

## Bridging the Divide: Integrating Composition and Second Language Writing Approaches to Transfer

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### I. Introduction

Over the past 10 years, composition studies has seen an increase in empirical and theoretical research concerning the subject of transfer. Although “transfer” can be theorized in different ways, some common approaches borrow from Perkins and Salomon’s (1988) conceptions of “low road” and “high road” transfer, which denote respectively the reflexive use of habits and the “mindful abstraction” of knowledge across contexts (p. 25). Perkins and Salomon (1988) also used the terms “near” and “far” to describe transfer to similar (or near) and different (or far) contexts (p. 22). These original conceptions have been taken up and further developed by composition scholars in their work of identifying the previous writing knowledge that students bring to first-year composition (FYC) classrooms and exploring how (and if) students apply what they have learned in these courses to future coursework. Although these scholars investigate transfer through varied lenses, they largely share an underlying attention to the critical practices of generalizing, adjusting, and reshaping knowledge to varying genres and writing tasks that are embedded within specific social and cultural contexts.

These updates have also described transfer as a mode of critical thinking by resisting a “carry and unload” model (Wardle, 2012) that sees transfer as a one-to-one application of knowledge. Instead, they have adopted a problem-solving mindset in which prior knowledge is adapted to new rhetorical situations in flexible and innovative ways. In this sense, Wardle (2012) framed transfer as “creative repurposing” that emerges from problem-exploring dispositions that develop multiple possible solutions through careful reflection, as opposed to answer-getting dispositions that focus only on a single, “correct” answer (“Problem-Solving”, para. 1). Yancey, Robertson, and Taczak’s (2014) three models of how students adapt previous knowledge to new writing tasks include *assemblage* (students affix new writing knowledge onto earlier understandings of composition), *remix* (students integrate prior and new writing knowledge) and *critical incident* (students come across a situation that makes them retheorize writing) (p. 5). Both Wardle’s and Yancey et al.’s approaches are attentive to metacognition, or “thinking about thinking,” which Beaufort (2007) described as characteristic of most transfer literature and what Yancey et al. (2014) argued is a “critical component” of transfer (p. 32). Because meta-awareness does not often arise on its own, students must be cued or guided through this process by reflection exercises (Yancey et al., 2014) and analyses of how knowledge is “recontextualized” through the social and rhetorical dimensions of genres (Beaufort, 2012; Nowacek, 2011). While varied, these approaches reconceptualize transfer from being a static application of knowledge to being a dynamic, evolving mental activity.

While composition studies has studied the cognitive work of transfer largely in terms of writing, it has paid little attention to how language use can be a transformative practice as well. Some gaps in transfer research were identified in Nowacek (2011) and Yancey et al.'s (2014) call for future work addressing how knowledge is recontextualized by underprepared, working class, and/or first-generation students, in addition to the mostly privileged, homogeneous group of students that most empirical research about transfer within the FYC classroom has focused on. However, clearer steps towards connecting transfer with language use are present in Leonard and Nowacek's (2016) position that this type of research has not yet "attended in sustained, systematic ways to language negotiations, despite the fact that such choices and navigations are indeed being made, even among primarily monolingual students and instructors" (p. 260). Given the relationship that language has to writing, both need to be addressed when researching the presence of and potential for transfer work in the writing classroom.

One potential reason for why FYC-focused transfer research has not yet fully studied language use is the ideology of monolingualism that defines language "deviations" against the "sameness" of Standard Written English (SWE) and obscures how first language (L1) as well as second language (L2) students engage in transformative language acts (Lu & Horner, 2013). Another potential reason stems from the creation of required ESL or basic writing courses as prerequisites or replacements for "mainstream" FYC courses. Although Matsuda (2006) did not advocate removing these placement options since many L2 students self-enroll in such courses and see them as a means of language support, he did maintain that this policy of containment contributes to the myth of linguistic homogeneity, or the "tacit and widespread acceptance of the dominant image of composition students as native speakers of a privileged variety of English" (p. 638). To combat these assumptions of monolingualism, instructors can instead view the writing classroom as a space to negotiate the "local" with the "global" where "the multicultural, multilingual, multifaceted experiences and identities of our students meet the equally varied and complex academic discourses" (Hall, 2009, p. 38). Leki (1995) reminded writing instructors that L2 as much as L1 students use various strategies, such as adopting feedback they receive and notice their classmates receiving from the instructor, to help them "cope" with writing tasks. Thus, instructors can consult with *all* students about these types of strategies in order to better understand and facilitate transfer.

Combining language practices with writing can offer a fuller version of the critical thinking process behind transfer acts. In this article, I offer one way of supporting such work by contextualizing much of the transfer research that takes place in composition studies within the more global aspects of language learning and acquisition that are studied by the second language writing discipline. I also explore discussions of transfer within second language writing scholarship to analyze how this concept is treated in the literature about second language acquisition (SLA), contrastive rhetoric (CR), and English for academic purposes (EAP) courses as well as to uncover possible connections between the research of composition studies and second language writing. Ultimately, this work seeks to inform, enrich, and diversify transfer research currently taking place within composition studies—which has not yet thoroughly considered how multilingual and native English-speaking students engage in cross-language practices in a variety of contexts—while offering directions for research to help instructors promote the transfer of writing and language learning for both L1 and L2 writers.

## II. Review

### **Linguistic Approaches to Transfer Through SLA**

Like composition studies, second language acquisition (SLA) has several different definitions of transfer. For instance, Odlin (1989) defined transfer as the “influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired” (p. 27). Kellerman and Sharwood-Smith (1986) described transfer as “those processes that lead to the incorporation of elements from one language to another” (p. 1). O’Malley and Chamot (1990) approached the concept as “the use of previous linguistic or prior skills to assist comprehension or production” (p. 120). Even from these first few definitions, we can see how SLA primarily views transfer through the lens of linguistics, as opposed to composition’s writing-focused approach.

These two fields’ disciplinary values are also evident in the ways they view “negative transfer.” Where the term largely suggests obstructions or “interference” within the process of learning a new language in SLA (Karim, 2010; Weinreich, 1953), the same term can be used in composition studies to imply the misapplication of knowledge or skills in a new writing context (Beaufort, 2007; Perkins & Salomon, 1988, p. 22). Nowacek (2011) added that the term carries implicit (and unquestioned) assumptions about the value assigned to recontextualization that conceal the variety of these acts and “normalize[ ]” who determines the “misapplication” of knowledge (i.e. often instructors) (p. 37–38). To re-situate the cognitive acts of transfer within the power relations of the university, she described those who recognize and communicate connections across diverse contexts as “agents of integration” (p. 38).

Despite the disciplinary differences between these two fields in the approach to transfer, commonalities can be seen in how their attention to specific contexts can facilitate the process of successful, or “positive,” transfer. Much as similar writing tasks can ease the direct application of genre knowledge, perceived structural similarities across two languages can result in higher occurrences of transfer (Karim, 2010; Kellerman 1983). These instances can tentatively be labeled as examples of “near” transfer in the sense of applying writing and language skills across similar contexts. And yet, it should be noted that while both fields place an emphasis on prior knowledge, they each do so in a way that is grounded in their respective disciplines.

While most composition scholars are interested in the understanding of prior writing instruction and assignments that students bring with them into their FYC classrooms, much of the research in SLA focuses on how prior linguistic knowledge impacts the learning of a new language. Such work not only focuses on the syntactical, phonetic, or semantic differences between languages, but also addresses L1 and L2 reading processes (Karim 2010) and the various learner- and language-based variables that affect third language (L3) acquisition (Murphy 2003). In his review of transfer within SLA research, Liu (2001) emphasized the need for more pragmatic-oriented studies of transfer that focus on the interpretation and production of meaning within communication. This point signals a shift from largely linguistic forms of transfer to a consideration of how the use of language impacts communication practices, of which writing plays a significant role.

### **Contrastive Rhetoric and the Bi-Directionality of Transfer**

SLA's pragmatic approach to language acquisition transitions into research into contrastive rhetoric within second language writing, which has a long, contested history in the field that began with Kaplan's (1966) seminal article comparing various student essays to argue that different cultures have their own rhetorical conventions and thought patterns. Since then, the idea of negative transfer or interference has been applied to empirical work in CR to see if, how, and in what ways L1 rhetorical characteristics shape L2 writing. Kubota (1998) provided a comprehensive overview of research that both supports and challenges the presence of L1-L2 transfer, specifically citing examples of studies that maintain differences between Japanese and English rhetorical structures (Hinds, 1983, 1987, 1990; Kobayashi, 1984; Oi, 1984) as well as her own research that points to similarities (as well as differences) across the two languages (Kubota, 1992). Likewise, her 1998 study of Japanese students writing expository and persuasive essays in Japanese and English revealed that half of her participants used similar patterns in their L1 and L2 writing. Other analyses of Japanese exam-preparatory essay training and junior high school language arts textbooks confirmed that deductive patterns can be found in both Japanese and English writing (Kobayashi & Rinnert, 2002, 2004; Kubota & Shi, 2005).

Contrastive rhetoric's research can offer transfer scholarship in composition a focus on the cognitive, socio-cultural, ideological, and political nature of language and language use in writing. In the fifty years since Kaplan's founding article in contrastive rhetoric, scholars in second language writing have considered ways in which to update this work given the emergence of poststructuralist, postcolonial, and postmodern critiques of language and culture. While some defend contrastive rhetoric against claims that it is essentializing and presents culture as static and homogeneous (Connor, 2002, 2005; Li, 2014), others suggest updating traditional contrastive rhetoric to critical contrastive rhetoric to account for the multiplicity of languages, rhetorical conventions, and identities within the larger political and economic sphere of globalization (Kubota & Lehner, 2004, 2005). Kubota and Lehner (2004) argued that an uncritical analysis of L2 English texts to uncover the rhetorical features of a writer's L1 overlooks the multiple factors that can influence the development of L2 writing competence, such as L1 writing expertise, L2 proficiency, and the writer's agency during the composing process. Such comparisons often do not allow for considerations of bi-directional transfer and "may not reveal actual transfer at the individual level" (Kubota & Lehner, 2004, p. 12). Thus, transfer is not impacted by culture alone.

Spack (1997) and Matsuda (1997) carried this idea to the pedagogical level with the insistence that writers are not uncritical vessels of their respective cultures. Assuming that students automatically produce rhetorical tendencies believed to be characteristic of their culture positions them as a "writing machine" that "creates text by reproducing the pattern provided by [their] linguistic, cultural, or educational background[s]" (Matsuda, 1997, p. 49). No writer is the same and students vary in age, background, and L1 and L2 literacy experiences (Spack, 1997, p. 51). DePalma and Ringer (2011) added that the static model of L2 writing that Matsuda (1997) critiqued presumes the reader to be a "kind of decoder who can identify the presence of 'academic discourse' and 'alternative discourses' in student texts" (p. 138). Not only does such a model ultimately deny any authorial agency and fix writer and reader identities, but it can result in a "limited search for 'skills'" in which instructors and researchers are looking for "apples when those apples are now part of an apple pie" (Wardle, 2007, p. 69).

Identity becomes a crucial component, among others, that can shape the L2 writing process as well as the bi-directionality of transfer across multiple languages. Students' individual ways of thinking and processing information often intersect with their personal, academic, and professional identities, their cultural backgrounds, linguistic capabilities, and rhetorical understanding of a particular context (Matsuda, 1997; Spack 1997). Kobayashi and Rinnert (2013) added that the boundaries of these factors become blurred within the linguistic, textual, and rhetorical features of the various languages that multilingual writers can compose in. For instance, their longitudinal case study of Natsu, a Japanese student who could write in three languages, revealed how she “developed common features of her discursive selves (‘voice’) as a writer” across her L1 (Japanese), L2 (English), and L3 (Chinese) (p. 25). Moreover, their study showed (a) how each of these languages had bi-directional influences on the others and (b) that her L1 added to the “construction of a core pattern for all three languages” (Kobayashi & Rinnert, 2013, p. 23) that reflected the multiple personal, cultural, and writer identities within her writing. Language proficiency and identity cannot be teased apart, but are very tightly bound together within a person's composing process. It is also important to recognize that there is a language proficiency threshold below which the production of meaningful written text is unlikely if not impossible.

### **Language Development and Writing Across the Curriculum**

Discussions of drawing upon students' prior writing knowledge inevitably welcome the question of how to best facilitate the transfer of this knowledge from writing or EAP classes to courses within their specific disciplines. Such a question must be treated with care since composition and ESL and EAP classes are often seen as teaching “general academic writing” to students, which ultimately supports the widely held perception of FYC and ESL classes as lower-level, “basic skills” type of courses (Downs & Wardle, 2007; Spack, 1997; Zamel, 1995). This question becomes ever more important given studies that show how transfer is not instantaneous or guaranteed (Leki, 1995; Spack, 1997). Also, relying on students to articulate the transfer of writing skills can be fraught given how “even students who have been exposed to a considerable amount of writing instruction can lack the vocabulary and the metacognitive development to be able to articulate what is happening to them” (Brent, 2012, p. 567). Similarly, asking explicit questions of students about transfer only increases the risk of researcher bias influencing their answers (Brent, 2012, p. 567). Such concerns highlight the slippery process of tracking and analyzing both the reflexive and critical applications of prior language and composition knowledge to new writing tasks.

Nonetheless, transfer researchers in composition studies need to seriously consider the role that cognitive and sociocultural conditions of language acquisition have within the completion of new writing tasks, given the experiences of L2 students writing across the curriculum. By challenging the “myth of transience,” the belief that students' language “errors” can be “fixed” within a semester or two of writing, Zamel (1995) emphasized the interconnectedness of knowledge and language (p. 509). Writing instructors must do more than only focus on decontextualized language skills and grammar drills, and should welcome the opportunity to revise perceptions of language use that the presence of L2 students demands (Hall, 2009; Zamel, 1995). Although she did not discuss transfer specifically, Leki (1995) stated how writing instructors should “consult with students to learn what strategies they already consciously use, help to bring to consciousness others that they may use and

not be aware of using, and perhaps suggest yet others that they had not thought of before” (p. 259). Here we see an indirect reference to tapping L2 students’ prior knowledge of writing experiences and techniques in order to design assignments that will better prepare them for writing across the curriculum.

### **Applying EAP Concepts to Building Disciplinary Knowledge**

Although Leki (1995) raised the importance of critically assessing which models to include in the writing classroom, scholars looking into EAP instruction take this suggestion into further consideration. Negretti and Kuteeva (2011), for instance, explored the connections between genre awareness and metacognitive knowledge through examining the writing of pre-service teachers in an academic reading and writing course at a major Swedish university. Their study revealed that a genre-based approach to these writing tasks (e.g. discussing the differences between familiar genres, analyzing introductions to academic articles, comparing articles, etc.) “helps L2 students develop metacognitive knowledge of genre-relevant aspects of academic communication” (p. 107). Such knowledge helps students become better attuned to the rhetorical contexts of the texts they work with and produce while “translating” this understanding to effective reading and writing strategies (p. 108). This work also connects to the five interrelated knowledge domains that Beaufort (2004) described: writing process knowledge, subject matter knowledge, rhetorical knowledge, genre knowledge, and discourse community knowledge.

In her overview of 60 studies that focused directly and indirectly on the development of genre and/or disciplinary discourse knowledge, Tardy (2006) discussed the role that genre knowledge has in the transfer of learning. Although previous writing experience and practice (whether L1 or L2) affect all writers, “both L1 and L2 writers seem to build knowledge *implicitly* through exposure to texts and also make *explicit* use of model texts to build knowledge of generic structure” (Tardy, 2006, p. 95, emphasis hers). Although her review reaffirms the difficulty of studying transfer since “learners may transfer knowledge unconsciously or may be unaware of the origins of knowledge that they have” (p. 94), it does support the idea that transfer is not exclusively either an L1 or L2 issue, which is echoed in empirical work within contrastive rhetoric (Kubota, 1998; Kobayashi & Rinnert, 2008, 2013). Her review also discussed future directions for research related to second language writing, which will be discussed in more detail in the conclusion.

### **Challenging Monolingual Writing Instruction Across the Curriculum**

Second language writing can remind composition studies that there is no monolingual form of English or “academic writing” across the curriculum (Hall, 2009) when it comes to transfer research involving the first-year writing classroom. Just as writing is not a “skill” that can be learned within one or two semesters, language development is not a “problem” that can be “fixed” within the same amount of time, within the same allotment of writing courses. Leki (1995) described how L2 students rely on various strategies to help them “cope” with various writing tasks within their coursework: using current experience and instructor feedback, looking for models, using current or past ESL writing training, and accommodating and resisting teachers’ expectations while juggling other course requirements, among others. By becoming more aware of these coping techniques, instructors can consult with students about these types of strategies in order to build more effective writing tasks and to create a more supportive writing environment for these students. Likewise, Zamel (1995)

would argue that such conversations would allow instructors to “reexamine composition instruction” (p. 520) that takes into account the writing *and* language support of various students. Just as Zamel (1995) imagined the writing course as one of Pratt’s “contact zones,” Hall (2009) stated that the same space can reflect the negotiation of “the local” with the “global” where students’ multilingual backgrounds and identities can challenge the static, inaccurate version of “academic discourse” (p. 38).

If Leki (1995), Zamel (1995), and Hall (2009), among others, described *why* the experience of L2 writers across the curriculum must be considered, DePalma and Ringer (2014) contended that their conception of adaptive transfer offers one way as to *how*. Specifically, they defined adaptive transfer as dynamic, idiosyncratic, cross-contextual, rhetorical, multilingual, and transformative (pp. 46–47). The last component is particularly important given their emphasis on “reshaping” learned writing knowledge as opposed to simply “reusing” it (2011, 2014). Thus, adaptive transfer provides a potential framework to help develop research questions that will lead into further insights about how students learn to write new genres in a range of contexts, how they compare learning outcomes of various classes, how they compare the writing they do in their coursework to tasks they complete in the workplace (perhaps an internship), and how they approach reflective assignments, among other situations. Adaptive transfer also updates the methodological approaches that CR and EAP scholars take to studying transfer by resisting the search for assumedly static, transferable skills and instead providing a model focused on “the dynamism of writing knowledge, rhetorical situations, and written genres” (DePalma & Ringer, 2011, p. 143).

Grujicic-Alatraste (2013) raised some concerns about adaptive transfer in terms of its use of “reshaping” within a genre studies context, its broad framework, and the need for more pedagogical applications of adaptive transfer. Grujicic-Alatraste (2013) asserted that adaptive transfer’s attention to the rhetorical shifting of language overlooks how the altering of genre conventions requires affirmation by the discourse communities that communicate through them (p. 462). However, DePalma and Ringer (2013) responded that adaptive transfer is not solely focused on genre and that its use of “reshaping” differs from that of genre instantiations by situating this act on a spectrum that locates using prior knowledge to alter a genre (or context transformation) on one end and adapting the same knowledge to a new situation (knowledge adaptation) on the other (p. 468). They also added that the flexibility of their framework allows for multiple ways of rearticulating prior writing knowledge, as writing domains (like the instruction and practice-based ones Grujicic-Alatraste suggested) cannot easily be teased apart. Finally, DePalma and Ringer (2013) agreed that more methodological and pedagogical applications of adaptive transfer are needed, since their 2011 work largely outlined the theory of this approach. However, they began to address this need for these additional applications in their 2014 updates.

### **Transforming Languages Practices Through Translingualism**

The transformative component to DePalma and Ringer’s adaptive transfer framework also acts as an effective bridge between recent literature on translingualism in both composition and second language writing. Similar to how adaptive transfer resists the notion of “reused,” unchanged concepts across contexts, translingualism challenges the myth of linguistic homogeneity (Matsuda, 2006) as well as the ideology of monolingualism (Lu & Horner, 2013) by instead calling attention to the “variety, fluidity, intermingling, and changeability of languages as statistically demonstrable norms around the globe” (Horner, Lu, Royster, &

Trimbur, 2011, p. 305). It is important to note that even so-identified native speakers of English as much as multilingual speakers (un)consciously engage in transformative language practices given how SWE is not so much a uniform discourse as it is a language with conventions that are reiterated through practice—much like a genre (Horner et al., 2011; Lu & Horner, 2013). Rather than viewing this process as prescriptive, Lu and Horner (2013) instead saw “iteration as agentive” given how instructors can guide students on critically reflecting how writing is a site where even slight, deliberate changes can modify and renegotiate the standards of “dominant” discourses (pp. 592–593). This type of engagement mirrors DePalma and Ringer’s (2014) emphasis on perceiving students less as passive “repositories of genre knowledge and conventions” and more as actively shaping ways of knowing within their respective discourse communities via prior knowledge and experiences (p. 60).

In this vein, both transfer and translingualism are not a “neutral carrying over of knowledge from one context or language to another,” but instead are processes of knowledge-making and communication that are shaped by cultural, social, and political practices (Leonard & Nowacek, 2016, p. 259). Viewed through a translingual lens, “inference” or the “negative transfer” of language use must be re-thought, as “language deviations in writing can be considered not always failure to transfer standard writing knowledge, but instead a norm of language-in-practice, one of its meaning-making functions” (Leonard & Nowacek, 2016, p. 261). This is likely one reason why the composition field has seen an uptick in literature related to acts of code meshing that combine vernacular, local dialects with so-called “Standard English” discourse in ways that reveal the embedded power dynamics of communication practices (Canagarajah 2006, 2013; Young 2007). Leonard and Nowacek (2016) also suggested that transfer and translingualism have much to offer one another since past literature on transfer suggests potential research methods for studying translingualism while translingualism “reminds transfer scholars to also account for language ideologies in the writing skills, knowledge, and contexts studied” (p. 260), among other benefits.

While translingualism, much like transfer, has seen much attention within composition journals, considering how its acknowledgement of linguistic heterogeneity can be used to challenge the dominance of “unaccented” or “Standard English” (Horner et al., 2011), care must be taken not to conflate translingualism with second language writing. Matsuda (2014) described the “false binaries” of second language acquisition versus translingual writing, code switching versus code meshing, and multilingual versus translingual with the reminder that “negotiating language differences is not possible without having some proficiency in multiple languages or multiple varieties of a language” (p. 480). More specifically, an uncritical use of code meshing in the classroom can evoke a fascination for “alien writing” that risks being more a case of “linguistic tourism” than a thoughtful re-shaping of language practices (Matsuda, 2014, p. 482) as well as paradoxically reinforcing the “sameness” of SWE (Lu & Horner, 2013, p. 584). For this reason, writing instructors must be attuned to the scholarly conversations taking place about language differences rather than rely on “tour guides” (Matsuda, 2014, p. 482). Atkinson et al. (2015) also stressed the differences between translingualism and second language writing by clarifying how the former is a particular perspective about the role of language in the study and teaching of writing while the latter is a broader international and transdisciplinary field that examines



the theoretical, methodological, and ideological processes involved in writing through the acquisition of a second (or third, etc.) language (p. 384).

### **III. Implications**

#### **Directions for Future Research**

Given the implications of transfer research within second language writing scholarship, four broader connections can be made between this work and similar studies within composition. These connections are meant to reflect areas of overlap between the two fields as well as point to ways in which empirical research on and pedagogical approaches to transfer within composition can be further developed and expanded with a more explicit attention to the needs and backgrounds of L2 writers. The following implications that “bridge” the two fields are as follows:

#### **Prepare Both L1 and L2 Students for Writing Across the Curriculum**

As has been discussed earlier, several studies within second language writing urge instructors to be attentive to students’ previous writing experiences and strategies to better shape course goals and assignments to fit their needs (Leki, 1995; Spack, 1997). James (2006a) discussed several instructional strategies for “hugging” (i.e. addressing low-road or unconscious transfer) by explaining to students how a particular learning outcome from the course will be useful elsewhere, matching learning experiences to future applications of learning, simulating future expected writing tasks, modeling learning outcomes, and creating situations for problem-based learning. Strategies for “bridging” (i.e. addressing high-road or mindful transfer) include anticipating applications, generalizing concepts, using analogies, conducting parallel problem-solving, and performing metacognitive reflection. In addition to considering writers’ needs across disciplines, second language research also needs to consider how L2 writers cope with the transition from classroom to workplace writing (Tardy, 2006). Other than Parks’s (2001) oft-cited study about the writing practices of novice nurses, most research related to transfer in second language writing has predominately focused on writing courses. This is an area that research in business and technical communication can assist with (Russell, 2007; Brent, 2011).

#### **Be Mindful of the Transformative Nature of Knowledge, Skills, and Language Use**

Within this review of a second language writing approach to transfer, both James’ (2006b, 2008, 2009, 2010a, 2010b) and DePalma and Ringer’s (2011, 2014) research comes the closest to citing research that is also used by empirical studies in composition on the same topic (e.g. Beach, 2003; McCarthy, 1987; Perkins & Salomon, 1988; Russell, 1995). However, while second language writing studies on transfer often draws upon composition research (e.g. Beaufort, 2007; Wardle, 2007, 2009), composition research could reciprocate the move to more closely consider how language proficiency shapes the process of learning transfer. While a number of factors ultimately affect how students increase their writing competence and develop their approach to writing tasks with a more critical consciousness, language use is certainly one of them. As Hall (2009) and Lu and Horner (2013) made clear, a strict attention to only one type of “Standard English” disadvantages students by failing to have them consider the relationships between multiple types of Englishes and languages more generally.

### **Encourage Reflection on Types of Writing and Language Recontextualization**

One pedagogical application of transfer research that is shared by composition and second language writing is reflective assignments that encourage students to consider how they adapt their prior knowledge to new rhetorical situations. The basis for such an activity comes from the two fields' concurrent focuses on "recontextualizing" genre and language conventions and contexts (Canagarajah, 2013; Lu & Horner, 2013; Nowacek, 2011). For instance, in their Teaching for Transfer course, Yancey et al.'s (2014) last major "reflection-in-presentation" assignment asks students to articulate their own theory of writing based on their experiences within the class as well as how they imagine to apply this theory to other writing tasks outside of the classroom (pp. 75–76). This assignment can be modified to prompt students to also consider how their history of language learning and development comes to bear on their writing practices (DePalma & Ringer, 2014; James, 2006). Even L1 students can analyze and reflect on examples of "typical" student writing (e.g. the "White Shoes" essay from Bartholomae's (1986) "Inventing the University") to consider how their uses of discourse contribute to the "sedimentation" of this Standard Written English (Lu & Horner, 2013). Overall, these metacognitive approaches aimed at "cuing" these types of connections also share the goal of emphasizing students' agency in how they shape their writing and language use across multiple contexts (DePalma & Ringer, 2014; Lu & Horner, 2013; Nowacek, 2011).

### **Explore the Relationship Between Prior Knowledge, Language Use, Genre Knowledge, and Identity**

As Matsuda (1997) and Spack (1997) clarified, writers come from a variety of cultural, linguistic, and educational backgrounds that each have an influence on the decisions they make during the composing process. No one factor can determine the shape or direction of a text. Just as second language writing scholars cannot assess student texts based solely on the rhetorical characteristics believed to be representative of their L1 linguistic background, composition scholars cannot analyze the writing of a student without considering other factors (e.g. previous writing instruction and language use) that may have influenced its development. Overall, the larger identities of L1 and L2 writers must be taken into account to better understand how personal, writer, disciplinary, and professional identities intersect with genre knowledge and audience expectations. Lately, researchers in both L1 and L2 writing have realized the impact that student attitudes and motivation have on the process of learning transfer (Driscoll, 2011; James, 2012; Pugh, Linnenbrink-Garcia, Koskey, Stewart, & Manzey, 2010). More research needs to continue in this direction.

Overall, what this work hopes to make clear is that transfer research in composition studies and second language writing should not continue in more or less separate, but parallel, directions, but should be better integrated to address the learning experiences of different types of students within the increasingly globalized university. In addition, second language writing research—both in terms of methods and results—is a valuable resource for composition scholars to draw upon, considering how much empirical research about FYC courses focuses largely on the reshaping of writing conventions and contexts. L2 writers and writing are very much present across American colleges and need to be accounted for in more detail, especially when it comes to learning more about how L1 and L2 students transfer (or do not transfer) writing knowledge across the curriculum. Composition studies

and second language writing still have much to learn from one another, and teacher-scholars and their students can only benefit as a result.

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