary and grammar, since she thought that writing is a good tool to improve foreign language proficiency. In this way, the participants continuously interacted with the rules they set while writing. Through the analysis of the interaction, each individual’s ways to approach writing tasks and motivation for writing were more clearly revealed.

Good writing criteria-mediated strategies

During this study it was especially interesting to see how the participants defined ‘good writing’. This is an aspect of foreign language learning, especially with respect to writing, that is difficult to acquire, especially as early as the third-year level. In this regard, as with other strategies already reviewed, these participants were especially active and independent language learners. Each participant had very clear thoughts about what good writing looks like, and their rules or standards for good writing influenced how they wrote. That is, they wrote so as to follow those rules or meet those standards. The following excerpts reflect each participant’s perspectives on good writing.

Mark: Simply put, good writing is writing that can make an argument without causing confusion or writing that presents information in a clear and organized fashion. Though in some cases eloquent verbiage may enhance certain kinds of writing, it is not necessary (Mark, autobiography).

Paul: To me, good writing is short, it’s concise, and it’s clear, but it’s done in ways that intrigue you. I think in college we read a lot of essays that are talking about same things for four pages. And I think like why am I reading about this? Like in real life, no one has time for that. In my opinion, if you are a really good writer, you can take a lot of information and put it in a paragraph and you still understand everything. That to me is a really good writing because that to me is what businesses want. Your boss doesn’t want to read 20 pages. He wants to read one page and he wants all the information in that one page (Paul, interview based on autobiography).
Minsoo: Good writing is something that is easy to read, where the ideas flow well in the introduction, body, and conclusion. The introduction should be interesting and informative, the body should have the main ideas or points that are clear and well organized, and the conclusion should basically summarize the paper, coming back to the main idea or purpose of the paper (Minsoo, autobiography).

Tao: A good writing should be clear and well organized. In order to achieve that, we need to learn good transition words to make the writing more coherent. Proofreading is also an important step because a good writing should not have any misspelled words or grammatical errors (Tao, autobiography).

Mee: Good writing in my opinion is a piece of work that interests the reader and draws the reader in while reading it. It also has to have good usage of grammar and vocabulary. Spelling is also important since too many mistakes would decrease the quality of the composition. Also, the writing has to flow with good usage of transitional words. Finally, a good piece of composition would make the reader think and analyze (Mee, autobiography).

They all thought that good writing is concise, clear, and well-organized. Also, consideration of readers or audience and natural flow of writing were important criteria. All the participants had received systematic, formal English writing instruction since their grade school years, and also they took composition classes offered by the university in their freshman year. They all stated that this writing education influenced the formation of their thoughts on good writing, also mentioning that the criteria were applied to any writing, regardless of the language used. Thus, they had generated generic rules or standards for writing, rather than language-specific ones. Mark, for example, told me that the writing instruction that he received from the university influenced his current thoughts on good writing, and the criteria were used when he wrote in Korean as well:

Researcher: And you wrote your thoughts about good writing here [autobiography], good writing involves making an argument without causing confusion, writing in a clear and organized fashion. What made you think like this?  
Mark: From my English L1 writing instructions...  
Researcher: L1, English good writing has this kind of features?  
Mark: Yes, that’s what I talk about what your writing should have.
Researcher: Did you get writing instructions at OSU, English composition class?
Mark: Not at OSU because I transferred from when I was a sophomore. All L1 writing instruction was at a different university in Pennsylvania.
Researcher: Did you learn how to compose in English?
Mark: Yes, I had two composition writing courses. One focused on rhetorical analysis, and the other was on persuasive writing.
Researcher: So the instruction affected your concept of the good writing, even in Korean?
Mark: Right, absolutely. I’m assuming again that all forms of writing should be clear, precise and accurate… regardless of languages.
Researcher: What’s the role of writing in your Korean, L2, learning?
Mark: Obviously, it’s really important. In order to communicate, for example like when you apply for a job, there is only one chance to show yourself it’s on paper.. It’s extremely important. I mean if you can write something well and understand, then, you should be able to theoretically be able to speak well. It’s kind of flows into all the other facets of language.

The participants tried hard to include the features of good writing embedded in their good writing rules, but it was found that they were often frustrated by their lack of language proficiency, frequently saying that “my level is elementary.” Since they were college students and had a lot of experience in writing academic papers in their L1, English, they tended to keep comparing their Korean writing with that of English. For example, Minsoo often told me that “저는 대학생처럼 쓰고 싶은데 초등학교, 중학교 학생처럼 쓰요 (I’d like to write as a university student writes, but I’m writing like an elementary or middle school student)”. Paul was very confident in his English writing ability and thought he was a good writer in the L1, but not in Korean writing. Tao and Mee said that they tended to keep using grammar points that they had learned in the first-year Korean classes, not advanced-level grammar patterns. They had studied Korean for three years only, but they engaged in writing assignments with a sense of a burden or pressure that they would need to write a more advanced-level piece using high-level vocabulary and
grammar points as “a regular college student” writes. As such, the participants were experiencing a conflict between the identities of “an adult college student” and “a beginning foreign language learner,” and the conflict seemed to affect the formation of negative feelings about writing, especially a sense of frustration; however, the participants pushed themselves to attain higher-level writing proficiency by investing their energy and time in studying Korean to overcome the negative feelings.

The participants’ ‘rules’ for good writing mediated their writing, and it provided them with criteria that they needed to follow when writing. Due to a lack of Korean language proficiency, however, they found it difficult to produce good writing as they defined it, and this made them frustrated. The negative feeling that they experienced was influenced by the conflict between the identities of a college student utilizing the native language and a beginning foreign language learner. This pressured the participants into believing that they need to write in Korean as a college student writes, despite their lack of target language proficiency.

**Plagiarism rule-mediated strategies**

Plagiarism is one of the most complex issues in the field of second language writing, one that both teachers and students struggle with. For second language learners, there is an understandable and sometimes powerful desire to simply copy what others, especially native speakers, have written in the target language because of their facility with the language. Also, in light of what the participants revealed earlier concerning L1 use and the use of translation, it was particularly interesting to see how they addressed the plagiarism issue. It was found that all the participants were conscious of plagiarism while
writing and tried not to violate the plagiarism rules when completing Korean writing assignments. In fact, they thought that observing the plagiarism rules by trying not to copy others’ words would help their foreign language learning, rather than hindering the learning process. Tao expressed her fear of violating the rule as follows:

Tao: I always have to be careful with, even and especially with Yahoo, now they would.. their sentence so I just borrow some.. I don’t think I remember.. one time I was writing and then I found a website with a lot of good sentences, but I was afraid.. Researcher: You were able to understand? You were able to understand every sentence?
Tao: Yeah. And then.. but I didn’t use them. Because then Oh.. she [instructor] will find out.
Researcher: Yeah.. (Tao, SR3, p. 6)

The other participants also tried to avoid plagiarism by not copying sentences that other people wrote. Paul said that he tended to find information for writing in English out of a fear that the structure of Korean sentences in a Korean webpage might influence his writing too heavily by leading to excessive duplication of what he read. Also, he always met his Korean friend, Min-ji, to get proofreading only after completing his draft so that she might not write for him. He told me that some of the sentences she suggested were “too good” for him, and he found that the sentences were the best for his intention but often decided not to use them for his essays, because those sentences were not the ones that he himself came up with. However, through the talk around the sentences with Min-ji he was able to learn how Koreans construct sentences and their thought processes. The excerpt below shows his efforts to avoid plagiarism and to write his own sentences, as well as learning through talk with his native Korean friend, Minji.

Researcher: So you always find information in English?
Paul: Yes, actually I do. Because I’m afraid that if I find information in Korean, I’m afraid that I’m just going to.. just you know what I’m saying.
Researcher: Copying?
Paul: Yeah, I’m going to see the structure and it’s going to influence me.
Researcher: Umm.
Paul: So that’s why when I see Min-ji, like this.. I already had this written out. I’m not with her beforehand. I already have it written, and I hand it to her, and we talk about it, and she’ll write these great sentences and then I’m like, I can’t use that. I’m like, this is too good. But it really helps me because we’re able to talk about my ideas and what I’m trying to say. And I think when you are alone you can’t do that. So I’ll be like, this sentence is 뭐뭐뭐 [like this.. like this..], and she’s like, that makes no sense to me. So that really helps. What sentence is right, like, this sentence was too good. And I was just like, no, this is too good. It’s not my words, but when I see her writing, it’s like I’m starting to understand the thought process, of oh, that’s how she would say it. Because when I read this I understand it and that’s exactly what I wanted to say. But that’s not what I wrote.
Researcher: Then, why don’t you accept her comments and copy it?
Paul: Because that’s plagiarism.
Researcher: Plagiarism?
Paul: 근데 한국에서 이렇게 했으면 괜찮은데요 (However, in Korea it’s o.k. to copy the sentences)
Researcher: 한국에선 괜찮아요? (Is it o.k. to do that in Korea?)
Paul: 근데 여기서 똑같은 걸 쓰면 안돼요 (But, here we should not write the same sentences), because it's not my words.
Researcher: Not your word.
Paul: Not my words.
Researcher: Even though it's good and you understand everything, you cannot copy?
Paul: I mean, well, like here, for example, she says:
비록 경제 성장은 가져왔지만…는 변하고 있다.
Researcher: Right
Paul: But then, I took that and I said, it sounds too good. How can I write it, that it's still my writing, but I understand, I see this thought pattern now. Because I had this all the way in the back, I did this in the front, it didn’t make sense. But then when I see her writing, I’m like, okay, now I get what you are saying. And in a lot of times she will read my writing and I’ll say something like, 감정이, feelings, right? 감정이 나왔어요 (emotions came out). But she’s like, 나오다 (to come out)? We don’t really use those, you know what I’m saying. But in my opinion, I’m like, oh, that makes sense. I’m being very poetic. But she’s like, we wouldn’t use that. So it’s stuff like that, really specific things.
Researcher: So you always think of the plagiarism, the copying.
Paul: Yeah, oh my gosh, I was afraid to show you this because I thought you were going to tell me that I was plagiarizing. Because, in America, it’s a really big deal. Plagiarism is not okay. In Korea, they plagiarize all the time. It’s fine.
Researcher: How did you know that? Why?
Paul: You just.. okay. Because in Korea, I know teachers, well actually from friends that I’ve studied with in Korea, are like, I had to write a thirty page paper. And I’m like, thirty pages? How did you write all that? And they’re like, everyone copies. And that’s like, Oh, that’s how they write thirty pages.

Researcher: But not here?

Paul: No, oh my gosh. No one would assign a thirty page paper here, because you know that it would all be copied. But I would rather assign a ten page paper and know that you wrote it all yourself. Because that shows your abilities. I think plagiarism is a big deal because you can get kicked out of college, so, I don’t want to get kicked out of college.

Researcher: But even though you see perfect sentence and even though you understand everything you paraphrase it in your own words.

Paul: Well, yeah, I’m like, how can I rewrite this, and it’s my own words. Because I see where she’s going with that, and I see that I was wrong. Because what I had written before, it didn’t make sense (Paul, SR1, pp. 3-4).

What is striking in those comments is not only Paul’s extreme level of concern about plagiarizing in Korean, but his awareness of different attitudes toward plagiarism in Korea and the United States and his decision to adhere to American standards for plagiarism. Like Paul, the other participants tried not to copy the whole sentences that they found on the Internet sites or received from their Korean friends; however, they all acknowledged that their Korean writing processes were much involved with “borrowing” from various external resources rather than creating their own sentences. Plus, they all mentioned that they learned a majority of Korean through the borrowing and ‘plugging in’ processes in which they would insert carefully chosen words from Korean sources into their own writing. Mark expressed his thoughts on his Korean learning through borrowing from external sources (e.g., the Internet, articles, or interactions with Korean friends and instructors) as follows:

Researcher: How do you describe your learning process in the Korean writing learning? Like do you think it is a process of copying, borrowing from other’s words, or do you think it is the process of creating your own words? What do you think?
Mark: That’s a good question. I definitely do borrow a lot of expressions. Like I said, I read news articles once in a while and I just remember stuff from the books, the textbooks that we’ve learned out of. So as far as certain grammar expressions like just for example, say “세 번째는(as for the third)”, “두 번째는(as for the second)” – like all those expressions… Like just those expressions, I just remember them and then I borrow them and I put them in my paper. I guess the majority of my writing is just expressions that I borrowed and I kind of just plug in different words here and there (Mark, 5th Interview, p.3).

Mark: I guess plenty of expressions I know come from grammar textbooks and just articles that I’ve read. Like this “내가 보기에는(from my perspective)” I remember my friend from he was in the military who learned Korean – he sent me like a paper that he had written, and that was in there all the time, so I just took it from there. Researcher: Right.
Mark: Because I knew the meaning of it. And especially too when I speak, a lot of the words, the things that I say, are expressions that I take from what my friends have said (Mark, 5th Interview, p.4).

Mark: Especially I remember, I think it was one of the first ones [e-mails] you sent, I don’t remember if it was this quarter or last quarter, but you said Korean 507을 통해서 – like going through – I’ve never used “을/를 통해서(through + Noun)” in such an abstract – like I didn’t know that you could use it such an abstract way like that. I thought it was only concrete – like I went to Pusan through Gwangjoo or something like that. You know, like literally very concrete. I’ve never used it in an abstract way before, so actually, I realized when you sent that e-mail that I could use that object in an abstract... It helps...
Researcher: Right, so that kind of borrowing process is deeply involved in learning?
Mark: Yeah, absolutely. I think that would be the majority of my writing. It’s just borrowing and plugging in different words (Mark, 5th Interview, p.4).

When they encountered sentences that they wanted to use on the Internet or in a dictionary, the participants tried to re-write those sentences with the words reflecting their levels of proficiency, instead of copying them exactly as they saw them. For example, Mee and Tao, when they re-wrote, tended to lower the level of sentences that they thought “good” or “attractive” to their levels with the grammar points and words that they could understand and use with confidence. They thought that the sentences on the Internet (i.e., articles, online dictionary, etc.) provided “sample guidelines” that they
could use for making sentences, and using the sentences they re-wrote was more appropriate for their writing contexts. The following excerpts show Mee and Tao’s use of the sample sentences, or ‘playing around with the sentence’, for their assignments.

Mee: Sometimes when it [the sample sentence] is not talking about what I want to talk about, I kind of change the words a little but use it as a sample guideline and stuff. If they were saying “something, something should be improved”, then that line, I just switch the word and put like, I don’t know, “technology should be improved”. So I just like stick words where I need them and then take out words if I don’t need them and stuff, so (Mee, SR3, p.8).

Mee: I didn’t know what like ‘worldwide’, how you would say that and stuff, so, um, yeah. And then like I think this sentence [발렌타인데이는 전세계적으로 인기가 많은 명절이다; Valentine’s Day is a popular holiday worldwide] was formed from a sample sentence they had online that looked pretty good, so I kind of like changed it around to kind of make it into a sentence kind of. In the dictionary they had a sentence that - it was talking about something else, but like the English meaning if you switch the words around would kind of work out if I kind of played with it. So that was from a result of me kind of playing around with the sentence (Mee, SR2, p.3).

I used online dictionaries (yahoo and babelfish). Sometimes I put the entire sentence in babelfish and see what they have. If I like it, then I take the whole sentence. Sometimes, I change the sentence a little bit. For example, 메시지를 전달하십시오 (Me-si-ji-reul jeon-dal ha-sip-si-o; please deliver the message) is changed to 메시지를 전달하고 싶으면 (Me-si-ji-reul jeon-dal ha-ko si-peu-myeon; if you want to deliver the message). (Tao, PL3, p.2)

Tao: This sentence, ‘테크놀로지는 인간을 육체적으로 그리고 정신적으로 강화하기 위하여 이용된다 (Technology is used to enhance human lives physically and intellectually)’ This sentence.. ‘정신적으로’ is from Yahoo dictionary. The Babel Fish has a different word.
Researcher: Other sentences from Babel Fish?
Tao: And also, ‘테크놀로지는 사람들의 편익을 창조하기 위하여 존재한다 (Technology exists to create convenience to people). (Tao, SR4, p.4).

Researcher: When you use Babelfish, if Babelfish gives you too good sentence, then what do you do?
Tao: Usually I understand all the grammar points that they used..
Researcher: Right.
Tao: And then if I don’t understand the way that, why they use it, then I would change it to something I would, I would use.
Researcher: Okay. So, why do you use Babelfish? Why?
Tao: Um.. like, put the.. give you the whole sentence, and then from there you can see..
Researcher: Do you think that’s a good tool for your Korean learning?
Tao: Yeah (Tao, SR3, pp.5-6).

Researcher: Yeah. So when you encounter some sentences that you would like to use, but the sentence is really good, too good to you then, what do you do?
Tao: Well, I just maybe borrow some words, but not the entire sentence.
Researcher: Why not entire sentence?
Tao: It’s not my level, and you can’t use other people’s.
Researcher: Right. So do you think that rule. You think of always that rule?
Tao: Yeah (Tao, SR2, p.4).

It was found, however, that paraphrasing or re-writing of the original sentences was a very challenging process to the participants, who had limited linguistic capacity. For example, Mee sometimes used the exactly same sentence found in the online dictionaries if she really liked it, but she used one sentence only, not more than two sentences at once.

Also, she used a sentence only if she was able to understand the meaning of the sentence.

As seen in the excerpt below, it was a hard process for her to paraphrase or re-write the original sentence because of her limited vocabulary and grammar abilities. She was afraid that she might change the sentence into one that would not make sense at all.

Mee: This sentence, ‘발렌타인데이 같은 특별한 날에는 12 송이의 장미 가격이 수요가 많기 때문에 2 배 이상 경충 뜨었다 (On special days like Valentine’s Day, the cost of a dozen roses rose twelve-fold or more as a result of high demand)’ This was from the sample sentence in Yahoo.co.kr dictionary. I can’t remember what exactly I typed in that one. It’s like I just found that sentence. I thought it was good, so I just wrote down (Mee, SR2, p. 4).

Mee: This sentence, ‘기술의 진보는 대부분의 일상적인 일의 기계화를 가능하게 했다 (Technological advances have enabled most routine tasks to be automated)’ this was a sample sentence.
Researcher: You understand what this means, right?
Mee: Yeah, I thought this was a good sentence.... Sometimes I find it hard to paraphrase because it’s so hard to change around, and I think like what if I change it around it’ll mean something else, and so. There’s probably that experience sometimes (Mee, SR3, pp.8-9).

To summarize, the participants tried to avoid plagiarism when writing by not copying the sentences they saw in the Internet or dictionaries, but they all acknowledged that their writing processes heavily involved borrowing or plugging in of words from other sources. They borrowed words, phrases, or sentences from the external sources such as the Internet and dictionaries. The sentences that they found provided a good basis for making their own sentences, and they tended to lower the level of the sentences to their level of proficiency when writing by employing words and grammar points that they could understand and use. This acute awareness of their own level of proficiency and their strong desire to avoid sounding, through copying, more proficient than they actually were is an especially interesting finding. It was found, however, that they had difficulty when re-writing or paraphrasing in their writing context due to their Korean linguistic limitations: some of the participants copied sentences from the Internet, but they did so only when they could understand the sentences.

**Time-mediated strategies**

Time was also an important mediator to the participants. They reported that they broke up their assignments into chunks or portions and invested more than a few days to complete them. They mentioned that the paper that they took enough time to write was better than the one that they hurriedly wrapped up. As seen in the excerpts below, breaking up and frequent re-reading of the essays before submission allowed the
participants to see their mistakes that they had overlooked earlier and to keep writing with fresh ideas and thoughts.

Mark: I started it… I wrote a little bit of it last Friday. Maybe about half… and then I wrote the Monday evening and then I wrote Monday night and this morning. I’ll write it and then I’ll take a few days to revise it because the more times I look at it, the more errors I find and the better it tends to be (Mark, SR3, p.1).

Mark: I am not satisfied with this piece right now. I plan on making more changes to it later tonight as well as tomorrow morning. This is because the more I read my own work, the more ideas I get and the easier it is for me to make it better. I am a firm believer in the statement that “good writing lies in revision” (Mark, PL3, p.2).

Paul: The writing process for me takes days because I enjoy breaking up the work as not to overload me and allow for only the best writing to be accomplished (Paul, autobiography, p.1).

Paul: I’ll re-read the essay during the day, and I’ll maybe see a mistake, and then I’ll be like, okay, I need to change that now. So throughout the day, I’ll maybe look at it, and I will see something that I overlooked earlier. Like oh I put ~演(-eul; object particle) here but it should be ~이(-i; subject particle). You know, that doesn’t make sense (Paul, SR1, p.10).

Researcher: Okay. And then how long did you invest – how long did it take to write this piece?
Mee: Um, it took me – because it took me—because I spread it out over such a long period of time kind of, so I don’t know, like two days kind of that I kind of worked on this little bits and pieces kind of. ‘Cause I usually can’t -- like it depends like how like what my mood is – but usually I don’t really sit down all in one sitting to finish it, but I kind of do it like little bits at a time kind of, so
Researcher: So, yeah. You divided your work?
Mee: Mhm. Yeah, and then like sometimes I just like write a paragraph an hour or something like that and then do something else and then come back to it ‘cause like I feel like maybe if I come back to it like maybe more ideas will come and then something will light up or something…. Yeah, because you know when you sit down and just writing four to five hours, then that makes me really stuck and then I cannot think of anything. Yeah, and so when I don’t get the ideas, then I’m stuck on that one thing and I won’t go on until I like figure that out kind of (Mee, SR2, p.10).

They also reported that writing in the L2, Korean, required a lot more time because of their linguistic limitations, whereas writing in their L1, English, was much more natural
and thus they were able to write and complete their papers in a day. The language proficiency issue was one of reasons why they preferred breaking the work into chunks rather than finishing it up at once, as Paul and Mee explained:

Paul: It [English writing] is more free flowing. When I was writing this, I would write a little, think about it, write a little bit, think about it.. you know, in English, I can just, you are going to just type it up in twenty minutes. But this, I mean, they both take preparation, but this is definitely way more time-consuming. And it’s definitely a lot more.

Mee: English writing is more natural. Things flow out.. I don’t know.. English writing, I can do the day before its due, but for Korean assignments, I probably have to work on it a couple of days to proofread and everything. For English writing, I’m pretty confident. So I can just write one time without going back to check. But for Korean writing, I have to go back to proofread (Mee, interview based on autobiography, p.4).

In addition, another reason why they broke their work into time-related segments was related to their busy schedules. For example, Paul worked on campus after the classes and he got busier because of a puppy that he bought. He also mentioned that he could not meet his Korean friend, Min-ji, for proofreading for the third and fourth writing assignments, because both of them could not find time for it. Since Min-ji was one of the important resources that he could rely on for paper revision, the fact that he could not meet with her due to their busy schedules made him frustrated and decreased his motivation for writing. Tao often reported that she could have written better if she had had more time: she had to study for exams, and she reported in her process logs that the busy situation affected her writing performance negatively. Mee, as well as Tao, who tended to literally translate from English to Korean for assignments, wished that they could translate all the sentences in their writings, but usually they stopped translating in the middle and wrote out in Korean directly for the second half of the papers because of
the lack of time. As such, it was found from the stimulated recalls and process logs that ‘time’ was an important mediator that the participants interacted with while they were writing.

To sum up, the participants engaged in writing with the following four rule-mediated strategies: self-constructed rules mediated, good writing criteria mediated, plagiarism rule mediated, and time mediated. The participants had their own rules or beliefs about effective language learning, which differed according to their learning goals, and these rules affected how they wrote. Also, they had very clear thoughts on the features of good writing and tried to meet those criteria, but it was found that they often felt frustrated by their lack of Korean language proficiency, which in turn limited the achievement of good writing. Plus, the participants tried to avoid plagiarism while writing, but they all acknowledged that their writing processes involved borrowing or plugging and the borrowing was associated with their lack of Korean proficiency. Time was also an important mediator in writing.

**Community-mediated strategies**

Another important point that emerged from the data was that the participants agentively interacted with various communities while writing. They interacted with the mediators such as native Korean speakers, classroom community, past learning experience, and imagined communities. As for the community-mediated strategies, they can be grouped into four categories: native speaker mediated, past experience mediated, imagined community mediated, and classroom community mediated strategies.
Native speaker-mediated strategies

All the participants interacted with Korean native speakers to receive assistance in their Korean learning. Minsoo, the heritage learner, received help from his Korean parents, who spoke Korean to him at home, while the non-heritage participants’ interactions were mainly with Korean friends on campus. Mee and Tao had Korean friends and thus had a chance to practice speaking in Korean, but they did not ask them to proofread their Korean assignments. Tao said that her Korean friends wanted to learn English from her rather than helping her by speaking Korean, and Mee told me that she did not want her Korean friends to feel that she was using them just for proofreading. However, Mee and Tao wanted to have their drafts proof-read by Korean native speakers if conditions allowed. Paul and Mark’s Korean friends were kind enough to read their drafts and provide constructive comments on them. So, I will report what I found from Paul and Mark here, as they had the most interaction of this kind.

Paul and Mark had their Korean friends check their drafts, looking to see if the sentences made sense and if there were any problems in wording, grammatical appropriateness, flow, and content accuracy. Mark always asked his Korean roommate, Jin-ho (pseudonym), to look over his essays after completing the drafts himself first. He asked Jin-ho to look over his papers to see whether the sentences sounded Korean, the information on Korea and Korean people was correct, and whether the papers had any structural or grammatical errors that hindered readers’ understanding of the content. Mark’s friend, Jin-ho, was fluent both in Korean and English, since he was born and received elementary education in Korea. He was also a good informant in terms of
knowledge of Korean society and culture, since he frequently communicated with his parents and relatives living in Korea. To Mark, Jin-ho was a trustworthy informant, and his comments played a crucial role in him learning the Korean language, and its culture and society as well. The following excerpts show the reasons why he communicated with Jin-ho and in what way the interactions worked in writing.

Mark: Uhmm. While I was writing, like I looked up about 떡국 (tteok-gguk; rice dumpling soup) and 성묘 (Seong-myo; a visit to one’s ancestor’s grave) online, but not all the information you find online is accurate. So just to be sure I had to ask him “do they do this when they do 성묘?” “Is this what they do?” “you eat 떡국 (tteok-gguk; rice soup) in 설날 (Sol-nal; New year), right?” to make sure..
Researcher: o.k., so do you think that native Korean speakers, they are very informative?
Mark: Yes, absolutely. He actually grew up in the United States, but his whole family is in Korea, so he goes back often, so he is a good source, he has a kind of: he is able to draw from both cultures.
Researcher: Like 민수 씨 (Min-soo) in our class?
Mark: No, he’s like really fluent in Korean. He grew up in Korea until he was like I think elementary school. His family moved here, and he is here in English. His family went back, but he stayed here, and he went to the whole school system in the United States. He speaks English just like me, and he also speaks Korean like a native speaker. So he has a really distinctive advantage as far as drawing experiences from both cultures.
Researcher: So how long did you spend time with him?
Mark: Probably, when I was writing the essay, I asked him quick questions, like you guys eat 떡국 (tteok-gguk; rice dumpling soup) on 설날 (sol-nal; New Year), right? Yes, and then I wrote the paper, and just had him like look over to make sure that there won’t any many large grammatical errors and typos, and just make sure the content was accurate. So, maybe half an hour total? (Mark, SR1, p. 5)

Researcher: And you mentioned here for proof-reading, your roommate helped the paper.
Mark: Right. Most part, I tell him not to correct anything as long as it’s o.k. because that way you [instructor, researcher] can correct it and I learn from the mistake. But because I still don’t want him to change the whole paper.. you know what I mean? So he just kind of corrects to make sure that you can understand it and get what I’m trying to say.. just to makes sure there won’t any major errors..
Researcher: So he read your paper, and said it’s o.k.
Mark: Yes, I can understand what you are saying. And there is nothing too big.. I can actually understand what you are trying to say. So..
Researcher: Is there any reason why you are getting the proof-reading from your Korean friend? Are you afraid that your teacher cannot understand?
Mark: Yes, I wanna make sure that at least saying it coherently, so at least you can get meaning of what I’m trying to say.. even if it’s not grammatically correct. So that way when you correct I’ll be able to learn better from that grammatical error (Mark, SR1, p.6).

Mark repeatedly mentioned that Jin-ho’s comments helped him to receive more constructive comments from the instructor, because, before submission, Jin-ho corrected some major errors that hindered understanding of the sentences. Mark asked Jin-ho to focus on the major errors that could block understanding of the papers, not minor errors. Mark thought that he could learn from the instructor’s feedback as far as the minor errors were concerned. Mark believed that he would be able to receive the comments that he was supposed to have from the instructor when submitting papers after talking with Jin-ho. Plus, when he judged that the sentences that Jin-ho suggested were the ones that he could not come up with by himself, he rejected them and tried to think of new sentences on his own because he thought that such corrections would not help him improve his Korean writing at all. Mark’s interaction with the Korean native speaker was truly for learning of Korean writing, as he explained:

Mark: He proofread it, but I told him just to do it to the extent that if you can understand it, leave it alone, unless if it’s so incorrect to the point that you can’t understand it, then let me know and fix it. But if you can at least understand it, don’t change it (Mark, SR3, p.12).

Researcher: When he revised, do you simply follow his comments?
Mark: Well, I ask him why. ‘Cause if you change it, it doesn’t help me learn anything. I have to understand why he changed it.
Researcher: If he changed it to too good sentence – you know what I mean – like perfect sentence, then what do you do? You paraphrase or just accept it or what do you do?
Mark: Well, I mean if he completely changes it, then I just get rid of it and write something else. Because like I said, that doesn’t help me. Like if he writes a sentence for me, I didn’t write it, so it doesn’t help.

Researcher: It doesn’t help? Why?
Mark: Because it’s not my writing. If I can’t come up with something like that on my own then it doesn’t help me. Like, I have to be able to do it on my own. Like if he changes it and then I understand why he changes it, but he basically changed the whole sentence around, I’ll write something else. Because not only is it not my own work, it doesn’t help me because I can’t come up with that sentence on my own if I want to (Mark, SR3, pp.12-13).

Paul also used the comments of his Korean friend, Min-ji, on his papers as guidance for understanding Korean people’s thought processes and sentence writing that sounds more Korean (see the excerpt below). Min-ji was a graduate student who came from Korea, and she needed Paul’s help in her English paper writing. They exchanged their papers and helped each other write better papers. Like Mark, Paul did not use the sentences that Min-ji suggested if he thought that the sentences were too good relative to his Korean proficiency, but at the same time he would not be able to come up with them by himself. Also, Paul wrote out everything first by himself and then went to Min-ji, as Mark did, so that he would not be influenced by her comments much. His interaction with Min-ji was geared for leaning, rather than just for submitting error-free papers:

So I’ll be like, this sentence is 뭐뭐뭐 (like this, like this), and she’s like, that makes no sense to me. So that really helps. What sentence is right, like, this sentence was too good. And I was just like, no, this is too good. It’s not my words, but when I see her writing, it’s like I’m starting to understand the thought process, of oh, that’s how she would say it. Because when I read this I understand it and that’s exactly what I wanted to say. But that’s not what I wrote.
Me: Then, why don’t you accept her comments and copy it?
Paul: Because that’s plagiarism (Paul, SR1, pp.3-4).

To Mark and Paul, discussing their drafts with native Korean friends was important in order to learn and use more proper words in their writing contexts and to write sentences
that they actually intended to express. As Paul wrote in his writing autobiography, one of their important concerns was “how their intentions in writings are received by Korean native speakers” (Paul, autobiography, p.2). As mentioned earlier, Mark asked Jin-ho to find major errors that can block understanding of the papers and correct them. In addition, having interactions with native Korean friends seemed to boost the participants’ confidence in their writing, just as not having such interaction lowered their confidence. For instance, Paul could not meet with Min-ji for his third and fourth writing assignments because they could not find time to meet. He said, therefore, that he tried to be more careful when editing the essays by referring to old essays and teacher’s corrections, because he could not have his papers reviewed by Min-ji. However, he expressed low confidence and fear of the instructor’s reaction to the papers that could not be reviewed by the Korean native speaker:

Researcher: How do you feel? Because I know for your previous writing you met your Korean tutor, your Korean friend. For this writing you didn’t and you figured out for yourself.
Paul: Part of me just makes me feel like I really don’t know Korean, I’m just not that good, I’ve been just so busy lately I just can’t focus on this anymore you know.. so when then I have no help at all, and after I write it, I’m like, wow, you’re really bad. You know what I’m saying? I feel like this seems like such a little kid wrote it, and then I’m like, alright, whatever.

Paul: Yeah, it’s too like, I was just afraid that I would turn in something and you would be like, don’t know why you’re saying this, don’t know why you’re saying this, you know what I’m saying, and I’d feel like, oh well, great. I guess I got more scared since I didn’t have anyone reviewing this. I had no idea what would be wrong with it or what’s on it good (Paul, SR3, p.4).

To the participants, communication with the native Korean speaker community was important to make sentences sound more natural and grammatically appropriate. To satisfy the instructor, they wanted to submit papers that had no major errors that hinder
readers’ understanding. They believed that the papers proof-read by their Korean friends tended to receive more beneficial feedback than from the instructor, since those papers were more comprehensible to the instructor and did not require as much sentence level feedback. In addition to obtaining the instructor’s feedback, they could learn about Koreans’ thought processes and ways to construct sentences through the interactions with the native speakers. It also appeared that the assistance from the native speakers increased the participants’ confidence level in writing.

**Classroom community-mediated strategies**

During the ten weeks of the Korean course, the participants had four major writing assignments. The topics of the writing assignments were associated with the main texts of the previous lessons that they studied, and additional reading materials related to the topics were also covered in the classroom to increase reading and vocabulary abilities. Thus, through the writing assignments the participants could have a chance to review and use vocabulary and grammar points that they studied, and they could enhance their writing ability through the practice. On the due date of each writing assignment, the class had time to read their essays aloud and ask questions about their classmates’ papers. They asked about the content of the papers, reasons for selection of the topics, and opinions about the specific issues brought up from the papers. Through this reading-aloud time, the participants were able to practice speaking and listening in Korean, and also learn new words and grammar patterns. I gave papers back to them with written feedback and answered their concerns or questions on the writing during my office hours and interview times.
In relation to the classroom community, participants mediated their writing with target readers (i.e., instructor and classmates), textbooks, class readings, and instructor’s feedback. The participants were all aware that they would share their writing with their classmates and instructor after completion of the essays, and this fact influenced their engagement with the writing. For example, when writing Mark used words and expressions that his classmates would be able to understand, and he thought that would be the best way to meet the purpose of reading-aloud. He was prepared to explain words and phrases that could be hard for his classmates to understand. The following excerpts are the reflective of this tendency.

Mark: They (classmates) affected my essay in that of there was something I was fairly sure they did not know (i.e., 성묘: seong-myo; a visit to one’s ancestor’s grave), I made sure to explain it well (Mark, PL1).

Researcher: O.k. Then for the target reader, you mentioned classmates..
Mark: Yes, classmates, right.
Researcher: We share our writing. In case other students ask some questions, you prepare... You mentioned about 성묘.
Mark: Especially with people at our level, if we write about something like this, there are a lot of vocabulary words they may or may not know. So I made sure like when talking about ‘성묘’ because chances are they didn’t know what that was, so I made sure to explain it well.
Researcher: So for your writing, target reader is important?
Mark: Yes,
Researcher: So you always think of your readers?
Mark: Absolutely.. whenever you write anything regardless of what language it is, your audience, interacting with the piece is very important (Mark, SR1, p.5).

Mark: The target readers for this assignment are my classmates as well as teacher. They have affected my preparation in that, in choosing my vocabulary, I try to stay away from vocabulary word that we did not use in class so as to make them understand my essay (Mark, PL3).

Mark: Like if I use a lot of hard vocabulary or the words that we haven’t learned in class, it makes them hard to understand it, and it kinds of defeats the purpose of reading it aloud and then asking questions and discussing it (Mark, SR2, p.7).
However, Tao, who did not feel confident about her writing and considered herself a bad writer, often felt inferior during the reading-aloud time when she compared her writing with that of other students. In an interview, she mentioned some specific student names saying that they were good at writing and their writing flowed well. In the case of descriptive writing, in which everyone wrote similar content, for example regarding New Year’s Day and Valentine’s Day, Tao felt more inferiority with regard to her linguistic ability, saying that the listeners already knew about the content, so it became more obvious who writes better or more effectively. Thus, this affected her writing in such a way that she tried to make her writing more interesting so that her essays could attract the listeners’ attention. She reported, however, that classmates did not influence her writing that much in the case of argumentative writing, in which students expressed their own opinions and wrote different content.

Tao: Since we’re all writing the same topic, and they might know more than I do, so when I’m writing, and they can think, oh, you can’t write this way or.. Especially when I heard their version, I thought it’s really good. (Tao, SR1, p.3).

Tao: I think the target readers already know about the topic and might have a different opinion than my own. But, it does not affect my writing because everyone has their own opinions and we should respect each other’s opinion (Tao, PL4).

In addition, the participants read their past writing and reviewed the instructor’s comments on the papers when writing a new piece. They carefully reviewed the instructor’s written feedback so that they would not make the same mistakes or errors. Also, they used the written feedback to learn correct word choices and grammar in the context of their papers. They appreciated when the instructor suggested better words and sentences, or alternative options appropriate for their writing context. They were aware of
their weak points that needed to be improved, and the instructor’s comments were a good mediator that they could use in knowing what to focus on for improvement. For example, Mark knew that he needed to put in extra effort to correctly use the particles (i.e., subject particles lsi/lsa (i/ga) and topics particles oun/uns (eun/neun), and academically appropriate words or sentences in his writing rather than colloquial or informal Korean. Also, he wanted to learn other ways of expressing himself, instead of using the same words and phrases repeatedly. As seen in the excerpt below, Mark appreciated one of my comments in which I wrote 쉽지 않다 (ship-ji an-tta; not easy, verb/adjective stem + 지 않다, negation) could be a good alternative to 복잡하다 (bok-ja-pa-da; complex/complicated).

The instructor’s comments and corrections were helping him to improve in his weak areas, as seen below.

Researcher: Do you like this kind of written feedback?
Mark: Yeah, it’s very helpful to me. I mean if you didn’t give us any written feedback, then how would I know even how to improve myself?
Researcher: Is it helpful? In what way? Can you be more specific?
Mark: The more – the ones that help the most are where – like here – ‘cause this is obviously a big concern of mine, sounding too colloquial, really informal when writing papers, so when you give feedback like this saying it’s too colloquial and then giving the better expression that is extremely helpful. Also, correcting I think grammar that is incorrect and letting us know. For instance if I have ‘에게 (e-gae; to a person)” or if I have “lsi/lsa (i/ga; subject particle)” instead of “을/를 (eul/leul; object particle)” it’s very helpful. Or, just different ways to say things. Like in English, I could think of a thousand different words to say the same thing, but in Korean it’s obviously much more difficult. Like right here, I have “복잡하다(to be complicated)” and “쉽지 않다(not easy)” – that’s also helpful, just trying to think of other ways to say the same thing.

I don’t know if that would be as helpful as this is. Because the way you have it, you’ll write – not that it’s incorrect – but you’ll write a better way of saying something. Or if it is incorrect, you’ll correct it. It’s easier for me to understand something when you correct it in context than for you to simply underline it and say look at this grammar point again. That’s not exactly – I mean ‘cause I can
understand something, but not necessarily be able to apply it on my own. So if you correct it in context in my paper, it’s a lot more helpful like how you did now.

Absolutely. Like I said when something is corrected in context, then it makes it stick a lot more. It’s easy for me to remember to do it the way that [break]

And then if I – say I’m writing another paper, and I’m trying to make a similar grammar structure that I remember I made in an older paper that I did incorrectly, I’ll go back and look at it and make sure that I’m doing it the right way this time (Mark, 5th Interview, pp.2-3).

Furthermore, having many opportunities to write in class helped them to see the usefulness of writing practices to improve their language abilities, and boosted their confidence in writing and a feeling of achievement as well. The participants used writing assignments to practice vocabulary and grammar points that they studied and to apply them to the real-world task situations. They valued the writing opportunities, since they thought that their actual use of vocabulary and grammar points facilitated later recall of them and understanding of their usage in context. The following excerpts from Mark and Mee show how their engagement in writing contributed to improvement of their writing ability, confidence, and feeling of achievement.

Researcher: Okay, alright. Do you think that, compared to the two quarters ago, do you feel like your writing proficiency improved?
Mark: Yeah, definitely. I know that my confidence level is much, much higher.
Researcher: Oh, confidence level.
Mark: Yeah, which is really important. ‘Cause usually obviously the more confident I am the better I tend to do. Like I can’t imagine myself being able to write this paper 9 months ago. I just can’t picture myself being able to do this. ‘Cause I may have – like the vocab – I may have had it back then – but I wasn’t as able to get my thoughts down in such a coherent manner as I am now think. I think that was the big thing – just to be able to get to be like a smooth or flow well.
Researcher: Yeah. So back to what resources – what made you improve on the writing?
Mark: I think the main thing is just repetition. Just doing it over and over. 9 times out of 10 you’re going to get better at it. So I think just ‘cause we’ve done a lot of
writing, it’s just – I take the feedback every time and I just get better every time I write a little bit (Mark, 5th Interview, pp.2-3).

Mee: I am really glad that this year while taking the Korean 500 level series, it allowed me the opportunity to write a lot. I think that this is a very valuable experience and I don’t think that my language ability would have improved without this experience. The usage of grammar in writing helps me to continuously keep grammar points in my mind and not lose them because lack of everyday usage. I think that writing in a L2 language really helps to improve the learner’s understanding of that language (Mee, autobiography, p.2).

I like – I guess taking this class makes me like actually like Korean writing ‘cause it makes me feel kind of good at the end when I see “oh wow, I can actually write something in Korean – like that’s about a page long” or something like that. Because like we couldn’t do that back in like Korean like the 200 level series. We never did something like that. So actually like accomplishing like a piece of writing makes me feel kind of like “oh at least I kind of learned something and was able to put it into use.” So I feel like it’s a good assignment (Mee, SR2, p.7).

As reported above, the class sessions were an important mediator in writing: in particular, reading-aloud sessions influenced the participants’ engagement with writing (e.g., considering the audience’s linguistic ability, making compositions interesting so as to attract an audience, etc.), and they agentively interacted with the instructor’s written feedback to improve their weaknesses. In addition, having frequent opportunities to write (i.e., practice) seemed to improve their writing abilities, confidence level, and feeling of achievement.

*Prior experience/community-mediated strategies*

In addition to the classroom community, it was also found that participants mediated their writing with their past community experiences: foreign language learning experiences, study abroad (to Korea) experiences, and writing or other Korean classes that they took previously.
All the participants had the experience of learning foreign languages other than Korean when they were high school students, and these language learning experiences influenced the study methods they selected for Korean learning as well as formation of an evaluative or comparative perspective on linguistic aspects of languages, including Korean. They knew some effective study strategies through prior foreign language learning and applied them to Korean learning. For example, Mark studied Spanish and German, each for two years, during high school, and the experience influenced how he studied Korean grammar and vocabulary. He knew effective methods by which he could learn well: use of flash cards for vocabulary and simple sentence writing for grammar. Also, Paul wrote in his writing autobiography that his Korean writing process mimicked his writing process for Spanish that he learned when he was in the 7th grade. For Korean writing, Paul tended to write down new vocabulary and grammar patterns that he would like to use later, as he had done previously when he learned Spanish. Also, he felt more at ease whenever he learned another language, since he already knew “what to do and what is hard and confusing” through the previous learning experiences. Paul reported to me regarding his foreign language learning experience and its influence on his Korean writing as follows:

Researcher: You wrote here that “my process of writing mimics my writing process of Spanish”. Could you tell me more about this?
Paul: Yes, I started learning Spanish when I was 7th grade. And when I first started writing, I would do a lot of the same things that I did when I write in Korean now. Now my Spanish is the point where I can write it’s like in English, but.. starting out I would do the same things..
Researcher: So when you recall, you are doing exactly same things.
Paul: Pretty much same things.. I would think of words that I didn’t know, I didn’t think of grammar patterns that, you know, I have to use this, at least certain amount of this.. so that teacher won’t be angry.
Researcher: Spanish was your first foreign language, right?
Paul: But after Spanish, I also took French and German in high school. I took all three at the same time, but my writing skills are not good as French and German. My speaking is a lot better.
Researcher: So do you think that when you learned French and the other languages, was it similar to the learning process of Spanish?
Paul: Yes, everything was easier to learn after you had already gotten one. All the others like naturally came because you already knew what to do and you knew what’s hard and confusing (Paul, Interview based on autobiography, p.1).

Plus, the participants often mentioned that Korean was much different grammatically from the other languages that they had learned, including English, their native language, and thus required more time and harder work than they had invested in previous language learning. It seemed that their previous foreign language learning experience helped them to form an evaluative or comparative perspective on linguistic aspects of languages and to choose appropriate learning methods based on that knowledge. For example, Mark and Paul tried not to translate from English to Korean literally as well as mentally while writing because of the major structural difference between the two languages. Tao, who engaged in translation many times, also mentioned that direct translation from English to Korean did not work well:

Researcher: You wrote here [process log #3] that you are doing your best to think in Korean.
Mark: Right. This is why before I start writing anything I will review vocab words or past articles like this to get me in the Korean way of thinking and get me in the mood to write in Korean.
Researcher: So you think that if you think in Korean then you think that it makes you a better writer?
Mark: Yes, it might not help a real significant amount, but I think it does help a little bit because Korean especially from English it’s very different. It’s a subject object verb language so the whole thought process is a just a little different. So I think it does help a little bit, but I’m not sure how significant it actually is (Mark, SR3, p.10).
Paul: Yeah. Definitely Spanish is easier because it’s so much more like English, you know. For Korean, I feel like I have to do a little bit more work and I second guess myself a lot more.

Tao: But I think writing is different with every language because the grammars are so different and it is often not right to just do a direct translation. I think having a foreign language learning experience allows myself learn to not just do direct translation. Instead, observe how natives or book uses certain word or phrases and apply it myself. I do think that having previous experience reduce the fear of learning another foreign language and it gives you more confidence (more for speaking) (Tao, e-mail communication).

Study abroad or internship experiences in Korea were also important mediators that influenced the participants’ writing: these experiences heightened the importance of an immersion environment or frequent interaction with native speakers for foreign language learning and also seemed to enhance confidence and risk-taking in Korean use. Mark studied Korean for two months at a university in Korea before taking third-year Korean courses at the research site, and he said that the learning experience in Korea was an important turning point for him in terms of writing in Korean and Korean learning in general. He emphasized that daily journal writing and the immersion environment in Korean improved his Korean proficiency tremendously, and also said that he came to be more sensitive to the ways in which Korean people made sentences. He had a habit of translating before the study abroad experience, but he realized that writing directly in Korean made writing more natural and proper (see the excerpt below). Also, after returning from Korea, he tried to create a local immersion environment. For example, he tried not to use English when he communicated with his Korean roommate, listened to Korean radio programs, and watched Korean shows or movies. He truly appreciated frequent writing opportunities offered by the third-year Korean courses. Since he was
such a strong supporter of the immersion environment, he was planning to go to Korea again to study Korean for an entire year after the completion of the third-year Korean courses. The excerpts below show how Mark’s learning experience in Korea mediated his current writing learning:

After completing Korean 103, I was awarded a scholarship and spent the summer in Suwon, South Korea studying at Kyung Hee University. This is where I consider my real Korean writing education to have begun. Though my Korean writing skills were still limited, I began to keep a journal every day, which I would have corrected by my language instructor. In addition, we were required to write several short essays – one to three paragraphs – about certain topics. I thought that this method was extremely helpful because, in my opinion, the best method to writing improvement is to write often (Mark, autobiography, p.1).

Researcher: You went to Kyunghee University.. and you said that your real writing started at that time. Tell me more details.
Mark: Before I went to Kyunghee, I took 101, 102, 103, and that time mostly I studied basic syntax formation, just completing extremely basic forms of written communication. But at Kyunghee, I started writing opinions, and giving more in-depth explanations of things. For example, we wrote about plastic surgery, South Korean/North Korean,, describing scenery..
Researcher: Two to three paragraphs?
Mark: Right. It was not that in-depth, but it was more than what I had done up to that point.. Extremely difficult for me that time.. learning vocab & difficult grammar patterns..
Researcher: Do you think that experience still affects how you write now?
Mark: Absolutely..
Researcher: In what way?
Mark: It’s where I just started to be able to understand.. Up until the point, I just take English, and translate into Korean.. When I started to write there, I realize different ways the Koreans write words and sentences, so it influences the way that I write my Korean now.
Researcher: So before, you wrote in English first, and then you translated into Korean.. you started think in Korean after the experience in Korea?
Mark: Yes, I listen to teacher all the time, explain in English you say this way, but in Korean you say this way, but it doesn’t actually translate.. For example, In English, you say “the person has a big muscle” possession verb.. you wouldn’t say “근육근이 있습니다. 근육이 큽니다.. That’s sort of thinking..
Researcher: You wrote here that “the best method to writing improvement is to write often.. You’ve got to think like this through experience in Korea? Did you write often that time?

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Mark: It wasn’t that long.. One or two paragraphs.. I kept a journal everyday while I was there..
Researcher: Was it required?
Mark: Yes, my teacher checked it every morning. It was extremely, extremely helpful. That’s why my writing improved much while I was there because I did it every single day..
Researcher: That’s why you wanted to keep writing a journal here.
Mark: I tried, but I had classes, so I didn’t have time, so (Mark, interview based on autobiography, pp.1-2).

Mark: Oh, I’ve been wanting to study abroad in Korea ever since I got back from the summer because I mean it’s – I’ve learned so much there just in a two months period of time. I mean I’d be there for a year now – so just imagine how much I can learn if I can try hard and stuff (Mark, SR4, p.12).

When I was in Korea, I realized since I get to use Korean – well, obviously, if you use the language more often, you’re going to get better at it. So as far as writing goes anyways, it really made me just I guess just try and learn as much as I can. That way I can test into the highest level when I get over there the more I’ll learn as far as speaking and listening and all that goes. As much as I can anyway, I don’t speak English to my roommate ever. Because I always get mad if he speaks English to me ‘cause obviously the more you speak it the better you’re going to get. So it really just made me kind of – yeah, I guess just focused. Just try really, really hard to get as good as I can while I’m here in the United States, and then plan on continuing that when I get to Korea (Mark, SR4, p.12).

Mee also studied Korean in Korea prior to taking the third-year Korean courses, and she reported that it helped push her to strengthen her language skills, because not many people knew English there. Learning Korean in the classroom in Korea was challenging to her, since there was no English explanation if there was a grammar point that she did not understand. At times, it was frustrating and frightening, but she was able to see how much she improved her Korean through the study abroad experience, and this increased her confidence and reduced her fear of making mistakes in speaking and writing as well. Thus, she strongly wanted to go to Korea again for further Korean learning, mentioning that “I feel that it is the only way in which I can continue to improve my Korean skills”
Also, Paul went to Korea for an internship at a hotel before taking the third-year Korean courses. He did not take any Korean classes in Korea, but he said that the internship experience helped him to enhance his confidence and his willingness to communicate while reducing his fear of making mistakes in speaking and writing. He wanted to go to Korea again, like Mee and Mark, for further Korean learning.

The following is an excerpt that shows how the internship in Korea impacted on his Korean learning in terms of affect and motivation.

Researcher: O.k. You have been to Korea, Chejudo, right? You didn’t take any classes?
Paul: No. I just went there to work.
Researcher: Do you think that experience influenced your writing or learning of Korean in general? Tell me about your experience.
Paul: I think definitely it made me like have to fin for myself immediately. You know, before I went to Korea I had only taken three classes of Korean. So when I went there, it just made me have to really you know think quickly and answer questions myself, you know, kind of take all in. I remember I worked with the PR team and I was asked to translate signs in Korean to English. That to me is not for someone who had taken only three classes. I was given it, and I was so nervous. Work ethics there are totally different, so you have to do this, don’t complain, just do it and don’t think about it. I had to use dictionary but you know I did do work like that even though I think I wasn’t prepared for it at all. So today, I think it just made me maybe not be as scared of Korean like writing and speaking. I feel like now I have no fear. Like, I’ll talk to anyone. If I make a mistake, I don’t really care.
Researcher: That time you were supposed to translate signs?
Paul: Yes.. There were pool rules, rules for the pool. I remember that I translated one of them and it was like talking about how “if you have tattoos you have to wear T-shirts.” I remember translating it, and I’m like that can’t be right, why do you have to wear T-shirts? You know and then like I question myself and then answers we don’t allow people to have tattoos and swim without T-shirt. And I’m just like o.k. and I don’t know I feel like it just made me more confident and to be willing to you know make mistakes and try again and practice.
Researcher: What kinds of writing activities did you do there? Translation?
Paul: Other than the translating for the PR team, I didn’t really do anything else. What I did notice was writing like I couldn’t read people’s fast, fast writing completely couldn’t read at all. That really bothered me because I’m just like this looks like scribble, this is not Hangul, like this is a totally different language.
Researcher: Didn’t they read to you?
Paul: But I really wished I had known that because I felt kind of bad. They are writing quick notes and it’s like you can’t read it, o.k. I guess I need to learn how to write in a different way now because no one writes perfect. I really didn’t write much there.

Researcher: So do you wanna go to Korea someday to learn Korean?
Paul: I definitely wanna go back. I’d like to go to Seoul or I’d like to go to Pusan or something like that (Paul, interview based on autobiography).

Furthermore, the classes they took at the research site often became a mediator for their writing. For example, Mee told me that a class that she took in the Department of Korean, one about Korean literature and translation, helped her greatly improve her Korean writing skills, including her grammar and vocabulary abilities, and in turn boosted her confidence in Korean writing. She took the literature and translation course at the same time she took the first course of the third-year course series, and presented her translations of classical poems that she did for the class in a research forum. Through the work of translation, she learned more clearly about the differences between Korean and English grammar, which enhanced her grammar skills and thus contributed to her writing development:

When I started taking the 500 level (K507, K508, and K509) Korean series this year, I was forced to sharpen my writing skills without previous experience. During the time I was taking Korean 507, I was also taking Korean 753, which required a very high level of writing skills. I think that Korean 753 really enhanced my writing skills in Korean. We would have to analyze classical texts and write a response in Korean regarding our analysis. Writing about classical poetry was definitely a lot harder than what assigned in Korean 507, topic wise (Mee, autobiography).

One of my major accomplishments in Korean writing was my work done for the Department of East Asian Language and Literature Research Forum. At the forum, I presented my translated work of classical Korean poems. This was a very different writing experience for me. I had to translate poems written in English and Chinese back into Korean. During the translating process, I would first translate all the words one by one into Korean. Next, I would link all the words back together using the Korean grammar that I know. And finally I had to rearrange the poem according to my interpretation to make the poem flow. I feel that writing a Korean poem was a
lot more challenging than writing composition because of the way the poem had to be put together (Mee, autobiography).

In addition, all the participants took English writing classes when they were freshmen, and what they learned about how to write a good composition in the classes mediated their writing in Korean. They said that ‘good writing’ is a piece written in a concise, clear, and organized fashion, and in a way that attracts readers. They reported that the English writing classes, as well as what they learned about writing since their grade school years, helped them construct an overall concept of good writing that affected how they wrote in Korean as well.

As described above, while writing the participants interacted with their past learning communities, such as foreign language learning experiences, study abroad experiences, and the classes they took previously. Their use of these prior experiences and sources showed how active they were as language learners and how beneficial these resources were for their acquisition of Korean. Their adeptness at utilizing these resources was another interesting finding of the study. All the participants had learned at least one different foreign language before Korean, and the previous learning experiences affected their choice of study methods for Korean learning and helped them have more evaluative and comparative perspectives on languages. Also, the study abroad or internship experiences heightened the importance of continued, sustained exposure to Korean input, and increased their willingness to communicate and confidence in Korean learning. Plus, it was found that the participants had taken English writing classes since their grade school years, and the solid foundation of the L1 writing seemed to positively influence their writing in Korean.
Imagined community-mediated strategies

Participants not only had specific goals or objectives that they would like to achieve for each writing assignment, but also interacted with communities where they aspired to belong to in the future. The communities, so called ‘imagined communities’, were strongly related to their long-term goals for learning Korean, and these communities influenced their ways of studying Korean and their learning foci. The positive and considerable impact of these imagined communities was another of the study’s more interesting findings. The following paragraphs provide descriptions of each participant’s interaction with the imagined communities and their connection with their writing behaviors.

Mark had a very specific community that he would like to belong to in the future, and his continuous interaction with the community mediated his actions in Korean writing. His goal was to work as a political officer for the U.S. Embassy in Seoul, Korea, working for both the Korean and the U.S. governments. The interaction with the imagined community helped him engage in Korean learning with clearer goals and beliefs. Also, it motivated him to invest a considerable amount of time in studying Korean, including efforts to create L2 immersion environment (i.e., communication with his Korean roommate in Korean, watching Korean shows and listening to Korean radio programs, elimination of L1 (English) use when writing, etc.) to maximize his Korean learning. In short, he had strong instrumental motivation to improve his Korean language ability. He knew that he would need to be equipped with a distinguished-level of speaking and writing skills in Korean to achieve his goal and join the community in the
future. His main concern was to develop an advanced vocabulary and use it in a socially and culturally appropriate manner. Also, he tried to write in Korean so as to sound as academic and intelligent as possible, and made every effort to memorize vocabulary lists that he created every day, to self-study with advanced-level Korean books in addition to textbooks, and to apply the high-level words appropriately in his writing by referring to his electronic dictionary frequently. He was planning to study again in Korea for a whole year, hoping to be more fluent in speaking and writing as well as knowledgeable in Korean politics and economics. The excerpts below show his imagined community, interaction with it, and how the interaction influenced his actions for writing.

My goal for my Korean writing is to be able to write at a professional level, that is, well enough to be accepted in a professional setting. In order to achieve this, I will need a much better grasp of advanced Korean vocabulary, grammar, and overall Korean language function (Mark, autobiography).

Mark: If I get a scholarship that I apply for, I like to work at the embassy in Seoul, it’s a political officer public, I’ll communicate with Koreans on a regular basis, what United States is doing and what Korea is doing.
Researcher: So your future goal is related to your Korean learning, right?
Mark: Right, absolutely. I need to communicate very well in Korean and English, too (Mark, interview based on autobiography).

Mark: If I’m going to have to communicate to government officials in both countries in either Korea or America, I’m gonna have to be able to write well and I’m gonna have to be able to get my point across. I guess it’s made just strive for not so much perfection but just to do the best that I can and sound as academic and as intelligent as possible.
Researcher: Do you think that definitely affects your work?
Mark: Yeah, absolutely. With having that goal, it really allows me to push myself like everyday to memorize words and look over papers and feedback. So it does help me kind of push myself to go that extra step (Mark, 5th interview, p.5).

Minsoo, the Korean heritage student, wanted to be able to write at a level that a regular Korean college student writes at. His goal was to attain Korean writing fluency
equivalent to his current English writing proficiency. Whereas the other participants were taking the third-year Korean classes to fulfill a Korean major or minor requirement, Minsoo was taking Korean to maintain and further develop his heritage language proficiency and its cultural knowledge. In other words, his motivation was more integrative in contrast the more instrumental motivation of his classmates. According to him, his parents immigrated to America in 1977 for better economic and educational opportunities for the future and decided to live permanently in the U.S. for their two sons’ education, work, and other opportunities (Minsoo, e-mail communication). His parents wanted him (and his older brother) to take Korean classes and forced him to study Korean at a Korean heritage language school near home when he was young. Minsoo told me that his parents wanted their sons not to lose Korean “because they are Korean.” His parents spoke in Korean at home and taught vocabulary and grammar by using workbooks and flashcards, but Minsoo wanted to get along with his American friends more and often felt “embarrassed at being Korean” as soon as he entered grade school. He felt ashamed of speaking Korean and thought that the use of Korean negatively influenced his social life when he was young:

Researcher: 근데 왜 Korean School 은 안 갔어요, 가지 싫었어요?
Minsoo: 그냥 더.. 영어, 미국 사람처럼 살고 싶은 생각 들어서.
Researcher: 한국어를 배우는 게 왜 미국 사람처럼 사는 거에 좀 안 좋은 거 같았어요?
Minsoo: 아니 그냥, 뭐 어쨌.. 그냥.. 어렸을 때 좀 창피해서. 한국말이 좀 창피해서. 뭐 들으면, 하면, 그냥 여기 미국이니까. 그래서 하면 좀 이상하죠.
(Researcher: By the way, why did you stop attending the Korean heritage school? Minsoo: Just, I wanted to live more like American people.
Researcher: Did you think that learning Korean was not good for living like American people?)
Minsoo: No, but just I was ashamed of speaking Korean that time. That time, I thought that here is America, so it was strange to speak Korean. My friends were all American and all spoke English... so...(Minsoo, interview based on autobiography).

However, Minsoo wanted to learn Korean as he got older and wanted to be more “Korean,” and he thought he should speak Korean well because he is “Korean” and his parents’ native language is Korean. As time went by, he identified himself as a Korean more than an American, and thought that learning his heritage language and culture would be important to consolidate his identity and pride as a Korean:

Past Korean writing education and experiences include going to Korean school as a child, as well as doing workbooks and flashcards at home (vocabulary, grammar, spelling, etc.) Growing up in a Korean household, I can understand Korean almost as well as I can understand English. Since my parents speak Korean at home, listening and speaking is pretty natural. But since, I have grown up and have gone to schools in America, I have spoken more English than Korean. When I was younger, at first, I wanted to be more “American” and was almost embarrassed of being Korean, but as I got older I wanted to be more “Korean” (Minsoo, Writing autobiography).

Minsoo: 한국어를 잘 하는 것이 중요한 이유는 한국 사람이니까요, 부모님이 한국에서 태어나셨고, 알아야 되죠.
(Minsoo: The reason why I should speak Korean well is that I’m a Korean. My parents were born in Korea, and so I have to know the language (Minsoo, interview based on autobiography, p.4)).

He was dreaming of communicating with his parents and other relatives in Korea with no problem in both speaking and writing: this was his imagined community to some degree. His listening skill was outstanding, since he had grown up with Korean parents speaking Korean to him at home. However, he felt that he needed to improve his Korean speaking skill to function more successfully in the Korean communities that he belonged to (i.e., family, relatives, Tang-soo-do friends (댱수도; Korean martial art), etc.). Plus, he wanted
to read and write fluently like a regular college student in Korea. For these reasons, he started to take Korean classes that the university offered.

Minsoo interacted with the imagined community of Korean college students in Korea, and that interaction impacted on his actions and learning foci in Korean writing learning. One of his major learning foci included learning of high-level vocabulary and expressions as well as how to write a well-structured, intellectual paper by using the advanced words. Through the writing assignments, Minsoo wanted to learn and use high-level words that he had not learned or heard of before. He thought that the content of the textbook and words in it were overall easy to grasp, and he found that online resources (i.e., words and example sentences in the naver.com online dictionary) were more useful to satisfy his needs for intellectual and academic vocabulary and spellings than the textbook. Also, he appreciated additional reading materials dealt with in class. The level of the reading materials was higher than that of the textbook, and he thought that the materials were very useful to him in learning new words and phrases. He hoped to have more of those kinds of advanced-level reading materials in the classroom instruction.

Since he was interacting with his imagined community, college students in Korea, and aimed to achieve the college-level proficiency in writing, he wanted to receive more formal instructions solely focused on advanced-level reading and writing, such as a course on how to write an academic paper. Also, he wanted to write a paper about the topics in his study area, Business, and hoped to be able to take a Business Korean class someday so as to have a chance to learn and use technical vocabulary and expressions related to his major in the Korean language. The Korean program at the research site did
not offer such a specialized course as Business Korean, but Minsoo said that the Japanese program of the research site was offering a Business Japanese class. He noticed that many Business major students, including Japanese heritage students, received benefits from the class in learning technical terms and formal business writing in Japanese. He hoped that the Korean program would be able to offer such a special class for the heritage learners, like the Japanese program did. Minsoo was the only Korean heritage student in the classroom, and he knew the different needs and goals of heritage and non-heritage students through his classroom experiences. Interestingly, in the interviews, he indicated that heritage and non-heritage learners would need to study Korean in separate classrooms so as to satisfy their special needs and goals, which he felt varied between the two groups. The wish came out from his desire to attain college-level vocabulary knowledge and writing proficiency in Korean, and from the interaction with his imagined community.

Paul, after graduation, wanted to work at a company where he could use his foreign language abilities and knowledge of his major, International Studies. One of the major reasons for him double majoring in Korean as well was that he thought that it would make him more employable. He repeatedly mentioned that there are not that many people who can speak English, Spanish and Korean fluently, saying “there are a lot of Korean Americans who speak English, but how many of them also speak fluent Spanish?” Since he was thinking of getting a job in which he could use his foreign language ability, enhancement of speaking and listening skills was his priority, rather than writing. He said, “I’m not worried about my writing in Korean because I want to master speaking. Because
writing to me is something like for only educated people do. Speaking? Everyone does. If my writing is bad, I’m not worried, but, you know, if my speaking is bad, then I’m useless” (interview based on autobiography, p.5). However, he acknowledged that writing was important at his level, saying, “you finally take all the abstract ideas and put it on paper, in one thing that you can really convey a lot of meanings without speaking” (interview based on autobiography, p.6).

As for writing, Paul’s ultimate goal was to write papers that sound as natural as possible and that are acceptable to Korean native speakers. He wanted to enhance his oral proficiency, vocabulary and grammar knowledge through the writing assignments as well. Paul did not put much importance on learning how to write for the sake of writing ability itself, but he had a lot of interest in investigating the usage of words in context and tried to use appropriate words in his writing context. One of his major concerns was how the native Korean speaking people responded to his writing. He strongly believed that “a native’s perspective is the best perspective” (Paul, SR4, p.6), and thus communicated with his Korean friend, Jinhee (pseudonym), often times for his writing assignments, particularly to discuss word choices and sentences’ intentions. The native speaker’s acceptance, rejection, and comments were important for his learning of writing (see the excerpts below), and he kept saying “I don’t have intuition. I don’t have that inner Korean knowing,” and that “The native speakers’ comments are important to me because I would never know” (Paul, interview, p.2):

My editing process is mostly concerned with how my intentions in my writing are received by Korean native speakers (Paul, Autobiography).
Paul: But, what’s hard about that is I feel like when I sometime use online dictionary, it gets you so many words that in my context that I don’t know. You know, should I use that one or should I use this one? If I use this word, is this a only like a science word or is this like a child word? You know because I don’t have that intuition at all like what’s an appropriate word.

Researcher: Then, how do you decide which word is more appropriate than the others?

Paul: If I am really unsure and really want to use it… I would probably ask you, or I have one Korean friend, Jinhee (pseudonym) that reads my papers. I would probably ask her like “Does this make sense?”

Researcher: Is she your friend?

Paul: Yes, but I never go to her first. I always write out everything I want and give it to her, and she normally doesn’t understand (laugh out loud). And it makes you feel really bad. Because I really want to try first and I think that to me is probably one of the best parts when I can really ask specific questions. Because I feel like I can write, but it’s like those little words things or it’s like I’m trying to say this, but she is reading in a totally different way. You know what I’m saying?

Researcher: So you mean that her interpretation is different?

Paul: Yes, it’s totally different. That’s what I think is at this level right now it’s really important because I think I’m explaining everything clearly and then she reads and then says I don’t get it…. Laugh…. O.K. I’ll try again..

Researcher: The last sentence in your autobiography is interesting.. You said, “my editing process is mostly concerned with how my intentions in my writings are received by Korean native speakers”. So you mean that your standard is Korean native speaker?

Paul: Yes, I want to be understood because I feel like maybe if American read my essay, he would get it completely. But if Korean would read it, it would be like, man, it sounds weird, that’s intuition that I don’t have…that like we would never say that.. Or this sentence sounds aggressive or something, or sounds too forward.. I don’t know. There are so many things that are different.

Mee was a senior, and after graduation she was planning to go to graduate school to study Higher Education. With the knowledge she would acquire in graduate school, she hoped to have a chance to work at an institution of higher education in Korea in the future; this was her imagined community. She mentioned that this goal forced her to work harder on her Korean. Also, she had a passion for learning Korea, including its culture, literature, and history, since she was thinking of working in Korea later. To learn more about
Korean literature and culture, she took a course on Korean literature and translations, and presented her translation work of Korean classical poems into the East Asian Language and Literature Undergraduate Research Forum. Also, she had a lot of interest in learning about Korea and its language by watching Korean movies TV dramas and listening to Korean songs, through which she believed that people can learn a foreign language and culture in the most effective and enjoyable way.

As for writing, Mee hoped to reach a level where she could write smoothly and fluently without relying on dictionaries, as she did in English. However, she mentioned that, at her current Korean proficiency level, the online dictionary was her best friend, and borrowing words from the external sources such as the dictionary and songs was necessary to enhance her Korean writing ability and understand Korean people’s thought processes. She tended to borrow lots of words, phrases, and sentences from the dictionary or songs to overcome her linguistic deficiency and negative feelings associated with it. The borrowing was an important strategy for Mee to construct sentences and explore the Korean language, and the action was important to achieve her goals. One of her worries, however, was that the graduate school she had been admitted to had no Korean program, so she had no choice but to plan to self-study in Korean as a graduate student. She was determined to continue her Korean study.

As for Tao, an imagined community that she was interacting with was not clear compared to the other participants, but she wanted to understand Korean movies and TV dramas better in the future. In a sense, she was her own imagined community. She loved watching Korean movies and dramas, and, as I said earlier, it became an important
motivation for her to take Korean classes. Even though she did not enjoy writing in Korean, defining herself as a bad writer, she was taking the third year courses for fun, she said. She did not want to stop learning Korean even if she felt it very challenging to keep going on to advanced-level Korean classes. It turned out that she used writing assignments mainly to learn more vocabulary and grammar points and “study and memorize” them, hoping that she could understand Korean movies and dramas better with an expanded linguistic capacity. Also, for the writing assignments, she used direct translation (from English to Korean) to write clearly and profoundly in an organized fashion, and she had to use the online dictionary and translator very frequently to complete the assignments. She hoped that she could write freely without the help of the L1 use in the future, but she reported that the translation and the use of resources were greatly helping her to enhance her Korean vocabulary and grammar at her current proficiency level. She was agentively using the resources to learn Korean writing, and to overcome her linguistic deficiency and anxiety on writing.

To summarize, the participants’ interactions with communities such as native Korean-speaking friends, classroom community (classmates, instructor, class materials, etc.), past experience (previous foreign language learning experience, study abroad experience, and L1 writing education), and imagined community were important parts of their writing learning and engagement. The environmental factors were not just ones that indirectly affected the participants’ actions in writing; rather, they were central components of the learners’ writing processes. Thus, it seems necessary to know more about the learners’ social processes to fully understand their experience of L2 writing.
Role-mediated strategies

It emerged from the data that the participants actively executed their roles of a language learner and an author when writing. Those are the two strategy areas explored in this section of the chapter.

Language learner role-mediated strategies

The participants had different reasons as to why they came to choose Korean for their foreign language courses or major/minor area: Mark wanted to work for the Korean and U.S. governments after graduation, so he pursued attainment of a high or distinguished level of Korean proficiency. Paul wanted to diversify himself professionally by attaining fluency in Korean (in addition to Spanish) and thus to make himself more marketable. Minsoo hoped to communicate with his parents and other relatives and to function properly as a Korean by speaking and writing socially and culturally accepted Korean in his community. Tao wanted to understand Korean dramas and movies better with her improved Korean, and Mee desired to work in a Korean university in the future and use her Korean skills for such work. To all the participants, Korean was an important means to achieving their goals, and they all thought that writing provided a good opportunity to review and apply what they learned, and also to learn new grammar points, vocabulary, and sentence structures. It turned out that they all took advantage of the writing opportunities actively to enhance their Korean abilities. Thus, for them, writing operated primarily as a means to an end - improved Korean proficiency - rather than as an important object of study for its own sake.
Mark repeatedly emphasized that the best way to improve writing proficiency is to write often. He studied Korean at a Korean university during the summer before taking third year Korean courses, and he said that the daily journal and short essay writing that he did in that summer course improved his writing skills greatly. As reported below, Mark also appreciated writing assignments in the Korean writing class that was the site of this study in terms of learning about writing and indicated that the writing opportunities enhanced other language skills as well:

After completing Korean 103, I was awarded a scholarship and spent the summer in Suwon, South Korea studying at Kyung Hee University. This is where I consider my real Korean writing education to have begun. Though my Korean writing skills were still limited, I began to keep a journal every day, which I would have corrected by my language instructor. In addition, we were required to write several short essays – one to three paragraphs – about certain topics. I thought that this method was extremely helpful because, in my opinion, the best method to writing improvement is to write often (Mark, autobiography, p.1).

This current academic year, 2008-2009, I am taking the 3rd year Korean courses at this university. In these courses, we do a considerable amount of writing that, I believe, is extremely helpful given my current language ability. It facilitates not only writing skills, but overall language improvement due to the fact that one must conduct some research in order to write about some of the given topics. I will restate this because I believe it to be extremely important – the best way to get better at writing is to continue to write (Mark, autobiography, pp.1-2).

Mark asked Jin-ho, his Korean roommate, to proofread his papers and see if there were any major errors that blocked understanding of the paper, while asking him to leave any minor errors as long as the papers were understandable (see the excerpts below). He thought that writing provided a good means for him to learn from errors or mistakes, as well as from teachers’ feedback on them. He tried to write each assignment as thoroughly as possible, but he also recognized the importance of learning through writing and errors:
Researcher: And you mentioned here for proof-reading, your roommate helped the paper.
Mark: Right. Most part, I tell him not to correct anything as long as it’s o.k. because that way you can correct it and I learn from the mistake. But because I still don’t want him to change the whole paper.. you know what I mean? So he just kind of corrects to make sure that you [instructor; researcher] can understand it and get what I’m trying to say.. just to makes sure there won’t any major errors..
Researcher: So he read your paper, and said it’s o.k.
Mark: Yes, I can understand what you are saying. And there is nothing too big.. I can actually understand what you are trying to say. So..
Researcher: Is there any reason why you are getting the proof-reading from your Korean friend? Are you afraid that your teacher cannot understand?
Mark: Yes, I wanna make sure that at least saying it coherently, so at least you can get meaning of what I’m trying to say.. even if it’s not grammatically correct. So, that way when you correct I’ll be able to learn better from that grammatical error (Mar, SR1, p.6).

The other participants also actively engaged in writing and wanted to learn from the writing. Minsoo, the heritage learner, was aware that his speaking and listening were good enough to communicate with his parents and Korean people around him, including his Tang-soo-do (Korean martial art) co-teachers that he met three times a week. The owner of the Tang-soo-do gym, where he worked as a part-time instructor, was a Korean and in the workplace there was one more Korean instructor who felt more comfortable when speaking in Korean. In fact, he spoke in Korean, not English, when responding to my interview questions (I knew that he actually felt more comfortable when he spoke in English, so I told him to speak in English, but he wanted to keep using Korean because “I am Korean,” he said). Even if his spoken abilities were good enough to the extent that he could use Korean during the interviews, he felt that he needed to study writing skills systematically through the formal classes, particularly to learn high-level vocabulary items and to use them appropriately in writing. By learning how to use the difficult words in writing, he wanted to write like “a college student in Korea.” He often used a
I used Naver.com online dictionary to help me with certain phrases that I wanted to clearly write about (i.e., 거행하다, 결혼식을 올리다, 사형을 선고하다, 물질적인, 사망일). I wanted to know different ways to say these things, so I looked them up (Minsoo, PL2).

Writing was important to him as a means to learn the usage of high-level words and apply them appropriately. Also, he said that actual use of the words that he found from the various resources in his writing assignments enabled him to memorize them more effectively and retain them for a long time:

쓰기를 하면 아주 어려운 단어를 배울 수 있어요. 쓰이팅을 하면 모르는 단어나 문법을 찾아보고 나서 외우고, 나중에 더 쉽게 외워서 사용할 수 있어요 (Minsoo, SR2, p.10).

If I do writing, I can learn high-level words. Writing makes me to look for the unknown words and grammar points, to learn and memorize them. So, I can use the words and grammar more easily later (Minsoo, SR2, p.10).

As for Tao, writing provided a good opportunity to practice and reinforce what she studied in class, and to study more words and grammar points. Her main focus was to make sentences successfully using correct grammar and vocabulary. She reported that she could use only a few grammar points effectively and tended to use them only with repetition, even though she learned a lot of different grammar patterns in the Korean classes. So, she tried to use other grammar points instead of using the same ones over and over again. As mentioned earlier, she tended to think that she was a bad writer and thus did not enjoy writing much; however, she actively used writing assignments to improve
her vocabulary and grammar skills. In her writing autobiography, she stressed the importance of writing for the enhancement of language proficiency:

Writing plays a big role in learning a language because it shows how much you actually know about the language. It is also a tool to improve the language because you can always learn something new each time you write whether it’s learning new words or grammar points or leaning more about the topic. Writing forces you to use the skills you learn in class and apply it to form a good and concise sentence. Therefore, writing can play a big role in helping us improve our language skills (Tao, autobiography, p.2).

Mee also thought that writing was a good means to improve her overall Korean skills, including speaking. When doing writing assignments, she tried to incorporate example sentences (i.e., from textbooks or other reading materials) that she learned in class “to further ingrain them into her head” (Mee, writing autobiography). She appreciated opportunities to write often in the third-year Korean courses because it forced her to put everything that she learned onto paper and thus reinforce it by doing so. To her, writing was a good tool for retaining what she studied and understanding the Korean language in general:

I am really glad that this year while taking the Korean 500 level series, it allowed me the opportunity to write a lot. I think that this is a very valuable experience and I don’t think that my language ability would have improved without this experience. The usage of grammar in writing helps me to continuously keep grammar points in my mind and not lose them because lack of everyday usage. I think that writing in a L2 language really helps to improve the learner’s understanding of that language (Mee, autobiography, p.2).

Paul tended to first write down unknown words and grammar patterns that he would like to use on a sheet of paper before starting to compose. He did not want to use the same words and grammar patterns for every paper. He listed the words and grammar points before writing, partly because he truly wanted to learn and use new words and patterns,
and partly because he wanted to show me, the instructor, that he kept learning and improving. Even though he put his priority in improving his oral proficiency rather than written skills, he valued the opportunity to write in the third-year Korean courses, saying that writing allows learners to incorporate what they learned into a paper:

I think writing is important with Korean because when you get to this level you are finally taking all of these abstract ideas and putting it on paper, in one thing that you can really convey a lot of meaning without speaking. And I guess that’s why I think that’s one of the hardest things to write well and be a good writer (Paul, interview based on autobiography, p.6).

As described above, the participants interacted with the larger role of a language learner while writing. They engaged in their writing assignments to review and apply what they learned in class. Also, through the writing assignments, they wanted to learn and use new vocabulary and grammar structures rather than using the same ones repeatedly. They often mentioned that writing opportunities should be provided frequently in the upper-level Korean classes, since writing enhances overall language proficiency, including speaking. In other words, writing served as an important means of instantiating what they were learning about the Korean language because, in the act of writing, they were better able to retain what they had learned and could experiment with the input they had acquired in a form of expression that allowed them to carefully monitor what they were doing, since writing, by its nature, creates ongoing opportunities for review and revision.

**Writer role-mediated strategies**

At the same time, the participants exerted their role of writer or author while engaging in writing. They had their own ideas about what good writing is and took actions accordingly to produce a good piece of writing. Indeed, it appeared that to some
extent they had formed identities for themselves as writers of Korean. As writers, they were very careful to equip themselves with correct information and knowledge on the topics they wrote about so that they would not give incorrect information to their readers. Also, before submitting papers to the instructor, they checked content accuracy, spelling, wording, and grammar by asking their native Korean friends to read their work, re-reading their papers orally out-loud, and by referring to online dictionaries. The target readers, classmates and the course instructor, were in their minds when they decided on words and content while writing.

As writers, the participants continuously interacted with their audience while writing. In my research context, the term ‘audience’ is especially appropriate, since the participants read their writing aloud in the classroom and their classmates and instructor became their audience during the reading-aloud time. Mark was conscious of the audience while writing and chose words and grammar patterns comprehensible to his classmates. As for the difficult words or expressions that might possibly cause some confusion to his classmates, he was prepared to explain them and actually did so while reading his work. I noticed that while reading aloud, he explained to the audience some high-level words or key words important to understand the content of his compositions. When writing, he knew that he would share his compositions by reading out-loud in the classroom, and he told me that the reading aloud aspect of writing affected his writing preparation:

My main role in writing this assignment was the role of being a writer. It affected my preparation in that I attempted to write this essay at the highest level possible without making it difficult for my classmates to understand (My current writing level is most likely around a grade school level) (Mark, PL2).
Paul tried to write in a concise and clear manner, because he thought that modern college students have little time to read or listen to a long paper because of their busy schedules. Responding to the question asking about the influence of target readers on writing, he wrote in his process log that “I wanted to write something in as little amount of writing as possible to quickly gauge a reader into my essay. I understand the modern college student has little time for self-glorification writing due to a busy schedule” (Paul, PL1, p.2). In the interview, he also mentioned that a more concise and clearer paper is increasingly preferred in the modern business world:

Researcher: What is good writing in your opinion?
Paul: To me, good writing is short, it’s concise, and it’s clear, but it’s done in ways that intrigue you. I think in college we read a lot of essays that are talking about same things for four pages. And I think like why am I reading about this? Like in real life, no one has time for that. In my opinion, if you are a really good writer, you can take a lot of information and put it in a paragraph and you still understand everything. That to me is a really good writing because that to me is what businesses want. Your boss doesn’t want to read 20 pages. He wants to read one page and he wants all the information in that one page.
Researcher: That applies to Korea writing, too?
Paul: Yeah.. Yeah, for Korean writing I felt like I can write 20 pages and talk about nothing you know. But to me it’s better to write in a concise manner. Because, if you write like that to me that shows your ability more than someone who just gonna write 20 pages, because anyone can do that. I can blabber on and on. But if you are really good, you can write it in 3 sentences that are perfect (interview based on autobiography, p.7).

Mee always tried to come up with an impressive and interesting introductory paragraph to attract the audience’s attention and to help them understand the content of the whole essay. What follows is an excerpt from the stimulated recall for the essay comparing the Korean and American New Year:
Mee: When I was writing the first paragraph, um, I was trying to think of an interesting way to open it up and make the readers know that I’m comparing like the Korean Sol-nal [New Year] to the American Sol-nal [New Year] (Mee, SR1, p.2). Also, for the final paper on which she wrote about the issue of abortion, Mee wrote a short story in the introductory paragraph to hint at what the essay was about and to facilitate the readers’ understanding of the issue and her opinion regarding it. The story was about a girl who was raped and abortion was unavoidable:

Researcher: Then what made you think of this first introductory paragraph? Very interesting.
Mee: ‘Cause I kind of want to give more supporting – a supporting story that would describe what I’m writing about and why abortion should be [break] and that stuff. I figured if I start off with this, then maybe the audience will understand more. I wanted to tell the audience that there’s this kind of unfortunate situation.

For the argumentative writing assignments, the participants tended to interact with their readers more frequently than the descriptive writing to persuade them by using good supporting details. They paid special attention to the introductory paragraph by writing sentences attractive to the readers, such as a short story related to the topic or questions. They looked for information they needed through the Internet, textbooks, and reading materials used in class, tried to write appropriate supporting evidence, and double-checked whether the information was correct by asking native Korean friends or parents and by comparing more than one online resource. Furthermore, there was an effort to respect the audience by considering their preferences and areas of sensitivity, such as religion. For example, Paul wrote about gay marriage for his final paper, and he stated that he tried his best “not to appear too biased” toward a specific religion throughout his paper:
Researcher: Please tell me what you were thinking and doing while you were writing.
Paul: What I was thinking first was that I didn’t want to appear too biased. At first I just kind of talk about the situation, and then, I wanted to relate it to the rest of the world at the same time, talk about just recent events with it, then I give a little more history, and kind of my opinion. And then I wanted to finish it off with more of what I think should happen, and what I kind of think it’s wrong with how people are trying to change things, like I say here, just about how I think churches should privately choose what they do, but the government, too, needs to work separately from the church. They both can’t support each other, because they’re two separate things. It’s pretty much what I was thinking, because I just didn’t want to seem too biased. Even though I really believe in this, I’m really for this one point, I just wanted to talk more about the constitution, and not about religious reasons, because it can get really personal. And I kind of just wanted to avoid any kind of religious argument since the government and the religion is separate in my opinion (Paul, SR4, p.1).

The participants approached the writing assignments as a language learner and at the same time as an author of their writing. Their interaction with the role of an author was mainly revealed in their consideration of their classmates as their audience during the reading-aloud time: while writing they considered their classmates’ proficiency level of Korean, interests, and sensitivity. The actions of the participants as language learners and as authors were an important part of the writing process.
Chapter 5: Discussion and Implications

The current study examined college level Korean as a foreign language (KFL) students’ mediated strategies in L2 writing. An important frame of reference for the study was Lei’s (2008) article, which examined similar issues and used the same theoretical framework, *Activity Theory* (Engestrom, 1999), which guided the current study, but within the context of English as a foreign language (EFL). Chapter Four presented a detailed description and analysis of the larger and smaller types of mediated strategies adopted by the study’s five participants, who were in their third year of Korean as a foreign language undergraduate study.

The purpose of this chapter is to put the study’s findings into further perspective. Following a brief summary of the study’s main findings, the chapter addresses the study’s research questions and offers conclusions emerging from the findings while exploring what the study found relative to other work and important issues in this area. Pedagogical implications arising from the study are then examined. This is followed by a brief discussion of recommendations for future research and then some closing remarks which summarize what the study has contributed to the field of second language writing.

**Summary of major findings**

Drawing on Engestrom’s (1999) *Activity Theory* and the notions of *mediation* and *agency*, this study identified and re-conceptualized L2 writing strategies from the socio-
cognitive perspective and explored how the learners’ learning histories and goals were interrelated to their use of the mediated strategies. This study’s main theoretical framework was Engestrom’s (1999) Activity Theory Model (see Figure 1), which was developed from Leontiev (1978)’s Activity Theory. Engestrom’s Activity Theory deals with complexities of learning context by adding three more types of mediators: community, rules, and division of labor (or rules). Through examining the mediators and mediations, the theory of Engestrom explains the “sociocultural and motivational basis” of activity and goal formation, rather than being restricted to finding reasons for activity in an “individual and internal psychic source” (Engestrom, 1999, p. 21-22). For the current study, Activity Theory was a convenient framework for capturing and categorizing complex environmental or mediational forces that influenced L2 writing. Also, the theory was very useful to connect the L2 learners’ writing activities with the various mediators, including goals, revealing interactions and contradictions between the different mediating components of the KFL context. The theory was valuable in the way it provided “a rich view of context” and a way of “dynamic description” of L2 learners’ purposeful actions in writing for this study (van Lier, 2004, p. 218).

Using various sources of qualitative data (interviews, stimulated recall protocols, process logs, writing autobiography, and students’ written assignments), I categorized the mediated strategies into four broad types and thirteen smaller ones: (1) artifact-mediated (the Internet-, native language (L1)-, and target language (L2)-mediated), (2) rule-mediated (self-constructed rules-, good writing criteria-, plagiarism rule-, and time-mediated), (3) community-mediated (native speaker-, prior experience- (foreign language
learning, study-abroad, & L1 writing experiences), classroom community-,
and imagined community-mediated), and (4) role-mediated (author- and language learner-mediated) strategies. The KFL learners’ mediated actions utilizing the available environmental resources were an important component of their writing: the external environment was not just modifying or indirectly affecting the writing processes; rather, it played a central role in the writing process. In addition, it was found that the learners’ ethnic or cultural backgrounds (e.g., heritage learner vs. non-heritage learner) and learning goals (e.g., a long-term career goal) were important factors that influenced their mediated actions and motivation in writing.

The study found that L2 writing was a mediated or situated process, and actions taken by the learners for writing were able to be more fully understood with the mediators or mediational means involved. Also, the learners strategically mediated their writing with various resources to achieve their current goals and long-term future goals. These broader findings described in this and the preceding paragraph are presented in more detail by way of providing a summary of the KFL learners’ mediated strategies reported in Chapter Four.

First, the KFL participants used various artifacts for their writing assignments to achieve specific purposes. They searched the Internet (e.g., Wikipedia.com, Google, etc.) to find information about their writing topics, to check the accuracy of their existing knowledge, to obtain new ideas for writing, to learn topic-related vocabulary and phrases, and to check for spelling. Online bilingual dictionaries (e.g., Korean websites such as yahoo.co.kr and naver.com) served as their ‘best friend’, as one participant put it: they
used the online type of dictionary heavily to define unknown words, to reaffirm the definition of words, to explore fine points or nuances of words in context (e.g., through example sentences), and to check out spellings (e.g., loan words). Their L1, English, was also an important mediator: the participants used English to find the meaning of unknown words, to acquire information concerning the topics they wrote about, to organize thoughts and ideas (e.g., making an outline, brainstorming, etc.), to write more clearly and profoundly (e.g., mental and literal translation), and to decrease their anxiety towards mistakes or errors. In addition, the participants mediated their writing with their L2, Korean (e.g., textbooks, reading materials/handouts, past essays, Korean TV dramas, shows, songs, and radio programs, etc.): they made efforts to increase the amount of exposure to L2 input in order to overcome a lack of L2 knowledge in the context of foreign language learning (FLL), and to apply what they acquired to the writing assignments and thus to retain and consolidate it through actual use.

Second, the participants mediated their writing with rules, and the rules influenced their writing behaviors. The participants constructed their own rules or beliefs (e.g., ‘the use of L1 should be minimized to maximize the amount of L2 learning,’ ‘only the native’s perspective is the best one’, etc.) for effective foreign language learning and acted according to them when writing. Also, they all had clear thoughts about what constitutes good writing; these were formed through systematic English writing education and applied as standards to their Korean writing as well. However, they often felt frustrated, since it was hard for them to produce good writing in Korean as they defined it because of limits in their L2 proficiency. Also, it was especially interesting to find that
the participants were all very conscious of the dangers of plagiarism and tried to avoid it, e.g., by not copying what other people wrote or suggested, such as what they found on the Internet or what Korean native speaker friends recommended. Time was also an important mediator: the participants tended to break up their writing assignments into smaller, more manageable portions because of their lack of L2 proficiency and busy schedules.

Third, the participants interacted with various communities while writing, and the interaction was an important component of their writing processes. To the participants, discussing their drafts with native Korean friends was an important way to learn more natural, refined words, to learn Korean people’s ways of constructing sentences and the thought processes involved, and to submit more comprehensible papers to the instructor and, by so doing, to heighten their self-confidence as writers. In addition, they mediated their writing with their past learning communities: prior foreign language learning experiences influenced ways of studying Korean writing and the formation of comparative perspectives on languages; the study-abroad or internship experience in Korea increased confidence and willingness to communicate in the L2, and also made them think that sustained, daily exposure to L2 input is crucial to improve Korean abilities; also, their prior L1 writing education transferred positively to L2 writing and provided standards or rules to follow when writing in Korean. Furthermore, the class community mediated their writing: reading-aloud sessions in class made the participants sensitive to the audience’s needs and responses; the instructor’s written feedback helped improve their weaknesses; and also, having frequent opportunities to write (i.e., practice)
improved their writing abilities, confidence level, and feeling of achievement. Also, one of the noteworthy findings was that the imagined community that they would like to belong to in the future was an important mediator and influenced their ways of studying Korean and what to focus on in Korean learning. The imagined communities (e.g., the Korean government, a company requiring foreign language fluency, college students in Korea, etc.) were strongly associated with the participants’ long-term goals, and their interaction with the community helped to clarify their goals and learning foci, and to stay motivated to achieve their goals.

Lastly, the participants exerted the roles of ‘a writer or author’ and ‘a language learner’ while writing: as writers, they considered the Korean proficiency level, interests, and sensitivity of their classmates, who served as their audience (in reading-aloud sessions), and as a language learner they made use of writing assignments to review and apply what they learned and, thus, to increase their overall L2 proficiency, including speaking. The writing assignments were a useful venue where they were able to try out what they learned in various ways, explore new words and grammar, and retain and memorize them.

Collectively, the findings of this study support the claim of sociocultural theory that learning, including learning related to writing, is a situated or mediated activity, and learning occurs and/or emerges from the interactions of learners and environments (van Lier, 2000). Learning about writing did not just occur inside the mind through strictly internal cognitive processes; these learners actively sought and benefited from various kinds of interaction beyond themselves. The KFL learners’ interactions with the various
environmental mediators, categorized into four major types and thirteen smaller ones in this study, were themselves an important component of their writing. The external environment was not just a secondary element or a modifier indirectly affecting writing; rather, it played a central role in the writing process. It has been noted that “cognition and context are intertwined and interact so closely that their boundaries are blurred” (Lei, 2008, p. 219), and the results of this study support that idea. Engestrom (1999) also noted that the idea of mediation “breaks down the Cartesian walls that isolate the individual mind from the culture and the society” (p. 29).

In the socio-cognitive perspective of learning that was at the heart of this study, mediational means or mediation is treated as one of the key concepts in learning, since all adults’ learning involves mediation. Engestrom (1999) also regarded mediation as the most important idea among concepts discussed in the activity-theoretical perspective. Vygotsky (cited in van Lier, 2000, p. 258) found from his research that all adults’ attention was mediated, whereas children showed both unmediated and mediated attention in their activities. Mediational means, such as physical and symbolic resources, mediate social and individual functioning. Engestrom (1999) emphasized that the idea of mediation indicates how people can control their behavior and supports human self-determinism. He further argued that researchers should seriously study “artifacts as integral and inseparable components of human functioning” (p. 29). In his view, and as this study found while utilizing his Activity Theory as a theoretical framework in the analysis of the data, the examination of mediations enables us to understand how social
processes and learning contexts are inter-related with the cognitive, mental processes of learners, which in turn enables us to better understand L2 learning processes.

In this section, I summarized the study’s major finding involving four types of mediated strategies that were explored through various sources of data in Chapter Four. The next section addresses the study’s research questions one by one and offers discussion and conclusions based on the results obtained. Also, the discussion relates to other research work and important issues in the areas of L2 writing and learner strategy studies.

Response to Research Questions

Question #1: What kinds of mediational means do the KFL participants use for their L2 writing assignments? What are the purposes or reasons for using them?

As described in the summary section, the KFL participants agentively used various mediators, categorized into four major types and thirteen smaller ones, to achieve specific purposes for writing. Some findings concerning the identified mediators in the present study confirm the findings from the earlier studies on L2 writing, while they also reveal new mediations that need more attention.

First, as for the artifact-mediated actions, the KFL participants extensively used the Internet (e.g., Wikipedia, Google, Naver, etc.) to search for information regarding writing topics and preferred using an online bilingual dictionary rather than a paper-based dictionary. Lei (2008) also reported her EFL learners’ preference for the use of an online bilingual type of dictionary and active use of the Internet (e.g., to search for information, ideas, and useful expressions) for their L2 writing assignments. What the EFL
participants’ reported in Lei’s study, that “the Internet is fast, convenient, up-to-date, and full of resources” (p. 234), was what the KFL participants reported in the present study. These L2 learners all agreed that the online form of dictionary was faster and handier to use: they had their own portable notebook computers, and so the Internet (and thus an online dictionary) was readily available to them on campus and at home. The use of the online forms of mediators was an important mediation in L2 writing, suggesting that L2 educators need to respond to the change in students’ preferred learning mode as new technological opportunities arise.

The learners’ L1 and L2 were both used as mediators in writing. A number of studies have reported that L2 writers use their L1 to search out and to assess appropriate wording, and to compare cross-linguistic equivalents (Cumming, 1990); to generate ideas, search for topics, develop concepts, and organize information (Uzawa & Cumming, 1989), and to manage writing processes (Wang & Wen, 2002). The ESL learners in Leki’s study (1995) took advantage of their L1, and the EFL learners in Lei’s (2008) study also actively used their L1, Chinese, to gather information, organize thoughts, and to think clearly and profoundly. However, contrary to those other studies, in this study, the KFL learners thought that the use of the L1 was an indication of their low L2 proficiency and would need to disappear at some point in the future in order for them to become more fluent in their L2, Korean. Hence, they were uncomfortable with their use of the L1 while writing in the L2. This contrast with the results of previous studies was one of this study’s most interesting findings. As for the use of the L2 as a mediator, the actual application of what they acquired from various resources in their writing
assignments was important, because it allowed them to consolidate, retain and recall that material more easily. This finding suggests that ‘L2 output’ or ‘L2 use’ is used as a mediator to further develop L2 proficiency (Swain, 2000). This also implies that more proficient L2 learners have a greater possibility to be equipped with and make use of a more sophisticated tool (the L2) and thus to better mediate their writing compared to less proficient L2 learners. This supports the research finding reported in other studies showing a positive relationship among L2 proficiency, the quality of L2 writing, and strategy use in L2 writing (Khaldieh, 2000; Lei, 2008; Sasaki, 2000).

As for the rule-mediated actions, the self-constructed rule mediated strategy identified in this study is similar to what Bown (2009) found from her American learners of Russian taking classes in the format of Individualized Instruction. The study found that the effective RFL learners actively created their own structure or plans (e.g., setting mini-goals, scheduling appointments in advance, etc.) and acquisition-rich environment (e.g., communicating with Russian neighbor, attending weekly Russian Table, etc.) to overcome the lack of external structure and interaction with peers also pursuing the Individualized Instruction format. Seeing a similar finding in the current study suggests that L2 learners actively shape their learning environment to satisfy their needs by exercising agency, and the sense of agency helps them regulate their learning processes and motivation. Also, this study confirms the belief that L2 learning involves an identity construction process requiring strenuous and proactive efforts on the side of learners for the attainment of desired L2 proficiency (Norton, 1997). For instance, while applying concepts or standards of good writing to the assignments, the KFL learners often felt
frustrated, since it was very hard to meet those standards and produce good writing given their fairly low level of Korean proficiency. There was a conflict between the identities of “an adult college student utilizing L1” and “a beginning L2 learner,” and this conflict caused negative feelings, including a sense of frustration; however, they pushed themselves to attain more L2 knowledge to overcome the conflict by exercising agency. Also, given that the KFL learners generated generic standards for writing, rather than language-specific ones, the finding supports the claim that L1 writing skills and strategies are transferred to L2 writing (Brooks, 1985; Cummings, 1989; Cumming et al, 1989).

Furthermore, the KFL learners actively interacted with the rules concerning plagiarism. For instance, they tried to avoid plagiarism by not copying what other people wrote (e.g., sentences that they saw on web pages or sentences suggested by Korean friends). This finding is valuable because the mediator of plagiarism has been barely researched and discussed in the context of foreign language writing. The learners indicated that adhering to these beliefs or rules and making their own sentences would eventually help them enhance their writing skills. However, all of the KFL learners acknowledged that their L2 learning involved a lot of “borrowing” processes (Pennycook, 1996), and the two less-proficient learners stated that copying or plugging in processes were necessary for them to learn more about writing in Korean. This created a conflict between the plagiarism-mediated strategy and the learner role-mediated strategy, a point which is further discussed later in this chapter. In addition, the EFL learners of Lei’s study reported similar interaction with the mediator of ‘time’, and Lei saw the time-
mediated strategy as an area of future research, since it has received very little attention and yet impacts on students’ writing practices.

With regard to the community mediated strategies, the KFL learners interacted with native speakers, classroom community, past learning experience (e.g., foreign language learning, study-abroad/internship, L1 writing instruction), and imagined community. First, it was noted that “collaborative dialogue” or “verbalization” mediated the learners’ writing (Swain, 2000, p. 105). For example, the KFL learners were able to learn better ways to express their intentions through their native Korean speaker friends’ assistance and were also able to overcome the sense of helplessness coming from their absence of native intuition as well. Vygotsky (1989) asserted that “social interaction actually produces new, elaborate, advanced psychological processes that are unavailable to the organisms working in isolation” (p. 61), and the findings of this study confirm that the learners experience a better performance and greater emotional support by means of working together with more knowledgeable others, as reflected in Vygotsky’s notion of the Zone of Proximal Development. This mediator of native speakers is further discussed later in this chapter. Furthermore, the participants’ efforts to meet the purpose of reading-aloud and heightened sensitivity to the audience corroborates the claim that the development of learning strategies is “a by-product of mediation” and the environment influences the learner’s level of engagement with writing (Donato & McCormick, 1994, p.453). Also, the mediator of the imagined community greatly impacted on L2 writing and motivation for it. This was important to these participants, who were learning Korean voluntarily in the foreign language learning (FLL) context, where tangible target
communities were scarce. The presence of this mediator is one of the key findings of this study; thus, it is discussed in more detail later.

As for the rule-mediated strategies, the learners exerted the roles of a language learner and a writer. Learning Korean was crucial to achieving the participants’ career goals, and the writing assignments provided them with a chance to study, review and apply what they learned. The heritage learner in the study used the writing assignments for enhancement of writing skills, whereas the non-heritage participants made use of the assignments to increase their overall Korean proficiency, including speaking. The different needs of heritage and non-heritage learners with regard to writing were also reported in Haneda’s study (2005) on JFL (Japanese as a foreign language) learners.

**Question #2: What types of L2 writing strategies can be identified from the group of the KFL participants? Are they different from what Lei (2008) found from her Chinese EFL learners?**

Among the identified types of mediated strategies, there were mediated actions that were not detected in Lei’s study (2008) on Chinese EFL learners but were important in the KFL context: they are (1) plagiarism rule mediated-, (2) native speaker-mediated, (3) study abroad-mediated, (4) foreign language learning experience-mediated, and (5) L1 writing education-mediated strategies (# 3, 4, and 5 were categorized as the prior experience mediated strategy).

First, one of the mediators that greatly impacted on the KFL learners’ writing was the rules of plagiarism. Since their grade school years, they had been taught that copying others’ words is like stealing others’ possessions; thus, it is wrong, dishonest, and
immoral. They seemed well aware of the definition of plagiarism commonly accepted by the Western universities: “plagiarism is defined as the use of other people’s work and the submission of it as though it were one’s own work” (Pecorari, 2001, p. 235). However, their L2 writing processes involved borrowing and plugging in of words from other sources in order to overcome their lack of L2 proficiency. They were able to write in their native language freely, but in the L2, Korean, it was hard to paraphrase or re-write in their own words without referring to resources. This was especially true for the two less proficient writers, who tended to engage in what has been called “patchwriting.” Howard (1995) defined patchwriting as “copying from a source text and then deleting some words, altering grammatical structures, or plugging in one-for-one synonym-substitutes” (p.788). She portrayed patchwriting in negative terms as a strategy adopted in desperation by writers who feel incapable of finding new ways to express something. However, her focus was on native speakers of English. Students influenced by other languages or cultures might approach patchwriting from a different perspective. For instance, studies on multicultural students’ ESL writing found that Chinese students’ patchwriting was highly associated with their Chinese-oriented literacy education, which stresses the importance of the memorization of classical literature and copying of good models for writing improvement (Bloch & Chi, 1995; Deckert, 1993; Pennycook, 1996). In the Asian society, memorization and copying are regarded as important learning strategies in internalizing basic foundations for deeper understanding and thus for rapid academic advances (Dryden 1999; Pennycook, 1996). In the case of the less proficient writers in this study, it seems likely that their limited L2 proficiency motivated their patchwriting:
they self-reported their lack of vocabulary and grammar skills and heavily relied on translation. L2 studies reported that less-proficient L2 writers tend to rely on their L1 and pay much more attention to translating ideas to L2 compared to more-proficient writers (Sasaki, 2000; Wang & Wen, 2002). Thus, for these two writers, patchwriting appeared to be the best option available.

A number of studies on ESL learners’ writing have discussed how patchwriting is an important strategy to overcome their “linguistic insecurity and a fear of making mistakes” (Currie, 1998; Hu, 2001; Pennycook, 1996; Shi, 2004; Spack, 1997; cited in Bloch, 2001, p. 220); for L2 learners, particularly less-proficient writers, copying seems a way of learning as well as an indication of efforts to learn, rather than intention to violate rules or laziness. This implies that the patchwriting of the KFL learners in this study needs to be understood as a useful early step toward more sophisticated abilities to use words and construct sentences.

Second, the interaction with native speakers outside the classroom was not only beneficial to the participants in their linguistic development, but also provided social and affective benefits for them. Their Korean learning involved a desire to access target language communities or socialization (Bown, 2009; Samimy, 2008). This shows that L2 learning needs to be understood as an issue of “affiliation and belonging” rather than solely being a matter of acquiring linguistic rules or facts (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000, p 156). Related to writing, the participants were able to receive assistance linguistically and affectively from the native Korean readers they consulted. In sociocultural theory, the gains resulting from a collaborative process are called “scaffolding” (Bruner, 1975) or
“assisted performance” (Tharp and Gallimore, 1991), and the concept specifies that a less knowledgeable learner is enabled to do something that she or he might not have been able to do without the assistance or guidance provided by a more knowledgeable learner (Ohta, 2001). Research on scaffolding has demonstrated that learners working together with more informed or knowledgeable others obtain a higher level of language proficiency (Donato, 1994; Ohta, 2001; Villamil & de Guerrero, 1996). In addition, by seeking out (and then actively responding to) the guidance of more knowledgeable learners by agentively accepting, modifying, rejecting recommended words and sentences, the KFL learners in this study provided “the spark that ignites cognitive processes” (Villamil & de Guerrero, 1996, p. 70).

Third, the study-abroad experience positively influenced the KFL learners’ writing engagement, motivation, and confidence. There has been research on the positive effects of study abroad experiences on L2 learning: the studies discovered that study-abroad students improved overall speaking skills, and spoke more, faster, and less hesitantly (Freed, 1995; Freed, So, & Lazar, 2003); and they self-reported that their listening and speaking skills had improved after the study-abroad program (Meara, 1994). With regard to L2 writing, the study of Sakai (2007) on Japanese learners of English found that study-abroad students’ L2 writing quality and fluency significantly improved compared to those of at-home students. Also, the study abroad group became more motivated to write better L2 (English) compositions after the study-abroad experiences. The KFL participants in the current study attributed their increased confidence and motivation about writing to the
fact that they had become accustomed to writing much and often in the study-abroad program.

Fourth, the KFL participants utilized knowledge obtained from their prior foreign language learning experience for their Korean learning, which indicated that they were experienced learners. Brown (2009) found from his large-scale survey study that students who were taking Less Commonly Taught Languages (LCTLs) (Arabic, Hebrew, Japanese, Turkish, Greek, and Italian) were more mature, experienced, driven and motivated in language learning than those taking Commonly Taught Languages (CTLs) such as Spanish, German and French. The LCTL students in the sample had more experience with foreign language learning in the classroom context. He also found that more experience with the formal foreign language learning would result in the development of more accurate and informed perspectives on language learning, and also would enable learners to be more skillful and at the same time critical learners. He explained that “dexterous manipulation of effective learning strategies is only earned after discovering one’s preferred learning style” (p. 421). Given that the KFL learners in the current study tended to experience greater exposure to different languages and formal instruction than other CTL learners, it seems likely that they were better positioned to make the discovery of a learning style they liked, and then to develop and modify their learning strategies.

Fifth, the KFL learners mediated writing with their prior L1 (English) writing instruction, and it positively affected their L2 writing. They all reported that the L1 writing education was useful. They had been educated in a society (the United States) where writing is valued and taught systematically. This implication is important to
discuss because there is research pointing out that learners’ L1 writing experience influences writing in L2. For example, Cho’s study (2010) that examined four Korean scholars who studied in the U.S. as graduate students found that the scholars had difficulties in developing L2 (English) academic writing skills, and one of the major reasons for their struggles was the lack of proper writing education in their L1, Korean, in their native country. The participants explained that both elementary and secondary school education in Korea was tailored to preparing for college entrance exams; as such, writing was regarded as less important than the other skills or types of knowledge covered in the examination. Also, they complained that they had not received any proper academic writing instructions in either Korean or English when they were undergraduate students in Korea. Thus, Cho (2010) concluded that, to some extent, the lack of writing instructions in Korea could account for the difficulties or struggles that the four scholars had when developing L2 (English) academic writing skills.

**Question #3: Are there any conflicts between the identified strategies?**

In this study, the strategies interacted with each other to achieve the participants’ goals. For example, the participants actively used the opportunity to write and the instructor’s feedback (classroom community), and incorporated L2 knowledge obtained from various resources (artifact) into their papers in order to improve their vocabulary and grammar abilities (goal/object). One participant (Mark) discussed his papers with his Korean friend (community) and tried to immerse himself in L2 input (self-generated rule) to produce writing which has a natural flow and thus comprehensible to the instructor (goal). Another (Minsoo) actively used the Naver.com online dictionary (artifact) and
interacted with his imagined community, college students in Korea (community), to fulfill his desire to write academic and intellectual papers (goal). As such, all the strategies were inter-connected with each other, and the interaction between the various strategies contributed to facilitating the participants’ writing processes and achieving their goals.

On the other hand, there were conflicts or contradictions between the identified strategies, and Activity Theory helped detect and illuminate the contradictions. First, the study found a conflict between the L1 mediated strategy and the language learner role mediated strategy. For the writing assignments, the KFL participants extensively used their L1, English, to search for and explore new words, to gather information on the topic, to organize thoughts and ideas more effectively (e.g., making an outline or brainstorming), and to think more clearly and profoundly (e.g., mental and literal translations). However, the participants thought that the use of the L1 would not help them advance their L2 writing proficiency toward a higher level and attain natural, native-like sentence making abilities; thus, they thought that their use of L1 would need to be eliminated at some point during their L2 learning process. One participant (Mee) stated she felt that she was becoming more and more independent from the use of English as her Korean proficiency increased. Her experience supports the finding of Wang and Wen’s (2002) study with EFL learners: the use of L1 decreased in relationship to writers’ L2 development.

The participants’ negative view toward the use of their L1 appeared to be connected with the issue of the linguistic distance between Korean and English. The KFL learners
found the sentences awkward or unnatural if they translated from English to Korean, because the two languages are drastically different syntactically. For example, most of the participants had negative attitudes towards online translators, such as the Babel Fish translator, and did not use them for their writing assignments because the translators translated word for word, without considering structural differences between the two languages and thus often produced awkward, unnatural sentences in Korean. This conflict between the L1 mediated and learner role mediated strategies was also found among the Chinese learners of English in Lei’s study (2008).

Second, there was a conflict between the plagiarism rule mediated strategy and the language learner role mediated strategy. As mentioned earlier, the KFL learners tried to avoid plagiarism by not copying others’ sentences, but it turned out that following the rules or conventions concerning plagiarism was a very challenging task to the learners, especially to the less-proficient writers. As discussed earlier, the less-proficient learners tended to engage in patchwriting, that is, “paraphrasing the source’s language too closely” (Howard, 1995, p. 799) because of their linguistic limitations in Korean, but the practice of copying seemed necessary for the less-proficient learners to further develop their L2 writing skills. Also, all the participants acknowledged that their L2 learning involved a lot of borrowing from external sources, rather than creating a text in their own words. This suggests that we need to rethink the relationship between plagiarism and learning how to write in the L2.

Third, there was a conflict or tension between the good writing criteria mediated and writer role mediated strategies. The participants had clear standards or rules
regarding good writing thanks to their L1 writing instruction that they had received since their grade school years as well as their L2 writing instruction. They defined good writing as concise, clear, and well-organized. It also has a natural flow and considers readers’ interests. They tried to apply these criteria to their writing assignments, but they often experienced negative feelings, including a sense of frustration, because they found it very hard to meet these standards due to their lack of Korean proficiency. They wanted to write at a college level with high-level words and accurate, clear grammar, but this was very challenging given their fairly low levels of vocabulary and grammar. To help adult L2 learners improve their L2 writing proficiency, it seems important to understand the affective aspects of their writing experiences, because thinking and emotions are connected and enhance each other (Vygotsky, 1989; cited in Rio & Alvarez, 2002, p. 65).

According to Engestrom (1999), tensions and contradictions between the different influences become the “motive force of change and development” (p. 9), and the KFL participants’ reactions to the tensions support his claim. For example, to overcome the tension between L1 and learner role mediated strategies, the learners actively used L2 mediated strategies (e.g., thinking and directly writing in L2, using L2 input obtained from Korean songs, etc.) and communicated with Korean native speakers to learn more about native-like expressions and sentence structure. They also pushed themselves to improve Korean proficiency to reduce the amount of their reliance on L1. Concerning the tension between plagiarism and their learning process, they actively sought out various resources, e.g., the online dictionary, to write in their words and tried hard to increase their Korean facility. In learning L2 writing, the participants did not seem to move
smoothly in a one-way or linear direction from the peripheral position (novice writers) to the center (experienced writers); rather, they experienced contradictions or tensions between the mediating forces they were exposed to. They questioned existing authorities such as plagiarism rules and the notion of good writing in their L2 learning context. It seemed, however, that the participants actively shaped their learning environment to meet their needs by creating artifacts (e.g., vocabulary lists, writing down Korean songs to memorize, etc.) and rules or standards (e.g., self-constructed/generated rules for effective L2 learning); this creating process of rules or artifacts is called “externalization” (Engestrom, 1999, p.26). Engestrom’s Activity Theory was useful to describe the dynamics of the interactions and externalization process, which the early versions of activity theory paid little attention to.

**Question #4: How are the KFL learners’ goals for L2 learning and ethnic, cultural backgrounds (e.g., heritage/non-heritage) inter-related to their mediated actions in writing?**

It was found that the KFL participants engaged in the same L2 writing assignments with different goals, histories, and mediations, which resulted in individual differences in terms of actions taken for writing. The L2 learners did not select the mediational means randomly; rather, they chose them to fulfill their current and future goals, and to meet their needs. This was in line with Activity Theory, which contends that “human behavior is a complex process, and the properties of any given activity are determined by the socio-historical setting and by the goals and sociocultural history of the participants” (Leontiev, 1981; cited in Roebuck, 2001, p.83). Engestrom (1999) added that the
purposeful human behavior should be analyzed based on its “artifact-mediated or cultural aspects” (p. 22). The different goals, historical backgrounds, and mediations of the learners necessarily caused individual differences in the engagement with the assigned tasks: even if the given task was the same, activity differed between individuals. The results of the present study and the insights from Activity Theory suggest that teachers need to know their students’ learning goals, including their long-term goals, personal histories of learning, and different mediations to better understand their current performance.

For example, the KFL learners were interacting with imagined communities that differed in accordance with their varying goals and ethnic/cultural backgrounds (heritage vs. non-heritage), and this interaction influenced their engagement in writing, learning foci, and motivation. A study by Haneda (2005) also found that foreign language learners differentially invested their time and energy to master the target language, Japanese, according to their goals and backgrounds. Jim, a Japanese Canadian student, took the researcher’s advanced writing class to further develop his heritage language and, thus, to become an effectively functioning member of his local Japanese community. His learning focus was on enhancing skills in writing a more socially and culturally “proper” essay that could be accepted by the community. He paid more attention to the ‘subtlety’ or ‘nuance’ of Japanese than any other students. On the other hand, Edward, a non-heritage student, wanted to become a successful English-Japanese bilingual business executive in the future; thus, his learning focus was to increase and consolidate his vocabulary and grammar abilities through writing, believing that writing would help him improve his
overall Japanese proficiency. Improving Japanese speaking and reading abilities was more immediate and meaningful for him, rather than focusing on writing, to attain his goal.

Similarly, in the current study the L2 (Korean) learners had different goals in mind, and their mediated actions were all oriented toward their goals. Haneda’s (2005) study and the current study found the same difference between the heritage and non-heritage learners in terms of attitudes and actions towards writing. The heritage learners tended to put an emphasis on developing the writing skill itself when engaging in writing assignments, whereas the non-heritage learners tended to engage in writing hoping that overall language proficiency, including speaking, could be enhanced through writing, in which case writing served as a means rather than an end. The heritage learners highlighted their special needs, such as a need for more specialized courses (e.g., Advanced Formal Writing, Business Korean, etc). These results suggest that the difference between the heritage and non-heritage learners will need to be considered in the Korean curriculum and classroom instruction.

It was especially interesting to find that the mediator of the imagined community strongly impacted on the KFL learners’ writing engagement and motivation. The learners engaged in L2 writing not only to achieve their goals at hand (e.g., to receive a good grade, to learn vocabulary and grammar, to fulfill major/minor requirement, etc.), but also to prepare themselves for the communities in which they aspired to belong in the future. In this foreign language learning context, where tangible or readily available target language communities were scarce, the role of the imagined community seemed
crucial in facilitating learning processes and enhancing motivation. The participants’
creation of the imagined community is a good example of the “externalization” process,
learners’ controlling behavior from the outside by using and creating artifacts or
mediators, which Engestrom (1999) mentioned. The participants seemed well aware that
they needed a motivating source to facilitate their Korean learning and enhance
motivation, especially within the FL learning environment, where available face-to-face
L2 communities were rare and often hard to access. They, thus, created their own
imagined community and actively interacted with it to enhance their performance and
achieve their goals. The learners were able to control their learning processes, motivation,
and environmental restrictions by using and creating mediators.

As such, agency played an important role in regulating L2 learning processes,
motivations, and emotions. It was found that the participants engaged in their writing
assignments with agency, that is, a willingness to act, by actively constructing and
changing the conditions or environment impacting on their learning. They were not
passively responding to their tasks; rather, they actively engaged in the tasks by
exercising agency. Sociocultural theory emphasizes the importance of “the active
contribution of the learner” in the learning process, because learning is viewed as a
constructed process, rather than a reproduced one, and as a social, cultural, and
interpersonal process as well as intra-personal one (Bown, 2009, p. 571). The KFL
participants were all aware that they needed to take proactive actions to improve their
Korean writing skills, particularly within the FL learning environment, where L2 use
tended to be restricted to the classroom; thus, they actively sought out additional sources
of L2 input and interaction outside the classroom. Also, they encountered many
difficulties, such as lack of time due to busy schedules, frustrations coming from L2
deficiencies, identity conflicts, and so forth. However, they agentively responded to the
negative feelings and challenges, and made endeavors to cope with them by investing a
lot of time and energy into their learning.

**Pedagogical Implications**

This study confirmed that L2 learners’ strategy use in writing can be more fully
understood by examining the learners’ mediated actions, social interactions, goals, affect,
and histories. Based on these findings, language programs and instructors may need to
examine their current state regarding what kinds of mediational means their students are
exposed to or use, so as to provide a better environment where the students’ abilities and
potentials can be drawn out maximally. Activity Theory emphasizes the point that
educators need to evaluate whether the current educational services are playing a good
role as “affordances” that positively influence learners’ learning processes and identity
construction (van Lier, 2000, p. 252). Engestrom (1999) also mentioned that researchers
should analyze human behavior or learning in relation to its “broader activity context” or
mediation and suggest ways to improve environment based on findings (p. 32). The KFL
learners in this study mediated their writing with various resources, and there are several
pedagogical implications that can be drawn from the finding.

First, the KFL learners extensively used the Internet (e.g., Wikipedia, Google, etc.)
to gather information for their writing topics, and preferred using the online dictionary
rather than the paper dictionary, because using the online resources was fast and
convenient and provided the most up-to-date information on the topics being written about. Considering their preference for using the online resources, language class instruction will need to consider how to use online resources effectively and wisely. Also, it would advisable for instructors to provide lists of online references that can be used during students’ writing activities.

Second, in this study the L2, Korean, was an important mediator, meaning that more proficient learners of Korean had a greater possibility to mediate their writing more effectively and thus to produce better quality writing than less proficient learners of Korean. In that regard, KFL teachers may need to incorporate considerable amounts of vocabulary, grammar and reading practices into their instruction to promote their students’ writing improvement. In other words, it will be important to provide more opportunities by which KFL learners can make use of the L2 as a tool for mediating their own learning. This entails increased emphasis on the target language as a means of learning, not just as the end point of the learning experience.

Third, the KFL learners in this study appreciated the opportunity to write often and to write longer texts, so that the writing assignment itself was an important mediator influencing their writing and confidence enhancement. This supports Swain’s claim (2000) that ‘L2 output’ or ‘L2 use’ is often used as a mediator to further develop L2 proficiency. As such, instructors should provide frequent writing opportunities for L2 learners to develop their writing proficiency. This entails developing richer notions of the ways in which writing tasks can serve learning purposes.
There are several more mediators that merit attention for more effective KFL teaching and learning: they are the mediators of imagined community, plagiarism, native speakers, study-abroad experience, prior foreign language learning and L1 writing experience. The impact of the imagined community and plagiarism on L2 writing was an especially important finding; these mediators have not been discussed much in the context of foreign language writing instruction. The KFL participants’ interactions with the mediators indicated that the mediators were important to accomplish the goals of their Korean writing assignments, and this implies that KFL educators need to attend to improving the learning environment especially associated with the identified mediational means. It may be necessary to create instructional units devoted specifically to plagiarism and imagined community as sources of learning.

Along these lines, given that the KFL participants’ interaction with their imagined communities greatly helped them clarify their goals and learning foci and sustain motivation for learning, a departmental endeavor geared toward providing information regarding communities that the learners can possibly participate in would be desirable. For example, it would be a good idea for the department or instructors to invite people (e.g., alumni) who went through Korean learning at the university and successfully obtained a job. Having a chance to hear a talk by the successful learners would allow students to be exposed to possible imagined communities via the experiences shared by the speakers. Because undergraduate students, in particular, may not yet be fully prepared to fully conceptualize various imagined community possibilities, this kind of exposure could be helpful to their academic and career planning. Also, the department will need to
cooperate with institutions or companies that provide internships or other forms of work and inform the learners of these opportunities so that they could study Korean with clearer vision and goals. As for plagiarism, instructors may need to develop teaching materials which help students distinguish between positive and negative aspects of plagiarism.

In addition, intermediate or/and advanced level students need to receive systematic instruction on how to write sentences and paragraphs, including how to paraphrase or rewrite material from the source texts they consult. Particularly in classroom instruction, teachers will need to provide appropriate amounts of time for writing practice, and to some extent more guided or focused instruction, such as that which involves studying and following models or examples of good writing in Korean, rather than focusing on free writing only. Writing practice with models or example sentences would be especially helpful to the less proficient learners who are struggling with vocabulary and sentence structure. Given that all the KFL learners in this study acknowledged that their L2 learning involved borrowing processes, the inclusion of practice with models, as well as discussion of how to use them appropriately, seems suitable for the nature of L2 learning and necessary for improvement in proficiency.

Furthermore, the department will need to be active in providing study-abroad or internship opportunities for students, encouraging them to have the experience for their language learning as well as building their motivation and enhancing their confidence. Also, since the students will bring back to their home institution knowledge of the teaching methods that KSL (Korean as a second language) teachers used in the classroom
in Korea, KFL instructors will need to create opportunities to hear about their experiences in Korea and help them continue the practice learning strategies taught in Korea (i.e., daily journal writing) after their return. In addition, it would be good if the department provides Korean writing tutors for the KFL students, because they have a strong desire to learn native-like word usage and sentence structure from the native speakers of Korean. The study found that these KFL learners had problems in locating native Korean speaking readers to review their drafts, whereas they could easily find native Korean speaking friends for speaking practice.

Lastly, the instructors need to be aware that it is highly possible that their KFL learners, particularly advanced learners, are highly motivated and experienced language learners. The students will need to be given opportunities to talk about their thoughts on classroom instruction and learning, because they are likely to provide very thoughtful and constructive comments or opinions on the instructions based on their foreign language learning experiences and L1 writing education, as was shown in this study. Also, it would be more meaningful to the students if the instructor incorporates various cultural components (i.e. writing about similarities or/and differences of various countries’ celebration of New Year, Thanksgiving, Valentine’s Day, etc.) into classroom learning. Furthermore, since the students tend to be highly motivated and goal-driven by their third year of KFL study, instructors should account for these characteristics in their course planning. For example, it would be good if the students are provided with writing projects that can make use of their autonomous, independent and goal-driven characteristics.
KFL teachers also need to be sensitive to their students’ goals and motivation for learning as well as their histories and backgrounds. It would be especially important to recognize and respond to the differing needs and goals of heritage language versus non-heritage language learners. In addition to coming from very different backgrounds in terms of prior exposure to the Korean language and culture, these two groups of learners may well have very different reasons for wanting to become highly proficient in Korean.

As an instructor of the participants, I tried to provide instructions and assistance appropriate for their learning needs and goals. As the results indicated, the participants were highly motivated for Korean learning and experienced in language learning. They wanted me to teach additional reading materials (e.g., online news articles or short stories) in addition to the textbooks, and they wanted to have many discussions related to the readings for enhancement of their vocabulary and oral skills. They also appreciated writing practices in the upper level courses and wanted to continue to have the opportunities inside and outside the classroom frequently: they wrote these in their mid-quarter course evaluation that I prepared. Even though the course was supposed to focus more on improving students’ reading and writing skills than oral skills, I had to design the course in such a way that the students could practice Korean speaking frequently in the classroom at the same time, because they expressed a need for this and I agreed with them based on limitations in their Korean proficiency. Consequently, it was hard for me to find time sufficient to teach how to write in the classroom; what I did was to provide good writing samples and explain them in class, and let them study vocabulary, expressions, and sentence structures through the readings and apply them to their writing.
I also tried to provide the students with very detailed written feedback on their writing assignments (e.g., correcting grammar and spellings, suggesting better words, expressions, and sentences). In other words, I played the role of a facilitator rather than a transmitter of detailed information about writing. However, based on the findings of the study, I realize that I should have incorporated sentence-level writing instruction more actively in the classroom, including how to paraphrase or re-write source texts, and should have developed and actively used more materials for direct teaching of writing. It was hard to obtain good materials designed to teach writing, especially for a course like mine where heritage and non-heritage students studied together. In these regards, my approach and experiences may mirror those of others teaching a similar kind of course and thus point to pedagogical issues in need of further exploration.

**Recommendation for future research**

The socio-cognitively-framed L2 writing strategy investigation represented by this study should be continued in various other learning/teaching contexts, because each learning context has its own unique mediators and mediations affecting learning and learners. For example, this study on KFL learners’ writing engagement in the context of a U.S. college classroom found some mediators that were not mentioned in the study of Lei (2008) with EFL college learners in China. Since this study examined KFL students, it would be useful if we have a qualitative case study of KFL instructors to obtain a richer understanding about the KFL context. At present, little is known, empirically, about how teachers of Korean writing actually teach such courses. The examination of the mediated actions of the KFL teachers will inform us of teaching strategies they use, mediators
important to them, creation of mediators, and areas that need improvement regarding KFL teaching and learning.

In addition, this study found a conflict between plagiarism and learner role-mediated strategies. This conflict needs to be further explored in the context of KFL: a large-scale survey study on KFL students’ perceptions about the rules and application of the rules to their writing would be helpful to understand more about the issue. Likewise, an in-depth qualitative case study on this topic would offer insights into KFL students’ writing experiences and to develop more detailed and informative guidelines for teaching writing. It would be especially important to look at KFL learners’ attitudes toward plagiarism as a means of placing into better perspective the findings of this study. Because these participants’ attitudes toward plagiarism contrasted so sharply with those identified in other studies, it would be beneficial to see whether the results of this study were an anomaly or reflective of a characteristic perhaps unique to KFL learning.

Furthermore, this study revealed differences between heritage and non-heritage students in terms of mediations, areas of focus or concern, backgrounds and goals, and attitudes toward L2 writing instruction. However, the majority of participants in this study were non-heritage students. There is a need for research that focuses on listening to the voice of Korean heritage learners regarding their perceptions about the current education they receive for writing or other language skills. With heritage language learners becoming an increasingly large constituency in Korean language courses and programs, future research needs to look at their experiences and attitudes.
Lastly, this study found that one of major concerns of the KFL learners was vocabulary acquisition (e.g., higher-level words, subtle meaning difference between synonyms, etc.). Thus, it will be worthwhile to explore vocabulary acquisition in greater depth, including learners’ mediated actions in learning vocabulary.

**Concluding Remarks**

This qualitative, comparative case study looked at KFL learners’ writing engagement by connecting it to their social processes of learning, and it makes several contributions to the fields of L2 writing in general and KFL instruction in particular.

First, it confirmed the belief that the L2 writing process is a mediated or situated process, rather than solely occurring inside a learner’s head. In this regard, it demonstrated the value of a socio-cognitive view of L2 writing rather than one heavily weighted toward the historical emphasis on the cognitive perspective as well as research that focuses solely on the social domain and does not account for cognitive issues. The study revealed that L2 writing was a socio-cognitive process, simultaneously involving cognitive and social processes, and revealed “the profound interdependency and integration of both” in the L2 writing process (Atkinson, 2002, p. 537). The L2 learners in this study agentively mediated their writing with a variety of resources, including the ones that they created, and the mediation influenced their actions in writing as well as attainment of their goals and motivation. L2 writing processes involved the learners controlling their own current mediations and conceptualizations about their future use of the L2, controlling “from the outside” by using and creating mediators (Engestrom, 1999, p.29).
In addition, the study showed that the L2 learners’ learning goals, backgrounds (heritage vs. non-heritage), and L2 proficiency were associated with their use of the mediated strategies, and those resulted in individual differences among the mediated actions in writing. In this way it added to understanding of the important role played by mediating factors in the development of L2 writing proficiency.

Third, the study identified several important types of mediating forces that have not received much attention in previous L2 writing research. These included imagined community, plagiarism, input from native speakers of Korean, study abroad experiences, and prior foreign language learning experience. The importance that the specter of plagiarism had on the learners’ approach to their Korean writing development was an especially interesting and valuable finding that has not been revealed in previous research. Instead of being paralyzed by a fear of committing acts of plagiarism, the KFL learners used their concern about plagiarism to make better use of resources available to them and to rely more on their own internal resources. In this regard they were pushed harder to enhance their knowledge of the Korean language and find effective means, especially at the sentence level, for expressing their ideas. The importance that imagined community played in their approach to learning how to write in Korean was also especially interesting. Instead of looking only at the here and now of their writing assignments (e.g., satisfying the expectations of the teacher and meeting the goals of the writing task at hand) and focusing on obtaining good grades for their writing, the participants placed a lot of emphasis on how their learning would impact on their future uses of Korean. This ability to combine the needs of the present with the perceived needs of the future, as
represented in the imagined community idea, was an intriguing finding that sheds new light on what takes place during foreign language writing acquisition.

Fourth, Lei’s (2008) important study on EFL learners’ writing provided useful insights and a valuable framework for re-conceptualizing writing strategies from a socio-cognitive perspective, and the current study corroborated the usefulness of the re-conceptualization of the learner strategies in the context of KFL. At the same time that the study provided valuable support for the direction that Lei’s study offers in terms of studying L2 writing, it also obtained findings that in some cases differed from what Lei found. In this regard it extended the range of possibilities and insights initiated by Lei’s research. A related contribution with respect to Lei’s study is that it shed further light on the usefulness of Activity Theory as a means of researching L2 writing. Activity Theory is still relatively new in the field of L2 writing research, and its use in this study, as well as Lei’s, suggests that it merits additional use in L2 writing research.
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Appendix A: Interview questions about L2 learning and writing experience
(Modified from Lei, 2008)

1. Can you tell me about your L1 and L2 writing education? What kinds of writing education did you receive for L1 and L2?
2. What are the differences between L1 and L2 writing?
3. What kinds of efforts have you made to improve your L2 writing? And how did they benefit your writing?
4. How do you usually work on writing assignments? Can you give me an example?
5. What are the features of good L2 writing in your opinion?
6. What are your goals in L2 writing? (including immediate and future goals)
7. What strategies do you often use when writing assignments? Can you give me some examples?
8. What do you think of your writing course (textbooks, topics, teachers, etc.)? And what have you learned from your writing course?
9. Did you communicate with anyone (e.g., classmates, friends, and teachers) about L2 writing? Can you give me an anecdote?
10. Have you ever been to Korea to learn Korean? How was it? What was the purpose for the study abroad? Do you think the study abroad experience influences your writing? If yes, tell me more about it with some specific examples.
Appendix B: Process log (Modified from Lei, 2008)

Name: _______________________                         Date: ________________________

Section I: Preparation for writing

1. What is the assignment topic? What are you required to do? Do you like it? Why or why not?
2. Do you know much about the assignment topic? If yes, what are they and where was your knowledge from?
3. How are you going to get ideas for the assignment?
4. Do you have target readers for the assignment? If yes, who are they and why did you choose them?
5. What are your goals in writing the assignment?
6. What are your roles when writing the assignment? Have they affected your preparation? If yes, in what way?
7. Did you talk about the topic with anyone before writing? If yes, whom did you talk to and what did you talk about?
8. What did you actually do to get ideas for the assignment?
9. What tool/resources (e.g., the Internet, instructor, tutor) did you use and how did you use them in the pre-writing stage?
10. In what language did you prepare for the assignment and why did you use this language or these languages?

Section II: Writing an essay (including the whole process of writing and revising until the submission of your essay)

11. Have your assumptions about what the target readers know or believe to be true affected how you wrote the essay? Can you give me some examples?
12. Have your goals affected how you wrote the essay? If yes, in what way?
13. Did your perceptions of the target readers change during the writing process? If yes, what are the changes?
14. Did your goals change during the writing process? If yes, what are the changes?
15. Did you talk about the essay with anyone during writing? Whom did you talk to and what did you talk about?
16. Are there any problems in your writing? If yes, can you describe five major problems and how you handled them?
17. Are you satisfied with your final version? Why or why not?
18. Can the final version represent your writing ability? Why or why not?
19. What tools/resources (e.g., the Internet, dictionaries, tutor, instructor) did you use and how did you use them when writing the first draft?
20. What tools (e.g., the Internet, dictionaries, tutor, instructor) did you use for revision and how did you use them?
Appendix C: Autobiography Guideline

Please write literacy autobiography describing your L2 (Korean) writing experience in English. I’ll appreciate if you write in detail for each question below with examples, anecdotes, and your emotions and thoughts, etc. The autobiography may include the following:

1. Describe your past and current L2 (Korean) writing education & experiences (i.e., classes you’ve taken, kinds of writing instruction/education you’ve received, study abroad experience, etc.)

2. Describe your L1 (native language, English) writing education and experiences (i.e.: classes you have taken, kinds of writing you engage in L1, etc.)

3. What kinds of writing strategies you employ for L2 writing (assignments)? (i.e.: kinds of resources you rely on for L2 writing (the Internet, L1 (native language), dictionary, kind of interactions/communications you go through, etc.) When do you use the resources? And for what purposes?

4. What kinds of efforts have you made to improve your L2 (Korean) writing?

5. Describe your goals in L2 (Korean) writing.

6. Describe the roles of L2 (Korean) writing playing in overall L2 learning.

7. What is “good writing” in your opinion?
Appendix D: Korean 509.01 Third Year Korean III Syllabus (Spring, 2009)

KOREAN 509.01: Third Year Korean III
Spring, 2009
The Ohio State University

Instructor: Eun-Jo Lee (이은조)
E-mail: lee.2395@osu.edu
Office Hours: 11:20 – 12:20 (T & Th) & By appointment
Office: HH #365
Class Time: 9:30 – 11:18 a.m. (T & Th)
Classroom: HH #359 (T), HH #45 (Th)

Course Description

Korean 509 (Third Year Korean III) is a continuation of Korean 508. This course is designed for students who want to study the Korean language towards an advanced level of proficiency, as well as who want to build a more solid foundation in Korean. K509 focuses on enhancement of students’ listening, speaking, reading and writing abilities through an integrated work of all the language skills. Particularly, students are required to read and write extensively in and out of classroom for this course. Also, students are expected to expand their current understanding of ethnic, cultural, social and economic life of the Korean people through a variety of activities. In addition, approximately 80 Chinese characters will be introduced during the quarter for basic literacy in Hanja. Students are expected to preview the assigned lesson and complete all the assignment for each lesson.

Textbooks and Learning Materials

- Korean Reader for Chinese Character by Choon-Hak Cho et al. (2002), University of Hawaii Press (available at SBX)
- Self-study Reference (available at Carmen)

Course Requirements
1) **Quizzes and exams**
   A. Quiz: Study words, expressions, and grammar points covered in the previous classes. No make-up for any missed quiz. The lowest score will be dropped.
   B. In class mid-term exam: April 28, 2009, 9:30 – 10:48 a.m. (HH #359)
   C. In class final exam

2) **Four writing assignments**
   You should write four compositions for this course. As for the due dates, please refer to the Class Content & Assignment Table in pages 3-5. No late composition will be accepted. More specific guidelines about each assignment will be provided two weeks before the deadlines. The topics are as follows:
   A. *Writing #1*: 한국 설날과 미국 설날의 같은 점과 다른 점을 쓰 보세요. (Write similarities and differences of the two countries’ New Year’s Day). Due by 4/21
   B. *Writing #2*: 발렌타인 데이는 어떻게 생겨났나요? 발렌타인 테이에 주로 무엇을 하는지 쓰 보세요. 그리고 발렌타인 테이가 있기 때문에 어떤 점이 좋은지 어떤 점이 나쁜지 자신의 의견을 쓰 보세요. 자신의 경험도 쓰면 좋을 것 같습니다. (Write about the origin of Valentine’s Day. It would be a good if you use the Internet or other resources for information. After writing about the origin of Valentine’s Day, describe how people in the U.S. spend the Valentine’s Day. In the last one or two paragraph(s), write your opinion about good aspects and/or bad aspects of Valentine’s Day. You can add your experience in this writing). Due by 5/12
   C. *Writing #3*: 현대 사람들의 일상생활에 컴퓨터와 테크놀로지의 사용이 점점 늘어나고 있습니다. 여러분은 컴퓨터나 테크놀로지의 사용이 사람들에게 유익하다고 생각합니까? 아니면, 해롭다고 생각합니까? 여러분의 의견을 말하고 그 이유를 쓰 보세요. (For everyday life, nowadays, an increasing number of people uses computer and technology. Do you think this (use of computer and technology) is beneficial to people? Or, do you think this is damaging to people? Take your position and provide reasons (with specific details and examples) that support your position). Due by 5/26
   D. *Writing #4 (Final Project)*: Choose any social issue that you are interested in, and research about the topic. Explain the issue and write your opinion regarding what people should do to solve the problem or issue. Due by 6/4

3) **Performance (Dialogue performance & Class participation)**
   You are expected to memorize a key conversation and perform it in the classroom. Refer to the Class Content & Assignment Table in pages 3-5. You are also expected to actively participate in the classroom activities.

**Grading**

Quizzes: 20%  Writing Assignments: 20%  Mid-term Exam: 20%  Final Exam: 20%  Final Project: 10%  Performance: 10%
Course Grade

100.00-91.01: A  
91.00-87.01: A-  
87.00-83.01: B+  
83.00-79.01: B  
79.00-75.01: B-  
75.00-71.01: C+  
71.00-67.01: C  
67.00-63.01: C-

Academic Misconduct & Disability Services

Academic Misconduct
It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct at http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/info_for_students/csc.asp or http://oaa.ohio-state.edu/coam/home.html.

Disability Services
Any student who feels she or he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the coordinating instructor to discuss the specific needs. Please contact the office for Disability Services (614-292-3307) in room 150, Pomerence Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

Course Schedule & Assignment

Check the following website for the text materials and audio files. Listen to the audio files repeatedly. http://www.lsa.umich.edu/asian/intermediate/index.htm

For the assigned main texts and conversations, make sure to memorize all the vocabulary in them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>FACT/ACT</th>
<th>Class Content &amp; Assignment (Be sure to complete all the assignment prior to each class)</th>
<th>Writing Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Week 1   | T (3/31) | • Course introduction  
          |  FACT/ACT | • Review of important grammar patterns & words covered in Korean 508                  |                    |
| 3/31,    | R (4/2)  | • Quiz #1  
          |  4/2 FACT/ACT | • Lesson 13 ‘제주도 (Cheju Island)’  
          |  | • Conversation Performance 13.1 (line 9 to 13: 제주도에 유명한 것이 ~ 말들을 놓고 돌아갔다)  
          |  | • Listen to the audio files  
          |  | • Study Grammar 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6 (G13.1 ~ G13.6) in the textbook |

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### Week 2
#### 4/7, 9
- **T (4/7)**
  - **FACT/ACT**
  - **Quiz #2**
  - **Lesson 14 ‘설날 (Korean New Year)’**
  - Conversation Performance 14.1 (line 15 to 19: 현배냐? 그동안 별 일 없니? ~ 취직하려고 해요.)
  - Listen to the audio files
  - Study Grammar G14.1 ~ G14.6 in the textbook
  - Study Extra Reading ‘설날 지내기’
  - Study Self-study Reference

- **R (4/9)**
  - **FACT/ACT**
  - **Quiz #3**
  - **Hanja Lesson 11 ‘한국의 춘희추동’**
  - Study “Korean Reader for Chinese Characters” Lesson 11
  - Study Self-study Reference for Hanja

### Week 3
#### 4/14, 16
- **T (4/14)**
  - **FACT/ACT**
  - **Quiz #4**
  - **Lesson 15 ‘노래 자랑 (Korean songs)’**
  - No Conversation Performance
  - Listen to the audio files
  - Study the entire main text including Extra Reading ‘가고파’
  - Study Grammar G15.1 ~ G15.6 in the textbook
  - Study Self-study Reference

- **R (4/16)**
  - **FACT/ACT**
  - **Quiz #5**
  - **Hanja Lesson 12 ‘제주도에서 (In Cheju Island)’**
  - Study “Korean Reader for Chinese Characters” Lesson 12
  - Study Self-study Reference for Hanja

### Week 4
#### 4/21, 23
- **T (4/21)**
  - **FACT/ACT**
  - **Quiz #6**
  - **Lesson 16 ‘발렌타인 휴일 (Valentine’s Day)’**
  - Conversation Performance 16.1 (line 8 to 13: 그런데 오늘 백화점에 ~ 사리 왔단 말이에요?)
  - Listen to the audio files
  - Study the entire main text including Extra Reading ‘신세대 이야기’
  - Study Grammar G16.1 ~ G16.7 in the textbook
  - Study Self-study Reference

- **R (4/23)**
  - **FACT/ACT**
  - **Quiz #7**
  - **Lesson 17 ‘대통령 선거 (The President election)’**
  - Conversation Performance 17.1 (line 12 to 17: 형은 어떤 후보자를 ~ 그것도 대답하기 어려운 질문인대)
  - Listen to the audio files
  - Study the entire main text
  - Study Grammar G17.1 ~ G17.6 in the textbook

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<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>T (4/28)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>R (4/30) FACT/ACT</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>In-class Mid-term Exam</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Quiz #8</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Lesson 18 '홍길동 (Hong-kil-dong)'</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Conversation Performance 18.1 (line 7 to 11: '홍길동전'은 우리 나라 고전소설이야 ~ 그래서 그런지 더 재미있었어)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen to the audio files</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study the entire main text including Extra Reading '홍길동전'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Grammar G18.1 ~ G18.6 in the textbook</td>
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<tr>
<td>Study Self-study Reference</td>
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<th>Week 6</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>T (5/5) FACT/ACT</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>R (5/7) FACT/ACT</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing #2 Due</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quiz #9</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hanja Lesson 13 '전기불과 호롱불 (The electric light and oil lamp light)'</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study “Korean Reader for Chinese Characters” Lesson 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Self-study Reference for Hanja</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 7</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>T (5/12) FACT/ACT</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>R (5/14) FACT/ACT</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Quiz #11</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lesson 20 '조선족 학생과의 만남 (Meeting with Korean-Chinese students)'</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversation Performance 20.1 (line 12 to 18: 중국에서 쓰는 한국어 ~ 그런 것도 마찬가지에요.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen to the audio files</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study the entire main text including Extra Reading '조선족 이야기'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Grammar G20.1 ~ G20.7 in the textbook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Self-study Reference</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Quiz #12 |
| **Lesson 21 '전자 제품이 고장나다 (Electric products’ breakdown)'** |
| Conversation Performance 21.2 (line 20 to 25: 오늘 써디 플레이어를 구입했는데요 ~ 고치드리도록 하겠습니다) |
| Listen to the audio files |
| Week 8 5/19, 21 | - Study the entire main text including Extra Reading ‘환경문제와 에너지 절약’
- Study Grammar G21.1 ~ G21.6 in the textbook
- Study Self-study Reference |
|---|---|
| T (5/19) FACT/ACT | - Quiz #13
- Hanja Lesson 14 ‘중매 좀 서 주세요’
- Study “Korean Reader for Chinese Characters” Lesson 12
- Study Self-study Reference for Hanja |
| R (5/21) FACT/ACT | - Quiz #14
- Lesson 22 ‘무역회사 통역을 하다 (Translating for a trade-related company)’
- Conversation Performance 22.1 (line 5 to 9: 이어서 오십시오 ~ 고맙습니다.)
- Listen to the audio files
- Study the entire main text including Extra Reading ‘한국의 무역에 대하여’
- Study Grammar G22.1 ~ G22.6 in the textbook
- Study Self-study Reference |
| Week 9 5/26, 28 | - Quiz #15
- Lesson 24 ‘미국에서 온 소식 (A news from America)’
- No Conversation Performance
- Listen to the audio files
- Study the entire main text
- Study Grammar G24.1 ~ G12.7 in the textbook
- Study Self-study Reference |
| T (5/26) FACT/ACT | Writing #3 Due |
| R (5/28) FACT/ACT | - Quiz #16
- Hanja Lesson 15 ‘방송국에 다녀요’
- Study “Korean Reader for Chinese Characters” Lesson 15
- Study Self-study Reference for Hanja |
| Week 10 6/2, 4 | - Quiz #17
- Lesson 23 ‘컴퓨터 정보 센터에서 (At a computer/information center)’
- Conversation Performance 23.1 (line 4 to 8: 안녕하세요 ~ 이 신청서를 작성해 주세요.)
- Listen to the audio files
- Study the entire main text including Extra Reading ‘컴퓨터 신제대와 통신 문화’
- Study Grammar G23.1 ~ G23.6 in the textbook
- Study Self-study Reference |
| T (6/2) FACT/ACT | Writing #4 Due |
| R (6/4) ACT | - Quiz #18
- Sharing Final Writing Projects |

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