I, Miyoung Nam, hereby submit this work as part of the requirements for the degree of:
Doctorate of Education

in:
Literacy/TESL

It is entitled:
Second Language Writing Socialization:
Korean Graduate Students’ Use of Resources in the U.S. Academic Context

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Second Language Writing Socialization:
Korean Graduate Students’ Use of Resources in the U.S. Academic Context

A dissertation submitted to the
Division of Research and Advanced Studies
of the University of Cincinnati

in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

DOCTORATE OF EDUCATION

in the Division of Teacher Education
of the College of Education, Criminal Justice, and Human Services

August, 2008

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Abstract

Most L2 writing studies with Korean ESL or EFL students to date have been limited to processes and products of specific genres, and research called for more attention to the practices and activities in which students interact within a broader sociocultural context. The present study investigated nine Korean graduate students’ L2 writing socialization experience at a mid-western U.S. university and explored the problems that they encountered during their L2 writing socialization process. The study also examined the roles that the resources played and scrutinized the assistance that ESL writing courses, a writing center, and academic research courses in particular provided for Korean L2 graduate students in socializing into their new academic culture.

The findings indicate that the students in this study attempted to socialize into their L2 academic discourse through many different venues such as ESL writing courses, writing center tutorials, discipline-specific academic courses, and interactions with peers. However, they were not active users of those resources and their overall resource utilization was limited. It was found that the participants’ lack of L2 proficiency inhibited them from active use of the resources and further posed challenges in articulating their needs for more than basic services to the resource providers.

The study points to a need to develop a university-wide support network to assist L2 students’ smoother transition into their new academic community. It also suggests that employing different and additional theoretical perspectives may bring about different but more comprehensive results. More suggestions for future research and implications for pedagogy are provided.
List of Contents

ABSTRACT ..................................................................................................................... III

LIST OF TABLES ....................................................................................................... VIII

LIST OF FIGURES ........................................................................................................ IX

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ............................................................................................ X

CHAPTER 1  INTRODUCTION .................................................................................. 1

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY ........................................................................ 4

OVERVIEW OF THE FOLLOWING CHAPTERS ..................................................... 7

CHAPTER 2  LITERATURE REVIEW .................................................................... 10

KOREAN L2 GRADUATE STUDENTS’ BACKGROUND ............................................ 10

STUDIES ON KOREAN STUDENTS’ L2 WRITING .............................................. 12

SOCIALIZING INTO THE CULTURE OF AMERICAN WRITTEN ACADEMIC DISCOURSE..... 15

RESOURCES ................................................................................................................. 18

Social Interactions .................................................................................................... 19

ESL Classes ................................................................................................................ 23

Writing Centers ........................................................................................................... 25

Instructors in the Disciplines ..................................................................................... 28

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK ................................................................................. 31

Language Socialization (LS) .................................................................................. 32

Legitimate Peripheral Participation (LPP) ............................................................ 33

CHAPTER 3  METHODOLOGY ............................................................................... 36

RESEARCH DESIGN ............................................................................................... 36

RESEARCH SETTING AND PARTICIPANTS ......................................................... 39

Participants ............................................................................................................... 41

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES ................................................................... 46

Interviews ................................................................................................................... 46

Documents ................................................................................................................ 48

Observations .............................................................................................................. 50

Researcher’s Role ..................................................................................................... 51

DATA ANALYSIS ..................................................................................................... 52

VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY ................................................................................. 55

SUMMARY .................................................................................................................... 56

CHAPTER 4  L2 WRITING SOCIALIZATION ........................................................... 58

INTRODUCTION .................................................................................................. 58

L2 WRITING SOCIALIZATION PATHWAYS ....................................................... 61

Use of On-campus Writing Services ................................................................... 61
### Problems in L2 Writing Socialization

- Lack of L2 Proficiency .......................................................... 78
- Difficulties with Resources .................................................. 86
  - Access to Resources ......................................................... 86
  - Mismatched Needs and Services ........................................... 92
- Summary .................................................................................. 95
- Discussion ............................................................................... 98

### Chapter 5 Resources Provided and Utilized

#### Introduction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resources: What, Why, and How</th>
<th>105</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### ESL Writing Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Three Writing Courses</th>
<th>106</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Academic Writing Course</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intended goals</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments and course materials</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer review and feedback</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing Center</th>
<th>115</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intended Goals</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL Services</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptions of L2 Students and L2 Writing Problems</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual Services</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Research Courses

| Course Description: Graduate Research and Writing | 123 |
| L2 Concerns | 125 |
| Addressing the Concerns | 126 |

| Summary | 127 |

#### Students’ Utilization of Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESL Writing Courses</th>
<th>129</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goals and Needs</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited Utilization</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course materials</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer review</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing Center</th>
<th>139</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goals and Expectations</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passive and Limited Utilization</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Courses</th>
<th>144</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Passive Utilization</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary ................................................................................................................. 146
Discussion ............................................................................................................. 151

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION ................................................................................... 158

Summary of Findings .............................................................................................. 159
Suggestions for Further Research ........................................................................... 161
Pedagogical Implications ....................................................................................... 164
  Suggestions for resource providers ................................................................. 164
  Suggestions for students .................................................................................... 167

References ............................................................................................................. 169
List of Tables

TABLE 1 PARTICIPANTS ........................................................................................................... 44

TABLE 2 DATA ANALYSIS...................................................................................................... 54

TABLE 3 KOREAN L2 STUDENTS’ SOCIALIZATION PROBLEMS ........................................ 97

TABLE 4 MISMATCHED NEEDS AND SERVICES................................................................. 149
List of Figures

Figure 1. Korean L2 students’ socialization pathways. ........................................ 72

Figure 2. Socialization pathways suggested by AC. .............................................. 72
Acknowledgements

First of all, I would like to thank my academic advisors, Dr. Gulbahar Beckett and Dr. Mary Benedetti, for their continuous support and encouragement throughout this research. I had numerous meetings and email exchanges with them, and I am very grateful to them for their guidance and advice, not only in relationship to my academic work, but also on many aspects of my life in the U.S. In particular, I would like to express my appreciation to Dr. Beckett for her insightful and critical feedback on the final draft of this dissertation, which helped enhance the overall quality of this study tremendously. I would also like to acknowledge the rest of my dissertation committee for their ongoing support and assistance. Specifically, I would like to thank Dr. Kim for her thoughtful feedback and encouragement throughout the process of this dissertation. Also, I would like to thank Dr. Bryan and Dr. Paulson for their valuable comments on this dissertation.

I would also like to thank my participants for their willing involvement, time, and enthusiasm. Without their help, this study would not have been possible.

My particular thanks go to Terry Peters, my friend. She offered a tremendous amount of help not only during this study but also throughout my program of study at the University of Cincinnati. I am very grateful to her for reading several drafts of this dissertation and sharing her thoughts and ideas. I cannot miss to thank my dear friends, Rachel, Elif, and Marieta for their warm hearted encouragement and consistent support. I would also like to thank my friends and colleagues at the OEPT office and the Center for ESL at the University of Cincinnati.

Last but most importantly, I would like to thank my family, my husband Dr. Ohwon Kwon, our 17-month old son Gimyoung, our second baby Boram (nickname) expected to be born in January 2009, and my family back home in Korea for their consistent love, support, and
encouragement. Ohwon was one year ahead of me in the U.S. academia, and he was my mentor. He sometimes pushed me to move forward and other times accompanied me as I worked through all the concept maps that I created for this study. He reviewed all the tables and figures in this dissertation, offering ideas and suggesting solutions. Without him, I could not have accomplished this work. With my pregnancy with Gimyoung, this dissertation study began. I would like to thank him for being such a good boy and great joy throughout this study. Finally, I wish to acknowledge my beloved, departed mother who I believe is always looking after me and my family.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to investigate a group of Korean graduate students’ L2 writing socialization experience as well as the roles their resource providers played in a US context. As early as 1992, Casanave called for attention to the process by which linguistically and culturally diverse students integrate into their new academic community in North American academia. With the continuing, increasing influx of international students, there is even more need to adequately address these students’ socialization process. For example, the Institute of International Education (IIE) reported “particularly large increases” in the number of students from South Korea, up 10% in 2006, and in the 2006-2007 academic year, the IIE reported a 6% increase to 62,392 students enrolled in U.S. higher education institutions compared to the previous year (IIE, 2007). South Korean students ranked third, comprising about 10.7% of the total international student population in the United States.

According to Spack (1988), “there is most often a large gap between what students bring to the academic community and what the academic community expects of them” (p. 30) and this gap poses a constant struggle for many international students. The real challenge for successful adaptation to a new academic culture, according to Zamel (2002), lies in second language (L2) writing. She sees L2 writing as the greatest concern for L2 students. During Zhu and Flaitz’s 2005 focus group discussion with L2 students, faculty members, and administrative personnel on L2 students’ academic language needs, writing was perceived by all three groups to be most challenging and pose persistent difficulties for these students. Lee and Scarcella (1992) also
assert that writing is one of the most serious problems that prevent Korean students from achieving academic success in North America.

In fact, writing plays a significant role as a mediational tool in many activities, both in learning and producing knowledge, particularly in a graduate context (Lantolf & Appel, 1994). Moreover, “it is through writing that learners are judged academically fit or unfit relative to target academic discourse communities” (Kruse, 2003, p. 20). Because of difficulties in writing in English, L2 students are often considered by faculty as deficient and unprepared for undertaking the work in their courses (Zamel, 2002). For the current study, writing or academic writing is defined as encompassing “knowledge of the linguistic, textual, social and cultural features of academic written discourse as well as knowledge of English as used by [L2 writers’] academic disciplines” (Ferenz, 2005, p. 339).

Despite the large amount of time, money, and effort they invest, upon entering graduate programs, Korean L2 students are faced with the discontinuity between their primary socialization in their home country and their secondary socialization in the U.S. academic context. Moreover, these L2 students are often unable to access the cultural knowledge and resources that are the foundation for their secondary socialization. Thus, they fail to produce contextually adequate or educationally valued texts in the U.S. academic context (Hyland, 2003). While experiencing frustrations and challenges in their L2 writing socialization, L2 students, in general, tend to blame themselves for their difficulties. They often attribute their inability to carry out the writing tasks to their lack of intelligence, not to their language proficiency or their status as novices in the community (Currie, 1998). This may result in not seeking out and making use of available resources (e.g., ESL center writing classes, tutorials, writing centers, peer and professor feedback, etc.).
Yet, if they wish to participate in and make meaningful contributions to their target U.S. academic communities, L2 graduate students need to learn how to construct texts commonly represented in the writing style of their new academic communities (Johns, 1997; Kim, K., 1996; Swales & Feak, 1994). More importantly, learning to write academically is not only a matter of mastering writing skills, but is also a process of becoming socialized into the academic communities of practice (Belcher, 1994; Casanave, 1992, 1995; Dong, 1998; Ferenz, 2005; Guo, 2006; Leki, 2006; Spack, 1997). In this process, L2 graduate students’ access to local resources in general, and their interactions with more experienced others and peers in particular, seems to be a key factor in constraining and/or facilitating the socialization of L2 students toward full participation within their new academic culture.

L2 researchers have begun to explore the socioculturally embedded nature of writing within academic settings. However, more attention needs to be given to the practices and activities in which students interact within a broader sociocultural context (Belcher & Braine, 1995; Mohan & Smith, 1992; Riazi, 1997). Most L2 writing studies with Korean English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) or English-as-a-Foreign-Language (EFL) students so far have been limited to producing traditional contrastive rhetoric findings that explain some characteristics of processes and products of specific genres. Although there are many studies on the language socialization of native English speakers or other groups of Asian students such as Chinese or Japanese students in higher education (Casanave, 1992, 1995; Johns, 1992; Prior, 1991; Schneider & Fujishima, 1995; Shi & Beckett, 2002; Spack, 1997), there are still few studies focusing on Korean L2 graduate students. Thus, little is known about this particular group. Given the increasing numbers of Korean graduate students in North American higher education, it is
critical to study how these South Korean students become socialized into North American academic communities of practice.

*The Significance of the Study*

L2 students bring their unique sociocultural histories to their new academic culture. Often unable to access cultural knowledge and resources, they consider themselves on the fringes as they attempt to gain membership in their target academic community. Arriving in U.S. academia with limited exposure to English academic discourse and with conceptions and beliefs regarding academic discourse that prove dissonant with those that prevail in the U.S., L2 students encounter difficulties. However, immersion in the new academic context is not sufficient to overcome these difficulties. These students would benefit greatly from being exposed to activities or interactions that introduce them to a wide range of resources to help facilitate their learning. Therefore, given the complexity of L2 language socialization, research like this will offer valuable insights into better assisting L2 students in general, and Korean students specifically, to learn to write academically and to enhance their knowledge of the North American academic culture.

As yet, little research on these specific issues has been published. As mentioned above, most L2 writing studies in relation to Korean students have employed the research paradigm of text analysis, and as a result, their research method tends to be quantitative in nature. Also, most investigations of students’ writing practices have been limited to ESL or English for Academic Purposes (EAP) classes and have depended on the findings of surveys, which do not reveal the situated nature of participation in a broader sociocultural context.

A few case studies have begun to examine how nonnative speakers learn to write in English in their chosen academic communities (Casanave, 1995; Prior, 1991; Spack, 1997;
as well as the writing needs and problems of increasing L2 students (Casanave & Hubbard, 1992; Riazi, 1997). However, there are few studies with a contextual or social focus on how Korean L2 graduate students are being socialized into their target academic communities, and given the increasing numbers of Korean graduate students in American higher education, such research is clearly needed. As previously stated, past and current research focuses on Japanese and Chinese students; we may speculate that differences arise in research that focuses on Korean students specifically.

This study attempted to encompass not only L2 students’ access to general campus-based resources such as ESL courses, writing centers, and research courses but also it attempted to investigate the role of more experienced others such as advisors, course instructors or tutors, both native and non-native, as writing consultants or mentors and their interactions in a university graduate context. Therefore, a study of this type is significant because it should assist in preventing unnecessary failures of L2 students by opening the doors to the effective use of resources. Without appropriate intervention or proper help, many L2 students will end up copying from the course texts or source materials to stay out of immediate trouble when carrying out their writing tasks, which may result in immediate academic failure or cause other significant problems later in their academic lives (Currie, 1998). On the other hand, by actively participating in a range of activities and bringing to the academic socialization process their individual diversities, L2 students themselves will shed light on the communities into which they are being apprenticed.

Finally, this study will have important implications for teachers and administrators who work with L2 students. Findings of this study will enable educators to appreciate the adaptations these L2 students must undergo and have a better grasp of the educational needs of the students.
In addition, it will also help foster students’ initiation into their academic communities by providing teachers and administers with the opportunity to evaluate resources according to how they are being utilized by L2 students and to make sure they offer the help that L2 students really need. In these respects, this study is critical.

Therefore, this dissertation investigated nine Korean graduate students’ L2 writing socialization experience at a mid-western U.S. university and explored the problems that they encountered during the L2 writing socialization process and the coping strategies they used such as social interactions with more experienced others in the U.S. academic context. It also attempted to examine the roles that those resources played and the assistance that the ESL center, writing center, or academic research courses provided for Korean L2 graduate students in socializing into their new academic culture in particular. The following research questions guided this dissertation:

1. How do Korean graduate students socialize into L2 writing in the U.S. academic context?
2. What L2 writing socialization problems, if any, do Korean L2 graduate students face in the U.S. academic context?
3. What resources (e.g., ESL classes or Writing Center) do they have access to in their L2 writing socialization into the U.S. academic context and what do the resources do, if anything, to socialize Korean L2 graduate students into U.S. academic writing, how, and why?
4. How do Korean L2 graduate students make use of ESL writing course, the writing center, and academic research courses?
Overview of the Following Chapters

Chapter 2 is a review of the relevant studies that provided a foundation in theories and methods for the current study. Studies on Korean L2 students’ cultural and educational backgrounds in relation to their L2 writing experience as well as studies on Korean students’ L2 writing are examined to enhance an understanding of the difficulties that they generally face in L2 writing within a U.S. academic context. Then, studies on L2 students’ socialization into the culture of American written academic discourse and studies particularly focusing on resources that L2 students can utilize in their L2 writing socialization process are also discussed in Chapter 2.

Data collection methods and procedures, as well as data analysis schemes are explained in Chapter 3. Language socialization as a sociocultural phenomenon lends itself to qualitative research methods. Semi-structured and open-ended interviews with 14 participants including nine student participants and five resource providers were employed as a major data collection method. The examination of documents such as course syllabi, student written samples, and email messages was also used in synthesis with interview data. Rationale for each method is discussed in this chapter. Data gathered were analyzed starting with open coding to conceptualize the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), and strategies from Bogdan and Biklen (2003), Miles and Huberman (1994), and Patton (2002) were used to analyze the data inductively to discover recurring themes and patterns. How I attempted to ensure the validity and reliability of this study is also discussed in Chapter 3.

Findings are presented in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5: findings for research questions 1 and 2 in Chapter 4 and findings corresponding to questions 3 and 4 in Chapter 5. Each question is followed by a brief summary and discussion of the findings. However, questions 3 and 4 are
discussed together, as both questions examined the available writing resources to the student participants and their utilization of the resources.

Chapter 4 presents the participants’ socialization pathways and problems that they encountered in their socialization processes. The participants in this study seemed to socialize into their new academic community in many different ways. Some made use of university resources such as ESL classes or the writing center. They also socialized through taking regular courses and relied on interactions with their advisors, peers, tutors or colleagues as well. Participants’ lack of L2 proficiency posed many challenges as they attempted to utilize the available support resources. Furthermore, the participants either did not express or had difficulty conveying their needs to resource providers, which resulted in relatively ineffective communication to the participants’ further disadvantage.

Chapter 5 discusses three major resources in terms of what they are and what they do to help socialize Korean L2 students, and it also presents the participants’ utilization of these three resources: ESL writing courses, writing center, and research courses. All three resource providers clearly stated as their goals that they intended to provide for L2 students. However, the participants’ overall resource utilization effort was not active. Despite the intended goals of the resources discussed in Research Question 3 being the type of the services that the students really sought, the students presented their needs for basic services and thus the basic services were what they were provided with from the resource providers, resulting in mismatches between the students’ needs and the services. This could be attributed to the students’ passive and/or limited resource utilization effort, as well as their lack of L2 proficiency necessary to articulate their real needs.
Chapter 6 provides a summary of the overall findings of the current study. Suggestions for future research and implications for pedagogy are provided in this chapter. Some of the suggestions for future research include a similar investigation of the use of resources with various L2 student groups, even with native English-speaking (NES) students, which might provide further insight into the process of writing socialization. Also, employing different and additional theoretical perspectives such as the systemic functional linguistics perspective may bring about different but more comprehensive results. Some of the pedagogical suggestions include a strong need for more communication among resource providers and thus more collaboration among resource providers involved in L2 students’ writing socialization. Also, data analysis indicated that content-based instruction would be useful in minimizing the mismatch between students’ needs and resource providers’ services. A mentoring system is also suggested as a way to help novice L2 students socialize into their new academic community.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

This section will begin with a brief description of the educational background of Korean L2 graduate students in order to establish an understanding of what they bring with them to the U.S. academic context, followed by a description of past and current research on Korean ESL or EFL students’ L2 writing. Then, I will review studies on L2 students’ problems in their writing socialization into their new academic culture, and potential resources including social interactions, writing center tutorials, and ESL classes.

Korean L2 Graduate Students’ Background

EFL teaching and learning practices in South Korea have been described in some studies (e.g., Chon & Kim, 2005, Kim, S., 2001, Kim, Y., 2001, and Li, 1998). According to Chon and Kim (2005) and Kim, S. (2001), there was an overall lack of writing instruction in L1 and L2 in Korea, which posed great challenges for them to study in the American academic context. Even if they do practice L1 and L2 writing skills in schools or language institutions, the findings of previous research seem to indicate that the transition to American academic context does not seem to take place.

Drawing from the data collected through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews from 162 Korean university students, Chon and Kim (2005) concluded that the students felt that they had received weak training in formal writing instruction in both L1 and L2. Their results also revealed that the students’ perception of L1 writing instruction was limited to exam-oriented short-term training in high schools, but usually writing was not practiced in classes as a regular part of the curriculum.
Lee and Scarcella (1992) claimed that Koreans generally value poetry, short novels, and expository essays among other types of genres. However, most Koreans believed that only experts in subject areas were capable of composing meaningful expository writing, and assumed that not every Korean was expected to have the writing proficiency needed to write in genres such as exposition. Expository writing with an unstated thesis was considered “good,” as the reader was usually viewed as responsible for interpreting the thesis from hints within the text. Korean students in the U.S. may be affected by these underlying cultural values tied to these writing genres, including the reluctance to state opinions strongly, the desire to save face, and the tendency to write indirectly (Lee & Scarcella, 1992).

With respect to L2 writing instruction, Lee and Scarcella found that Korean students did not have any formal foreign language writing instruction until the university level, although some students gained experience in writing about topics of interest in the L2 on their own or at private language institutes. Li (1998) too stated that English education in Korea has tended to focus on vocabulary, grammar, and reading skills, with little attention to writing. When writing was taught, the tradition of the grammar-translation method and writing as a sentence-by-sentence translation from L1 to L2 was still the prevalent method of instruction. For example, Y. Kim (2001) stated that in Korean EFL classes, “writing is often regarded as translating Korean sentences into English ones, or combining a couple of simple English sentences into a complex sentence using given rules of sentence combination” (p. 23). Such instructional practices have hindered Korean L2 learners from freely expressing their ideas and developing appropriate writing skills during their study in the American academic context (Kim, S., 2001; Kim, Y., 2001).
Studies, thus, have revealed that Korean L2 students, despite having had a long period of
target language study (i.e., at least six years), rarely had the opportunity to develop writing skills.
However, to understand better why Korean students actually have difficulties in academic
writing in North American contexts, the aforementioned underlying cultural values must be
taken into consideration.

*Studies on Korean Students’ L2 Writing*

Most of the studies focusing on Korean students’ writing were based on text analysis. Contrastive rhetoric, introduced in 1966 by Kaplan, was used to study the written texts of L2 learners. Contrastive rhetoric postulated that the rhetorical conventions used by L2 learners writing in English reflect their culture-specific thinking styles. Some studies (Choi, 1988; Connor, 1996; Eggington, 1987; Hinds, 1987, 1990; Hinkel, 1997; Kaplan, 1966; Kim, K., 1996; Lee & Scarcella, 1992) revealed that the text structure of writing in English by Koreans was characterized by indirectness. This made their writing look out of focus or unclear in comparison with North-American academic writing.

Choi (1988) examined the text structure of L2 argumentative writing and found that native Korean speakers more often used indirect strategies, going from evidence to conclusion, and preferred a situation-problem-solution–conclusion pattern to that of the NES subjects who used a theme-justification–conclusion pattern. Text analysis also showed that Korean essays did not have a clear structural pattern. Hinds (1987, 1990) gave a similar explanation for the indirectness. He proposed that in Japanese, Chinese, and Korean writing, the writer placed greater responsibility on the reader to derive meaning, in contrast to English, in which it was the writer who had the responsibility of conveying meaning to the reader. In support of this assertion, Hinds analyzed samples written in the participants’ native languages and their
translations into English and found that Korean essays were characterized by a “specific-to-general” (1990, p. 93) pattern.

These studies (Choi, 1988; Hinds, 1987, 1990) are also related to Eggington’s 1987 analysis of three traditional Korean academic writing samples that had been characterized as non-linear or indirect, and one sample of a linear rhetorical style used by native English speakers (i.e., going from general to specific). The latter feature was particularly exhibited in articles written by those Korean scholars who had studied in English-speaking universities. Based on this analysis, Eggington raised the question about whether Koreans regarded the linear structure as being unclear, as native English speakers would regard the non-linear structure as unclear. He collected eight Korean academic writing samples, four following the non-linear style of Korean and the remaining four following the linear style of English. Fourteen Korean students who had been in the U.S. for less than six months were asked to rank the samples depending on the difficulty in reading. The results revealed that the samples of the non-linear Korean discourse style were ranked as easier to read than those written in a linear pattern. Eggington’s analyses of written samples that followed the preferred rhetorical pattern of Korean academic writing supported the notion of being indirect, circling around the topic and going from specific to general, which made their writing seem confusing and unfocused to native English speakers.

Kim (1996) compared the rhetorical styles of Korean and American university students’ writings through the examination of the campus newspaper editorials. Like Hinds (1990), she translated the students’ texts written in Korean into English for analyses, but she also collected texts written directly in English by Korean students. The findings showed that most of the editorials written by Korean students, whether they were written in Korean or in English, had the thesis statement at the end of the article after a long orientation consisting of several facts on the
topic. Korean students were also found to transfer their L1 rhetorical style into their L2 writing. In other words, Korean writers thought it was the role of readers to deduce the thesis statement based on the facts presented. This was the opposite of the American students’ writing, which had a thesis statement in the initial position of the article, followed by arguments in support of or against it. Concluding that rhetorical patterns in Korean and English were different from each other, Kim (1996) referred to the cultural and historical background knowledge of each country to account for these differences. Kim also concluded that in order for L2 students to succeed in the target language, they needed to learn the rhetorical patterns of the target language.

In its early years, contrastive rhetoric research was mostly based on text analysis focusing on the differences of rhetorical organization of written texts. However, text-based studies have been criticized for only examining the written product. They have ignored the context and the process of writing. In brief, the process approach in L2 writing drew attention to what writers “actually do as they write” (Raimes, 1991, p. 409), focusing on the overall procedures for producing texts, including planning, drafting, and revising. However, the process-based research did not take sufficient consideration of academic content and the disciplines L2 students were writing for. Giving too much focus to the written products, text-based studies have not taken into account L2 students’ socialization issues and how they cope with the difficulties as they enter the discourse community of American academic writing. In addition to the research on Korean students’ writing in particular, studies of L2 writing socialization are relevant to this study. The next section will begin the discussion of studies on L2 students’ socialization into the culture of American written academic discourse and focus on the successes or failures of L2 writers’ socialization in the U.S. academic context.
There are some studies (Belcher, 1994; Casanave, 1992, 1995; Currie, 1998; Dong, 1996, 1998; Ferenz, 2005; Johns, 1992; Leki, 2006; Myles & Cheng, 2003; Prior, 1991; Schneider & Fujishima, 1995; Spack, 1997; Zamel & Spack, 1998) that investigated the situated or socially constructed process of acquiring L2 writing by which newcomers become socialized into academic communities of practice. Also, a variety of challenges, conflicts, and tensions that L2 learners may experience when participating in L2 writing activities have been documented.

Schneider and Fujishima’s (1995) case study of a Taiwanese master’s student in International Public Administration exemplified that “practice did not make perfect” (p. 19). They analyzed journal entries, classroom writing samples, and interviews with the student’s ESL and content teachers. The authors pointed out that the student’s difficulties in his academic program could be attributed not only to his English proficiency but, more importantly, to lack of participation in campus life, which “eliminated many opportunities for him to learn from peers outside of class” (p. 19) to improve his English and to gain a better understanding of course materials and the culture of graduate school.

Similarly, Dong (1996, 1998) found that L2 writers tended to work alone, unwilling or less likely to participate in the sorts of communicative exchanges with more knowledgeable others. Particularly, Dong’s 1998 survey results from 137 graduate students writing their thesis/dissertation and 32 advisors revealed that L2 students’ lack of social networks and the lack of a support system created a barrier to their socialization process. It was also found that L2 students had less contact with faculty, staff, or peers for help, compared to their NES counterparts. In addition, the survey results showed that L2 students did not make good use of resources, by which Dong (1998) meant faculty advisors, committee members, and fellow
students, and L2 students in the study were unaware of other resources. These studies called for more attention to explore what prevents students from gaining access to the opportunities for participation and interaction that could prevent unnecessary failure.

Casanave (1995) further examined contexts for writing, namely a few Sociology courses. She conducted an 18-month-long ethnographic study of a culturally diverse group of first-year doctoral students in Sociology under the framework of language socialization. In her conclusion, Casanave emphasized the importance of the local, historical, and interactive aspects of the contexts that writers construct for themselves. Individual writers interacted with resources through social engagement or collaboration with teachers and with other learners by taking an active role in the process of each student’s experience of socialization. Although there was a Korean student in the first-year group she studied, little information about how the Korean student interacted with resources was presented. It is particularly of note that Casanave (1992, 1995) rejected the passive, unidirectional view of socialization by which an individual gains membership in a group by adopting or internalizing its values, practices, and beliefs. Previous studies tended to address neither the cultural conflicts nor the resources that a culturally diverse student population might bring to a graduate program. In contrast, she proposed that “rather than being immersed in communities of unidirectional contextual influence, student writers use a multiplicity of local resources to respond to their training in diverse ways” (Casanave, 1995, p. 107).

It is also noteworthy to review Spack’s (1997) three-year longitudinal study on the process by which a Japanese undergraduate student with high English proficiency acquired academic reading and writing skills. This study examined both ESL writing classes and content area courses that the participant attended. The participant had attributed her writing and reading
struggles and her failure to complete a first-year course to lack of background knowledge in L2 and, more importantly, to her Japanese way of writing as was also echoed by some of the participants of the pilot study that I had conducted for the current study. However, the findings showed that over the years this Japanese student developed strategies for different purposes and she came to have confidence in herself as a reader and to appreciate the Japanese background knowledge she brought to the reading. For example, she began to use writing to clarify reading and reading comprehension to fulfill writing assignments. L2 students develop learning strategies as a “by-product” of the socialization process, which is directly connected to the practices of cultural groups and through which inexperienced novices become competent members of these communities of practice (Donato & McCormick, 1994). Therefore, it is important to examine cultural practices or activities L2 students can access in order to develop learning strategies in the socialization process. Although this study gave a thorough description of this particular student, little attention was given to her interactions with her peers, either experienced people or other novices like herself. It also focused exclusively on a high-proficiency student, so the need to study more diverse L2 students with different English proficiency levels remains.

Although Berkenkotter, Huckin, and Ackerman's seven-month study (1991) was about a native English speaker, Nate, it is worthwhile to point out their findings. Nate was observed over the period of seven months and it was found that he had become familiar with academic written conventions from his reading and not from any formal instruction on academic writing. The researchers asserted that most entering graduate students who struggled to gain competence with preferred writing conventions were generally being initiated into their academic community through reading and writing, taking courses, and interacting with faculty and peers. Consistent with this, the findings of my pilot study showed that instead of making use of on-campus
services such as the writing center tutorials and ESL courses, it was through reading and writing that the five Korean L2 graduate students believed that they learned the most about academic discourse. It would be interesting to further investigate how native English speakers’ acculturation activities and practices are similar and/or different from non-native English speaking students. Also, a question arises regarding the effectiveness of on-campus services such as ESL courses and the writing center that exist to provide L2 students with the assistance to meet their special needs in academic writing as they enter their academic community. Thus, in the following section, studies on resources that L2 students could make use of will be discussed.

**Resources**

L2 graduate students are usually not successful at picking up both the explicit and implicit expectations of their discourse communities. It is significant that they are more likely to work in isolation, without the benefit of support from discourse community insiders. As Gee (1996) described, they are not sure about “saying the right thing at the right time and in the right place” (p. 124). Accordingly, they are not confident of positioning themselves or do not know how in terms of who they are and what they are doing, “saying (writing)-doing-being-valuing-believing combinations” (p. 127), which Gee referred to as Discourses.

However, these L2 students’ inability to build such social relationships in their academic communities was often explained by cultural tendencies, which tended to portray L2 students as passive (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). Kanno and Applebaum (1995) also claimed that “many students from the Far East have difficulty developing a viable social network with North Americans” (p. 41), which might explain why their interactions were often limited to asking for academic help and did not extend to developing social relationships. However, it could be also explained by the claim that Morita (2004) raised: “although many theoretical accounts of
Socialization tend to assume that experts or peers assist newcomers, such assistance may not always be readily available to all learners” (p. 598). In addition, depending on the kinds of participation made available to the L2 students, some students took a less empowered position and denied access to or keep themselves away from the cultural and linguistic resources (Hyland, 2003; Toohey, 1999; Zuengler & Miller, 2006).

It has been found that L2 students had barriers such as language and lack of background knowledge in L2, and they also experienced cultural conflicts as they entered into their academic community. More importantly, their lack of participation in activities as well as interaction outside of classroom was clearly related to failures of L2 writing socialization in the U.S. academic context. Thus, I will review the literature on L2 students’ social interactions as well as studies of on-campus activities or services students could access in order to facilitate their L2 writing socialization.

Social Interactions

As not only L2 students’ English proficiency or learning strategies but also a lack of social contact with their academic communities have emerged as major problems, researchers (Belcher, 1994; Casanave, 1995; Dong, 1998; Guo, 2006; Riazi, 1997) have begun to acknowledge the importance of examining particular people and their interactions in situated activities.

Belcher (1994) focused on the mentoring relationships between three nonnative graduate dissertation writers, who were enrolled in her dissertation writing class for L2 students, and their advisors. Under the legitimate peripheral participation theory, she investigated these three cases based on her interaction with the students as well as interviews with their advisors for 10 weeks. One year afterwards the author met the advisors to find out whether the students successfully
completed their dissertations and also to know the advisors’ overall assessment of the students. The findings suggested that the advisor/student collaboration play a very important role in the academic and professional success of students in their writing socialization. For example, two Chinese students’ relationships with their advisors were “notably hierarchical” (p. 31), which resulted in lack of interaction and thus made it difficult to reduce the mismatch between students’ and advisors’ conceptualization of their academic community with regards to writing goals and audience awareness. As a result, one of the two students, who was according to Belcher “an extremely proficient speaker and writer of English” (p. 26), left his program unfinished. In contrast, the case of a Korean student in Human Nutrition was the most successful one despite being the weakest in L2 proficiency among the three L2 dissertation writers in the study. This Korean student’s successful relationship with her advisor was found to be characterized by dialogue, support, and cooperation. The findings of this study clearly showed how critical it was for dissertation writers to have effective and constructive mentoring relationships with their advisors, which could enable students to openly discuss the mismatch mentioned above as well as negotiate the writing demands of their academic community. However, it would be interesting to know what other resources were available to those L2 students for support beyond the dissertation writing class where the study took place.

According to Dong (1998), L2 students tended to work alone without seeking help to cope with writing difficulties from available social networks including their advisors, committee members, and peers. Dong surveyed support networks for L2 graduate students in their thesis/dissertation writing in the area of science. The data were the self reports from 169 L2 graduate students and their advisors in two U.S. institutions. Compared to their native English-speaking counterparts, L2 students lacked a support system and resources, which not only
affected their writing but also, more importantly, limited their access to the target disciplinary community. Also, Dong stated that, due to L2 students’ perceived linguistic and cultural differences, L2 students did not make good use of these social resources and further explained that the students “could be reluctant to dialogue with native speakers in order to save face, or non-native speakers could fear self-disclosure, or they could be unable to use resources available for facilitating the dialogue” (p. 384). Based on the survey results, Dong called for a university-wide effort to initiate helping networks for L2 students, including peer groups as well as research courses designed to teach “how to do a literature review and how to write an introduction” (p. 387). He also argued that writing centers should collaborate with academic disciplines in order to provide content-specific writing knowledge to meet L2 students’ real needs.

Similarly, Riazi (1997) provided some insights into how and why nonnative students developed certain coping strategies. He followed four second-year Iranian doctoral students in Education for five months to study how they acquired their field-specific L2 literacy. He employed questionnaires, weekly interviews, and written documents for data collection. Learning to write in a second language in the graduate context was found to be “an active, extended, and dynamic process” (p. 121). Although Riazi did not explicitly discuss the theoretical framework that he used for the study, it seemed that he interpreted the findings through the lens of legitimate peripheral participation and language socialization. He discussed the participants’ peripheral participation in their academic community, and he also confirmed that language played a role as a medium through which the participants learned their discipline-specific knowledge and writing skills, while at the same time language was an object of learning. Among many coping strategies the four Iranian students reported that they developed in their learning process, the social strategy and the “reading to write” strategy were of note. By reading
to write, Riazi meant “reading purposefully” (p. 123). For example, the participants in his study interacted actively and extensively with their professors and peers to clarify the assigned tasks before beginning the tasks, during the performance of the tasks, and after they received comments from the professors. Also, the participants in his study reported that they utilized reading activities by taking notes from the source texts so that they could use them in their writing. However, this study only relied on students’ perceptions. How the social interactions affected their learning process needs to be investigated in more detail, possibly in consultation with teachers or advisors.

Guo’s (2006) autobiographic description of L2 writing also highlighted the importance of interactions. She attributed her own progress from “a timid peripheral participant” to “a legitimate participant” in academia to the help of supportive peers and professors. Like Casanave (1995), Guo was also arguing that that existing literature seemed to suggest that learning to write in a second language is a one-way socialization process. However, she emphasized that L2 students’ social, cultural, or linguistic knowledge should be also valued because they help enrich the North American academic community. In fact, when the peers and professors were more collaboratively willing to listen to and discuss her “different” opinions, she too was more willing to accept the suggestions in terms of the content, organization, and mechanics in her writing. Echoing the findings of Belcher’s 1994 study reviewed above, Guo’s case proved how critical a role the supportive relationships between L2 students and their advisors or professors could play for enabling the students to become successful members in their academic communities.

Canagarajah (2002) claimed the importance of situating “pedagogical activities in the specific discourse communities one is writing in/for” (p. 29). Referring to Lave and Wenger's (1991) notion of situated learning and legitimate peripheral participation in communities of
practice, he further asserted that “it is by participating in the activity of the community that one can become an insider in the knowledge and conventions of that circle” (p. 30). Thus, it is important to know what kinds of activity or practice L2 students have access to participate in. In other words, what resources can they access? Ferenz (2005) also stressed the importance of “supportive social and academic environments” (p. 350) in L2 students’ path to academic literacy. A review of existing studies of on-campus services such as ESL classes, writing centers, and instructors in the disciplines designed to assist L2 students to cope with their problems in academic discourse follows.

**ESL Classes**

Research in L2 writing showed that there was a large mismatch between the tasks and texts practiced in ESL or EAP classes and those required in real academic disciplines (Horowitz, 1986; Leki & Carson, 1994, 1997). The problem was decontextualization. For example, the type of writing that L2 students encounter in real academic classrooms was rarely practiced in ESL classrooms.

In this respect, Zamel and Spack (2006), which I will discuss further later in this chapter, made some relevant points. The focus of their study was primarily exploring how faculty across the curriculum could facilitate undergraduate L2 learners’ acquisition of language and literacy. However, as Zamel and Spack acknowledged, faculty across disciplines “have become increasingly concerned about the growing number of linguistically diverse students in their classrooms, and . . . they have reached out to ESOL [English to speakers of other languages] professionals for guidance” (p. 128). As such, the findings of their study bear on the role L2 practitioners can play in ESL classes. Zamel and Spack emphasized that ESL classes should offer activities closely relevant to L2 students’ subject matters. They also pointed out that ESL
instructors should create intellectually challenging activities “whose content, texts, and assignments involve students in authentic and meaningful work and thus facilitate their acquisition of language and literacy” (p. 147).

Similarly, Kasper (1998) stated that ESL programs should go beyond teaching students four basic language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). She further emphasized that “we must put these skills into the context of the academic environment to enable our students to find a place in that environment, so that they will not be isolated nor excluded from it” (p. 148). To achieve this goal and to meet L2 students’ needs, it would be ideal to establish interdisciplinary collaboration between ESL programs and academic disciplines, which is, however, not easy to implement due to such problems as scheduling, training, and time commitment. Still, ESL teachers could redesign courses within the ESL program by introducing discipline-specific content as the medium of instruction, so that the process of transitioning knowledge gained in ESL courses to students’ academic disciplines could be facilitated.

Participant feedback in Kasper’s study also revealed students’ preference for discipline-based learning materials and literature in ESL classrooms.

As an alternative to introducing a discipline-specific content into ESL writing classrooms, Silva (1997) claimed that it is important to provide various learning contexts for L2 writers. He said that L2 writers should be given as many placement options as possible such as into mainstream composition classes, basic writing classes, sheltered ESL classes, or classes designed for both native and non-native speakers of English. In these cases, it is crucial that teachers of such classes be well-informed in L2 writing and have experience in working with L2 writers, which is related to Heath’s (1996) notion of the importance of forming a supportive environment
in ESL classrooms. Heath further stated that teachers need to be open as models by sharing their writings with their students.

Finally, the study conducted by De Guerrero and Villamil (2000) is of note in terms of the use of the L1 in ESL writing classrooms. These researchers studied two novice L2 writers working collaboratively in revising a text written by one of the writers in the ESL writing classroom. The authors observed their interaction and revising strategies with a microgenetic approach under the concepts of zone of proximal development and scaffolding. Their findings showed that students’ use of L1 throughout the task of revision facilitated their interaction and encouraged mutual communication. The authors concluded that speaking L1 was valuable “to the extent that it did not inhibit but instead promoted achievement of the goal and stimulated reflection, reconsideration, and restructuring the L2” (p. 64). These findings lead one to ask if Korean L2 graduate students could benefit from speaking their L1 to collaborate in L2 writing, and thus consider their Korean peers as helpful resources.

Writing Centers

In the academic context, instructors evaluate students not only based on their content knowledge but also their ability to write, and the instructors consider writing centers to be useful resources (Thonus, 2002). In fact, as Cumming and So (1996) pointed out, “students may scarcely know a tutor but drop into a writing center or establish personal contacts to plan or revise a specific text (for which the tutor may not know much of the relevant educational context)” (p. 198). They further conceptualized one-to-one tutoring as “a dialogic process with potential for learning through focused talk, modeling thinking processes and relevant writing behaviors, and focusing attention on specific text features” (p. 198). Researchers (Harris & Silva, 1993; Powers & Nelson, 1995; Williams & Severino, 2004) have called for additional research
on writing center practice regarding L2 writers and on collaboration between L2 instructors and writing center staff (Powers & Nelson, 1995).

The research on writing center tutoring has provided tutors with information about L2 writing and advice on working with L2 writers and their concerns. It included not only the errors that L2 writers typically made but also “cross-cultural differences in interaction and how to manage them” (Williams & Severino, 2004, p. 166). For example, many L2 writers expected tutors to be authoritative. L2 writers wanted tutors to be “tellers” and felt uncomfortable or even inappropriate about casual interaction with tutors (Harris & Silva, 1993, p. 533). Moreover, they thought of writing center services as mainly editing and simply correcting errors. In fact, assistance with correctness or sentence-level problems was the type of request L2 graduate students most sought from writing centers (Cumming & So, 1996; Powers & Nelson, 1995). As a result, tutor talk tended to be dominant in interactions with L2 writers, which resulted in less participation in communication or negotiation of meaning between tutors and L2 writers, and thus less productivity.

Another problem was that oftentimes L2 students sought out last-minute help when they were about to hand in a paper, which put tutors at a loss and made it much more likely that their services became limited to mere proofreading. Furthermore, this prevented the active participation of L2 writers from revising and negotiating meaning that some studies suggested might facilitate their learning (Goldstein & Conrad, 1990; Williams, 2004). More importantly, these articles pointed to a different approach to tutoring L2 writers from that with native speakers. For example, reading aloud as a writing center practice which had been suggested to help native speakers with errors and editing was found not to work equally well with L2 writers (Harris & Silva, 1993).
Powers and Nelson’s 1995 survey is notable. These researchers surveyed writing center staff about conferencing with graduate research writers in general and L2 graduate research writers in particular at 110 institutions across the U.S. They found that writing center staff, who were mostly peer tutors from the English departments, did not have specialized training in ESL and/or experience with graduate research writing. Their unfamiliarity with the content of tutees’ writing caused more problems for L2 writers, who might also be unfamiliar with rhetorical contexts and organization or have difficulty explaining their problems to writing center staff. When asked how their effectiveness in working with L2 writers might be improved, staff indicated the need for more ESL training and learning more about ESL writing. Powers and Nelson concluded that, considering the scarcity of resources on campus, writing centers could play a significant role by providing individual conferencing to meet individual needs. Writing center staff could also function as cultural informants to “bridge the gap between expectations of L1 and L2 writing contexts” and facilitate communication between L2 writers and their content-area teachers and advisors (Powers & Nelson, 1995, p. 130).

As mentioned earlier, more collaboration between ESL teachers and writing center staff is critically important. The latter can share their one-to-one pedagogies and their “awareness of the kinds of questions students really ask, [their] first-hand observations of how students cope with writing assignments and teacher responses, and [their] encounters with non-native differences that interfere with learning how to write in American classrooms” (Harris & Silva, 1993, p. 536). At the same time, ESL theory, research, and practice can assist writing centers “to deal effectively with their increasingly multilingual and multicultural student populations” (p. 537).
As Powers and Nelson’s survey showed, L2 writers were not provided with such resources as scientific, technical, or business writing courses to the same degree as were undergraduate L1 writers, and “there are decidedly fewer resources tailored to meet the needs of L2 research writers (p. 119). Therefore, writing centers could be valuable resources for L2 writers. Although some studies have been done on successful tutoring (e.g., Thonus, 2002 and Weigle & Nelson, 2004), Power and Nelson claimed (1995) that research on writing centers as resources for L2 writers was scarce. There is a clear need for research on the role of writing centers for L2 writing socialization.

Instructors in the Disciplines

Zamel and Spack’s 2006 qualitative research is of particular note. This study investigated the experiences and expectations of both L2 students and faculty across the curriculum. Hundreds of L2 students’ accounts of their experiences in disciplinary classrooms were collected through surveys, interviews, and reflective journals for analysis. Zamel and Spack also analyzed faculty responses to questions regarding their perspectives and experiences in teaching L2 students. It probed into how faculty can facilitate the learning of L2 students. The authors pointed out that L2 learners should not be expected “to have achieved mastery of English before they begin to grapple with the demands of the academy” (p. 127). Further, Zamel and Spack argued that ESL instructors and ESL classes should not be expected “to teach such a complex group of students all of the language they need in order to succeed in all of their courses” (p.128). In their attempt to gain insight to students’ perspectives about their experiences in classrooms, they found that the students “have readily acknowledged their linguistic struggles and cross-cultural disorientation” (Zamel & Spack, 2006, p. 128) and were concerned that the instructors might not recognize or appreciate “the time, effort, and frustration that have gone into the
composing” (p. 129) when they handed in papers. Although L2 students asked for assistance in handling course expectations, their needs were not usually met and thus, they tended to attempt to figure things out on their own. Instructors were likely to consider L2 students’ written language as inadequate for undertaking coursework and felt that they were not responsible for their students’ acquisition of academic discourse. However, Zamel and Spack pointed out the critical role that instructors across the curriculum could play in fostering multilingual students’ academic success by “providing meaningful feedback and guidance in response to students’ work” (p. 140). This was also echoed by Ferenz (2005), who studied the role of social networks on L2 students’ academic literacy development. The findings of this study showed that “the professors’ assistance and comments serve an additional function, enhancing the participant’s conception of academic audience awareness” (p. 346).

In another study related to disciplinary faculty roles in supporting L2 students, Adrian-Taylor et al. (2007) examined conflict between international graduate students and faculty supervisors. They found that faculty supervisors considered international students’ poor English proficiency (both oral and written) and their lack of research skills to be the most common sources of conflict. In contrast, a significantly smaller number of international students considered these to be sources of conflict. In terms of asking for help regarding different assumptions or perspectives, the majority of the 55 international graduate students who participated in the study were unwilling to talk to an individual to manage conflict unless they knew someone very well. Rather, they considered conflict-management workshops or diversity training more useful. Perhaps this is related to L2 students’ reluctance to “negotiate or dialogue with native speakers” in the fear of losing face or self-disclosure (Dong, 1998, p. 384). It could be also on the part of faculty not being able to recognize L2 students’ language barrier and thus
failing to accommodate their special needs (Leki, 2006). This leads to a question regarding the kinds of writing workshops or training activities that are provided for L2 students as this is regarded as the most common source of conflict between L2 students and the faculty.

Until this point, studies focusing on underlying problems in the failure of L2 writers to socialize, L2 students’ access to resources, particularly their interactions with faculty and peers, and additional resources such as ESL classes and writing centers have been reviewed. As the literature showed, although a body of research now exists on the language socialization of native English speakers and other groups of Asians such as Chinese or Japanese students in higher education (Casanave, 1992, 1995; Johns, 1992; Prior, 1991; Schneider & Fujishima, 1995; Shi & Beckett, 2002; Spack, 1997), there are few studies focusing specifically on Korean L2 graduate students. Students from China, India, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, and many other Asian countries, in spite of their cultural diversity which Kumaravadivelu (2003) described as “contrasting and conflicting,” tend to be “all thrown into a single cultural basket labeled as Asian” (p. 710). Kumaravadivelu further problematized this homogenization of different groups of Asian students.

Moreover, as mentioned earlier, most L2 writing studies with Korean L2 students until now have been focused on text analysis in order to determine some characteristics of processes and products of specific genres, but these studies did not address language socialization issues. Moreover, little research on writing centers as resources for L2 writers has been done. Overall, there is lack of research regarding L2 writers’ use of resources in general and what encourages or inhibits them from making use of those available resources. Given the increasing numbers of linguistically and culturally diverse students in general and Korean graduate students in American higher education in particular, this kind of research is clearly needed. Utilizing the theoretical frameworks of both language socialization and legitimate peripheral participation will
provide insight into these students’ language socialization problems and their participation or practices in social resources to facilitate the socialization process.

Methodologically, since “academic literacy is generally acquired over an extended period of time in a complex, dynamic manner, and from multiple sources” (Braine, 2002, p. 63), there is also a need for longitudinal observations of L2 students in their writing socialization processes employing multiple data sources. The current study attempted to employ multiple sources of data in order to enhance the reliability and validity. First, it focused not on a single participant but a group of Korean graduate students. Second, although I intended to probe into a group of Korean L2 students’ use of resources in their L2 writing socialization, it is significant that not only did I draw on students’ perspectives of their experiences in utilizing resources but also I included perspectives of individuals representing the resources involved in Korean L2 students’ writing socialization (i.e., ESL center, writing center, and research course). Moreover, in addition to interviews, which have been most commonly used for data collection in this type of research, ESL classroom observations as well as document analysis were employed for data triangulation, and a detailed description of the research methods are discussed in Chapter 3.

**Theoretical Framework**

The main theoretical perspective providing the conceptual foundations for this study comes from language socialization (LS) and legitimate peripheral participation (LPP). These two theories place great emphasis on the role of sociocultural context. Sociocultural theory, based on the work of Vygotsky (1978), maintains that the sociocultural context in which people learn plays important roles in an individual’s cognitive growth and development by influencing how and what is learned. For Vygotsky (1978), social interaction is a mechanism for individual development with assistance from more knowledgeable others, and such assisted performance
facilitates the linguistic, cognitive, and social development of the novice participants. In particular, the development of higher forms of thinking and the acquisition of certain complex skills are thought to be initiated and shaped by social interaction, which also can facilitate the learner’s progress to a higher level of L2 writing development. As such, as Vygotsky (1978) argued, it is important to acknowledge the sociocultural settings and the interactions as the primary and determining factors in the process of socialization into academic communities of practice.

In addition, LS and LPP are complementary to each other. As language is one of the most significant challenges facing L2 students socializing into the culture of American written academic discourse, LS highlights the importance of being exposed to and engaged in language-mediated activities through interactions with the members of the culture. LPP concerns relationships, and participation in and access to the activities of the community. Combining these two theories will shed more lights on exploring L2 students’ writing socialization issues and their use of social resources including their interactions with more experienced others.

*Language Socialization (LS)*

Language socialization theory (Ochs, 1988; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986a, 1986b) views language learning as an interactive social process. LS places great emphasis on the role of sociocultural context and focuses on the process through which novices in a certain social group become socialized into the groups’ culture through exposure to and engagement in language-mediated activities. In other words, the notion of language socialization involves “socialization through the use of language and socialization to use language” (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986b, p. 163). Similarly, Heath (1996) also stresses the importance of learners’ engagement in language-mediated activities as she claims that “students cannot be expected to write academic essays of
argumentation, laboratory reports, or biographical accounts unless they have learned these forms through oral practice and have had multiple opportunities to reshape such writing with immediate audience feedback (p. 777). LS is a useful framework for understanding the interactions that take place in classrooms or the surrounding environment as second language learners enter into new discourse communities and gain expertise in their new languages and contexts of language use.

Korean L2 graduate students enter the academic context neither as complete outsiders, because of their past educational and academic background, nor as full insiders, because they encounter distinct linguistic, academic, and cultural challenges in the new context. In the process of socialization into academic communities, language plays a role as a medium through which they learn domain-specific knowledge and culture, and language itself is an object of learning. As such, language and cultural knowledge are learned together as these students participate in various types of cultural activities through interactions with resources in the academic and surrounding environments.

**Legitimate Peripheral Participation (LPP)**

To conceptualize disciplinary enculturation for graduate students, the theory of legitimate peripheral participation (Lave & Wenger, 1991) addresses the process by which newcomers gradually become full participants of a given community of practice by interacting with more experienced community members. LPP supposes that learning takes place with increasing levels and varieties of sociocultural participation in a target community of practice. Lave and Wenger further state, “to become a full member of a community of practice requires access to a wide range of ongoing activity, old-timers, and other members of the community; and to information, resources, and opportunities for participation” (pp. 100-101).
Within academic communities of practice, there are a variety of relationships between experts and novices, old-timers and newcomers, so that members are engaged in a process of learning through participation at multiple levels. Since novice L2 students are not expert members of that community, they do not have central participation. However, students should have legitimate access to the activities of the community. For L2 graduate students, collaborative interactions with resources, either self-initiated or other-initiated, appear to play a significant role in terms of enabling them to learn genre-specific writing skills. An investigation of L2 students’ collaboration with the resources specific to a university setting will provide a concrete picture of how old-timers assist newcomers in the appropriation of genre-specific language within the context of their writing tasks. At the same time, as acknowledged by some researchers, depending on the kinds of participation made available to the L2 students, some students take a less empowered position and deny access to or keep themselves away from the cultural and linguistic resources (Hyland, 2003; Toohey, 1999; Zuengler & Miller, 2006).

Language socialization and legitimate peripheral participation theories have resulted in critical questions related to opportunities for participation in communities of practice, access to community resources, and participants’ identities. Many researchers (Canagarajah, 2003; Casanave, 2002; Flowerdew, 2000; Morita, 2000, 2004; Toohey, 1998) have applied the community of practice or LPP perspective in research in ESL classroom settings. This study, however, explores these important questions in contexts outside classrooms.

Under the language socialization and legitimate peripheral participation perspectives, this study explored how nine Korean L2 graduate students socialized into the North American academic context. Resources that they had access to during their socialization processes were examined from the perspectives of this group of Korean L2 graduate students as well as from the
perspectives of the resource providers. As discussed earlier, studying these issues is significant because novice L2 writers should not be expected to grasp how to write academically simply by being embedded in the new academic context. Further students’ active utilization of resources could facilitate their socialization and it is important for them to be provided with many opportunities for participation in their target academic communities.
CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to investigate the second language writing socialization of the Korean L2 graduate students, the possible issues they face, and the resources they have access to while becoming socialized into the culture of American written academic discourse. The research questions that guided this study were:

1. How do Korean graduate students socialize into L2 writing in the U.S. academic context?
2. What L2 writing socialization problems, if any, do Korean L2 graduate students face in the U.S. academic context?
3. What resources (e.g., ESL classes or Writing Center) do they have access to in their L2 writing socialization into the U.S. academic context and what do the resources do, if anything, to socialize Korean L2 graduate students into U.S. academic writing, how, and why?
4. How do Korean L2 graduate students make use of ESL writing course, the writing center, and academic research courses?

Research Design

In order to explore these research questions, I have previously reviewed theories that would provide conceptual foundations for this study. Sociocultural perspectives in general, and language socialization and legitimate peripheral participation theories in particular, conceive that the sociocultural context, as well as social practices or activities and interactions in that context, play a significant role in L2 writing socialization. This theoretical framework fits under the constructivist paradigm, which assumes “a relativist ontology (there are multiple realities), a
subjectivist epistemology (knower and respondent cocreate understandings), and a naturalistic (in the natural world) set of methodological procedures” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 23).

This theoretical approach emphasizes that researchers do not assume that they know what meaning the people they are studying confer on the things happening around them (Douglas, 1976). Instead, as they attempt to gain entry to the conceptual world of their subjects, researchers believe that there are multiple ways of interpreting people’s behaviors and this happens through interactions with others. Thus, realities are socially constructed through interactions and there exist multiple realities (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003).

In a similar vein, a subjectivity epistemology assumes that “knowledge is a social and historical product” and it emphasizes “the existence and importance of the subjective, the phenomenological, the meaning-making at the center of social life,” which rejects direct and objective knowledge (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 4). Under this approach, researchers attempt to understand the subjects from the participants’ perspectives. However, this is also “a research construct” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003, p. 23). They inevitably intrude upon their participants’ world and also the researchers’ subjective thinking tends to influence their interpretation of the data. While being subjective, they also attempt to justify what they produce, research records or data, by making sure that “there can be and should be a correspondence with what the researcher said happened and what actually occurred.” Also, they see the data “not as a transcendent truth, but as a particular rendering or interpretation of reality grounded in the empirical world” and they believe that “the qualitative research tradition produces an interpretation of reality that is useful in understanding the human condition” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003, p. 24).

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) define qualitative research, in general, as “a situated activity that locates the observer in the world,” which “consists of a set of interpretive, material practices
that make the world visible. . . . Qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world” (p. 3). They illustrate the role of qualitative researchers as studying “things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (p. 3). They search for answers to “questions that stress how social experience is created and given meaning” as opposed to “the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables” (p. 9), which quantitative research emphasizes.

One of the strengths of qualitative data is that “they focus on naturally occurring, ordinary events in natural settings, so that they have a strong handle on what ‘real life’ is like.” This means that when a researcher focuses on a specific case embedded in a certain situation, a context so to speak, “the influences of the local context are not stripped away, but are taken into account” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 10). Taking all of these aspects of qualitative research into account, I chose to adopt a qualitative research design, which best allowed me to address what Korean L2 students know and what they do in the process of becoming socialized into the culture of the academic community they wish to join while focusing on the context in which they are situated.

More specifically, I employed a case study approach focusing on a particular group in great detail. The case study approach was chosen because it is a powerful research method for researching changes in context over time (Patton, 2002; van Lier, 2005) especially “when we want to understand how a specific unit (person, group) functions in the real world” (van Lier, 2005, p. 196). Case studies seek to describe details of events, settings, or subjects in naturally occurring environments without any manipulation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002). This type of research draws attention to “what specially can be learned” about a particular case by paying close attention to the activities and how things are done within
the case (Stake, 2005). In other words, it focuses on understanding the particular case rather than generalizing it. Therefore, the purpose of a case study is “to encapsulate complex meanings into a finite report but to describe the case in sufficient descriptive narrative so that readers can experience these happenings vicariously and draw their own conclusions” (Stake, 2005, p. 450).

Thus, in order to investigate the above mentioned research questions on a particular case of Korean graduate students and their experience with L2 writing socialization, I used three main methods of data collection: open-ended interviews with each of the student participants as well as with people presenting resources available at the university (i.e., ESL center, writing center, and academic research course); classroom observation and field notes; and the examination of documents (e.g., policy statements, tutorial guide, and course syllabi) and written artifacts such as students’ writing samples and e-mail messages. I believe these data collection methods allowed me to attain an in-depth, detailed, and accurate description of the context in which the students were situated by triangulating data from different sources. I will describe the research setting and the participants of this study, as well as data collection and analysis strategies which I employed, in the following section.

Research Setting and Participants

This research was conducted at a large research-extensive Mid-Western U.S. university with an enrollment of approximately 170 Korean students (estimated from the 2006-2007 academic year Korean Student Association directory). A total of nine of these Korean students were recruited as participants for this study.

These participants include four Korean graduate students from a pilot study, which I conducted from September through January during the 2006-2007 academic year (two from Political Science; one from Music Composition; and one from Teaching English as a Second
Language) to further investigate changes, if any, in their perceptions and use of resources in the L2 writing socialization processes.

In addition, I recruited five additional Korean L2 students in the fall of 2007. The participants were selected through purposeful sampling of information-rich cases to gain in-depth understanding (Patton, 2002, p. 230). I sent an invitation email to ten Korean graduate students, both new and returning, enrolled in academic programs that require a relatively large amount of writing. The students were selected from the student directory issued by the Korean Student Association of the university, and they were also contacted by phone. I received no replies except from one student from Architecture, Hansung (pseudonym), who showed interest in participating. As a result, I had to look to other means of recruiting participants. Working as a graduate assistant at the Oral English Proficiency Test (OEPT) office, I was able to recruit additional two participants, Heesoo (pseudonym) from Music Accompanying and Jungsoo (pseudonym) from Political Science, who came to register for the fall 2007 OEPT. Finally, I recruited Sejun (pseudonym) from Choral Conducting and Sujin (pseudonym) from Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL), two Korean students who registered for ESL writing courses at the time of this study, the Editing course and the Introduction to Academic Writing course respectively. I recruited students with fewer than three years of U.S. residency to participate because this study sought to follow the socialization process of those who were either new or had little experience with the U.S. academic writing culture.

Additional participants in the study were an ESL writing class instructor, the ESL program director, a writing center tutor, the writing center director, and an academic research course instructor in the Music Department. I contacted these individuals by phone or by email after identifying them through websites and/or the on-line course offerings system. I explained
the details of this study, including the objectives and the procedures, to all the participants by email or in person before the informed consents were obtained. I will describe each of the 14 participants in the following section.

Participants

Hansung, a second-year Master’s of Science in Architecture major in his second year in the U.S. with no prior experience in U.S. academia. He had taken one ESL course each quarter since he started the program. At the time of the interviews, he was enrolled in an ESL writing class, Introduction to Academic Writing, which I observed in the fall quarter.

Heesoo, a new entrant to graduate school as a master’s student in Accompanying in the Music Department. She previously went to a community college for one semester, where she took two regular classes and two ESL classes. Upon receiving a graduate assistantship from her graduate program, she was required to take the Oral English Proficiency Test (OEPT), which she passed. However, she had yet to take an ESL writing course as a result of the placement test. This placement test was administered by the OEPT office of the Center for ESL at the university at the request of the Music Department, and all incoming international students in the Music Department must take this test upon entering their program of study. It consisted of two parts, a 10-minute oral portion and a 20-minute written portion. Based on the test results, the Music Department required its students to complete all the recommended ESL courses before they actually registered for writing-intensive regular academic courses such as History, Theory, and Graduate Research and Writing.

Sejun, a first-year PhD student in Choral Conducting in the Music Department. He has a master’s degree from another U.S. university and this was his third year in the U.S. At the time
of the interviews he was enrolled in the ESL Editing class and the Oral Presentation Skills class, which he was required to take as a result of the OEPT and the placement test discussed above.

Jungsoo, a first-year PhD student in Political Science. He had been in the U.S. for two years and transferred from another university. For his personal reasons, I could not conduct the second interview in person. Instead, I was only able to get his brief answers to interview questions via email.

Sujin, a junior at a Korean university majoring in English Education and exchange student in the TESL certificate program, which required 24 graduate-level credit hours in TESL. Even though she was an undergraduate student, she was taking graduate-level courses and possessed a very advanced level of English proficiency. She had been in the U.S. for one month when the first interview was conducted. She was also enrolled in the Introduction to Academic Writing class.

The following four participants were from the pilot study which I previously conducted and who agreed to participate in the current study.

Juyoung (pseudonym), a second-year PhD student in Composition in the Music Department. She participated in the pilot study as a new entrant to graduate school as a PhD student with no prior experience in U.S. academia other than a 3-month ESL experience at another university. She took an ESL writing class as a result of the placement test.

Jin (pseudonym), who participated in the pilot study as a second-year PhD student in Political Science. However, he transferred to the master’s degree at the beginning of the current study. He was in the same ESL writing class with Hansung and Sujin.
Namjoo (pseudonym), a second-year PhD student in Political Science. She had completed her masters’ degree at the same university and she had previously taken an ESL writing class.

Younghee (pseudonym), a second-year master’s student in TESL at the beginning of the pilot study. She completed her degree and went back to Korea. I conducted a follow-up interview for this study before she left for Korea.

In addition to the nine student participants, I recruited five participants from resource providers. The director of the Center for ESL (CESL), who had been in the field of ESL for thirty years, took on directorship in September 2007, but she had been in charge of the center for many years previously at this university. Jen (pseudonym), an ESL instructor, had been teaching writing courses since she started her master’s degree in TESL four quarters prior, and at the time of the interview for the current study, she was a first-year doctoral student in the program.

Lindsey (pseudonym), a writing center tutor, was a second-year PhD student in the English Department and had been working for the center for two years. She was also enrolled in the certificate program in TESL in the College of Education and she had one year experience teaching in an intensive ESL program at the American university where she completed her master’s degree. The writing center director, faculty in the Music Department, had been supervising the center since 2003.

The Music Department research course, Graduate Research and Writing, was particularly chosen for further investigation because the pilot study results indicated the need for a close look at L2 Music students’ use of this course. The instructor at the Music Department had taught this course during two previous quarters, and at the time of the interview she was teaching the course for the third time. Table 1 presents only the people that I interviewed for this study.
Table 1

*Participants*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Degree sought</th>
<th>Residency at time of first contact</th>
<th>Data collected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students newly recruited</td>
<td>Hansung</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Architecture</td>
<td>Master’s</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>2 interviews, ESL writing class observations, ESL course writing samples, Paper reviewed by a writing center tutor, Email communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Heesoo</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Accompanying</td>
<td>Master’s</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>2 interviews, 2 Music course syllabi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sejun</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Choral Conducting</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>2 interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jungsoo</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Political Science</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>2 interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sujin</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>English Education</td>
<td>TESL certificate</td>
<td>1 month</td>
<td>2 interviews, ESL writing class observations, ESL course writing samples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students from pilot study</td>
<td>Juyoung</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Music Composition</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>2 interviews, 2 Music course syllabi, Music paper, Phone communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jin</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Political Science</td>
<td>Master’s</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>2 interviews, ESL writing class observations, ESL course writing samples, ESL writing course needs analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Namjoo</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Political Science</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>1 follow-up interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Younghee</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>TESL</td>
<td>Master’s</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>1 follow-up interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource providers</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Field</td>
<td>Roles and Responsibilities</td>
<td>Methodologies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CESL director</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>TESL</td>
<td>Supervising the center since Sep. 2007; several years in the past</td>
<td>1 interview</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jen (ESL instructor)</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>TESL</td>
<td>Teaching ESL writing courses for 4 quarters</td>
<td>6 classroom observations, Course syllabus, Course materials, 1 interview</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing center director</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Supervising the center since 2003</td>
<td>1 interview</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lindsey (Writing center tutor)</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>English (TESL certificate)</td>
<td>Working for the center for 2 years</td>
<td>1 interview</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music research course instructor</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Music</td>
<td>Teaching the course for the third time</td>
<td>1 interview</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Email communication
Data Collection Procedures

Qualitative research in general and the case study design as the strategy of inquiry in particular requires multiple methods for collecting data to “secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 5) and to achieve broader and often better results (Fontana & Frey, 2005, p. 722). The data collection methods that I employed include interviews, observations, and document analysis, which will be explained in more detail in the next section.

Interviews

The interview is “one of the most common and powerful ways in which we try to understand our fellow humans” (Fontana & Frey, 2005, p. 697). Face-to-face individual interviews were both semi-structured and unstructured. Especially, open-ended, in-depth unstructured interviews, given their qualitative nature, provided greater breadth than did the other types of interviews.

The interview questions were semi-structured in relation to the research questions and also open-ended to capture the points of view of the participants. Follow-up interviews for the participants were tailored to each participant to delve further, focusing on their previous responses in order to learn “what behaviors have changed, how they view things, and what their expectations are for the future” (Patton, 2002, p. 250). Particularly, interview questions for the Korean students newly recruited for this study were generated and modified during the pilot study.

Interviews with the students were conducted in Korean. However, the participants were given the option of responding either in English or in Korean. Asking questions in Korean could bring clarity by being sensitive to “languaculture” and attending to “meanings that lead the
researcher beyond the words into the nature of the speaker’s world” (Patton, 2002, pp. 362-363). Clarity, communication, and rapport between the researcher and the participants were thus greatly enhanced during the interviews (Patton, 2002). Upon completing two interviews with each student participant, I had the student participants check the transcriptions which I had translated into English in order to ensure the reliability of these data.

First, individual interviews with four students who participated in the pilot study were conducted at the end of the spring quarter 2007, and a follow-up interview was conducted in fall 2007 with two of them, Jin and Juyoung. However, I was not able to interview Younghee who completed her degree and left for Korea and Namjoo who finished her coursework and was exclusively concentrating on her doctorate comprehensive exam.

Jin and Juyoung were still taking courses and expressed difficulty in writing for those courses. Particularly, Jin, who transferred from the PhD to the master’s program in Political Science, was enrolled in the ESL writing class that I observed. Two interviews were also conducted with each of the five new participants, once at the beginning and once at the end of the fall quarter in 2007.

I also interviewed the director of the CESL, an ESL writing class instructor, the director of the on-campus writing center, a writing center tutor, and an academic research course instructor at the Music Department. It appeared to be necessary to interview these people after reviewing the findings of the pilot study, which exclusively relied on interviews with the five Korean student participants. Of particular significance, I decided to interview the instructor who taught the Graduate Research and Writing class which all Music Department students had to take unless they passed a specially designed departmental level placement test, as it was found in the pilot study that almost all Korean students tended to put off taking this course until the end of
their coursework. Interviews with these individuals aimed to investigate their perceptions of L2 students’ writing socialization and how they help L2 students in general and Korean L2 students in particular learn the new academic writing discourse. Interviews with these participants were conducted once, lasting from 30 minutes to an hour, and the interview questions were semi-structured. All interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed by the researcher.

Documents

Analysis of course documents (e.g., syllabi) and the policy statements of university services (e.g., ESL center and writing center) and related documents (e.g., writing center tutorial guide) were collected for analysis. In this study, document analysis was carried out in comparison to interview data primarily regarding the mismatched needs and services between the students and the resource providers. Therefore, it is different from the text analysis conducted in such research as discourse analysis.

The official websites of the ESL center and the writing center were analyzed to investigate the services provided for L2 students as well as their accessibility to L2 students. Also, the tutorial manual for writing center tutors was analyzed in order to find out how and to what extent tutors were trained regarding L2 students and their issues. In addition, the analysis of a consulting session report form, which was sent out to course instructors when they sent their students to the writing center or when students wrote papers for courses they took, allowed me to further scrutinize what happened during a tutoring session and how it was perceived by the student, the tutor, and the course instructor as a means of communication.

In addition, the ESL writing course syllabi as well as the syllabus of the Graduate Research and Writing course offered by the Music Department were scrutinized to understand how those courses were designed and in what way they aimed to assist L2 students particularly
in relation to their academic discourse socialization. Other documents related to peer review activity in the ESL writing course were also examined. All these documents were analyzed in order to examine the services they intended to provide for L2 students and compared them with the L2 students’ perceptions of and experiences with the services. As such, the documents were used as supplements to interviews “as sources of rich descriptions of how the people who produced the materials think about their world” and to see “how the documents get interpreted by real people” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003, p. 124).

Participants’ written samples were also examined to determine the extent to which ESL instructor’s and writing center tutor’s feedback related to academic discourse socialization. Written samples included the final mid-term papers and two drafts prior to the final that my participants posted on the online discussion board of the ESL writing course.

Since I was not able to observe any writing center tutoring sessions, it was particularly useful to have a copy of one of my participant’s papers with comments from a writing center tutor, which allowed me to partially examine the nature of a tutoring session and the types of feedback offered by a tutor there. Documents also included email messages, which I asked of my participants for further explanation and clarification on what they said at the interviews as necessary. The email exchanges were also used to compensate for my not observing every class meeting of the ESL writing class. Email messages from my interactions with the Assistant Dean for Admissions and Student Services in the Music Department were also analyzed to obtain more information regarding the Music Department faculty perspectives of L2 students’ language issues and the impetus behind the implementation of the English placement test.

Two ESL instructors, who taught writing courses at the time of data collection, did not continue teaching these courses the following quarter. The instructor who taught the course
which I observed was an experienced writing teacher but was distracted by personal affairs
during my data collection period; and the other instructor was new to the field of teaching ESL.
Given the particular situations of the two ESL writing instructors, these two cases may not be
representational of ESL writing courses in general. For example, the former did not use the
textbook that the ESL center recommended; and the latter seemed to have difficulty designing
the course for students as their grammar appeared most problematic to him. As a result, he
focused more than necessary on teaching grammar, a fact he admitted to me in our personal
discussions and a fact that was supported by Sejun, one of his students. These particularities
indicated the need to look into courses being taught by different instructors, which would allow
me to get a general picture of how ESL writing courses were taught. As a result, I examined
documents from three writing courses offered in winter quarter and taught by three different
instructors. Two of these courses were the same as those that were offered in the fall.

Observations

I observed an ESL writing class, Introduction to Academic Writing, for one quarter to
have firsthand experience of what was occurring in the classroom setting and to compare that
with L2 students’ perceptions and prior experiences with the ESL writing class. I aimed to
observe the class once every week but for personal reasons, and due to two class cancellations, I
was able to observe a total of six out of twenty class meetings. I took notes during each of the
class sessions that I attended. The observations were mainly focused on students’ in-class peer
review activities on students’ two drafts and the final mid-term papers and, more specifically, on
interactions between the students and the instructor.

It was not possible for me to observe any tutoring sessions in the writing center, as the
tutor with whom Hansung arranged three different sessions refused to be observed. The rest of
the student participants did not use writing center services during the time of this study. I did ask the tutor I interviewed to inform me when any Korean student or an international student from Japan or China scheduled a session, but that did not occur. Although I could not observe any tutoring sessions, I was able to analyze the paper with tutor’s comments on it from the participant who went to the writing center three times.

The observations and analyses allowed me to better understand and capture the context within which L2 students in general and Korean graduate students in particular interacted with resources. They also enabled me to triangulate data and understand the meaning and context of interviews and documents more completely, so that I was able to compare and contrast the perspectives of L2 students and the resources. Another strength of direct observation was that it made it possible to reveal aspects that participants may have taken for granted or that escaped their awareness (Patton, 2002). In addition, they gave me the opportunity to capture things that participants might not have wanted to talk about (Patton, 2002).

**Researcher’s Role**

I attempted to take the role of both insider and outsider in the field (Patton, 2002). As a fellow Korean/international graduate student in the process of making a transition into the U.S. academic community like my participants, I shared similar difficulties and perspectives with the participants, which made it possible to develop “an insider’s view of what is happening” (Patton, 2002, p. 268). Particularly, difficulties and dissonances the participants experienced were rooted significantly in cultural differences. Sharing the same language and culture made it easy for me to establish a reliable rapport with my participants. Whenever relevant, I openly and honestly talked about my own personal difficulties, making the participants visibly more comfortable sharing their stories as well.
At the same time, I attempted to remain an outsider in order to describe things as accurately as possible for other outsiders and to “objectively record the details of what has occurred in the field” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003, p. 112). While sharing the same language and culture with the participants is advantageous, the researcher might overlook some important points that appear too obvious and thus consider them merely a fact of no value for further discussion. Or the researcher could interpret data based on his or her own subjective assumption which he or she believes to be the same as the participants’ without paying sufficient attention to the participants’ own perspectives. In order to avoid these possible drawbacks and to see things objectively, whenever I was not entirely confident of the meaning of something, I attempted to contact my participants for clarification. Also, I consulted fellow doctoral students speaking different languages and from several different regions of the world, particularly during the processes of developing interview questions and analyzing data. I was able to accommodate different points of view as they sometimes looked at the same things from different angles and brought their own educational and socialization processes to bear.

Data Analysis

Data gathered were analyzed under the framework of a qualitative study, which seeks to describe details of events, settings, or subjects in a naturally occurring environment without any manipulation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002). All the data were analyzed inductively to discover recurring themes and patterns (Patton, 2002).

I started the analysis of the data with open coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) of interview transcripts. The main purpose of open coding was to conceptualize the data and to break them down into separate units of meaning, so-called codes. In open coding, interview transcripts were openly coded in the margins and thus, at this first stage of data analysis, the codes were not
particularly focused. Open coding occurred before becoming selective that fell into related
groups and those selected codes were later clustered to develop categories around a related theme.
Key issues, recurrent events, or activities were also identified. As themes and patterns became
repetitive, they were organized into units or codes according to their content, which were then
clustered into categories and subcategories.

Documents and field notes from observations were read and analyzed in synthesis with
and/or in comparison to the data from interviews. Specifically, as suggested by Patton (2002),
after key issues were identified from interviews with students and resource providers, relevant
documents including course syllabi, resource providers’ policies or related documents, and
students’ written samples were analyzed and presented in synthesis with the data from interviews.
Also, ESL classroom observation notes were compared specifically with participants’ comments
on their use of ESL writing classes obtained during the interviews and presented in synthesis
with the interview data. This was an ongoing process throughout the data collection procedure,
and numerous readings of the data were performed before coding was completed.

I adopted some of the coding categories developed by Bogdan and Biklen (2003):
setting/context; perspectives held by subjects; subjects’ ways of thinking about people and
objects; activity; strategy; relationship and social structure. For example, these coding strategies
allowed me to develop categories and subcategories in relation to resources, under which
activities were also performed; the students’ use of resources; the perspectives of the resources
and the students on each other; strategies that the students developed during utilization of the
resources; and the relationship between the students and the resources. Regarding major themes,
I worked in close consultation with my advisor. These themes were developed from theories that
I employed for this study and also arose from research questions that guided this study. As I was
allowing the data to speak for itself, some of the major themes, particularly regarding students’ passive and/or limited utilization of resources and the mismatch between students’ needs and the services provided, were evidently and repetitively apparent from both the words and behaviors of the participants.

This coding strategy was particularly useful in the examination of the interrelations between the students and the on-campus resource providers as well as interactions among the resource providers. Further, based on the codes, several concept maps, “descriptive or casual,” were developed to graphically lay out all the related codes (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 18). The concept maps helped to specify and explain meaningful interrelations between all the parties involved with the student participants (participants hereafter), which provided the base for the figures presented in this study. Table 2 below briefly presents the types of data gathered for this study, as well as corresponding methods used for analysis.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Data</th>
<th>Data Analysis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>- Openly coded; unfocused (Strauss &amp; Corbin, 1998)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Selected &amp; clustered into categories (Bogdan &amp; Biklen, 2003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Concept maps (Miles &amp; Huberman, 1994)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL Classroom Observations &amp; Documents</td>
<td>- Analyzed &amp; presented in synthesis with/in comparison to interview data (Patton, 2002)</td>
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All these processes were performed in close consultation with my academic advisors to ensure the trustworthiness of data, encompassing both validity and reliability, which I will explain in the next section. In brief, trustworthiness has to do with whether the findings of a study accurately represent what is studied and are thus adequately transferable to other people or
situations, and whether the findings are consistent or reliable enough to draw plausible conclusions.

Validity and Reliability

Validity pertains to accuracy of findings, which asks whether data gathered authentically and accurately represents the phenomena under study. Reliability means replicability of findings, and it is viewed as “a fit between what they [researchers] record as data and what actually occurs in the setting under study” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003, p. 36). This is related to consistency, which assumes that when different researchers study the same or similar people or setting or the same researcher studies the same people or setting over time, similar conclusions will be made. Validity and reliability are important concepts in terms of ensuring the quality of the study. The question that Lincoln and Guba (1985) raised well expresses the importance of maximizing validity and reliability: “how can an inquirer persuade his or her audiences that the research findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to?” (p. 290).

In order to establish validity and reliability of the current study, I have attempted to develop research questions and design based on well-informed theories and have also tried to ensure the quality of the study throughout the processes of selecting the setting, recruiting the participants, and collecting and analyzing data. To do so, first, it was critical to have the optimal research site and participants. The university where this study was conducted is a well-reputed research-focused university, and the graduate programs in which the participants were enrolled expect of their students a high level academic performance, and thus required a significant amount of academic writing. In addition, as a fellow Korean L2 graduate student myself, I had some familiarity with the setting under study, which Miles and Huberman (1994) claimed as one of the “some markers of a good qualitative researcher-as-instrument” (p. 38).
Also, multiple data collection methods including interviews, observations, and the document analysis were adopted for data triangulation, and the overall research design allowed thick description and information-rich responses from the participants to generate authentic and accurate data (Geertz, 1973). In addition, triangulation of the descriptions and interpretations were performed through member checking: “going back to participants and asking them, ‘Have I got it right?’” (Freeman et al., 2007, p. 28) especially when I translated their words from Korean to English. In addition, I worked closely with my advisors and fellow researchers to ensure the quality and consistency of the work (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Data collection and analysis were also performed through discussion with experienced researchers. Numerous meetings with my advisors as well as with fellow students in the processes of designing the study, analyzing the results, and writing up the conclusions allowed me to adopt a more critical approach as I worked with the data. Particularly at the stages of creating and refining interview questions, analyzing interview transcripts and documents, and developing codes and categories, others’ ideas and suggestions were truly insightful, and thus greatly enhanced the quality of this study. In addition, I continually reflected critically on myself as researcher throughout the process of conducting this research in order to ensure validity and reliability.

Summary

In order to investigate the second language writing socialization of the nine Korean L2 graduate students and more specifically what the resources did and how the students made use of the resources in the socialization process, a qualitative research design was employed. Semi-structured and open-ended interviews, an ESL writing classroom observation, and the examination of documents including course syllabi, student written samples, and email messages were used for data collection, and these multiple data collection methods allowed me to attain an
in-depth description of the context in which the students were situated. The data collection lasted from May 2006 through January 2008.

In addition to four pilot study participants, five additional Korean students were recruited through purposeful sampling. Also, an ESL writing class instructor, the ESL program director, a writing center tutor, the writing center director, and a Music research course instructor participated in this study. Interviews with these individuals allowed me to examine the perspectives of the resource providers on L2 students and their language problems. Interviews with the student participants were conducted in Korean. However, to ensure the trustworthiness of the data, the participants were asked to review the transcriptions after I translated them into English. Data analysis began with open coding, followed by the organization of important issues and recurrent themes into categories and subcategories. I attempted to maintain objectivity in order to describe and analyze things as accurately as possible throughout the process of this study.
CHAPTER 4  
L2 WRITING SOCIALIZATION

Introduction

In this chapter, findings and discussion of Research Question 1 and 2 will be presented. Research Question 1 examined how the participants in this study socialized into L2 writing in the U.S. academic context in general and Research Question 2 explored what problems they faced in their socialization process. It seemed that all parties involved in Korean L2 students’ socialization (i.e., the students, the ESL center, the writing center, research course instructor) thought that there were issues that needed to be addressed, and they spelled out some of the major issues. Further, all parties articulated what they did and how they did to address those issues.

More specifically, the findings of Research Question 1 showed that the participants in this study developed various strategies in their socialization process. They made use of on-campus writing services and interactions with advisors and NES peers. They also took the responsibility upon themselves by using reading for writing. However, while utilizing the available resources, they also encountered problems.

Regarding the students’ overall perceptions of socialization into the academic community in the U.S., quotes from two participants, Jungsoo and Younghee, well represent how their initial perceptions changed as they became socialized into the community. Jungsoo, a transferred first-year PhD student in Political Science, expressed his initial thoughts about academic writing and how they have changed:

I thought once I come, I could do it, you know. As time goes by, you just learn it somehow automatically, but no. I didn’t think of it as a big deal. If you look around back
home, all the professors got their degrees. If they could do it, why not me, you know? And so, I thought that shouldn’t be that hard, but no, no way. It is very hard.

His first quarter at this university has just begun but, overwhelmed with written assignments for a class, Jungsoo was already “behind” in keeping up with those assignments by saying “I am already one or two papers behind every week. I am not even sure whether I could turn them all in before the final.” He mentioned the ideal kind of writing class that he wanted to be provided with:

I think it will be nice to develop an academic writing class, not only the ESL writing class but also an academic writing class, which could help us learn how to write a dissertation, how to write sentences appropriately, how to make comments, or how to write summaries. There are private institutions in Korea, which teach those things and I think they do a better job. They are different from TOEFL prep classes. They are called “Prep for Studying Abroad,” I think. Now, I am thinking I should have had such training there, but it will be much better if there is such a class here, because we can learn things in English, which is what we need. But, there isn’t such a help here.

It was interesting that he pointed out learning both the content and the language with the latter as a medium. However, claiming that there was not such a class, he regretted not having taken a preparation course back in Korea. As such, some of the participants agreed that things came down to an individual level in terms of coming already prepared or seeking out resources to facilitate their own L2 writing socialization. For example, Younhee, who completed a master’s program in TESL, summarized her thoughts in retrospect:

It is not that anyone told me about resources available on campus or encouraged me to use them, but now I think if I had more often gone to see professors, I could have gotten more help. . . . My conclusion is that it all depends on me. Depending on how often and how diligently you use it, it could bring about a lot of difference.

As new entrants to their academic community, the participants were either assumed to know the expectations of the community already or expected to become familiar with those naturally after being in the community for a while. Hansung described himself as “trouble” in his department because his case deviated from his department’s norms or expectations:
I am the only international, I would say, having problems with English. The others are either natives or students from India. They don’t have problems with English or writing. So, my program assumes students should not have serious problems with English or writing skills. So, I am quite a trouble there.

Also, the research course instructor in the Music Department expressed her frustration about two Korean students she had because their reading and writing skills seemed not to have improved as sufficiently as she expected even after their being “here for a while.” So she had to tell them to drop the required course, Graduate Research and Writing. However, not only the participants but also the director of the ESL center argued that it is unrealistic to assume that their overall language skills would get better after a while. Jin said:

Frankly, being a nonnative, as a Korean, it is almost impossible to write smoothly like natives unless you try very, very hard. Because it is not our language, first of all. It is the second language. We can’t be like them who have lived here for years. There are parts that you could only understand or learn only if you live here, in writing. Same in Korean. Even if foreigners can learn how to write in Korean, they can’t get those, very culturally loaded expressions which are too Korean.

Moreover, the ESL director emphasized the seriousness of the problem particularly with L2 students and further called attention to these students’ limited access to assistance:

Students are being evaluated on something that their curriculum has not addressed, native and nonnative. I mean we’ve come to this same point with native speaking students but the problems are compounded because international students simply don’t have the strategies available to them that the native students do. The native speakers at least can talk around something, whereas international students are limited in both writing strategies and vocabulary and the fact that they don’t feel that there is anyone that they can ask. They are not being mentored in their writing. They are so much more limited. There is no way for them to get help.

Therefore, she insisted that “every single graduate student at this university should be required to take a research writing course first.” The function of a research writing course and perceptions of the participants on research courses will be further discussed later in Research Question 3 and 4.
L2 Writing Socialization Pathways

Research Question 1: How Do Korean Graduate Students Socialize into L2 Writing in the U.S. Academic Context?

Encountering unrealistic expectations from the new academic community that their English skills should quickly improve after being embedded in this academic environment and wrestling with problems with L2 academic writing, the participants expressed frustration. However, they developed several coping strategies in order to join the community and thus to successfully finish their studies. Some of the main strategies they utilized on their own or were advised to utilize were as follows: use of on-campus writing services (e.g., ESL center and writing center); interactions with people (e.g., advisors, private tutors, and NES friends); and reading and taking courses (self-directed reading and degree-related course work). As these strategies emerged as major themes, each strategy will be further discussed in relation to how the Korean students in this study were socializing into L2 writing in the U.S. academic context.

Use of On-campus Writing Services

The participants in this study were using the writing center and ESL writing courses for unique reasons at the moment of the interviews. Seven out of the nine participants either had taken or were in the process of taking a writing class offered by the Center for ESL at the university at the time of interviews in the fall quarter. Of the remaining two, Jungsoo took one ESL writing class at the university he transferred from and Heesoo would have to take one at some point before she could register for writing-intensive graduate level academic courses in her department. All three Music students participating in this study, including Heesoo, were placed into an ESL writing class by their department as a result of the English placement test, which was administered under the supervision of the ESL center at the Music Department’s request.
It was particularly noteworthy that the Music Department was making departmental efforts to assist its L2 students to socialize into its unique academic culture through the English test and corresponding ESL program. Upon inquiry, the Assistant Dean for Admissions and Student Services at the Music Department responded via email about the impetus behind those practices and their expectations of those efforts:

I believe we started asking all international students to take an ESL Placement test about 5 years ago. As to the why, we discovered there have, indeed, been students who have had trouble understanding lectures and doing assignments. The TOEFL is an indication, but not a perfect test. I think it works well enough for admission, but doesn't necessarily tell us the whole story; it is hoped that the ESL Placement Test will help the student realize how they can best improve their English skills so that they will be able to thrive within the music environment.

He explained why they made it mandatory for students to complete previously recommended ESL classes before they start taking graduate level courses:

We went mandatory last year because, in practice, the students were very often not taking the courses that they were recommended to take; this way we can be assured that they will indeed take what the ESL professionals think they should take. This is perhaps a fluid situation, and we will certainly see how this works over a few years. If further tweaks are needed, we will certainly make them.

Also, the research course instructor at the Music Department described the placement test in her own words:

So, when students arrive who are non-English speaking students, they do have to write a test. . . I know they have to take the test and if they don’t pass all the sections of the test then they have to do ESL classes before they can take any of the History classes, not to mention this class [Graduate Research and Writing] as well. . . I know that a couple of years ago they started to do ESL testing and they would recommend that students take classes, but the students would often not take them because it’s extra work, you know? So, then you know they would take the test and clearly not be able to cope with the language but come into the classroom and not be able to manage. So, now, it’s a requirement that they have to complete those.
According to her, there is no class offered to teach students how to write essays or papers for classes at the Music Department. Thus, efforts were being made at the departmental level in collaboration with the ESL center to help L2 students develop academic writing skills.

While those Music students were required to complete an ESL writing course before they actually started taking writing-intensive regular graduate level courses, participants from other departments--Hansung, Sujin, Younghee, Jin, and Namjoo--decided on their own to take an ESL writing class with more specific purposes in mind. In their second or third year of study, they thought a writing class would help in preparing for particular types of writing they were faced with, such as a thesis proposal, a conference proposal, a master’s project, or a comprehensive exam. Either way, the ESL writing class was considered to be a place where they could get some help to improve their academic writing skills, although it was found that there was a gap between what the participants initially expected of ESL writing classes and how they really transpired. Issues like how the participants’ perceptions of writing classes and how they made use of writing classes will be discussed in more detail in Research Question 4.

Another on-campus resource used by the participants was the writing center, which is run by the English Department at the university. Three participants, Hansung, Jin, and Sujin, visited the center. Jin and Sujin used it once, but Hansung visited it five times, three of them in the fall quarter. Hansung, having described himself as “trouble” in his department, seemed to be the most active user of on-campus resources. He said that he started thinking more seriously about his writing and thus utilizing on-campus resources such as ESL classes and the writing center after he received a C- on a four page case study review paper. He explained the general environment he was situated in and further why he attempted to use those services available to him as much as he could:
Most students in my department are native English speakers, which means they don’t feel that they need to be supported from writing centers even if they also have different types of writing skills, framing the paper, distilling concepts from readings, and so on. They usually do not care whether there is a writing center in this university or not. I would like to say I am currently the only international student who has much trouble in my program. . . . It also has to do with the environment. I mean it also depends on how often you interact with natives and how close you are with them. In my case, it is very slow. I am in the MS architecture program. . . . I spend a lot of time in the library writing. So, I have this gap, you know, lack of speaking. That means I have to look for opportunities myself to improve my English. ESL classes are one thing that I can do. Communicating with my advisor is another that I do. Basically, there are fewer opportunities for graduate students than undergraduates. To me, ESL classes and the writing center are the first things that I must take advantage of, I think. What’s good about going to the writing center is that I can clarify my thoughts by explaining to someone. It’s like you can understand better when you speak. When the tutors ask questions, for example, “what is ephemeral façade?”, then, I know but I have difficulty articulating it in speaking. This helps a lot. Other than that, even though he [the tutor] may know as an English literature major and a doc student, but you can’t really expect much.

In this way, he tried to create the interactive environment through ESL classes or tutoring sessions at the writing center, so that he could improve his writing and practice speaking as well. Moreover, it was not that somebody told him what was available and what he could do to improve his writing. Instead, he found out about those resources by himself through an on-line search at the university website. In contrast, Sujin was told to go to the writing center by a course instructor. The research course instructor at the Music Department was also sending her students to the writing center to get some help on their writing assignments. The instructor said she would write on the assignment turned in “please go to the writing center, have them help you with this and then bring it back.” Furthermore, she sent her students to the writing center because the center sent the instructor a report on the tutoring session. She said:

I ask the student to go to the writing center because they do that [sent a report]. That way, I know, first of all, the student has gone, and I know that they haven’t just gotten someone else to rewrite their assignments for them. They’ve actually gone for help. This is an example [copy of the report form]. This is a [Korean] student who I have this quarter who cannot write an essay. So, this is what the writing center sends me. It has my name, the student’s name, and then they list what types of things and now, from the sheet, from the writing center I don’t know she got a lot of help. The assignment was better but
I think the student really had difficulty conveying to the writing center what the problem was.

More details about the writing center, including the perspectives of the center director and a tutor, student users, and research course instructor, will be discussed later in Question 3 and 4.

Interactions with People

In addition to utilizing on-campus writing services, the participants reported that they relied heavily on interactions with people inside their academic community. The participants attempted to contact these people for help. Younghee felt it difficult to approach her advisor, something that she attributed to her native culture, but instead, she had a NES private tutor.

As mentioned above, Hansung explained that he had to create his own learning environment not only by making use of the writing center and ESL classes but also by pursuing opportunities to interact with his advisor:

I don’t ask other professors but my advisor. I show him a draft, let’s say, chapters of my thesis or anything like proposals that I have produced at that point to show him, and he gives me a general comment on it including proofreading. It is very helpful. I don’t directly ask him to read my paper and give feedback on it but I say “I would like to show it to you.” and then if it’s possible depending on his schedule, he gives feedback. It’s not easy. It could be my personality but also because I know he is busy it’s not easy to ask him to give his feedback on my papers. It is my strategy that I try to show him that I am doing something, I am trying and doing my best. In fact, I have shown him almost every page of my thesis, conference paper, and fellowship proposal. Sometimes, he just forgets but sometimes he gives me a very thorough feedback. I don’t always expect that to happen, but it increases the possibility for me to get his comments.

Even though he indicated it was not easy, he seemed always prepared and ready to ask for feedback from his advisor whenever possible. Moreover, it was interesting that Hansung developed this “strategy” as he described to impress his advisor: “I am doing something, I am trying and doing my best.”

Unlike Hansung, who described his social environment as very limited and also illustrated how difficult it was to develop frequent and close relationships with NES peers, Sujin,
an undergraduate exchange student taking graduate level courses, seemed to be exposed to more opportunities to interact with NES friends:

As an exchange student, I hang out a lot with native friends as I have less academic pressure, unlike those graduate students. I have a lot of friends and by getting along with them, my oral English is getting better, I feel. However, graduate students seem to have fewer opportunities to have friends or immerse themselves into the community, so less social interaction.

Sujin asked her Korean classmates, who she thought were more experienced with the academic culture and writing, to clarify assignments or to get tips on structuring or formatting papers. It was easy for her to ask Korean peers, because it was natural to speak Korean among them, which made communication easy:

I have asked other Korean students in classes, doctoral or masters’ students or those who seem to have experience with writing research papers how to organize, structure. Almost all the classes I took this quarter there were Korean students and so I asked them such as how to format or what I should know when I write a particular kind of paper and that sort of things. It is because you can easily get to know them and you say hello to them. It’s just easy. In the undergraduate class where there are no Korean students, however, I have asked my native friends about the formatting and all.

However, other than Sujin, the participants in this study did not consider socializing with Korean peers as helpful as interacting with NES peers.

Juyoung joined a study group of Korean peers for a Theory class at the Music Department. It did not work out well for her, because it was unidirectional rather than collaborative as she had wanted. First of all, the research course instructor at the Music Department claimed that “the music program here, the academic part is much more difficult than it is in a lot of schools. It is an academically challenging program.” As a Composition major, generally considered to be more proficient at the academic part, including writing essays, compared to performance majors, Juyoung described the study group:

Among Korean students, it was not like sharing but because since I study Composition, once I share my thoughts, the others were, like, don’t say anything [because they think it
is too difficult and want to get some help from her because usually composition majors are considered good at Theory compared to other majors]. It is like they just keep my thoughts. They come and ask me for help but they don’t share their ideas. We got together only once and then not continued.

She also had an opportunity to join a study group of NES classmates:

One classmate asked me to join a study group. I didn’t even know they’re having a study group. All Composition students and I was the only non-American student there. I couldn’t understand all that they were saying and they speak fast. So, it was an experience for me to get a sense of what is a study group of American students like and I felt good that I could join them. It was helpful in that way.

As such, she considered joining this study group a very good opportunity to interact with NES peers. Moreover, she attempted to contribute to the study group by fulfilling the assignments in advance, despite that being the group’s intended purpose. The research course instructor at the Music Department recommended to L2 students, including one of the two Korean students she mentioned earlier, that they speak English, not their native language among themselves and also suggested they interact with NES peers for help, particularly with their grammar.

Although the participants were different in the extent to which they interacted with NES and/or Korean peers and their perceptions of and experience with their peers were different from each other, all of the participants did think of these interactions useful. However, problems especially with accessibility, consistency, and quality arose in their process of seeking out help from these people. This will be discussed later in Research Question 2. Because of those problems, in the case of Younghee, she preferred to have private tutors for more consistent and systematic help:

The most help that I got is from the editor. I have had two editors. One has not touched on the structure of the paper, but more or less grammatical changes, but the other one changed the whole structure of sentences. . . . While sitting together and going over the paper, it helped a lot. You do more interactions that way. To me, having feedback and going over it together helped a lot. I met her seven days a week and I thought if I do like this it would be a great help.
Even though the students preferred one-on-one interactions with their advisors or NES friends and tutors, problems like accessibility and availability appeared to limit their use of interactions. Also, not satisfied with on-campus services, some participants made other arrangements at the more individual level to cope with their problems in L2 writing. It was discovered that almost all the participants believed that they learned a lot about academic discourse through self-directed reading and reading and writing for degree-related course work. They said that they improved their writing primarily through reading books, journal articles, and classmates’ messages posted on the online discussion board, which gave them models to use in their own work and provided them with the targeted practice they needed, and through writing their own papers. Younghee explained her reading and writing strategy by noting that “writing wouldn’t be much of a problem after reading a lot. It is also important to read my papers over and over again while writing and question myself whether it would be making sense to others.”

She further explained:

In terms of academic writing, it was through reading other papers, not from classes but reading and learning myself. About the final project? I didn’t know how to write it but through reading other papers on the similar topic I learned how to write it. Hints and ideas from reading other papers. . . . Anyway I got some hints from the samples for organization, title or subtitle, but it was through reading a lot of papers on similar topics to mine. If you ask me how I learned how to write academic papers I don’t know what to say, because basically I learned it myself.

She concluded that basically she educated herself on L2 writing through reading, and further stressed the importance of locating sample articles close to what she was writing about. Her case was distinctive because the type of paper she talked about above was her master’s project, which was a thorough literature review on a topic of her choice. She expressed her frustration, because
according to her nobody told her how to write the particular paper and thus, she had to look for samples on topics similar to her own.

Unlike Younghee, Sujin said that it was very helpful to write for regular courses, which also required a significant amount of reading. According to her, she learned more about L2 writing from writing for regular classes than from the ESL writing class:

What was very helpful was that I had to write a 10-page paper for the Theory class, and it was a graduate level course which requires a lot of reading, reading journal articles and research articles and all. So, I think reading those articles helped me a great deal in terms of expanding my vocabulary and expressions and sentence structures. Of course, it wasn’t easy to read those. Sometimes it took several hours reading one article but later I was able to skip and read what’s more important.

Heesoo in the Music Department also said that taking classes helped her to learn how to write. In her department, there is another entrance exam separate from the English placement test. The research course instructor explained:

It is required for every graduate students unless when they come into the program they do write an entrance exam on bibliographic methods, and if they pass that exam they don’t have to take it [Graduate Research and Writing], but very few students pass whether they are English-speaking or not. Very, very few. Someone who is coming in to do a doctoral program who has already done a master’s degree in musicology may pass the exam, because they would have taken a similar course before, but most of the performance don’t and almost all of our Korean student population are performance majors.

In addition to this Graduate Research and Writing course, some students were also placed into review classes, undergraduate level History and Theory classes, as the result of this test. At the time of interviews, Heesoo was taking both review classes. Even though she thought of it as “extra work,” she considered it helpful and hoped that it would help her with graduate level courses later when she actually took them:

I am in the review class now. As a result of the placement test, I have to take two more of these classes and upon completing these classes like review one and two, I will move on the graduate level History and Theory class, probably next year. At first, I didn’t like it because it is extra work because . . . Think about it. I had already taken them back home and take them again here? I didn’t like it, taking the same courses again. But, now that I
am in those classes, everything looks new to me especially because we are learning in English. Now, I think it is good to review them. So, even those who passed the test and don’t need to take them come to the classes, because I heard that without going through these review classes, when we take the graduate level regular History and Theory classes later, they are too difficult.

Namjoo also said that it was mainly through reading that she learned how to write.

However, her case was interesting because she tried to find readings both in Korean and English on a similar topic. She explained why:

Mainly from reading than writing, I think. Not only English but also in Korean, basically in both languages, because when I read and write I think in Korean anyway. So, I was wondering how it could be put in Korean or how putting something in Korean like this can be translated in English.

Similarly, Sejun in Conducting described how reading helped his writing:

When a paper is assigned, I think I learn . . . get a sense of how to write through reading, like the format, how to do footnote, how to write a bibliography. I learn that way. It’s not like a professor comes to you and tells you to write this way, especially for graduate students.

His last comment in particular represents the participants’ overall perceptions of L2 writing socialization at a graduate level, which led the students to a very personal level of effort.

Summary

As illustrated in Figure 1 and 2 below, the participants in this study seemed to socialize into their L2 academic discourse in a U.S. academic context in many different ways depending on what was available and accessible. As shown in Figure 1, some made use of university resources (e.g., ESL classes or the writing center) belonging to the outer circle—the more general academic communities. Those services were not offered by the inner circle, which is discipline-specific. The participants also socialized through taking regular, more discipline-specific courses. In addition, they made self-arranged efforts like reading and looking for samples to cope with problems they encountered in L2 writing.
Some relied more on interactions with their advisors and NES peers or to a lesser degree with Korean peers in their field. Also, they interacted with tutors or colleagues, who were not in their field. Clearly, the students in this study seemed to be academically motivated and attempted to make use of the various coping strategies discussed above in the process of socialization.

Figure 2 shows what efforts were being made by academic communities to assist these students’ L2 writing socialization. The students in the Music Department, in particular, were placed into ESL writing classes and undergraduate level review classes by their department through placement tests. In addition, they were sent to the writing center and also recommended to ask NES peers for help. The participants from other departments seemed to make self-efforts to make use of available resources, with the exception of the writing center information they received from course instructors.
Figure 1. Korean L2 students’ socialization pathways.

Figure 2. Socialization pathways suggested by AC.
The findings corresponding to Research Question 1 are summarized and displayed in Figure 1 and Figure 2. Figure 1 shows how the participants in this study attempted to socialize into academic communities they wish to join; Figure 2 illustrates socialization pathways suggested by their academic communities. The outer circle in Figure 1 represents the academic communities of the university as a whole. The inner circle at the center represents one of the many different discipline-specific academic communities which comprise the university. The triangular area indicates the participants’ perception of their progression towards discipline-specific socialization, ranging from outside the border of academic communities to inside discipline-specific communities. Some students are new without any prior experience with the U.S. academic culture and are positioned outside the border of the outer circle. Others are more experienced with the U.S. academia in general and/or their discipline-specific communities in particular and are located in the outer circle or have moved within the periphery of the inner circle. Those who completed their master’s program in a U.S. academic context have been exposed to the inner circle, representing their disciplinary communities, but they did not seem to consider themselves full members of the communities yet, since they were struggling so much with L2 writing and having difficulty locating or making use of the available supportive resources.
Discussion

The participants in this study seemed to become socialized into their academic communities either “directly” as in the example of the Music students, or in “more subtle and pervasive” ways in the cases of other students (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 104). They were legitimately peripheral in that they were not kept from participation in the broader and more general academic world. However, from a more discipline-specific point of view, they seemed not to be peripheral because the participants’ self-effort as well as the support from their department were taking place primarily in the limited ESL or writing center environment rather than within the environment of their disciplines. According to Lave and Wenger (1991), theoretically, “peripherality, when it is enabled, suggests an opening, a way of gaining access to sources for understanding through growing involvement (p. 37).” Given the peripherality in a more general sense, the extent to which each participant attempted to make use of resources towards full participation in their academic communities varied.

Given sociocultural theories under which learning is viewed not only as a cognitive activity but more importantly as a social process, all the participants in this study relied substantially on interactions with those they considered more experienced others. Unlike the L2 students who appeared in many studies (Dong, 1996, 1998; Leki, 2006; Schneider & Fujishima, 1995) which revealed that L2 students tend to work in isolation without taking advantage of support available from their academic communities, the participants in this study did try to develop strategies and create learning environments to facilitate their socialization process, exercising their agencies as active beings who take control over learning (Beckett, 1999).

As Casanave (1995) discovered in her 18-month-long ethnographic study of a culturally diverse group of first-year doctoral students in Sociology, the participants in this study also took
an active role in their own process of writing socialization. The socialization process seemed to take place largely through interactions with various resources that those students developed as learning strategies that Donato and McCormick (1994) described as a “by-product” of the socialization process. However, as the survey results of Leki’s 2006 study revealed, not all the participants were aware of all the on-campus writing services. Even if some of them were, they relied on one more than the other.

Consistent with Berkenkotter, Huckin, and Ackerman's 1991 study, the findings showed that the participants in this study familiarized themselves with academic written conventions though reading and writing without being formally mentored in writing. This is also consistent with Spack’s (1997) three-year longitudinal study of a Japanese student who developed a strategy to use reading to acquire academic writing skills.

Contrary to Schneider and Fujishima’s 1995 case study of a Taiwanese master’s student and Dong’s 1996 study, where L2 students were found to work in isolation, each one of the participants in this study were willing to interact with people around them even though the people they contacted for help and the types and the levels of interaction varied. For example, one participant, Hansung, made a concerted effort to generate as many opportunities as he could for interaction not only with his advisor but also with all the possible on-campus writing resources such as the ESL writing course and the writing center. Particularly, Hansung’s relationship with his advisor exemplified relationships like those that have appeared in some studies (e.g., Belcher, 1994; Myles & Cheng, 2003) that could bring about positive outcomes for L2 students’ academic success. The findings of the current investigation seem to support the claim that Leki (2006) asserted: “These students’ eventual success was shaped by the socioacademic relationships that they were able to create and use to their advantage (p. 148).”
Many researchers (Belcher, 1994; Braine, 2002; Canagarajah, 2002; Casanave, 1995; Chung, 2006; Ferenz, 2005; Guo, 2006; Leki, 2006; Riazi, 1997) claimed the importance of interactions but they also acknowledged L2 students’ overall lack of social contact with their academic communities. This was also echoed by some of the participants. It seems that other than commonly available on-campus writing services such as the writing center and the ESL classes, establishing supportive relationships with faculty or NES peers to receive more individualized assistance fell to the students. Some departments like the Music Department in this university may have taken these issues more seriously than other departments. However, in general, they were not equipped with systematic discipline-specific assistance for L2 students in particular. Nevertheless, they expected the students to know what was expected in academic writing.

Casanave (1992, 1995) rejected the unidirectional view of socialization. This means the linguistic, cultural, and historical diversities that L2 students bring into their new academic community should be positively acknowledged by the community, and further these diversities could play a role as a medium for bridging the gap between L2 students’ L1 and L2 socialization processes. Although Namjoo and Jin as students in Political Science could share some of their diversities—particularly in terms of Korean politics—with their professors and classmates, all participants seemed to think that their diversities and differences, and thus the difficulties, might be understood by the community. However, to be successful, they were expected to learn the expectations of their academic community as quickly as they could. As a result, the socialization efforts made by the participants in this study seemed to characterize a one-way centripetal process into their target academic community. Furthermore, these diversities might be considered to be barriers that the students needed to overcome for successful socialization.
Before I explore the kinds of resources for participation these Korean students were provided with, what those resources did to socialize them, and how the students made use of them, some of the frustrations, concerns, and problems that they faced in their socialization process will be discussed in Research Question 2.

Problems in L2 Writing Socialization

Research Question 2: What L2 Writing Socialization Problems, If Any, Do Korean L2 Graduate Students Face in the U.S. Academic Context?

As the findings showed in Research Question 1, the participants in this study developed various strategies in their socialization process to their academic communities. They went to on-campus writing services and sought out opportunities for academic and social interactions. They also took the responsibility upon themselves by using reading for writing. However, while making use of available resources, they also expressed frustrations with the problems they encountered. In this section, I will discuss some of the major problems that they faced in their L2 writing socialization process.

Two prominent aspects emerged under this question: lack of L2 proficiency and difficulties with resources. The first aspect pertains to the participants’ lack of L2 proficiency, oral and written, upon entering their academic community, which inhibited their active use of on-campus resources as well as participation in effective social interactions. The second aspect, difficulties with resources, pertains to the problems encountered as the participants attempted to utilize the resources. These aspects were discussed not only from the participants’ perspectives but also from the perspectives of the resource providers (i.e., ESL center director, ESL instructor, writing center director, writing center tutor, and research course instructor) in order to examine if
there was any mismatch or gap between the students and the resource providers within the community regarding the socialization issues of Korean L2 students.

*Lack of L2 Proficiency*

Participants identified language as a very challenging factor in their attempt to socialize into the culture of American written academic discourse. Their proficiency seemed to be also perceived as problematic by faculty. As a result, the Music Department started implementing the English placement test. The Assistant Dean for Admissions in the Music Department wrote in an email exchange: “we discovered there have, indeed, been students who have had trouble understanding lectures and doing assignments.” The research course instructor in the Music Department also acknowledged this problem: “This [language] is a big issue in the Music Department because it’s not just Korean students. We have a lot of students, international students from many other countries. . . . The language issue is something we have to deal with.”

In Hansung’s case, his English was also perceived as problematic by his program:

I am the only international, I would say, having problems with English. The others are either natives or students from India. They don’t have problems with English or writing. So, my program assumes students should not have serious problems with English or writing skills.

It was particularly of note that unlike the Music Department, where there were relatively many Korean students enrolled and language was perceived as a serious problem, Hansung’s case was unique as he considered himself the only international student in his program. In fact, he described himself as “trouble” in his program. He further explained his language problem, which created communication difficulties with writing center tutors:

I think I still cannot communicate quite well with the writing center because of my English and sometimes I have a hard time to show my ideas to the tutors in casual expressions. However, I have fewer problems with communicating with professors and classmates than tutors. I think that’s because we in the same field, share a lot of common background knowledge. . . . It was not easy to talk about academic writing with someone
who is not in my field. Maybe it is my language problem because I cannot clearly explain what I want to the tutors.

Even though he mentioned writing center tutors’ unfamiliarity with his content area, implying his recognition that academic writing is field-specific, it was his language that he thought inhibited effective interactions with tutors. The issues with field differences among writing center tutors and ESL instructors will be discussed later.

Just as Hansung had difficulty communicating with tutors at the writing center, Lindsey, a writing center tutor, saw a lack of L2 proficiency as a major problem for Korean students. She claimed this made them so self-conscious that they were afraid of making mistakes even during ostensibly friendly tutoring sessions. As a result, they were not able to explain what they wanted from her. She said:

The problem is the accent with a lot of them. I am not saying that I mind that I can’t understand. I am saying that that makes them self-conscious, making mistakes. . . . They just stop. They also hesitate a lot before speaking.

She also added her observations on L2 students in general not expressing what they need:

Not just Korean students, all international students. They are feeling frustrated. They are feeling overwhelmed. They are feeling maybe humiliated a little bit because most of them are graduate students. I can guess it but they don’t talk about it. They don’t necessarily open about it. . . . Korean students are just like “I need some help with this paper.” They don’t express.

The writing center director described L2 students in general as “very polite and they are eager to learn.” However, he also pointed out their language problem:

Sometimes ESL people don’t want to be considered to be different and yet they know they have some of these difficulties. Many of them won’t actually come in, I suspect, because they don’t want to show that they don’t know the language.

Importantly, the director assumed that L2 students’ language problems prevented the students from coming to the center for help. Lindsey, the tutor, further added to this by saying “a lot of students have the fear of losing face because . . . you are here because you are presumably very
good in your field and it’s hard even to ask for help.” This lack of confidence in their language proficiency seemed not only to inhibit L2 students from using the services but also created challenges in expressing what they wanted from the tutors when they sought out their help. For example, the Music Department research course instructor mentioned one particular Korean student in her class who she sent to the writing center to get help on an essay assignment. She referred specifically to the student’s language problem:

I don’t know she got a lot of help. The assignment was better but I think the student really had difficulty conveying to the writing center what the problem was. If you can’t communicate at all, you can’t clarify what the problem is. This student needs much more help than what the writing center gives her.

According to Lindsey, after each tutoring session, tutors are asked to send a report, called a consulting session report form “indicating what they have done, where their problems lie, whether they [students] have made an appointment for return visit” to course instructors when they have sent their students to the center or when students voluntarily bring assignments to the center. The tutor who helped this Music student on an essay assignment wrote to this instructor after the session:

Sunhee [pseudonym] wanted help with “essay format,” but I wasn’t really sure what she meant. I talked with her about ways to develop her own ideas in essays to give them a sense of purpose and coherence. We looked at MLA guidelines for formatting papers, but I also told her that style guidelines vary by discipline and that I did not know which you expected her to use. I suggested she consult you for your preference.

The course instructor sent this particular Korean student to the writing center because the student did not know how to write an essay. However, uncertain about what the student wanted to work on, the tutor sent the student back to the instructor for writing style guidelines. The writing center director added his opinions about this problem: “What often happens is we are not clear what the assignment is.” Because of lack of L2 proficiency, L2 students often could not explain the assignment clearly to the tutor. This was also mentioned by the Music research course instructor,
who said “they don’t really understand the assignments.” According to the director, it could be also that “the student has so many [mechanical] problems that we can’t even deal with the concerns the instructor has because there is no way to get the student to that point.” Despite both the uncertainty that the student received the help she needed and the recognition that “this student needs much more help than what the writing center gives her,” no further assistance was arranged to help the student. The student did not make a future appointment either. This clearly illustrates a lack of communication among the three parties involved: the student; the instructor; and the writing center tutor.

The language barrier also inhibited students from expressing their needs to ESL instructors. This resulted in less than optimal communication between students and ESL instructors. For example, Sejun, who believed his English was advanced, expressed his frustration about the ESL instructor who taught very basic grammar such as subject-verb agreement in the Editing Skills for ESL Writers class. He talked to the instructor about his frustration, but other Korean students in that class did not:

There were many Korean students and, as you know, they talk a lot. You know what I mean? Talking among themselves . . . want this and that . . . Korean style of thinking. However, they didn’t speak out . . . or complain or tell him what they want. Part of it is because they cannot speak well enough to express what they think. They were just speaking in Korean among themselves.

While other Korean students in that class complained among themselves about the instructor’s teaching style and what was being taught, they could not articulate the problems and their needs to the instructor. Instead, they asked Sejun to speak for them as they thought him to be a better English speaker. Hansung, who was in another writing class, Introduction to Academic Writing, described this problem differently. He approached it from a cultural perspective:

Another thing is that when there are Asian students, it is considered a virtue not to speak much even he or she knows the issue discussed in a class and that’s why they don’t speak
much in class. . . . The instructor may assume that the students don’t know because they
don’t speak as much as American students do and as a result she may feel that she needs
to go to more basics and that’s why she had to go through the website, reading everything
on the website, which was very boring to us and made us wonder why she is doing
that. . . . So, it seemed to me that the instructor couldn’t catch whether the students knew
it or not. On the one hand, she is not aware of Asian culture . . . not knowing why these
students don’t talk in class.

He also pointed out a “communication gap” between the instructor and the students in that class.

Clearly, there was an overall lack of communication between the students and the instructors
both in class and online. In my observation of this class, there was not a lot of class discussion
and this instructor usually did most of the talking. Even though the instructor encouraged the
students to talk and tried to engage them through peer review activities, the students were not
actively participating. The ESL director, from her observation of this writing class, also pointed
out a lack of communication between the instructor and the students, the former talking most of
the time and the latter being quiet. In terms of overall lack of communication in this class, the
instructor said that “with this particular class . . . I felt maybe there could be more
communication in terms of them telling me what they wanted more or me being able to reach out
to them and get to those needs.” Particularly of the six Korean students in her class, she said that
“they didn’t really express that.” In fact, the students neither brought up their concerns for
reconciliation nor suggested ideas for improvement, at least during the class meetings that I
observed, even though some of the students looked bored and distracted. The students in that
class appeared passive in expressing their needs, which could be attributed to the instructor’s
lack of cultural knowledge of Asian students’ silence or her lack of efforts to analyze the
students’ skill level and what they needed to learn as mentioned by Hansung above. It could be
also due to the students’ lack of language proficiency and resulting inability to articulate their
needs. These issues were also pointed out by the ESL director:
One is the cultural knowledge of the teacher; the second is the student’s inability to respond and to ask. . . . I think that the teacher’s willingness to be more open to the knowledge that the students do have and to find out what knowledge they have and the students’ feeling comfortable enough to say “yeah, we know this. Here is what we really need.”

Eventually, this frustrated both the instructors and the students. More details about students’ perspectives of and experience with ESL writing classes, as well as the issues with lack of communication between the instructors and the students, will be discussed in Research Question 4.

In terms of the problems in L2 writing, most of the participants mentioned their limited and inappropriate use of vocabulary and expressions in academic writing. They explained that when they translated some expressions that they would use in L1 writing into L2, those expressions usually sounded awkward and inappropriate. Sujin discussed her problems with “academic expressions or vocabulary”:

The academic aspect of it such as academic expressions or vocabulary is more difficult. I can explain concepts with easy English or using simple words but what is difficult is to write with more specific, sophisticated or abstract words.

Jin pointed out his problems with organization in L2 writing:

It is difficult to learn American way of writing… in other words, it looks perfectly fine in Korean but when you translate it into English it looks not clear or not logical to Americans. Still, sometimes it comes easy to think in Korean first and then put it in English. When I do that, when I read my writing, it looks strange not only to me but also to others.

However, the writing center tutor, Lindsey, pointed out Asian students’ common problems with verb tenses and articles. This could explain why the ESL Editing class instructor, mentioned above, focused primarily on basic grammar as these appeared most problematic to him. The writing center director also emphasized L2 students’ problem with grammar:

We try to help them as much as we can toward whatever they need and usually that will be, let’s say, dealing with idiom problems or prepositions. A lot of Koreans, in particular
... a lot of these [L2] students think very well and actually their sentences aren’t that bad, but all of these mechanical problems get in the way... Many of these students tend to be a little bit old. They’ve been around. I mean, they’ve thought. They’ve read ... and so, generally speaking, they can put their thoughts together fairly well and there are some idiomatic problems and so on, but a lot of it has to do with just basic little mechanical glitches.

In addition to grammar, the ESL writing class instructor identified problems with structure:

Some of those problems that I noticed and I saw with Korean students also were two major categories, one having to do with the surface level . . . linguistic concern. . . . The other level would be the discourse level, the genre writing level where the structure, organization of the paper, may have caused confusion and not a very effective delivery of their ideas or their messages.

The comments of the Music research course instructor on the two Korean students in her Graduate Research and Writing class also indicates their problems with grammar and structure:

I started summer quarter with two male Korean students, who have been here for a while. This was not their first year. They have already been here for a while. This class, they get a number of small assignments before writing the bigger one and the first assignment I look very carefully to see what their writing is like... There are difficulties with grammar and with making the writing clear, being able to structure essay, so that the paragraphs have a clear topic sentence and following in a logical manner. That’s the biggest problem. After the first assignment, I recommended that both of them drop the class, because the skills were so poor.

This comment underscores the seriousness of students’ writing problems in that although the course was required the instructor recommended that they drop it. While the grammatical errors were pointed out as the most prominent problem with L2 writing by all the resource providers, the ESL director directed attention to more global problems in L2 writing:

ESL students in general tend not to understand two things. One is the culturally-based expectation of the audience and the other is the connection between reading and writing. By the first, I mean they simply don’t know the pragmatic aspects of the language that are appropriate in academic writing and nor do they understand . . . sense of audience. The second issue is they read a lot but they don’t read analytically . . . they read just for the content. They are not looking how the paper is structured. They are not looking at the language that’s being used.
She recognized a pragmatic dimension in that L2 students are not aware of meeting the expectations of their readers and consequently are unable to generate acceptable texts corresponding to those expectations of their academic communities. The observations of the ESL director also imply an interaction between reading and writing. L2 students are generally not skilled at using reading as a means of acquiring adequate academic writing conventions. Even though the participants were well aware of their problems with surface level grammar and organization, they seemed unable to comprehend those problems in relation to reader awareness in sociocultural contexts as well as reading-writing relationships.

Some of the participants brought up the issues with “vague” and “modest” Korean way of thinking style and culture, which manifested in their writing. Younghee said:

It is a problem with thinking than writing. Different thinking style . . . for example, we Koreans express vaguely. Often, when I write something, my editor says to me that people won’t understand what I meant and she tells me to write more concretely. When I read Korean articles, it is written like this [vaguely] and I could understand it, but if my editor reads that same article, she may not understand it. So, I assume I must be oriented to that [Korean and vague] thinking style, which is shown in my writing.

Indirect writing style, which relates to the issue of reader awareness that the ESL director pointed out earlier, was also mentioned by Hansung:

The shorter and more concise style of writing is more appreciated here . . . In our language, passive expressions are more common, which I am also more used to and so more modest style of thinking and expressions like . . . as simple as passive expressions, could be barriers.

Particularly, the use of passives perhaps stemmed from his native culture, which values not strongly stating one’s opinion. Likewise, without knowing the sociocultural aspects of the U.S. academic context, it seems even more difficult for the participants, as nonnatives, to acquire academically preferred writing skills. As represented earlier, Jin described:

Frankly, being a nonnative, as a Korean, it is almost impossible to write smoothly like natives unless you try very, very, hard. Because it is not our language, first of all. It is the
second language. We can’t be like them who have lived here for years. There are parts that you could only understand or learn only if you live here, in writing. Same in Korean. Even if foreigners can learn how to write in Korean, they can’t get those, very culturally loaded expressions which are too Korean.

In this regard, it is of note that the Music research course instructor seemed to be frustrated by the two Korean students’ writing problems particularly because they were not new. She emphasized the fact that the students “have been here for a while.” Then, this leads to the issue of use of resources. What resources can they access for support? The services resource providers aim to provide and how the students make use of them will be discussed later in Research Question 3 and Question 4 respectively. In the following section, I will focus on the difficulties the participants encountered as they attempted to make use of resources in their socialization process.

**Difficulties with Resources**

The participants in this study reported difficulties primarily in their attempts to access and use resources. The findings also revealed that the services were not always readily available when the students needed them. Also, the types of services did not seem to always meet their needs and expectations, indicating mismatched needs and services between the participants and the resource providers. However, the participants’ overall use of resources seemed to be passive and limited.

**Access to Resources**

Younghee, who relied heavily on paid private tutors for editing her papers for classes as well as her master’s project and who also used reading as a base for her writing, recalled that nobody told her what assistance was available. Moreover, she had mentioned in the pilot study that she was hesitant to approach her advisor for help because it was difficult and she felt uncomfortable. Similarly, Juyoung indicated in the pilot study that because she was not
competent in speaking whenever her advisor asked how things were going, she always said "good," even when things were not going well. Sujin also explained that she would rather ask her peers than professors because "there is no need to tell [the professors] that I am in trouble and show them I am not doing well." As such, lack of language competence prevented some of the participants from the effective use of interactions with their advisors and course professors. In the follow-up interview for the current study, however, Younghee indicated that it could have been helpful to interact more actively with people, particularly professors:

> It is not that anyone told me about resources available on campus or encouraged me to use them, but now I think if I had more often gone to see professors, I could have gotten more help. . . . It was difficult for me to go to see professors maybe because of my culture. It was not easy. . . . My conclusion is that it all depends on me. Depending on how often you use it or how diligently I contact that person, it could result in a lot of difference in one’s ability.

In an environment where no one was telling her where to go or what to do, it seemed that she took it upon herself to look for a way for self-socialization. In the end, she found private tutors. It was interesting that ESL courses, for example, as one of the basic resources provided for students on campus, were advertised through various ways including annual ESL center coffee hours, center website linked the International Students Services website, and the international student orientation. Also, ESL center website provided extensive information and resources to assist L2 students in improving their language skills. The participants’ use of these resources will be further discussed later in Chapter 5. Compared to other participants, it seemed relatively easy for Namjoo and Sujin to get help from NES colleagues or friends when they needed, although that help seemed to be mostly limited to editing surface level grammatical errors. Namjoo said that “I am lucky that I have someone [colleague at work] whom I can ask for feedback anytime when I need.” Even though it seemed relatively easy for Sujin to ask her NES friends for correction before she turned in assignments, she indicated that it was not always easy to do this:
It wasn’t difficult to ask for help. When they are not busy, they’re willing to help me, they read and give feedback. But when they are busy, I feel sorry and uncomfortable asking them because one of my friends whom I asked to read the 3-page paper . . . it was due the next day and I thought it wouldn’t be any problem for her to read it but she told me later that she needs more time in advance because she is not available all the time.

As an undergraduate exchange student with less academic pressure, Sujin seemed to be exposed to more interactions with NES peers and thus had more opportunities to immerse herself in the academic culture, unlike most of the graduate students in this study. However, Juyoung had an opportunity to join a study group of NES peers. She explained how it went:

One classmate asked me to join a study group. I didn’t even know they’re having a study group, all Composition students and I was the only non-American student there. I can’t understand all that they are saying and they speak fast. So, it was an experience for me to get a sense of what is a study group of American students like and I felt good that I could join them. . . . I also thought about what I could do for them. Once, [I knew] the answer no one in the group knew. It was like I studied while doing the study group. Think about it. Not speaking the language well, if you don’t know the answer, they would think “what is she doing here?” So, I studied in advance to find the answers.

As such, she considered this study group a very good opportunity to interact with NES peers and attempted to contribute to the group by studying in advance. It was because she thought she was not capable of actively participating when they actually met for discussion due to her language barrier and she did not want to be ignored or undervalued by her NES peers. Unfortunately, the study group discontinued due to the course instructor’s misunderstanding of the nature of the study group.

Although Juyoung had the opportunity to join a study group with her NES peers, it appeared difficult for Jin to find NES peers with whom he would feel comfortable enough to show his papers. He said:

In reality, it is not easy to make friends with Americans, first of all, and also peer review means you have to show your writing but it is not easy. If it is not someone you know well and pretty close, it is not easy to show your papers.
He felt it embarrassing to show his papers full of errors to fellow graduate students. This seemed to be related to the comments that the writing center staff made about L2 students not coming to the center for help. It may be because of “the fear of losing face because . . . you are here because you are presumably very good” in their field or “because they don’t want to show that they don’t know the language” according to the writing center tutor and director respectively. In any case, as their NES peers were busy as well, peer feedback was often limited to grammar checks. Juyoung said:

> Once I asked a native friend to proofread a paper but it was weird because she was also writing the same paper for a class. Of course, she was doing better than I was and that’s why I asked her but still she is not always better than me in every single aspect. So, it is the very cheating I thought [laughing]. Moreover, it seemed that she didn’t spend much time on it or didn’t look carefully because she was also busy. So it was more of less limited to grammar check.

Asking a classmate who was writing the same paper for proofreading seemed “weird” to her since the assignment was to respond in writing to specific questions based on assigned readings. She expressed discomfort because, as she was aware, the NES classmate might not always do better than she did. Nevertheless, she depended on her classmate because she needed help even if it was merely a grammar check. In fact, the Music Department research course instructor, who previously expressed frustration about the two Korean students’ poor writing skills, said that she recommended that L2 students ask NES peers to help them with grammar. However, the problem was not only that the type of help L2 students got from NES peers was limited to grammar checks but, more importantly, the peers were not always available when needed. In this regard, the ESL director pointed out the limited access L2 students have to assistance:

> The problems are compounded because international students simply don’t have the strategies available to them that the native students do. The native speakers at least can talk around something, whereas international students are limited in both writing strategies and vocabulary and the fact that they don’t feel that there is anyone that they
can ask. They are not being mentored in their writing. They are so much more limited. There is no way for them to get help.

In terms of access to on-campus resources, all the participants were aware of the ESL program at the university and that they could take classes if they wanted. However, Jungsoo and Heesoo could not take any ESL classes in their first quarter because they already had a full load of regular classes. It was interesting that Jungsoo wanted to take an easy ESL class to “breathe” and improve his English as the same time, whereas his graduate program director assumed that his English would get better anyway as he took regular classes and thus recommended that he not take ESL courses. For the other students, ESL classes were readily accessible, but problems with what was being taught and how it was taught emerged, which will be discussed in Research Question 4.

The on-campus writing center was also used by some of the participants. According to the writing center director, he sent out the center information to academic departments via email. Unfortunately, this information did not always filter down to the students. Not all the participants, particularly those who were new to this university, knew about the writing center. Some received the information from their Korean friend; others from their course instructors. Hansung found the center information through a university website search. He explained that faculty in his department were not aware of the writing center. According to Hansung, “they [faculty] don’t feel that they [students] need to be supported from writing centers” and “they usually do not care whether there is a writing center in this university or not.” However, in the case of the Music Department, one out of four course syllabi that I obtained from Heesoo and Juyoung contained the writing center information. The Graduate Research and Writing course instructor provided it in her syllabus. However, none of the three Music students in this study used the writing center at the time of the interviews.
With regard to scheduling, Hansung said that he tried to make an appointment even if he had not completely finished writing a paper because of the difficulty in scheduling. He said that “if I think it’s kind of ready as a draft, five or six page and if its format takes a good shape even if I haven’t finished writing, then I make an appointment with the writing center.” In fact, all the participants who had used the center complained about scheduling. The writing center director and the tutor also mentioned that they had some complaints because they did not have enough tutors. Hansung said that “the only problem with the writing center is that it’s not easy to make an appointment because I have to schedule at least one week beforehand.” Sujin also noted the inconvenience, in that she could not make a follow-up appointment in the same week to get the whole paper read and checked by tutors. Jin reported similar problems and further offered some suggestions:

In the case of the writing center, when I call them they tell me to come next week. I wish they have more people so that they could help us immediately, or the next day, if we can get editing whenever we need without appointment. It would be great if they can provide that kind of services. I know it can’t be done that way. I think it would be even better if the writing center works at the department level. If each department has its own writing center, it would be great. Considering the increasing number of international students, the current staff is not enough.

The Music Department research course instructor also supported the idea of more individualized instruction:

I think the best thing for them would be if they could have a class where they could work in small groups with someone who is a fluent English speaker who really sits with them and helps them develop how to write because I don’t think they learn much in the ESL classes and they really need to have someone sit with them and say “this is how you make a proper sentence” and keep working with them and processing it but it’s an issue of time. They have to spend a lot of hours to practice and they have to perform, and we don’t have the staff or money to be able to do it. It’s very difficult.

However, as she mentioned, it is very difficult to create such a learning environment for L2 students for many reasons, including funding. According to the Music Department instructor, the
department does not offer a class that teaches students how to write academically or how to write essays for classes in the discipline. This was why the Music Department initiated the ESL program in cooperation with the ESL center. However, she did not think that the ESL center was doing a good job teaching it either. She had one Korean student in her class who had completed the prerequisite ESL writing course but the student’s language skills were still “extremely weak,” and still didn’t know how to write an essay.

Other than Hansung, Jin, and Sujin, the participants in this study did not use the writing center either because they did not think that the tutors, without knowing their content areas, could offer significant help or because they were so busy finishing writing the papers up until the last minute that they had no time to go to the center for help.

In sum, the participants’ resource utilization effort might not appear active, in that basic services dealing primarily with formal linguistic concerns were provided but not accessed. Despite the participants’ clear demonstration of difficulties with L2 writing, they were not using all the resources available to them. Particularly, they rarely interacted with their academic advisors or course professors, who considerably could provide considerably more consistent and constructive assistance than any other resource providers.

Mismatched Needs and Services

The findings showed that the participants did not seem consistently satisfied with the assistance that they received from the resource providers such as ESL classes, the writing center, and research courses. They also seemed to be disappointed at the type of help they got from interactions with people. For example, Hansung questioned the usefulness of the textbook that the instructor used for the ESL writing class:

I don’t know whether she had to teach that textbook because it talks about basic writing techniques and most of the students in the class were graduate students, although a couple
of them were undergrad, and the graduate students would wonder why they have to read these.

In an email exchange with Hansung regarding one of the several class sessions that I did not observe, he also wrote that “it was mainly a quick review of the textbook. . . . That review was not very helpful to me, and many felt boring about it.” Sejun, in another ESL writing class, expressed his frustration because “the class that I am taking now is focused too much on grammar. Very basic grammar, starting from subject-verb agreement.” More about these issues regarding the ESL classes will be discussed in the next chapter.

In terms of the writing center, those who had used it seemed to be relatively satisfied with their services, but they mentioned that the services tended to be limited to surface level editing. This was contrary to the goal of the writing center. The writing center director stressed the fact that editing or proofreading were not the services they intended to provide:

One of our concerns is that a lot of these [L2] students come to us who need editing and we don’t really do editing. We tried to work with overall concepts with sentence problems and that kind of things, but a lot of graduate students in particular want somebody to check all their errors, and that’s not really our function.

The writing center director further stated that because of “so many mechanical glitches” in L2 student writing, the center “can’t really deal with the ideas or overall concepts,” which he stressed in the interview as the main function of the center and as was also described on its website. However, the participants believed that the writing center services were limited to surface level editing and would not provide assistance at the conceptual level. According to Hansung, the tutor whom he went to see three times for his conference paper “pointed out some grammatical errors and he asked questions about conceptual parts for clarification and made some suggestions on what’s not clear.” In fact, my analysis of the paper reviewed by the tutor revealed that the comments from the tutor were almost exclusively about grammatical errors.
such as verb tenses, subject-verb agreement, missing prepositions, articles, and a few vocabulary suggestions. Hansung described his overall experience with tutoring sessions as follows:

What I get from the writing center is usually proofreading. At the graduate level, I think what the writing center can offer is quite limited, mostly helping with expressions, but I don’t think they can be a lot of help at the conceptual level, although there could be some graduate students who have problems with concepts and don’t know how to put it. I think the writing center could help with concepts like definition or understanding of field-specific terminology at the undergraduate level. I think it’s impossible to expect conceptual comments beyond undergraduate level.

Hansung, Jin, Namjoo, and Younghee pointed to academic discipline differences between the participants and the tutors as another problem that seemed to limit the services to surface level editing. In fact, because of this, Namjoo and Younghee did not use the center. They supposed that perhaps the tutors were writing specialists but might not be able to help them with field-specific writing. Particularly, in the case of Hansung, as represented earlier, it was a compounding problem because he was already having difficulty communicating with tutors due to his lack of L2 proficiency.

I think I still cannot communicate quite well with the writing center because of my English and sometimes I have a hard time to show my ideas to the tutors in casual expressions. However, I have fewer problems with communicating with professors and classmates than tutors. I think that’s because we in the same field share a lot of common background knowledge. My advisor, for example, he knows what I am doing and so do my classmates not as well as my advisor but to some degree. On the contrary, it was not easy to talk about academic writing with someone who is not in my field. Maybe it is my language problem because I cannot clearly explain what I want to the tutors.

In addition to ESL writing classes and the writing center, the participants in this study relied heavily on their interactions with NES peers for help, though it was often limited to proofreading. It was particularly interesting that Sujin mentioned that she could not always expect to get good quality feedback from her NES peers. Based on the students’ L2 proficiency alone, one could conclude that the basic services the campus-based resources provided were
adequate to their needs. However, the students accurately acknowledged that their limited L2 proficiency hindered their pursuit of and acquisition of more than the very basic of services.

**Summary**

The findings show that the participants’ lack of L2 proficiency not only posed initial challenges as they entered their program of study but also made it difficult to utilize the available support resources. This language barrier seemed to inhibit the participants’ interactions and their ability to build relationships with NES people, particularly with their advisors or course professors, who could have supported and facilitated their socialization process. Furthermore, the participants either did not express or had difficulty conveying their needs to the ESL instructors and the writing center tutors, which resulted in less communication to the participants’ further disadvantage. Moreover, as mentioned by the writing center staff, this was a major reason L2 students did not come to the center for help.

When the participants went to the resource providers for assistance, they encountered problems in terms of access to resources. In addition, their services seemed not to always meet the students’ needs. For example, their access to NES peers was limited and the help was confined primarily to surface level grammar checking. Moreover, some of the participants’ interactions with the writing center tutors were also limited, in that they could not use the services in the way they wanted because of scheduling problems. Also, the type of help they received from the tutors was limited to editing. As a result, because of the participants’ lack of L2 proficiency and the cultural differences, the needs they presented did not appear to be deeper than surface level linguistic problems. Table 3 below presents a brief summary of the findings regarding the problems associated with the participants’ lack of L2 proficiency and difficulties
with resources, resulting in socialization problems from the perspectives of Korean L2 students and their resource providers.
### Table 3

**Korean L2 Students’ Socialization Problems**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Resource Providers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lack of L2 Proficiency</strong></td>
<td>- Difficulty articulating problems &amp; needs to resource providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Communication problems with resource providers resulting in lack of communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Unfamiliarity &amp; lack of experience with L2 academic discourse</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Problems with organization/structure in L2 writing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Indirect L1 thinking/writing style</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- L2 students’ self-consciousness; being afraid of making mistakes; not expressing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Not clear about what L2 students need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Basic surface-level grammar issues appeared to be most problematic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Problems with structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Difficulties with Resources</strong></td>
<td>- Hesitant to approach advisors, professors, and peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Not readily accessible: writing center tutors &amp; NES peers not always available at students’ convenience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Mismatched needs and services: services limited to surface-level editing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Students’ presented needs for basic services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussion

The findings of this study confirm that language plays a significant role as a medium of learning content and culture, and language itself is an object of learning, in accordance with the premise of language socialization theory (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986b). To be able to socialize into their target academic community, L2 students need to be provided with multiple opportunities for language-mediated activities to learn about the writing expectations of their new academic community and practice them. However, lacking the language-mediated learning activities specific to their discipline-specific community as they wished, some participants in this study attempted to create such activities with professors and NES peers, and also they attempted to use the ESL and writing centers. In making such efforts, the participants’ lack of L2 proficiency emerged as a very challenging factor, in that it inhibited smooth and effective communication with resources, as was also indicated in Schneider and Fujishima’s (1995) case study, where the English proficiency of a Taiwanese master’s student and his lack of participation “eliminated many opportunities for him to learn from peers outside of class” (p. 19).

Despite the language barrier, one participant, Hansung, continued searching for such opportunities to socialize for language practice and also to use language to socialize. Although another participant, Younghee, could afford paid tutors for more individualized and specific help, not everyone could afford it. Unlike other participants, Sujin and Namjoo had NES friends and colleagues around for help. With the exception of these four participants, the remaining participants seemed to be exposed to or engaged in fewer activities for socialization; their lack of language proficiency was a major reason behind that.
In addition to the language barrier, participants’ unfamiliarity with L2 academic discourse posed significant challenges. This supports the findings of contrastive rhetoric research (Choi, 1988; Eggington, 1987; Hinds, 1987, 1990; Hinkel, 1997; Kaplan, 1966; Kim, K., 1996; Lee & Scarcella, 1992) since the participants reported that their writing may look vague and unclear to native English speakers. This is particularly related to the underlying cultural values tied to writing that Lee and Scarcella (1992) discussed, which include the reluctance to state opinions strongly, the desire to save face, and the tendency to write indirectly. The participants in this study, like those in Zamel and Spack’s 2006 study, also “readily acknowledged their linguistic struggles” (p. 128) and their instructors, particularly the Music Department research course instructor, also considered their writing inadequate for coursework. As discussed in Research Question 1, the participants sought out available resources for assistance, and the Music research course instructor was dependent on the ESL writing courses and the writing center in regards to helping her students with writing.

In addition, language socialization posits that the learners should be exposed to and engaged in language-mediated activities (Heath, 1996; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986b), which requires interactions (Vygotsky, 1978) and participation (Lave & Wenger, 1991) in a target community of practice. Particularly, Lave and Wenger argue that “to become a full member of a community of practice requires access to a wide range of ongoing activity, old-timers, and other members of the community; and to information, resources, and opportunities for participation” (pp. 100-101). However, the problem is, as was also reiterated by the participants in this study, “such assistance may not always be readily available to all learners” (Morita, 2004, p. 598). This was particularly true of the participants’ interactions with NES peers and the writing center tutors, as NES peers were not always there to help them and the writing center schedule could be
inconvenient. The legitimate peripheral participation perspective stresses the importance of multiple levels of relationships between experts and novices for novice members to gain a full membership to the community they wish to join. Thus, for novice L2 students to be able to learn discipline-specific writing skills, providing them with more opportunities for interactions with more experienced members, natives or non-natives, in the community is significant.

Dong (1998) argued that building strong and effective relationships with people who support them academically is essential to L2 students' learning to write. Particularly, the available helping networks for L2 graduate students were found to be critical in thesis or dissertation writing. One participant, Hansung, attempted to interact with his advisor as much as he could in the process of writing his master’s thesis, but this did not apply to all the participants. Younghee especially worked on her master’s project independently, relying on readings and self-found written samples without any assistance from her advisor or any supportive network. In this study, Sujin, an undergraduate exchange student, seemed to be exposed to more opportunities to build social networks with her NES peers and was active doing so, seeming to contradict Leki’s (2006) argument that compared to graduate students, “L2 undergraduates are typically younger, less focused academically, less close to academic advisors, and arguably left more to their own devices” (p. 137) in her research on the literacy experiences of a group of L2 undergraduate students and their negotiation of socioacademic relationships with faculty. By taking graduate level courses to achieve a certificate in TESL, Sujin seemed “focused academically” and interacted actively with course professors and NES peers. On the other hand, it was difficult for the rest of the participants, who were graduate students, to build such social relationships in their academic communities. Furthermore, as the findings of this study showed, all the participants, graduate students or not, took it upon themselves to socialize into their academic communities,
although some of the participants, especially the Music students, were placed into review courses or ESL courses or sent to the writing center. Overall, it was difficult for the participants to cultivate constructive social networks within their academic communities. As a result, the participants’ interactions were often limited to asking for academic help (Kanno & Applebaum, 1995) which they did somewhat ineffectively, generally receiving surface level grammar feedback as a result.

The participants in this study perceived the writing center services as mainly editing and simply correcting errors. This seems to be partly attributable to the participants’ lack of L2 proficiency, resulting in less participation in communication or negotiation of meaning between tutors and the participants. Also, as in Powers and Nelson’s 1995 survey, the tutors’ unfamiliarity with the content of the participants’ writing caused more problems to students, who were already having difficulty explaining their problems to writing center staff.

The participants in this study were not active enough which confirms Kumaravadivelu’s (2003) portrayal of L2 students’ cultural tendencies as passive. Similarly, Seo and Koroljungberg (2005) pointed out “shyness and passivity” of East Asian students (p. 168), causing communication difficulties and further inhibiting the participants’ active utilization of resources. Or, as the writing center staff claimed, the students were reluctant to use the resources available for facilitating their socialization in order to save face, or out of the fear of self-disclosure, which is consistent with Dong’s 1998 survey results from 169 graduate students and their advisors. In addition to cultural differences, the fundamental problem in L2 writing socialization was the students’ lack of L2 proficiency. As a result, the resource providers perceived the students’ needs to fall within their basic services and despite providing them those basic services, the participants were still not actively making use of the resources. Perhaps the students’ limited use and pursuit
of resources is related to their frustration with the mismatch and their inability to articulate their needs.

Consequently, students often discover the content-specific linguistic and cultural expectations of their discourse communities through trial and error. More importantly, their sociocultural marginality as L2 students is reinforced by the academic discourse that they have difficulty commanding. In fact, faculty often consider L2 students to be unprepared for undertaking the work in their courses (Zamel, 2002), which unfortunately sets up boundaries and encourages “the designation of otherness, difference, deficiency” (Rose, 1990, p. 205). One participant in this study, Jin, did not say this outright, but this issue might be why he transferred to the master’s program after being in the doctoral program for two years. Therefore, for students to be embedded in their academic contexts is not sufficient for successful socialization. These students also need to be exposed to activities or interactions with a wide range of resources to help facilitate their socialization process. For example, as Silva (1997) claimed, L2 writers should be provided with various learning contexts, including mainstream composition classes, basic writing classes, or sheltered ESL classes. To be more discipline-specific, especially for graduate students, Weidman and Stein (2003) emphasized the role faculty could play in the students’ socialization to academic norms, “characterized by faculty who are accessible to students, who are actively engaged in scholarly activities themselves, and who clearly convey expectations and encouragement for students engaging in such activities” (p. 653). Furthermore, Leki (2006) highlights the importance of socioacademic relationships that L2 students could establish with faculty and peers as they also have an impact on students’ educational experiences and may in fact go some long way toward determining the success or failure of those experiences.
In order to interact more actively with their advisors and professors, L2 students must overcome the fear of losing face, and attempt to create more opportunities for participation.

More collaboration between all the parties involved in L2 students’ language socialization to construct an effective resource network is also clearly necessary. In the following chapter, what the resource providers do to help Korean L2 graduate students socialize into their academic communities and how the students utilize the resources will be investigated in order to further suggest what needs to be done.
CHAPTER 5
RESOURCES PROVIDED AND UTILIZED

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings and discussion of Research Question 3 and 4, which investigated the resources that the participants had access to in their L2 writing socialization, what the resources did to socialize Korean L2 graduate students into U.S. academic writing, and how the participants made use of the resources.

The participants reported that the major resources that they utilized were ESL writing courses, the on-campus writing center, and regular academic research courses. Particularly, ESL writing courses aimed to meet L2 students’ specific needs by incorporating activities such as peer review and advisor logs in relation to students’ content-specific writing. In contrast, the writing center and the Music Department research course were not specifically designed to meet L2 students’ needs. However, these two resource providers were aware of L2 concerns and attempted to address the concerns. For example, the writing center tutors adapted their services to meet L2 students’ requests, which, in fact, limited writing center services to surface-level grammar checks. Tutors were being asked to provide services beyond their intended scope in that they chose to modify the services they provided to meet student needs. In the case of the Music research course, the instructor referred L2 students to other resource providers for assistance.

In terms of the participants’ utilization of these resources, they did not actively make use of the resources for various reasons. Because they could not articulate their needs and their writing showed insufficient development, the participants received only basic services despite
their desire for the more substantive input the resource providers could and were designed to provide.

Resources: What, Why, and How

Research Question 3: What Resources (e.g., ESL Classes or Writing Center) Do Korean L2 Graduate Students Have Access to in Their L2 Writing Socialization into the U.S. Academic Context and What Do the Resources do, If Anything, to Socialize Korean L2 Graduate Students into U.S. Academic Writing, How, and Why?

Three major resources that emerged were ESL writing courses, the on-campus writing center, and regular academic research courses. In this section, these three available resources that the participants made use of in their L2 writing socialization are explored, focusing on what they are and what they do to help socialize Korean L2 graduate students. The data in this section derived from information provided by the three resource providers. Some of the challenges that these resource providers faced in their attempt to fulfill their intended goals were also examined.

ESL Writing Courses

The Center for English as Second Language (CESL) at this university oversees all ESL courses for international graduate and undergraduate students. The center offered three writing courses: Editing Skills for ESL Writers, Introduction to Academic Writing, and Academic Writing for International Students. At the request of the Music Department the CESL tested and placed all their incoming L2 students into writing courses. The test consisted of a 10-minute conversation-based speaking section and a 20-minute writing section. Students were given field-specific prompts for the writing section, from which to choose. Based on the results, students were advised to take one of the three writing courses offered or, perhaps, none at all. All three
Music students who participated in the current study were placed into writing courses. The Assistant Dean in the Music Department stated his expectations that “the ESL placement test will help the student realize how they can best improve their English skills so that they will be able to thrive within the music environment.”

While the analysis of Editing Skills for ESL Writers and Academic Writing for International Students courses was based exclusively on the course syllabi and online course description provided at the CESL website, the analysis of the Introduction to Academic Writing course was conducted through interviews with the course instructor and the CESL director, classroom observations, and document analysis.

*Three Writing Courses*

The center offered three writing courses and the brief information about the course titles and descriptions were provided online.

**Editing Skills for ESL Writers:** This workshop course is designed to assist non-native speakers of English to recognize, correct, and avoid the most commonly made errors in writing.

**Introduction to Academic Writing:** This course is designed to introduce non-native speakers of English to skills required to successfully complete basic academic writing. Topics include term papers/general academic writing, topic limitation, paraphrasing, summarizing, documenting sources, revising, editing, etc.

**Academic Writing for International Students:** This course is designed for non-native speakers of English to improve their academic writing skills by preparing longer academic pieces such as literature review, research proposals, and research papers.

The first two courses were offered both in fall and winter quarter and the third one in winter and spring quarter. None were offered in the summer quarter. All of the courses stressed the importance of learning academic and discipline-specific writing conventions and thus the courses were designed to explore the discipline-specific writing conventions.
The syllabus analysis of the Editing course taught in winter showed that the course was designed as a workshop “with a deliberate focus on peer editing reviews” and it aimed for students to “develop the skills necessary for creating writing samples that are acceptable for academic and discipline specific settings.” This course also intended to teach students “to use critical reading practices to recognize a variety of language features present in various genres of writing.” The instructor who taught this course in winter clearly stated on the syllabus that “students are in this course only if they demonstrate that they already understand how to write papers, but need help in editing their work. If students are not able to compose, they should under no circumstances be in this course.” The instructor also stressed that “the focus is not on teaching grammar rules but on recognizing their own errors in their writing.” As the course was not designed to teach students how to write, the instructor recommended that students take it with either Introduction to Academic Writing or Academic Writing for International Students, or be engaged in writing papers in their disciplines. Such course descriptions and goals seemed to be in contrast to what happened in the Editing course taught in fall by a different instructor, who focused so much on grammar as the ESL program director said: “somehow the whole curriculum got changed and focusing on just grammar.” As the director pointed out, perhaps this was a result of the instructor being new to the program and not experienced in teaching ESL. Also, students in that class presented their needs for the very basic grammar.

In order to achieve these intended goals, it was particularly notable that the instructor who taught this course in winter included “advisor logs” as a course assignment. It was for students to meet their advisor or a course instructor three times throughout the quarter to gather research articles and discuss the criteria. From this, students were to write the academic papers/writing assignment(s) required in their disciplinary course(s). This also engaged advisors
or course instructors by asking them to review their students’ work and to provide feedback regarding the discipline-specific writing criteria, ensuring that their students’ work conformed to the standards of their disciplines. This clearly showed the instructor’s attempt to achieve discipline-specific writing goals by eliciting the participation of advisors and instructors in students’ disciplines and creating opportunities for L2 students to communicate with these people regarding writing conventions and their expectations. This was all part of the final project, which was to develop a portfolio of content-specific reading and writing samples from students’ disciplines as an evolving process throughout the quarter. In addition to three drafts for the final paper as an ongoing process, weekly assignments included an analysis of a 1-paragraph genre sample used in their disciplines. This served to explore important features such as grammar, organization, and language. There was no required textbook for this class, but students explored writer’s handbooks in class. They were also charged with finding one appropriate and relevant to their needs and thus to continue to learn and practice editing skills.

The Introduction to Academic Writing course, introduced as a prerequisite to the Academic Writing for International Students course on the CESL website, which however was not mentioned in either of the two course syllabi, will be discussed later in detail. In brief, topics covered in this class included audience, purpose, organization; style, flow; data commentary; writing summaries, writing critiques; and plagiarism, rewording.

Academic Writing for International Students was designed as an advanced-level workshop course, where students practiced and discussed writing for their disciplinary courses. The instructor who taught this course in winter stressed the importance of learning a writing convention expected in North American universities and thus, this course aimed to explore the conventions of North American academic writing as well as discipline-specific writing.
conventions (e.g., documentation styles). The textbook required for this course focused on academic writing for various disciplines as well as writing summaries and critiques for graduate students beyond basic writing strategies. Further, this course was intended to “create a community of practice in which all members support and aid each other in their writing projects.” The instructor seemed to attempt to create an environment where students could learn about writing workshops, giving critiques, and responding to others’ critiques of their writing. Her intent was that they became not only active writers and but also effective peer reviewers. Some of the primary topics covered included audience, purpose, tone; documentation styles and integrating sources; editing for publication; and grammar. In addition, the instructor also attempted to discuss the uses of technology for writing, including uses of available software, web resources, and library websites. Workshop guidelines and criteria for critiques were provided in the syllabus.

These courses clearly aimed to teach writing at a higher level. They were designed to be more relevant to students’ actual writing for content courses by encouraging students to work on their discipline-specific writing samples and providing resources for students to learn to become active members of their academic communities. In the following section, I will further examine the Introduction to Academic Writing course, in which three of the nine participants in this study were enrolled at the time of my classroom observations in fall 2007. There were 11 students enrolled from various majors including Music, Political Science, Architecture, TESL, and Engineering. Three of them were undergraduate students.

Introduction to Academic Writing Course

**Intended goals.** The primary course objective was to “familiarize students with the North-American academic writing style” and “assist students in improving their performance on
specific academic writing assignments” as described in the course syllabus. Intended goals also included learning about the writing processes; participating on Blackboard and in the classroom and using a variety of methods to improve writing skills; and showing ability to use acquired knowledge in order to successfully anticipate and meet graduate/undergraduate level academic writing requirements and expectancies.

The instructor, Jen, who had been teaching this course for four quarters, illustrated that she thought of this course as writing resource:

Ideally, it would be something that would be a bridge, transition them learning the language, knowing more about English, and using that in their academic field and being successful in that . . . like a central point and at the same time, it’s . . . like a start.

Even though she felt that this course would not be enough, she certainly hoped that this course would be considered useful as a resource for L2 students; otherwise, she pointed out, “it would defy its purpose” and she would feel “terrible” not providing them that kind of service.

Instructor. Jen, the instructor, who was teaching the Introduction to Academic Writing class taught the same class and Academic Writing for International Students for three quarters in the previous year while she was pursuing her master’s degree in TESL. At the time of the interview for the current study, she was a first-year doctoral student in the program. Jen seemed comfortable teaching writing, and she described teaching writing in general:

I am comfortable as a writing teacher because I had a few writing classes before. At the same time, I do feel that teaching writing is challenging. . . . seen as a most difficult one and the least sort of engaging, fun one and maybe it encourages communication the least . . . as opposed to listening or speaking. So, I am comfortable with it but . . . I realize that it’s a challenging course to teach and always writing a composition is not easy.

Assignments and course materials. As a “content and process-based” course, as stated in the course syllabus, Jen also encouraged the students in class to make use of this class to write their field-specific papers for other content courses. She explained why:
I don’t want them to do extra work other than the work that is extremely useful . . . that they have to do . . . I can help them with that, but I don’t want them to write other papers when their problems are writing papers in their field and when they have research to do and write reports, or thesis.

Students had to submit two papers: one mid-term and the other final on the topics of their interest as indicated above. Most of them, particularly the graduate students, worked on a research or conference proposal, a thesis, or papers for other content courses. Students were also asked to post both the drafts and the final papers on the online discussion board so that every student could read the others’ papers for in-class peer review activities. The first written assignment was to write three paragraphs regarding audience and purposes on students’ selected topic, while they prepared a draft for the mid-term paper. Readings from a textbook focusing on processes and strategies for academic writing were assigned for in-class discussion throughout the quarter. These readings provided students with a significant amount of information about writing techniques and strategies.

Also, the students in this class were provided with three documents as guidelines on peer review and providing feedback; they could also use the documents to support self analysis on their own writing. For example, they identified things that needed to be included in an introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusions, as well as language features such as grammar and word choice. Jen did review these documents in class. She also posted many websites as writing resources online and browsed one particular website in class to discuss redundancy and conciseness, spending 50 minutes going through the examples provided. Jen told the students to return to this particular website for future use.

Peer review and feedback. Upon producing their first draft for the mid-term paper, students started peer review activities in class. Because it was difficult to meet all the needs and concerns of the students, and also due to discrepancies in their levels of proficiency in writing,
Jen, the instructor, emphasized the importance of doing peer review. She felt this gave them practice. She reflected on how it went throughout the quarter:

Using those peer review sessions and peer feedback a whole lot and myself as a mediator and I’ve tried not to take over and become . . . a guide. . . . This may not be related but trying to be not too directive and at the same time giving them enough feedback to be consistent and for them to feel they are really getting help and also help them understand that peer feedback is useful, and it’s not just a way of wasting class time. . . . I wanted them to take it over and really use it and see how that goes in the discussion and in the classroom, then for them to translate that to their writing. And I found that they gave each other really good suggestions actually.

Jen attempted to incorporate peer review sessions as much as she could to provide opportunities for students to give and receive feedback on their work from their peers and instructor. Students also could reflect on their own writing through reviewing peers’ work and thus, improve their own writing skills and processes.

As peer reviews were done exclusively orally, Jen did not give written feedback on students’ papers. Jen said that she used to give her students “extended” written feedback but she found out that students would end up not really reading or understanding all the written feedback, or depended so much on the feedback but did not translate the knowledge to other papers or into doing those things on their own. She explained:

They will just use that as a . . . “okay, the instructor will get the paper fixed and then I will get an A in my writing” and in the writing class . . . I think they are aware of the fact that that would not help them in the long run but at the same time they are tempted to use that way. So, that’s why I tried to place emphasis on them working on these things on their own, making it their responsibility because before myself giving them so much feedback I . . . made them laiddback, “well, I will just get it from the teacher, I will just get it from the tutor, it’s not really my problem.”

For the same reason, Jen said, she did not direct students to the writing center and did not tell them to make use of other ESL instructors’ office hours to get help on editing. It was interesting to note this because she, as an important part of L2 writing socialization process, did not inform the students on other places for assistance.
Thus, in this class she said that she focused more on “really getting them engaged and thinking about their writing and analyzing their writing and getting help from others, and me working as the facilitator in the classroom and also outside of the classroom.” Even though there was not as much communication as Jen expected in terms of students’ expressing their needs, she certainly tried to get students engaged by asking questions. Moreover, she wanted her students to read each other’s papers outside of the class, review them, and provide more feedback, but she was also aware that “that would have meant additional time spent and there isn’t really that availability.” Despite her efforts to get them engaged, the students in that class did not actively participate in in-class as well as online discussion.

Instructor tried to encourage students’ participation by asking questions and eliciting their comments and suggestions, but students were quiet most of the time (Field note: October 3, 2007)

In terms of Korean students’ problems in L2 writing, which Jen believed to be common among all Asian students, two major problem areas were mentioned: surface level linguistic concerns such as prepositions and articles; and discourse level problems, especially with structure and organization of the paper. During my classroom observations, I noticed that she seemed to focus more on the latter in peer review sessions because, as she also said in the interview, it caused “confusion and [was] not a very effective delivery of their ideas or their messages.” She explained:

I tried to focus more on structure, making sure that they have their main idea, clear thesis statement . . . their paper is logically developed and the ideas easily follow one from another, that they do not go off or astray in different directions . . . to make sure they convey a clear logical message that their audience could understand.

She also said that she tried to work with linguistic problems if necessary because they could obscure meaning and cause comprehension problems. She said that she did not “make it a big issue” but tried to raise students’ awareness.
Jen seemed not well organized in peer review as she tended to randomly open students’ papers without keeping a record of whose papers to review. There was no sign-up sheet for peer review. As a result, the class as a whole had to read a paper on screen and Jen had to go back and forth between the paper being reviewed and the peer review guidelines that she had posted online.

**Challenges.** A major challenge that the writing course faced was, as the director indicated, “such a mixture of levels in that class and mixture of needs that students have.” Jen also expressed difficulties dealing with “different assignments, different needs, different foci in their study.” Related to these issues, Jen further pointed out the need to “communicate and negotiate with . . . [students’] advisors and with professors in their field to make sure that the assignment and the purposes are clarified so that they understand exactly how to complete those and to respond to those assignments.” With respect to communicating with students’ advisors and professors, the director also asked for cooperation. She said that “the disciplinary faculty have to understand that it is partly their responsibility as well.” One example would be the “advisor logs” that the Editing course instructor integrated to class assignments and such activities should be expanded to other writing courses as well. Also, students should be better advised on the three ESL writing courses designed for specific purposes and thus, they could benefit taking more than just one course.

Regarding the issue of L2 students in general not presenting to the resource providers what they really need while being dissatisfied with receiving basic services and despite the CESL teachers’ consistently receiving excellent student evaluations, the director encouraged mutual effort on the parts of the teacher and the students:

I think that the teacher’s willingness to be more open to the knowledge that the students do have and to finding out what knowledge they have and the students’ feeling comfortable enough to say “yeah we know this. Here is what we really need.”
Writing Center

The on-campus writing center was run by the English Department and was available to every student free of charge. A tutorial session lasted for 50 minutes. Scheduling was done primarily by phone. The center’s website provided brief information on its services. The center website stated that “our tutoring staff is drawn from a pool of writing instructors familiar with college level writing problems and ways to solve them.” According to the director, many of the tutors already had master’s degrees in Composition or English or were working on their master’s or doctoral degrees. Tutors were almost entirely from the English department.

Intended Goals

The director of the writing center said that the center focused on dealing with first-year students in freshmen composition classes, who comprised 70% of the total users, although they did assist other students. The goal of the writing center as described on its website was as follows:

Our primary function is to consult with those who come to the Center to become more competent and self-confident writers by helping them improve their writing skills. We do not provide editing or proofreading services, though we will be happy to address mechanical and grammatical questions within a tutoring session.

The director also stressed in the interview that editing or proofreading were not the services the center intended to provide. However, he expressed his concerns about L2 students, primarily coming to get editing or proofreading assistance. As a result, he claimed that the center could not provide the type of assistance it was designed to provide because of all the “mechanical” problems in L2 students’ writing.

ESL Services

Although the writing center was primarily for first-year students in freshmen composition classes, the director acknowledged “a fair share of ESL students” visiting the center.
According to the writing center director, approximately 15% of their clients were L2 students, with Korean students making up 3% of the total students served in the 2006-2007 academic year. In fact, the writing center did have some resources available on ESL issues that tutors could access, and the center website included a link to an ESL website in addition to other more general web resources on writing. The director explained that the link was provided because “there were some concerns on them [ESL students],” and he further explained that “what it does is talk about some of the typical problems that ESL students have and it’s pretty general. . . . We tried to find one that seems to be relevant.” However, the CESL website at the university was not provided.

According to the director, a few tutors had experience in teaching ESL. However, he indicated that overall, as far as L2 students and their issues were concerned, “we are not equipped to deal with those because most of us are not experts in those areas.” However, he mentioned one particular tutor, Lindsey, who was in the graduate program but had an ESL background. Lindsey was a second-year PhD student in the English Department but also was enrolled in the certificate program in TESL in the College of Education. She also had one year experience teaching in an intensive ESL program at the American university where she got her master’s degree. Lindsey said that she worked with many international students and most of them came back to her because she was perceived as the “ESL expert” in the writing center. She said that “I am the only one who had the experience with adult ESL looking to go on into their regular university.”

The center provided some training for tutors, but it seemed to be minimal. After they were hired, the tutors were sent an email describing their duties, and during the required one-
hour orientation, the director spoke to tutors about his expectations. The center also provided an online training guide for its tutors. The director explained:

   It’s minimal but we do have a little training guide which is online. It’s actually a program put out by Montreat. It was put together as a part of Appalachian project but it deals with writing centers in general so that my tutors get online, review writing centers, what they are for, how they work, slow, “quickly” stuff. . . . What I ask them all to do is to go on review this spend maybe a maximum of six, seven hours on this. . . . It’s on their honor.

The website training guide consisted of fourteen chapters, which introduced a brief history of writing centers, followed by the student-tutor relationship; it then discussed very briefly how to deal with the “clueless” student, the “unfocused” students, the “disorganized” student, the “underdeveloped” student, the “unrevised” students, the “unpolished” student. It also described ESL strategies, research strategies, discipline-specific assignments, documentation styles, writing center ethics, and writing center publicity chapter by chapter. The center did not provide anything specific for its tutors regarding L2 students, but one online chapter titled “ESL strategies” very briefly touched on ESL concerns such as cultural differences, language barriers, cultural thought patterns, building rapport, and the tutorials. According to Lindsey, the tutor, tutors did not receive much formal training at the writing center, so the tutors compensated for any difficulties in tutoring by educating themselves on ESL issues through reading resources.

   Overall, the director thought that the writing center had been fairly successful helping L2 students although he had received some complaints because the center did not have enough tutors. However, he stressed the fact that “it is a free service.”

Perceptions of L2 Students and L2 Writing Problems

   The director thought that the center had a positive perception of L2 students and he described them as “generally very polite and they are eager to learn.” However, he did point out that their language problems seemed to inhibit L2 students from coming to the center for help:
I know that it would be great if we had like three tutors for ESL in particular in composition. But, we don’t have that and we’re probably not going to get that. So, what can we do for these students other than what we try to for our regular students. Maybe that’s enough because sometimes ESL people don’t want to be considered to be different and yet they know they have some of these difficulties. Many of them won’t actually come in, I suspect, because they don’t want to show that they don’t know the language.

Particularly, he shared his observations on Korean students’ writing problem and further stressed their mechanical problems: “We try to help them as much as we can toward whatever they need and usually that will be . . . dealing with idiom problems or preposition,” which he considered difficult to deal with: “I don’t know that there is any way to fix that.” Even though the writing center did not have ESL specialists and probably would not acquire them, the director claimed that what the center did for “regular” students may be enough for “ESL people” because “ESL people don’t want to be considered to be different” and “they don’t want to show that they don’t know the language.” Similarly, Lindsey believed that many L2 students do not come for help because “a lot of students have the fear of losing face because . . . you are here because you are presumably very good in your field and it’s hard even to ask for help.”

Actual Services

As the director acknowledged, many L2 students had difficulties with writing and some did go to the center for help. When L2 students went for help, how tutors actually dealt with L2 students’ problems and concerns are discussed in this section. As mentioned earlier, because L2 students often expected editing or proofreading assistance from the writing center and also because grammatical problems in L2 students’ writing became obstacles, the director argued that the center could not provide its intended goals described above. The director said:

A lot of these students come to us who need editing and we don’t really do editing. We tried to work with overall concepts with sentence problems . . . but a lot of graduate students in particular want somebody to check all their errors and that’s not really our function.
He continued:

Some of these papers are unreadable because so many of those mechanical glitches. So, we can’t really deal with the ideas or overall concepts because . . . oftentimes it might be particular ESL students . . . new to the country . . . and there is no way for us to fix those people. And we don’t like to think of ourselves as a place where people come to get their papers fixed. We’d like to think of ourselves as a place where students can come to improve their writing.

As such, these problems limited its services to the very basic including surface-level grammar checking.

Lindsey, the tutor, described her experience with L2 students in general and Korean students in particular when they came for tutorials:

Not just Korean students, all international students, they are feeling frustrated. They are feeling overwhelmed. They are feeling maybe humiliated a little bit because most of them are graduate students. I can guess it but they don’t talk about it. They don’t necessarily open about it. . . . Korean students are just like “I need some help with this paper.” They don’t express.

She also pointed out that Korean students were generally so “shy” and “respectful” that they generally agreed with her input and did not ask her questions. As a result, she described what usually happened at the sessions as “we’re not getting anywhere. It’s just me talking at them,” which further led the tutoring to become “directive.” She explained:

The tutoring . . . it becomes . . . it forces me to become very directive. I don’t have a problem with that with international students because I know that’s what they are looking for, a lot of them. I don’t have a problem with being very directive.

However, she said that in writing centers nowadays, tutors were encouraged not to be very directive but to elicit answers from the students. The director also stated that he expected tutors to be nondirective: “We try to get tutors to be friendly, introduce themselves, try not to write for the student but allow the student to write, look for where the problems seem to be, help finding ideas.” Lindsey illustrated how she tried to approach L2 students at tutoring sessions:
I think it’s more with culture from what I’ve talked to my students . . . and it takes very conscious effort to get them out of that. . . . I say “Hi, I am international too. I am from Romania” . . . and maybe give a few examples of own frustration and my own problem and then they open up. . . . If I make a joke or I’m friendly toward them, they just open up. They are so friendly and they smile.

However, she stated this was her approach, but not all tutors were willing to do this.

In Research Question 2, the issue of L2 students’ complaining about tutors’ unfamiliarity with their content areas, limiting writing center services to grammar check and basic editing, was raised. Lindsey argued that the tutors not being from the students’ field is not important; she said that, for example, she tried to ask questions:

I have worked with students from Chemistry, Engineering from all over the place. I ask questions if it doesn’t make sense to me. I ask questions because it may not make sense to me because I don’t know the field but it may not make sense to me because it’s not written as well as it can be so I just ask questions. And if something looks strange to me . . . if they have an assignment sheet or if they were told specific things about how to write it, we just look at that and I try to familiarize myself with that what it is and go from there. So, the fact that the tutors aren’t from their field is not important. It’s true that the students cannot rely on us to improve the content because we just don’t know that much but we can ask questions if we feel there are gaps something like that.

After every tutorial, tutors generally sent a report to instructors indicating what the tutor and student covered, where students’ problems lay, and whether the students had made an appointment for a return visit. This form was called “consulting session report form.” Most students had reports sent to their instructors if those instructors had sent students to the writing center in the first place, or if the papers were for specific classes. The consultation report allowed instructors to know whether that student had made a future appointment, but if no appointment was made, no further follow-up help was arranged. As Lindsey said, “the instructor just sees that the student is making effort that the student is really trying,” but no continuation of assistance seemed to be required.
Challenges

As the director and Lindsey said, the writing center functioned on a limited budget, rarely had sufficient tutors and thus, the center received complaints from instructors and students regarding scheduling. The participants in this study who used the writing center also mentioned this problem. Although it was not the case with my participants, Lindsey said that when students called the center to make an appointment, some potential tutees specifically indicated “I am an ESL student and I am worried about my grammar” and they would like to work with her, the only ESL specialist at the center. However, since her schedule was limited, not everyone could make an appointment with her.

The director said that he had tried over the years to get someone who specialized in ESL but also in writing but has been unsuccessful. Also, because the writing center funding comes primarily from the English Department, he said that “we keep this in house” (i.e., hiring from their own department, not from TESL). Therefore, he had to rely on English Department tutors who already had an ESL background. He said that in the past he tried to recruit tutors from ESL programs but he said that “they’re all busy. Another concern is that a lot of them are not that experienced in composition themselves.” It was unclear if he was referring to students in ESL or TESL programs as potential tutors. He further said that “I would like to see though a specialist in ESL working in our area if we could get such a person.” Overall, the director said that he had not emphasized ESL issues. However, he wished for more collaboration with the Center for ESL at the university: “if we had a better correlation between what ESL program is doing and so on, we would be better off obviously.”

From the tutors’ perspective, Lindsey thought that a little more information about the ESL issues could be included in tutor training:
I do think there are ESL issues that should be addressed a little more maybe during the orientation or during the quarter I would love to see the ESL director come in and give like a short explanation here is what you need to know when you’re interacting with ESL students.

She also pointed out the importance of knowing L2 students’ culture and further stated how it could facilitate negotiating with the students:

It has a lot to do with interpersonal relationships and issues of respect and how you present yourself and body language, your body language how do you present yourself and read your students’ body language which complicates especially with Korean students because the body language is different. Just because the student sits like this [posed], it doesn’t mean that they are not listening to you or they’re hostile toward you.

She also mentioned that even though the on-line training packet included some information about cultural differences, it was not as comprehensive as she would like.

In terms of publicity, the director said that:

I usually send out an email. I used to do flyers but end up on the floors. I would rather spend money on tutors but we send out an email to Arts and Sciences and to other departments, “okay we are open for business and we try to these things and here is our website. Check this out.”

As a center focusing on first-year students in freshmen composition, it seemed that it had not made a sustained effort to pass the center information on to L2 students in particular or collaborate with the ESL program. In fact, some of the participants, especially those who were new to this university, did not know about the center. Among the five syllabi that I obtained from the participants in the Music Department, two courses, the Theory Review course and Graduate Research and Writing, provided the writing center information.

The Montreat website tutor training guide itself suggested several advertising strategies for writing centers, among which tutor/class partnerships were of note. This involved building partnerships with writing-intensive classes. Lindsey also indicated that the writing center could do more in order to encourage L2 students to take advantage of the center. For example, she
referred to sending information to the International Services Center at the university, as this was where L2 students got a great deal of information about university life in the U.S. when they first arrived.

Research Courses

Research courses offered by each discipline are presumably where students can learn more discipline-specific writing conventions than in writing center tutorials or ESL courses, where L2 students can get help for writing at a general level. In this section, the Graduate Research and Writing course, required for every graduate student in the Music Department, will be examined in detail. This course in particular was chosen for further analysis in the current study as the findings of the pilot study revealed that many Korean students postponed taking the course until later in their program of study. It was perceived as too demanding academically, and students were more concerned about getting a bad grade than learning what the courses offered, despite knowing that the course was designed to teach them how to write in the discipline.

Course Description: Graduate Research and Writing

This course was offered every quarter including summer. The instructor, who was teaching the course for the third time, shared her experience with L2 students in general and two Korean students in particular from the previous summer. There were no Korean students enrolled at the time of the interview in the fall quarter, but when she showed me the roster for the winter quarter, I noticed that there were three Korean students registered, among them Juyoung. Later, I found out that Juyoung dropped the course and planned to take it in the following summer.

The instructor explained that this class was required for every graduate student, native and non-native, unless they passed the entrance exam on bibliographic methods when they entered the program. As she mentioned earlier, very few students passed this exam:
Very few students pass whether they are English-speaking or not very, very few. Someone who is coming in to do a doctoral program who has already done a masters degree in musicology may pass the exam, because they would have taken a similar course before but most of the performance majors don’t and almost all of our Korean student population are performance majors.

This indicates that almost all Korean students in the Music Department must take this course. In fact, all three Music students participating in this study, Juyoung, Sejun, and Heesoo, had to take this course.

This instructor expected students to take this course early on in their program of study, especially in her discipline, Musicology, in which students were advised to take it in their first quarter. Regarding the performance students, she said that “their advisors generally ask them to delay . . . and they often recommend that they take it in summer quarter when it’s only three weeks and they are not doing other coursework.” She maintained that taking this course in summer when it lasted only three weeks was not helpful:

Just to have the credit. Just to say it’s done. In my opinion, the course shouldn’t be taught in the summer because it doesn’t help anyone to try to do . . . the purpose of the course is to learn how to write a research paper. You can’t do a really good job in three weeks whether you have the language skills or not.

As specified in the course syllabus, this course was “to familiarize [students] with specialized resources for pursuing research in music, with the goal of preparing you to become independent musician-scholars”; it further stated that students would “improve critical thinking, problem-solving and writing skills.” In this class, each student was expected to produce a 10 to 12 page research paper as a final term paper. Students received a number of small assignments in preparation for writing the term paper. There were six smaller assignments specified in the course syllabus: database searches; expository writing; evaluating histories; term paper proposal and bibliography; evaluating biographies; and the first draft of term paper. The instructor said
that she paid particularly close attention to the first assignment to see what students’ writing was like.

**L2 Concerns**

The instructor claimed that the first problem for the two Korean students she had in summer was their reading skills, in that they did not really understand the assignments. Then, when it came to writing, she said:

> There are difficulties with grammar and with making the writing clear, being able to structure essay, so that the paragraphs have a clear topic sentence and following in a logical manner. So that's the biggest problem. The experience that I had in summer with the two students . . . after the first assignment, I recommended that both of them drop the class, because the skills were so poor.

She said one of them did drop the class. The other one decided to continue, and she described that student more:

> He was going to try, and I said “okay, that’s fine” but after the next assignment he emailed me to tell me he felt that his grade should be higher than that. He was disappointed because all his grades otherwise are substantially higher. And I had to say “well, the grade is because of the language problem and I can’t just give you an A because you coming to the class. I have to grade you according to the type of work you’re doing.” He continued. He did pass the course largely because he kept coming to the class, he did the work, and he tried to improve. But his language skills did not improve over the three weeks, and I tried to encourage him to speak English whenever he could.

The instructor argued that the language problem among L2 students was an important issue that the department, in which the academic part was much more difficult than it was in many other schools, had to deal with. In fact, the Music Department initiated an English placement test in collaboration with the CESL because, as explained by the Assistant Dean for Admissions in the department in Research Question 1, faculty in the department “discovered there have, indeed, been students who have had trouble understanding lectures and doing assignments.” Furthermore, the Music Department made completion of any placement test-mandated ESL courses a prerequisite to any writing-intensive graduate-level required courses because “students
were very often not taking the courses that they were recommended to take; this way we can be assured that they will indeed take what the ESL professionals think they should take.”

Addressing the Concerns

In order to address some of the L2 language concerns, the instructor indicated that she sent students who were struggling with writing to the writing center, although she did not send the Korean student above to the writing center because “in three weeks the course is so short and the assignment is coming so quickly. There isn’t time for the writing center to help him.” However, the writing center was not open during breaks between the quarters.

She included the writing center information in the course syllabus: “If you need extra help with writing, take advantage of the campus Writing Center (phone number): it’s free!” What she liked about the center was that they sent a report to the instructor. That way, she knew that at least students attempted to get help and were not “ghost writing” (i.e., having others write their papers for them), which she described as a prevailing problem in her department.

The instructor mentioned that this course was not a preparatory or preliminary course to teach students how to write essays for other basic-level Music History classes. However, the Music Department did not offer any class in which L2 students could learn academic writing other than research papers. Instead, those students were referred to the ESL program. She said that at the time of the interview it was too early to see any improvement in L2 students’ overall English performance yet as a result of the ESL requirement. At the same time, she expressed frustration about one Korean student in her History class, who she assumed must have completed the ESL program in order to be in the class. The student’s language skills were still “extremely weak” and she suspected that the student could not possibly pass the Graduate Research and Writing class “because this student does not understand what essay means.” In this respect, she
did not think that ESL classes were of much help. Moreover, she sent this particular student to
the writing center for help on an essay assignment, but she did not think this student got the help
she needed. It seemed that the instructor supposed that the responsibility fell to the student and
the other resource providers (i.e., the ESL center and the writing center), but she did not seem to
willingly align the course with L2 students’ needs. Moreover, her expectations of the Korean
students in her classes that they demonstrate substantial improvement in their writing after
completing this course or the ESL requirement seemed unreasonable.

Summary

Three major resources that the participants reported that they made use of in their L2
writing socialization were examined in terms of what they were and what they did to help
socialize Korean L2 students. All three resource providers clearly stated in their goals that they
intended to provide for L2 students. They also encountered difficulties, but they spelled out what
they did and how they tried to address those issues.

The Center for ESL offered three writing courses designed to help L2 students develop
the skills to create writing samples that are acceptable for their disciplines and to become critical
readers and writers. Particularly, the instructor who taught the Introduction to Academic Writing
course attempted to integrate peer review activities as much as she could as a way to meet
students’ different needs and levels in L2 writing abilities, which was, in fact, one of the
challenges that the writing courses face. The instructor did not provide written feedback on
students’ work because previously students tended to expect editing only from her and to be
dependant on her feedback without transferring it to their writing.

The writing center staff mentioned that L2 students came to the center for editing, which
was not its main function. According to the director, the number of surface level errors in L2
writing inhibited addressing deeper, more complex writing issues, which were the primary foci of the writing center. Some of the challenges that the writing center faced were scheduling, because they did not have enough tutors; not enough tutor training on ESL issues; and publicity.

Discipline-specific research courses were where L2 students might learn the preferred writing conventions in their field of study. Particularly, since the research course at the Music Department was perceived as academically challenging, students tended to postpone taking it. However, the department did not provide a class where L2 students could learn academic writing even though the L2 students’ language was considered problematic by the faculty. Instead, the research course instructor referred those L2 students who were struggling with writing to other resource providers including the writing center and the ESL classes for assistance.

The three major resource providers involved in the participants’ L2 writing socialization process did not seem to be cooperating among each other. Even though the Music Department initiated the English placement test and the mandatory ESL program in collaboration with the ESL center, it handed the entire responsibility over to the center, and was not engaged. Also, the Music research course instructor was simply referring L2 students to other resource providers, but she neither matched her course to L2 students’ needs nor attempted to communicate with those resource providers regarding her issues with L2 students’ writing problems.

Students’ Utilization of Resources

Research Question 4: How Do Korean L2 Graduate Students Make Use of ESL Writing Courses, the Writing Center, and Academic Research Courses?

In relation to what the three major resources (i.e., ESL writing courses, the writing center, and academic research courses) did to assist Korean L2 students’ writing socialization
discussed in the previous section, this section examines how the nine participants in this study made use of the resources: the examination is primarily from the students’ perspectives. The data showed that the participants attempted to utilize these resources with various purposes in mind. Particularly, all of the participants took ESL writing courses as they were easily accessible, as opposed to using the writing center. However, they did not actively utilize all the resources provided.

**ESL Writing Courses**

The participants could easily access and register for ESL courses if they wanted. The course descriptions were available online, and students’ financial aid covered the cost of the courses.

**Goals and Needs**

The participants in this study took ESL writing courses for many different reasons and at different times in their program of study. Particularly, the three Music students in this study, Juyoung, Sejun, and Heesoo, took a writing class in the first or second quarter of their studies, somewhat earlier than the rest of the participants, as L2 students in the Music Department were required to complete ESL classes before they registered for graduate-level writing-intensive courses such as Theory, History, and Graduate Research and Writing. Sejun was taking Editing Skills for ESL Writers as the result of the English placement test required for L2 students in the Music Department. He expressed his feelings about the test result:

I couldn’t believe it [not passing the test] would happen to me. However, writing . . . since I have those [his Korean peers in the Editing course] problems in writing and in addition I have never taken any academic writing class before, I kind of expected that it would be useful to take it. But, seeing those who came to master’s program . . . just arrived from Korea . . . they don’t know anything. There is too much difference in levels among the students.
He achieved his master’s degree from an American university and considered himself relatively advanced both in speaking and writing compared to his Korean peers in that class, and he expressed frustrations about his placement there. Although he said that he did not take the test seriously, he seemed unhappy with the result. Nevertheless, he tried to be positive, considering this an opportunity to improve his writing skills. However, he pointed out that the level difference among the students influenced the overall quality of the class. Juyoung and Heesoo were also placed into writing courses. Juyoung had taken Introduction to Academic Writing at the time of this study and Heesoo was planning on taking the Editing course in her second quarter.

Unlike the Music students, Namjoo took one ESL writing course, Academic Writing for International Students, after completing all the required degree-related courses. She said that “the reason why I took the class was . . . as I remember, it wasn’t a beginning level class. It was targeted at those who are in the process of writing their dissertation or who are almost done with their coursework.” In her case, the writing class was the only ESL course she took because she was exposed to more opportunities to practice speaking than writing and, also, she wanted to utilize the writing course to prepare for her doctoral comprehensive exam.

Hansung had been taking one ESL course each quarter and, at the time of the interviews, he was enrolled in the Introduction to Academic Writing class with Jin and Sujin. His goal was to get assistance from the instructor as well as peers in writing a conference proposal and his master’s thesis. As I noted on September 19th, during my first classroom observation of the Introduction to Academic Writing class, he introduced himself by saying that he was in the class because he often heard from his professors that “the way I write is not formal.”
Jin, who was registered in the same class, did not attend the first session. However, in his needs analysis, which the Introduction to Academic Writing course instructor had available online for the students to fill out and return, Jin wrote “still have problems with grammar; look forward to improving organizing skills” as difficulties in his L2 writing. As to why he decided to take this class, he responded that “to find someone reviewing my proposal for my M.A. thesis as well as conference paper. Of course, another main reason is to improve my English writing ability.” In the interview, Jin said that he was taking the class not only because he had to write his master’s proposal, but also to increase his GPA because, as he described, “they [ESL classes] give out all A’s, don’t they?” His general perception of the class was that “I don’t expect a lot. Hearing from others about ESL classes, it is not really useful, and how much can you learn and improve for such a short time?” Moreover, he assumed, even before the class started doing peer review activities, that peer review would not be useful because “first of all, my department, which is different from the others and . . . I don’t think the peers have the capability of giving good comments.” Basically, what he expected of the class was editing primarily from the instructor, not the peers.

Jungsoo had previously taken an ESL writing course at the university from which he transferred, but he wanted to take another at this university because, as he described, he could improve his English and at the same time “breathe by taking an easy class . . . feel kind of relaxed at least in the ESL class.” Clearly, all the participants in this study took or would take ESL writing classes for unique purposes.

Although one participant, Jin, had preconceptions of ESL courses that seemed to limit his use of the course, the rest of the participants, in general, seemed to come to ESL writing
classes with the goals and needs that they could learn and improve academic writing skills and use the classes to get assistance when writing papers for their own specific purposes.

Limited Utilization

The Introduction to Academic Writing class instructor expected it could help L2 students transition into their disciplines although taking this class might not be sufficient. In fact, the participants actively chose to take ESL writing courses. However, their overall use of the courses as resources in their L2 writing socialization was limited in that they did not make good use of course materials and also they did not actively participate in class activities including peer review, and in-class as well as online discussion.

Course materials. Jen, the instructor, who taught Introduction to Academic Writing at the time of this study and also taught Academic Writing for International Students previously, provided a number of web resources online as well as documents for peer review; students could also use the documents to support self analysis on their own writing. However, only Namjoo seemed to find those web resources and documents useful. She said:

It was good to learn those criteria for peer review, what to look at. . . . It was good to learn about those web resources and have a sense of how to review my papers as well as others’ based on what criteria.

As my field notes from October 8 class indicate, Jen reviewed one particular website, as she said in class, to “utilize one of the resources to help with writing thesis statements and main ideas.” She particularly directed students’ attention to tips for writing thesis statements and then focused on conciseness and redundancy by showing some techniques such as combining and eliminating and reviewing given examples on the website. Both Hansung and Jin participated by answering some of the questions that the instructor asked about verb alternatives to make example sentences concise. The instructor continued reviewing peer review documents in the
same class session. My field notes show that Hansung sighed at one point, and Jin looked bored. Jin started chatting with another Korean student sitting next to him in Korean and it was distracting as I, sitting across the classroom which could barely accommodate 11 students, could hear him talking. Hansung shared his thoughts about this particular class session in his email message after the class:

I think she [the instructor] is very meticulous. She went through everything even the given examples on the website. It took too much time. One the one hand, it is good to know, but just looking and hearing her explaining may not really be effective. [I] doubt that. Too much theory but not enough practice. Can I make connections between what we learned today and actual peer reviews later, really use them when I write? On the other hand, reading Jin’s paper today, there seem to be reasons for her doing that because, like redundancy . . . I see all those points and problems in his paper. I know that but the problem is we can’t do that all the time.

Hansung also had issues with reviewing the assigned readings and the overall use of the textbook, which he thought focused too much on “basic writing techniques.” The textbook, dealing primarily with processes of academic writing beginning from the invention techniques, may not be seen useful as most of the graduate students in the class came in with the work they had been working on for some time and thus they were doing mostly revisions. In the process of revising, however, students could still benefit from reflecting on the writing processes and analyzing their work based on writing strategies.

*Peer review.* Peer review was something that the Introduction to Academic Writing course instructor intended to integrate as much as she could as explained in Research Question 3. When I interviewed her after the quarter ended, she reflected that “I have seen progress and I have seen the discussion in the peer review . . . I saw them really engaging in the peer review session and I think that was great.”

Both Namjoo and Hansung thought of peer review as a way to raise awareness of their own writing problems. Namjoo said that “it was good to review each other’s papers because we...
are all non-natives and I could easily recognize the common mistakes among us.” Hansung also pointed out:

What was good about the ESL writing class was that my papers were read by others. I could discover similar problems in other Korean or Asian students’ writing, and also I could notice differences between Asian students’ writing style and native speakers’ writing.

Hansung said that, on the one hand, the class provided him with the opportunity to share his papers with the class, which he considered good, but overall, he said it was not very helpful. Particularly, he pointed out that “the quality [of peer feedback] was not that good, I think. It seems that many students still find themselves not familiar with the peer review. Too miscellaneous things were asked and commented rather than productive ones.” Similarly, Namjoo and Jin referred to the ESL instructors’ and the students’ unfamiliarity with others’ content areas as well as the level difference among the students as problems. Namjoo indicated:

Another problem is . . . since the students are from different fields like Engineering, Math, or Music, I doubt whether they can understand context specific writing. I can write it but I want it to be more fluent in writing. In that aspect, the instructor was a little bit helpful but the students were not helpful.

As discussed in Research Question 3, the instructor regarded this course as content-based, in that she encouraged the students to choose topics from their areas of interest, rather than assigning separate topics for the class. However, it may have been difficult for the students from various fields to provide substantial and critical feedback on each other’s papers and thus, their comments were minimal and limited to surface-level suggestions. Hansung further pointed out some of the issues with this class, including the class being too loosely run and not well organized:

Personally, I think the instructor failed managing . . . planning the class time effectively. Another thing was that the class was too loose. For example, the instructor in the improving pronunciation class last quarter arranged the class time such that we had an individual discussion and class discussion followed by feedback sheet and particularly,
she had us turn in the feedback sheet after class. In other words, there was a format, but this class, it was like “okay, let’s read” and we read papers from the start to the end and it was too loose. It seemed that she didn’t even encourage us to participate and moreover, she didn’t even try to know our name, which was very different from other ESL instructors that I have had so far.

Similarly, Sujin said that “I don’t think I learned a lot, first because the teacher wasn’t enthusiastic. She didn’t look like enjoying teaching that class and secondly, students in that class were too loose as well.”

However, in spite of the instructor’s attempt to engage the students in making comments or asking questions, the students in this class did not actively participated. Moreover, the students rarely initiated a discussion on any aspect unless prompted by the instructor. Some of my classroom observation notes that show the students’ lack of participation are presented below:

Instructor tried to encourage students’ participation by asking questions and eliciting their comments and suggestions, but students were quiet most of the time (Field Note: October 3, 2007)

Most of the time, she [instructor] does the talk. She emphasized that “don’t write for me . . . want this to be useful for you.” She mentioned this to encourage the students to bring a paper or papers the students are or will be working for other classes (Field Note: October 15, 2007)

None of the students explicitly requested the class to address particular areas of their papers. This resulted in the instructor doing most of the talk and the students being quiet during peer review activities. As my field notes from October 31 indicate, to promote students participation the instructor asked every student one after another a very basic yes/no question: Is there a thesis statement? Also, comments were often limited to dealing with thesis statements or suggestions for alternative words.

The problem appeared worse because there was not enough preparation from the students. Despite the instructor telling students to post their papers on the online discussion
board so that they could read each other’s papers in advance for in-class peer review, the
students did not seem to read the papers in advance. Also, despite the instructor asking students
to bring copies of peer review related documents that she had posted online as resources and thus
resources they could refer to during in-class peer review activities, the students did not seem to
have the documents handy. As I noted on October 31 during class observation, Jen had to open
several windows on screen simultaneously to display the documents for the class in addition to
the paper that they were reviewing because not all students had brought the copy of the paper.
Namjoo, who took a writing class in the previous academic year from the same instructor, said
that “the students should read others’ papers at least once but as you know . . . they don’t. Also,
the instructor herself seemed that she didn’t have enough time. She is also a student and didn’t
have time.” The instructor did not always seem to come prepared as well because I did not see
her bring hard copies of the students’ papers with any comments on during my observations.
Also, she was not keeping a record of the papers to be reviewed. Moreover, as she randomly
opened a paper to review, sometimes it was digitally marked as “unread.” As a result, both the
students and the instructor began reading the paper in class on screen to review, which took up
substantial amounts of time and thus class time was not effectively used.

Jin, Hansung, and Sujin, those who took this course at the same time, expressed their
disappointment about not receiving any written comments on their papers from the instructor.
Sujin said:

This writing class was not good and I don’t think I learned a lot because she was just too
busy. I got disappointed at the class. My understanding is that for teachers giving
feedback on their students’ work is part of their job but I haven’t gotten any feedback.

However, none of them asked the instructor for written feedback. This clearly shows a lack of
communication. In fact, not enough communication between the students and the instructors in
the ESL writing classrooms took place. Even though Hansung, Sujin, and Jin in the Introduction to Academic Writing had issues discussed above, they did not bring them to the instructor for discussion. As mentioned earlier, the instructor forgot to open a forum in the online discussion board for the students to post drafts for their final paper. However, none of the students informed the instructor and thus, the class reviewed their mid-term papers until the end of the quarter.

Sujin expressed her frustration:

Another thing was that we’ve worked on each other’s mid-term paper until the end even when we supposedly had to review our final papers. I just chatted with a friend sitting next to me during the whole class hours sometimes. Unlike what we’ve done for the mid-term paper, this time for the final paper we even didn’t turn in the draft, so I don’t understand this and it’s a little bit disappointing.

Namjoo’s case of not being able to finish reviewing her paper in one class and the instructor forgetting to continue in the next demonstrated the instructor’s lack of organization. More importantly, Namjoo did not remind the instructor of what she had promised to do with her paper, as she just assumed it was because of “lack of time.”

Unlike Sujin, who simply waited for the feedback from the instructor until the end of the quarter, struggling with written assignments for the other ESL writing class, Editing for ESL Writers, Sejun did ask the instructor personally for feedback on one paper so that he would know what the instructor expected of him for the final paper. However, he did not receive any comments from the instructor, who told Sejun that he was too busy and thus not able to give any feedback at that moment. As such, even though some of the participants had issues with the class activities, with the exception of Sejun, most of them did not spell out the issues to the instructors. This could be explained by what the instructor and the ESL director indicated earlier about Korean students and Asian students in general not expressing what they wanted. As represented earlier, Hansung interpreted this based on cultural differences:
Another thing is that when there are Asian students, it is considered a virtue not to speak much even though he or she know the issue discussed in a class and that’s why they don’t speak much in class. I think that there is a communication gap between the instructor and the students. The instructor may assume that the students don’t know because they don’t speak as much as American students do and as a result she may feel that she needs to go to more basics and that’s why she had to go through the website, reading everything on the website, which was very boring to us and made us wonder why she is doing that. Even undergraduate students felt it very boring. So, it seemed to me that the instructor couldn’t catch whether the students knew it or not. On the one hand, she is not aware of Asian culture not knowing why these students don’t talk in class. Maybe it’s overlooked.

Similarly, Sejun argued that it was the instructor who should know what the students already know and need to know. The ESL director interpreted this problem such that “one is the cultural knowledge of the teacher; the second is the student’s inability to respond and to ask.” She further elaborated what needed to be done from the both parts:

I think that the teacher’s willingness to be more open to the knowledge that the students do have and to finding out what knowledge they have and the students’ feeling comfortable enough to say “yeah, we know this. Here is what we really need.”

Almost all the participants who took writing courses referred to the instructors’ and the classmates’ unfamiliarity with each other’s content areas as a barrier that limited the quality of feedback as well as students’ participation in peer review. However, more importantly, the data showed that the students were not actively making use of the materials or the activities in the writing courses. Particularly, in relation to my participants’ use of the CESL website, they did not seem to make use of the information provided in the website. In fact, the website provided extensive information and resources for students, including ESL course information and useful links and brief descriptions of each link to assist L2 students in improving their language skills. In addition, the center also provided free tutoring services for L2 students who needed assistance both in speaking and writing. However, it was found at the interviews that none of my participants knew about the tutoring services. Lack of communication and passive participation
seemed to be added problems, which limited the actual services that the writing courses intended to offer and the very services that the students wanted to get from the writing courses to the basic as “a mere means of getting editing on their papers” as indicated by Sujin.

Writing Center

According to the writing center director, in the 2006-2007 academic year, students using their services who reported Korean as their first language were 7 out of 254 in fall quarter; 4 out of 200 in winter and; 8 out of 150 in spring. This amounts to approximately 3% of the students who visited the writing center, while the ESL population made up about 15% of the total writing center clients. Among the nine participants, Sujin and Jin visited the center once, and Hansung used it five times. The rest of the participants did not use the center at the time of the study. Sujin got the center information from a course instructor; she said that “the professor of that class gave me the writing center phone number after he read my first assignment.” Hansung found the information on his own through a university website search, and he was the most active user of the writing center services among the nine participants in this study. Some participants were not aware of the center and others said that they were just so busy writing papers to the last minute that they could not use the center in time.

Goals and Expectations

Generally, the participants in this study seemed to consider proofreading to be the primary function of the writing center. As represented earlier, Hansung described:

What I get from the writing center is usually proofreading. At the graduate level, I think what the writing center can offer is quite limited, mostly helping with expressions, but I don’t think they can be a lot of help at the conceptual level, although there could be some graduate students who have problems with concepts and don’t know how to put it. I think the writing center could help with concepts like definition or understanding of field-specific terminology at the undergraduate level. I think it’s impossible to expect conceptual comments beyond undergraduate level. . . . If the proofreading is not their function, then there is no reason for me to go there.
Unlike the rest of the participants, who could not go to the writing center because they were working on their papers until the last minute, Hansung attempted to schedule a tutoring session in the process of writing, even if he had not finished writing a paper. He explained that “if I think it’s kind of ready as a draft, five or six pages and if its format takes a good shape even if I haven’t finished writing, then I make an appointment with the writing center.” Another reason for Hansung to use the center in the process of writing could be the difficulty of making an appointment. Moreover, he utilized tutoring sessions as opportunities to interact with tutors to practice his English. He said:

> What’s good about going to the writing center is that I can clarify and sharpen my thoughts by explaining to someone. Like, you understand better when you speak. When the tutors ask questions, for example, “what is ephemeral facade?”, then, I know but I have difficulty articulating it in speaking. This helps a lot. Other than that, even though he [a tutor] may know as an English literature major and a doc student, but you can’t really expect much.

Jin, who did not visit the center more than once because of the inconvenience with scheduling and because he was a slow writer, writing until the last minute, also considered editing to be the writing center’s main function. He also wished for a writing center working at the departmental level, so that he could get help whenever he needed.

> It was interesting that although Sejun did not use the writing center, he said that “I haven’t used it yet. I don’t know but if it provides proofreading I think it will be good enough.”

As such, whether or not they used the writing center, the participants in this study seemed to assume that the type of service that the center provided was editing or proofreading, and they appeared to be relatively satisfied with the editing services as they thought writing center tutors were “writing specialists” in the English Department.
Passive and Limited Utilization

As mentioned above, three out of the nine participants in this study used the writing center. Sujin and Jin used it once and Hansung used it five times. In the case of Hansung, he went to see one particular tutor at three different times. However, it was not Hansung but the tutor who arranged two more follow-up tutoring sessions to finish reviewing his conference proposal. As Hansung explained, however, this was not a typical case. He also said that he would not have minded working with different tutors because it would allow him to experience different tutoring styles with diverse viewpoints and foci. It is of note that this particular tutor whom Hansung met three times was the one who refused my observations. Interestingly, he had refused to review Hansung’s conference paper in the first place because it was not written for a class.

In general, the participants in this study did not actively use the writing center because there was insufficient time remaining before their deadlines, inconvenience with scheduling, tutors’ unfamiliarity with students’ content areas, and communication difficulties. Some participants had preconceptions of the writing center, which seemed to restrict their utilization of the writing center services. As mentioned earlier, all the participants, whether using it or not, seemed to think that the writing center provided primarily editing/proofreading services. Even though Hansung, the most active user of the writing center services among the nine participants in this study, attempted to utilize tutoring sessions to create opportunities for interactions with tutors, he did not expect more than editing. Hansung described the tutoring sessions with the tutor whom he met three times for his conference proposal:

For the first 20 minutes, he read my paper and I had to wait until he finished reading. While reading the paper, he checked and edited it as you see and then he explained it to me. He pointed out some grammatical errors.
Sujin recalled the tutoring session she had with a different tutor saying that “the tutor pointed out articles or organization, mostly about sentence level problems like when a sentence looks weird, or she also fixed inappropriate expressions.” However, it seemed that the tutors also touched on the conceptual level as well as the organization of the papers. Hansung said that “[the tutor] asked questions about conceptual parts for clarification and made some suggestions on what’s not clear” and Sujin also pointed out that the tutor asked questions to clarify what she was trying to say but “not to the degree that I should write or follow a specific format or structure or this part is wrong.” It was not clear whether Sujin asked for more than basic services if she wanted more than the basic grammar check. In the case of Hansung, he said that in the tutorials he particularly asked for advice on “grammar and expression,” which he considered most problematic as a nonnative English speaker.

It was also found that both tutors whom Hansung and Sujin consulted, as well as Lindsey, approached students’ texts by asking questions so as not to be directive and thus to elicit students’ participation. However, the writing center tutors seemed to deal more with surface level errors because these errors were most prominent and also students’ requests were for grammar help, as mentioned by the writing center staff in Research Question 3. The students did not actively attempt to communicate with tutors to get what they wanted from them but were passive receivers of the services. In relation to the communication difficulties, Hansung expressed his difficulty articulating what he wanted, and he attributed this to his lack of L2 proficiency. Hansung attempted to make use of tutoring sessions to practice his English, but language itself turned out to be a problem, inhibiting effective interactions with tutors. This language problem seemed to result in tutor-centered unidirectional tutoring sessions, as Lindsey described in Research Question 3. Thus, L2 students tended to passively receive and accept
tutors’ input. Lindsey’s comments confirmed this; she said “Korean students are just like ‘I need some help with this paper.’ They don’t express.” She further pointed out that Korean students were generally so “self-conscious” about making mistakes that “they just stop.”

Hansung, Sujin, and Jin, those who used the writing center, pointed out the scheduling difficulty as a problem, which seemed to limit students’ use of the writing center. For example, Sujin said that she could not make a follow-up appointment in the same week of her first visit, saying that “it was inconvenient because I couldn’t use it when I needed.” Similarly, Hansung stated that “it’s not easy to make an appointment because I have to schedule at least one week beforehand.” Jin concurred:

In the case of the writing center, when I call them they tell me to come next week. I wish they have more people so that they could help us immediately, or the next day. . . . I think it would be even better if the writing center works at the department level. If each department has its own writing center, it would be great. Considering the increasing number of international students, the current writing center staff is not enough.

In fact, according to the director, the center did receive complaints particularly about scheduling.

Tutors’ unfamiliarity with tutees’ content areas emerged as another problem in this study. Regarding this issue of tutors’ field difference, even though Lindsey argued that “the fact that the tutors aren’t from their field is not important,” Hansung claimed that it is difficult for tutors without discipline-specific content knowledge to provide a conceptual level of assistance particularly at the graduate level. Furthermore, not sharing background knowledge made it more difficult for Hansung to communicate with the tutors. This was also reiterated by Jin, who proposed the idea of creating a discipline-specific writing center. Younghee and Namjoo, in particular, did not go to the writing center because tutors did not have the background knowledge and thus, were not able to give specific feedback. Younghee explained:

I think the writing center would have been helpful, although I have not used it, but not for academic writing but to the degree of proofreading because I think they would not
understand what I say since they do not have the background knowledge. So, they would not be able to give specific feedback. . . . There is a limit in terms of the help we could get from them. So, it would be more helpful if we can get help from our majors.

*Research Courses*

Research courses, generally required of all graduate students, are presumably where students can learn their discipline-specific writing conventions. The participants in this study indicated in the pilot study that their academic research courses served as resources for their L2 writing socialization. For example, one of the objectives identified in the Music Department Graduate Research and Writing course syllabus is “to improve critical thinking, problem-solving and writing skills.” As discussed in Research Question 3, the Music research course was chosen in particular for a closer examination.

*Passive Utilization*

The problem was found to be that, as the instructor who taught the Graduate Research and Writing course pointed out in Research Question 3, this research course was not a preparatory course for other academic courses and this course was, by itself, academically very demanding and challenging. This was consistent with the three Music participants’ perspectives of this particular course. As a result, even though the course was recommended early in students’ program of study, many Music students, particularly performance majors, tended to postpone taking this course. Instead, they usually took the course in summer, when it lasted only three weeks. Both Heesoo and Sejun were performance majors. However, even Juyoung, who was in Composition and considered to be doing more writings than other performance majors, did not take this course early in her program of study. As such, none of the three Music students in this study was taking this course at the time of this study. Juyoung registered for the course in winter quarter but decided to drop it. She explained the reason behind her decision:
This course is being offered every quarter and just one class not a sequence. So, I can take it anytime. Students tend to postpone, because they don’t need to take it at a certain time and can take it anytime. Besides, I have been writing for other classes just fine without having taken that class, even though it would have been helpful. Students who took it told me that taking that class helped for other classes. One of them who took it in summer strongly recommend to take it in summer when it’s only three weeks and particularly because there is no exam in summer and less assignments, compared to taking it in a regular academic quarter.

All of the three Music participants seemed to depend on their Korean peers’ (mis)perceptions of this course in making their decision on when to take it to a great degree and thus the intended goals of this course were misinterpreted. More importantly, even though the participants pointed out that this course was a resource for their writing socialization, it seemed that they just wanted to get this course done. They perceived it to be difficult to fulfill the course assignments and were afraid of not getting a good grade.

Younghhee’s comments well represent the participants’ overall perceptions of research courses:

I took two research courses. Research courses were helpful in a way that we learn how to do research. I thought that if I am writing a doctoral dissertation, I will do research like this. . . . Not much about how to write academically. Don’t teach how to write literature review. It is not designed to teach non-natives. So, international students should figure things out by themselves. It is their own problem.

Research courses seem to teach writing for specific purposes (e.g., literature reviews or research papers), assuming that students are already equipped with general academic writing skills, and this was also consistent with the comments that the Music research course instructor made in Research Question 3. As Younghee pointed out, these courses were not necessarily designed to teach academic writing for beginners like her or L2 students in general who had limited prior writing experience. Perhaps this was why the Music research course instructor referred L2 students to other resource providers such as the ESL center and writing center for assistance.
Summary

The participants’ utilization of the ESL writing courses, the writing center, and the Music research course was examined in this section. The findings revealed that the participants in this study attempted to make use of these resources with different goals and expectations. However, their overall resource utilization effort was not active. Despite the intended goals of the resources discussed in Research Question 3 being the type of the services that the students really sought, there was a mismatch between the students’ needs and the services because in reality the students appeared to request and require the more basic services. This could be attributable to the students’ passive and/or limited resource unitization effort, as well as their lack of L2 proficiency in articulating their real needs.

While the participants in this study actively chose to take ESL writing courses, their participation in classroom activities was minimal. Their limited participation and insufficient preparation resulted in students’ not getting high quality feedback as the peer feedback was often limited to surface-level linguistic features. The three participants in the Introduction to Academic Writing course were passively receiving the services, and did not make their needs explicit to the instructor. Instead, the three participants who took the course from the same instructor pointed out the problem of the ESL instructors’ and the students’ unfamiliarity with each other’s content areas.

In terms of the on-campus writing center and the Music research course, with the exception of Hansung, the participants in this study were passive users of these resources. Three out of nine participants used the writing center and all of them asked primarily for surface-level editing from the center despite the center’s contention that this was not its major function. Also, students’ lack of oral L2 proficiency resulted in communication difficulties with tutors. This may
have led to the participants misrepresenting their needs as being primarily for written grammatical help (i.e. basic services).

Research courses were considered to be a more discipline-specific resource compared to the ESL center and the writing center. However, none of the three Music students who participated in this study took the research course since the course, not specially designed for L2 students, was perceived as academically very challenging. They were not making use of this course as a resource.

Table 4 presents the three resource providers’ intended goals and their actual services, as well as the students’ goals and their presented needs to the resource providers. In terms of ESL writing courses, it seems that the writing courses’ intended goals and the students’ goals and needs show some consistency. However, the students demonstrated limited and passive utilization of course materials and participation of in-class activities. Moreover, the students’ oral English and limited grasp of the writing conventions often limited the actual services of the writing courses to surface-level formal linguistic issues despite that being not the major goal of the activities.

Regarding the writing center, a conflict was revealed between the goals of the center and the students. Despite editing or proofreading not being the type of assistance it intended to provide, L2 students used the center primarily for editing or proofreading assistance, which seemed to limit its services to the very basic surface-level grammar checking.

In the case of the Music research course, even though the intended goals are described as above, the course was perceived as academically very challenging and demanding. Moreover, the students were more concerned about getting a bad grade than learning what the courses
offered and thus they tended to postpone taking the course until later in their program of study or they took it in summer when it lasted only three weeks.
Table 4

*Mismatched Needs and Services*

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<tr>
<th>Resource Providers</th>
<th>Intended Goals</th>
<th>Actual Services</th>
<th>Goals and Needs</th>
<th>Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ESL Writing Courses</td>
<td>- Exploring academic and discipline-specific writing conventions</td>
<td>- Course materials and in-class activities not actively utilized</td>
<td>- Complete required ESL writing courses (Music students)</td>
<td>- Limited and passive participation in peer review activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Assisting students in improving their performance on specific academic writing assignments</td>
<td>- Peer review feedback limited to surface-level issues</td>
<td>- Preparing for doctoral comprehensive exam</td>
<td>- Peer feedback limited to surface-level formal linguistic issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Writing summaries and critiques for graduate students beyond basic writing strategies</td>
<td>- Focusing on grammar (Editing course)</td>
<td>- Getting assistance in writing conference/thesis proposals and master’s thesis</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Grammar and organization</td>
<td>- Editing or proofreading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Center</td>
<td>- Consulting with those who come to become more competent and self-confident writers by helping them improve their writing skills</td>
<td>- L2 students, primarily coming to get editing or proofreading assistance</td>
<td>- Consider proofreading as the primary function of the writing center</td>
<td>- Grammatical problems in L2 students’ writing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Research Courses | - Preparing students to become independent musician-scholars  
- Improving critical thinking, problem-solving and writing skills  
- Recommended early in students’ program of study | - Referring L2 students to other resource providers (i.e., ESL courses and writing center) for help | - Perceiving the course as academically very challenging and demanding  
- Concerned more about getting a bad grade than learning what the courses offered, despite knowing that the course was designed to teach them how to write in the discipline | - Poor grammar, reading and writing skills  
- Postponing taking the course; taking the course in summer |
Discussion

A variety of challenges and conflicts that L2 learners may experience when participating in L2 writing activities have been documented (e.g., Belcher, 1994; Casanave, 1992, 1995; Currie, 1998; Dong, 1996; Johns, 1992; Prior, 1991; Schneider & Fujishima, 1995; Zamel & Spack, 1998) and these studies called for more attention to explore what prevents and inhibits students from gaining access to the opportunities for participation and interaction. Particularly, Casanave (1995) proposed that “student writers use a multiplicity of local resources . . . in diverse ways” (p. 107). Language socialization and legitimate peripheral participation also supposed that newcomers should have access to “information, resources, and opportunities for participation” (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 101) to become a member of a target community of practice. The findings of this study showed that basic services were provided by the resource providers, but the participants thought that they were not provided with the assistance necessary to meet their special needs in academic writing. From the perspectives of the resource providers, however, despite their aim being to provide higher level writing services, basic services appeared to be what L2 students needed in general and thus that was what they provided for the students. This clearly shows a lack of communication resulting in a mismatch between the services and students’ actual needs.

The participants in this study could have made use of the resources provided more actively by articulating their specific needs to the resource providers, taking more ESL writing courses, making more frequent visits to the writing center, and requesting more assistance from their advisors or course instructors. However, in keeping with what some researchers (e.g., Hyland, 2003; Toohey, 1999; Zuengler & Miller, 2006) claimed, some participants in this study
were denied access to some of the resources or did not make good use of them due to the language barrier or cultural conflicts.

Canagarajah (2002) highlighted the importance of situating “pedagogical activities in the specific discourse communities one is writing in/for” (p. 29). This stresses the importance of the context, consistent with the language socialization and legitimate peripheral participation perspectives, which posit L2 students learn best when they are engaged in and exposed to language-mediated activities within the context. However, as the findings showed, the participants in this study were not provided with such activities within their individual disciplines. Instead, in some cases, they were referred to ESL courses or the writing center. Nevertheless, previous studies (Horowitz, 1986; Leki & Carson, 1994, 1997) revealed that there is a large mismatch between the tasks and texts practiced in ESL classes and those required in real academic disciplines. Zamel and Spack (2006) emphasized that ESL classes should offer “content-saturated” activities (p. 147). They also pointed out that ESL instructors should create intellectually challenging activities. Similarly, Kasper (1998) stated that ESL programs should go beyond teaching students basic writing skills. The data analyses of ESL writing courses revealed that in order to address these concerns the instructors in this study attempted to create academically challenging and content-related learning environment by encouraging students to work on their field-specific papers. However, the topics were so diverse in content that students had difficulty giving significant feedback on each other’s papers. Further, this seemed to add to the larger problem of language barriers and cultural conflicts, which already impeded students’ active participation in peer review activities. Peer feedback was limited to basic linguistic features.
Particularly, the new Editing course instructor integrated the advisor logs to promote interactions between the students and their advisors and course instructors for consultation on discipline-specific writing conventions. As such, in order to help facilitate the transition process of L2 students from the ESL courses to their academic discipline and to meet students’ needs and instructors’ expectations, the findings of this study called for more communication and collaboration between ESL writing courses and academic disciplines. In addition, Silva (1997) claims that it is important for L2 writers to be provided with various learning contexts, including mainstream composition classes, basic writing classes, or sheltered ESL classes. Other than the basic resources discussed in this study, the participants, however, were not exposed to such a varied environment for participation, which the legitimate peripheral participation and language socialization theories view crucial for novices to enter their target academic communities.

Researchers (Harris & Silva, 1993; Powers & Nelson, 1995; Williams & Severino, 2004) called for more research on writing center practice regarding L2 students. Consistent with Thonus (2002), the findings of this study showed that L2 students were referred to the writing center by their disciplinary course instructors for assistance, since the instructors considered the writing center a useful resource. It was also because the courses and the departments did not provide the specific help that L2 students needed. The participants in this study went to the writing center primarily to “revise a specific text (for which the tutor may not know much of the relevant educational context)” (Cumming & So, 1996, p. 198). As shown in other studies (Cumming & So, 1996; Powers & Nelson, 1995), the participants in this study thought of writing center services as mainly editing and proofreading. In fact, due to students’ lack of L2 proficiency and cultural conflicts, basic services focusing on sentence-level problems appeared to be what they needed. Thus, as with the ESL writing courses, tutor talk tended to be dominant,
resulting in less participation of L2 students in interactions and less communication between tutors and L2 writers. The writing center staff were aware of “cross-cultural differences in interaction” as they indicated L2 students’ fear of losing face, for example, but with respect to “how to manage them [cross-cultural differences]” (Williams & Severino, 2004, p. 166), more training specifically concerned with L2 students would be beneficial. Powers and Nelson (1995) also stressed the need for more training on ESL issues and learning more about ESL writing for the writing center tutors.

On the part of L2 students, they could have been more rigorous in utilizing the writing center. The participants in this study either did not go to the writing center, since they worked on papers until the last minute or sought out last-minute help, which limited the writing center services to proofreading. Furthermore, this prevented the active participation of the students in revising and negotiating meaning with tutors as deemed advantageous by some studies (Goldstein & Conrad, 1990; Williams, 2004). As Powers and Nelson’s 1995 survey study revealed, the findings of this study showed that the writing center tutors were entirely from the English Department and did not have specialized training in ESL. Their unfamiliarity with the content of tutees’ writing seemed to cause more problems for L2 students, who were also unfamiliar with rhetorical contexts and organization or had difficulty explaining their problems to tutors. As Powers and Nelson (1995) stated, the writing center could play a significant role by providing individual conferencing to meet individual needs, and further function as cultural informants to “bridge the gap between expectations of L1 and L2 writing contexts.” (p. 130). This could be further facilitated through collaboration with L2 students’ content-area teachers and advisors, and the ESL writing courses.
Some researchers (Adrian-Taylor et al., 2007; Zamel & Spack, 2006) stated that instructors tended to consider L2 students’ writing inadequate for undertaking coursework. Particularly, according to Zamel and Spack (2006), instructors felt that they were not responsible for their students’ acquisition of academic discourse. The Music research course instructor in this study was aware of the language problem of L2 students, but made no effort to redesign the course to accommodate L2 students’ writing needs. Instead, she referred them to other writing resources such as the writing center and she also expected them to learn academic writing skills from ESL courses. More pertinently, she expressed her frustrations about L2 students’ not acquiring the language skills after being exposed to the academic community. However, Zamel and Spack (2006) pointed out that L2 learners should not be expected “to have achieved mastery of English before they begin to grapple with the demands of the academy” (p. 127).

Similarly, as Heath (1996) claimed, “students cannot be expected to write academic essays of argumentation, laboratory reports, or biographical accounts unless they have learned these forms through oral practice and have had multiple opportunities to reshape such writing with immediate audience feedback” (p. 777). As these studies indicate, it is unrealistic for instructors to expect L2 students to know how to write academically after taking a few ESL courses or making a few visits to the writing center. As Zamel and Spack pointed out, the instructors could play a critical role in fostering L2 students’ academic success by “providing meaningful feedback and guidance in response to students’ work” (p. 140). Or, when they refer their students to other resources for assistance, they could clarify to the other resource providers their expectations as well as the problems that they noticed in L2 students’ writing. For example, the Music research course instructor sent her Korean student to the writing center without sufficiently explaining the task. Had she made things more explicit either to the student or to the
tutor, the tutor would not have sent the student back to her for clarification. If there had been a follow-up communication among the three parties involved (i.e., the students, the instructor, and the tutor), the student could have received the help she needed.

More constructive and systematic assistance network could be established as scaffolding through communication and collaboration, which could further create more interactions and participation for L2 students in the discourse community, moving them away from the discoursal periphery or marginal positioning. For example, the findings of Weidman and Stein’s 2003 research on the socialization of doctoral students in sociology stressed the role of faculty, “who are accessible to students . . . and who clearly convey expectations” (p. 653). Instructors should develop ways to integrate and allow L2 students’ linguistic and cultural conflicts to become part of their instruction by making tacit expectations and conventions of writing practices explicit and articulating them clearly.

The three major resource providers in this study spelled out their intended goals and also pointed out difficulties providing the intended services. However, they could have been more actively involved in the L2 students’ writing socialization through more effective cooperation among each other to provide more sustained and constructive assistance for L2 students.

The students in this study received basic services at the very least; however, they seemed not to be actively utilizing all the resources available to them. This could be explained by their lack of L2 proficiency to articulate their real needs and intentions as well as cultural differences. In addition to “shyness and passivity” of East Asian students and “hierarchical systems” (p. 168) in Asian culture, Seo and Koro-Ljungberg (2005) indicated communication difficulties as the most prominent problem older Korean graduate students face in American higher education. Not only do L2 students have to make good use of all the available resources to create more
opportunities for participation, but also, more significantly, they must make a conscious effort to express their needs and thus to be provided with what they need as legitimate members of their academic communities.
CHAPTER 6
CONCLUSION

Based on sociocultural theories, more specifically the theories of language socialization and legitimate peripheral participation, the current study investigated the L2 writing socialization and the use of resources of nine Korean graduate students as they were socializing into their target academic communities. The research questions that guided the current study were the following:

1. How do Korean graduate students socialize into L2 writing in the U.S. academic context?
2. What L2 writing socialization problems, if any, do Korean L2 graduate students face in the U.S. academic context?
3. What resources (e.g., ESL classes or Writing Center) do they have access to in their L2 writing socialization into the U.S. academic context and what do the resources do, if anything, to socialize Korean L2 graduate students into U.S. academic writing, how, and why?
4. How do Korean L2 graduate students make use of ESL writing course, the writing center, and academic research courses?

Under the umbrella of qualitative research, multiple data collection methods such as interviews, observations, and document analysis were employed. The data were obtained both from the student participants and the major resource providers.

In this chapter, I will summarize the findings of these questions in light of the data presented and analyzed in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5. In addition, suggestions for further research and the implications for pedagogy will be discussed.
Summary of Findings

The findings showed that the nine Korean L2 students in this study attempted to socialize into their L2 academic discourse through many different venues such as ESL writing courses, writing center tutorials, discipline-specific academic courses, and interactions with NES peers and to a lesser degree with Korean peers. They also made self-arranged efforts like reading as a means of searching for written samples. The students in this study made an effort to utilize the resources mentioned above in their L2 writing socialization process. However, they were not active users of the available resources and their overall resource utilization was quite limited.

In their attempt to make use of the resources, the participants encountered some problems. These were mainly due to their lack of L2 proficiency to articulate their real needs and their ingrained cultural assumptions. The language barrier inhibited them from actively utilizing the available resources and posed further challenges in articulating their needs to the resource providers beyond basic services. Culturally perceived as shy, self-conscious, and afraid of losing face, the Korean students in this study were hesitant to seek out support from the resources, particularly from their advisors and course instructors. The students’ needs were primarily in the area of formal linguistic concerns and thus, the resource providers attended to those needs. For example, grammatical problems of in L2 students’ writing prevented the writing center to provide higher-level writing services dealing with concepts and organization. The students’ formal linguistic needs also seemed to have jeopardized the CESL goals for offering higher level content-based courses. As a result, one of the ESL writing course instructors focused extensively on grammar and had his students practice basic grammatical features in class. In addition, the peer feedback during the peer review activities in the Introduction to Academic Writing class was often limited to surface-level formal linguistic issues despite that being not the major goal of
the activities. It seemed that the students’ oral English and limited grasp of the writing conventions reduced the peer evaluation time to a surface-level grammar sweep. Similarly, although the Music Department research course was designed to teach higher-level critical thinking abilities and help students improve their writing skills, the formal linguistic issues of the Korean students’ in the class seemed to get in the way and thus, the instructor had to recommend that they drop the course or had to send them to other resource providers for assistance.

The students’ frustration with the mismatched needs and services and their inability to articulate their needs may be related to their limited use of resources. Nevertheless, the participants in this study could have been more active utilizing the available resources through more participation and interaction, which they did not due to various reasons including the language barrier, cultural conflicts, and ESL instructors’ and writing center tutors’ unfamiliarity with the students’ content areas. The students also expressed difficulties with access to the resources such as scheduling difficulty with the writing center tutors and lack of readily available interactions with NES peers.

Three major resources (i.e., ESL writing courses, writing center, and research courses) were involved in the participants’ L2 writing socialization process. However, there was a lack of collaboration among the resource providers. Even though the Music Department initiated the English placement test and the mandatory ESL program in collaboration with the ESL center, the department’s engagement was minimal. Furthermore, research courses are presumably designed to aid students’ understanding of discipline-specific writing conventions. However, these research courses are not necessarily designed to teach general academic writing skills for novice L2 students. The Music research course instructor was referring L2 students to the ESL center and the writing center for assistance, but there was no communication occurred between the
instructor and the other resource providers despite the uncertainty that the students got the help they needed. The resources were dispersed and not working in cooperation, which points to a need for a discussion among the three resource providers for possible collaboration.

_Suggestions for Further Research_

This study presents several limiting factors, which need to be taken into consideration for future research. First, the current study was conducted based on the experiences and perspectives of nine Korean L2 students and five additional people involved in their L2 writing socialization. Thus, the findings of this study are not generalizable to a larger Korean student population, nor to other L2 student populations. In this respect, a similar investigation of the use of resources with various L2 student groups, and even with NES students, can reveal further insights into a broader view of academic writing socialization.

Furthermore, similar research on the use of resources focusing not only on writing socialization but also on language socialization in general can also be conducted to facilitate the overall L2 language socialization process. For example, this type of research can be conducted in either a graduate or undergraduate context with a group of L2 students from the same discipline or a group of students from various disciplines. By utilizing language socialization and/or community of practice (e.g., legitimate peripheral participation) perspectives, further research will provide insights into how students with different backgrounds socialize into their target academic communities. Also, it will allow for comparison of the kinds of activities or practices available to students and also what facilitates or keeps them from actively utilizing some of the resources provided for their language socialization. Also, as the participants’ lack of L2 proficiency posed many challenges in their resource utilization, it would be interesting to further
investigate the role of L2 proficiency and resource utilization behaviors in both advanced and less proficient L2 students.

I would also like to mention the concepts of centripetal and centrifugal forces (Bakhtin, 1986) in relation to socialization of L2 students into a new community, in that the socialization process should be considered not as a one-way, centripetal force into the new community but as a two-way, centrifugal process because L2 students bring their linguistic, cultural, and historical diversities into the new community. This diversity serves as a building block for creating new learning spaces. This could be interpreted as constructing third spaces to link students’ L1/C1 and L2/C2 funds of knowledge. Thus, it would be interesting to investigate how the process takes place and what kind of social practices or activities could be employed in order to support the process.

Secondly, data collection methods can be expanded through more interviews with writing center tutors, ESL instructors, and faculty to present a broader picture of L2 writing socialization. For the current study, I interviewed one writing center tutor, one ESL writing course instructor, and one Music research course instructor. The interviews were also conducted once with each individual. Given the particularity of each case, these may not be representative of more general cases. Even though I attempted to address this limitation by including document analyses of other ESL writing courses for two quarters, more interviews with more people involved in L2 writing socialization would definitely strengthen the quality of future related studies. Also, as I was not able to observe any tutorials at the writing center, more observations of tutoring sessions and ESL writing classes would provide more valid and reliable data.

As novice L2 students’ socialization strategies in making use of writing resources develop and redevelop throughout their programs of study, more longitudinal research is
necessary to investigate their writing socialization. These would make it possible to speculate L2 language socialization issues from many different angles, enabling to discover other unseen or overlooked problems. Future research would also contribute to enhancing the understanding of those issues and thus to developing a university-wide support network for L2 students’ smoother transition to their new academic community.

Furthermore, this study was developed and conducted based on language socialization and legitimate peripheral participation theories. However, employing different and additional theoretical perspectives may bring about different and more comprehensive results. For example, the systemic functional linguistics perspective could shed more light on the understanding of the mismatched needs and services between L2 students and resource providers, which limited the services to the basic and which in return limited the participants’ active pursuit of resources.

The systemic functional linguistics perspective provides a framework to see, beyond the focus on form, “the ways that language, as a semiotic tool, interacts with social contexts in making meaning” (Schleppegrell, 2004, p. 18). More specifically, as Mohan (1986) puts it, “language is the major medium of instruction and learning” (p. 1). Based on this perspective, existing research shows that content-based instruction could be very effective for both language and content learning (Mohan, 1986; Mohan & Beckett, 2001; Schleppegrell, 2004). Several studies applied systemic functional linguistics perspective and content-based instruction to address mismatches (Beckett, 2002, 2005; Beckett & Slater, 2005). For example, Beckett (2002, 2005) shows that project-based instruction is generally perceived as useful in creating opportunities for learning content knowledge and language at the same time. However, she states that there are some discrepancies between teachers’ and students’ perceptions of project-based activities. Particularly, ESL students in Beckett’s study (2002) expressed frustration about not
focusing on learning language skills in isolation, as the purpose of project-based instruction was to integrate content with language as the medium for learning. Therefore, utilizing a variety of theories may provide a foundation for further research in the issues of mis-matches in students’ needs and resource providers’ services.

Finally, some cultural perceptions were noted by the student participants and the resource providers in this study. These perceptions were shown to play a negative role in the students’ attempt to utilize the resources and were not emphasized enough in this study. Further research on the role of cultural conflicts in L2 students’ use of resources can contribute to the better understanding of L2 students’ active or passive resource utilization. Also, it would be interesting to know how L2 students (re)shape their identities as they experience cultural conflicts in the process of their academic L2 writing socialization.

**Pedagogical Implications**

The findings of the current study clearly indicate that there needs to be more communication and thus more collaboration between all the parties involved in L2 students’ writing socialization. It is of note that the Music Department was making departmental efforts to assist L2 students to socialize into its academic discourse in collaboration with the ESL center. However, instead of handing the entire responsibility to the ESL center and simply referring students to the ESL courses or the writing center, more students can benefit to a greater degree if disciplinary programs take more responsibility.

**Suggestions for resource providers**

Each department can offer a basic-level research course or writing workshops for novice L2 writers to teach how to write an essay, a literature review, or a research paper. Also, as some participants suggested, it would be very effective if there were writing centers at the
departmental level, which can provide L2 students with more discipline-specific, continual and constructive assistance. Clearly, this can afford more accessibility to students. However, if an individual department finds it difficult to establish its own writing center or services, the on-campus writing center can hire tutors from various disciplines, or at least more tutors with ESL teaching experience.

It was also noteworthy that one ESL Editing course instructor attempted to create the opportunity for students to interact with their advisors or course professors through an advisor log activity to learn their discipline-specific writing conventions. It would be clearly beneficial if such effort would be made in all writing courses. Also, my data analysis indicated that content-based instruction was the CESL writing course goal but implementing this approach proved to be challenging. This was due to the participants’ apparent need for basic-level services. Nevertheless, resource providers should make every effort to facilitate content-based instruction based on previous research that shows that content-based instruction has been implemented successfully. For example, the findings of Mohan and Beckett (2001, 2003) and Beckett and Slater (2005) clearly show how this was done successfully with L2 student population at a university setting. Mohan and Beckett (2001) demonstrated the role of grammar in constructing meaning through the grammatical scaffolding by the teacher and the L2 learners, and it helped learners’ development of higher level academic discourse by focusing both on form and meaning. As Beckett and Slater (2005) found, implementing project work in content-based ESL courses would considerably enhance L2 students’ learning of both their field related content knowledge and language and other skills such as problem-solving skills, which would help minimize the mismatched needs and services between L2 students and resource providers. In addition, the TESL program at the university where this study was conducted began offering Content-based
Second Language Education course. This course trains the ESL teachers how to implement various content-based teaching and learning activities. Such on-going support for these ESL teachers can befit their teaching and make it more relevant to their ESL students’ needs.

Similarly, when instructors send their students to the writing center or the ESL writing courses, knowing where the students’ problems lie in their writing, it would be helpful if they can clarify their expectations not only to the students but also to these resource providers through methods like advisor logs or the writing center consultation report. At the same time, when writing center tutors send consultation reports to instructors, more follow-up support should be arranged both from tutors and instructors specifically targeting the areas found to be problematic in L2 students’ writing. Also, when ESL writing courses instructors and writing center tutors cooperate by sharing or dividing their responsibilities, the former focusing on the process and the latter focusing on the product in L2 students’ writing, students would benefit from two different resources, which would create more opportunities for participation and interaction.

More training for both writing center tutors and ESL instructors can bring about better understanding of and thus the optimal assistance for L2 students’ writing socialization. For example, the ESL center can provide workshops for writing center tutors on teaching ESL theories and pedagogy to enhance writing center tutors’ understanding of L2 students’ cultural differences, which tend to inhibit students’ active participation in tutorials and negotiation with tutors. In addition to proactive student advising informing incoming L2 students about the various writing courses offered by the ESL center, implementing a writing placement test to place students in courses best fit their needs can be also helpful. Thus, L2 students can use ESL services more actively by benefiting from taking more than one writing course as a sequence.
Suggestions for students

On the part of L2 students, they can reap the greatest benefits when they make intentional and rigorous efforts to utilize the available resources and explicitly articulate what they need. For example, this was why the Music Department made it mandatory for L2 students to complete previously recommended ESL courses because they often would not take the recommended courses despite their struggles with writing. Also, as many students in the current study pointed out, they started writing their papers in the last minute and thus, they had no time to go to the writing center. Students should be aware of potential scheduling pitfalls and be advised to plan their time ahead and use the writing center services in the process of writing.

They also need to interact more with their advisors and course professors to receive more consistent and discipline-specific assistance. Faculty also can amplify their role in L2 students’ socialization to academic discourse by being more accessible to students and being more explicit conveying their expectations. In this regard, students can take advantage of the office hours of their course professors and also, it would be helpful to have mentoring meetings with their advisors on a regular basis. In terms of mentoring, it would be also helpful if novice L2 students could be paired up with experienced native or non-native students or a group of such students who agree to serve as their mentors, so that L2 students can more readily access useful information about available resources from the very beginning of their academic experience. Furthermore, L2 students can get continuous assistance learning language and culture. This would be particularly helpful for those with a less advanced L2 proficiency because, as my data analysis indicates, they tend to be not active in seeking out for help. Therefore, a mentoring system with fellow students can create a friendly and social environment, where novice L2 students can easily get some of the necessary assistance they need.
More importantly, L2 students should not be expected to acquire acceptable writing skills by merely being exposed to the academia and taking courses. Faculty should not expect the students to demonstrate substantial improvement in their writing after taking just one or a few ESL writing courses or after making a few visits to the writing center. Writing is not merely a matter of linguistic proficiency or accurate spelling and good grammar. Acquiring academic discourse is a unique social practice that all students, including native speaking students, must be socialized into. This is why there are numerous English 101 courses that even some native speakers have to take several times to pass. As Silva (1997) claimed, this is why there is a need to provide L2 writers with more opportunities for participation in various learning contexts, such as mainstream composition classes, basic writing classes, and content-based ESL classes.
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