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# Dynamics under the Silence: Exploration of the Needs and Wants of Korean Students in a Large Scale English Writing Class

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DYNAMICS UNDER THE SILENCE: EXPLORATION OF THE NEEDS AND WANTS  
OF KOREAN STUDENTS IN A LARGE SCALE ENGLISH WRITING CLASS

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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August 2011

|

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Title: Dynamics under the Silence: Exploration of the Needs and Wants of Korean Students in a Large Scale English Writing Class

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This qualitative study aims to understand the varied needs and expectations that Korean students bring into a large scale English writing class, as well as the transformation of these stated needs in the course of a semester. Moreover, it investigates how the writing teacher and his students negotiate these different needs and expectations. Also, this study examines the topics and approaches that the Korean students utilize when they want to dialogue with their writing teacher. Additionally, the present study tries to illustrate the endeavors of this English literacy educator to assist his students within the limitations of the Korean EFL teaching environment.

The stereotypical portraits of Asian students as quite and uncritical can hinder L2 students' learning, as these false assumptions prevent L2 researchers from gaining better insights about these students (Kubota, 1999, 2000; Kumaravadivelyu, 2008; Nieto, 2010). In fact, Asian students can think critically (Benesch, 1993; Canagarajah, 2002b), though they may use their own particular approaches and strategies when they wanted to express their voices (Biggs, 1990, 1996; Cribbin & Kennedy, 2002; Holmes, 2004; Watkins & Biggs, 2001).

In order to seek to embody a much fuller picture of these students, this qualitative study used methodologies drawn from an ethnographic approach. Participants included one male English writing teacher and seven student participants enrolled in his writing class in a Korean

university. The main data sources were ethnographic interviews, participant observations, field notes, weekly conceptual memos, and artifacts such as students' drafts and text messages exchanged between the participants and researcher.

The results of the study indicated that the seven students and writing teacher appeared to have varied understandings, expectations, and needs related to English writing, which were virtually never discussed and negotiated in this class. Still, the students' perceived needs transformed as students gained more experience and understandings about English writing. Depending on the topic involved, Korean students used various approaches to communicate with their writing teacher. Ultimately, this study identified factors inside and outside of class which impeded dialogue between the teacher and students. The last chapter offers relevant suggestions for English literacy educators and university administrators.

## Dedication

In memory of my grandmother, Young-hwa Park,  
For her strong Korean woman's spirit passed down to me,

To my father, Sung-hyuk Kim, and my mother Eun-Kyong Kim,  
For their devoted love to my life.

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Without the love of my Korean mentor, Dr. Jawon Lee, I would not have been able to dream of extending my academic life to this point. I also would like to express my love to Younghee Kwon and Youngjoo Lee, who have been a constant source of comfort. Also endless support and encouragement from my senior colleagues, Yongsu Kim, Jaewoong Yoon, Dohyeong Yoo, and Hyejung Kim, who have encouraged me to pick myself up whenever I felt



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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

This qualitative study explores the various needs and expectations that Korean students brought into a university writing class, as well as the ways these needs transformed in the course of a semester. In particular, this study investigates various topics and strategies that students utilized both inside and outside of class to engage with their professor. Though some literature conventionally describes Korean students as silent and passive learners, the present study seeks to embody a much fuller picture of these learners using investigating tools from an ethnographic approach. Additionally, the current study aims to convey the voice of an English literacy educator who, despite environmental limitations, made continuous attempts to promote an effective English writing class. Finally, this study analyzes the outcomes of the educator's endeavor to understand his students. Participants of this study included one teacher and seven student participants who enrolled in the teacher's English writing class in a Korean university.

The framework of this study is rooted in the dialogism introduced by Bakhtin and, particularly in terms of pedagogy, by Freire (2000), who emphasizes the role of dialogue to empower students. This idea is supported by the dialogic approach in TESOL (Wong, 2006) and critical pedagogy educators (e.g. Canagarajah, 1999, 2002b; Kumaravadivelu, 2001, 2003, 2006), who emphasize the need for sensitivity in contextualizing the theories and practices related to classrooms. Throughout the process of examining Korean students' attempts at negotiating their needs, these theories provide a critical lens through which to view these students' developing perspectives on and understanding of their needs, as well as the dynamics surrounding their desires and attempts to find ways to meet these needs.

This chapter begins with background explaining the reasons that I undertook the long journey that is this study. Also included in this section is a statement of the problem area under study, the purposes of this study, the significance of this study as well as the research questions. Finally, this chapter provides an overview of the coming chapters.

### **Background of the Study**

This study is deeply rooted in my short but intensive teaching experiences as a writing instructor at a Korean university. The integration of my experience with concepts in the professional literature has helped me to gain insights into student-teacher communication for negotiating the needs of both parties. With these in mind, I will begin this chapter with a discussion of how this study originated.

After I finished my doctoral course work, I wanted to go back to Korea to teach Korean university students, hoping that I could understand them through this teaching experience. Since I thought I knew my students well to some extent, I expected that I could help them cope with the feelings of inadequacy they may experience as English language learners in an EFL country. However, this journey toward understanding Korean students' needs turned out to be very confusing and complicated. I came to feel that there were seemingly impenetrable walls between them and me. Also, the results of my limited attempts at needs analysis were very different from my expectations. It was not an easy job to break the silence that seemed to reign in the classroom and elicit my Korean students' authentic voices. I was willing to listen to these voices, but it was difficult to hear them. In the end, I feel I learned a valuable lesson from my students, as they taught me that there should be ways of discerning their needs even when their behaviors were characterized by silence.

From fall 2007 to spring 2008, I taught four English writing classes at a university in

Seoul, Korea. The class sizes, which consisted of from 100 to 120 students, were astoundingly large for writing classes. The large number of students, however, was and is not unusual for elective courses at Korean universities, especially popular courses. English is a foreign language for Korean students, so English writing class (comparable to English 101 in the United States) is not required for undergraduate students in Korea. Rather, Korean universities require undergraduate students to take Basic English 1 classes, which mostly aim to enhance English reading skills. According to a particular teacher's preferences and goals, speaking and writing may occasionally be taught in these classes. However, students may elect to take a separate course focusing on writing, such as the ones I taught and the one focused on in the present study.

In my writing classes, these 120 students sat in a high-tech environment, complete with a brand new computer with internet access, wide screen projector, automatic screen coming down from a big white board, wireless microphone, and a main desk where the instructor can control the computer, DVD, VCR, and speaker sound. I could also turn off the screen in front of the white board so that students could not see what I was doing with the computer. The classes even had fancy thick curtains so that a teacher could completely block day light. In short, it was impressive. However, the inconsistency between the high-tech environment and the enormous class size was both interesting and challenging.

Most of all, determining the learning expectations of the Korean students was a challenge for me. To meet this challenge, I attempted to find out what they wanted, by devising a survey containing open-ended questions such as, "What would you do if you were a writing teacher?" at the beginning of the classes. However, this exercise was not enough to elicit the responses that would allow me to understand my students' needs. Most importantly,

their needs seemed extremely varied and somewhat chaotic. Many of them described their writing class as though it were mixed with their listening and speaking class. Others noted that they would teach English grammar so that their students could develop a perfect grammatical sense. Also they claimed that they would teach many vocabulary words so that their students would write well. And some of them even said they would teach students to write well in every form of writing genre, *just like American people*. I was overwhelmed by their expectations and could not find a way to work with them regarding their needs.

Perhaps even more important, I felt that there were strong limitations to my ability to hear my students' voices in many cases. Some wrote only superficial comments which did not have the ring of sincerely felt opinions. These simply said things like "You are doing fine." Others responded in a way that I found more deeply distressing: these chose to return the survey virtually blank. I understood that Korean students were not accustomed to providing this kind of feedback; still, their lack of response left me wondering if the silence hid some deeply felt dissatisfaction. And I found it even more difficult to elicit open discussions in class about the students' feelings. There was often a pervasive sense of discomfort among the students when I approached them to talk.

Not only did I have trouble discerning their needs, I now wondered whether their unenthusiastic responses were hiding oppositional attitudes for some of my students. I wondered if they resented the fact that I had spent some time in another country; this in turn made me feel a hurtful alienation, and a sense of frustration when I could not understand their difficulties as English learners. When I had explained myself to my students, situating myself as a language learner and a scholar from the United States, I had really hoped to talk with and understand them so that I, also, could be understood.

In many Korean writing classes like my own, students' chaotic expectations are mingled with skepticism about their writing teachers. Relatively young professors have often recently graduated from schools in English-speaking countries. These young returning teachers are often given writing classes for at least two reasons. First, these classes involve a heavier workload, and new instructors are often relegated to taking on the more demanding situations. There may also have been an assumption that instructors who had earned degrees in English literature would be good at teaching writing.

Unfortunately, this situation has some notably undesirable features. Students believe the writing teachers do not understand what they want. Conversely, writing teachers believe students do not know what they need because students are inexperienced in English writing. This mistrust between Korean students and Korean writing teachers greatly lessens the possibility of dialogue between them, which is already difficult enough in large-scale classroom contexts.

In my second semester, I had mixed feelings of being somewhat comfortable yet exhausted with the large scale writing class. I tried to communicate with the students through drafts and personal mini-workshops, which were done during times devoted to in-class writing activity. During this time, I let them know that I was there for them, offering my help whenever they needed it. Through providing teacher feedback, I tried to reach as many students as I could so that I could understand their needs and difficulties. However, when I approached them, asking if they needed my help with their writing, many students seemed hesitant to close the distance; rather, they just smiled and said they were fine. While some felt comfortable in discussing their writing issues with me, most students seemed uneasy expressing their writing concerns in a public setting. Thus, overall, my attempts to understand

students' needs as well as provide feedback elicited unsatisfactory results: I failed to understand what they wanted. With the constant effort to learn about my students, I started to become exhausted and began to feel that these students might not be interested in English writing, much less in communicating with their teacher. However, a priceless experience with a student taught me that this was a misunderstanding

The time came for me to collect my students' first project, consisting of small books of their favorite recipes. Each student's book was the result of his or her in-class writings for the first half of the semester. I emphasized that they should not simply staple the drafts that they wrote during the classes and submit them. Instead, I asked them to reorganize the writing pieces into a small recipe book that they designed in the first class. However, despite my semester-long efforts, I found that one student turned in his/her recipes as stapled writing pieces. I assumed the student would be a clumsy male who did not pay attention and was indifferent about his work. So, I talked into the microphone laughing and saying, "Please re-submit this recipe book. It's amazing that someone really could do this even after all my efforts emphasizing the recipe book." The students and I laughed together and I forgot the incident.

After the class, while I was preparing the next class, a student approached me, looking nervous. At first, I did not recognize her (recall that this was a class of 120 students). She told me that she was the student who turned in the stapled papers and said she felt sorry but she really did not know the guidelines. I was surprised to realize that the owner of the stapled drafts was the attentive student whom I had noticed always sat in front and studied hard. Feeling surprised and a bit guilty at my presumption, I told her that it was fine and that she could resubmit the paper during the next class. However, after my other sections, two hours

later, she came to me with her completed recipe book. It was evident that she had worked really hard on the book during these couple of hours. Most of all, at the end of the book, there was a handwritten letter from her, in which she wrote about how she felt embarrassed and hurt when I joked about her work to whole class. She told me she had even heard someone saying, “What a loser. He’s going to get F.” I now seriously regretted my sarcastic in-class behavior. In the hope of making amends, I searched her email address on the university website and sent her an email telling her that I felt sorry about the incident, explaining what I had been thinking at that time. I apologized and said that I had learned from her the fact that a simple joke, which seems harmless, could hurt students. To my surprise, she replied back to me saying she was astounded to find my email. She was surprised to see that a professor would send an apologetic email to a student, and excited at the fact that she had found an instructor willing to communicate with her students. In turn, her response shocked me; I had considered my email to be no more than a common courtesy, something any professor would do in this circumstance.

As I reflected upon my experience, I was disappointed to realize that there had been times when I had nearly cynically given up on communicating with students, and when I no longer tried to find different approaches to reach them. This exchange had been simple. A simple email allowed me to have a meaningful dialogue with a student. Even though it was a large-scale class, I now realized that there still might be ways to communicate with my students. From this student’s feedback, I had also been surprised to learn that students do not view teachers as people who want to talk with them. But if a writing teacher does not want to talk with her students, I thought, how can she understand them? How can she help them with their writing? If this is the prevailing situation in English language education in Korea, it

comes as no surprise that it has been difficult to create effective writing classes for Korean students. After this experience, I decided to start transforming myself. In order to understand Korean students' needs and expectations from English writing class, I first had to know how to communicate with them.

From experiences like this, my journey to understanding Korean students as a Korean teacher had begun. As a result of my exposure to critical pedagogy, I strongly believe that the negotiation between these positions, namely those of the students and the writing teacher, is an important way to empower both parties.

### **Statement of the Problem**

When researchers and practitioners from English speaking countries examine the interactions and negotiations in English language classes, they often describe EFL/ESL students as uncritical, passive, and uncommunicative. However, Cortazzi and Jin (1997) have presented an interesting argument about this issue. As one of the class evaluation processes in English speaking countries, teachers often get feedback through group discussions of reflections in classes. Many students from East Asian countries feel uncomfortable in criticizing their teachers' class in public. Consequently, they resolve this issue by talking to their teachers in private after the class. However, since teachers in English speaking countries often perceive these efforts as private talk, unofficial comments, or just being polite, they do not give them full value. This result illustrates the possible problems caused by a limited understanding about students from different cultures who hold differing expectations in student-teacher interactions.

A number of studies have suggested the importance of understanding students' different expectations in communication (Biggs, 1990, 1996; Cribbin & Kennedy, 2002; Holmes, 2004;



Watkins & Biggs, 2001) when they express their needs to their teachers or professors. For example, many studies report that a number of students from East Asian countries favor one-to-one interaction with their teachers (Biggs, 1990, 1996; Cortazzi & Jin, 1997; Murphy, 1987). In other words, many East Asian students have the tendency to line up in front of their teacher to ask questions and discuss issues, as soon as a class is over. They do this more often than students from Western cultures (Biggs, 1996). Teachers in Confucian cultures such as China, Japan, and Korea also function to nurture the expectations of students toward personal interaction in and after class by seeking more one-to-one interaction in their classrooms than teachers in Western cultures (Biggs, 1996). In an EFL context, Chinese students are likely to be disappointed about the lack of personal communication and response of native teachers (Biggs, 1990, Murphy, 1987).

Some studies, conducted with limited understanding of such issues, can unintentionally create stereotypes of Asian students in applied linguistics and English language teaching (Kumaravadivelu, 2008). Of course, not all stereotypes are negative as there are positive stereotypes (Asian students as diligent and good at math) and harmful/negative stereotypes (Arabs as terrorists). However, even the stereotypes which are believed to have a positive function can have negative effects. For example, researchers have found that the stereotypes of Asian American students “contribute to biased and limited perspectives of Asian American students” (Ki & Yeh, 2002, p. 2) by allowing people to ignore the heterogeneity within and between groups. Asian students are not a homogeneous group who can be described as all alike. Korean students are heterogeneous based on their differing geographical, social, political and economic backgrounds, as well as their personal characteristics. Thus, labeling students from any culture “can veer dangerously close to [...]

racist implications” (Nieto, 2010, p. 93), or also can be a form of reification (Nieto, 2008).

Kubota (1999, 2001) criticizes the false stereotypes about Asian students in her series of studies. She points out the fact that the perceived images of Asian students are derived from false comparisons with idealized images of American students. Kumaravadivelu (2008) points out that, in language education, the stereotypes of Asian students (ex. obedience to authority, passivity in class, and lack of critical thinking) can negatively affect L2 students’ learning, as well as hindering studies on L2 learning. In other words, these stereotypes of Asian students prevent L2 researchers from gaining better understandings about students from those contexts. As many researchers have argued, students from those contexts can be critical (Benesch, 1993; Canagarajah, 2002b; Kumaravadivelu, 2008), and have their own preferred negotiation strategies. Researchers and educators need to explore these students’ different expectations in teacher-student communication and to understand the dynamics under these students’ struggles and their preferred approaches to learning and growth.

### **Purpose of the Study**

One purpose of this study is to examine the various needs and expectations that Korean students bring to an English writing class. Literacy educators need to understand their students’ expectations in order to create an effective class. However, many teachers find it difficult to estimate their students’ expectations inasmuch as students have various degrees and kinds of experiences of writing in English as well as diverse attitudes toward writing. Thus, this paper aims to explore the various perceived needs and expectations that Korean university students have when taking writing classes, as well as their understandings about English writing.

This study also aims to understand a Korean teacher’s expectations and perceptions

about an English writing class. Many writing classes are run by Korean teachers who have differing English literacy backgrounds. From their own learning experiences, these literacy educators use various writing theories and practices which need to be modified to fit into diverse teaching contexts. Thus, it is expected that these educators may have differing understandings and expectations toward English writing when they design courses for Korean learners.

Another purpose of this study is to explore how the writing teacher and his Korean students negotiate their two sets of expectations as the course develops. Many studies about student and teacher needs have been conducted in the TESOL field. The field benefits the investigation of the negotiation of needs between teachers and students as a way of empowering students. However, negotiation does not necessarily mean that conflicts are accepted and resolved. This study will explore attempts at negotiation between student and teacher and will attempt to discern the reasons for success and failure of these attempts in the context of Korea.

As part of this goal, I would like to investigate how Korean learners utilize differing approaches to communicating with their teachers, as well as the topics they bring up when they communicate with them. Asian students are believed to use different strategies to speak with their teachers in both ESL and EFL classes when compared to students in Western countries. It is dangerous, however, to generalize, thinking that all Asian students use a single set of strategies that differ from those of Western students. Still, when a writing educator in Korea is interested in creating a meaningful dialogue with her students, it will be valuable for her to understand the different channels used by Korean students to discuss particular issues with their instructors.

### **Significance of the Study**

Exploring a range of writing needs of Korean college students will provide a greater understanding of Korean students and the context of writing instruction in Korea. In spite of the fact that a number of studies have been conducted and have emphasized the importance of understanding the needs of local students in EFL literacy education (Canagarajah, 1999; Kumaravadivelu, 2001, 2003, 2006, 2008; Wong, 2006), studies on Korean students' writing needs have been relatively scarce.

Moreover, explorations of these Korean students' preferences in teacher-student communication will help educators find their own approaches to elicit meaningful interactions in their writing classes. Especially for those educators who experience difficulties engaging students with cultural, economical, and educational backgrounds similar to those of the participants, this study will help them, as well as researchers, to understand some of the numerous factors influencing these students' understandings and approaches in classroom communication.

Methodologically, this qualitative study, using elements of ethnographic methodology, expects to open a space where light is shed on the dynamics of Korean students who are often described as silent and passive. In fact, these dynamics are difficult to investigate via quantitative studies, which constitute the main research trend in Korean English education (Sung, 2007). Although both quantitative and qualitative approaches are useful, some important voices are left out in a pattern that relies exclusively on quantitative studies. Thus, this study will contribute to knowledge construction in Korea by adopting a qualitative study to have a close look at the Korean students.

With the help of critical understandings from Bakhtin, Freire, as well as critical

pedagogies, the findings and implications of this study are expected to contribute to the field of critical studies, particularly related to issues in Korean higher education.

Finally, one of the significant aspects of this study is that it attempts to explore practice in a typically large EFL English writing classroom. While this large class size could represent a serious problem, it is also the reality in Korea as well as other places. The rich descriptions and findings of this study will provide insights for the teachers and scholars who want to understand such EFL contexts and create effective English writing classes within the parameters imposed by contexts such as the Korean educational system.

### **Research Questions**

This inquiry is guided by the following set of questions;

1. What perceived expectations and needs are brought to a writing course in Korea by both the teacher and his students, and how do the students' perceived needs transform as the writing class progresses throughout a semester-long writing course?
2. What means of dialogue development is there between the teacher and his students during this semester-long course, and what topics do the students discuss in these student-teacher dialogues?
3. To what extent is it difficult to create a dialogue in such a writing class? If dialogue fails to take place, what effect does this have on the large scale writing class, and on the learning that takes place, as perceived by the instructor and the students?

A qualitative approach was employed in order to explore the needs of Korean students in one English writing class over the course of a whole semester in the fall of 2009. The main methods of data collection were as follows: participant observation of the writing class, field notes, interviews, casual conversation with participants, an open-ended question for the entire

class students as a class activity, weekly conceptual memos, and collection of artifacts such as students' drafts. The data will be analyzed through the three phases in an ongoing manner (Green, Camilli, & Elmore, 2006). For the effective analysis of the substantial collected data, NVivo 2 was used as an assistant tool.

### **Overviews of Coming Chapters**

Chapter 2 provides a review of the relevant literature relating to this study. The chapter consists of three parts: the notion of dialogic interactions in English language teaching; needs studies; and writing studies in Korea. This starts with Bakhtinian and Frierian dialogics as theoretical framework, as well as discussing the framework of critical pedagogy. Also, a brief history of needs analysis in English language teaching is presented, followed by a section discussing studies of English writing instruction in Korea.

Chapter 3 introduces the methodology of this study. After repeating the research questions and the methodology for the study, the research paradigm of qualitative inquiry will be discussed. It also presents the information about the research site and participants, as well as description of the role of the researcher. The chapter then continues by presenting an overview of the methods for data collection and data analysis. Issues of trustworthiness and ethical considerations are covered as well.

Chapter 4 provides detailed contextual findings about the writing class (the site of this study) and personal profiles of the eight participants (seven student participants and one writing teacher). Chapter 5 relates the results of this study to the three research questions, using thematic headings. Chapter 6 discusses interpretations of the findings. Finally, Chapter 7 presents conclusions with brief summaries of analytic points, implications, directions for future research, limitations, and researcher reflections.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter will provide a review of three categories of relevant literature: dialogical studies on English language teaching, studies on needs analysis, and writing studies done in Korea.

#### **Dialogical Studies in English Language Teaching Pedagogy**

This section of the chapter will deal with the theoretical frameworks as well as relevant literature that serve as basis for the present study. Dialogism plays an important role, providing insights to understand the differing expectations and needs about English writing of student and teacher, as well as processes for negotiating such differences. First, it will introduce Bakhtin (1982) and Freire (2000) as a theoretical and conceptual framework. Bakhtin's (1982), dialogic perspective on language, discourse, and power will be discussed through the concept of speech genre, dialogized heteroglossic power in language, and human nature. The next section will present Freire (2000)'s pedagogy which emphasizes dialogue as empowering students. In the same line, Wong (2006) suggests a sociohistorical and dialogic approach in TESOL, again embracing the voices of students who are often excluded in the academy. Critical pedagogy (Benesch, 2001; Canagarajah, 1999, 2002a, 2002b, 2005; Giroux , 2005, 2007 ; Kumaravadivelu, 2001, 2003, 2006; McLaren, 2009) will also support the dialogic idea in English language education, emphasizing the importance of listening to the hidden voices of peripheral classes (Canagarajah, 2002a). Later, the following chapter will present a historical outline of needs analysis in English language teaching, focusing on "rights analysis," the dialogic needs analysis, as well as the definition of needs relating to this study. Finally, relevant studies of English and English writing education in Korea will be introduced

in order to provide a better understanding of the context.

## **Dialogism**

The concept of dialogism presented in Bakhtin (1982) provides a significant viewpoint on the ways of understanding language or signs. Bakhtin viewed language as speech, not as a structural system of linguistic features such as syntax, lexicon, and morphology (Johnson, 2004). Bakhtin objected to the linguistic system proposed by de Saussure, claiming that Saussure “ignores the fact that in addition to forms of language there are also forms of combinations of these forms, that is, speech genre” (Johnson, 2004, p. 121). The concept of “utterance,” for Bakhtin, is distinguished from the “sentence” which is an abstraction from the utterance and is, thus, devoid of a context. In his view, the utterance is “placed within the context of living people through their dialogic social interaction” (Wong, 2006, p. 124). Dialogic interaction is affected by social or historical constraints and actual discourse forms of speech genres. The speech genres regulate social activities such as content, style, and structure in language use, and in this sense, they mediate between “sociopolitical and economic life and language” (Wong, 2006, p. 124).

Since the speech genres are in a dialogic relationship, the dialogic is at the core of Bakhtin’s literature theory. According to Bakhtin (1982), we are not “the first speaker, the one who disturbs the eternal silence of the universe” (p. 69). Every utterance is not a new and genuine word which never had been said. We speak with words that were spoken in an ancient time, and our utterances also enter into the utterances of others. In this regard, we speak with others’ voices (Bakhtin, 1982). The utterance is in multi-dialogical relationships with other utterances and, “since every utterance, every word, is half someone else’s, this dialogic relationship extends to the original owner of the utterance and to the social, cultural,



and institutional context in which it was originally situated” (Johnson, 2004, p. 125). When the utterance is addressed to the person who speaks (in monologue), it is in the form of dialogue with other utterances. Thus, the utterance has a dialogic relation with other utterances.

Bakhtin’s dialogic understanding about language and human behavior/ knowledge offers a valuable theoretical framework for English language education, reminding educators of the importance of various situated contexts. Even though we use the same utterance, the uses and understandings of this same utterance can be different. We need to find out where students come from and why they produce a given utterance in order to have a better understanding of our students. When we produce utterances, we choose a certain speech genre in order to express our intended meaning to others. Each speech genre contains a specific type of utterance that we will use consciously or unconsciously. For this reason, we “do not speak with one voice but with many voices” (Johnson, 2004, p. 124); Bakhtin called this *heteroglossia*. Utterances do not belong to us until we internalize or appropriate them; but these are connected with other voices; in other words, they are heteroglossic, in that language reflects and defines a range of contexts where the language has been used. Sometimes, the same word has different meanings according to the contexts in which the word is used, which include the time, the place, and the person who uttered the word. In order to understand an utterance, we need to consider the context where the utterance was made and we need to think about the other voices which enter into the speakers’ voice, whether the speaker is aware of this process or not.

For Bakhtin the two forces at work in speech, which reflect and appreciate the multi-voicedness of the world, are centripetal and centrifugal forces. Centripetal forces move

toward the center and unity. In language, these centripetal forces are expressed as general linguistic systems such as in the grammar and phonology of a language. Centripetal forces are opposed to the heteroglossic notion of languages, in that these forces aim at unification and centralization in linguistic life. At the same time, they might have a positive function because centripetal forces help to overcome the heteroglossia in language and maximize mutual understanding. Bakhtin (1982) noted that “the centrifugal forces of language carry on their uninterrupted work; alongside verbal-ideological centralization and unification, the uninterrupted processes of decentralization and disunification go forward” (p. 272). In language, the centrifugal forces are embodied in dialects and exceptional rules in linguistics.

Bakhtin emphasizes the centrifugal forces in the dynamic of those two forces and places the concept of dialogized heteroglossia here. Dialogized language, the hybridization through the dynamic of those two forces, is ongoing within any utterance. Through dialogism, Bakhtin explains human behavior: the self represents a dynamic process of those two forces. Johnson (2004) notes that “individual self is relative” (p. 126), in that it cannot be isolated from others, and is affected by other voices which enter a speaker’s voice through her lifetime experiences. Understanding the individual means understanding the relations between the individual’s inner and outer realities. This understanding can be achieved by understanding the mediating substances, the utterance of the individual.

Bakhtin’s explanations about dialogic relation of the two (centrifugal and centripetal) forces are both descriptive and idealized. In other words, his explanation about the dialogic relations in language and nature address not only natural logic, but also an idealized relationship by virtue of struggle and negotiation. Supporting this point, Lillis (2003) discusses Bakhtin’s dialogic notion on two levels: On level 1, dialogue is a “given” in the

nature of language; and on level 2, dialogue is “something to struggle for,” and is an “ideal as to the nature of language in human communication” (p. 197). Additionally, she points out that, in Bakhtin’s view of the encounter between the two forces, dialogue is not the process of meaning making but the goal.

Educators need to focus on this dialogized heteroglossic power existing in language and human nature. The ongoing dynamic between centrifugal and centripetal forces works in classrooms consisting of participants who have different experiences and, thus, hold different expectations about any given utterance. The ongoing attempt at hybridization of those two powers of centripetal and centrifugal through language represents human nature. However, if the negotiation, the dialogue between two forces, is forbidden, this works against human nature and eventually has negative effects on students. Wong (2006) maintains that the ongoing nature of dialogism, which is unfinished, open-ended, and multi-voiced, is opposed to monologism. She advocates that while multivoicedness characterizes Bakhtin’s dialogism, authoritative discourse is “univocal” (p. 134) and does not permit dialogue; such authoritative communication is often observed in Korean education. This dialogic concept has been “a valuable theoretical resource for those who want to open spaces for different voices” (Wong, 2006, p. 125), such as TESOL scholars and practitioners teaching students in/from different discourse communities. The following section discusses this dialogism in an educational context, particularly focusing on Freire, who criticizes the monologic pattern existing in some classrooms and emphasizes the importance of dialogue between the student and teacher.

### **Dialogism in Education**

In an authoritative English writing class, where students bring their differing needs and wants, they study teacher-selected knowledge and often do not have an opportunity to

negotiate their own preferences. Considering this unbalanced power issue, many scholars have agreed that dialogue between student and teacher is an important solution for empowering students and eliciting successful learning. One of the best known roots of the movement for empowering students in education can be found in the work of the Brazilian educator, Freire (2000; 2009). He has criticized the ‘banking’ image of education, under which “the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor” (p. 72) of knowledge. He believes that instead of communicating with students, teachers see themselves as banks that are full of knowledge and students as passive depositories that need to be filled with true knowledge transferred from teachers. From this banking perspective, students become objects which are not required to think, feel, make decisions, and be critical. This hierarchy keeps students and teachers from building mutual trust, with students believing that teachers are not related to their lives. He stresses that “education must begin with the solution of the teacher-student contradiction, by reconciling the poles of the contradiction so that both are simultaneously teachers and students” (Freire, 2009, p. 53).

In many English language classes in Korea that are often taught through teacher-centered teaching, a pattern emerges in which teachers make all decisions regarding teaching materials, content, and procedures. Freire (2000) has pointed to what he calls a “narrative” pattern in such cases, which “involves a narrating subject (teacher) and patient, listening objects (the students)” (p. 71). In this narrative relationship, teachers make all of the decisions and fill students with “contents which are detached from reality” (Freire, 2009, p. 52). Even though the teachers believe that they are making good decisions for their students, the decisions do not reflect their students’ voices, needs, or expectations. Given this context, these decisions hardly capture the students’ needs. Freire (2009) notes that “education is suffering

from narration sickness” turning students “into ‘containers,’ into ‘receptacles’ to be ‘filled’ by the teacher” (p. 52), and thus, this relationship promotes a mistrust between students and teachers.

In order to solve these problems, English literacy educators are encouraged to reorganize their teaching by recognizing students as co-constructors/ investigators. Freire (2000, 2009) suggests a ‘problem posing’ model which involves acts of cognition instead of the transfer of knowledge. He emphasizes that the liberation of the oppressed (in this case, students) should be achieved with them, not for them; he uses the metaphor of a midwife in describing learning as an act of liberation. Thus, in English literacy education, teachers are the people who help students’ literacy development, and students are the agents of their learning. In this view of education, the banking model dichotomy between teachers and students no longer exists. Rather than assuming a rigid, unreflective, and hierarchical role, problem-posing teachers are reflective about their own practices. Freire (2009) emphasizes that such teachers become “the object of reflection by himself and the students” (Freire, 2009, p. 57) and students are the agents of liberating themselves through a process of transformation that comes from within them. In order to practice problem-posing education, Freire calls attention to dialogue as an indispensable element.

Recognizing students as co-constructors/ investigators of a teachers’ teaching is a form of teacher development through learning from students. Dialogic relations depend on the capacity of cooperation among cognitive actors, which in turn requires perceiving others as cognitive agents. Freire (2000) has argued that

Through dialogue, the teacher-of-the-students and the students-of-the-teacher cease to exist and a new term [sic] emerges: teacher-student with

students-teachers. The teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, the one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teach. They become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow (p. 80).

In this view, teachers learn various hidden values and knowledge from their students through dialogue with them. It is also unethical and ineffective to prohibit student dialogue in a class because this only promotes the possibility of compliance (Benesch, 2001), wasting valuable learning opportunities. The dialogic notion includes the right to speak, which works to prevent dehumanization. Through dialogue, in the teaching and learning process, teacher and student have opportunities to become “more fully human” (Freire, 2009, p. 54). “The dialogue between oppressed people and those who seek to end oppression” (Wong, 2006, p. 134) evokes reflection, and the roles of students and teachers are transformed, resulting in learning being a mutual process. Freire (2000; 2009) believes that dialogue is the practice of freedoms as it requires love, humility, faith and, most of all; hope (Wong, 2006).

Overall, this problem-posing approach provides a valuable theoretical background for English literacy educators to understand student needs from an ongoing perspective, reflecting reality in a situated context, requiring flexibility for change, and engaging a critical dialogue. Freire (2009) explains that “problem-posing education affirms men as beings in the process of becoming as unfinished, uncompleted beings in and with a likewise unfinished reality” (p. 59). He continues that even though the unfinished nature of humans is similar to that of animals, humans and animals are different in two ways. Basically, animals are not historical while humans are aware of their incompleteness. First, humans are incomplete beings that are in the process of becoming, and the ongoing nature of humans is reflected in

education. Second, the departing point of transformation of humans is “here and now” (Freire, 2009, p. 59) in a problem-posing approach. As humans are not isolated from the realities they live in, education is also deeply concerned about realities, including the cultural, sociopolitical, and economical situations of students.

A problem-posing education promotes educators “working within a dynamic present” (Wong, 2006, p. 85). Students are constantly changing beings and they all have different assets from their various experiences. In order to teach the students in the process of becoming, teachers need to be flexible in their teaching. This is the opposite notion from that of banking education, which emphasizes permanence (Freire, 2009). Finally, dialogue, which is the key concept in a problem-posing approach, should be critical. It should be critical in that the people who are engaged in dialogue are aware about reality as process and transformation. Thus, by realizing the problems of the contexts with which they are situated, students and teachers need to be involved in determining the content of education through ongoing dialogue.

### **Dialogic English Language Education**

As this study investigates an English writing class, the relationship between dialogism and the English language classroom needs to be examined. More specifically in TESOL education, Wong (2006) proposes a dialogic approach to TESOL in the same vein as the dialogism of Bakhtin and Freire. She explains that educators need to reflect the needs of students in their curricula based on the dialogic theory of Bakhtin which advocates “on-going, open space for different voices” and the “right to speak” (Wong, 2006, p. 135). Thus, English language education must value students’ “different linguistic and cultural resources, engaging with histories and legacies in ways that realize their cultural and political potential” (p. xiv).

Her attempts in encouraging multiple voices are again opposed to the “banking pedagogy” which Freire points out as one of the critical problems in education. Her sociohistorical and dialogic approach gives emphasis to “the complex and contested hybrid, and heteroglossic nature of any learner” (p. 7) and, thus, sees an individual student as a site of struggle. Wong’s (2006) dialogic approach seeks to include the voices of people who are excluded in academia and to help educators understand the complexities of their decisions that affect students’ learning.

Dialogic pedagogy (Wong, 2006) takes into account four features: learning in community, problem posing, learning by doing, and the question of knowledge for whom. Learning in community refers to the understanding of learning a language that is situated in and across communities. She explains that her “dialogic pedagogy engages community as a site and a motivation for learning” (p. 37). The dialogic pedagogy she advocates follows Bakhtin, who emphasized that languages are socially and historically grounded within communities which feature the heteroglossic interaction of multiple voices and perspectives. In the concept of problem posing, she includes “a process of inquiry and exploration” (p. 37) by students for their own learning. Within this framework, teachers appreciate students’ linguistic and cultural resources, and students reflect on their own resources as well as their learning strategies in their language learning. Learning by doing in learning a language involves experiences, “activities, assignments, and evaluation” (p. 37) within dialogic and theoretical reflection and transformation. Wong stresses that activities need to be designed that respect the students’ real lives rather than focusing on exercises per se; these activities will produce meaningful discourses. Finally, she includes questions about what kind of knowledge we teach and who benefits from the knowledge. Through the discussion of these



questions, she advocates that English language teaching should involve students' immediate learning needs, and teachers should pay attention to the hazard of uncritically transmitting knowledge in the context of hegemonic power.

Wong (2006) points out that dialogic interaction is possible even when teaching in large scale classes. Large scale classes that are over 40 and even 100 students are prevalent in the countries where people do not use English as their standard language, such as Korea, Japan, and Taiwan. In these classes, teachers face challenges if they try to use teaching approaches that are designed for relatively small scale classes (Shamim, 1996). Wong suggests that dialogic interaction is possible with larger groups, at least if the teacher is "aware of students' individual perspectives, backgrounds, and needs" (p. 69). She explains that even though there might be standardized assignments and evaluations, topics of discussion and activities can reflect students' interests. Also, modified reading and writing workshops can be used to some extent to help individualize instruction in large scale classes.

Large scale classes do not always indicate lack of access to education, as Wong claimed in her book. The system that creates large scale classes such as the one in this study may result from multi-faceted socio-political or economic issues. This pattern may also reflect a lack of interest or understanding about the subject (writing instruction in this case), on the part of the institutional administration. But it is evident that large scale classes are one of the major forms of English language classroom in the EFL context and, even in those classes, a dialogic pedagogy needs to be practiced.

### **Class as a Site of Negotiations**

Class is the site of encounter between pairs of dichotomies: students' language and teachers' language; students' expectations and teachers' expectations; everyday knowledge

and legitimated knowledge. Given this idea, in the view of critical pedagogy, teaching a rigid form of chosen knowledge tends to perpetuate an authoritarian climate in the classroom, and ultimately to support a hidden curriculum, seen as the “unintended outcomes of the school process” (McLaren, 2009, p. 75). These unintended outcomes are embodied in teachers’ expectations, goals of instruction, school curriculum, and government structures; and these are transmitted to students through the schooling process. Canagarajah (1999) also persuasively argues that the classroom is not a microcosm of society but is “society itself involving the relationships, values, and conflicts experienced in collective life” (p. 197). For this reason, school is understood as a site of struggle through accommodation, contestation, and resistance mediated by language and knowledge.

Class also is a site where a teacher can empower or dis-empower her students. Critical pedagogy emphasizes that social problems are situated within both individuals and society. McLaren (2009) explains that “problems form part of the interactive context between individual and society” (p. 62). This dialectical nature, advocating the indispensable relationships between individual and social structure, allows educators to see schools as sites of both domination and liberation (McLaren, 2009, p. 63). In this understanding school becomes a cultural site of struggle where students experience empowerment and transformation.

This critical pedagogy provides the reasons why literacy teachers should include students’ viewpoints, which includes their expectations and needs in teaching as they develop modifications to their teaching. As Freire (2000; 2009) and Wong (2006) point out, critical pedagogy raises questions about knowledge: what kinds of knowledge do we regard as important, and for whom, and why? Critical pedagogy theorists view knowledge as socially

constructed (Darder, Baltodano, & Torres, 2009). That means the world is symbolically constructed through interaction with others and “is heavily dependent on culture, context, custom, and historical specificity” (McLaren, 2009, p. 63). Thus, in this sense, educators need to ask why certain knowledge is appreciated by the dominant culture and taught in school. Critical pedagogy attempts to distinguish three kinds of knowledge, adopting the concept grouping of Habermas (as cited in McLaren, 2009, p. 64): technical knowledge, practical knowledge, emancipatory knowledge. Technical knowledge is knowledge which can be measured and classified, and is connected with mastery and organization. Practical knowledge refers to knowledge relevant to relationship within social situations in historical context. Emancipatory knowledge means knowledge which reconciles the technical and the practical knowledge. Critical pedagogy practitioners suggest that educators should raise questions about the hidden agenda behind teaching the knowledge selected by the dominant discourse. They believe emancipatory knowledge can help us to achieve “social justice, equality, and empowerment” (McLaren, 2009, p. 64).

In any class, students need a space where they can unconditionally ask questions and discuss assumptions. Giroux (2007) states that teachers can have authority only when they view their students “as producers of knowledge, who not only critically engage diverse ideas but also transform and act on them” (p. 3) and thus, it is their role to assist students to become agents of their learning and life. In order to do so, teachers should open a space for students, helping them to transform into critical agents by engaging questions actively and negotiating the relationship between knowledge and practice. McLaren (2009) explains that students become critical agents when they “appropriate knowledge existing outside their immediate experience in order to broaden their understanding of themselves, the world, and the

possibilities for transforming the taken-for-granted assumptions about the way we live” (p. 77). The important issue is to provide a safe space where students can experiment with this knowledge.

Canagarajah (2002b) advocates providing students a safe zone in class; he makes a distinction between ‘critical teaching’ and ‘critical practice.’ He identifies critical teaching as an “imperialistic endeavor” (p. 101), which has also been discussed by Atkinson, Kaplan, and Ramanathan schools studied by the latter scholars. The approach of these scholars sees critical thinking as a “perfect” logical skill which is assumed to be achievable by learning. They also believe that it is difficult to teach to multilingual students because the students spring from a culture alien to this form of critical thinking. As a consequence, “middle class, Anglo-American, and male subjects” (p. 100) mainly practice this fashion of critical thinking, making it ultimately a monological way of thinking. Meanwhile, Canagarajah explains that critical practice promotes dialogue between teachers and students about their differences derived from their different experiences. It then also enables them to negotiate their differences and learn from each other (see also Kumaravadivelu, 2008). This basic distinction is in fact elaborated into an eight-part comparison as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

*Distinctions between Critical Thinking and Critical Practice*

Critical thinking	Critical practice
Monological thinking	Dialogical thinking
Asocial/ Mentalistic	Socially grounded
Objective/ Instrumental	Self-reflexive

Dispassionate	Ethical
Neutral	Politically engaged
Rationalistic	Multimodal
Universal/ Transcendental	Context bound
Leads to understanding	Leads to social change

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Note: Adapted with approval from Canagarajah, A. S. (2002b). *Critical academic writing and multilingual students* (p. 98). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan.

To sum up, while practitioners working in traditional critical thinking models advocate that students are objects who need to be taught how to think critically, practitioners of “critical practice” see students as self-reflective beings who can think critically based on their social and political experiences. Critical practitioners believe that students negotiate and reshape their perspectives by the dialogues involving their minds and material lives. In the same vein, Benesch (1999b) also made clear a distinction between teaching critical skills and performing critical practice. Accordingly, it is important to note again that empowering students is a collaborative cognitive act (Freire, 2000), rather than an act of transferring critical knowledge. As mentioned before, students are already critical enough: they know that what they want is often in conflict with what teachers want. However, students have difficulties in articulating these issues in class, while facing the authority of teachers. For this reason, they need a space where they can freely speak for themselves, negotiate different ideas with the teacher, and reflect on teaching, learning, and themselves. In doing so, students can appropriate the language of the dominant discourse according to their needs and interests.

Acknowledging that students express their critical thinking through diverse ways, Canagarajah (2002b) suggests that in some cases even silence can embody critical thinking.

Through the example of Schenke's (1991) study about ESOL students, he explains that students experience critical reflections arising from the contradictions they experience in society; they may display these critical perspectives, even though they do not verbalize them overtly. In this regard, he admits that there are "differences in the extent to which subjects may make their critical insights more or less explicit, more or less ideologically sophisticated, more or less collectively sustained for social change" (p. 100). Teachers and intellectuals can play important roles here by encouraging students to realize and articulate their critical perspectives. This involves a reciprocal process, given that teachers and students, both of whom are conscious intellectuals, can re-examine their bias through these encounters. This is where dialogue works for both parties.

Canagarajah (2002b) has noted that "critical practice is a humbling educational process for the teacher and learner, or the enlightened and the dominated, as they negotiate their differences and learn from each other, based on their differing social experiences" (p. 101). Negotiation of two different positions means listening critically to others' voices, and legitimating the differences as all partners accept and work with them (Giroux, 2005). Thus, the goals of this framework, as desirable as they appear, are not always easily met; the process that I engaged in during the present study illustrates some of the difficulties involved in creating the ideal situation for negotiation in a learning context.

Thus, the effort of examining what students need and want is not merely a part of teaching process, but is a crucial practice in the learning process. For example, Canagarajah (1999) suggests that considering the values that students bring to class and the ways where these elements mediate their learning in appropriating dominant discourses is significant. These ideas apply to language learning as well as to other kinds of cognitive growth.

Kumaravadivelu (2001, 2003, 2006) has espoused the importance of empowering students in English language teaching, in the context of the students' own social, cultural and historical conditions. In his post-method pedagogy, he has proposed the three post-method pedagogic parameters of 'particularity' (sensitivity to particular language learners in a particular teaching context), 'practicality' (deconstruction of the dichotomy of theory and practice), and 'possibility' (empowering students in light of their sociopolitical and cultural contexts). Among the three parameters, the parameter of 'possibility' focuses on empowering classroom participants so that "their lived experiences, motivated by their own sociocultural and historical backgrounds, should help them appropriate the English language and use it in their own terms according to their own values and visions" (Kumaravadivelu, 2003, p. 544).

Critical practice is especially important in EFL countries. By exploring the needs, values, perspectives and motivations of their students perspectives rather than imposing on them the methods and practice from 'center countries' (Canagarajah, 1999), English language teachers can achieve meaningful educational goals while avoiding the hazards of linguistic imperialism (Canagarajah, 1999; Pennycook, 2007; Phillipson, 1992). Sung (2007) illustrates the ways that critical pedagogy can be practiced in an EFL context, such as Korea. He stresses that EFL practitioners need to adjust their practices to the local context, acknowledging the relationships between "language, culture, power and social justice" (p.164).

One concept that emerges in this framework is resistance, which can often be a hidden factor in the educational process. Ethnographic procedures are frequently used in order to find these hidden phenomena. For example, Lin (1999, 2000) uncovered the resistance strategies of the teachers and pupils in a Hong Kong school. Canagarajah (1999) explored similar discourse practices in Sri Lanka, also by conducting ethnographic studies. He stresses

that “not all strategies of resistance are hidden” (p. 206) On a similar note, Flowerdew (2008) speaks of explicit strategies of resistance which may include: “open flouting of discourse/genre conventions; appropriation; euphemism; silence; irony; satire; lying; anti-language; quarrelling; laughter; slogans” (p. 206). By exposing both hidden and overt strategies of resistance, CDA allows researchers to examine the subtle behaviors of students that challenge the dominant discourse in class. However, Canagarajah (1999) emphasizes that students’ resistance should not be romanticized. He notes the difference discussed by Giroux (1983) between resistance (displaying ideologic characteristics and showing the possibilities for social transformation) and “mere opposition” (Giroux, 1983, p. 98) (unclear and mostly passive). However, he acknowledges that students’ behavior does not clearly fall into the two categories of Giroux. Moreover, in many cases students’ behaviors represent mixed elements of “resistance or accommodation to dominant ideologies” (p. 98) rather than representing behaviors that can be clearly labeled as falling into one category. He continues that teachers should come to understand the hidden mixed values of students’ resistant behavior by scrutinizing it within wider social and historical contexts. This perspective provides a guide for the present study, as I need to explore the underlying dynamics of Korean students’ behaviors. These students are often described as quiet and passive learners; it is an assumption underlining my study that these students need to be understood in more depth than is suggested by such stereotypical notions.

When conducting studies about students’ writing needs and wants, researchers should consider the social context of individual writers. However, Canagarajah (1999) suggests that researchers should not analyze needs alone. Rather, they also need to “study the strategies second language writers employ to negotiate their ideological challenges” (p. 150).



Canagarajah (1999) also writes about the importance of students' internal conflicts, as they experience both "the high motivation to study English" (p. 96) and also "hidden levels of opposition" displayed through oppositional behaviors. While students acknowledge how becoming fluent in English can empower them socio-economically, they may easily fail to engage in critical learning due to their test-oriented motivations. A thorough needs analysis should be able to critically interrogate the learner's situation with all its complexity.

Based on the theoretical framework provided by Bakhtin and Freire, as well as critical perspective studies, this study views an English writing class as a site of struggle of different voices on both sociopolitical and personal levels. It is worth noting that the participant students will not be portrayed merely as oppressed. They must be seen as agents and subjects of their actions and transformation. The writing teacher is also not merely an oppressor. He also struggles with other dominant ideologies (McLaren, 2009) and discourses from outside of this class. In this sense, the English writing class will be portrayed as a site of struggle and negotiation of conflicting perspectives, not all of which are present in the actual classroom.

Another topic related directly to this study is needs analysis. Thus, I will briefly introduce the various approaches to needs analysis that attempt to understand students' needs, discussing them in a dialogic frame.

### **Dialogism and Needs Analysis**

As it was discussed in the previous section, dialogism is one of the crucial constituents in educational and political discourse. However, in spite of the endeavors made through many years of research, the influence of dialogue in needs assessment has been less emphasized than one might expect. Most research paradigms have focused on developing various approaches to collecting students' needs, rather than focusing on negotiation. Responding to

this research trend in needs analysis, Benesh (1999a, 1999b, 2001) emphasizes that teachers should derive deeper insights about students' needs in English literacy education by engaging in continuing conversations with them and including such needs in class modifications.

This section will explore the area of needs assessments in English language education history, followed by Benesch's rights analysis as an alternative approach. In this study, the concept of dialogic needs analysis will be used in helping understand any problems that emerge in communication in the writing class.

The importance of needs analysis in English language teaching has been extensively discussed by many researchers in that it usually functions as "the means of establishing the *how* and *what* of a course" (Hyland, 2007, p. 155). Brown (1995) defined need analysis as:

the systematic collection and analysis of all subjective and objective information necessary to define and validate defensible curriculum purposes that satisfy the language learning requirements of students within the context of particular institutions that influence the learning and teaching situation (p. 36)

Thus, the term 'needs analysis' refers to a series of approaches to collecting and analyzing various kinds of needs which are present in language classrooms.

Even though various approaches to needs analysis have been proposed according to different ideological stands (Hyland, 2007), many researchers acknowledge an important role for some form of needs analysis in language pedagogy (Benesch, 1999a, 2001; Dudley-Evans, 2001; Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998; Holliday, 1994; Holliday & Cooke, 1982; Hutchinson & Water, 1987; Hyland, 2004, 2006, 2007; Jordan, 1997; Long, 2005; Munby, 1978; Oanh, 2007; Richterich & Chancerel, 1977, 1980; Swales, 1989; Songhori, 2008; West, 1994). Of

course, needs analysis is conducted informally by language teachers in order to assess information about what the students need to learn for their language learning. But the discussion of formal forms of needs analysis is relatively new in the ELT field (Songhori, 2008). According to West, (1994), the term ‘needs analysis’ first appeared in India to cover the two conflicting concepts of “what learners will be required to do with the foreign language in the target situation, and how learners might best master the target language during the period of training” (p. 1) in language learning. After that, the term did not appear for some time until the field of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses became to attract attention in the 1960s (Oanh, 2007; West, 1994).

In the 1960s, needs analysis started to focus on ESP and English for Academic Purposes (EAP). Since it is important to understand what students need for their language learning in ESP and EAP courses, needs analysis has been “the principal method for determining what to include in ESP/EAP curricula” (Hyland, 2006, p. 181). Needs analysis in EAP courses helps teachers and school administrators to provide the language, academic skills, and genres which learners will encounter in a given English language course. However, the importance of needs analysis has been advocated not only in ESP/EAP curricula but also in the ELT field in general.

The term ‘needs’ is often used as an “umbrella term” (West, 1994, p. 3) which has various and mixed meanings. The general definition of needs refers to the information which will serve to develop curriculum that can meet a particular group of students’ expectations in a particular class (Songhori, 2008). Hutchinson and Waters (1987) classified the definitions of ‘needs’ into six categories: necessities, lacks, wants, learning strategies, constraints, and the language audit. This categorization, presented in Table 2, leads the discussion into different

concepts of needs and different needs analysis approaches (Allwright, 1982; Mackay & Bosquet, 1981).

Table 2

*The Six Categories of Needs*

Six categories	Descriptions
Necessities	“What the learner has to know in order to function effectively in the target situation” (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, p. 55): “Objective needs” (West, 1994, p. 4)
Lacks	The gap between the necessities and what the learner knows already
Wants	“What the learners want or feel they need” (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, p. 57): “Subjective needs” (West, 1994, p. 4)
Learning Strategies	Learners’ preferred learning strategies for their language learning and development
Constraints	Constraints of the learning situation such as the available facilities (staffs, time), attitudes, culture, and materials
The language audit	The term covers all of the five categories above for the longer term language training requirement for a company or a country. A language audit “differs from a needs analysis in scale” (West, 1994).

Note: Adapted from Hutchinson, T., & Waters, A. (1987). English for specific purposes. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press.

West (1994) says that necessities are “objective needs” (p. 4) and points out that the teachers or administrators of courses define these needs. Target situation analysis aims to identify these needs. In contrast, wants are “subjective needs,” in that students define what they want. Lacks are the gaps between what learners already know and what they need to learn. A kind of needs analysis, which is called deficiency analysis, helps to reveal what these lacks are. Learning strategies analysis enables learners to identify their own required learning strategies. Thus, when it comes to wants and learning strategies, conflicts can occur frequently when the viewpoints of students and teachers are different. Still, needs that are stated by the majority of learners can be considered in syllabus design when they are negotiated between the learners and teachers. Constraints involve external factors such as staff, accommodations and available methods, as well as attitudes and culture. Means analysis aims to identify these constraints when teachers and administrators develop a syllabus. Finally, the language audit is a large scale needs analysis that encompasses the aforementioned five different needs, extends over time, and can address the needs of a whole population, rather than being focused on, say, a particular class or course of study. Large companies, organizations, and even governments use language audit analysis in order to decide “what language ought to be learnt, for what reasons, by how many people, to what level, in what type of institution, by what methods, at what cost, and so on” (West, 1994, p. 5).

The leading approaches to needs analysis include target situation analysis, present situation analysis, means analysis, and rights analysis. Some researchers (ex. Songhori, 2008) include the notion of genre and genre analysis when they discuss needs analysis. I will not cover genre and genre analysis in detail here. I have not felt the need to refer to these concepts in relation to the present study, although they have been stressed in the literature by

researchers such as Hyland (2004) and Swales (1990). The following sections will discuss target situation analysis, present situation analysis, means analysis, and rights analysis, and will offer some remarks regarding how they are relevant to this study.

### **Target Situation Analysis**

One well known framework of target situation analysis is the model of Munby (1978). With his interest in terms of communicative language syllabus design, he has noted that “the systematic processing of the profile of communication needs for the particular participant input is prerequisite to the syllabus specification output” (Munby, 1978, p. 218). His model takes into account numerous elements to which he gives specific terms: participants, communication of needs processor, profile of needs, meaning processor, the language skills selector, and the linguistic encoder. Among these elements, the main concept of his model cited by other researchers is the CNP, the Communication Needs Processor, which includes eight elements: purposive domain, setting, interaction, instrumentality, dialect, communication event, communicative key, and target level. The outcome of his communication of needs processor, which classifies variables that influence communication need into dynamic parameters, is a detailed profile of learners’ language needs. Munby believed that the profile of students’ needs can result in a specific communicative language syllabus for a specific course. In brief, he tried to identify the target language linguistic forms that learners can use in a certain situations. Based on Munby’s framework for a communicative language class, Chambers (1980) established the term Target Situation Analysis to refer to his approach (Songhori, 2008).

Many researchers in ELT accepted Munby’s analysis frame for needs analysis in their language class. For example, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) designed a series of questions

for needs analysis in a language classroom which are related to the questions of why, how, what, where, and when in language learning. They believe that it is important to ask questions about certain target situations and find learners' attitudes toward those situations in order to build an effective curriculum in which learners can experience effective learning.

However, many researchers argue about some limitations of Munby's target situation analysis approach (Dudely-Evans & St. John, 1998; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Hyland, 2007; Songhori, 2008; West, 1994). West (1994) found that Munby's model has some deficiencies in its complexity, learner centeredness, sociopolitical constraints, and its inability to incorporate the analysis of actual language syllabi. Perhaps most important, Munby's model is too complicated and time consuming (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; West, 1994). A number of further criticisms have been leveled at the system: it collects data not *from* learners but *about* learners; it fails to capture factors stemming from sociopolitical and affective concerns (Dudely-Evans & St. John, 1998), and it does not specify how to develop a language syllabus (Dudely-Evans & St. John, 1998; Songhori, 2008). Munby revised his model later by adding reference to "political factors affecting the target language" and claiming that "the homogeneity of the learner group should be applied at the needs analysis stage" (Munby, 1984, p. 64). However, his critics believe that Munby should have included these constraints in his first model and that the simple phrasal inclusion in the revised model was not enough to account for those constraints (West, 1994).

During the 1980s, ESP/EAP researchers (Horowitz, 1986; Johns, 1981; Ostler, 1980) collected data using target situation analysis in order to find the common skills and assignments which ESL students might encounter in certain ESP/EAP courses. Most of the data collection was made by the survey method for faculty and teachers in these fields. They

aimed to provide “realistic advice about appropriate discourse structures for specific tasks” (Horowitz, 1986, p. 477) in ESP and EAP courses. Through target situation analysis, these scholars tried to offer certain practices and writing tasks for ESL students, such as “information processing problems” (p. 460) in the case of Horowitz. They even suggest that EAP practitioners use these tasks in other settings for their ESL students. However, other scholars criticized the generalizability of their study, suggesting that needs analysis should be conducted as context specific studies (Benesch, 2001).

On the whole, target situation analysis aims to identify certain language skills, and assignments that ESL students are likely to meet in a certain context. However, this type of analysis has some problems, as it treats needs in terms of detached language items of grammar and vocabulary (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1988). Also, it “relat[es] to communication needs rather than learning needs and refer[s] to the linguistic skills and knowledge students need to perform competently in their future roles” (Hyland, 2007, p. 155). Ultimately, the long list of weaknesses of target situation analysis led to other approaches in needs analysis, such as present situation analysis.

### **Present Situation Analysis**

In order to compensate the shortcomings of target situation analysis, Richterich and Chancerel (1977/1980) proposed a supplemented approach: present situation analysis. Present situation analysis aims to collect the data about the present state of language development through surveys, questionnaires, and interviews. The sources of data are “the students themselves, the teaching establishment and the user institution” (Jordan, 1997, p. 24). The present level of a learner is important in this approach, since it concerns not what learners should be like at the end of a course but rather what learners are like at the



beginning of a course (Songhori, 2008). In short, present situation analysis concerns the information about “learners’ current proficiencies, perceptions, and ambitions” (Hyland, 2007, p. 155).

Unlike target situation analysis, which solely includes surveys and questionnaires, present situation analysis collects data from other sources, including interviews and observation. These methods allow present situation analysis to provide a deeper understanding of students’ needs, since it represents the use of ethnographic research methods in EAP. Benesch (2001) introduces some research which has been conducted using this ethnographic approach in needs analysis (ex. Johns, 1990, Prior, 1991, 1995; Ramani, Chacko, Singh, & Glendinning, 1998). She suggests that these studies aim to find not only the types of writing students do in their classes but also “reactions of students to assignments and the processes they go through in fulfilling them as well as faculty reactions to student participation and writing” (p. 11). Accordingly, those who favor present situation analysis advocate the revision of a syllabus based on feedback and evaluation from students and teachers, often via an ongoing process.

Target situation analysis attempts to understand the future states of learners after a course, while present situation analysis aims to verify the present states of learners. In order to achieve balance in needs analysis in language classes, it is important to have analysis about present states before the courses as well as predicted states after the course. For this reason, the following approaches tend to propose the combinations of the two approaches.

## Means Analysis

The failure of Munby's (1978) model in developing an actual language syllabus led to debate over practicality and constraints in developing needs-based curricula. However, some have argued that "instead of thinking about constraints, course designers should consider how plans can be implemented in the local situation" (West, 1994, p. 11). Therefore, researchers have become aware of the value of considering the teaching environment and local situation in needs analysis.

Holliday and Cooke (1982) and Holliday (1994) call this approach 'means analysis' or the 'ecological approach.' With the development of many EFL and ESL classes, course designers or teachers have acknowledged that "what works well in one situation may not work in another" (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998, p. 124). Thus, researchers have argued that teachers first need to identify the features of the teaching context (the ecosystem) and then define the negative and positive features which can assist educators in solving the problems of constraints (West, 1994). Means analysis provides the "information about the environment in which the course will be run" (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998, p. 125) and "thus attempts to adapt to the ESP course to the cultural environment in which it will be run" (Songhori, 2008, p. 15). In short, Hyland (2007) defines means analysis as the approach that involves "consideration of the teachers, methods, materials, facilities, and relationship of the course to its immediate environment" (p. 155).

In order to analyze the kind of information collected through means analysis, Swales (1989) classifies five factors which need to be considered. The five factors are "classroom culture research, EAP staff profiles, pilot target situation analysis, status service operations, and study of change-agents" (Swales, 1989, p. 89). He suggests that efficient decisions can be

made through the analysis of these five factors. Holliday (1994) also states that “the means analysis approach allows sensitivity to the situation and prevents the imposition of models alien to the situation” (p. 45). While the needs analyses systems developed earlier failed to understand sociopolitical concerns, which play an important part in a language class, means analysis succeeds in understanding the wider contexts which also effect language classes.

### **Rights Analysis**

While these aforementioned approaches have had a great influence on English language teaching, providing valuable information about students’ needs, other critics point out that these approaches treat needs as measurable objects (Hyland, 2007) or as a collectivity (Benesch, 2001). These monologic needs assessments can be problematic, as they are mostly concerned with collecting a quantity of students’ statements, turning their voices into measurable objects and potentially failing in the process to understand the meanings under the students’ utterances. Due to heteroglossia, in order to have a better understanding of students’ stated utterances, researchers are required to consider the context where the utterances was made (Bakhtin, 1982). In other words, students’ statements can be interpreted in varied ways when researchers scrutinize them within the heteroglossic perspective. If a researcher has failed to consider such issues, the teachers’ needs assessment can fail to comprehend students’ voice. To have a clearer picture of students’ needs and wants, the researcher may need to trace the reasons for students’ statements, for instance in part by considering the context where a given student’s utterance was created.

These approaches also present limitations in incorporating students’ knowledge and making changes in their classes. Emphasizing the importance of teaching students in the process of becoming, Wong (2006) suggests that teachers need to be flexible in their teaching.

Also, as many scholars in critical pedagogy advocate (e.g. Freire, 2009), re-organizing a teacher's teaching upon students' stated needs and reflections is a way of empowering them, expressing the awareness of students as cognitive agents of their learning.

Based on the philosophical vein of Foucault and Freire, along with Canagarajah's critical concepts in language education, Benesch (1996, 1999a, 2001) attempts to overcome the limitations of descriptive analyses, suggesting a conceptualizing framework that she has called "rights analysis." The following section will introduce her definitions of "rights analysis" as well as other relevant studies (Flowerdew, 2005; Molle & Prior, 2008) that shed light on this concept.

Benesch (2001) has proposed the political term "rights" in order to replace the term "needs," which is believed to "underscore[s] the power relationship in academic settings" (p. 61). She explains that "need" is a psychological term, in that it suggests that students want what the institution mandates, conflating students' desires and the outside world's regulations. Also, the term, "needs," seems to evoke a biological connotation, bringing to mind concepts such as food and water, implying that students are content once their needs are met. In the needs framework, as seen by advocates of rights analysis, there are no conflicts between students and teachers/institutions, since students want what the institution offers and the students get what they wanted. Also these needs are not negotiable because they are beneficial to the students. However, "rights" are more appropriate in describing those tensions because "rights" are political and negotiable. Thus, rights analysis is "a way to conceptualize more democratic participation for all members of an academic community" (p. 62); this approach acknowledges that students have opportunities to negotiate their needs with their teachers. Rights analysis proposes a conceptual framework in which teachers encourage students to

negotiate their needs.

Dudley-Evans (2001) suggests that ESP teachers should focus on rights analysis as well as needs analysis. ESP practitioners should assist ESP students by engaging them to ask questions and express what they want in their classes. Hyland (2006, 2007) explains rights analysis as an approach that proposes possibilities for change, noting that while needs analysis is a starting point which discovers institutional requirements and expectations, rights analysis stresses the momentum for change. Hyland (2006) emphasizes the value of balancing those two different stands in needs analysis, saying that the “dual focus of compliance and resistance allows students to choose which aspects of the course they want to accept and which they might challenge” (p. 184).

As an empirical example, Benesch (1999b, 2001) explored the ways that her rights analysis can assist ESL students in a linked EAP/Psychology class. In her EAP class, she encouraged students to write proposals about their problems and suggestions regarding their psychology class; she then handed the proposals over to the subject teacher. Ultimately, Benesch realized that the student statements could be used as a guide for the EAP class itself. She recommended that EAP classes should focus on listening, note-taking, textbook reading, and test-taking skills, all of which the students identified in their concerns. Moreover, Benesch identified aspects of the dynamics between teacher authority and student resistance to given situations and rules. She suggests that the role of the critical EAP teacher is to promote awareness about the dialogue between teachers and students, in part by encouraging students to negotiate syllabi and assignments, and to learn to ask their teachers questions.

Many other recently conducted studies have explored students' writing needs and wants based on such critical perspectives. For example, Flowerdew (2005) attempted to

integrate traditional needs analysis with Benesch's critical approach in her English for occupational purposes writing class, encouraging her students to choose their writing topics through a series of conversations with her and their classmates. After investigating a mismatch in their curriculum and future career, a group of biology majors made a recommendation to their professor to include more compulsory Mandarin courses. During an interview with their professor, the professor agreed to raise their issue at their curriculum decision making board. Through this example, the researcher suggests that "carrying out these projects often gives students a sense of empowerment as they feel they can facilitate change in academic matters" (p. 145). Molle & Prior (2008) conducted an ethnographic study in order to understand international students' writing needs across disciplines, introducing Benesch's conceptual frame of needs as involving awareness of students' rights. Furthermore, they emphasized and defined needs analysis as situated practice. Presenting multimodal and hybrid genre systems for international students in varied disciplines, the researchers suggest that English literacy educators help them become ethnographers of writing genres.

On the whole, rights analysis is the conceptual framework that can be the final piece of a puzzle which was partly assembled by the needs analysis framework, engaging students in decision making. In general, it is important to understand what students must learn in order to have good proficiency in a target language. Teachers and administrators also need to identify the present situations of learners and, also, the gap between what the learners already know and what they need to know. However, it is not enough for teachers and researchers simply to collect these needs. Rather, teachers and educators must invite the students to participate in decision making for their classes by negotiating sometimes conflicting needs. Second language literacy is a deeply grounded within the broader social and cultural context

(Canagarajah, 1999). For this reason, needs regarding second language literacy must be understood within situated contexts. Needs are fluid and negotiable concepts, rather than rigid and legitimate objects. Thus, successful needs analysis attempts to identify the diverse views about needs in a certain context and then reflect the full picture of these needs in course syllabi, which evolve through mutual negotiations.

### **Needs and Needs Analysis in this Study**

In this study, the term “needs” refers to perceived student needs and wants in general, including five categories: necessities, lacks, wants, learning strategies, and constraints, five of the six needs classifications of Hutchinson and Waters (1987). Also, even though term “needs” has different meanings as it is defined by different scholars, the terms “needs” and “rights” will be used interchangeably in this study. In other words, the term “rights” will not replace “needs” because this study will not formally employ the methodological framework of Benesch’s study. As Belcher (2006) emphasized, “needs assessment itself [is] in need of continual reassessment” (p. 135) rather than being final and conclusive. However, the spirit of Benesch’s theoretical framework has been relevant to this study, as it has helped me to examine students’ needs and wants through a series of qualitative methods. .

In carrying out this study, I have viewed students’ needs as fluid, changeable, and negotiable. Thus, it is important to understand the ways that needs are shaped and reshaped through the experiences of a semester’s writing class. Differences frequently occur between the viewpoints of the different participants, because students and teachers have different needs based on their own experiences at different levels. It is the teacher’s vocation to direct the learning process by encouraging students to articulate their needs and dialoguing about the conflicts. Discussing rights analysis, Benesch (2001) emphasizes the fact that rights are

dependent on both context and an individual's history:

Rights are contingent, depending on the local context and histories of the participants in a particular course. They emerge from discussions of possible collective responses to local conditions. Critical EAP teachers do not know what might emerge but are prepared to help students enact their reactions in a thoughtful, cooperative, and communitarian fashion (p. 62)

Instead of assuming the needs of learners without considering the individual students' situated context, it is crucial to examine the students' sociocultural context. This is applicable to not only critical EAP teachers but also to the teachers in L2 literacy in general. It is difficult to estimate all the anticipated situations in a literacy class. Still, the understanding of students and teaching contexts is prerequisite for ELT teachers. In the context of the present study, the understanding of Korean students' perceived needs and wants includes understanding their perceptions about English writing, their expectations about the writing class, any transformations of their perceived needs, the goals of this writing class as well as the students' perceived knowledge and understanding the genre of writing focused on in this class.

The site of this study, Korea, will be discussed in the following section, as well as the needs studies conducted in the Korean context. At the start of this discussion on the Korean context, I will discuss the controversies dividing EFL and ESL contexts in English language teaching, since Korea's status as an EFL context is important to the present inquiry.

### **Korea as an EFL Writing Context**

As this qualitative study explores English language learners in an EFL English writing in Korea, this section will first discuss the division between ESL and EFL learning, after which it will present a brief overview of ESL and EFL writing studies. Finally, writing studies and writing



needs studies conducted in Korea, the main field of this study, will be introduced.

### **The ESL and EFL Division**

Many schools, programs, textbooks and even some scholars use “ESL” as a general term in order to refer to the teaching of English to people who have already acquired other languages. However, some make an explicit distinction between ESL and EFL contexts (Gebhard, 2006; Kachru & Nelson, 2006; Richards, 2001) based on the roles of English in each context. It is becoming difficult in the current global environment to maintain clear-cut EFL and ESL categories due to each country’s sociolinguistic complexities and the concept of World Englishes (Mckay, 1992). However, there remains the idea that English language teachers should be sensitive to the distinction between ESL and EFL contexts, insofar as decisions need to be based on each context.

Context plays a vital role in shaping the teaching process and the outcome of the teaching. The distinction between ESL and EFL seeks to reflect various contextual differences even though it is difficult to capture all the varieties of contextual complexity in every country (Richards, 2001). Richards(2001) explains numerous aspects of the learning context which can affect the issue of the roles of English in learners’ lives: the functions English fulfills; the role of English in relation to other languages in the community and in the learner’s speech repertoire; the extent to which learners focus on accuracy of or fluency as learning goals; whether learners seek to acquire a native or non-native variety of English; whether learners seek to acquire a standard or a non-standard pronunciation; and the type of language input learners receive (p. 213). However, this explanation has some limitations in that Richards neglects the fact there are many political and ideological issues to discuss regarding two thorny questions: what a native and nonnative speaker is, and what a standard and

nonstandard pronunciation is. Overall, because of these problems, his definition cannot cope with the relatively recent ELT issues relating to World Englishes.

In order to overcome the problems arising from the simple dichotomy of native and nonnative English, Kachru and Nelson (2006) defend the distinction between ESL and EFL using the concept of three Circles. They suggest that the differences between ESL and EFL arose from the differences between learning situations and various contexts for using English. They criticize the ELT professions and professors who still use ‘native’ English norms, failing to accept the fact that teaching English in ESL and EFL environments is quite different. They note that “the FL/SL designation makes, or should indicate, a significant difference in the status and nature of English in a given context” (Kachru & Nelson, 2006, p. 26).

Gebhard (2006) also states the importance of differentiating teaching and learning English in EFL and ESL settings. According to his careful analysis, Gebhard points out the most variable factors in EFL and ESL settings: the student population, the opportunities to use English outside the classroom, and the goals of learning English. For example, a given EFL student population tends to be homogeneous in many ways, since they share “a similar history of being Korean, German, or Egyptian” (p. 40); in contrast, the usual population of an ESL community is heterogeneous, consisting of students from various countries. Moreover, there are much more limited opportunities to use English outside the classroom in EFL settings than ESL settings. Although the possibility of using English has increased through the development of technology such as the internet, the opportunity to use English in and outside the classroom is still limited for EFL learners when we compare it with the options available in the ESL context. Also, the goals of learning English are often different in EFL and ESL settings. The goals of EFL learners tend to be more test-oriented, whereas they are more tied

with broad literacy in ESL settings. Gebhard also points out, that “not all English fits neatly into the category of EFL or ESL” (p. 41); this is especially true given the rise of the so-called “New Englishes” (p. 41), a term which is used in multilingual societies in Asia and Africa. Reminding readers of the point that “teaching English is context dependent” (p. 55), Gebhard suggests that ELT teachers develop insightful understandings of the importance of the different settings, in order to make appropriate decisions about what and how to teach.

In this study, it will be important to keep in mind that these Korean learners are EFL writers who do not have regular naturally occurring contact with English written texts, with English language, or with a Western-style classroom approach. More specifically, the context of writing classes in Korea is different from that of ESL classes. In many cases, when it comes to elective classes at the university level, class sizes are large, consisting of 30 to 100 students (or even more). Also, the population of native and nonnative teachers is very unbalanced. In other words, the majority of English writing classes are run by Korean teachers. Moreover, most Korean university level students do not have many experiences in English writing; they have a limited amount of writing instruction in their K-12 education due to the exclusion of writing from the Korean SAT, *Su-Nueng*. Even more, the number of writing classes in universities is relatively small when compared to other classes such as speaking and reading classes. A detailed description about writing education in Korean will be discussed in the next section. Noting the important point that the context of English writing classes in Korea is EFL, I will first give a brief overview of writing studies in general that relate to the two different contexts of ESL and EFL.

## **ESL/EFL Writing Studies**

Writing is assumed as the last skill to be acquired, compared to reading, speaking, and listening even in first language learning (Hirose, 2001; Leki, 1992). Studies on writing in the second language were traditionally more neglected than other skills, due to substantial focus on teaching second language learners with the grammar translation and audio lingual methods through the middle of the twentieth century (Matsuda, 2003). Second language writing entered into the mainstream of the English language teaching field in the early 1990s. Even though studies on second language writing appeared in the 1960s, the studies on second language writing in that period suffered from some limitations, and the nature of the research changed in the early 1990s (Matsuda, 1999).

### **Overview of the Field of EFL Writing**

Studies on second language writing have focused on a wide variety of concerns and interests. These include concerns related to the following areas: global Englishes (e.g. Kachru, 1992, Kachru & Nelson, 2006; Kirkpatrick, 2007); critical examination of concepts regarding global English (e.g. Canagarajah; 1999, Fairclough, 2006; Pennycook, 2007; Phillipson, 1992); pedagogical investigations, including various studies on writing feedback (e.g. Ashwell, 2000; Conrad & Goldstein, 1999; Hyland & Hyland, 2001); error feedback (e.g. Chandler, 2003; Ferris, 1999; Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Truscott, 1996); effectiveness of peer review (e.g. Mendonca & Jonson, 1994; Nelson & Carson 1998; Tsui, 2000; Zhu, 2001); writers' voices (e.g. Helms-Park & Stapleton, 2003; Hirvela & Belcher, 2001; Ivanic & Camps, 2001; Ramanathan & Kaplan, 1996); the genre approach (e.g. Hyland, 2003); and process and postprocess pedagogy (e.g. special issues in *Journal of Second Language Writing*). In the following section, I will review only a limited range of studies devoted to the

EFL context.

### **EFL Writing**

Since a great deal of literature on the teaching of English writing focuses on English-dominant contexts, the teaching of EFL writing has been paid relatively insufficient attention. Recent research has examined many challenges and new directions in teaching EFL writing (Leki, 2001; You, 2004). Some have suggested that EFL writing pedagogy should be shaped considering context-specific factors in education (Gorsuch, 2000; Reichelt, 2005). Other researchers have examined ways to invent new methods that can assist students according to each specific EFL language learning context (Hirose, 2001; Ghahremani-Ghajar & Mirhosseini, 2005; Tarnopolsky, 2000).

Leki (2001) examined English writing instruction in EFL contexts, attesting to many challenges of EFL writing contexts, such as large class sizes, special local needs, the lack of training in pedagogical techniques, the inexperience of many students in writing in their L1 context, and the difficulties arising from the great rhetorical distance between their L1 and the target language. Moreover, numerous ethical and ideological issues have been substantiated. These include unclear purposes for EFL students learning to write in English; the expense of writing instruction, leading to enormous workloads for writing teachers; and the extensive profits that center countries made by producing books and materials. On the whole, Leki noted that, in order to prevent these ideological problems, “a careful analysis of local needs, goals, and possibilities would seem reasonable” (p. 205). Again, so as to develop suitable English teaching for a certain EFL country, it is essential to identify changes and needs of local contexts (Canagarajah, 2005). Further, despite some commonalities of writing instruction in China and North America, You (2004) has identified notable differences; for

instance, the teaching of writing fits into a holistic development in China, rather than being an independent course; ultimately, developing writers in China gradually learn to appreciate a Chinese style of English writing. The results of this study underscore and have heightened the distinct nature of EFL writing in one particular context.

Along with the researchers who have attested to the distinctive nature of EFL writing, other researchers have further suggested that in deciding upon EFL curriculum, education boards should consider each specific context. Gorsuch (2000) examined Japanese teachers' actual implementation and resistance to communicative activities, since they run contrary to the focused and measurable goals set by the Japanese government. The results showed that Japanese teachers tend to resist communicative language teaching in their classes since they have heavy pressure from the form-focused university entrance program. Clearly, this suggests that each country's educational policy must attempt to consider its decisions in the light of its own preexisting educational culture.

One study has documented English language writing instruction in Poland, delving into the role that English plays, the history of English language teaching, and Poland's context specific educational factors (Reichelt, 2005). This researcher, additionally, has emphasized that English language writing instruction should be shaped by the role of various contextual factors in a variety of international settings. In brief, instead of implementing methods from the center countries recklessly, EFL writing instruction in each country must reflect its own contextual concerns to facilitate effective writing classes.

Recently, some studies have started to scrutinize the possibilities of inventing new methods and creating effective writing instruction based on the various contextual concerns of each country. Tarnopolsky (2000) has attempted to develop unique writing instruction

techniques for Ukrainian students, by exploring Ukraine's history of English language teaching and Ukrainian student's needs. He is working on a series of studies regarding this issue (Tarnopolsky, 2004; 2005). Effective writing at the Japanese university level also has been examined, suggesting that journal writing is effective for fluency-aimed writing when EFL students are novice in L2 writing (Hirose, 2001). Another study of silenced EFL Iranian high school students has suggested that dialogic journal writing is a critical EFL literacy practice that can empower these EFL students to express their voices (Ghahremani-Ghajar & Mirhosseini, 2005).

To summarize, the main argument of the studies examining EFL context is that EFL writing should be considered as significantly different from ESL writing, having its own contextual problems and needs. Educators in EFL contexts need try to develop their own appropriate teaching practices concerning their unique contexts instead of implementing methods from center countries and Western ideologies without regard to their appropriateness. Thus, understanding the context and the students of the immediate teaching environment should be prioritized in English writing education. In the same light, I now continue by examining Korea's particular context.

### **English Writing and Writing Needs Studies in Korean Contexts**

English language education began in the twentieth century in Korea (Moon, 1976) due to the presence of military troops from the U.S. and other countries stationed in Korea. After that, during the Japanese colonial regime, English was taught for missionary purposes in order to teach the Bible and Western knowledge (Hong, 1993). These early forays into language education were mostly conducted using the Grammar-Translation Method, which still affects current Korean English language education, in its emphasis on grammatical

features and memorization (Sung, 2007). English language became “a survival tool” (Sung, 2007, p. 164) during the internal Korean War, which broke out from 1950 to 1952. At last, in the 1960s and 1970s, contemporary theories and approaches in ESL brought by teachers trained at universities in the United States have influenced English education (Moon, 1976; Kim, 1995). Recently, the 7<sup>th</sup> National Curriculum (1997- present), emphasizing the communicative approach and considering both language fluency and accuracy, was developed by the Korean government (Chang, 2002). In order to support this policy, many native speakers of English have been hired in public school and private domains (Kwon, 2000), but the policy’s effectiveness remains controversial. Moreover, the emphasis on English language learning continues to prevail in Korea with the new government of President Lee, which aims to begin cross-discipline English classes at the university level.

While English plays an important role in Korea as a means educational and economic success (Roh, 2001; Phillipson, 1992) and sometimes as a means of exclusion (Pennycook, 1994), English writing education has been devalued among the four skills. In 1997, English writing began to be included as a school subject in the elementary school education from the 5th grade (Kahng, 2006). However, in K-12 education, Korean students are not required to write in English when they complete their assignments except on special occasions. Moreover, even though writing is taught at the university level, students of English (language and literature) at the university level are not required to write their dissertations in English (Lee, 2006). Meanwhile, in contrast to the public school situation, private institutions pay considerable attention to English language education; thus, there exists a large gap between the students who have experience in writing through private institutions and those who do not (Chung, 2004, 2005).



Many studies on EFL writing identify the reasons for devaluing writing instruction and giving primacy to grammar instruction in product-oriented language education (e.g. Canagarajah, 2002a). Korea falls in line with this model, in that writing is taught through grammar and vocabulary instruction and is seen as enhancing other skills such as reading and speaking (Lee, 2003; 2004). Also, competitive university entrance exams, consisting of objective testing, are pointed out as a reason for the lack of interest in practicing English writing (Lee, 2004). However, the teaching of writing is essential for English language education as a means of knowledge construction and distribution. Canagarajah (2002a) even stresses that “periphery institutions must provide adequate institutional support for their scholars to engage in publishing” (p. 285). Thus, writing instruction may be one of the ways that enables the empowerment of EFL students by helping them engage in the contribution to knowledge construction.

With the lack of interest in English writing education, recent studies on the teaching of writing have been lacking. Moreover, many of the existing studies use quantitative methods which are the main research trend in Korea’s English language education (Sung, 2007). Most of the research topics covered by those studies focus on patterns in linguistic features and word usage by Korean students (e.g. Choi, 1988; Choi & Kim, 1999).

Some recent qualitative studies on Korean students’ writing explore teacher/student interaction (O, 2003), meaning-making in letter writing (Lee, 2004), and connections between sociocultural theories and EFL writing (Chang, 2005). O (2003) conducted action research examining the effects of individualized interaction on Korean students’ writing. The data was collected through interviews, and students’ writing was analyzed using textual analysis. She suggests that easy access to teachers through individualized interaction can enhance students’

understanding of the writing process. Lee (2004) investigated the meaning-making strategies that Korean students used when they engaged in letter writing in English. The Korean students reorganized and recontextualized English formal letter-writing patterns through content analysis of ten letters in English. Lee concluded that learning to write involves becoming familiar with “specific discourse communities” (p. 85) and the way language is used in each of these. Based on this insight, Lee further suggests that Korean students’ development as writers is influenced by their experiences with writing instruction and their growing awareness of the purposes for different forms of writing. Chang (2005) explored the possibilities of reflecting the work of Vygotsky, Bakhtin, Wertsch, and Cole in the EFL writing context. Providing some implications for teaching writing in Korea, She suggests that it may be meaningful for EFL writing teachers to interact with those theories.

Korean students’ writing needs have been investigated through recent studies (Kang, 2003; Kahng, 2006; Lee, 2006) as well as ESP program development (Lee, 2004), as a part of a series of studies focusing on national curriculum development (Choi, Park, & Kim, 1997; Kim, 2005; Lee, 1995). For example, Kang (2003) recommends including academic literacy teaching in the early stages in English language education. Based on the analysis of 43 students’ writings, Kang’s results indicate that the high cognitive level of students at the university level positively influences students’ linguistic skills. Also, Kahng (2006) conducted a quantitative study of a one-week English writing camp, analyzing the needs of 94 6<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> graders and 10 teachers who are native speakers of English. Evaluating the one-week camp as successful, the researcher provides some implications for writing education in Korea. The suggestions include the following: providing more writing activities which can utilize students’ creativity, and placing students according to their proficiency level rather than their

grade. Finally, Lee (2006) explored Korean students' perceptions and needs through a comparison between two English writing classes in a university. The two English writing classes were compared by writing practice, types of classroom activities, and writing tasks based on analysis of student interviews. Lee discovered that students favored a writing class where they are able to engage in actual writing and discuss their papers with their teacher. Concluding that teachers' beliefs about EFL writing affect their writing practice, Lee recommends that EFL teachers need to listen to students' suggestions; she further stresses the importance of finding spaces in order to communicate with students.

Studies about English writing education have rarely been done in Korea. More specifically, needs analysis studies of English writing class have rarely been conducted due to the lack of emphasis on English writing in the curriculum. Even English major students in undergraduate and even in graduate level often are not required to write their thesis in English.

### **Summary**

This chapter provides an extensive literature review relevant to the current study, including dialogism studies, both focusing generally on education as well as more specifically on English language education. Among these issues, I especially focused on synthesizing the concepts and perspectives of dialogism in English language classes for second language learners. Varied approaches to needs analysis in English language teaching history are also discussed, as well as critiques from the viewpoint of dialogic needs analysis. Finally, in order to provide understandings on the site of this study, Korea, the last section presents an overview of Korean English education, as well as studies about English writing and the writing needs of Korean students. In chapter three, I discuss the methodology and explain how I conducted this research based on my theoretical framework.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

#### **Introduction and Overview**

The purpose of this study is to explore the various needs and expectations of Korean students and their teacher in a writing class, as well as the multiple channels that students and teachers use when they try to negotiate their shared and conflicting needs. In order to have a better understanding about Korean students in an English writing class in a Korean university, the study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What perceived expectations and needs are brought to a writing course in Korea by both the teacher and his students, and how do the students' perceived needs transform as the writing class progresses throughout a semester-long writing course?
2. What means of dialogue development is there between the teacher and his students during this semester-long course, and what topics do the students discuss in these student-teacher dialogues?
3. To what extent is it difficult to create a dialogue in such a writing class? If dialogue fails to take place, what effect does this have on the large scale writing class, and on the learning that takes place, as perceived by the instructor and the students?

Based on the nature of this inquiry, this study aims to answer those questions by adopting qualitative techniques. More specific information regarding the data to be gathered and other aspects of the research design will be discussed in the following sections. This chapter is organized into the following categories: research paradigm; research site; selecting informants; role of the researcher; overview of information needed; data collection; data analysis; issues of trustworthiness; ethical considerations; and summary the chapter.

## Research Paradigm

According to Thomas Kuhn, the phrase ‘research paradigm’ refers to philosophical assumptions about the nature of existence (ontology) and views about the nature of knowledge (epistemology) (cited in Maxwell, 2005). In Kuhn’s view, researchers in a given field share concepts and assumptions in the context of a “paradigm” which includes certain methodological strategies. This section represents an attempt to elaborate on the idea of a research paradigm applied to the present study.

There are two main approaches in scientific inquiry in educational research: quantitative research and qualitative research (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2005). Most researchers who choose quantitative study have a positivist epistemological perspective. Positivists believe that a real world with concrete truth is out there and it is possible for people to find the reality if they investigate the world using scientific means. However, qualitative researchers take another epistemological position known as “interpretivism” (Erickson, 1986). Those who accept interpretivism understand that the human environment is constructed by the individual who lives in that environment. They believe that they can best understand social realities by understanding the meanings that individuals construct.

Qualitative research involves the in-depth study of a particular phenomenon in a natural context (through field work), representing both the *emic* and *etic* perspectives (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2005; Green, Camilli, & Elmore, 2006; Maxwell, 2005). According to Gall, Gall, and Borg (2005), qualitative research is conducted to explore a particular phenomenon which contains “a set of processes, events, individuals, or other things of interest to the researcher” (p. 308). Kirk and Miller (1986) define qualitative research in social science as research conducted by “watching people in their own territory and interacting within their own

language, on their own terms” (p. 9). Accordingly, field work is one of the main characteristics of qualitative research; the methodology involved with field work allows researchers to interact with participants and collect substantive data in natural settings. The data collected includes verbal statements, images, and physical artifacts as well as quantitative data of a limited, normally descriptive nature. Since the data obtained through qualitative means is potentially extensive, researchers should have a focus so that they collect the data that can yield answers to their research questions. In qualitative study, researchers represent both the *emic* and *etic* perspectives. That is, researchers obtain insiders’ perspectives (*emic*) through communication and interaction with participants in their natural setting. At the same time, researchers maintain an outsider’s perspective (*etic*) so that they can make conceptual and theoretical sense of the information they gather.

Quantitative and qualitative studies answer different kinds of questions and goals. The strength of qualitative study is on its inductive approach, its focus on a particular phenomenon, and rich description. Maxwell (2005) categorizes five particular intellectual goals which can be achieved through qualitative study.

1. Understanding meaning through an interpretive approach
2. Understanding the particular context
3. Identifying unanticipated phenomena and generating new grounded theories
4. Understanding the process
5. Developing causal explanations

A qualitative study has its own strength in understanding participants’ perspectives, which is part of the reality that researchers aim to understand. Also it allows researchers to understand a particular context in depth, rather than achieving the simplified version of reality available

through statistics. Flexibility of research design, together with the open coding of results in qualitative research, allows researchers to identify unexpected findings. Qualitative study is more interested in understanding the process than in coming to predictable outcomes. Finally, qualitative study can answer the causal questions through intensive description and visualization of events, though its way of arriving at these goals may differ from those of quantitative research (Weiss, 1994).

In this study, I seek to examine my research questions through a qualitative lens. The goals of this study include understanding the needs of particular participants in a particular context, that is, university students in Korea, and exploring the multiple channels that they use. These goals are set under the assumptions that the teaching environment in Korea is constructed by the participation of each Korean student. I believed that if I carefully examined the individuals in the context, I would be able to understand the environment and find the answers to my research questions. Qualitative study helps the researcher to do in-depth study by enabling her to directly observe natural settings (Bromley, 1986). Thus, the qualitative approach is suited to the purpose and nature of my study.

This study is not an ethnographic study but a qualitative study conducted using some ethnographic ideas and methods, as I explain below. Many researchers have addressed qualitative research with a particular focus on defining ethnography as compared with other qualitative approaches (Bernard, 2002; Green, Camilli, & Elmore, 2006; Heath & Street, 2008; Wolcott, 1987). Heath and Street (2008) suggest that even though qualitative research stresses face-to-face methods and rests on its characteristic epistemological foundations, the methods and theoretical framework do not rely on a particular social science. In contrast, ethnography is “grounded in anthropological theory” (Bloome, 2002, p. 53) and linguistics (Heath & Street,

2008). For many cultural anthropologists (e.g. Wolcott, 1987; Bernard, 2002), ethnography is “describing and interpreting cultural behavior” (Green, Camilli, & Elmore, 2006, p. 279).

Heath and Street (2008) suggest that “ethnography is a theory-building enterprise constructed through detailed systematic observing, recording and analyzing of human behavior in specifiable spaces and interactions” (p. 29).

As mentioned before, this naturalistic qualitative study has explored a large scale English writing class in Korea using ethnographic methods. Green and Bloome (1997) classify possible ethnographies into three categories according to their greater or lesser degree of orientation to anthropology: doing ethnography, adopting an ethnographic perspective, and using ethnographic tools. ‘Doing ethnography,’ for Green and Bloome, means following all the criteria of ethnography when researchers are doing a research study within a particular field. ‘Adopting an ethnographic perspective’ means doing more focused research rather than doing a comprehensive ethnography, using “theories of culture and inquiry practices derived from anthropology or sociology to guide the research” (Green & Bloome, 1997, p. 183). Finally, “using ethnographic tools” means doing a study using ethnographic methods such as fieldwork and field notes, but not following the philosophical and theoretical framework of ethnography. This trend of using ethnographic methods can be used by teachers in their efforts to understand their classroom in educational research (Scollon, 1995). By those definitions, the current study is defined as a qualitative study using ethnographic study tools.

The present study follows much of the theoretical framework of ethnography, as it pays attention to the meaning making of people in a particular culture, and understands ‘culture’ as a verb (Street, 1993; Heath & Street, 2008). The idea is for the researcher to act as participant observer, to explore works of interwoven multimodalities, and to follow a selective



intermittent time mode (Jeffrey & Troman, 2004). This conception contains several terms such as ‘culture as a verb’, ‘participant observer’, ‘multimodalities’, and ‘selective intermittent time mode’ which will be explained in the following paragraphs.

This study takes the concept of “culture” as a verb, as opposed to the concept of culture as a noun, that is, as a fixed object; this concept has been proposed in recent work by Street (1993) and Heath and Street (2008). To view “culture” as a verb means treating culture as “unbounded, kaleidoscopic, and dynamic” (Heath & Street, 2008, p. 7). Many anthropologists focus on action or process (e.g. Wax, 1993) in dealing with culture. When ethnographers describe what happens in a particular context, they describe both what happened there in the past and what is happening as an ongoing process within the context. In the same vein, Green, Camilli, and Elmore (2006) propose that culture should be viewed in terms of meaning making and generation of meaningful behavior. People learn from others to interpret their experiences and generate their actions from the meanings they constructed. For this reason, when Green, Camilli, and Elmore (2006) use the word ‘culture,’ they refer to learning that is acquired through experience, as opposed to biologically innate human knowledge. This learning is not completed without the effects from interwoven relationships with others. Also this type of learning is not a simple absorption of what our ancestors did. It is a “process of meaning making and contest over definition” (Street, 1993, p. 25). Thus culture, as viewed in this study, means the ongoing process of meaning making out of what we have done and are doing, as well as making meaningful behavior as members of a particular group.

Participant observation is one of the key concepts in this qualitative study. Participant observation means maintaining dual perspectives as both insider (*emic*) and outsider (*etic*) while collecting data as an ethnographer. The insider perspective requires that the researcher

participate as one of the members of the group being studied, to some degree. This insider perspective helps the researcher to witness the process of what happens within a particular cycle of events, such as a semester's academic events in this case.

Listening is the most important means of participation (Green, Camilli, & Elmore, 2006). A researcher must begin her study by listening to others in their own terms and language. Green, Camilli, and Elmore (2006) note that, when a researcher asks pre-invented questions before listening to what people say, s/he is eliciting the researcher's meaning, not that of the participants. The second important aspect of participant observation involves asking reflective questions based on the issues that the local people state in their own language. Researchers obtain this *emic* perspective by holding casual conversations and participating in the field (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2005).

Maintaining an outsider's perspective refers to making the familiar strange (Heath & Street, 2008; Spindler & Spindler, 1992) or "mak[ing] visible the invisible" (Green, Camilli, & Elmore, 2006, p. 285). If a researcher looks at the culture only with an insider's perspective, s/he may not notice the meaning-making process and may not be able to articulate the tacit knowledge of the culture. Through explicit and implicit comparisons with the outsider's own perspective, researchers have the advantage of looking at familiar scenes as if they are new or strange, rather than simply taken for granted. Certain techniques are employed in distancing oneself from the culture and obtaining an outsider's perspective. These techniques include recording observations (writing field notes), writing a reflective journal (rereading and coding of field notes), studying photographs and (tape and video) recordings, drawing maps and sketches, and conducting surveys. Heath and Street (2008) explain that ethnographic study researchers rarely are real participants, and that ethnography forces researchers to think

consciously about others.

In understanding a particular culture, qualitative study draws its distinctiveness from looking at multimodalities of human behavior. People who are practicing qualitative study include ethnographies believe that knowledge is located in different places: in the head, in social interaction, and in artifacts (Green, Camilli, & Elmore, 2006). Heath and Street (2008) explain that “knowledge that comes in patterned symbolic structure works in constant interdependence with context, emotion, embodiment, and many other aspects of being human” (p. 11). Knowledge of humans is represented as signs and symbols in multimodal aspects of human life and the signs and symbols are not innocent (Bourdieu, 1991). Thus, it is ethnographers’ critical job to track and record multimodalities in interwoven resources of interactions, language, artifacts, and visuals (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996; 2001).

In many cases, the natural cycle of a studied group is decided by the purpose of study and the natural rhythm of the group’s focused events (Heath & Street, 2008). In the case of the present study, the goal is to understand the needs of Korean students and their teacher and the ways that the needs are negotiated through multiple channels. Therefore, the natural life cycle of a class becomes a whole semester, and thus, data collection for this study needs to be completed within a semester. Within that framework, I have chosen a time mode defined by Jeffrey and Troman (2004) as ‘selective intermittent.’ Researchers who employ this selective intermittent time mode use a flexible approach and decide clear focuses and themes that s/he will investigate in and out of the site. Heath and Street (2008) suggest that this method enables researchers to reflect upon the strengths and weaknesses of their studies and make clear decisions about their study plans. The following sections introduce the decisions made regarding the study context (site, participants, role of researcher), data collection and analysis

(information needed, data collection, research timeline, data analysis) as well as other considerations (issues of trustworthiness, ethical considerations, limitations).

### **Research Site**

Angrosino (2007) suggests that ethnographers should consider a number of issues when they select a research site. A researcher should choose a site where:

- the issue you are exploring is seen in a reasonably clear fashion;
- the subject has been studied but not overly studied;
- there are a minimum of gate-keeping obstacles;
- “you will not be more of a burden than you are worth to the community” (p. 31).

First of all, a researcher should choose a site where s/he can find the issue s/he is studying.

Also, the site may be a place where relevant studies have been done. However, as noted above, it should not be overly visited by several researchers. Angrosino (2007) introduces a funny joke among anthropologists about this issue: “the typical Navajo family consists of a mother, a father, three children, and an anthropologist” (p. 30). In addition, even though there usually are many obstacles such as visas, vaccination certificates, and letters of approval, only the researcher can decide when the process of gaining entry becomes too problematic for the study. Finally, a researcher should choose a site where she does not become a burden for the local people. A researcher should make sure to find a place in which s/he can perform a role as a participant observer.

For these reasons, I chose Green University (pseudonym) in Korea as my research site. Green University is one of the prestige universities located in the northern part of Seoul. It is a four year university practicing English writing through various kinds of writing classes. This site was the optimal place for me, in that it contained the participants and events that I

wanted to study, such as Korean university students and a Korean writing teacher in an English writing class.

The title of the writing class that I studied was “English Writing through Movies,” an elective course open to any students at Green University. One of the main goals of this class is motivating students to write using movies in English. The class enrolls from 100 to 120 students; this is a typical number of students for elective courses in Korea. Since it was one of the popular elective courses among students at Green University, sometimes a few students came to the teacher asking about the possibility for opening extra seats for them. However, in the semester of this study, the student number was decreased, which was one of the writing teacher’s concerns; a smaller number of students enrolled in the course, and in addition, some dropped the course. There were around from 40 to 50 students at the start of the term; but at the end of the semester, the number of students had declined to 35 and 38 respectively for the two sections participating in this study. However, in spite of these decreased numbers, the class size was still one of the writing teacher’s concerns, as these are regarded as a large scale English writing class in the literature on the ideal pedagogical situation. The meetings were two hours long, and consisted of teaching with movie clips for one hour and in class writing for one hour. More detailed information regarding the site of study and participants will be provided in the next chapter.

### **Selecting Participants**

Purposeful sampling (Patton, 2002), purposeful selection (Maxwell, 2005), or criterion-based selection (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993) were used in order to find participants. The logic for deliberately selecting these participants and sites lies in the rich information held by the place and participants in this study. The present study aims to explore various needs of

Korean university students in a writing class and how they negotiate their conflicting needs with their writing teacher. The main characteristic of my participants is that they are Korean university students in a writing class. Gender, age, and social status were not considered for recruiting participants in this study. However, the participants must be students in this particular writing class at Green University.

The teacher-participant was Myong (pseudonym) at Green University. When I taught at Green University, I had informally discussed my research topic with him and he had agreed to participate in my study as a teacher participant. He graduated from one of the prestigious universities in Korea and received his doctoral degree specialized in English literature. During this study, he was an adjunct professor teaching at various universities. However, while I was finalizing this dissertation, I was informed that he had been hired in a tenured position from a university in Korea.

In order to find focal students for my study, I asked Myong if I could have a brief time with the class when he was not present. As he agreed, I introduced myself and handed out forms asking students for their contact information, as well as providing my email address. I explained that I was looking for some participants who would be willing to confer with me to help me understand the Korean students better.

I received contact information from a total of 14 students. However, when I contacted them for more detailed information, only eight students decided to participate in my study. After the first interview, since one student dropped this class, all of his information as well as the first recorded interview audio file were deleted and excluded. Consequently, a total of seven students participated in this study as student participants.

The range of age of the student participants ranged from the early twenties to the late

twenties. They came from various disciplines with different English proficiencies and GPAs. These students also tended to be heterogeneous in terms of gender, socio-economic status, places of residence, Korean dialects, and English writing experiences. The more precise and rich description about the seven participants as well as the professor, Myong, will be provided in the next chapter.

### **Role of the Researcher**

The researcher's relationship with participants needs to be considered in any research. Many qualitative research methods conceptualize this relationship in terms of gaining access or negotiating entry, which can be problematic. Maxwell (2005) criticizes the conceptualization of relationships with participants as "a tool or strategy for gaining access to data" (p.82). However, even the more egalitarian phrase "building rapport" does not capture the complexity and ongoing nature of the relationship. Maxwell (2005) also cautions about the nature of qualitative research for its humanitarian and democratic agendas, because the attempt to share equally with participants can easily dilute the existing power relationship. Even though he did not advocate a particular position in building relationships with participants, he suggested that a researcher should remember that creating a relationship for the purpose of achieving answers poses ethical problems: there is always a danger of intruding on the participants' lives to some degree. As Maxwell (2005) concludes, the best way for a researcher to position herself with participants is "to put [herself] in their position, and ask how [she] would feel if someone did to [her] what [she is] thinking of doing, making allowances for differences in culture and norms" (p.85). Acknowledging all of the above considerations, I held two positions, which allowed me to look at the class as both an outsider (*etic* perspective) and insider (*emic* perspective): I was both a student researcher and *Unni*/

*Nuna* (big sister) in my different interactions.

### **A Student Researcher**

I presented myself as “a student researcher” who wanted to understand Korean university students as a future teacher at the university level. When I began my data collection, I asked the teacher to introduce me as a graduate researcher from a university in the United States who wanted to meet and understand Korean students. The reason why I used a “student” researcher was to avoid being seen as a distant adult who was unrelated to their lives. I was a researcher; but I was also a student who had a similar social status to their own. Since this study used ethnographic interviews as a tool and sought to paint an accurate picture of the students’ views and feelings, I kept in mind that I needed to have close access to the students. Still, this position endowed me an outsider position (*etic*) that enabled me to observe the class and write field notes. I used Korean language most of time in my own notes, as I felt most confident expressing myself in my mother tongue. I offered the participants the opportunity to choose the language of their choice for the interviews; as noted later, all participants chose to speak in Korean.

### **Safe Big Sister (*Unni/ Nuna*)**

In order to build closer relationships with the students in general and especially with my focal students, I positioned myself as a safe “big sister,” as well as a “student” researcher. These positions enabled me to have an insider (*emic*) perspective when I collected data. The terms, *Unni* or *Nuna* (indicating an elder sister and an elder brother respectively) are Korean words that show respect and honor to older sister from a younger sister and a younger brother. Korean people use these familial words even for those who are not relatives but when they have close relationship across different age groups. Some researchers doing ethnographic



studies suggest that a researcher modify controllable personal factors such as hair-style and clothing, so that the researcher fits into her study community (Angrosino, 2007). Thus, with the teacher's consent, I tried to wear less formal clothes, to differentiate me from the teacher and other authority figures.

Positioning myself as a graduate student, rather than a professional, I aimed to close the possible distance with the students in terms of age difference and social status. This was important since the age and social status of a professional such as a teacher places her on a higher position in the social hierarchy in Korea due to Confucian influences on social relationships Korea. In the Confucian system, education is considered as a path toward becoming a noble man; consequently, university professors are regarded as idealized noble persons (Kim, 1996). Even though the hierarchy involving students and teachers has lessened in recent years, these influences still exert a strong influence over classroom relationships. For example, the relationships and words for addressing classmates are still decided by age differences even among Korean students. Korean students show respect to university professors when they meet them in school by addressing them as 'professor X' and 'professor Y.' In this context, it was important for me to minimize attention to my age and experience as a teacher figure. As a consequence, in order to create intimacy with them, I asked students to address me as *Unni* and *Nuna* if they wanted. I tried to become their friend/senior student having conversations and lunch or dinner together as well as offering them mentoring sometimes as *Unni* and *Nuna* when they needed me.

I conducted the ethnographic interview with the teacher only outside of the school, again maintaining some distance from the participant teacher in the class. While on campus, I tried not to give the students an impression that I met frequently with the professor. By keeping a

distance from the teacher, Myong, I expected the participant students to understand that the conversations that they had with me would remain confidential. Also, for ethical reasons, I did not share information about students with the instructor. By keeping a spatial and informational distance from the teacher, I tried to present myself as a safe “big sister” for the students.

My attempts to build intimacy with my participant students was successful, in that all of them called me *Nuna* or *Unni* as the study progressed. At the beginning of the study, while some students (James and Young) called me, *Sun-Bae* (“Senior” in Korean), others called me *Nuna* or *Unni*. As the study progressed, the seven participant students and I were able to build a comfortable relationship. Consequently, from the second interview, I noticed that James and Young called me *Nuna* mixed with the term *Sun-Bae*. However, after the informal Christmas party that all student participants attended, all of them called me *Nuna* and *Unni*.

### **Sources of Data and Data Collection Methods**

Based on the understanding of locating culture in different places, various sources of data and data collection methods were used.

Green, Camilli, and Elmore (2006) point out three places (the humans’ head, social interaction, and artifacts) as the places where culture is situated. First, researchers believe that cultural meaning making happens in the head because people interpret situations and generate behaviors in their heads. For this reason, in order to understand the people’s culture, the interview is one of the best data collection methods. The interview may range from structured interviews to casual conversations. The second place is interaction with people, because people make meaning and generate actions through relationship with others in spoken and unspoken forms. Especially, power relationships can be easily detected when researchers

focus on social interactions between people (Gonzalez, 1999). Investigating the ways to interpret and create texts, such as notes and messages sent to students, is one effective approach in understanding the power relationships in a class. Researchers recommend making audio or video recordings in order to capture scenes that are difficult to catch from field notes. Last but not least, artifacts are a third place where culture exists. These artifacts include not only the things that humans create, such as school buildings and the furniture in the classroom, but also human language (Cole, 1996; Wertsch, 1998; Wortham & Rymes, 2003). Examining the words and metaphors used in the participants' language in interviews and casual conversations is one way to understand the artifacts they present.

For these reasons, multiple sources of data are collected for the present study. The data collection methods and data sources are presented in the following table:

Table 3

*Data Collection Methods/Sources*

Data collection methods	Data collection sources
Participant observation	In and out of the writing class/ any possible places that participants articulate and negotiate their writing needs
Field notes	In and out of class
Ethnographic interviews	One on one with the seven students/Myong (Each participant, 3 times, 1 hour long)
Casual conversations	Casual conversations from in and outside of classroom with the focal students and the teacher Participating any occasions regarding this class and

	students
Open ended questions	The entire class students' answers to the open ended questions (1 time)
Artifacts	Exchanged emails and copy of text messages, course syllabus, outcomes from classroom activity, classroom
Weekly conceptual memos	Field notes/ (video and tape) recorded conversations

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### **Participant Observation**

Participant observation refers to a process that “places the researcher in the midst of, and interacting with, the community under study” (Angrosino, 2007, p.99). It consists of three phases: gaining access to a particular community, living among the people, and coming back to the academy (Crang & Cook, 2007). There is some basic information that a researcher should record in every observation (Angrosino, 2007):

- setting (e.g. school, a certain store);
- details of participants (number, general characters such as ages and genders);
- descriptions of participants;
- chronology of events;
- physical setting and all materials involved;
- behaviors and interactions;
- records of conversations or other verbal interactions (p.40).

A researcher should write as precisely as s/he can and not take anything for granted. Given this information, I decided to observe every meeting of the writing class.

## **Ethnographic Interviews**

Interviewing is one of the most important data collection methods in qualitative study. Ethnographic interviews can be seen as casual conversations, in the sense that the researcher and interviewee engage in conversation in the context of a friendly relationship. Friendships or partnerships may frequently develop because of the length and frequency of discussions with the interviewee, who has much knowledge about a site and enjoys sharing her experiences and interpretations with the researcher. However, ethnographic interviews should go beyond friendly conversations, in order to find the information that a researcher want to explore. Further, the interview is different from casual conversation in that a researcher should keep her conversation on a certain track, without “seeming to be coercive or impatient” (Angrosino, 2007, p.42).

The nature of the ethnographic interview in this study lies in open-ended questions and in-depth follow up in the context of semi-structured interviews. Angrosino (2007) explains that open-ended interview questions attempt to follow the flow of the conversation. Thus, digressions which can open new questions and insights are appreciated. The open-ended interview is based on the concept that an interviewee is a kind of partner who can help a researcher develop her inquiry. Also, the ethnographic interview differs from the oral questionnaire in that it is an in-depth interview. The purposes of an in-depth interview are to find the meanings of interviewee’s language, to gain insights into their behaviors, and to explore nuances that can be missed from the surface meaning of an issue. Even though a researcher prepares general questions by reviewing what they observe, these questions serve as guide rather than a rigid plan.

To gain more meaningful results from ethnographic interviews, there are many concerns and issues that a researcher must keep in mind. Especially, she must realize that the initial interview may be stressful for both an interviewer and interviewee. Crang and Cook (2007) recommend strategies to overcome such problems:

- exchange pleasantries;
- introduce yourself;
- ask where you should sit;
- confirm the topic of the interview;
- explain why you want to talk to her/him about this issue;
- go through a standard ethic protocol;
- ask if she/he minds you recording the interview;
- and remind yourself to do these things by writing them down as instructions at the top of [your] list (Crang & Cook, 2007, p.68-69).

In the initial interview, I introduced myself, asking where I should sit and sharing some jokes to break the ice and set the participants at ease. I also explained the reason why I want to talk with the participants, and asked their permission to record their interviews. Further, I explained that the recording would help me to gain more accurate understanding about their responses and minimize the risk of misunderstanding. Angrosino (2007) also lays weight on a researcher's maintaining good eye contact and monitoring undesirable non-verbal cues. The researcher's non-verbal cues can give an interviewee a signal that they are giving the right answer or give them an impression that the researcher is negative and judgmental in regard to their experiences.

In the initial stage of the interview, a researcher can also employ grand-tour questions

(Spradely, 1979). The grand-tour questions aim at understanding an interviewee's views about a phenomenon or event that a researcher aims to study. The questions include 'what', 'who', 'where', and 'how' about the issues, establishing basic ground for the interview (Crang & Cook, 2007). The researcher can then ask follow-up questions in such a way to more fully explore the issues at hand. In addition to follow up questions, a researcher can use probe questions to encourage an interviewee to restate and elaborate on their experiences in their own language. Some examples of these probe questions are neutral acknowledgements, repeating their language in your own language to make sure you understand, asking for more information or opinions, confirming a word or phrase, and requesting experiences or examples (Angrosino, 2007).

There are several things for a researcher to avoid in her/his ethnographic interview (Angrosino, 2007; Crang & Cook, 2007). A researcher should not ask leading questions by redirecting and interrupting interviewee's story. Also, an interviewer should give interviewees a pause, giving them some moments to think about what they want to say. Most of all, many researchers recommend that the interviewer consider the time issue. An interview can be a very intensive and stressful conversation. Thus, the interviewer should pay attention to the condition of the interviewee. When an interviewee seems to be tired from the interview, an interviewer should stop the interview and ask if the interviewee is available at another time.

Given this information, I conducted three ethnographic-style interviews, approximately an hour long, with each participant. All interviews were recorded in a digital recorder and transcribed in a Word document for analysis. Before the first interview, I had asked them which language they wanted to use between English and Korean. As all of the eight participants (seven students and Myong) wanted to Korean, all of the interviews were

conducted in Korean , as were the other conversation held in and out of class.

### **Field Notes**

Street, Baker, & Tomlin (2005) recommend using two columns for writing field notes. The two columns help researchers keep their data clear, by allowing them to separate their observations from interpretation or comments.. For these reasons, I used two columned field notes in order to separate the information about what happened from my reflections and questions regarding the events. When I used my lap top to document field notes during the class, I used parenthesis to separate the observed information from my interpretations and questions; I recorded the interpreted comments and inquiries in parenthesis.

### **Casual Conversations Inside and Outside the Class**

Whenever possible, with permission from the participants, I recorded the casual conversations that were made in both inside and beyond the classroom context. However, it was not possible for practical reasons to record all of the impromptu conversation. For this reason, instead of using a digital recording, I tried to remember the conversations as well as possible and record my recollections in my field notes as soon as possible. As the records were documented relying on my own recollection, I later checked the accuracy of my notes with the participants.

### **Artifacts**

In this study, artifacts refer to objects and materials regarding this writing class. These include class photos, teacher's syllabus, and written messages among the participants and me, students' writings, and outcomes from this writing class. The classroom, school building, and the teacher participant's office also represent artifacts in this study. Most of these artifacts were retrieved from the participants with their permission. The main source of artifacts I



included in this study involves: Myong's syllabus, text messages exchanges with participants, and the seven students' final drafts (mostly to trace their topic changes).

### **Conceptual Memos**

Heath and Street (2008) suggest that a researcher review what she has collected (such as field notes and recordings) and write conceptual memos on a weekly or regular basis. The conceptual memo contains "generic ideas that come from particular events, along with queries raised in the reflections column of field notes" (p.79). The researchers suggest that these memos should not be longer than five or six pages, and should include "name of researcher, dates of period covered by memo, sites included, and primary activities or scenarios observed" (p.79). They introduce three sections for the conceptual memo: problems and setbacks (unexpected incidences); overview (hours, locations, and source of data); and patterns, insights, and breakthroughs (detected patterns and realizations). For this study, I kept writing weekly conceptual memos, adopting and modifying the three categories recommended by Heath and Street.

### **Overview of Information Needed**

In order to answer the research questions, I needed to collect information in four categories: background (the information on the context); demographic (background and personal information of participants); perceptual (participants' perceptions related to this study); and theoretical (ongoing review regarding the topic of this study). It was also necessary to relate these kinds information to my research questions. The following table presents the information required according to the four categories and research questions as well as data corpus and data collecting methods:

Table 4

*Overview of Information Required*

Type of information / research questions	What the researcher requires to know	Data corpus	Methods
(a) Contextual	Background of school, history, structure, mission, values, staff (teachers) and physical site descriptions	Documents, Field notes, Spoken texts from interviews	Document review, Observation, Interviews
(b) Demographic	Descriptive information regarding the focal students and the teacher (age, gender, background, current status and etc.)	Field notes, Spoken texts from interviews	Observation, Interviews (formal and informal)
(c) Perceptual	Descriptions and explanations of English writing that students and teacher expect in the class	Field notes, Spoken texts from interviews	Interviews (formal and informal)
1. What expectations are brought to a writing course in Korea by both the teacher and his students?	a. The teacher's needs and expectations / changes and developments of these goals	Field notes, spoken texts from interviews, syllabus, reflections and reviews of field notes	Class observation, interviews, informal conversations, syllabus of the class
	b. The students' needs and expectations / changes and developments of these goals	Field notes, spoken texts from interviews, survey data, reflections and reviews of field notes	Class observation, interviews, and informal conversations (focal students), whole class surveys

2. What means of negotiation develop between the teacher and his students	c. The ways that these two sets of expectations relate to each other	Field notes, spoken texts from interviews, reflections and reviews of field notes	Class observation, interviews, informal conversations
	a. The ways the teacher and his students view each other	Field notes, Spoken texts from interviews, reflections and reviews of field notes	Class observation, Interviews, and informal conversations
	b. Negotiation channels that students/ the teacher use	Field notes, Spoken texts from recordings and interviews, artifacts (exchanged emails, text messages and others), reflections and reviews of field notes	Class observation, Interviews, and informal conversations
	c. The ways the teacher and his students negotiate with each other through these channels	Field notes, spoken texts from interviews, artifacts (exchanged emails, text messages and others), reflections and reviews of field notes	Class observation, Interviews, and informal conversations

in the course of a semester long course?	d. Changes, if any, through these negotiations?	Field notes, Spoken texts from interviews, artifacts	Class observation,
	How do they see their views as changing in the course of the term?	(exchanged emails, text messages and others),	Interviews, and informal conversations
	How do these changes show up in their own behaviors, in and outside of class?	reflections and reviews of field notes	
	e. Outcomes after their negotiations	Field notes, Spoken texts from interviews, artifacts (exchanged emails, text messages and others), reflections and reviews of field notes	Class observation, Interviews, and informal conversations

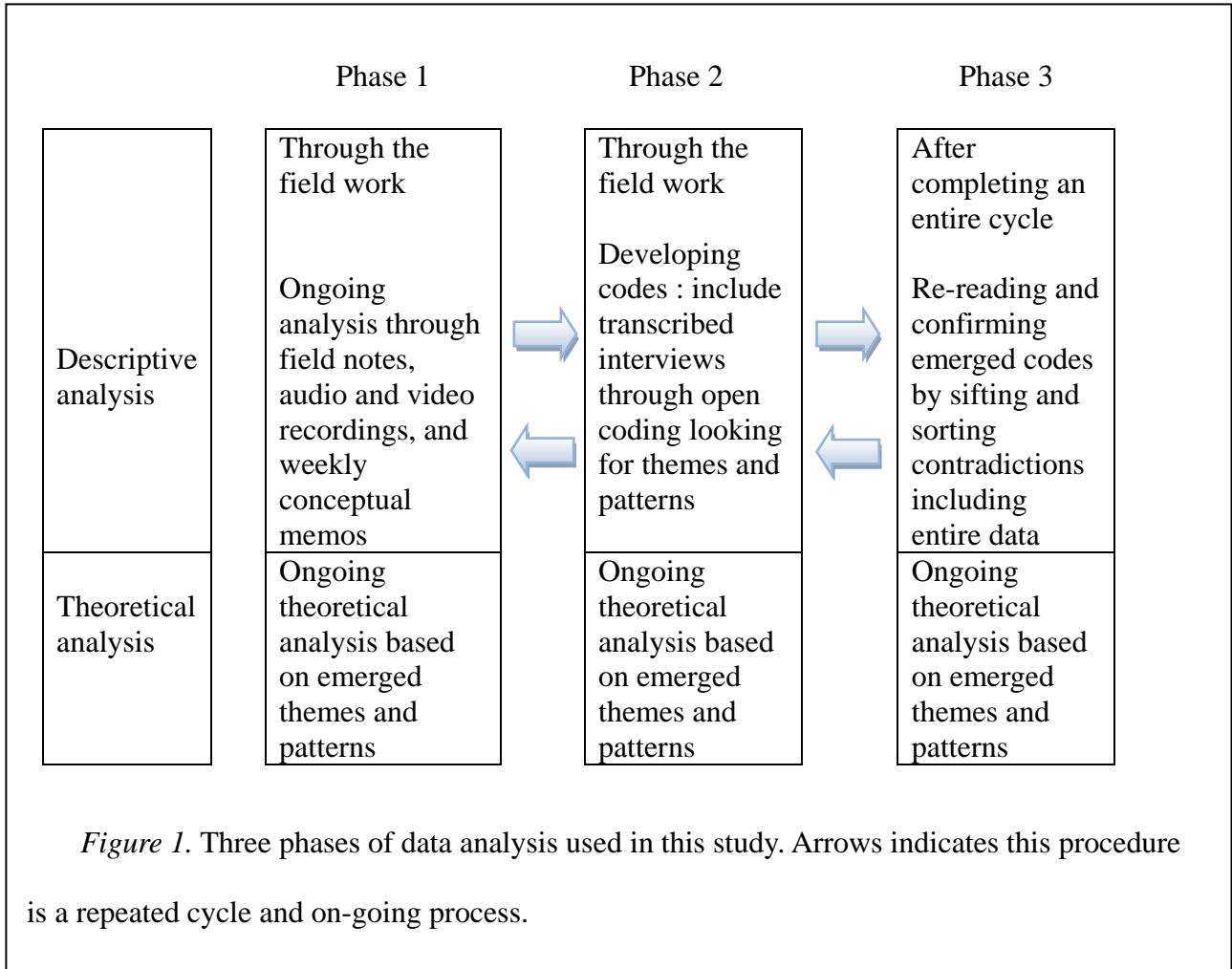
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## Data Analysis

### Three Phases

Generally speaking, “analysis is about making sense, both from the insiders’ perspectives and from an outsider’s perspectives” (Green, Camilli, & Elmore, 2006, p.288). In order to achieve this goal, there are three main phases along with two main forms (descriptive and theoretical) in my data analysis. Angrosino (2007) suggests two main forms of data analysis. Descriptive analysis is the process of looking for emerging patterns, regularities, or themes from the stream of data. Theoretical analysis includes ongoing literature review figuring out or supporting the explanation of these patterns. The three phases do not represent

a linear process. Rather, they represent an ongoing process which can go back and forth when needed.



**Phase 1.** As shown in phase 1, ongoing analysis through field notes begins from the first day of field work (Green, Camilli, & Elmore, 2006). Even though it is stated as phase 1, this phase continues until the data collection has all been gathered. This ongoing initial analysis was carried out through interpretational comments in field notes, review of audio recordings, and conceptual memos that were written every week. Because of this nature, Crang and Cook (2007) explain that ethnographic data cannot be seen as raw data. They further point out that even though the research process is still in progress, the data should

“already [have] been partly analyzed, made sense of, ordered in the research process” (p.133). For example, the data is analyzed by focusing on research questions, particular participants, certain methods, specific interview questions, and writing interpretations and reflective memos in field notes.

From the very beginning of the research and even more in the later phases, a researcher requires both *emic* and *etic* perspectives. These perspectives help her to confirm the categories and decide to what extent the previous categories represent findings in the data and the researcher’s (outsider) view. However, it is very difficult to have clear-cut distinction between *emic* and *etic* perspectives since those insights are interwoven and blended in any statement (Agar, 1980; Crang & Cook, 2007; Heath & Street, 2008). Thus, instead of employing *emic/etic* categories in analysis, Crang and Cook (2007) suggest an approach which “involves a general drift from *emic* to *etic* coding” (p.140). It is the process of developing codes and sifting/making sense of the codes of all data materials. They emphasize that the dual perspectives are still required in this process and the process should not be taken as a simple procedural move from A to B. In this study, phase I, Phase II and Phase III represent Crang and Cook (2007)’s ongoing, recursive, and hermeneutic analysis.

**Phase 2.** In phase 2, emergent patterns and themes should be found, which leads to labeling by open coding. This is the stage where researchers “look at data much more carefully and critically, and to perhaps de-and recontextualize different parts so as to be able to see new themes and patterns in it” (Crang & Cook, 2007, p.133). Comparison and contrast are key techniques in qualitative data analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 2006; Crang & Cook, 2007). Green, Camilli, & Elmore (2006) suggest that a researcher compare his/her entire data across different dimensions so as to find certain patterns. They offer a set of specific suggestions:

- Find evidence of the same theme or same pattern of behavior across the same actor in both interviews and observations
- Find evidence of the same theme or pattern of behavior across different actors in the same setting, which leads to recognition of variation or even conflict among actors
- Find evidence of different patterns of behavior across different activities or places which evidences the importance context (p. 287).

Along with those comparisons, a researcher adopts constant comparative perspectives to find co-occurrences which allow the researcher to detect patterns. The constant comparative perspective refers to the *etic* perspective, which involves “making the familiar strange” (Heath & Street, 2008, p.32). Through intensive data collection, the researcher becomes very familiar with the site she studies. Since she brings her own perspective into the field, the researcher examines the data from her own point of view. This is the constant comparative perspective. This reflexivity of what a researcher knows and what s/he sees in the field characterizes qualitative research. Heath and Street (2008) say “it is the recursive process of theory and practice in doing ethnography” (p.34), and their comment applies as generally to other forms of qualitative research. Through this constant comparison, an ethnographic researcher can find co-occurrences. For example, these can represent two events occurring at the same time and events which take place repeatedly. These co-occurrences reveal patterns of the participants which lie beyond their awareness. Angrosino (2007) calls this constant comparison “constant validity check” (p.69) and suggests that researchers consider these elements in this process:

- look for both consistencies and inconsistencies in what knowledgeable informants tell you;

- check what people in the community says about behavior or events against other evidence;
- be open to the negative evidence;
- play with alternative explanations for patterns that seem to be emerging (p. 69).

When the themes and patterns emerge, a researcher begins to develop codes through open coding (Strauss, 1987). Open coding is a process of analyzing data without predetermined themes so that codes can be developed with no prejudgment. When the researcher writes down her interpretations in the margin of the text or materials, codes can be developed through this open coding process.

**Phase 3.** This is the phase where an ethnographic researcher is “chopping up, (re)ordering, (re)contextualising, and (re)assembling the data” (Crang & Cook, 2007, p.133) that she has constructed. After the initial analysis of data through open coding, the codes need to be confirmed by re-reading and reviewing the whole of the data. A researcher should write down these codes on a separate paper and see how many/what codes have been developed, as well as asking if the codes can be merged, or might be mislabeled. Contradictions may occur between the data and codes. In this case, recursive data analysis should be conducted. That is, a researcher should go back to the data/codes and look for mismatches. Crang and Cook (2007) make some recommendations for a researcher to think about:

- was a particular case due to a ‘clerical error’ in filing?
- was it a genuine difference between sources?
- was it because, through your coding system, you had erroneously grouped together differing phenomena? (p.142).



After consider these issues, a researcher must go back to the data and reclassify the codes. Through this recursive process, the researcher's coding system will have more consistency as the codes have fewer contradictions.

Overall, through the recursive, ongoing analysis, themes and patterns emerged in the present study and a coding system was prepared. Angrosino (2007) summarizes this process according to the two stages of descriptive and theoretical analysis. When it comes to the descriptive analysis phase, researchers do the following:

- Organize notes, using thematic categories drawn from the literature if possible
- Read through the notes and modify categories as necessary
- Sort data into the modified categories
- Count the number of entries in each category for purposes of descriptive statistical analysis (is the sample is large enough to permit it)
- Look for patterns in textual materials, using a variety of presentation formats as aids (p. 73).

Also, in the theoretical analysis phase, qualitative researchers take the following steps:

- Consider the patterns in the light of existing literature
- Demonstrate how your findings relate to the interpretations of others (p. 73).

**NVivo 2.** In order to manage the massive amounts of data collected in the study, I used the computer software program, NVivo 2. This is not an automatic theory building software program. Rather, it assists to build codes and hierarchy among the codes by helping to sort coded data and retrieving the data. There are pros and cons in using computer software programs in qualitative studies. For example, (Angrosino, 2007) suggests that computerized data analysis is efficient in that 1. It helps a researcher retrieve materials as another form of

organized data storage; 2. It saves much time with the function of automatic sorting and searching data; and 3. It requires a careful reading and it allows a researcher not to lose information due to skimming. However, he also points out that computerized software programs may present problems as they 1. may take much time for people who are not familiar with computers; 2. tempt a researcher to “let them do the work” (p.75) and 3. are frequently expensive and time consuming when a researcher realizes that a given program she has invested in is not what she wanted.

This computer program was an efficient tool for my study, helping me manage substantial data in document and audio files. Also, the program was beneficial for me since I had experience with NVivo 2 through a year-long seminar with a qualified instructor in Korea; given this training I felt comfortable in using this program.

### **Issues of Trustworthiness**

In quantitative study, issues of reliability and validity are achieved from statistical means. In this sense, reliability refers to the possibility of achieving the same result from repeated tests. Validity means “the degree of to which a research finding actually demonstrates what appears to be demonstrate” (Angrosino, 2007, p.99). Many qualitative researchers agree that reliability is “out of reach” (Heath & Street, 2008, p.44) and these researchers are not “concerned with reliability” (Angrosino, 2007, p.58) because their results are not replicable.

However, in the case of validity, many qualitative ethnographic researchers seriously take this issue into consideration. Heath and Street (2008) explain that there are two kinds of validity in qualitative study, empirical and theoretical validity. Empirical validity concerns whether “the data is reasonable and backs up the claims made” (p.45). Theoretical validity refers to the relationship of the results to existing theories. They suggest, for instance, that

ethnographic studies can achieve validity from “the extent of which ethnographers convey co-occurrence” (p.45) through rich description of time, space, artifacts and interactants. In addition, in qualitative study, on-going literature review is one of the key concepts in achieving validity, in that this is achieved through a dialogue between existing explanations and a researcher’s data collection /data analysis.

In a similar vein, Angrosino (2007) proposes some means of achieving validity in qualitative study: working with multiple observers or teams; analyzing data with inductive methodology; and using the technique of *verisimilitude*. Multiple observers can offer multiple perspectives and they can cross check their findings to achieve more accurate understandings. Also, findings that emerge from analytic induction can be tested by examining negative cases. The verisimilitude technique is a writing style that brings “the reader into the world that has been studied so as to evoke a mood of recognition” (p.60). This can be achieved by rich, internally coherent, plausible, and recognizable descriptions. The work becomes authentic when the narrative of a qualitative researcher is successful in achieving these goals.

Thus, the validity of this study has been achieved through reporting emergent co-occurrences and by employing ongoing inductive analysis. The results were described in rich descriptive language set forth in a coherent and plausible manner. The ongoing dialogue between existing literature and my data throughout this study have also helped me to acquire validity. As a way of attaining validity of this study, I consulted two reviewers to confirm my data interpretations and analysis.

### **Ethical Considerations**

It is important to consider ethical problems because the nature of qualitative study involves deep engagement with human participants. There are two main phases when a

researcher considers ethical issues. One phase is data collection and another is data representation. In the data collection, I made an effort to protect my participants from emotional harm by engaging a prolonged relationship (on-going relationship). Also, before getting their written consent, I clearly explained my objectives and their role in this study. When I represented my data, I maintained confidentiality by using pseudonyms and doing member checking to verify if my transcription was accurate, as well as to check for any information they may not have wanted to expose.

As a researcher who benefits by obtaining rich data via my relationships with participants, it was import for me to consider the ethics of the researcher/participant relation, where the participants as well as the researcher perceived benefits. For instance, no participants want to feel that they were temporally used just as a source of data for a researchers' research purposes. Maxwell (2005) introduces a witty but sincere comment from one of his students saying, "The interview isn't over until the thank-you note is delivered" (p.85). Acknowledging this ethical concern, I expressed and am still expressing my appreciation for their time and efforts my participants gave to my study through the ongoing relationships, as well as personal treats and mentoring as their *Nuna* and *Unni*. At the same time, though I presented myself in two positions of as a researcher and safe big sister, I also thought myself with the fundamental role as a researcher who was always looking for ways to create relationships with my participants. In other words, I kept the fact in my mind that researchers are "invaders of a certain sort, picking up and putting down facts and feelings of others" (Heath & Street, 2008, p.28). Overall, during the data collection, I was very careful not to give my participants the impression that they were used for my own benefit.

Angrosino (2007) emphasizes that it is ethically wrong if a researcher studies a subject

without the express permission of the participants. Further, he points out two main ethical issues in observational research:

- It is unethical for a researcher to deliberately misrepresent his or her identity for the purpose of entering a private domain to which he or she is not otherwise eligible.
- It is unethical for a researcher to deliberately misrepresent the character of the research in which he or she is engaged (Erikson, 1967).

It is important to let participants know the identity of the researcher and explain the aims of research to them. Thus, as mentioned earlier, I identified myself as a student researcher, which was not an unethical distortion of identity, since I was a doctoral student doing her research for her dissertation. Thus, this identity was applicable. Also, as mentioned, when I received participants' signatures on their consent forms, I carefully explained what I wanted to explore and what each participant was going to experience while participating in my study. I presented the information in a written consent form in their mother tongue, Korean (Appendix F).

I also used pseudonyms so that my participants' identities were not revealed and employed member checking to screen the information that my participants did not want to disclose. Most of all, qualitative researchers must take into consideration the "subjects' right to freedom from manipulation when weighing the potential benefits of the research role against the harms that could accrue" (Adler & Adler, 1994, p. 389). In addition, by using member checking strategy, I showed my participants the scripts of their interviews, confirming the accuracy of the scripts and my interpretations.

## CHAPTER 4

### UNPACKING THE SILENCE

This section will provide background information such as descriptions of the study site and introduction of the participants. The main site of the class observation was the general elective course, ‘Movie English for Writing’ at Green University. Movie English for Writing was a two credit class opens to students in any major at Green University. The course normally enrolled up to 80 students for each class. This study includes eight participants: one teacher and seven students who took this course in the fall semester of 2009. Myong was the teacher who taught the four sections of the Movie English for writing class. Two of the classes were held on Thursday from 9 a.m. to 10:50 a.m. and from 11 a.m. to 12:50 p.m. respectively. The other two classes were on Friday from 2 p.m. to 3:50 p.m. and, again from 4:00 p.m. to 5:50 p.m. The Friday classes, which ran from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., were the main observation site of this study.

Three student participants, Adam, Christine, and Hae-chul, were taking the two o’clock class; the other four student participants, Blair, Dong-hwan, James, and Young, were in the four o’clock class. After describing the course, a later section of this chapter provides information on the educational background and English learning experiences of the student participants, as well as their personal characteristics and goals. A similar introduction is provided for Myong, the teacher. Unless otherwise specified, all quotes from participants in this section come from the first interview. As noted in the previous chapter, all interviews were held in Korean at the participants’ request. Thus, all direct quotations are my translations.

#### **The Movie English for Writing Class**

As noted above, the main site for observation was the Movie English for writing class. One teacher, Myong, was responsible for all four sections of the course. In the previous semester,

from 80 to 100 students per section had taken these classes as a general elective course.

Generally speaking, 360 students were taking this class every semester. However, in the term during which this study was conducted, the number of students had decreased to from 35 to 80 students per section, for a total of 200 students at a rough estimate. I observed two sections on Friday which had 35 and 38 students respectively. Due to my personal time conflicts with other class schedules, I chose the two Friday classes as my study sites. The number of students (35 and 38) still represented large scale English writing classes, although these sections were relatively small elective courses from a Korean context.

Myong had written a book for the class. He usually worked on the book during the summer or winter vacations; revisions were needed on a regular basis, since the classes used new movies every semester. There were ten units in the book. Two movies were used and each movie had five units dedicated to it. Each unit had three sections: Warm up, Script Text, and Writing. The Warm up section provided vocabulary, idiomatic phrases, and routine sentences so that students could fill out the blanks guessing the words, phrases, and sentences. In the second section of each unit, script texts were presented for reading. In the last section, there were explanations about writing, such as instructions for writing an analysis essay and definition of a critical essay. Also writing instructions appeared in the writing section in English.

Originally, each class was supposed to have two fifty minute sessions with a ten minute break in between. However, Myong allowed students to take personal breaks anytime they wanted and did not set a specific time for a class break. The classes were generally finished in 100 or 110 minutes. The table provided in Appendix J outlines the structure of the class in detail.

The class was divided into two main activities. In the first activity, students worked on the warm up and script section, learning vocabulary words, idioms, sentences, and cultural

expressions based on scripts. In the second activity, students wrote pieces of in-class writing for 15 to 20 minutes after they had watched a lecture and received instruction for the writing of the day. During the writing activity time, the teacher walked around the classroom and asked the students to ask questions if they had any. When a student finished her writing, the student submitted the paper and left the classroom. The table provided in Appendix K shows the structure of the main activities for the semester.

The class met for 14 weeks. Each class session was identified with specific goals and processes working toward writing a final paper. In other words, students were required to write an essay, engaging in activities from the writing process, such as brainstorming, deciding on a topic, writing a thesis statement, and organizing the structure of their papers.

Even though Myong said that he could not provide feedback to the whole class due to the class size, he provided minimal commentary on students' writing, such as complimenting their work, asking for more information, and checking students' drafts to see if they followed directions. Also, he offered to respond to student drafts in person or through email, as well as inviting students to ask questions about their writings and other issues during the writing section. Myong considered this writing section as feedback time for this writing class.

### **Myong, the Teacher**

Myong was a 40 year old adjunct professor when I interviewed him. He remembered that his English learning experience started in his middle school years, when it had focused mostly on translating English sentences into Korean, memorizing words and idioms, and working on reading comprehension tests. He loved to read novels in either Korean or English and also enjoyed imagining about what he read. This experience led him to study in the English language and literature department.

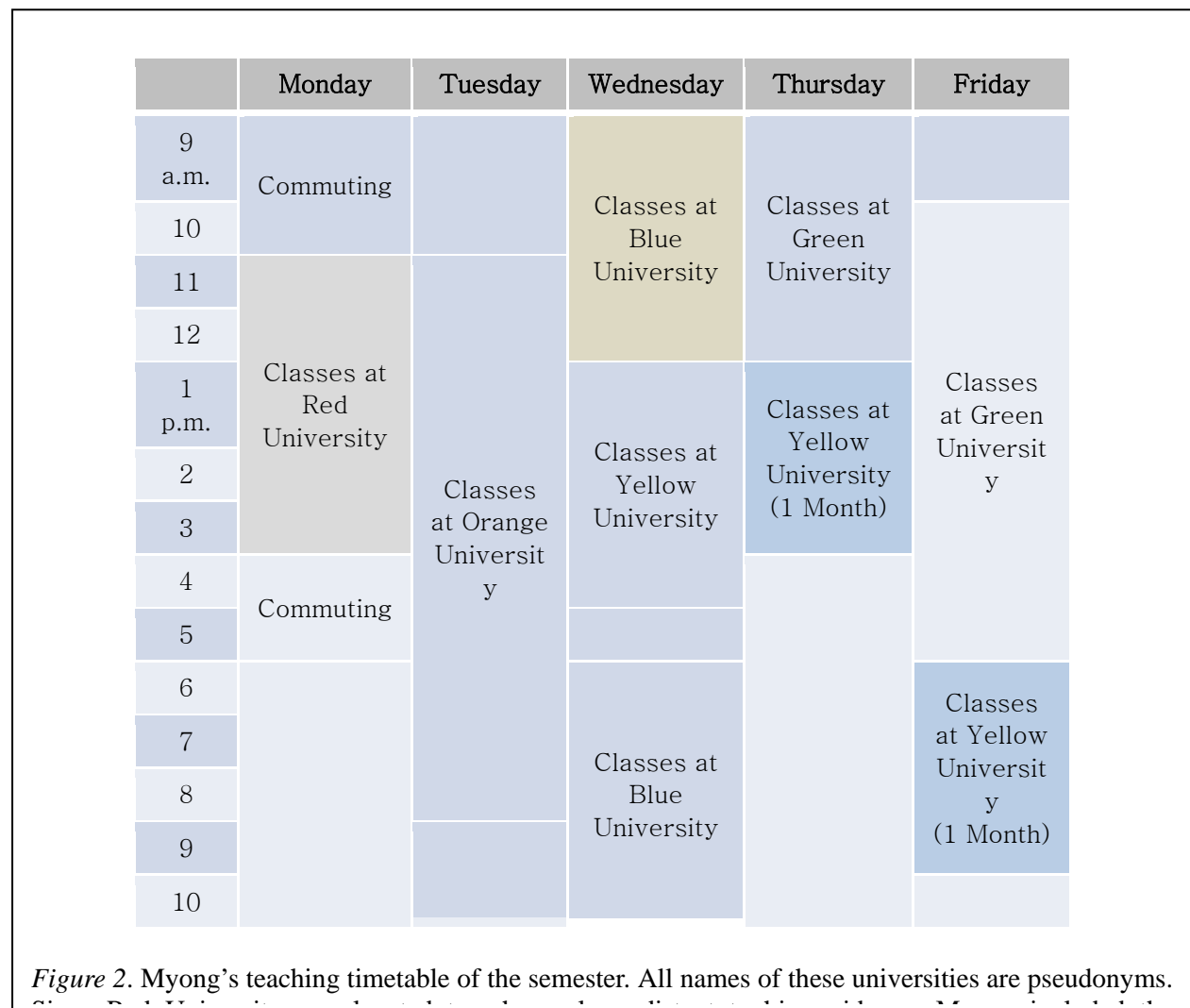


Myong liked to study English and American novels in the study group that he joined in college. At one point, he wrote a small article together with his study group members, and that was the moment when he felt that studying English literature was his way to go for the rest of his life. He pursued his Master's degree in English literature in Korea. Unfortunately, although Myong wanted to go abroad to study for his doctoral degree, he could not make it due to family issues at that time. Instead, he went to one of the prestigious universities in Korea and achieved his doctoral degree in English literature. His specialty was in American contemporary poetry in his doctoral work, and he studied Wallace Stevens, focusing on *The Emperor of Ice Cream* for his dissertation. He completed a post doctoral degree at a university in the United States. However, he did not have an opportunity to study teaching composition in any of his English programs.

It was 1994 when he first taught college students as a part time teacher. Until the time of the interview, Myong taught a broad spectrum of courses in English literature, education, and general subjects related to English. Some classes were combined with other fields and skills, such as English language, literature, education, writing and screen English. The courses he taught most often were these: Developing English Teaching Materials; Teaching Method in Elementary English for Listening and Speaking; Studies on British and American culture Introduction to British and American literature; English Poetry; Business English Writing; Movie English for Writing; and English 1.

Myong was a visiting professor at Blue University in a non-tenured track. However, in order to cover the living expenses for himself and his wife in Seoul, he was obligated to teach at five different universities in Seoul and the suburbs of Seoul, in each case as a part time teacher. His earnings were the main source of the family income. He was teaching forty hours a week at

the time of the second interview, and he told me that this schedule was unexpected for him. The following figure shows the schedule that Myong shared with me at his second interview.



When I asked Myong that if his schedule was a too much for him, Myong said, “When I compare this semester with other semesters, yes, I think so. I had to teach in other universities to make a living, and sometimes I happened to have unexpected classes.” He had been assigned the classes at Yellow University “out of blue,” (Myong, Second interview) and he had to teach these special classes for ten hours a week for one month. In the first interview, he was teaching 30 hours a week at five universities. However, due to the extra classes from Yellow University, by

the time of the second interview, he was teaching 40 classes a week.

Myong's situation was not unusual since, when part time teachers in Korea received an offer from a university, it was difficult for them to refuse to teach classes. Otherwise, they risk not having contracts from the schools in the next semester, since the university might think them too busy to accept teaching assignments. Having received the Best Teacher award at one university, Myong had a good teaching reputation, and thus, he received many offers from universities. For these reasons, Myong frequently ended up with an unexpected overtime schedule.

In Korea, part time teachers were rotated frequently, due to a rule stating that part time workers must be hired in tenured positions after they have taught in the same school for two years (four semesters) in a row. Thus, teachers were typically rotated every three semesters, if not sooner. Writing classes such as the one I observed were taught mostly by teachers who had specialized in writing. This time, though, Movie English for Writing was given to Myong. He believed that he was assigned the class because he majored in English literature. He said, "People think that people who majored in English literature have strong writing ability. I guess that was why I was given the class. I am from the literature department and I have had good experiences in teaching writing in English." He went on, "I often get to teach writing classes for those reasons."

### **The Seven Student Participants**

The following seven students agreed to participate in this study for the semester: Adam, Blair, Christine, Dong-hwan, Hae-chul, James, and Young. There were originally eight students who agreed to participate. However, when I finished the first round of interviews, one student dropped the class due to a personal issue and, thus, I removed all of his data from the study. The

students include two female students and five male students. Among the seven participants, three of the male participants (Dong-hwan, James, and Young) were close friends from the same department; I personally called them the “three musketeers.” Each student chose a favorite pseudonym; some of the students wanted to use English names and others wanted to keep Korean language names. I respected their decisions and used the pseudonyms chosen by the participants. I have described the students below in alphabetical order of their pseudonyms.

### **Adam**

Adam was a 21 year old freshman in the school of communication at Green University, and he was in his second semester at the time of his first interview. He was born in Korea’s Kyoung-Ki province, the second child in his family, which included his parents and an older sister. His older sister was a senior at a university in the United States majoring in Fine Arts and Business. His parents and he were living in Seoul at the time of this study. His family had had to move several times to other countries and come back to Korea, as his father had been transferred to other countries by his company. Consequently, his early education included experiences in public schools in the United States and Ireland, though he had mainly attended schools in Korea.

At age four, he and his family had moved to the United States for the first time and lived there until the age of seven. At that point, they moved to Korea again and lived there about six years before they moved to Ireland. When he came back to Korea after his first stay in the United States, his primary language was English and he had little Korean language proficiency, since he had attended kindergarten in the United States. He still clearly remembered an episode from the first day of his elementary school.

It was my first day of school in Korea and I had to introduce myself to other classmates. But they were surprised when I talked to them because I was

speaking in English. They were laughing aloud saying, “He is a REAL American!” That made me pretty nervous [...] I was not good at Korean at that time. People talked to me only in Korean language. My Korean got better but my language proficiency was caught between the two languages. People would say it is weird to see me speaking English pretty well but not knowing much grammar. And they are wondering why my Korean sounds like a foreigner’s speech sometimes (Adam, First interview)

He said some people still asked him if he had lived in other countries, saying he spoke like a foreigner speaking Korean. However, this was difficult for me to detect. He spoke Korean a little bit slowly, but this seemed to be natural to him since he was a “quiet and serious looking guy” in his self-description.

When Adam was 15 years old, his family moved to Ireland and lived there until he turned 18. There, he went to an international middle and high school where he mostly made friends with students from the United States. As a result, he has a strong American accent in his English pronunciation, “even though I lived right near England.” The family came back to Korea in time for him to attend the last year of high school in Korea. Since he was not prepared for the entrance examination for the university, he had to spend one more year preparing to enter Green University, where he had applied for the Korean Residents Abroad or Foreign Nationals Special Admissions Program. This was a special program for students who had spent two or more years in other countries due to having parents who were sent to other countries by their companies. He sometimes thought it would have also been good for him to go to a university in another English-speaking country. However, he wanted to come back to Korea because he “missed the country and, most of all, missed his friends.”

**Adam's future plans.** Adam had many dreams, under the influence of his parents who wanted him to pursue the career of his choice. One of his dreams was to be a voice actor who provides his voices for animated characters in dubbed movies, commercials, animations, and others. In order to pursue the dream, he was enrolled in a private voice acting school run by a famous Korean voice actor. Another dream was to run private movie multiplexes. However, he observed, "I know it is not easy to run such a big company. Becoming a voice actor is also very difficult, since it is very competitive and the Korean voice acting market is very small." In this reason, if he I failed to achieving those goals, he said he would love to go to "a company where I can speak English." He wanted to find a job in a company where he was able to use his English language ability.

Adam was a serious looking student with glasses and enjoyed neat fashion styles. But he was very active and sociable. He also described himself as "a person who loves to have fun, likes to go to Karaoke, [and is] good at pool and video games." Adam said, "I am pretty quiet when people first meet me. But if you get to know me more, haha. Even my friend thought I would not play video games at all." Making many friends in other classes was one of the things he wanted to achieve in his college years. In a party with other participants, even though he was relatively quiet as it was their first meeting, he hung out with other students, asking questions and talking about himself and his girl friend.

**English language learning experience.** Adam lived in New Jersey from the age of three to the age of seven and took ESL classes in pre-school and kindergarten during that time period. He felt uncomfortable being placed in ESL classes as he answered my question about what he learned in kindergarten: "Well, it was a kindergarten. I made something in craft classes and watched cartoon movies. As I was a foreign kid, ESL teachers took care of me." He remembered

that he did not like being placed in an ESL language class because he did not feel difficulties in speaking English. In these ESL classes, he also learned how to read the alphabet and words in English, which was easy for him since he had learned English from the age of four in the United States.

At the age of 8, Adam came back to Korea and entered an elementary school. Since he was not good at Korean language, he spent most of his time learning Korean until he became a fourth grader. He began to learn English from a cram school when he was in the fourth grade; this was his first experience with a cram school. He attended sessions there twice a week and was taught by Korean American teachers. He went to “conversation classes, learned English songs, and did some activities such as filling in the blank.” In this cram school, he also “prepared English tests for midterm and final of his school.” He began to study for the TOEFL exam in his second year of middle school in order to apply for a foreign language high school in Korea. However, since his father was sent to Ireland around that time, Adam moved to Ireland with his family.

Adam went to an international middle and high school in Ireland where English was the medium of instruction and communication. In his school, one teacher took care of the same group of students from first grade through ninth grade. He liked the teachers he met in the international school, since they listened to what he wanted and guided him into the appropriate curriculum for him. After having discussions with his teacher, he even skipped a year, the tenth grade, when students mostly had work experiences in Ireland. Instead, he took classes with eleventh graders that year. This was decided because he would be going back to Korea and thus it was not necessary for him to have work experiences in Ireland. Despite this impending move, he still appreciated the concerns and love of the teachers in his middle and high school years.

In his last year of high school in Korea, Adam went to a foreign language high school. He was glad to meet his friends from his former Korean middle school in the foreign language high school. As mentioned earlier, after he graduated from the school, he needed to spend one extra year preparing to go to the Green University. Once he reached college, he watched TV in English and talked in English with his friends who had similar experiences of living in other English speaking countries. He sometimes studies the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) workbooks because he needed to exceed a certain score on the test when he applied for Korean Augmentation To the United States Army (CATUSA).

He had taken two mandatory English classes at Green University: English conversation class and English 1. However, it was “well, really boring” to him because as he said, “that was too simple. Since it’s a college, I thought I would learn some difficult terms and words but that was a basic English class.” He chose two English classes for his elective classes in the study semester; these were Movie English for Listening and Movie English for Writing.

**Learning writing in English.** Adam had some experience of learning English writing in Korea and Ireland. However, the experiences were focused on short sentence writing and short essays. When his older sister, who studied in the United States, reviewed his writings, sometimes she found his thesis statement unclear and frequently asked him to write more clearly. He had few opportunities to learn English writing or write in English in his college year. He did not have a plan to study writing in English yet. However, he felt he might need to study TOEFL writing later in order to look for a job in Korea.

Adam was a 4th grader in elementary school when he first learned how to write in English in a Korean cram school. He wrote some short sentences in English, and then the teachers checked his grammar and spelling; of this experience, he said “It was a basic writing. I



wrote something and teachers checked my writing for grammatical mistakes.”

When Adam was in Ireland, he wrote some essays as homework from his middle and high school. Generally, the essays were about “summarizing in 300~ 400 words. For example, when I learned geography, I studied a case study and summarized it in a short essay.” While he frequently wrote short essays of 300 words, sometimes he needed to write an essay of 1000. Adam remembered that the 1000-word essay was pretty challenging to him, “One day, we went to a field trip together and the teacher told me we need to submit a report in 1000 words. We asked him, ‘When is the due date?’ and he told us ‘this week’ haha. [...] I had to stay up one night and next day I woke up early and wrote more.” He felt his writing was getting better; however, he still found it difficult to write a thesis statement.

After Adam returned to Korea, he had a few experiences of writing in English. He once wrote a group report in English 1 at Green University. The assignment was reporting a group discussion about questions in certain chapter. For example, “it was about video games and there were questions related to the chapter. [...] I wrote most of the writing. I asked my group members and I wrote down their opinions.” Aside from that class report, he had rarely had an opportunity to write in English. He was planning to study TOEFL test since he may need a TOEFL score for his future job search.

## **Blair**

Blair was a twenty year old female student in her first year of college, majoring in Business Administration at Green University. Her other family members consisted of her parents and her younger brother. In the fall semester in 2009, she was taking 21 credits, which was allowed only for the students who had their grade point average over 4.0 points out of 4.5 in the previous semester. Blair was also tutoring a middle school student three times a week. She also

participated in a volunteer service group with other college students from various universities. Her goal for winter vacation in 2009 was volunteering in other countries because “I want to do real volunteering this year, not for getting credits in school.” She was absent from our class only on one day when she got the N1H1 (Swine flu) and was isolating herself in her room for a week for her recovery. Blair found that experience horrible saying, “I was lucky not to die, haha.” Blair was a girl who had a positive attitude and loved to meet and talk with people.

**Blair’s future plans.** Becoming an accountant in an accounting firm was Blair’s dream. She thought it would take at least two years for her to prepare and pass a CPA (Certified Public Accountant) test. She wanted to “take a semester off from school and go abroad around six months” after passing the CPA test during her college years. It was going to be “a vacation for me who worked hard” on her study. Her plan was clear even though it was her first year in college. She wanted to visit one of her professors in her department in order to discuss her plan to become an accountant. However, she never made it during the semester of this study. Advices from her seniors had been the main source for her in making this decision about her future plan and school life.

**English language learning experience.** It was her first year of elementary school when Blair first began to learn English. With five other friends, Blair learned speaking in English from a woman called Ms. Kim. This, however, lasted only one month, since Ms. Kim had to leave for the United States. After that, Blair did not study English language for a while. Since she was not a healthy child when she was young, her mother did not expect her to study hard at that time. When she became a sixth grader, she started to learn English in a cram school along with other school subjects such as Korean, mathematics, and science. Blair said, “Teachers had me memorize vocabulary items. But when I think to myself, I didn’t study at all.” She told me that

the young Blair did not know how to study at that time. Learning English in the cram school was boring to her. In winter vacation, her mother thought that the cram school was not helping enough with her English language development and she introduced a home-school tutor for Blair.

In her middle school year, Blair was busy preparing for the entrance exam for a foreign language high school. She studied hard from her eighth year, “staying up at night until 2 a.m. and doing the homework from a cram school.” Her homework generally consisted of doing dictations for an hour, translating paragraphs, and doing exercises from a TOEIC workbook. Blair studied for the TOEIC because there was a special program for high school entrance based on TOEIC scores. However, her efforts were not successful. She divulged that she felt empty when she failed to enter a foreign language high school, which meant that she would have to attend a school in the regular public system. She said, “I felt empty, rather than crying. The teachers advised me, [saying I should] believe them and follow their directions. I followed the directions and there was nothing [as test results]. So, I felt pretty empty at that point.” The night that she learned of her failure to enter the high school, she had nothing to do and she felt listless, counting the coins in her piggy bank three times.

Most of her high school time, Blair prepared for *Sue-Nung*, the university entrance exam. Her high school and the cram school were the main places where she studied English. From the first year of high school, she worked on English workbooks for *Sue-Nung*. Her teachers taught one or two chapters from school textbooks “by courtesy”, mostly working on workbooks. Evaluation tests from big publishers were part of their mid and final examinations. Blair studied the patterns of the mock tests questions and said that, “School textbooks are easy for high school students. So, we learned some pop songs. It was really fun.” Blair scored at a high percentile in English when she was in high school. She explained this was because the students who were

good at English were in the foreign language high schools. In her cram school, she studied English for *Sue-Nung* as well. Cram school teachers asked questions, and then, students answered the questions, read sentences and translated them into Korean. Sometimes cram school teachers asked her to memorize school texts sometimes and return to them in order to check on her accuracy.

After she became a freshman at Green University, she was studying English through classes from her university, at a cram school, and by herself. She took Movie English for Reading in her first semester as an elective course. Though she was nervous since there were many students good at English in the class, she finally got an A+ for the term. She also took an English speaking class and said, “it was interesting. I did not have any experiences in going abroad. So, I was worried about that.” But she was surprised, as she put it, when she found that after all she could speak English. The teacher of the English Speaking class was “very unique” and “he brought a guitar with him and played it, singing songs.”

Blair enrolled in a cram school which was contracted by Green University for TOEIC preparation. She took classes at the cram school when she had a break in her schedule at Green University. However, she rarely went to the classes due to her part time job in another place. She tried to self-educate for the TOEIC by working on TOEIC workbooks, but she quit doing it after a week later. Additionally, Blair made a study group for the TOEIC with two of her friends. However, they did little work because they found it inconvenient to get all three together at a particular time.

Blair was under heavy pressure to study English, especially in terms of the TOEIC test. If she achieved a high enough score on the TOEIC test, she wanted to begin to study for the CPA test from fall semester in her sophomore year. She said that the TOEIC score was important to

her CPA test since “the English test in the Korean CPA test is not mandatory anymore. The scores from the TOEIC and the TOEFL can replace the English test.” She was planning to go back to a cram school that one of her senior volunteer recommended to her.

**Learning writing in English.** Blair’s only experience of learning writing in English was in her cram school, where she studied English for *Sue-Nung*, the Korean university entrance exam. This was not a formal writing class but a part of her homework for cram school. She said: “Most of the time I wrote a diary in English for homework or I wrote some essays when teachers gave us topics.” Since English writing was extra work for the students, she rarely did the homework. However, she remembered revising papers around “three to four times.” There was “a foreign teacher” in her cram school and the teacher assigned revision for the papers. Except this experience, she could not articulate any other experiences of writing in English.

### **Christine**

Christine, who was 23 years old, was doing double majors in the Department of Public Administration and Public Policy and the School of Business Administration. At the time of the interviews, it was her last semester of her college year. Her family consisted of her parents and younger brother who was six years younger than her. The family originally lived in Incheon and moved to Mok-Dong in Seoul. Mok-Dong was one of the prestigious cities where Korea parents preferred to live, as students educated there could enter top notch universities later. Christine said “that’s why we moved to Mok-Dong.” She was one of the hard working students in this writing class: She often marked her incorrect answers with a red pen, and could be seen looking up words in an electronic dictionary.

**Christine’s future plans.** From the first interview, Christine said she wanted to go abroad and study before or after her graduation. She was thinking to apply for an MBA (Master

of Business Administration) program in an English speaking country after her graduation. As another option, she wanted to go to Oregon State University through an exchange student program to earn a second diploma from the school. She was still discussing her future with her mother, who wanted Christine to graduate from Green University first before pursuing another degree. By the second interview, Christine had applied to the exchange student program, preparing for the documents and interviews. For this reason, we enjoyed talking about my studying abroad experiences.

**English language learning experience.** The English education of Christine began when she entered elementary school. She learned speaking and reading through after school programs and private tutors hired to come to her home. However, Christine explained that “I rarely studied English during my elementary school years.” Once or twice a week, she participated in an after school program learning English through songs, such as the *Do-Re-Mi* song, until fourth grade. Her mother sent her to those programs because she thought “English was a basic need”; also, Christine “liked learning English.” From fifth grade until eighth grade, private tutors visited her at home and taught her English. They corrected her pronunciation and she liked that, saying that “It was good. They recorded my speech and corrected my pronunciation. I also read words and sentences following a recorded voice” as a model.

After elementary school, most of her English learning was focused on preparing the university entrance exam through her schools and cram schools. Christine felt that English education in middle and high school had been “not helpful” for her. She said, “In schools, teachers began to translate the main readings without any explanations. I practiced finding the main subjects and verbs of sentences every day.” The experience was not pleasant for her and she expressed her disappointment, “I could not say a word in English when I entered college after the

six years of English learning.” In her high school, she learned English grammar at a deeper level; however, she was “skeptical about the usefulness of the grammar lessons,” as they involved “working on her grammar workbooks mechanically.”

In order to prepare for the university entrance exam, she went to cram schools during her middle school and high school years. Most of the time, even in these special lessons, she worked on translation and workbook exercises. She also practiced listening comprehension and “*had fun* working on listening comprehension workbooks.”

When Christine became a university student, her main source of English instruction was the English classes provided at Green University. The English classes she took were Movie English, Movie English for Reading, and Movie English for Writing (elective courses), and the basic mandatory courses English 1 and English Speaking. Unlike the English Speaking class, English 1 was similar to her high school English classes, which involved “translating reading materials, doing presentations, and answering the teacher’s questions.” She took three movie mediated English classes since they looked interesting. According to her, those movie English classes were “popular classes” at Green University. Her definition of a popular class was “the classes closed fast when students register for them” and “the classes students always enjoy.”

Christine also went to cram schools during her college year and she loved the classes because those classes were more enriching than “the classes preparing for the university exam.” She took CNN English, English speaking, and Movie English for listening. When it comes to the speaking class, four people were sitting and discussing the topics of the day’s chapter, such as fashion, movies, and food. They also formed pairs and shared their ideas about those topics. She said the classes helped her to “maintain her English proficiency” but unfortunately, not to develop them.

**Learning writing in English.** Christine learned writing in English for her TOEFL writing test. Since she wanted to have a “minimum score” for applying to schools abroad, she took a semester off to attend a cram school where she studied how to write four paragraph essays. When a teacher gave her a topic, she “wrote an introduction, body, and a conclusion in thirty minutes” for six months. She could achieve the minimum score after six months.

Christine also had some experiences of writing in English from her classes at Green University. In one of her disciplinary courses, she wrote a cover letter and wrote a narrative of what she did during Chu-suk, the Korean Thanksgiving. However, even though she received no feedback from her teachers, the scores of the papers were included in the final grade. In the Global Initiative class, Christine mentioned that she had written her resume, cover letter, and filled out a paper for a visa. It was a one credit course for the junior and senior students who wanted to work for global companies. Other than these writing experiences, Movie English for writing was her first writing class at Green University.

### **Dong-hwan**

Dong-hwan was 23 years old at the time of the first interview. He felt a bit of cognitive dissonance caused by his age; this conflicted with the idea that when he should be enjoying life, it was a critical period for him to prepare for his future. Dong-hwan, James, and Young, the three male students enrolled in the School of Business Administration, always stuck together, sitting in a row. Dong-hwan and Young were in the same study group in their department and were the same age, while James was one year older. Dong-hwan generally sat between Young and James, acting as a sort of conduit connecting his two friends. He had a relatively concrete plan for his future and was actively preparing for it by planning to pass the examinations for the licenses required for a career in finance.



**Dong-hwan's future plans.** Since Dong-hwan's dream was a corporate job related to finance, he was required to have many certifications in the field of finance. Specifically, he needed to pass the FRA (Financial Reporting and Analysis), and CRN (Chartered Financial Analyst) examinations, along with achieving a minimum required score on the TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication). He had already passed three other tests while he was in the army as part of Korea's compulsory military service system. He was planning to take one or two semesters off to prepare for the FRA and CRN exams. Since he also needed to achieve a minimum TOEIC score before applying for a job, Dong-hwan said he felt under heavy pressure to study English.

**English language learning experience.** Dong-hwan's mother sent him to a cram school to learn English when he was in elementary school. Even though he remembered little of what he had learned from the cram school, he said "I mostly learned English speaking," commenting, "It was boring." Specific activities he recalled included vocabulary lessons and conversations about varied topics.

When Dong-hwan started to learn English in middle school, his teachers used textbooks most of the time. He said, "I learned grammar from the dialogue section of the text and also studied the readings." High school English classes were "pretty much similar" to the ones in middle school. He also frequently noted that he experienced learning grammar through the textbooks. However, he still did not understand why he should learn English grammar and he did not like the experience. His English score in *Sue-Nung*, the Korean version of the SAT, was good as he had achieved "from 93 to 95 out of 100"; but most of the time, he noted that the points he had lost were from the grammar section. He loved to study by himself and, thus, he did not go often to cram schools during his high school years.

Compared to his K-12 experience, learning English in college was much more stressful for him. In his first semester, he had taken many English classes at Green University in an effort to raise his TOEIC score. At the time of the first interview, he was in his second semester of his freshman year and he was taking three English classes: English 1, Movie English for Writing, and Movie English for Reading. He said he had chosen many movie-mediated English classes, since “Green University was specialized in movie English classes.” Dong-hwan found these classes unique and enjoyable, saying, “Everybody loves watching movies.”

At the time of the first interview, Dong-hwan and Young were preparing for the TOIEC speaking test at a cram school. He explained that, in order to qualify for jobs, he needed to exceed the required score. As part of an effort to increase his speaking level, he practiced answering similar types of questions on the TOEIC speaking test. When the instructor of the class provided him basic sentences for answering certain questions, Dong-hwan memorized these answers and used these sentences to answer the questions. At the time of the second interview with Dong-hwan, he had quit going to the cram school, since he “was busy working on school projects and midterms.”

**Learning writing in English.** Dong-hwan could not articulate any specific experiences in writing English. In this regard, he said, “I don’t have any experiences because we did not do that [writing in English] in class.” Even though he had some practice writing sentences in English through his K-12 education, he never wrote any sort of English papers, such as essays. This class was the first time that he was required to write formal essays and other assignments in English.

## **Hae-chul**

Hae-chul, the oldest among the 7 students, was a 27-year-old computer science major, living with his parents in Kyong-ki province. Earlier in his college career, Hae-chul had been worried about not being prepared to succeed in his job search; he was concerned that his graduation date was approaching too quickly, and that he needed “one more year to look for a job.” To extend his period of learning the language, he went to study English in Canada for six months “from April to September in 2008.” Through websites, such as Facebook, and email, Hae-chul was still in contact with the friends he had met at the language school. He was one of the more sociable participants and was also very adventurous, frequently saying that he wanted to travel around the world. Hae-chul found his experience in Canada interesting and kept saying he wanted to go back.

**Hae-chul’s future plans.** Hae-chul had a relatively practical plan since he was in the last semester of his senior year; he was looking for a job in the computer science field or in a programming-related department of any Korean company. Addressing the importance of English in the job market, he said, “Even computer science students [need to] have a good score in TOEIC” to obtain a position in a prestigious company. In the last interview, he mentioned that this was the reason he had begun to concentrate his efforts on the TOEIC test. He said, “I registered for the test and bought some books for that.” He also was preparing for the TOEIC Speaking test. Because of this goal, Hae-chul was practicing his English interviewing skills whenever he had time.

**English language learning experience.** Until he entered middle school, Hae-chul did not study English, since it was not included in the elementary school curriculum at that time. When he took his first middle school English test, his mother was shocked to learn of his low score on

the alphabet test and sent him to her sister who was an English teacher. Hae-chul visited his aunt's house every weekend, staying overnight in order to be tutored in English. He remembered that "my mother was shocked yes. Haha. [...] I've studied English from the seventh grade through a private lesson, mostly English grammar" and "went to my aunt's house for two years, without complaining."

In Kyong-Ki province, middle school students were required to pass an exam in order to be accepted by their chosen high school. After graduating from middle school, Hae-chul was accepted at a prestigious high school there. After working hard when he was in 10<sup>th</sup> grade, his study habits deteriorated during the next two years, through 12<sup>th</sup> grade, causing him to be rejected by numerous universities. However, his zest for learning English did not dampen during that period, as he spent his own time memorizing vocabulary and studying workbooks for *Sue-Nung*. He entered a private boarding institution where students prepared for the university entrance exam after high school. Since he was good at the tasks required for the English comprehension test of the *Sue-Nung*, he continued to focus his efforts on studying English and applied to the universities that gave extra points to students who had high scores in English.

Hae-chul initially mentioned that he "did not study English at all" when he first entered Green University. However, further into the interviews, Hae-chul revealed that he had learned English through the classes he had taken at Green University and when he visited Canada. By saying "I did not study English at all" in college, he meant that he had not engaged in intensive practice to prepare for the TOEIC test. He had attended a cram school for speaking English because he was "curious about what a cram school would be like"; however, he quit that cram school a month later. Thus, he mostly had learned English through English classes at Green University. Hae-chul took English 1, Basic English Speaking, and English Speaking for Middle

Level, and movie mediated English classes such as Movie English, Movie English for Reading, Movie English for Listening and Movie English for Writing while he was at Green University. He found English 1 similar to the English classes in his high school years because they featured “[tests] based on memorization of vocabulary, did some role plays, and translated reading materials”; in the end, he said the class was not “interesting.” The other movie-mediated English classes also required him to memorize skills for the midterm and final tests.

As noted earlier, he attended a language institution in Canada, where he learned English by having discussions with other students after watching some cartoon movies such as *The Simpsons* and gave presentations about free topics. The topics he chose covered various subjects such as introducing Korea, Korean traditional costumes, and *Sam-Ge-Tang*, a Korean food. The preparation for this last presentation was interesting and challenging for him: “I needed to introduce the recipe. ‘Wow, that’s difficult.’ I really put my effort in looking for the recipe.” He even practiced the lines while he was in the shower by pretending to present the topic in class. He said, “Recently I am practicing my future interview in English, by guessing the questions” because “most of the prestigious companies have interviews in English.” After returning from Canada, he started to feel the need to memorize certain sentences. For example, when he found a sentence, he would think “there was a moment like that. Ah, that is the sentence that I can use in that situation. I should remember this sentence. That’s nice.” He then tried to memorize sentences that he identified in this way.

**Learning writing in English.** Compared to other participants, Hae-chul had had some writing experiences in English through the Canadian language school. This represented the first time that he had the opportunity to write in English. He addressed this experience, its newness and difficulty, in these terms:

I didn't do it before that time [when I learned English in Canada]. In my entire 26 years of life, it was the first time to write in English. It was awful, actually. I mean my writing. I wrote my diaries in English, getting some feedback. The teacher revised it individually and said I did a good job. But, it was difficult to write a diary in English because, well, there was nothing special in my everyday life

He wrote in his "middle school text level" diary every day and submitted it on Friday of each week. During this period, since Hae-chul "started to have a strong urge to write well in English," he consulted a dictionary often when he wrote in his diary, wanting to write better. Having feedback from the teacher and other students was one of the enjoyable moments for him. He said, "Getting feedback about my writing in another language, I was curious about the results [of my writing], having corrected my grammatical errors." He also talked about his experience of sharing ideas about writing in peer review sessions. He found this process "interesting" because these activities represented conversational exchanges with his peers.

### **James**

James was born and lived in Kyong-ki province with his parents. At the time of the interviews, he was in the second semester of his sophomore year, and considering his future. Among the "three musketeers" in the School of Business Administration, at 24, he was the oldest, since he had spent an extra year preparing to enter Green University. During the interview, he sometimes said that he was having a hard time because his major was not as interesting to him as he expected it to be. Movies, English, and sports marketing were his interests; he wanted to find a job where he could combine those interests. This was the reason why he was also taking classes

in the college of physical education. Additionally, he had experienced living in another country. Having lived in the District of Columbia and New Jersey when he was in elementary school, he loved learning English through various media such as movies, pop songs, and American dramas. During the break at the interviews, and while I engaged in small talk with him, there were many incidents where he talked about American dramas such as *Prison Break* and *Heroes*, and situation comedies such as *Gossip Girls* and *Seinfeld*.

**James' future plans.** James was still deciding what he wanted to do in the future. As well as the aforementioned interests, he believed his English speaking proficiency to be one of his strengths. Being a 24-year-old sophomore, James felt stressed about having to find a suitable job. Taking physical education classes was one of his ways to prepare for his dream job that would combine his main interests, which were sports and management. James said, "As a matter of fact, I am more interested in sports marketing than [any] other marketing field and that's why I am trying to do something in that field."

**English language learning experience.** As mentioned before, at the age of 3, James had moved to the District of Columbia in the United States with his family. After two years of a preschool experience which he could not remember well, he returned to Korea, only to move again a few years later. This time, he and his family moved to New Jersey where he attended elementary school from second to fifth grade. He found that English learning experience difficult. James recalled that people claimed not to be able to understand him. They said things that amounted to claiming that "[his] speech does not make sense." He felt intimidated by this experience: "I heard that phrase many times [...] I didn't say anything in school for a week and then, I started to speak, bit by bit, by asking questions of others." However, he did not feel this was a traumatic time for him: "I rarely experienced frustration since, haha, I was too young." He

enjoyed watching cartoons such as *Casper* and Disney movies, learning vocabulary and certain expressions from them. Since this was one of his favorite hobbies, he watched the same movies several times until he had memorized the lines. Meanwhile, he made many friends through after school programs such as baseball. He remembered those years as a time when he spoke English pretty well. Since his parents had enrolled him in a private Catholic school when they were not wealthy, he felt that they had placed a great emphasis on education.

After returning to Korea during the second semester of fifth grade, James spent two years adjusting once again to life in Korea. His mother was not concerned about his grades during this time because she knew that he needed time to adjust to his new environment. After starting middle school, he began take English classes as a part of the curriculum. However, he did not pay attention in class since it was boring to him. James said, “I didn’t pay attention to the teachers in English class out of my pride. Haha.” While his friends were studying English, he studied the Korean language instead.

Upon starting high school, James felt the need to study English. James did not like his English learning experiences because “There were some important expressions in textbooks. I blindly memorized those expressions and vocabulary.” Since he felt that some of the questions in the workbook were “ridiculous,” he could not comprehend why his teachers stressed this type of work. According to James, “Some questions were weird. Teachers omitted prepositions such as ‘of’ out of nowhere and asked what should be there. And they misspelled some words. When I read them, I couldn’t find any grammatical mistakes from those sentences, but there would be one misspelled word.” James said students could get good grades when they memorized whole paragraphs; in his opinion, this kind of “cramming education” was the problem that caused Korean students’ inability to speak English after completing Korean K-12 education.



During his senior year of high school, James achieved a perfect score on the English test in the *Sue-Nung*. After that, he began studying the English used in various media formats, such as sitcoms, movies, dramas, and TV news. Since he did not want to go to a cram school, he educated himself through English magazines. Also, when he was a freshman, he took many English classes such as English 1, Basic English Speaking, and English Speaking for Middle Level. He also had taken, or was taking, movie mediated English classes at Green University such as Movie English, Movie English for Reading, and Movie English for Writing. The class, American History: Listening to Music, was one of his favorite classes, which was taught in English. James found it unfortunate that studying English so often involved activities such as memorizing words and translating sentences even in movie and song related English classes. He looked forward to learning about writing in English through his Movie English for Writing class.

**Learning writing in English.** Before taking Movie English for Writing, James had not taken any English writing classes. Though he had written a few paragraphs when he was an elementary school student in the United States, he had mostly written short sentences since he was very young. In Korea, while he had had some experience translating Korean sentences to English, his classes had not involved English writing. However, he had experienced the significant writing activity of journaling in a personal diary. He had undertaken on his own to write in this diary; the diary was “personal” and he “tried to keep it regularly. But when I read it after I finished my writing, I found it childish. There were so many ‘I’s. I know that’s that not good. Haha.” Consequently, his inconsistent personal diary was his only recent English writing experience.

## **Young**

Young, the last member of the three musketeers was a 23-year-old student. Young said that he had a closer relationship with Dong-whan than he had with James, since he and Dong-hwan were in the same study group in their department. He lived with his parents in Seoul, just a few bus stops away from Green University. At the last interview, Young was preoccupied by his parents' preparation for his sister's wedding and with a leadership role for the International Workcamp Organization (IWO). IWO is an international group for college students that organize workcamps and volunteer efforts for people who are in need. In January, 2010, Young was elected to be one of the three leaders of a peace march in India. Since he was attending workshops for the camp of 70 students from around the world, he had missed this writing class two times. Even though many other events were happening in his life, he was serious about his school life.

**Young's future plans.** One of his plans was to work in the government company, Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA). This was his first option because KOTRA offered overseas positions in various places every four years. Young said that this combination of traveling and promotion is what he wanted for his future work. However, other kinds of financial work were not interesting to him; he preferred studying marketing and English, which was one of his strengths due to his experiences of living abroad.

**English language learning experience.** Due to his father's love of English, Young began to learn English when he was in kindergarten. While working for a government company, his father won a prize in an English contest held by his company and as a result was assigned to the United States for two years. Thus, Young went to Idaho with his family for two years when he was in elementary school. After they returned from Idaho, Young attended a private English

language school to augment his language learning. Young enjoyed learning English through every day practice by reading books, watching TV dramas and news, and speaking in English with his parents. He enjoyed these holistic learning experiences; in contrast, he was repelled by the mechanical methods used in cram schools. Young said, “That’s why I don’t know English grammar well. In high school, my friends asked me some grammatical questions, and then, I told them, ‘That’s the answer.’ Then, they asked me why. Then, I would go, ‘Well, that’s just the answer!’ Haha.” Since, in a linguistic sense, he had acquired rather than learned his grammatical skills, he could not articulate the reasons why his responses were correct

While he was in Idaho with his family, Young was in the third and fourth grades. Though he found it difficult to speak in English at that time, his language skills improved after he became acquainted with a mentor, a friend of his father. He learned English through conversations while on fishing trips with his mentor. Also, his teacher in school was “very kind” and always took care of him since she knew that he was having a difficult time speaking English. After his return to Korea, he did not go to any cram schools. He said he just tried to read, listen and use that language in his everyday life.

When he was in middle and high school, Young did not pay attention in his English classes since these classes were not difficult for him. In his trial *Sue-Nung* tests, he always received good scores in the English portion without any further preparation. He said, “If I studied English that time, I would really be good at English. But, I didn’t. So, I guess that’s why I am not that good at English now.” In addition to memorizing useful vocabulary, he tried not to lose his interest in English by reading English books and watching sitcoms.

After he became a college student, he was under stress to study English. During the interviews, Young kept mentioning that he was striving to study English with more intensity.

Before leaving school for a semester for his mandatory army service, he had taken two English classes: Basic English Speaking and English-American Literature. He particularly enjoyed reading Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* in the English-American Literature class.

After he returned to school, he started taking more English classes such as English 1, Movie English for Writing, and Movie English for Listening. Young said these classes were mainly focused on translation. He also enrolled in a marketing class taught in English and read marketing-related books and novels in English. All of these efforts were focused on enhancing his English proficiency for his future career.

**Learning writing in English.** Since he was too young to write, Young did not take any writing classes while he was in the United States. Also, he could not recall any formal English writing experiences throughout his K-12 education. The only occasion he could remember was his cyber diary in a personal blog. He had written this diary during his middle and high school years, occasionally making entries in English. Unfortunately, as he grew older, he made occasional but inconsistent entries, though he did make an effort to continue this practice. As it was very personal, he blocked his diary from the view of others. While he was writing this diary, Young felt the urge to become a more proficient writer in English. This became one of the reasons for his taking the Movie English for Writing class.

### **Summary of Contextual Findings**

This chapter has provided contextual findings that include brief descriptions of the school, and the Movie English for Writing class. Additionally, introductions to the seven student participants as well as to the writing teacher, Myong, have been provided. The following tables provide personal profiles of the participants by summarizing the aforementioned information about Myong (Table 5) and the seven student participants (Table 6).

Table 5

*Summary of Myong's Information*

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Section of the class	Time spent in English speaking environments	Major of the degree	Years of experience teaching English
Myong	Male	40	Both classes	1 year (Post doctoral degree)	English Literature (American contemporary poetry)	15 years

Table 6

*Personal Profile of the Student Participants*

Pseudonym/ Gender	Section of the class	Major/ Age	School year	Time spent in English speaking environments	Writing experiences in English	Future plans
Adam/ Male	First section	School of Communication/ 21	Freshman	7 years	Short essay writing (Irish elementary school)/ Sentence level writing (Korean cram school)/ Group reports (Green University)	Voice actor/ Working in an international company
Blair/ Female	Second section	School of Business Administration/ 20	Freshman	0	Extra homework for her cram school in her high school years	Passing the CPA test during her college years
Christine/ Female	First section	Department of Public Administration and Public Policy & School of Business Administration/ 23	Senior	0	Short essay writing (practice for the TOEFL test)/ a cover letter, resume, essay writings (Green University)	Studying abroad for an MBA degree/ Working in a company
Dong-hwan/ Male	Second section	School of Business Administration/ 23	Freshman	0	None	Working in a financial field

Hae-chul/ Male	First section	Computer science/ 27	Senior	6 months	Short essay writing and personal diary (Canadian language school)	Working in a computer science or programming related field
James/ Male	Second section	School of Business Administration/ 24	Freshman	6 years	Sentence translation (elementary school years)/ Personal diary	Working in sports marketing and marketing related international companies
Young/ Male	Second section	School of Business Administration/ 23	Freshman	2 years	Personal diary in his blog	Working in the KOTRA or a marketing related company

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The eight participants had various English education backgrounds, majored in different departments and belonged to different age groups and genders. Also they had different levels of learning and writing experiences in English. Some participants, such as Adam, Young, James and Hae-chul had lived in another English speaking country, although there were differences in the length of their stay. Other differences relate to their varied ages when learning took place and the disparity in their usage of English language. Even though Blair and Christine did not have any experience of living in an English speaking country, they had some experience with English writing in cram schools. Christen learned how to write a short essay for her TOEFL writing test, while Blair gained experience by working on her short essays with her cram school teachers. Dong-hwan had no writing experience in English except the experience of translating Korean sentences to English. These rich and descriptive contextual findings are expected to support and provide a deeper understanding about the results, which follow in the next chapter.

The next chapter provides the in-depth perspectives of the eight participants' who relayed their views on their experience in learning to write (or teaching writing) in English. Also, in particular, it conveys the perceived needs of the seven student participants from this large scale English writing class, relating these to the three main research questions of this study.

## CHAPTER 5

### PARTICIPANTS' PERSEPECTIVES

As noted at the end of Chapter 4, this chapter is mainly constructed in three parts, corresponding to my three research questions. In the beginning, I will present the two sets of perceived needs and expectations of the seven students and Myong according to five themes: understanding English writing, expectations for this writing class, transformation of perceived needs as the semester proceeded, goals, and understanding the genre of the critical essay. The second part of the chapter will introduce two examples of negotiation, which seldom occurred, followed by the topics and methods of communication the students used or wanted to use in their contacts with Myong. Finally, the third section will illustrate one of the major themes, the pervasive student silences caused by misconceptions between the two parties, while considering some possible reasons for this. Finally, this last section explores the self-strategies students' employed to answer their questions themselves. All of the interviews were conducted in Korean, as the eight participants wanted to use their mother tongue for their convenience. The collected data was transcribed with some parts translated into English as it was needed. The translated parts have been crosschecked with two English speaking reviewers and one bilingual (Korean and English) scholar for accuracy.

#### **The First Research Question**

The following section presents the data that responds to the first research question: *What perceived expectations and needs are brought to a writing course in Korea by both the teacher and his students, and how do the students' perceived needs transform as the writing class progresses throughout a semester-long writing course?*

Relevant data touches on a number of sub-topics, including the students' and teacher's



different understandings about the genre of the critical essay. Under each thematic heading, I will present the perspectives of both Myong and the seven student participants.

### **Perceptions about English Writing**

The first theme introduces the perceptions of Myong and the seven students and how those perceptions related to writing and learning writing in English. Differentiating the act of translating from the act of writing, Myong explained that teaching English writing was effective for nurturing students' awareness through critical thinking and broadening their cognitive abilities. Furthermore, Myong introduced his teaching philosophy of raising, what he called, students' "literary thinking" (문학적 사고, *Moon-Hak-Juk Sa-go*), which included "critical thinking" (비판적 사고, *Bi-pan-juk Sa-go*), "logical thinking" (논리적 사고, *Non-ri-juk Sa-go*), and "imaginative thinking" (창의적 사고, *Chang-eu-juk Sa-go*) through English writing.

The seven student participants presented various perspectives. They believed that learning to write in English was important, even though they could not articulate their exact reasons for this. Many participants explained that they did not have much experience in learning to writing in Korean, so that Myong's class was their first experience in writing an essay in English or Korean. Other students wanted to learn how to write in English, since they had limited English writing experience compared to other skills, such as reading, speaking, and listening. Additionally, while some participants expected to learn writing formulas, others assumed that English writing classes were targeted at advanced learners. One participant complained that the class was the least favorite of her English classes. In the following sections, these points will be discussed in more detail.

**Myong: Writing in English is not translating in English.** From the first class, Myong stressed that writing in English was different from translating Korean into English. He explained

that Korean students occasionally confused these two concepts. Myong pointed out that “Expressing one’s idea into words, clearly in English, that’s writing in English” (First interview). He further explained that due to a belief that equates writing with translation, some Korean students feel pressured when they realize that they are going to write independent text. Along with this idea, he further wanted to help his students develop “literary thinking,” in conjunction with their writing.

**A good way to raise students’ awareness through critical thinking.** Myong continued to explain that through the learning process, he was able to nurture student awareness, again using phrases like “critical perspectives”, “logical thinking”, and “imaginative thinking,” These practices encompass what he would call “literary thinking (Myong, First interview). He said, “This kind of philosophical idea could be the reason for the existence of a university education” (First interview) when compared to cram school, where Korean university students generally relied on learning language skills to achieve high scores on various English tests. He emphasized that university-level literacy educators need to consider this type of differentiated teaching.

Myong explained that his definition of “literary thinking” refers to the practices of critical thinking, analytic thinking, and imaginative thinking. According to him, the three ideas could be seen in the same light, in that literary thinking helps students consider issues from diverse perspectives, articulate their ideas in a clear manner, and suggest their own solutions to problems. He further admitted that more emphasis on critical skills is needed throughout the curriculum. “For example”, he explained, “when I ask Korean university students ‘what do you think about this?’ they cannot clearly express their ideas even in the Korean language. They will say, ‘I think that’s good’ or ‘that’s not good.’ That’s all that they say” (Myong, First interview).

He further claimed that college English writing instructors might be obligated to help

Korean students raise their awareness, since he saw the writing class as the only place where students could study to expand the boundaries of their horizons. “University education cannot survive” (Myong, First interview), he said, “if like the cram schools, the college educators focus on teaching English language skills only.” Myong was concerned that even though cram schools might be effective in raising English tests scores, the cram schools would not help to enhance students’ critical thinking. When he formulated his goals for this writing class, these concepts influenced Myong’s decision to assign a critical essay.

**Student views on English writing.** Based on interviews with the seven participating students, six themes emerged relating to their understanding of English writing. These themes are presented below, under headings summarizing each viewpoint. The headings are as follows:

*Writing seems to be important and thus, I learn it just in case; I don’t have much experience in Korean writing either; This is my first time to write an essay in English; Writing in English is my least developed language skill; Learning to write in English means learning to use writing formulas: English writing is for advanced students; Students do not like English writing classes.*

***Writing seems to be important, and thus, I learn it just in case.*** This was the most frequently repeated theme from the students. They assumed that they might need to learn English writing for future employment and personal linguistic interest. Imagined writing events were described in vague terms and were mostly connected with their future job or for possible communication with English speaking friends on the web.

Blair, Adam, Christine, and James wanted to learn to write in English due to the possibility of using these skills for their future jobs. Blair said, “I guess it [writing in English] is important” (First interview) because “we have to use English in many situations. Later, when I work in a company I might need to speak English [...] There are many foreigners in Korean

companies now. Many communications and reports are submitted in written form” (First interview). Adam wanted to “get a job in a company where [he] can speak English” (First interview) or “where I can speak English on business trips abroad” (First interview). Given this goal, Adam wanted to learn English writing in order to improve his language proficiency. Stating that she “wanted to study abroad or to do something like that” (First interview), Christine also indicated that she was also thinking about getting a job where she uses English. Similarly, James remarked that “If I am thinking about studying abroad, I need to write in English. Also, in a company, if I am assigned to a department where I frequently use English, then I also need to write in English” (First interview). James was somewhat ambivalent: in his first interview, he stated, “English writing is not necessary, but [it is worth learning in order to] be prepared for in the future,” (First interview) suggesting that his learning of English was provisional. However, in the same interview, he did admit that, in general, “English is essential now.”

Though Young, Hae-chul, and Dong-hwan found English writing important, they seemed to feel less clear about how they would use English writing in their lives. Young wanted to be a good writer in English because “there would be many incidents to write in English. But until now,” he rarely used English when he wrote (Third interview). Hae-chul also explained that, “There’s no urgent feeling for learning English writing now. What I want to write in English is writing on Facebook and writing a resume. Except for these, there are no occasions to use English writing” (First interview). Hae-chul used English writing on his Facebook page and in emails with his English-speaking friends. However, due to time and distance, his relationships with his Canadian school friends have faded, and he has begun to use his Facebook page less often. When it comes to Don-Hwan, he commented, “writing in English? I don’t need it right now” (Third interview), expressing his ambivalence toward the topic.

*I don't have much experience in Korean writing either.* Some participants explained that their limited Korean writing experience has, in part, caused their difficulties in English writing. Feeling that her lack of experience in writing itself caused her difficulty, Christine noted, “if I am stuck when I write, I have no idea what I should write. I don't have any idea about the topic” (First interview). She added that writing might come more easily to an experienced writer: “When it comes to people who write well or who've learned to write, they would go blah blah blah. But I've never learned how to write before so [I have difficulties]” (First interview). Similarly, in relation to a requirement forcing him to submit an introduction, body and conclusion, Dong-hwan remarked, “I've never written such things in Korean either” (Second interview). Moreover, Young and Hae-chul also pointed out their inexperience in Korean language writing, explaining that few Korean writing classes were provided to them during their K-12 or college education. Young said “writing is my least familiar skill. People don't write that much. Korean 101 (a writing class, equivalent to the English 101 course in the U.S.) is a tough class for Korean students” (Third interview). He further noted that in a certain way Myong's class was similar to the Korean 101 class. Hae-chul said that since “there are few Korean writing classes” (Third interview), writing classes are “pretty unfamiliar” to him. Consistent with the others, he also pointed out his lack of experience in Korean writing, mentioning that “we wrote when we were kids, like a book report as homework? That would be all” (Third interview). He spoke of some students who have more experience writing in Korean, but made it clear that he saw these writers as the exception: “people will write something in Korean as a hobby or learn to write in Korean in a Korean language department to become a professional writer” (Third interview).

***This is my first time to write an essay in English.*** Even the participants who had lived in another English speaking country revealed that they had little experience in English academic writing. Adam, who spent the longest period of time taking K-12 level classes in English speaking countries, said his English writing experiences were focused on writing reports in school and “TOEFL writing.” As he explained “this is the first time” (Third interview) for him; this class was his first English essay writing class. In the third interview, Young also echoed a similar theme: “This is my first writing class.” Even though Young irregularly kept a diary, he said that “I don’t think I’ve ever written something like this [an essay]” (Young, Third interview) since “a diary is not a logical writing.”

***Writing in English is my least developed language skill.*** Participants said that since writing was the least developed of their English language skills, they wanted to learn how to write in English. James mentioned that “I didn’t like the fact that I can read well in English, but I can’t speak that well. And, I am even worse at writing” (James, First interview), stressing the fact that he was not satisfied with his English writing proficiency, which was “worse than other language skills” (James, First interview). Like James, Young claimed that his reason for taking the class was that “writing is the worst skill in my English” (First interview).

***Learning to write in English means learning to use writing formulas.*** Some students, who had learning experiences from cram schools for English tests, expected that learning to write was the same as learning a writing formula for a certain writing task. According to Christine, “people go to a private institution in order to get a good English test score, spending 100% of their time focusing on skills through hard training” (First interview). What she meant by “skills” was the above-described issue of learning to write. She exemplified this formulaic approach by continuing, “If I gave two examples here, then, I should create a balance by giving

two examples there. Or, writing from small, specific facts and then expand on a broad idea, like that” (Christine, First interview).

Dong-hwan, who was taking a TOEIC speaking class at a cram school during the period of the first and second interview, expected Myong to teach him a specific writing formula for a critical essay, just as his cram school teacher did. Dong-hwan said, “I am expecting to learn some essential structures, such as introduction, body, and conclusion” (First interview). Because Dong-hwan repeated the words “something practical” (First interview) and “essential structures” (First interview), I asked him to provide me more detailed examples. Dong-hwan explained that “when it comes to someone asking, ‘what’s your opinion about that?’ [my response] goes like this, ‘My opinion is.’ Then in the conclusion, ‘This is the main reason why I think.’ Well, like these” (Third interview). Thus, his definition of learning writing often meant learning specific phrasal formulas which he would be able to modify and use when he wrote a critical essay.

***English writing is for advanced students.*** Due to their limited writing instruction in either language, student participants held the view that the writing class was for advanced English learners. This was confirmed, for them, when they found English writing difficult. Christine mentioned that she was able to restore “her pride” (First interview) in her English proficiency after her cram school, and this became one of her motivations for taking this class. Myong also pointed out that many Korean university students believed that only “students who are good at English” were supposed to take a writing class. To decrease their writing anxiety, Myong often tried to counter this misleading belief by telling his students “it is not true that only the English majors get an A+” (Field note, Second week).

***Students do not like English writing classes.*** According to one participant, English writing was generally seen as the least favorite class of Korean university students. Christine

explained that since Korean students already disliked their Korean writing courses, they did not want to take English writing courses, either. According to her, “among the movie mediated English classes, Movie English for Writing is the least popular” (First interview). Even though other participants did not clearly state their distaste for writing in Korean or in English, Donghwan expressed his lack of interest by saying that “I didn’t care about writing in English” (Third interview).

**Expectations about this writing class.** This section introduces expectations of the two parties, namely Myong and the seven student participants, about this class.

***Myong: Hopes and fears.*** Myong expressed mixed feelings, hopes, and fears about his decision to teach the writing process in this class. This was an experiment for him as he had not attempted to use the process writing concept in his previous classes due to the demands on him caused by large class sizes. In the past, he had only asked his students to translate simple Korean sentences into English or asked them to write a paragraph. However, he had received many complaints from students that they wanted to write a longer structured essay. On top of feeling the need to teach a structured essay, Myong disliked the short sentence translating exercises, since these activities forestalled opportunities to nurture the concept of literary thinking. Thus, he finally made the decision to pursue a process approach, even though he expected a large number of students in his writing classes.

Myong worried about whether his students would be able to follow his instructions well and write an essay at the end of the semester. In particular he asked, “whether students [would] ever be curious about the movies and come up with a question” (First interview) that they would be able to answer. He explained that some Korean college students tended to “resist thinking” (Myong, First interview) about complicated issues. To allow students to generate their own



questions, he planned to stimulate their thoughts with prompts or examples. Also, if some students were not interested in the first movie, he would give them the option of writing about a second movie. Given these choices, Myong expected that students would be able to find a good topic.

Through the in-class process writing activities, Myong intended to provide his students with a variety of writing experiences, as well as opportunities for students to discuss their drafts with him. In previous semesters, writing samples had been provided in the textbook, which hinted at the topic for the following week. As a result, instead of making use of the in-class writing activity, some students submitted essays which had been finished before class, then leaving before the activity time. This was not what Myong had intended, in that he could not be sure that the student had written the piece. More importantly, he lost an opportunity to provide these students with teacher feedback which was, in his view, vital to their learning. The other students also found these wayward students “annoying” as Myong explained: “Sometimes I get emails from other students who let me know about this issue. Some of them claimed that those students [who brought in finished essays] should not get grades for their writing.” Myong added, “I don’t think those pre-written writing assignments were helpful for the students either.” His desire to prevent students from completing assignments outside of class was one of the reasons that he wanted to employ a process writing approach in this class.

Because students were going to write critical essays, Myong also anticipated that students would be more satisfied with this writing class over the previous classes where students practiced translating sentences or writing short paragraphs. These activities were merged into the new book and syllabus, and even though other aspects of this class were “similar,” to previous classes, he hoped these classes would be better than his previous classes. Still, Myong said that in spite of

his hard work, he estimated that “only about 30% of the students would benefit from my teaching” (First interview) which he anticipated due to the large class size. When I asked him about the other 70 percent of the students, he answered that he was going to “pay more attention to those students” (First interview), and seemed to contemplate this for a while, as though he needed to think further about how to reach more students.

**The seven students.** The following results show the seven students’ expectations and their reasons for taking this class. They divulged that they took this class because they expected to enjoy it, and get a good grade in the class. Also, they expected this writing class would assist them in becoming better writers and speakers in English by helping them to learn various expressions.

***It will be fun!*** As this class’ title, Movie English for Writing, implied, some participants expected this class to be interesting. Adam said that “I thought, ‘Movie English for Writing? That’s interesting” (First interview) because “I love watching movies” (First interview). Dong-hwan also showed his excitement about the first movie watched in class and mentioned that “it’s going to be a good class” (First interview). Similar to Dong-hwan, Blair said, “I guess I can enjoy this class” (First interview) because “it will be fun” (First interview). James thought “it will be interesting” (First interview). Also, since James found that Myong articulated well, James believed Myong would be a good language model. James continued that, “when a person talks, you can tell if the person is a good speaker or not” (First interview) and “he seems to be a good lecturer. He’s good. So, this class will be fun. It will be one of the classes that I look forward to” (First interview). The participants all shared the expectation that this would be an interesting writing class that they could enjoy.

***An easy A class.*** Some participants perceived Myong's writing class to be easy in terms of getting a good grade. Dong-hwan addressed this by saying that he took this class because he thought "it would be easy" (Third interview) to get a good grade. Similarly, James also stated that he had "heard that writing essays is not that tough" (First interview). He explained that the lack of strict emphasis on grammar would make the class easier than other English courses: "it's pretty basic, and [I heard] as long as I wrote it with creativity and my own ideas, it's okay to have some grammatical mistakes" (First interview). Young counted "getting a good grade" (Second interview) as the most important element for Korean students when they chose classes. He said, "Students mostly take classes where they can easily get a good grade" (Second interview), and he admitted having chosen Myong's class for this reason.

***Worth a try to learn writing in English.*** Even if some participants enrolled in the classes due to their expectations about having an interesting class or getting a good grade, some students chose this writing class because they wanted to learn English writing. Adam was one of the participants who showed enthusiasm for learning to write in English through Myong's class. Adam expressed his wish to become a better writer saying, "I have many expectations for this semester. I also expect to learn how to write in English in this class" (First interview). Along this same line, other participant students also said that they thought it was worth a try to learn to write in English. Echoing Adam's eagerness, Young said, "I am expecting a lot from this class" (First interview), and expressed an interest in learning how to write an English essay. On a slightly more dubious note, Young added, "it's worth a try. Hmm, since an essay has some basic structures, I want to learn those things" (First interview). Also, Hae-chul mentioned that he "thought that there was merit in the learning of writing" (First interview), and it became one of the reasons for taking this class.

Blair expressed some concerns, however, about the possibility of learning to write well. In some of her English classes, she had “felt free to put some of her words in order” (First interview), despite her limited English vocabulary. However, she wasn’t sure if her “intended meaning was expressed correctly” (Blair, First interview), and this was why she thought it would be “better [for her] to learn to read before learning to write” in English.

***Expectation to learn various expressions.*** Some of the participants hoped to learn various English idioms and vocabulary in this writing class as well; this is not surprising, given that the teaching in cram schools, and in other classes, was heavily weighted toward developing language proficiency. When Adam and I discussed the writing class, he expressed his view that it would focus on teaching new expressions. Adam said, “I guess ‘There are these words and expressions, and let’s study them.’ The class will go like that” (First interview). Hae-chul also shared this expectation of Adam’s about the class, saying that he looked forward to “improving my English vocabulary” (First interview) through this class. James talked about his “childish” (First interview) and “dull” wording when he kept his diary in English, stressing his repeated use of “do” and “does.” He worried about the possibility of using English in his future job and wanted to acquire more vocabulary so as to become a more proficient writer in English.

***Expect to be helpful to develop speaking skill.*** Some participants thought this writing class would be helpful for their speaking. James wanted to take this class because, “I think writing is related to speaking a little bit. If I can write a sentence, I can speak it. That’s what I am thinking now” (First interview). In a similar vein, Dong-hwan also mentioned that he wanted to learn “persuasive writing” (First interview) in order for him to persuade people in his future job. For example, Dong-hwan said, “in a financial field, people talk like this, ‘it has these benefits. So, if you choose this one, you can make a profit’” (First interview); he expected that the experience

of learning to write persuasive essays in English could benefit his future career.

### **Transformations in the Students' Perceived Needs**

This section will illustrate how the needs of the seven participants were transformed during the period of the study by looking at the development of ideas in the three rounds of interviews. I will also describe Myong's eagerness to understand the needs of his students, along with his regret that he was not able to find a way to listen to his students' voices.

**Want to know what my students want!** One of Myong's concerns was to understand what his students wanted from this class. When I asked about his class, he said, "I never thought I could have failed this much in this class" (Myong, First interview). That was the first remark he made from his first interview after his class; In previous semesters, Movie English for Writing, classes had from 80 to 120 students, in most cases; thus, he had had around 400 students overall . This time, however, he had from 35 to 80 students in each class, which meant there were around 200 students in total. While the smaller population might look like an advantage pedagogically, Myong was concerned. He said, "it's my first time [to have such a small number of students]. I really want to know why" (First interview). He also had received his least favorable student evaluations from students in his last Movie English for Writing class, which featured lower ratings than the average evaluation points at Green University. Myong found this "awkward" (First interview) since he had never before had such low numbers in his student evaluations, explaining, "My lowest grade from student evaluations has been "Above Average" (First interview). When I asked him how he was going to discover the reasons for this issue, he answered, "I really want to find out the reason. But there's no way. That's why I feel stuck now" (Myong, First interview).

Myong postulated two possible reasons for the lower enrollment this term, besides the

possible opinions of the last semester's students. One was the days and times the classes were held, and another was his syllabus. His classes were on Thursday mornings and Friday afternoons. When it came to the Thursday morning classes, the first one was in the early morning at 9:00 a.m.; it was understandable that he had fewer students in this Thursday morning class since students did not like to enroll in any early morning classes. He had 100 students, the maximum number for the class, enrolled in the Thursday 11:00 a.m. class. However, both Friday classes, which were at 2:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m., only enrolled around 35 students for each class. Myong assumed that the sparse enrollment was due to the fact that Friday was a day when students did not want to attend classes.

Also, Myong explained that his syllabus for his previous classes might be another reason for this low enrollment. He did not like the previous syllabus because "the focus of the class was on writing a sentence in English and filling in the blanks" (First interview). He had decided to teach this way due to the large number of students in this writing class. Myong remembered that he "felt uncomfortable about" (First interview) teaching translation rather than writing in English. As mentioned earlier, in response to the many complaints from his previous semester's student evaluations, he had decided to use a process approach this semester. Myong hoped he could verify his assumptions by checking the number of students enrolled for the next semester.

**But, what students want is not what they need.** One of Myong's ideas about student needs in terms of learning to write in English was that what students want is not always what they need. Myong said, "I don't think I should adjust my teaching to the styles that students like" (First interview). He pointed out that sometimes his students told him that "essays are difficult for me. I want to write this and that" (Myong, First interview). These desired writing styles included "the writings that people use in their daily lives," including on "Twitter." One time he

did let students write an inquiry email in English to a web shopping mall, then collect any responses they got from the website. Students submitted the email responses as a proof of the activity. “Students liked that activity” Myong said, “but what’s the point of the assignment?” (First interview). He explained that college writing class should “provide an appropriate education which can help college students expand the level of their thinking” (First interview); thus, he did not want to change his teaching to suit the popular styles that his students wanted. Since writing classes should provide ample opportunities for students to write, he wanted his students to write in every class in Movie English for Writing. According to Myong, process writing was a good approach since it allowed students to write in every class, and as the class proceeded, he strove to increase his use of process approach activities, even though he met many obstacles due to the large size of the writing classes.

**The seven students.** Based on each student’s three interviews, as well as casual conversation I held with the seven participants in and outside of class, themes emerged over the course the semester relating to their perceived needs in the English writing class. I also drew some answers to my question from Myong’s pre-needs assessment sheet, which he agreed to share with me. The results will be presented in a chronological manner, in order to show the changes in the seven participants’ perceived needs as the class proceeded during the semester.

**First interview.** The results show the perceived needs which were collected from the seven participating students during the period of the first interviews. At first, the students found it difficult to articulate what they wanted from an English writing class. After considering their writing needs, students sometimes failed to provide sophisticated examples. The participants often used non-specific terms such as “something” or their words were ambiguous, such as “flow” and “structure.” Although some participants mentioned some genres they thought that they

needed to learn, other participants, such as Blair and Young, said they never thought about their needs, preferring for Myong to have this responsibility; this will be discussed at the end of this section.

*Something practical for daily life usage.* Some of the participants said they wanted to learn English expressions so that they could use them in their daily writing events. In the first interview with Christine, she said that if she were an English writing teacher, she would want to teach “practical expressions” (First interview). Later, a response corresponded with this statement as she imagined her own English writing class in which she would teach her students “something practical, focusing on actual life” (First interview). Christine first said that “I mean, rather than grammar, focusing on English speaking, which I really can use in my daily life” (First interview). After she noticed that she talked about her developing English speaking ability, she again added a note on her desire to learn vocabulary: “We know the words, but [American people] do not use [these words]. If I use the words [we know], then, it becomes weird when American people read it. Something like that. I want to learn something that I can use in the real world” (First interview).

Dong-hwan and Hae-chul also expressed this same need. Dong-hwan said that he wanted to learn “English which I can use right away” (First interview). Explaining that “even in Korean, people write notes, letters most of time” (First interview), he said he wanted to learn expressions that he could use in “three or four lines of simple writing.” Hae-chul said that he wanted to learn “something practical in our daily lives” (First interview) such as emailing, since “I write emails in English,” and posting on the web. Hae-chul suggested that Korean university students might expect to learn English for a web posting, for example, in “Facebook” (First interview), since “just like me, students get to have many friends in other countries after returning home.”



*I want to learn the logical “flow” in writing.* Christine and Adam said they wanted to learn how to write a logical essay. Christine noted that if she was a writing teacher, she would teach her students “logical flow” (First interview) in her imaginary writing class. Further stating that this was what “I asked him [Myong] to teach us, the logical flow” (First interview), she continued that “it is important to write logically and then it will be easy for the people who have a natural orientation to logical thinking” (First interview). However, as Christine included herself among the “many people whose skills need to be refined” (First interview), she wanted to learn write in logical manner. Adam also wanted to learn “logical flow” (First interview) in order to improve his English writing proficiency. He explained that “if the flow of the writing is good, even though it’s short” (First interview), the writing would be good and thus, learning “logical flow” was “important” for him. That was the reason why he wrote that “I would help my students to write in a way that flows logically” (Adam, First interview) in the pre-need assessment survey.

*I want to learn the ‘structure’ of writing.* Adam and Young mentioned that they wanted to learn the “structure” (First interview) of writing. When I asked Adam to elaborate on his definition of “the structure of writing,” he said, “for example, when students write an essay, they write their main argument first, and then, show examples. Yes, like that structure” (First interview). Young also commented that he wanted to learn “writing skills” (First interview) such as “the structure of writing.” He explained the structure of English writing by saying that “first write something, next, write another thing, and then, conclude” (Young, First interview). Thus, both agreed that writing an argument had a certain structure and they wanted to learn this physical “structure” in an English essay.

*Resume, TOEFL, business writing, and diary.* When asked about their needs in an English writing class, many participants mentioned various kinds of writing genres and their desire to learn those genres in this class. They suggested that the various genres should include a resume, the TOEFL test, business communications, and personal writing, such as diary entries and web posting.

Hae-chul and James wanted to learn how to write resumes in English for their job searches. According to Hae-chul, he needed to write an English resume to apply for a position in the Korean computer science field. Although he found this “annoying” (Hae-chul, First interview), he said, “I need to write a resume in English” (First interview) since it was one of the requirements of the job search. James also wanted to learn how to write a resume in English, since “I need to write why I am good for a foreign company” (First interview).

When it came to Adam and Hae-chul, they wanted to prepare for the writing portion of the TOEFL. Both were concerned about this because the TOEFL test scores are frequently required items when Korean students apply for a position after graduation. Adam said “well, generally, right now, I need to learn TOEFL writing” (First interview). Hae-chul noted that preparing for the TOEFL writing test was one of the reasons that he decided to take this writing class. According to Hae-chul, if he learns English writing in this class, he will be able to “write better than others” (First interview) and “will be in a favorable position for the TOEFL writing test. It’s like preparing for the TOEFL in advance.”

Business writing was also included among the genres that Adam and Dong-hwan wanted to learn in their English writing class. However, they found it difficult to articulate the meaning of business writing or related writing events. For example, when he talked about what kind of writing he wanted to learn, Adam mentioned business writing, he could not provide further

explanations or examples. Dong-hwan also said that he needed to learn business writing in order to “persuade other people” (First interview). However, he also was not able to illustrate this concept by providing more precise writing occasions.

It was in the genre of personal diary writing that James aimed to write well after he took this class. He said “I want to write my English diary better” (First interview). In Hae-chul’s case, he mentioned several times that he wanted to learn English writing in order to write well for his Facebook entries and the emails he sometimes sent to his friends in another country.

***Second interview.*** During the second interviews, I asked the same question, “What are you going to do, if you become an English writing teacher?” Also, data from casual conversations obtained during the interview and in class was collected and analyzed. The most frequent responses related to receiving and giving feedback between either the teacher and the students, or among classmates. This demonstrates that by the time of the second interview, students had learned that talking with other classmates and receiving feedback from either the teacher or classmates was important in an English writing class. Based on their experiences from Myong’s writing class, participant students also suggested that they expected to provide sample writings for their future writing class, as well as a writing formula.

*We need to talk to our classmates to develop ideas.* Throughout the second interview, Adam frequently mentioned his need to “talking with others [classmates]” in order to organize his essay ideas. In the beginning of this second interview, he carefully noted that “it is good to learn expressions and sentences. But later on it would not be bad if Myong let students discuss aspects of the movies in small groups.” When I asked him to provide me more information about the potential “discussions,” he added, “I mean, when a person writes an essay, he has his own idea, whether that is logical or good. When it comes to writing an essay, that kind of small group

discussion would be a good source for writing.” Later in the interview, Adam suggested again, “If there are too many students in the classroom, [Myong could] choose a day and hold the discussion, making groups of certain sizes. Students would then gather and talk to each other. Discussion is pretty [important].”

Young also made a connection between “sharing ideas” with other classmates and having feedback from other students as ways to develop his ideas. Young now spoke favorably about talking with other students so as to share ideas. He referred specifically to a change in his thinking on this point: “I [previously] thought it would be okay to write by myself in the classroom because it’s a writing class. But I now think that these [writing and sharing ideas] are inseparable. [...] The professor wants us to think and write something logical. So I hope we can have time to share our ideas.” Young said he originally thought it would be fine writing without having a discussion with others. However, as the class proceeded, he found that it was important to have discussions with others, because it helped him to expand his ideas. In the second interview, he included peer discussion as “a kind of feedback.”

Blair also expressed the same viewpoint as Adam about talking with others. However, her description of this activity was more focused upon having oral feedback from other classmates. Blair started with questions about whether there were any graduate assistants for the course: “By the way does he have any student assistants? He has some, right?” I told Blair that I was not sure about that. Then, possibly assuming that Myong might not have any assistants, she went on, “Wouldn’t it better, if students formed groups, made teams, then [students] checked each others’ writings?” Blair said it would be better for students to have group discussions, particularly if the instructor could not give students feedback due to his heavy workload and his lack of assistants to help him. Still, Blair’s view differed from that of Young and Adam, since she did not mention

the development of ideas. In fact, by using the phrase “check each others’ writing,” Blair implied there was a need to receive error correction through peer discussion. Overall through the second interview, three participants wanted to talk with other students, and some of the participants explained that having a discussion with other classmates also meant having feedback from their peers. There were three participants who clearly said they wanted feedback either from the teacher or other classmates, discussion of which follows in the next section.

*Instructor and peer feedback.* As noted above, even though she understood Myong’s difficulties in providing teacher feedback, Blair frequently expressed her wish to have feedback from Myong so as to “correct my weird expressions.” She made an example of her Chinese friend, who used expressions that are understandable but un-conventional in Korean. Blair continued that, “like her, I am a foreigner. English is my second language, so I will make some mistakes because I do not know many expressions” in English. At the end of the conversation, she added, “by the way I think that was a shame [not to have] feedback.” Christine also suggested that “I hope he can give us a feedback, once I submit the drafts.”

Hae-chul expressed his need for feedback as well; however, in contrast to Blair and Christine, he stated that he wanted to have peer feedback. Recalling his experiences with peer review in the language school in Canada, he said it would be beneficial for him if he could receive some peer feedback from his classmates. In speaking of his Canadian experience, Hae-chul admitted that the feedback was not always substantive: “Other students [only] wrote ‘that’s interesting.’ But, at least, I really liked the process itself [...] I wrote something in another language and then, I was curious about what others thought about my writing”; he felt that “it’s better” to have this kind of peer feedback. As noted above, Young also spoke of peer interaction, which he related to the idea of feedback; he came back to this at the end of his interview, “Mm! I

hope I can get some feedback.” Additionally, Adam had noted that he felt that peer review was useful. These three participants agreed that at least they needed to talk to somebody else so that they could share their ideas.

*I want to see some sample writings.* Two participants, Christine and Dong-hwan, said they wanted to see writing samples of critical essays because they were having difficulty figuring out what a critical essay was and what kinds of ideas they could include in a critical essay. Christine said that if she were an English writing teacher, she would show her students some examples. She began this answer with, “well, first, what I need most,” which underscored the importance of this factor for her and the fact that her decisions for her imagined students stemmed from what she perceived as her needs. She continued, “First, I would show my students many kinds of examples. [...] [I believe] the more students read the more they can learn. They can write something by imitating. That’s pretty helpful.” Dong-hwan also said he wanted to read someone else’s finished product. He explained that “well, for example, such as providing someone’s essay. Then, I will think, ‘aha! That’s a good idea too’.”

*I want something I can use right now.* Continuing on a theme from the first interview, Dong-hwan wanted to learn the formula for English essay from Myong. He did not mention the word “formula”; however, he said that if he were an English writing teacher, he “would teach my students something that they can use immediately.” He continued, “In the introduction, you can use a sentence, and then, write your own argument, like that.” Dong-hwan clearly seems to be referring to formulaic writing here, and this statement reflects his perceived need to learn a writing formula. The lack of this kind of activity was one of the reasons why Dong-hwan said Myong’s writing class was difficult.

***Third interview.*** In the third round of interviews, which were conducted after the semester was finished, the seven participants relatively easily articulated their perceived needs about English writing classes in general; and more specifically, they discussed their needs in Myong's writing classroom as they now saw them. The most frequently addressed theme was their desire for peer communication and feedback. This was followed by comments indicating that they wanted to have teacher feedback. Some participants wanted to read writing samples so as to be able to identify appropriate thesis statements and to examine the writing genre. After a semester's experience in English writing, some participants said they also wanted to learn genres other than those they had worked with in the class. Finally, some students pointed out that writing classes should be divided into several levels, based on students' language proficiencies.

*This is the class where communication is crucial.* Four student participants, Adam, Blair, James and Young, strongly expressed their disappointment about the non-dialogic aspects of this writing class. They claimed that what they most needed from this writing class was to discuss their ideas with other classmates. By emphasizing that they wanted to talk with other students, they actually were expressing their need for peer discussion in order to expand their ideas. Blair insisted that, most of all, she wanted a "*team-ple*," a team project in this writing class. However, she did not mean that she wanted to work on a project with other people. This was similar to the other participants, in that by saying "*team-ple*" she addressed her desire to share ideas in groups. Near the end of the semester, she discovered that one of her classmates from her discipline was taking the same section of this writing class; she was pleased to be able to share her ideas with her acquaintance. According to Blair, these discussions were "totally helpful for me," because "when I thought about the essay by myself, I didn't have any idea of what I was going to write." However, since many ideas emerged from the conversations with her friend, Blair wanted to

have a *Team-ple* where she could officially share her ideas with other classmates.

Adam also conveyed a strong desire for classroom communication, saying that “this is the class where communication is really needed.” He also referred to discussion as the most important element in his imagined writing classroom in order to allow students to share their ideas and exchange a certain level of feedback. He asserted, “I think discussion is critical [in an English writing class]. [...] Most of all, I think the most important work is conceiving ideas. [Thus] it is the most important thing in a writing class, having discussion with others.” He mentioned several times that he found it difficult to think about the topic and details of his essay and wanted to discuss these issues with somebody else. However, he failed to find an opportunity to exchange ideas during the semester. Adam seemed disappointed when he observed that “even with other students, there wasn’t any communication.” Adding that “At least, I want to [informally talk to somebody else], not necessarily a group discussion,” Adam expected to converse with other students, even if only in a casual way.

Furthermore, Adam and other students identified feedback as the outcome of their casual conversation with other students. When Adam discussed his dissatisfaction about not having feedback, the feedback that he described was from other classmates. He seemed to understand that feedback from the instructor would not be possible: “After submitting the essay, I could not get any feedback, making me feel short-changed.” He continued to explain that “I think, while writing an essay, I [would like to] receive feedback by communicating with others. Then I could learn what I didn’t know before like, ‘Ah, I never thought about that’.” Adam was aware of the fact that talking to other students was important to him, not only to fulfill his need to communicate with others but also for his ability to learn more about English writing.

Young also showed his enthusiasm for sharing his writing ideas with other classmates,



saying, “It would be great [if I could share my idea with other students]; I had hoped I could talk with other students.” However, he was hesitant to talk about his wants because he was concerned about time constraints and Myong’s work load; thus, he even added that “it’s unrealistic with time constraints, [and] the teacher also needs to do the grading.” About classroom communication, he further explained that “if I could talk to somebody, I could get most benefit from when I decided on a topic.” He added that since “after I thought about some topics, I was stuck. [I was] Stuck within that idea. I couldn’t think of anything else and kept repeating the same idea.” He continued, “however: if I could share ideas with others, I would go, ‘Aha, he thinks like that. But I don’t agree with his idea.’ and think more. Then, I would begin to broaden my ideas about my topic. I could do that.” Young repeatedly inferred that he might be able to generate better final drafts if he could discuss them with somebody else. Young suggested that “During the class, if students can do that [peer review] then, teachers do not need to be burdened [...] We can help each other.” He pointed out that the group discussion was not only what he wanted, but it could also lighten a teacher’s work load in terms of student feedback.

From the middle of the semester, James sometimes dozed off when Myong explained words and idioms. He explained that he did not find Myong’s class “effective” in that “only the professor is talking and we are taking notes.” James said that what he wanted from an English writing class was “group discussion.” In other words, he wanted students to have more agency, working “with other students, all together, sharing our ideas, doing something autonomously.” When the time came for in-class writing, James sighed deeply from time to time, expressing his frustration and bewilderment about writing in this format. He said “because students would get to talk and think with each other,” he brought up the idea of group discussions.

As well as indicating their perceived needs for exchanging their ideas with someone else,

Young and Adam took another direction and suggested that they wanted to have informal presentations so they could see their classmates' essay topics. In other words, considering the large size of the writing class, they suggested an alternative dialogic approach for sharing ideas. Young hoped the students would "have some time to share [their writing]" after they had finished writing an essay because he wanted to know "what [the other students] write about their topics." Adam told me that he wrote this constructive criticism in the teacher evaluation form: "I hoped we could have some presentations, and not [so many] formal discussions." He had also written that "we could have an atmosphere" where students could talk freely, responding to Myong's questions.

*I want to have teacher feedback.* Along with communication with their peers, including peer feedback, participants also described teacher feedback as being an important element of their imagined writing class; they wanted to have feedback from Myong as well as the students. The participants told me that they wanted to know the strengths and weaknesses in their writing, such as linguistic mistakes and awkward expressions or contents issues. Their main argument was that they were able to learn more about English writing through this process. Dong-hwan said, it was bad not to get "teacher feedback so that I could understand if I am in good shape [as a writer] or not." Because he could not get any response from Myong, and he did not get a good grade from the class, he even concluded that he "did everything wrong" in his essay. Like Dong-hwan, James also mentioned that "it was bad that there was no feedback" from the instructor, since students were not able to know "if their writing was good or not. Right or wrong." According to James, teacher feedback was "crucial" in order for students to learn from their mistakes. Young differentiated between "just writing an essay and receiving feedback." He explained that "if a teacher gives me feedback, I am learning at that moment of, 'Aha, I do have

these problems’.” Young added that even though he thought it was fine not having feedback from a teacher at the beginning of the class, he realized the importance of teacher feedback as the course progressed.

Expressing disappointment about their essays, some participants pointed out that they would write a better essay if they were able to gain some feedback from either Myong or their peers. Though Adam found his essay “okay” (Third interview), he did not consider it a “good essay,” specifically since he “wrote it alone.” He explained that he knew that some parts would still be ambiguous, and he felt that he could revise the essay if someone else could read and give comments about these areas. James expressed similar feedback-related opinions about his essay. He mentioned that his essay “would be better than the one that he has” (Third interview) if he were able to receive some feedback. Recalling his thought processes while he was writing his essay, Young said, “I was stuck” (Third interview) and he had to “write this essay even after I knew that I was not on the right track.” Young said he had to finalize his essay even though he knew that it had some logical mistakes, and it would have been different if he could have had some feedback. As noted above, Dong-hwan felt that in his essay he had done “everything wrong” (Third interview). He also suggested that he could write a better essay “if he [Myong] would let me know more” (Third interview) in the form of feedback.

*I need more examples.* Two students, Christine and Dong-hwan, stated again that they wanted to read the samples of the genre that Myong wanted his students to write. According to Christine, even though Myong provided some examples in the textbook, “that was not enough” for her to understand the genre, “since they were from English literature,” implying that the models were not appropriate for the students. She found the examples “unfamiliar” to her, and “it was unclear for us to read only one short example per each section.”

Dong-hwan explained that he had had a rough time figuring out the genre of the critical essay since he did not have a chance to read a full example of that type. He mentioned that he wanted to learn to write an English essay by imitating a writing sample because that was how he had studied the Korean argumentative writing style, *Non-Sul*. According to Dong-hwan, “I practiced *Non-Sul* by imitating the sample essays. It’s like learning from imitating in the basic level of writing.” This indicates that, like Christine, who wanted to identify the genre of the writing, Dong-hwan wanted a writing model that he could use and modify for his essay. Interestingly, he was the student who defined English writing as learning and applying writing formulas.

*I think students should be placed by their writing proficiencies.* Since this was a higher level class than he was used to, Hae-chul said that he experienced a difficult time and suggested that if he were a writing teacher, he would guide his students to write unstructured short writings. According to Hae-chul, he had “never written an essay with such structure, even in the Korean language.” Thus, this writing class was difficult for him since he was expected to write carefully formatted and highly structured essays in English. For this reason, he said he would teach his students according to their English writing levels. In the case of the basic level, he talked about students being able to write “freely, without the constraints [of needing to provide an] introduction, body and conclusion. I would love to just let them write their ideas.” Hae-chul stated that, as Myong’s class was above his level, he would have preferred to take an English writing class that was more appropriate to his proficiency.

At the other extreme, even Adam, who had the longest and the most varied writing experiences, also pointed out that he felt that English writing classes should be divided into different levels. Like Hae-chul, Adam was concerned about levels, and mentioned that if he were

an English writing teacher, he would “divide the writing class into different levels” at the start of the course.

Blair also referred to the need to provide different English writing classes based on students’ different English writing proficiencies. She stated that “Some students are really advanced writers and others are really bad at writing in English.” Further, she did not think that it would be fair for everyone to be expected to perform to the same standards since students showed distinct differences in their English writing abilities. Calling attention to the fact “even high schools have different levels of English classes,” Blair said it “would be good for the students” if they could have different writing instruction according to their English writing proficiency.

*I want to learn punctuation/ basic forms.* Christine and James suggested that they wanted to learn the mechanics of writing style and the specific formatting for academic English writing. Talking about the fact that Myong’s class did not cover punctuation and the specifics of writing format, Christine said, “I am also wondering about the format, such as Korean people write the title here (pointing to the top center of the paper) and name, there [pointing at the right top]. Like a format? Some people have double spaced papers and others have single spaced, like that. The basic stuff.” She told me that since she did not know the correct layout for her essay, she simply guessed how the paper should look. James also expressed his need to learn English punctuation. After saying that he wanted to learn “writing skills,” he explained: “For example, you need to use a comma here, like that.” Even though they did not use the words “punctuation” and “layout,” their statements indicated that they wanted to learn these writing basics.

*I want to learn other genres.* In the third interview, one participant mentioned her perceived need to learn more than one writing genre in English. Pointing out the fact that “There

are several kinds of genres in English writing,” Christine said she wanted to learn these different writing genres such as “recipe”, “email”, “resume” and “cover letter.” When I asked her why she suddenly mentioned “several kinds of writing,” she noted that she had considered this issue when she wrote the statement of purpose she needed in order to apply for a student exchange program at a university in Ohio. After reading various kinds of sample statements of purpose, Christine wrote her own statement and asked me to help her revise it, and talk with her about it. Referring to the experience, she expressed her feelings of regret because she could not “take this writing class twice,” in order to learn to write a statement of purpose.

*It's useless to talk about what we want.* Throughout the interviews, some participants were reluctant to talk about their needs and wants. From their past experiences when teachers did not respond to specific student requests, some participants argued that it was not worth telling professors what they wanted. Thus, even though they were very expressive when they had conversations with me, the students said they felt hesitant to talk to a professor. One participant even said she was afraid that if she explained what she wanted to a professor, the professor might find her annoying; this fear made her hesitant to approach the instructor.

Some students, at first, seemed unable to think about their needs. In the first interview, for instance, Blair found it difficult to articulate what she wanted from an English writing class. She said, “I didn’t think about it” and took a long moment to think about this. Most of all, Blair did not seem to be interested in talking about her perceived needs. Young also had the same attitude; speaking of his needs, he commented, “I never thought about that. I came here with no idea about the class, haha.” However, in the second interview, Young explained the reason for his attitude. He usually did not think about suggestions for his classes because “I don’t think a professor even would listen to my ideas. He’s just going to stick to his syllabus.” Young did not

think that a professor would listen to what he said, which was why he did not attempt to come up with an idea about his writing class. It is unclear whether this motivation also applied to Blair; however, Young's point does suggest a potentially important link.

In the first interview, Christine also claimed that "There is no point in talking about what I want from a class, like in a teacher evaluation from students" because "it would be useless to talk about it at the end of a semester." Interestingly, she automatically thought of student input as something connected only to end-of-semester evaluation forms, which she reasonably enough felt it would not have any effect on her own experience with a class. According to her, if she did not like a class, she usually did not choose the same professor for the following semester. In the second interview, Christine explained this in another way, saying "In the beginning of the class, he [Myong] had decided to teach in a certain way. Then, even if I told him [what I wanted], I don't think he would think positively about the suggestion and change his direction to what I wanted." She told me that this was not just about Myong, but could be applied to all professors. She continued, "I am not particularly talking about him. If I talk about my suggestions in terms of teaching, he might take it into consideration. But I don't think anything would be changed." Like Christine, Hae-chul stated that "I almost never discuss a class with a professor" because "they always follow their syllabus." In line with the above discussion, these participants were reluctant to speak to a professor even when they discussed their needs with me, since they expected that professors usually would not listen to them or make changes.

*If I told the professor what I wanted, she would think I am a brat.* Throughout the three interviews, Christine constantly said that she was afraid to discuss her wants with a professor because if she did, the professor might then view her as a "brat." In the first interview, she mentioned that she felt uncomfortable about another professor's class. When I asked her if she

thought about making some suggestions to the professor, she said she had never thought about it since “the professor looked very strict.” In the second interview, she said, “Well, if I say ‘Professor X, I think this could be a good idea for the class’ or ‘I think students want this in this class’ then, the professors would think I am a brat.” I asked her if she had any experience to base this fear on, and she answered “no.” Christine did not have any experience being of rejected for suggesting something in a class. However, she had imagined that professors would not like it if she made suggestions for their classes; and for this reason, she had never ventured to do so.

*If my professor asked me in the middle of the semester, I would tell him everything.*

Christine and Young showed strong interest in professors asking about their opinions for the class in the midst of a semester. Christine explained that, “Sometimes there were professors who said ‘write down what you want to learn in this class. But it’s my first day of the class, I just have a syllabus. So, I have no idea what I need to learn in this class.’” That was one reason why she could not articulate her needs to those professors who asked for her perceived needs at the beginning of their classes. In the case of asking students to assess needs at the end of the semester, as noted above, she did not think that she could not benefit from this, and felt that it was simply a perfunctory exercise that professors engaged in at the end of every semester. Thus, she suggested, “So, rather, I would appreciate if a professor asked us in the middle of the semester. ‘I want to go that direction’ like that, [at this point,] I could really make suggestions to them.” Young also agreed with Christine and said, “I would tell him what I want” (Third interview) if Myong asked him during the semester. At the end of the interview, returning to this topic Young added again, “I surely would [express my needs during the term]” (Third interview). Thus, both of the aforementioned participants were interested in a teacher asking them about their needs in the middle of a semester.



**What the writing teacher wants.** During the interviews with Myong, he also identified his needs about this large scale writing class. According to Myong, this class was most difficult to teach due to the stress caused by the class size, which did not allow him opportunities to provide feedback to his students. He mentioned several times that he also had needs for this writing class that were not being fulfilled.

Most of all, he pointed out the large number of students in the class. He sighed and said, “What I really want to say is that it’s ridiculous to teach writing with 80 students in a classroom; last semester was 150 [which was worse]” (Second interview). In the last interview, he suggested that the “students and I really need the class to be much smaller.” Even for a writing teacher who had taught English to college students for over 15years, it was not easy to manage such a large number of students in a writing class.

If the large number of students were not negotiable, Myong wanted to “hire some people whom I want” as “graduate assistants” (Second interview) and have “the school pay them.” He told me that if he could hire and train graduate assistants, he would be able to give his students written feedback at a level closer to what he wanted.

Another of Myong’s suggestions was to increase his salary for teaching a large scale English writing class. He said, “I could offer my students feedback if they [the university] could pay me more” (Second interview). During the semester of the interview, Myong said that Green University provided him with an extra \$20 an hour for teaching the large scale writing class. However, it was not enough to replace the income that he earned by teaching classes at other universities, which he needed to in order to meet his living expenses. He continued, “I want practical payment so that I don’t need to teach at other universities” (Second interview).

Finally, Myong called attention to the needs of Korean college students at different

proficiency levels. He explained that he had difficulties when there was a vast disparity in the proficiency levels of students in the same classroom. In the case of some students, “the sentences do not make sense. So even though I ask them to use simple sentences, they can’t write those either”, “not to mention misspellings” (Second interview). Mentioning that “speaking classes are divided by different levels” (Second interview), he wanted English writing classes to be differentiated according to the students’ different English writing proficiencies. He expected to be able to provide better teaching if students in a given class had similar abilities.

### **The Goals of Movie English for Writing**

This section introduces Myong’s teaching goals, which were presented in his syllabus as well as the aims he divulged during his interviews. Additionally, in four themes, the seven students’ stated achievements or what they had learned from this writing class follow.

**Myong.** There were four main goals for Movie English for Writing, which Myong clearly stated in his syllabus. According to his syllabus,

“This course aims at (1) teaching students to have some necessary skills for writing in English, (2) increasing students’ vocabulary & grammatical knowledge needed for English writing, (3) having students memorize useful expressions frequently used in various kinds of English writings, and (4) giving students as many chances as possible to write different kinds of English writings” (Appendix A, Myong’s syllabus)

Due to the large number of students in the writing class, this class was the most “tricky” and “stressful” class that he had, and thus, he put more energy into these classes than his other classes. The first thing that came into to his mind when he constructed the syllabus was that this class is a large class of around 80 students. This fact led him to set goals that could be realistically reached,

such as “increasing students’ vocabulary & grammatical knowledge needed for English writing” and “having students memorize useful expressions frequently used in various kinds of English writings.” In fact, these goals determined the main contents of a midterm and final test that were given in the course. Also, even though the large scale of the class prevented him from extensive feedback, he added one more process-oriented goal to his list, namely “giving students as many chances as possible to write different kinds of English writings.” Along with the main genre of the class, the critical essay, Myong guided students to write notes and various kinds of short essays in English during the semester.

Along with the aforementioned four goals, there were three more unstated but important goals for Myong’s writing class, which emerged in his interviews: nurturing literary thinking, teaching the concepts related to the drafting and writing process, and providing good writing experiences. During the interviews, Myong remarked several times that he wanted to help his students raise their awareness of “literary thinking” by using visual text: “Literary thinking can be pursued by having discussions and writing essays after reading literature.” He went on to relate the idea of “literary” thinking to the course’s focus on movies: “But today’s college students do not like to read written language. In that case, I think visual media can replace written language. In other words, students can watch visual information and write an essay about it.” Using visual text, such as video clips and movies, he aimed to encourage students to think and write about a certain issue. He expected students to practice what he called literary thinking through this process.

Myong also intended to teach the concepts of the writing process to his students. To this end, his syllabus included a series of activities for brainstorming (to look for topics), developing main arguments and thesis statements, and instructions for writing the introduction, body, and

conclusion of an essay. One of statements that Myong repeated in his class was, “You can write an essay when you follow my directions. If you combine your writings together and fix them at the end of the semester, you will have decent essays of your own” (Field notes, First, second, and sixth week). With his statements in his class and his syllabus, it was clear that one of his goals was to help students understand the writing process by assigning multiple drafts.

Last but not least, he wanted students feel being proud of themselves after they finish their final draft. According to Myong, “most students love to feel a sense of accomplishment when they finish an essay in English. I hope I can provide this experience.” Myong elaborated further: “Because later on, they may gain confidence in their ability to write similar types of essays; or [even] if the genre is different, they can gain confidence in their English writing.”

In order to achieve his goal of nurturing literary thinking through English writing, Myong decided to evaluate students’ writing by focusing on fluency instead of checking their accuracy with correct grammar and expressions. In his writing class, he regularly told his students that they did not need to put their effort into writing perfect grammar. Rather, he encouraged students to express their creative ideas about their topics.

**The seven students.** Even within the constraints of the large scale class, most participants said they learned how to write in English as well as learning new words and expressions, which matched with Myong’s teaching goals. Furthermore, many participants agreed that they were glad and felt confident, at some level, because they were able to finish writing an English essay by themselves.

***I’ve learned how to write in English.*** Adam, Christine, Blair, and Hae-chul stated that they had learned how to write an English essay through the writing process. More specifically, they said they learned how to organize their ideas through brainstorming, to strengthen their

argument by adding supporting ideas, and to appreciate the importance of revision. Also, Christine said she was aware of the fact that English writing was different than translating Korean sentences into English.

Many participants counted the process of brainstorming as one of the most important ideas they had learned from this English writing class. According to Adam, “Overall, I learned a lot about how to write in English. Through the brainstorming, he [Myong] taught us how to organize ideas.” He recalled the experience of moving from free writing to more focused papers: “He [Myong] once let us write about the various ideas,” then guided students to “form groups based on similar themes [in their free writing pieces]” (Third interview). Christine also suggested that it was good to learn new ways to organize her ideas. In preparing to write her essay, she first gathered the notes she made during the class and brainstormed. “I kept thinking about the essay. Every time I got some idea, during the class, like some evidence ‘I felt that I could use it later’ and made a note in my notebook” (Third interview). “Later I just went through my notebook, thinking ‘Aha, I’ve written that before,’ and then recalled the memories [associated with] those notes” (Third interview). The process helped her to organize her ideas. In his third interview, Hae-chul mentioned that he “checked the worksheets” and read his previous papers to do brainstorming as ways to help him with “deciding on topic.” According to Blair, after checking her notes from the class, she wrote some of her ideas in Korean, and then “decided on three of them” to write her essay. Even though Christine, Hae-chul, and Blair did not use the word “brainstorming,” based on their descriptions about the process of writing their essays, it can be said that they organized their ideas through the brainstorming process.

While describing the process of writing the final draft, several students mentioned that they made revisions to their essay and adjusted their thesis statements to make them clearer.

Adam, Blair, and Christine talked about their experiences with changing their topics. In fact, they had engaged in a process of narrowing down their points of view under the same topic. In the third interview, Adam said, “I modified my first topic. I focused on the word ‘rat,’ because, initially, I focused on the whole sentence, ‘I am not a rat.’ There weren’t many lines and scenes which could back up my thesis. And actually the word was repeated” (Third interview). For his essay, Adam initially decided to discuss the meaning of the sentence, “I am not a rat,” which Adam assumed that the main character repeatedly used to plead his innocence to his comrades in the first movie. However, after he found that he was unable to present strong evidence for his position, Adam modified his topic so that he could use more appropriate arguments to make his essay stronger.

Christine changed her perspective and her point of view, considerably as she worked on her essay on revenge: “I was going to say [revenge] can be good. But themes kept merging [and I thought of other words], successful, successful” (Third interview). After her deliberations, she clarified her adjective, from the bland “good” to a more meaningful “successful.” She also changed her topic from a statement into the question, “Was A’s revenge successful?” She added that she also paid attention to details of form, checking “grammar mistakes” and “conjunctions” (Third interview), as well as matters of style, such as trying to avoid using repeated words because “he [Myong] told me not to use the same words” (Third interview).

In addition, the participants explained that they also had learned to make their essays stronger by providing supporting examples such as directly quoting movie lines and citing specific scenes. Adam explained: “He also lets us use the lines from the movie. That was pretty clear [evidence]. So, I was able to pick some good examples” (Third interview). Christine also referred to this kind of support in her comments on note taking, when she mentioned earlier in

this section that “Every time I get some idea, during the class, like some evidence, ‘I can use it later’ and make a note in the book” (Third interview).

Finally, Christine suggested that she learned the distinction between translation and writing: “Before I wrote this essay, I thought translating Korean words into English was English writing. But, that turned out not to be true” (Third interview). She said she now tried to “write in English directly” (Third interview) and even had to “change the Korean sentences” (Third interview) in her mind in order to say what she originally wanted to express. At the end of the interview, she added that, “I mean, it’s not like writing Korean sentences and then translating them into English; [you need to] just write in English. I think that’s English writing.”

Unlike the other participants, Dong-hwan, Young, and James did not offer much information about their learning experiences in the interviews. Further, they explained that they did not put much effort into writing the critical essays. They also shared similar behaviors such as beginning to write their essays right before the deadline and submitting their essay with fewer or no revisions. These behaviors suggested that these students had not acquired the concepts that Myong wanted to convey about the writing process.

Dong-hwan said that it took “around two hours” (Third interview) to finish the final draft of his essay. First, he wrote the essay in Korean, then “translated it using a translator on the Web” (Third interview). He did not like the web-translated essay since the sentences were “weird” (Third interview); this led him to make some minor changes. After he changed some words, he sent his essay to his friend, Young, via an instant messenger program. Although Young recommended that Dong-hwan revise the essay again, Dong-hwan did not have time to make further corrections as it was too close to the assignment deadline to make changes.

According to Young, he began to write his essay “the night before the paper was due”

(Third interview) and finished it in a couple of hours. While he wrote his essay, he realized that “the more I wrote, the more I started to believe that the counter argument was better than my argument” (Third interview). He had started writing his essay based upon two conflicting arguments about the same issue, but then he realized that he no longer felt he could support the alternative that he had decided to defend. As he gradually lost trust in his argument, he noticed that he “was losing focus.” However, by that time, Young had no time to revise his essay and had to submit the un-revised essay with its lack of clear focus. Expressing his regret, Young admitted that he had not even had time to review the piece for minor changes: “I had to send it before proofreading it” (Third interview). Young told me that he knew that the writing teacher would not like his essay.

James was in a situation similar to Dong-hwan and Young, in that he started to write his essay close to the deadline. He said he regretted writing the essay “in a hurry” (Third interview) and waiting to write it “the day before the paper was due” (Third interview). The night he wrote his paper, James “googled [his topic] on the Web” and looked into many critiques about the movie to find “something I can criticize” for his essay.

***I enjoyed learning new words and expressions.*** Adam, Blair and James stated that they had learned useful new words and expressions. Adam stated, “I am learning some expressions that I didn’t know” (Second interview). James also added that “hahaha, I never slept when he taught us vocabulary because there were some new words. It’s really interesting when he explains them” (Second interview). According to Blair, “vocabulary” was one of the aspects of knowledge that she could gain from this class, as well as “routine sentences,” which Myong taught his students. By “routine sentences,” she meant groupings of words frequently used together. Blair said she thought it would be “really great” (Second interview) if she could



continue to use these sentences even after the semester's end.

*I felt great when I finish writing an essay.* Many students expressed their satisfaction about the fact that they were able to complete a final draft essay in English. Christine pointed out that “the act of writing itself really helped the writing process. Even though the topic of each writing assignment was different, it did help to improve my English writing abilities” (Third interview). In the third interview, recalling Myong’s writing class as an “interesting class,” Hae-chul said he “felt free to write in English” because “English writing itself was interesting.”

Even the students, who failed to engage fully with the writing process, seemed to have gained some confidence from their writing experience in the course. While he “could have written better” (Third interview), Dong-hwan seems to have derived a great deal of satisfaction from his English writing experiences. Young addressed the point that “If I had not had this chance, I would never have written in English” (Third interview), and said that he liked to write in English in Myong’s class. Emphasizing that “there are pretty big differences” between “having experience in English writing and having none” (Third interview), he said “it was pretty great that I wrote in English. Finally, at the end, I wrote my ideas in English.” He appreciated the writing experiences in this class and felt positive about the final result of his efforts.

Having positive English writing experiences did not necessarily equate with the writers having positive feelings about their essays. Students’ opinions of their writing fell along a continuum. On one end, Blair distinctly showed satisfaction with her final draft. She was very proud of her essay, saying that “my essay is pretty good” and “personally, I really like it.” She pointed out that “if I hadn’t taken this class, I think I would’ve never written in English.” Blair emphasized to me how much effort she had put into writing her final draft.

On the other end of the continuum, Dong-Hwan, James, and Young expressed

disappointment in their final drafts. Dong-hwan said he was “ashamed” (Third interview) of his essay because “it looks like an elementary student’s writing.” Young even wanted to “rip it up now” (Third interview), saying that he “really hates it” and “really feels ashamed about it.” Though Young laughed when he mentioned his feelings about the essay, he seemed disappointed by the final product. James explained that he did not like his essay because “I finished it in a day” (Third interview). These three participants had not spent much time in writing their essays, and consequently, they expressed their concerns that their writing did not meet either their or their teacher’s expectations.

Adam’s view fell in between that of Blair, who showed contentment about her essay, and those of the rest of the participants, who expressed negative feelings toward their final drafts. Adam first simply said that his essay was “fine” (Third interview). However, he did not consider that his essay was “really good” (Third interview) because he wrote it by himself, adding that, “If somebody read my essay, I am afraid it might be ambiguous” (Third interview). As noted earlier, he felt that if he were able to have feedback from other students, his essay could have been better than his current draft.

***Overall, I liked this writing class.*** Despite the difficulties caused by the large number of students, Myong and the seven participants expressed positive feelings after they finished the semester. At beginning of the class, Myong was worried about his new approach, because he had never used the process writing method in such a large class. In fact the “new” syllabus was intertwined with his old approaches such as having students memorize vocabulary. Still, both Myong and his students saw that the current syllabus was noticeably different from the previous term. However, in the third interview, he said that even though “this class was more difficult than previous classes [...] students actually preferred the writing class this semester.” Noting that he

had received many positive comments on his teacher evaluation this term, Myong mentioned that he also “personally enjoyed this class” (Third interview), since he was able to help his students complete an essay in English.

The participant students also stated that they were content with Myong’s class in general. Expressing thanks to Myong “for teaching us many things in a limited time” (Third interview), Hae-chul revealed that he had given Myong a generous grade on Myong’s student evaluation. Blair said that she would not have had the opportunity to learn how to write in English if she had not registered for this writing class; she indicated that she now “feel[s] good about successfully writing an essay in English by myself” (Third interview). Recalling that, initially, she “really felt stuck” (Third interview) in Myong’s first class, Christine now claimed that she had become “less afraid to write in English”(Third interview) in her recent drafts.

However, some negative points also emerged, which partly overlap with the themes covered earlier. While Adam showed his interest in learning to write an essay in English, he again expressed his regret at not receiving Myong’s feedback on the final draft of his essay: “It was interesting [...] But I couldn’t get feedback about my final drafts so [I feel bad about that]” (Third interview). Dong-whan was not positive about Myong’s writing class overall, though he suggested that if he had received a better grade, his impression might have been different. He said, “I studied hard. But I only learned a few things” (Dong-hwan, Third interview); but he added that if he had received the better grade, “then, I would [probably] say it was a really productive class, haha” (Dong-hwan, Third interview).

### **Critical Essay, the Genre of This Writing Class**

The main writing genre of this class was a critical essay, which students were supposed to submit at the end of the semester after submitting numerous drafts using the process format.

Myong defined this essay as a literary movie critique. “The critical essay in this class”, he said, “is a literary critique essay. Critique, a movie critique. Professional movie critiques describe the acting of the characters, events of the movie, and intentions of the director. But, a literary critical essay asks questions about the movie” (First interview). Myong expected his students to raise questions about one of the two movies they watched together as a class, and find the answers to their questions by themselves. He continued, “Answering those questions will be the topic of their essays, and they need to find evidence in support of their ideas. This evidence can be found from the movie itself or quotations from others’ critiques” (First interview). Myong did not expect his students to use “beautiful sentences.” Thus, even if the students used simple sentences, he wanted to provide an opportunity for them to think about their questions and develop answers of their own. This was why he stated that he would evaluate students’ writing fluency instead of accuracy in their essays.

**The seven students’ understanding of Myong’ critical essay.** In this section, I will present the seven participants’ understanding of Myong’s critical essay. The results are presented chronologically, beginning from the second interview and ending with the third interview. Table 7 presents the students’ topics, which were collected from the second and the third interviews. This table will foreground the seven participants’ process of understanding the definition of Myong’s critical essay.

Table 7

*The Final Essay Topics of the Seven Participants*

Name	Title (Second interview)	Used movie	Title (Third interview)	Used movie
Adam	The reasons for the repeated line ‘your’re a rat’	Movie A	What does A want to say by using the word of "Rat"?	Movie A

Blair	Why you should watch this movie	Movie B	Is A Stupid?	Movie A
Christine	Can revenge be righteous?	Movie A	Was A's revenge successful?	Movie A
Dong-Hwan	Is A's behavior right? (not decided)	Movie A	Unethical stories should be deleted in TV programs and movies (Untitled)	Movie B
Hae-chul	Not decided	N.A.	The life of Mafia and our stupid[ity]	Movie A
James	Is rough interrogation necessary? (not decided)	Movie A	Movie B is not good for house wives	Movie B
Young	Is character A really A?	Movie A	Is A the real A?	Movie A

**Second interview.** The second interviews were conducted after the midterm test, during which time students were writing the introduction to their critical essay. At the time of the second interview, the seven students had three to four weeks left to submit their final drafts. Only Adam, who had learned writing in an English speaking country, understood that Myong expected the students to write a critique about a movie based on their own critical perspectives. The other six students all referred to their confusion about the idea of a critical essay; they were not able to clearly articulate the genre of their writing or Myong's expectations for their writing. Most of the time, when they described their writing, they said that they did not have any idea about what a critical essay was and used relatively ambiguous words, such as "something" and "an English essay."

*I am not sure if I am doing this right.* As noted above, with the exception of Adam, all the participants stated that they did not know what they were supposed to write. Blair said "I am writing something now, but I am not sure if it is right or not [...] and honestly, I do not have any idea about how to write an essay" (Second interview). When I asked her what she was writing in

the class, she answered, “I don’t have any idea” (Second interview) and laughed loudly. Christine explained that she had changed her topic “too many times” (Second interview), which indicated her “confusion” about her essay. In fact, she wanted me to help clarify the assignment for her; she asked me if Myong’s critical essay was “like the *Non-sul-moon*” (Second interview), a style of Korean argumentative writing. “I don’t have any idea about how to write the essay. That’s too difficult” (Second interview), Christine said. Like Christine, Hae-chul also responded, “I do not have any idea” (Second interview) about what he was supposed to write, and added, “I am not sure what the essay will be like after I finish it” (Second interview).

***Is it criticizing about unethical issues?*** Showing their confusion, Dong-hwan and James defined a critical essay as interpreting, identifying, and offering critical responses about ethical issues involved in a movie’s plot. Dong-hwan clearly mentioned the phrase, “a critical essay,” saying, “We are supposed to write a critical essay” (Second interview). However, he found it difficult to define the meaning of a critical essay. “I kind of understand what it is, but I’m not sure about that” (Second interview). He even asked me: “What is a critical essay?” (Second interview)? When I asked Dong-hwan about his essay topic, he answered that he had written about whether the behavior of character A was right.

James first tentatively said he thought that a critical essay was “an essay that sounds like a personal essay” (Second interview). However, he quickly added, “That would be too personal” to be a critical essay, and he tried to give another explanation. He spoke about ‘watch[ing] the movie’ as a first step, but then faltered, and concluded, “as a matter of fact, I am not sure about that [i.e. the definition of a critical essay].” Later in our conversation I mentioned the term, “a critical essay,” and at that point suddenly James suggested, “Like criticizing something” (Second interview). James was writing a draft about whether a “rough criminal interrogation is necessary”

(Second interview). Dong-hwan and James both decided to write about moral and ethical issues that arose in the movies, based on their understanding of what a critical essay entailed.

**Third interview.** In the third interview, Adam and Young each gave me a clear definition about genre. In addition, even though Hae-chul described the critical essay as a movie report, his definition of a movie report matched Myong's definition of a critical essay. Blair's and Christine's projects were two of Myong's favorite student essays (Myong, Third interview), which indicates that they also had a good understanding of the critical essay that Myong wanted them to write.

However, it was interesting that the participants' responses at the third interview were very similar to their responses at the second interview; the participants answered that they were still unable to understand what they were supposed to write. James and Dong-hwan still had the same understanding that they had in the second interview; they explained once again that they thought a critical essay was about ethical issues in a movie. But, in the process of giving this definition of a critical essay, Dong-hwan recognized that he had misinterpreted the word "critical," expressing his regret at not having thought about it when he was writing his final draft.

***The critical essay: Accurate perceptions.*** Adam and Young had a relatively more clear idea than the other participants about what a critical essay was. Although these two participants had difficulty in finding a good topic, they were not struggling to understand the basic requirements of the genre. Adam defined a critical essay as an essay providing a critical interpretation of a movie. Young said that "criticizing is too negative of a word to use" in describing the genre, and thus, it was a "critique." Young added that he liked Myong's writing class because instead of "just teaching writing," Myong "taught us through the way he makes us think" (Third interview).

Hae-chul said, “it’s a report” which a person writes after watching a movie; he further explained that he intended to write about his “impression” of the movie rather than talking “about the story” about the movie. Based on Myong’s explanation, Hae-chul’s clarified his response, saying that his critical essay argued “what the movie wanted to say” to the audience. Under the title of “The life of Mafia and our stupid[ity]”, his analysis generated conclusions that every culture has internal social rules which are difficult for outsiders to criticize. It was interesting to see him take an objective stance by withholding his judgment about the mostly illegal lifestyles of the Mafia, using phrases such as “but it is not bad because it is just their lifestyle.” Even though he used different terminology, the word “report,” his essay and description about the genre fit into Myong’s explanation of a critical essay. Thus, Hae-chul also appeared to accurately understand this writing practice.

*I still do not have any idea.* At the end of the term, Blair and Christine stated that they still did not understand what a critical essay meant, even though they each had received a good grade in Myong’s writing class. In fact, in his own third interview, Myong pointed to the essays of Blair and Christine as two of his favorite essays from this class. Myong liked their essays because he was able to trace their efforts and their thinking about their essay topics, and their topics were unique. Still, in the third interview, which was conducted after the semester ended, Blair said, “I don’t think I wrote what he wanted.” Blair thought that Myong “wanted us to write something argumentative, such as pros and cons [...]; however, I just talked about my opinion” which was the reason why Blair felt that her essay did not comport with Myong’s expectations. Finally, she concluded that “I didn’t know what I was supposed to write.”

Even though Christine did give a definition for the critical essay, her language was circular, including terms such as “just critique” and “a little bit critical.” In line with this, she



admitted that “I still do not have any idea” about what a critical essay was. Like Blair, Christine also told me that she was still unable to understand what Myong expected from her. When I asked her about the results of the writing class, she laughed and said “I got an A plus from the writing class; but I still do not know what a critical essay is.” In the case of Blair and Christine, their instructor felt that they had a fair understanding about the genre of writing they had produced. However, their own testimony was at odds with the instructor’s evaluation; both explained that they were still not able to define what a critical essay was, though they had achieved a good grade.

*I criticized the movies since it’s a ‘critical’ essay.* At the time of the third interview, James and Dong-hwan still shared a similar point of view about the critical essay - that it was an essay wherein a writer was expected to offer (negatively) “critical” judgment on ethical issues. According to James, “I just thought, if something has positive values then it must also have negative values. [A critical essay is to write] focusing on the negative issues, digging them up and providing the reasons for the negative values in the movie.” According to James, as the name of the essay was a critical essay, he understood it with its literal meaning: “He [Myong] said it is a critical essay; so should I find some bad things about the movie, then? I just thought so.” Elaborating further on his definition and his attempt to write in keeping with this, James pointed out that “it [the essay] was really difficult, writing the criticizing essay” because “when I googled [the movie’s title], there were only good reviews about the movie.” Given his limited and flawed understanding of the assignment, he had to struggle to find a theme. In the end, the main argument of his essay was that the movie would be a bad influence on housewives, since the movie portrayed housewives who had serious ethical issues.

Dong-hwan wrote his essay based on an understanding that was similar to that of James.

When I asked him about the topic of his essay, he answered that “My theme was that stories which can have a negative effect on society should not be broadcast.” The main argument of his essay was that unethical stories should be deleted from TV shows and movies due to their potential bad influence on society. Dong-hwan quickly added that he felt constrained to take this position because of his understanding of the assignment: “I am not conservative. I couldn’t help but writing about it! Hahaaha.” When I asked him why he felt that he had no other choice but to write about this topic, he answered that “it was a criticism for the sake of criticizing.” Referring to the position he supported in his essay, Dong-hwan said “I don’t buy that idea, haha, as a matter of fact.” In deciding the topic of his essay, Dong-hwan had to choose a topic that was not his opinion because he had to find an argument which allowed him to criticize the movie.

Only during the third interview, did Dong-hwan re-define and correct his previous understanding, revealing that a critical essay should be written from an analytical perspective about an issue rather than being a negative ‘criticism’ of the movie. During the interview, I asked him if he could give me further explanation about his critical essay. At that time, Dong-hwan held a moment to organize his ideas and began:

Rather than criticizing, it’s different with criticizing. There are some issues that many people have taken for granted. But, [a critical essay] tries to think about these again from a different viewpoint. I think that is a critical essay. But, THIS [pointing at his draft] is not a critical essay, hahaha. I just realized that [sigh] after I listened to what I was saying. I just realized that (Dong-Hwan, Third interview)

Through his attempts at defining the writing genre, Dong-hwan figured out belatedly what the purpose of Myong’s writing assignment had been. He explained that his preoccupation with the writing of his essay had prevented him from reflecting on what he had learned from Myong’s

class, and this was why he had not been able to understand what a critical essay was.

### **The Second Research Question**

The following section presents the data that responds to the second research question:

*What means of dialogue development is there between the teacher and his students during this semester-long course, and what topics do the students discuss in these student-teacher dialogues?*

In this section, results will be presented for the second research question, cited above, which relate to the dialogue issues between the teacher and the students. In presenting my findings that respond to this question, I will first discuss the only two instances where overt negotiations emerged between the teacher and the students. I will then review the range of relevant topics about which the students and the instructor interacted, and the methods of dialogue that the students and Myong used to communicate with each other in this writing class. In both cases (the overt negotiations and other discussions), interaction was minimal and often involved only brief exchanges.

In fact, based on my class observations, there were rarely any negotiations between the students and the teacher in this class. Most of the communication was made in a monological manner, in that students asked Myong questions and he answered them. Their conversation usually ended with a student's response of "thank you," with no further follow-up questions asked or comments offered by the student. In fact, even though students were invited to ask him questions during the writing section, the class was typically quiet and the students asked few questions of the teacher. Also, even though the teacher told the students that he would love to give them feedback by email, Myong said none of the students sent him any drafts by this means until the end of the semester.

## Two Cases of Negotiation

The following two examples were the main cases where interactions between the teacher and the student participants extended beyond the simple question and answer manner, but only minimally, as noted above. The first example of this occurred when the participants discussed midterm results with Myong; this dialogue continued for three weeks, as the parties exchanged their opinions. The second case occurred when Myong decided the date of their final test, which prompted a few students to engage in a brief discussion during class.

**Discussing the midterm test results.** In the tenth week of a 14 week of semester, I observed the first instance of negotiation between Myong and his students. After the students had taken a midterm test in the eighth week of the class, Myong announced the students' grades by posting them on the wall, after erasing all information about the students except their identification numbers. After they went to the wall and checked their midterm scores, Adam and Hae-chul discussed their midterm test results with Myong. This dialogue consisted of several short exchanges over a period of three weeks, from the tenth week to the twelfth week of this class.

Before the class started, though Adam "hesitated" (Field note, Tenth week) for a while, he soon approached Myong and asked him: "Would you mind if I check the questions I missed?" (Field note, Tenth week). The exam had consisted largely of items testing idioms, words, phrases and sentences that the students had memorized from the movie scripts. Myong answered that if Adam would "write his name and student banner number" on a prepared sheet, he would then "bring Adam's test paper to the next class" (Field note, Tenth week). Adam said "Thank you" (Field note, Tenth week) and went back to his seat after writing his name on the paper. After the class, Hae-chul also went to Myong, asking if he could check his midterm test. Myong gave Hae-

chul the same instructions as he had given Adam. Hae-chul put his name and student number on the list, and then left the class.

The next week (the eleventh), Myong brought his students' test papers to class. He then called Adam and Hae-chul to his desk and handed them their graded papers. After he checked his scores, Hae-chul returned to his seat and prepared for class. However, Adam approached Myong to discuss his answers. They were not able to come to an agreement about one answer. Adam felt that the question had been worded ambiguously, and that given his reading, his answer had been correct. Myong said he needed more time to think about it and he would consider the issue. However, if Adam was the only one confused by the question, they both agreed that Adam's answer would be wrong. After Adam came back to his seat, he smiled and shared with me that, "at least he reflected on my opinion and he said he would consider it" (Field note, Eleventh week).

In the twelfth week, Myong approached Adam and a female student (who was not a participant, but who had also raised a question about one of her answers) and discussed his decision relating to their answers. He told Adam that it would not be fair to other students if Myong made Adam's answer right, since every other student wrote the correct answer. Even though Adam felt disappointed that his opinion was rejected, Adam conceded that the teacher's response "was understandable" (Adam, Third interview). Thus, the first case that I observed of negotiation between a student and Myong was this exchange about Adam's midterm test results. Adam said that he liked the interaction with Myong. Even if Adam's suggestion was rejected, they were able to come to an understanding, which Adam considered to be fair. After reflecting further on the answer he had questioned, Hae-chul decided not to press on with his challenge over the test grade, since he now realized that his answer was wrong.

**Discussing the final test date.** In the 10th week of the writing class, Myong asked students if they wanted to have their final test in the first or second week of December. Most of students answered that they preferred the first week of December. It seemed that many students wanted to take the final test a week earlier than announced in the class schedule, and thus finish the semester early. Adam was the only student who wanted to take the final exam in the second week, allowing for more preparation time. Although Adam sat right in front of Myong and expressed his opinion, Myong did not look at him or respond directly to him. Instead, he announced that he would schedule the final for the first week. Once the decision was made, Adam “sighed” (Field note, Tenth week) recalling that, “I felt sad” at that time because “I could learn more if we had one more week, but we couldn’t” (Adam, Third interview). This scenario was only a brief class discussion in this large scale writing class.

### **Topics of Dialogue between Two Parties**

The following section presents the topics that prompted student and teacher dialogue, based on the interviews with Myong and the seven student participants, as well as my researcher field notes. Since the writing class was very quiet, I was able to observe a few conversations between Myong and his students. These mainly focused on four themes. Here, I will introduce the four themes as well as some examples of their exchanges. It is worth noting here that most of these conversations could not be seen as addressing negotiation of needs or goals, but rather seemed to be routine communications within the learning process.

Later in this section, I will cover another important theme: many participants stated that they were not able to recall cases of communicating with Myong, and some participants even mentioned that they felt they did not have an opportunity to have a conversation with Myong during the writing class.

**Grading issues.** The conversation theme found most often dealt with grading issues. Grade issues included topics such as asking about test results, questions about the midterm and final tests, inquiring about paper due dates, and checking attendance. These conversations usually consisted of a simple two-part exchange, beginning with a student's question and finishing with Myong's answer. This last category arose when students arrived late for the class; when this happened, the students approached Myong later to confirm that he had not marked them absent for the session. The students were concerned about their attendance, since they lost points when they were late or did not come to class without giving him prior notice.

Adam referred to the experience of engaging with Myong to discuss his midterm test results; their exchanges, and Adam's concluding thought, are recorded above. In summary, during the interview, Adam referred back to these exchanges with just a simple comment. "[About] talking with him? I've talked with him about the midterm" (Third interview). On the day of the final test, Christine approached Myong and asked him about a specific point (Field note, Thirteenth week). Since the wording in her notes was different than the one in the textbook on this point, she wanted to confirm the differences for the final test. Myong told her that she could use both versions in the same context and it would not make a difference on the final.

Myong also asked students to send their final draft via email by a certain date during the 12<sup>th</sup> week of the course. When a female student asked him, "Do I paste the final essay as the content of the email or send it by attached file?" Myong answered that he preferred to receive the final draft as an email attachment. In response, the student nodded her head. Blair also remembered asking him about the due date of the final draft. She said that during the writing class, she asked Myong, "When is the paper due?" (Third interview), to which he replied "right, we [also] need to talk about the final" (Third interview); at that point, he began to talk about the

final test and paper due dates in class.

Before and after the class, many students approached Myong to check on their attendance. Students especially checked their attendance upon being late, because they lost points if they were absent from the writing class. Also, as a school policy, if a student exceeded a certain percentage of absences, he or she would automatically fail the class. For these reasons, in almost every class, I observed many students approaching Myong to check their attendance. According to the field notes, “A female student approached him. She checked her attendance” (Field note, third week) and “A student who was late approached the teacher and checked his attendance” (Field note, Fifth week). I made these types of notes three to four times a day during my class observations. Sometimes, students brought some verification documents, such as a doctor’s prescription copy, explaining why they had not able to come to a given class. For example, “A female student brought an official document to Myong and explained why she had missed the class the previous week. Myong checked her attendance and said, ‘you’ve been absent twice?’ as he accepted the document from her” (Field note, Fifth week). Some of the participants, such as Hae-chul (Field note, Sixth week) and Young (Field note, Eleventh week), also went to Myong to discuss their attendance.

**Asking for class materials.** When students were absent from the class, they asked Myong if they could obtain copies of class materials, such as PowerPoint files and handouts. For instance, Blair mentioned that she missed a class due to illness and asked Myong if she could have the class materials from that day (Blair, Third interview). Although Adam did not miss a class, he asked Myong about obtaining the PowerPoint file for the last chapter, which they had not covered in the class. Adam explained the reason for his request: “We didn’t finish the last unit of the textbook” (Adam, Third interview) and he wanted to study the chapter Myong found



these requests common; he noted that students “send me emails like, ‘I was absent today. Please send me the class materials’” (Myong, Third interview). He usually sent the contents of his PowerPoint; he felt that these requests for materials were a positive sign, and evidenced the students’ desire to learn the material (Myong, Third interview).

**Writing issues.** Even though the class sessions were generally quiet, some students attempted to discuss writing issues with Myong. These writing issues included further explanations about Myong’s writing instruction and questions about their essay writings. Three or four times, Adam asked Myong, during the writing time at the end of class, “Could you explain that again?” (Adam, Third interview). Along with Adam, other students also raised their hands and asked questions about the writing instructions. For example, “two students asked Myong if they must find direct quotations from the textbook” (Field note, Eighth week). Also, another student admitted to Myong, “I don’t understand it,” and asked Myong to give him further explanation of a point that Myong had made.

In other situations, students discussed their essay topics and asked Myong’s opinion during an in-class writing activity. For example, a female student asked him about her topic, and Myong said that she could “write whatever you want” (Field note, Tenth week). Hae-chul provided a second example. At the end of one session, after he had packed his bag and was leaving the class, he approached Myong and asked about his essay (Field note, Twelfth week). Myong gave him some instructions by adjusting certain elements of Hae-chul’s essay. Another student, Blair, wrote “a short note which began with ‘Dear professor’” (Field note, Fourth week) on the margin of her draft. When I asked her about this in the follow-up interview, she responded that she asked about her essay topic. Also, James mentioned that after he had changed his essay topic, he asked Myong’s opinion about his new topic (James, Third interview).

During that time, most of the participants tended to be satisfied with Myong's responses to their questions. When I asked Adam about Myong's responses to his questions, he said "He usually provided me with good responses" (Third Interview) and "It [his response] helped me to find answers to my questions." Hae-chul and Blair also conceded that they were generally satisfied with Myong's explanations to their questions as well. However, James found Myong's responses less enthusiastic and assumed that Myong was not interested in engaging in a conversation with his students. For example, when James asked Myong about changing his final essay topic, Myong agreed to the topic change but replied that "that could be difficult though." James answered, "I will try, then" (James, Third interview) but felt that Myong's response seemed emotionally unengaged. For this reason, James appeared to feel dissatisfied after his only occasion for communication with Myong. Citing Myong's response, James added that "somehow I felt Myong did not welcome my question." (Third Interview).

**Small talk for building intimacy.** Walking around the classroom during the in-class writing times, Myong sometimes initiated small talk with his students. Since it was difficult to extend my observations beyond the seven participants, I will mostly introduce examples from these participants, in addition to a few instances from other students. In the case of Dong-hwan, James, and Young, after Myong noticed that Dong-hwan had worn Myong's favorite team's baseball cap, on multiple occasions, he invited the students to talk about the baseball team (Field note, Tenth week). Dong-hwan recalled the conversation and said, "he [Myong] likes baseball a lot" (Dong-hwan, Second interview) and also, "Haha, he [Myong] asked me if I am a *Doosan's* fan [A Korean baseball team]" (Dong-hwan, Second interview). Dong-hwan told Myong that he was a big fan of the baseball team in question, although this was not true, and he only happened to wear the hat for convenience. Myong also once approached Adam, expressing his interests in

Adam's MP3 player, which Adam had put on his desk (Field note, Tenth week). Adam answered his questions about the device, after which Myong left to check other students' writing. As can be seen from these examples, it was Myong who usually initiated such exchanges of small talk.

**Asking a personal favor.** There were some situations when students asked for individual favors from Myong. On one occasion, Blair brought her friend to class and asked Myong if the friend could visit for the day (Field note, Tenth week). Myong agreed; so Blair and her friend sat together during that class session. Blair later told me that the friend had just finished her *Sue-Nung* (the Korean SAT, see Chapter 3 for more detailed information) the day before the class and asked Blair if she could experience one of her college classes.

Sometimes, students inquired if Myong would review their personal writings. For example, "a male student approached Myong and discussed something while holding a piece of paper (Field note, Eighth week). Myong explained to me later that he was a senior student who had been preparing for his job interview in English. The student had brought his self-introduction in English, asking Myong to revise it. At the end of the class, Myong gave the paper back to the student and said "It will be fine now" (Field note, Eighth week). The student expressed his appreciation to Myong and left the class.

**I did not have a chance to talk to him.** In spite of the aforementioned examples of conversation, some participants who were observed in conversation with Myong actually claimed that, in spite of their having talked with him, they had not had the opportunity to really communicate with him. Myong divulged that he intentionally engaged in informal conversation in order to create an opportunity for them to discuss their drafts with him. However, students felt that these brief encounters with Myong were not meaningful; from their testimony, it seems clear that they had not understood Myong's intentions. In fact, they were often unable to recall specific

conversations until I provided examples from my observations. For instance, as described earlier, Dong-hwan had talked with Myong about his baseball team several times. When prompted about these exchanges, Dong-hwan acknowledged them; however, he felt they had not represented important communication: “Except that [i.e. the baseball talk], there was no communication” (Dong-hwan, Second interview). It was similar with Young and James who always sat together with Dong-hwan in the writing class. James said he did not have a chance to communicate with Myong either in person or via email (Second interview). Young also simply answered with “Nope” (Second interview) when I asked him if he ever engaged with Myong in any type of conversation. In Hae-chul’s case, he said he had never communicated with Myong except when he had checked his attendance (Second interview). Furthermore, Christine said she had not had a chance to talk with Myong during the entire semester. She said, “I didn’t ask him [Myong] questions or talk with him. So, I still do not know him well” (Third interview). Overall, the students all felt that they had not been able to communicate with Myong during the semester except for brief question-and-answer exchanges. As noted earlier, no aspect of their contacts could be thought of as involving negotiation.

### **Korean Students’ Varied Communication Approaches**

The participants spoke of eight communication methods they used when they wanted to talk to a professor. They chose from among these approaches depending on the conversational topic involved in each case. In the interviews, these strategies were often discussed as matters of general practice when interacting with professors; thus, they were not limited to the writing class.

**Before/After class, I briefly see him.** Many students regularly asked Myong questions, and had conversations with him before or after class. The seven participants reaffirmed this when they answered that they usually asked questions of their professors before or after class. The

Korean college students seemed to naturally consider this short period as a time for the professor to respond to their inquiries. The topics the students brought up were varied, ranging from simple questions related to the writing class, to personal issues, such as asking for permission to check their attendance. Some students also engaged in small talk with Myong during this time.

According to my field notes, I was able to observe these interactions from the first class:

The teacher said ‘Thank you’ and the class was dismissed. He asked students to submit the written survey. One female student approached him and asked a question about where to buy the textbook. Another female student was waiting in line to ask him the same question about where to buy the textbook (Field note, First week)

When students had the same simple question, for instance this one about where to buy the textbook, Myong seemed not to mind answering the students’ repeated questions. This question was again repeated after the second and third class meetings.

Students also discussed personal issues or asked him for a favor during this time; Myong found this to be normal. Once, at the end of the writing class, “A female student was leaving the classroom. She went to ask Myong a question. Myong covered his microphone with his hand and answered her” (Field note, Fourth week). When students discussed topics that could be seen as personal, such as illness, Myong usually was careful to lower his voice when answering these questions, or to cover his microphone with his hand. If the students’ request was not perceived as personal, he generally answered in his normal conversational voice. For example, when Blair brought her friend to Myong’s writing class and she asked him if her friend could sit in on the class (Field note, Tenth week), he said “yes” loudly enough for me to hear his answer although I was sitting in the middle of the room.

In order to become better acquainted with him, Adam would sometimes approach Myong

after class. According to one field note, “Adam approached Myong and asked him something, and Myong answered. They then laughed together and Adam left the classroom” (Field note, 12th week). Adam addressed this issue in the second interview, stating that, “I see him after the class [...] asking about the class or like that. Or, I sort of hope to get to know the teacher better when I ask questions.” Asking questions was a way for Adam to build a good relationship with his professors and examine the possibility of developing a stronger acquaintance. However, like Myong’s own attempts at engaging the students in small talk, these exchanges were normally limited to simple dyads, with a student asking a question and the professor answering.

The rest of the participants also indicated that talking to a professor before or after the class was their preferred time to approach him or her with a question. Blair said, “I ask questions after the class” (Second interview) when there was “something that I couldn’t understand during the class.” Christine also mentioned that “If I have a question, then I can ask him about it after the class” (First interview). Dong-hwan felt that “seeing [the professor] in person” made him look more “sincere” which was why he asked questions while a professor was packing her belongings after the class. Hae-chul also mentioned that when he had a question, he saw the professor after the class (First interview); Young also found that time to be “convenient” (First interview) for him. James stated that he liked to ask questions “man to man” after the class so that he would avoid attracting “other students’ attention” (First interview). According to James’ explanation, he preferred to talk to a professor in person after the class because he felt uncomfortable when other students observed him asking questions during the class.

**During the class.** When students found their questions simple and felt secure enough to share with other students, they raised their hands and asked Myong questions. There was a female student who asked him if it was okay for her “to write one paragraph of the day” (Field

note, 10th week) since his instruction did not specify a length for the day's writing. Saying "yes," he announced that students could submit their worksheet even if they couldn't finish their writing. He explained, "they were going to revise it later." When a student asked a simple question confirming their writing activity (Field note, Eighth week), Myong generally answered him or her with a loud voice so that other students could hear his answer. However, since these cases were uncommon, some participants were not aware that they could ask questions during class and felt unsure about this. For instance, Young wondered in the third interview if anyone had asked Myong questions during the semester (Third interview).

To cite a more meaningful type of communication, some students discussed their essays with Myong during the in-class writing activity. Even though these conversations are categorized as in-class communication, they were more similar to private conversations. When a student wanted to have more a private discussion with Myong, the student would raise his hand and hold his questions until Myong approached him (Field note, Eighth week). By doing so, students were able to discuss their essays in person during the in-class writing time. Adam and Blair were most frequently engaged with Myong during these sessions. In fact, aside from Adam and Blair, James was the only other participant to communicate with Myong during the in-class writing time, and this only happened once. In the last class of the semester, James finally asked Myong's opinion about his essay topic. James discussed his essay topic with Myong when "he [Myong] let us write at the end of the class. I raised my hand and asked him about it [my topic]" (Third interview). He found Myong's advice helpful in that it validated his new topic.

**Email.** Email was Myong's favorite method of communicating with his students. Myong often informed his students that he usually responded to their emails within 24 hours, so that his students should feel free to send him emails about any inquiries. In the first class, Myong wrote

down his email address on the white board and announced this information (Field note, First week). In the last interview, Myong mentioned that some students had sent him email, usually to ask him about class materials when they had been absent. In fact, other than this, he received only one more substantive email asking for his advice about how to study English.

Some student participants also identified email as the method they regularly used when they wanted to communicate with a professor about class-related topics. Christine said, “I’ve contacted some professors. And most of the time, I contacted them using email, about 90% of the time” (Christine, First interview). She found email “more convenient” than other ways to communicate with the professor. Hae-chul was aware that Myong “was going to respond to email within 24 hours” (First interview) and expressed his awareness that he could contact Myong if he had trouble deciding on his essay topic.

While students were comfortable using email for routine matters involving the class, some students were uncomfortable with emailing the professor to make suggestions or express their opinions about the class. For example, Christine had some suggestions and ideas about her other classes; however, she had not attempted to send an email to her professors about these issues. Christine said “Nope. I never did. I don’t have courage for that, indeed” (First interview). She explained that she feared possible negative consequences from emailing suggestions to professors about their classes. For this purpose, she preferred to use other anonymous methods, such as the teacher evaluation forms and the on-line anonymous bulletin board discussed in the next section.

On the other hand, Blair explained that she did not use email to communicate with her professor, since email was not a method she usually used when communicating with her friends. When I looked for student participants for my study, she gladly wrote down her information,



such as her cell phone number; however, at the time, she did not provide me her email address. Blair commented that, “I do not use email” (First interview) and “Only spam mails are in my email account.” She said she generally communicated with friends through text messages on her cell phone or instant message on her computer. As these approaches were generally unacceptable for professors, this pattern left her without an important channel of communication to Myong.

**Teacher evaluation forms.** At the end every semester, through an on-line evaluation form, Green University invited students to evaluate each professor’s teaching in every class that they took. Each student was able to check her grade only after they finished filling out their teacher evaluation; and thus, most students filled out the form. At the end of the form, there was a blank box where students could write any additional comments. Students used the box in order to express how they felt about the class and what they wanted to say to their professors. Participants said that they expressed their opinions about classes through these on-line teacher evaluation forms and felt comfortable when using these due to their anonymous nature.

According to Christine, “Generally, if I do not like the atmosphere of the class or teaching, or I have some complaints with the professor’s teaching itself, then [...] I write that on it [the teacher evaluation form]” (First interview). Hae-chul also mentioned that he wrote quite freely when he filled out the comment box for the teacher evaluation, and that he sometimes used this space to express his disappointment about a class. Talking about a professor who often had conflicts with students, Hae-chul mentioned that he had written that “he [the teacher] is not flexible” (First interview) in his approach to student issues, and that Hae-chul had given this professor a low grade. In the same light, Hae-chul stated that he liked Myong’s class and gave him good points in the evaluation. Adam (Third interview) and Young (Third interview) also commented that they made suggestions about Myong’s class on the teacher evaluation form.

To summarize, when Korean students wanted to express their feelings and suggestions toward a class, they used a teacher evaluation form exclusively, feeling safe with this method since it involved an anonymous report. This allowed some students to more actively participate in making suggestions than would be likely if they were asked to use a less anonymous forum. However, as these evaluations only reached the instructor in anonymous form after the course was over, they could not initiate negotiation or discussion about student or professor expectations or needs.

**Visiting a professor's office.** When the Korean students wanted to have a conversation with a professor, they cited visiting the professor's office as their least favorite approach. Among the seven participants, only two students, Christine and Hae-chul had the experience of having a conversation in a professor's office. Interestingly, they had quite different views on these experiences. While Christine found her experience unique and very helpful, Hae-chul felt slighted and unfulfilled by his experience. Other students said had never had any experience with visiting their professor's office, and they suggested that they would feel uncomfortable if they stopped by a professor's office.

During her four years at Green University, Christine's only experience of visiting a professor's office was an instance when she had gone with her friend to discuss their team project. That professor had encouraged students to visit his office to discuss their class presentations. Christine recalled that "I made an appointment with him and visited his office" (First interview). He still was her favorite professor at Green University; she remembered him as "different" (First interview) and as an "energetic" professor who "truly cared about his students." Mentioning that professors "[were] extremely busy" (First interview), Hae-chul described his unpleasant experience of visiting his professor's office. In that instance, when Hae-chul had

asked his question, the professor had retreated and asked his graduate assistant to answer Hae-chul's question.

Other students had never attempted to visit a professor's office, suggesting that they would feel uncomfortable with these office meetings. Dong-hwan explained that "Somehow I would feel that I was doing something wrong" if he stopped by a professor's office to have a conversation. Hae-chul stated that it would not be necessary to visit a professor's office unless he had to discuss serious issues such as his grade (First interview). Blair mentioned that she also felt uncomfortable when she considered visiting a professor's office (Third interview).

**Writing on the margin of drafts.** Blair used the margin of her drafts in order to communicate with Myong in the writing class. During her interviews, she did not refer to writing notes on her drafts as one of her methods for communicating with a professor. However, I found her writing a message for Myong beginning with "Dear professor" (Field note, Fourth week) on the margin of her draft. When I asked her about that in the follow up interview, she explained that "I asked him if my essay was going in a good direction" and she continued, "In the next class, he came to me and gave me an answer about that" (Blair, Follow up interview). Thus, Blair's use of the margin of her drafts as a communication channel successfully prompted Myong into a brief conversation about her essay in the following week.

**Cell phone & text messages.** Expressing her wish to contact her professors via their cell phones, Blair spoke of her experience of communicating with one of her professors through her cell phone. She had once received "a text message from my professor" (First interview) asking the students to bring their projects in during the following week. She remembered that she "really loved" receiving a text message from the professor. Later, after the final test in the same course, she sent the professor a text message and asked him if her answer was right. She was

“really surprised” when she received a phone call from him in response. As she had explained in the interview, since she rarely uses email, she said that “I really hope my professors let me know their cell phone numbers,” (First interview) so that she could communicate with them through text messages. As Blair was well aware of the privacy issues in revealing teachers’ cell phone numbers, she remarked, “Haha, I wish they would have two cell phones. One for personal [use] and another for class” (First interview). Blair wanted her professors to use the same communication methods (such as text and instant chatting messages) with which she felt comfortable.

**On-line anonymous bulletin board.** Christine claimed that she wanted to be unidentified when she discussed her needs from a class, and that was why expressed her wish to use “on-line anonymous bulletin boards” (Second interview). She felt that communicating through these would be “much more comfortable than in person” (Second interview), Christine expected that Korean students would ask many questions when a teacher offered an anonymous bulletin board and she said she would be one of them.

### **The Third Research Question**

The purpose of this section is to answer the third research question: *To what extent is it difficult to create a dialogue in such a writing class? If dialogue fails to take place, what effect does this have on the large scale writing class, and on the learning that takes place, as perceived by the instructor and the students?*

#### **Struggles from Failing to Co-construct a Dialogue**

Despite Myong’s effort to invite students to engage in conversations about their writing during the in-class writing sections, the students did not actively respond to his invitation, resulting in silence during this activity time. The silence during his lecture and the in-class

writing time was one of the main themes that students and Myong often mentioned in their interviews. The seven participant students found this silence strange and uncomfortable. This section will unpack the silences as well as provide other examples, illustrating the extent of the failures in dialogue that pervaded the classes in spite of Myong's efforts to establish routes of communication.

**Silence in the writing class.** When students began to write their drafts during the in-class writing segments, the class consistently became very quiet. As I mentioned before, since Myong aimed to offer teacher feedback during these in-class writing times, he walked through the aisles in order to be accessible to struggling students. However, despite his efforts, there were few students who raised their hands to discuss their writing with Myong.

During the interviews, the participant students often mentioned that they found the silence during the in-class writing activity uncomfortable. Emphasizing the need for a positive atmosphere as an importance element of a good class, Adam felt that "it [in-class writing time] is pretty much, haha, too quiet" (Adam, Third interview). He had not expected that the writing time would be so quiet, partly because the class was "an afternoon class where students had relatively clearer minds than early morning classes" (Adam, Third interview). Blair also pointed out that the writing section was "really quiet" (Blair, Second interview), and she echoed Adam's feeling as she noted that, in her opinion, "the class atmosphere is very important" (Blair, Second interview). By comparing the silence of Myong's writing session to a positive class atmosphere, Adam and Blair indicated that their perceptions about the pervasive silence in their writing class were not positive. Describing the in-class writing section, Young placed an emphasis on the silence by exaggerating his vocal tone and stretching out the critical word: "it's really qui~~~~et" (Young, Second interview). Young's description indicated that he found the silence in the writing

session's unusual and negative as well.

Along with the interview results from students, I found several field-note descriptions about the silences of the in-class writing sessions. The first such description began with “Students are very quiet” (Field note, Third week) or with “writing section is really quiet” (Field note, Fourth week). In the eighth week, I even noted that “Every student is quiet. [...] I am very careful not to bother students with the sounds of my typing or when I move” (Field note, Eighth week). Like the students, I was aware of the silence as I observed the writing class and felt its inhibiting influence, so I was careful not to disturb the quiet by making unnecessary noises. Similar descriptions continued to appear in my notes until the last class of the course.

The silence during the in-class writing time was a clear symptom reflecting the difficulties of establishing dialogue between the students and Myong. Moreover, some students stated that the silence was itself one of the reasons that they were not able to engage in a conversation with Myong during the in-class writing time; this will be further detailed in the section entitled “Factors in the failure to establish dialogue.” In the following sections, seven examples will be presented in order to demonstrate the difficulties that emerged concerning the limited dialogue between Myong and his students, in spite of Myong's various offers of support to his students.

**Worried about submitting a final draft.** Christine and Dong-hwan enjoyed Myong's teaching on materials related to the written movie scripts. However, as these lectures tended to explain phrases or terms in the movies, they did not address the writing process. When Myong moved on to explain the writing process, they felt suddenly at loose ends, and felt they did not understand the point he made. Consequently, they sometimes felt confused about their essays, expressing their worries about revising their essays for their final drafts. Discussing her

confusion in this area, Christine expressed her anxiety over how to develop her paper: “I am worried about that [how I can write the final draft]” (Christine, Second interview). Dong-hwan also said that he needed to write his “introduction, body, and conclusion. I need to submit this but [I am not sure about that] hahah” (Dong-hwan, Second interview). He was struggling to understand the critical essay and also was concerned about turning in his final draft. As they expressed their own concerns, both participants suggested that other classmates were likely to have similar difficulties as well.

**Attempts at discussing their inquiries.** While many student participants expressed their confusion about their essay writing, few of them attempted to discuss their inquiries with Myong, either by using email or in-person. During the in-class writing sessions, Myong actively offered to facilitate his students’ writing questions by walking around the aisles and checking their drafts. He made several remarks such as, “Please ask me any questions, if you [the students] have any” (Field note, Fourth week). He urged students to “raise their hands” (Field note, Fourth week) if they felt uncomfortable getting Myong’s attention by calling his name. However, few students responded to his offer, and virtually all of them simply kept writing their essay drafts quietly. When I mentioned this issue, Dong-hwan laughed; he admitted that he had some questions for Myong, but said, “Well, I will ask him later” (Dong-hwan, Second interview). Young appeared to be unenthusiastic about the possibility of asking for help in class. He predicted that students would not discuss their inquiries with Myong, saying, “There won’t be anyone who asks a question” (Young, Second interview).

As I mentioned in the second question results, Adam and Blair were the most actively engaged with Myong, discussing their essay questions during the in-class writing activity. Also, they often called him over to discuss their essay topics and other essay writing-related issues.

Other than these two participants, only James sought Myong's advice as he contemplated changing his essay topic, which occurred only once and then not until the last class of the semester. He implied that it was a desperate step to appeal to the instructor for help: "Once I was driven over the edge, I could not help but ask him about that" (James, Third interview). James explained that although he felt hesitant, he had to initiate a conversation with Myong at this point, since "If I failed to write the essay, my grade [was] going to be awful" (James, Third interview). During the interview, even though he divulged that he had other questions about his essay writing, he did not attempt to ask Myong these questions. Basically, he was seeking only approval of his new topic, not assistance with the writing process.

**Unenthusiastic student responses.** Along with the lack of participation in requesting Myong's help, many students appeared to show unenthusiastic responses even when Myong asked them a simple question. During his class lecture, Myong occasionally asked them, "Are you following me?" (Field note, First week), but his students did not respond. Even though Myong repeated the same question over several times, he sometimes still failed to receive satisfactory responses from the students. Moreover, when Myong greeted his students, they often did not respond to his greeting (Field note, Eight week). When this happened, Myong did not reveal any uncomfortable feelings and just began to call the roll. Mentioning that he was aware of this issue, Myong explained that though his Korean students did not answer him with a loud voice, they answered by moving their lips and nodding their heads. Further adding that his students sometimes "speak with their eyes, saying, 'I also knew the answer'" (Myong, Third interview), Myong explained that he could recognize his students' comprehension by reading students' facial expressions or body language.

However, some participant students were not so optimistic about the silence in the class.



In the class generally, as in the in-class writing time, the students found the silence “annoying” (Blair, Second interview), and claimed that she tried to counter the silence by actively participating and answering with a loud voice. Adam expressed his uneasy feelings about students’ unenthusiastic responses, saying his classmates were “too quiet, not saying anything” (Second interview). He suggested, “If students want to get a good grade, they should actively participate in the class” (Second interview). Blair complained about the students’ passive involvement in the writing class and said, “if they understand the instructor’s questions, then they should answer” (Second interview). Expressing a sympathetic feeling toward Myong, she spoke critically of her classmates’ slowness and lack of enthusiasm in responding: “[Myong asked the students] ‘Do you get it? Understand? Do you understand? Then, they [students] finally [only] nod their heads. It’s annoying me’” (Blair, Second interview).

I also noticed, in my class observations, the attempts that Blair and Adam made to actively participate by answering Myong’s questions. For example, Adam and I both remembered Myong’s asking students about an English word which corresponded to a Korean word. He asked, “Can you come up with any English words for that?” and students did not respond to his question. It was Adam who broke the ice and answered the question, saying “brainwash [in English]” (Field note, Eighth week). In Blair’s case, it sometimes appeared that only Myong and she were talking in the writing class. Myong once asked the class, “can you find this sentence in the textbook?” and other students were quiet. Blair answered him with a loud voice, “Yes” and Myong responded, “Alright!” and moved on.

Even though Christine was not able to articulate the reasons for her silent responses, she expressed that she sometimes would have liked to actively participate in this class by answering Myong’s questions. According to Myong’s description, Christine was one of the students who

often responded to Myong with her eyes. In the third week, I wrote, “Christine nods and write[s] something in her notebook. She answer[s] Myong by moving her lips and nods from time to time” (Field note, Third week). However, Christine said that she “sometimes wanted to answer aloud. I wanted to sit in front of the class and answer him loudly. But, I just sat there and whispered” (Second interview).

Clearly there was a relatively consistent silence in this writing class, coupled with unenthusiastic responses from students. Despite this, some students tried to enthusiastically respond to Myong, and other students communicated with Myong quietly by moving their lips and nodding their heads. Myong was able to observe these students’ reactions, and he felt that that they responded to him using their own silent approaches. However, some students felt uncomfortable with these silences; unlike Myong, they were not able to observe the silent responses he seemed to see. Therefore, the few active students ended up becoming frustrated, as they felt that the other students were not interested in this writing class.

**Help me, *Unni/ Nuna* (“Big sister”).** Instead of seeking Myong’s help, both the study participants and other students called me for help with their essay drafts. The following section will introduce the four distinctive examples of students seeking my help. The first example occurred when I received text messages from Blair in the midst of the in-class writing activity. One day as I was observing most of students writing their drafts, I received an unexpected cell phone text message from Blair who was sitting in the front row of the class. Sending text messages during the class was unusual behavior for Blair, who understood that it was not respectful to do so. Thus, her text message surprised me. The following are the text messages that Blair and I exchanged over a short period during that session (Field note, Fourth week).

Blair: *Unni*, this, I really do not have any idea. What kind of questions do I need to make?

Me : Well...I think it's to write something you want to think about after watching this movie. Why don't you ask him~ He won't bite you  
[She didn't answer me and did not move her body either]  
Me : Can I come over to you?  
Blair: Can I just write four questions? If you come over here, the professor might feel weird.  
Me : Hm...it's fine if you cannot make all of the four questions. I will ask him about that later. Good luck!

After the students had finished watching a movie, Myong guided them to do a brainstorming activity for their essays, asking each student to identify four issues the student wanted to explore. Blair decided not to ask Myong for help in generating these ideas; and she also refused my offer to come to her seat in order to discuss the task. Since the students were allowed to leave for the day after submitting these questions to Myong, in the end, Blair managed to find three questions that she imagined might be appropriate, and then left the class. That she chose to discuss the issue with me, who sat in the back of the class, while Myong walked around the class and passed her seat several times, reveals Blair's level of hesitance to ask Myong questions.

The second example involved Christine and took place when Myong introduced his students to four possible methods of writing the body section of their essays: compare, contrast, trace, and debate. After he gave instructions to students so that they could organize their ideas using one of these approaches, the students began to write their drafts; again, they were allowed to leave when they had completed a draft. When there were five students left, I approached Christine and handed her some candies, saying "hi" to her. Instead of greeting me, she suddenly handed me her draft and said "I have no idea about this" (Field note, Ninth week), blushing as she did so. I was surprised and felt somewhat uncomfortable since Myong was standing right in front of us, waiting for his students to call for help. However, I got down on my knees on the floor and discussed her draft with her. When I later told Christine that I could not forget her face

when she unexpectedly handed me her draft, she responded, “Haha, my puzzled look?” (Christine, Second interview). She was unable to explain the reason why she decided to discuss her draft with me instead of seeking Myong’s help, even though he was right in front of her.

James was the third example of a student who asked me several essay writing related questions, which required a decision from the person in charge of the class. On the 10th week of the class, James came to me and asked three questions: “Can I write a short introduction?”, “Can I change the topic for the final draft?”, and “What if I want to write about the reasons why the movie was popular?” I answered his questions as well as I could, but I also recommended he confirm my answers with Myong since he was responsible for setting the parameters of the writing assignments.

Finally, when I sat beside Blair, two female students who sat in the back discussed something and called my attention, saying “excuse me, teacher” (Field note, Sixth week). They asked me if they needed to answer the questions that they wanted to discuss for the movie, and I told them that I thought so. Then, they said “Aha!” and began to write their drafts. Again, at this time, Myong was standing in front of us, reminding students again that they should ask him any questions they might have.

During the above-described conversations with the students, Myong was either standing in front of the students or passed the students’ seats as he circulated, asking them to raise their hands in order to discuss their drafts with him. However, the students made a decision to discuss their essay drafts with me instead of availing themselves of Myong’s help, which could have been both more convenient and more accurate.

**Was I supposed to ask him questions during the writing section?** Despite Myong’s efforts to provide a revision session to his students by asking them to ask him questions, some

participants were not aware of the fact that they were encouraged to seek Myong's help during the in-class writing activity. In the second interview, when I mentioned this, Dong-hwan asked me, "Uh, really? Was I supposed to ask him questions [during the in-class writing]?" (Second interview). He explained that he was unaware of that fact, and that was one of the reasons why he did not avail himself of Myong's help.

Young was also surprised to learn that he was able to discuss his essay drafts with Myong. He said, "Now I am thinking, why didn't I ask him a question? I did have many questions" (Young, Second interview); he asserted that he "never thought about asking him questions." Young found it "weird" (Second interview) that he was unaware of the fact that he could ask him questions during in-class writing time. He asked me if there was anyone who ever asked him a question. He found it rather difficult to articulate reasons why he and other students had not asked Myong for help: "That's what I am saying. I have no idea why I didn't [ask Myong a question]" (Young, Second interview).

### **Unsolved Questions**

While I previously introduced examples illustrating the difficulties that participants had endured, this section presents examples of participant confusion about Myong's instruction on writing and pre-writing activities. This confusion reveals the need for peer-peer or teacher-student dialogue.

**Confusion about writing.** Expressing their frustrations about the writing class, the seven participants said they felt confused when the in-class writing time began, and they had a difficult time figuring out what to do. Mentioning that this writing class was "much more difficult than I had expected" (Second interview), Christine unfortunately continued that "there's nothing I can do about it." When I asked her to explain more precisely, Christine explained that though she

“liked everything” (Second interview) Myong taught her, “When it came time to write”, she was confused about what she should be doing and whether it was “right or not” (Second interview). During the interview, she wanted to confirm if she was the only student feeling frustrated in the in-class writing section, and she asked me, “Am I the only one, *Unni*?” (Christine, Second interview).

Unfortunately, Christine was not the only student who expressed her confusion and cited difficulties during the in-class writing time. James suggested that he felt that “Myong became strict when it comes to writing” (James, Second interview). James explained that sometimes he could not clearly comprehend Myong’s writing instructions but kept writing with uncertainty (Second interview), trying to incorporate the writing instructions in his draft. He added that he sometimes found writing in English “stressful rather than exciting” (Second interview).

Addressing the content of the class (the movies), Dong-hwan noted that “the class is not tough [...] watching movies and learning expressions” (Second interview). However, when it came to writing, he indicated he had problems synthesizing his ideas during the in-class writing sessions: “Gathering my ideas and writing about them, that’s pretty difficult” (Second interview). In the second interview, Hae-chul also described his confusion over organizing his written pieces, claiming, “I have no idea about what I need to write” (Second interview). During these sessions, I sometimes found students mirroring their uncomfortable feelings through body language. For instance, I observed that while writing his draft, Young “waved both hands in the air, twisted his body, and sighed” (Field note, Fourth week). Even experiencing the aforementioned confusion related to their writing, most of the students in Myong’s class tended to avoid dialoguing with each other in order to resolve those concerns.

**Brainstorming is the trickiest part.** Zeroing in on a particular detail, the seven participants stated that brainstorming was the most difficult part of the writing process. In particular, the early brainstorming activity did not always serve its purpose of helping participants identify and organize ideas for their writing. For example, after spending a lot of time thinking about the topic of his essay, Adam said he came up with an idea “almost at the end of the semester” (Third interview), and that he generated a “concrete idea” only in the eighth class, which was five days before the paper was due. Blair also mentioned that “it was really hard to think about the content of the essay [...] like a topic” (Third interview). Hae-chul remembered that he “really thought hard” (Third interview) about his topic and expressed his frustration with the situation, saying that he “didn’t know what to do at that time.” On the other hand, while Christine was able to use brainstorming to generate her topic and main ideas, she stated that finding supporting ideas and “deciding what to say” (Third interview) was difficult for her. Although it appears that Christine partially understood the activity of brainstorming, since she used it to find a topic, it also seems that she had not learned to use the strategy to identify the supporting details.

### **Factors in the Failure to Establish Dialogue**

The section immediately below presents the factors that undoubtedly influenced the students’ non-responses to Myong’s invitation to discuss their writings, which created pervasive silences in return. The next section will introduce the strategies that students utilized instead of seeking Myong’s help, to solve writing class related issues and questions.

**Too many students.** All of the seven student participants pointed out the large number of students as one of the reasons that they felt uncomfortable communicating with Myong and other students; they suggested that it was “unrealistic” (Young, Third interview) for so many

students to be placed in an English writing class. Even though Young mentioned that it would be “wonderful” (Third interview) if Myong’s students were able to talk to each other through peer discussion, he recalled that “120 students are too much” (Third interview). Expressing his discomfort about communicating in front of that many students, James suggested that the writing class should be much smaller and noted that “if students feel comfortable, it becomes easier for them” (Third interview) to bring up questions about their essay drafts.

Dong-hwan explained that the large scale class was a problem related to Korean post-secondary education in general. He said, “It’s not only about Green University; college classes fail to give us sophisticated information [about each subject]” (Dong-hwan, Third interview). He added that better student - teacher communication would be possible, if the classes were around twenty students. Similarly, Adam mentioned that he did not expect to receive much feedback from Myong, since his writing class was “an elective course” (Second interview). By an “elective course,” Adam meant a large-scale college class where students and teachers typically have little opportunity to create dialogue. Thus, he did not look anticipate having extensive teacher feedback. Myong also asserted that there were “too many students for a writing class” (Third interview), pointing out that this was “the most frequently stated complaint from students.”

It appears that some participants felt that they could not communicate with Myong and receive feedback since they were concerned that Myong taught many students. Recalling Myong’s email feedback offer to his students, James said, “I am curious about that. If 39 students ask him to give them feedback, then, I don’t think he can do it” (James, First interview). He further added that “Myong is teaching three or four sections. Then, it becomes 200 [students]. If I assumed that half of the students are requesting feedback, then it becomes 100”; thus, James expressed his polite skepticism about the possibility of giving feedback on such a large scale



class. Blair also pointed out this problem of there being so many students in the writing class; she hedged her statement about her own need for help, saying that she would like to receive Myong's feedback, "if he has enough time" (Third interview). When Christine expressed her wish for Myong to initiate a conversation with her, she again showed her concern about her writing teacher's workload: "But he can't do it for all of his students. It would be difficult for the professor" (Third interview).

**It's too quiet.** Some participants cited another reason for failing to develop a dialogue with Myong, namely the previously discussed silence which predominated during the in-class writing activities. They explained that they felt uncomfortable breaking the silence by initiating communication with Myong. For instance, Blair was well aware that Myong was willing to give her help if she asked him. However, she said she often was not able to make herself appeal for his help, since "it's really quiet" (second interview) in the writing sessions and she "felt weird asking questions" which would break the silence. Young also pointed to "the silence" (Second interview) as the reason why he "felt it was difficult to ask questions" of Myong. This silence provided another reason why students had trouble overcoming this uneasy feeling and failed to establish dialogue with Myong. The next section presents data on a subtle concept that involves delicate feelings and is somewhat related to the silence theme.

**Noon-chi.** Many Korean participants referred to *Noon-chi* as one of the concepts that tended to limit their behavior and make them reluctant to ask Myong questions. The Korean word, *Noon-chi* can be translated into "sense" or "hunch" in English, and it is also used as a verb meaning to sense something, to know by studying another's facial expressions, or to try to read someone's mind. However, it is difficult to provide an appropriate translation in English. *Noon-chi* is not the same as saving face, which could create silence due to a fear of making mistakes.

Adam explained that *Noon-chi* would be translated into being “sensitive” (Second interview), differentiating it from the notion of saving face. Christine also distinguished *Noon-chi* from saving face; she described saving face as “self-centered” (Third interview) while *Noon-chi* is “about others” and involves considerations such as “how they think about me.” She added that today’s Korean university students are not concerned with saving face issues, but “we totally focus on *Noon-chi* a lot” (Christine, Third interview). *Noon-chi* was also defined as “trying not to give the impression of showing off or being cocky” (James, Third interview) and sometimes led to a person’s “not doing some actions since others are not doing it either” (Young, Second interview). Thus, an individual acting in accordance with *Noon-chi* can be understood as examining the atmosphere or others’ behaviors in order not to stand out and give others the impression of trying to stand out.

According to James, even though he had many questions, he usually held the questions until the end of the class due to *Noon-chi*. Mentioning that Korean students tend to “examine other’s *Noon-chi* during the class” (Second interview), James explained that he did not want to give them the impression that he was showing off by asking questions during the quiet in-class writing time. Adam was one of the students who actively participated in Myong’s class by responding to his questions. However, he sometimes felt other students’ *Noon-chi* and thought “Wow, how can I deal with this?” since other students were still not responding to Myong’s questions. He further explained that when he discussed his essay drafts with Myong, he also examined others’ *Noon-chi*, since he was concerned that other students might find it unfair that Adam was receiving Myong’s feedback when others were not: “Most students are not asking questions and not answering. So, am I being seen as showing off [by asking questions]?” Blair, another student who actively engaged in class communication, also tried not to ask Myong too

many questions since she was “afraid that other students would think it was not fair” (Third interview) to seek Myong’s advice when others did not. She added that she did not want to give other classmates a false idea that “I am trying to make a good impression on the teacher” (First interview) in order to receive a good grade.

Tangentially related, the notion of *Noon-chi* is the social environment in the class; presumably, people who do not know each other well might feel more constrained and concerned about others’ opinions. In fact, students did state that they felt uncomfortable taking a semester’s class without having a chance to get to know other classmates. Dong-hwan mentioned that he “felt bad that he could not make new friends” (Third interview). Explaining that he often expected to make new friends in different majors when he took elective courses, Dong-hwan felt sorry not to have that opportunity from this class. Adam found it was “ridiculous that students rarely talk [though they are] in the same classroom” (Second interview). He said that he sometimes felt “embarrassed” (Second interview) when he happened to make eye contact with other classmates, and would think to himself “should I say hi?” Adam recalled his previous Korean 101 class as “the best class in my entire college life” (Second interview), because a teacher offered students opportunities to become acquainted with others by inviting them to take part in a class discussion. James said he felt uncomfortable being together with “strangers” (Second interview), and that being with unfamiliar people was “the main reason for his examining *Noon-chi*” (Second interview), since he did not know how they would perceive him.

Participant students offered a solution for this *Noon-chi* issue by suggesting that teachers provide opportunities for classmates to get acquainted, in order to promote dialogue in a writing class. Blair stated very emphatically that if she knew her classmates in the class, “it would be crazy and loud!” (Second interview) with students asking questions and discussing ideas.

Introducing an example from her disciplinary courses, she explained that even though the teacher did not designate a certain question time, students were busy asking questions and sometimes other classmates responded to a student's question. James expressed his wish to take "a moment for us to get to know each other in the first class" (Second interview), and said that then he would not hesitate to ask Myong questions. Christine, who was not able to take advantage of Myong's help during the semester, explained that she "couldn't talk to the person next to her if she did not know the person well" (Second interview). She suggested that if students became familiar with each other, then the class could enjoy a relaxed atmosphere, which could yield an active conversation between students as they shared their ideas.

**Professor's authority.** Participant students stated that they felt uncomfortable when they sought advice from Myong due to the hierarchical nature of the traditional student-professor relationship. Participants said that they felt "distanced" (Christine, Second interview; Hae-chul, Third interview) from college professors which became another reason for their ignoring opportunities to engage in dialogue with Myong. Addressing the same issues, Dong-hwan explained that he generally "felt detached from professors" (Second interview), making him feel uncomfortable due to the authority stemming from the professor's status. Moreover, Blair said that even though she liked Myong, "it was not easy [for her] to approach him first" (Third interview). Young said the "professor's authority" (Third interview) still exists in Korean universities, and that he did not feel right when he approached a professor first. It appeared that the hierarchy involved in student-teacher relationships influenced the classroom relationships, making the Korean student participants uncomfortable with initiating conversations with Myong.

Participant students suggested that they sometimes examined a professor's cues or signals, such as sharing personal stories and initiating small talk, which would indicate the possibility for

mutual communication. Blair suggested that if a professor wanted to have a meaningful conversation with her students, she should “relinquish her authority” (Second interview), presumably by giving such cues. She explained that she felt a professor was treating her as her friend or human being when a professor shared her stories. She continued that, “when they [professors] tell some stories that students can sympathize with, then, I feel, ‘Ah, professors are not different than us’” (Second interview). But in contrast, she commented, “I feel uncomfortable with a teacher who just keeps lecturing” (Blair, Second interview). Young also said he felt more relaxed and “comfortable approaching those professors” (First interview) who sometimes shared personal stories with students. When I asked him for a further explanation about “feeling comfortable approaching such professors,” he explained that a professor’s small talk implied the possibility of mutual understanding. Young said, when it comes to the professors who often share their stories, “somehow I feel [...] we can understand each other” (First interview).

Interestingly, Myong showed sensitivity to this issue in his interview; however, he had not been able to overcome the distance between professor and student. As a professor who often participates at students’ club activities, Myong once mentioned that, “in private, today’s students are different from the students in my school years. They treat me as their friend. But when they enter the classroom, it’s a different story” (Third interview). Myong was not aware of the fact that his students felt comfortable when he engaged in small talk; he also did not realize that students felt a distance from him in his class due to the fact that he rarely shared personal stories with them. Myong explained that he did not have enough time for making jokes during the class, and he realized that, for this reason, some students found him “professional” (Myong, First interview), and thus unapproachable.

Participant students also pointed out that they wanted a professor to approach them first, initiating a conversation. Expressing his disappointment at the lack of class communication in Myong's writing class, Adam said "at least one party should show its interest in communication" (Second interview) in order to have a meaningful dialogue between a student and the teacher, and he had "hoped" (second interview) that Myong would approach him first and ask about his essay drafts. Addressing the issue of status again, this time phrased in terms of age, James noted that "it's difficult for students to approach professors first, because we are generally younger than them" (Third interview). James was speaking about the difficulties caused by the hierarchy based on age and social status in Korea. Young, who theorized about the reasons why he was not aware that Myong's offer of help was genuine, asserted that "It is a professors' responsibility" (Third interview) to initiate a conversation with students. Taking an example from his experience of being a leader in a peace march, he explained that in order to help other members engage in discussion, he had to perform the role of a conversation initiator by asking questions and calling individual's names. He suggested that Myong might need to begin conversations with his students to indicate his willingness to communicate with them. Dong-hwan also implied that, when Myong started small talk during the in-class writing, he expected that Myong would continue the conversation by offering to review Dong-hwan's essay drafts. His comment on the exchange illustrates his disappointment: "It was a good chance [for Myong to give feedback]. He missed it" (Dongh-hwan, Second interview).

**Professors tend not to allow questions.** There were two participants who expressed their concerns about approaching professors or teachers based on their previous experiences. Adam suggested that his past experiences with teachers might affect his decisions not to ask Myong questions; he said that, when he wanted to discuss some questions with Myong, he

sometimes thought “it is useless to make suggestions or ask questions” (Second interview).

According to Adam, when he had suggested to his Korean middle school science teacher that he changing the format of a required science project, the teacher had said, “That’s nonsense” (First interview) and “just follow the instructions in the textbook.” Even as a middle school student, Adam found his science teacher’s rigidity unreasonable; however he did not resist, and just followed the teacher’s instructions. He also shared another story about a middle school music teacher. In the final test, as Adam was supposed to practice the recorder, he played his own song which he had composed. After he finished, the music teacher told him that he did a good job and asked about the song. Adam, fearing consequences due to his past experiences, did not want to acknowledge his authorship; so he answered that it was just “[a song] I know,” hoping to avoid a negative reaction from the teacher. However, the teacher had still responded critically, saying, “It would be better for you if you could play all of the songs from the text book” (First interview); the result, for Adam, was a bad grade and another disappointing experience. Adam suggested that these experiences might influence his hesitancy towards asking questions or making suggestions to teachers.

Expressing a skeptical opinion about communicating with professors, Hae-chul also seemed to generalize from past experience when he said that “professors rarely answer little questions” (Third interview), and thus, he “can’t ask them questions” (Third interview). When I asked him what he meant by “little questions,” he shared a story with me. Hae-chul generally liked to talk with professors when he was a freshman. However, when he went back to school after he finished his army service, he met a professor who responded in a chilling way. When Hae-chul asked for help with a task, this professor told him bluntly “to give up your studies if you can’t follow this class” (Third interview). After this rejection by the professor, a senior

student helped Hae-chul to study the subject; Hae-chul felt bad that he had asked questions of the professor. After finishing that story, Hae-chul laughed and told me that that professor was still his least favorite professor. Even though he understood that it was this earlier professor's own personal style, he explained that this negative memory still influenced him in his teacher-student relationships by making him reconsider initiating communication.

**Misunderstandings between the teacher and students.** Unfortunately, Myong and the seven students misinterpreted each other's intentions, with each assuming the other did not want communication. Ultimately this misunderstanding became one of the critical reasons for the lack of dialogue between the two parties. Myong suggested that Korean students were not in favor of asking questions; meanwhile, partly for the reasons outlined above, the seven students said that it appeared that Myong did not want to respond to the students' questions. While Myong was willing to give his students feedback, the students said Myong did not want to provide feedback, adding that this was one of the reasons for not availing themselves of his feedback help. Pertaining to the in-class writing time, Myong assumed that his students did not need his help, since they did not ask for it. In contrast, the students misconstrued Myong's intentions about the writing periods, thinking that he (Myong) viewed this time as his personal class break, a time during which he did not want to engage with students.

***Providing feedback on drafts.*** In addition to the other writing class-related difficulties, Myong pointed out that due to the class size it was frustrating for him not to be able give precise written feedback on student drafts. As mentioned in the contextual description, Myong tried to review student drafts by providing minimal written commentary. While students watched part of a movie, Myong went to the back of the classroom, carrying some student drafts that he had not been able to finish reviewing (Field note, Fourth week). He would make comments on them



during this short period of time. Also, Myong sometimes asked his students to return their drafts to him if they were not able to find any teacher comments (Field note, Sixth week). He explained that, by reviewing students' drafts, he had two intentions. One was to check their understanding of his writing instructions, and the other was to provide them with minimal feedback. However, he divulged that he knew that what his students needed was "detailed teacher feedback, commenting on everything [including grammar corrections]. Or they want me to call them and say, 'you may need this and that'" (Myong, Third interview). However, Myong explained that "it's impossible in this class" (Third interview) to provide feedback to almost 200 drafts every week while teaching other classes.

Unfortunately, the participant students assumed that Myong did not want to give them teacher feedback, and some students did not remember that Myong had offered email feedback. In fact, Adam twice repeated his recollection that Myong had told his students that "he can't provide feedback" (First and Third interview), and that was one reason why Adam had not attempted to ask for his feedback. Hae-chul also suggested that Myong had not offered feedback; when asked about teacher feedback, he responded simply, "I heard that he would not do it" (Hae-chul, First interview). When we discussed Myong's email feedback offer, again James did not recall this announcement. James asked me, "How come I didn't get that?" (Second interview), saying again that he still did not think Myong would want to give him feedback about his drafts.

***Student and teacher misperceptions about creating a dialogue.*** Myong had a strong belief that Korean students did not generally ask teachers questions during a class and, consequently, he found it natural and unavoidable that his students did not attempt to ask him questions. When we discussed the students' inactive behavior in his class, he explained that "most schools are the same; students do not ask me questions" (Second interview). He

sometimes expressed his skeptical feelings about students' non-responsive attitudes by making jokes, sometimes in a sarcastic tone, during his class. In most of his classes, he would say, "You have questions so far? Nope? O.K. Thanks!" (Field note, Third week), and then, he and his students would laugh together, if somewhat nervously. Myong expressed feelings of resignation and pessimism about the tepid student involvement. He pointed out that, even though he had previously addressed the issue of active participation with his students, "they won't change. I do not have any idea [why]. Students never change" (Third interview).

In contrast, on their part, his students stated that they were unwilling to ask questions because they thought that Myong was unwilling to respond to student questions. Young mentioned that even though it was not his intention to avoid asking Myong questions, "I just end up having the feeling, not being able to ask questions" (Third interview). He explained that he felt "somehow Myong doesn't want us asking questions" (Young, Third interview). Blair mentioned Myong's "Do you have any question? No?" (Second interview) joke. Even though Blair was aware that this had been a joke and they had laughed together, she expressed her discomforts by quickly adding an unfinished "But..." (Blair, Second interview). James suggested that Myong did not want his students to ask him questions during the class. He, too, pointed out Myong's casual joke as evidence. He asked me about my own reaction, citing the "joke" verbatim: "Do you have any questions, nope? Okay, thanks!" (James, second interview). He then continued, implying that he had found the joke off-putting, and citing it as a barrier to communication: "I laughed at first. But I could not ask him a question after that. That's pretty critical" (James, Second interview). Young also mentioned explicitly that he even had a feeling that Myong was showing a negative viewpoint toward offering his students feedback by this routine joke. "Didn't he say not to ask him [questions]? Haha, I didn't think he would like it

[giving feedback]" (Young, second interview). Young added that when he had some questions, the joking sometimes shut down the opportunities to ask them.

*They don't need me when they write vs. He's taking a rest.* During the in-class writing activity, Myong offered his students the opportunity to ask him questions and discuss their essay drafts. However, as noted earlier, the in-class writing time was the quietest moment in this class. Reacting to the silence, Myong assumed that his students did not require his help when they wrote during that time. He explained, "I guess they would think that since I finished my lecturing, it's time for them to write" and thus, "they might not feel the need to see me" (Myong, Third interview). Expressing his "regret" (Third interview) about those students who might have benefitted from help when they wrote their drafts, he introduced an example of one of his students: "I found a student doing nothing and I asked him, 'Why?'" (Myong, Third interview), and the student answered, "I just don't understand what I need to do." Myong stressed that if a student did not understand his instructions or if they felt stuck, he "really wanted them to ask [for his] help" (Third interview). He also felt that students were not in favor of him approaching them first and then asking about their writings. Myong said, "If I talk about their writing, they don't like that" (Second interview), suggesting that "it was better to talk about funny stuff" with students. For this reason, he had approached students talking about sports rather than addressing their writing, which he felt might make them uncomfortable. Myong even asked my advice: "What can I do when my students do not ask for my help?" and "do not like for me to approach them first" (Second interview). Myong recalled that he had made use of the time by checking "the Power Points for the next class" and "student emails" since his students "did not speak to him" (Third interview) anyway.

Student interpretations of Myong's actions contrast sharply with his explanation for

checking emails or preparing PowerPoint during the sessions. Implying that Myong was not concerned with giving them feedback, students felt that he was taking his personal break during the in-class writing activity, leaving the classroom or working on his miscellaneous chores. Blair and Hea-chul commented that Myong usually left the classroom while students wrote their essay drafts. When I asked about Myong's behavior during the sections, Blair asked me, "Doesn't he leave the classroom?" (Second interview). Hae-chul also asked me the same question, "Doesn't he leave the class?" (Second interview) but then, he conceded that Myong was sometimes present: "Aha, right, I remember seeing him when I submitted my writing drafts" (Second interview). Other students answered that they thought of Myong as taking a rest, "just walk[ing] around the classroom" (Christine, Second interview), or just "standing in the classroom" (Adam, Second interview), or even "killing time" (Dong-whan, Second interview). Only James answered that he was aware that Myong "walk[ed] around the classroom to solve students' problems" (Second interview).

***Myong is just saying that.*** A number of behaviors on Myong's part seem to have fed the students' perception that he did not want to help them. These cluster into two groups. First, Myong's beliefs about his students' unwillingness to communicate were reflected in his speech and behaviors, which, in turn, caused his students to assume that Myong did not want to communicate with them. One of his speech behaviors that his students found uncomfortable was Myong's joke, discussed earlier, which he made when he checked his students' comprehension about his lesson. He repeated this sarcastic joke in every class. Even though Myong's students understood that he meant this as humor, they expressed discomfort at his remark. Explaining that the remark was a joke, Myong nonetheless admitted that he did not expect his students to ask questions. In fact, he added that, if students had asked questions, he would not have been able to

respond to them due to the time constraints.

Students also read Myong's body language to indicate his expectations regarding the students' non-responsive attitude during the in-class writing. As Myong did not anticipate his students' making use of in-class writing feedback, he walked around the class at a quick pace, and sometimes even missed students' calls on the rare occasions when they came. For example, on one occasion that I observed, a student called Myong in order to discuss his essay, but Myong did not hear his voice and passed him by (Field note, Third week). When Myong came back to pass the students' desk again, the student did not repeat his attempt to seek Myong's help with his essay. At another point, when a female student looked around the classroom trying to attract Myong's attention, Myong was busy working on his chores at the teacher's desk, and after a short time she gave up calling for him (Field note, Fourth week).

A similar lack of attention sometimes also characterized Myong's behaviors during the class lecture times. When students answered his questions during the class, Myong sometimes was not aware that the students were answering, and at these times he would simply continue his lecture without acknowledging their answers. For example, once when Myong asked his students "Can you see all right in the back?" a student answered "No, I can't" (Field note, Sixth week). However, not hearing the voice, Myong did not acknowledge his student's answer and continued to explain the meanings of expressions without making any adjustments to his presentation.

A second group of behaviors involved Myong's pedagogical choices. Students interpreted the monological patterns in class instruction, such as teacher-centered lectures and Myong's statement he could not provide precise written feedback, as Myong's rejecting the idea of constructing dialogue with his students. It should be mentioned that Myong made these decisions due the large class size. Except for the in-class writing times, Myong spent most of the class time

lecturing. Students found the lectures boring and uncomfortable, saying that they made them feel as though the teacher did not want to communicate with them, and that his choice to depend so heavily on lectures was closing off any opportunity for them to talk. Christine expressed her discomfort about receiving intensive lectures in an English writing class. She said, “if a professor teaches students unilaterally [...] we appreciate their teaching, but feel uncomfortable” (Christine, First interview), and she added that she did not “like it [lecturing in English classes] that much.” James interpreted Myong’s teaching style as related to his personality, mentioning that “his teaching is one sided” (Third interview). James added, “Myong’s funny. But somehow I feel that he doesn’t want to communicate with students. It’s just a feeling” (Third interview). Describing Myong as having a “one-sided kind of style” (Second interview), Young said that he “felt [this way]” because he noted that Myong did “not allow questions” from his students. Christine even stated that it appeared to be Myong’s personality “to close the door” (Third interview) to communication with his students.

Another monological pattern that students described involved Myong’s explicitly asking his students’ understanding for his inability to give precise feedback on essay drafts. Although Myong himself undoubtedly meant this as indication of willingness to help in spite of obstacles, some participants felt that this forestalled any opportunity for communication with him. Associating essay feedback with student-teacher conversation, Adam believed that Myong was rejecting engagement with his students when he said he could not provide written feedback. He said, “When I write an essay, I feel that I am conversing with my teacher; I perceive [his] feedback as a communication between him and me” (Adam, Third interview). However, since “it did not happen” (Adam, Third interview), and “he said he could not revise students’ drafts,” Adam did not attempt to ask him to review his drafts, assuming that Myong would also be

unwilling to give him other forms of feedback. Young suggested that he thought Myong “did not care about it [giving feedback]. Or he did not seem to find it important” (Second interview), since Myong “did not do it [give feedback].” He explained that, in his view, Myong might not be willing to discuss their essay drafts during the in-class writing activity.

**Writing did not impact grades enough.** Grading provided yet another indirect dampening factor on student-teacher communication. Some participants explained that they were not concerned with Myong’s help in discussing their essay drafts since essay writing comprised only a small percentage of their grade. Dong-hwan mentioned that, since “essay drafts were 20% of the grade” (Third interview), he would rather concentrate on his midterm and final written tests. After Myong finished reviewing his syllabus in the first class, Young thought “it is okay to submit a rough draft” (Third interview). James further suggested that “if the final involved writing an essay, students would have studied harder” (Second interview), trying to look for better words and learn new expressions. It appeared that some students misinterpreted Myong’s efforts to decrease students’ pressure on writing in English as his indifference about essay drafts.

**My personality is the problem.** Some participants even pointed out that their own passive personalities were the reason they lost opportunities to ask Myong for advice. Expressing her regrets, Christine pointed out that “I could have actively engaged in a conversation with him” (Second interview). Acknowledging that “my personality has some problems” (Second interview), Christine explained that she was not brave enough to make herself open to Myong’s help. James also expressed his regret for not asking Myong’s advice more often and had linked this in part to the issue of courage, explaining that he did “not have the guts to ask [Myong] questions” (Second interview). Discussing the reasons for the same issue, Young suggested that his reluctance to approach Myong might have stemmed from his own tendencies, “rather than the

professor[’s]” (Third interview) having a problem in communication. Young explained that even though he had an outgoing personality, he disliked being “troublesome” (Third interview).

### **Resolving Unanswered Questions**

Other than asking help from Myong, the participant students used two main approaches in order to find the answers to their questions. First, when friends were available in this writing class, they tried to solve their problems by asking their friends to help with their questions. For instance, Blair began to sit with her older friend towards the end of the semester. I found them discussing their essay topics and reviewing each other’s drafts during the in-class writing activity (Field note, Twelfth week). Blair also mentioned that she “asked [her] friend who had lived in an English-speaking country to review [her] final draft” (Third interview). The three musketeers, Dong-hwan, James, and Young, also helped each other by asking and answering each others’ questions. However, there seemed to be limited opportunities for them since they were busy writing their drafts; also, Dong-hwan believed that he had an uneven English proficiency compared to the other two students who had learned English in other English countries (Dong-hwan, Second interview). Sometimes Young took Dong-hwan’s drafts and reviewed them, providing him with minimal comments, such as, “Is that all?” (Field note, Eleventh week). Before Dong-hwan submitted his final essay draft to Myong, he also sent the draft to Young and asked him to review it. About Young’s response, Dong-hwan laughed, saying that Young told him, “Dude, don’t send it to the teacher” (Third interview). James also mentioned that when they needed to decide upon their essay topics, the three friends had a short discussion about that (Third interview). However, students who did not have friends in this writing class were not able to make use of this kind of help.

Students also searched on Google in order to find answers to their questions. Christine,



who took this class by herself, answered that when she needed help in deciding her essay topic, she “searched on the internet. Like some critiques about the movie” (Second interview). She explained that after she had read many reviews discussing the movie, she was able to come up with some interesting issues. Dong-hwan also said that he made use of internet sources to find an interesting essay topic. He said, “I am about to google it [movie reviews] hahah. There is so much information about the movie on the web” (Second interview). When we discussed Young’s essay topic, he mentioned that he “should study more about that [the movie]. I should find more information on the websites” (Second interview).

However, when the participants failed to find answers about their inquiries, they just submitted their drafts, expecting Myong to give them at least the minimum points for their efforts. Blair said “I just submitted it [my draft]” (Second interview) when she was not able to find an answer to her question, noting that if her writing was not what he wanted, “There’s nothing I can do about that” (Second interview). Expecting Myong to assign the minimum points when she submitted her drafts, Blair said, “I guess if I write a good final draft” (Second interview), she would receive a good grade from this writing class. Dong-hwan, James, and Young also mentioned that because they sometimes were not able to understand Myong’s writing instructions, they just submitted their drafts for grading.

## CHAPTER 6

### DISCUSSION

This chapter aims to provide a space for recapturing the findings and explaining what these findings mean in the larger frame of second language writing in Korean English education. This section discusses the answers to the three research questions in turn. The answers to the first research question involve the participant students' perceptions, expectations, transformation of their needs, dialogic needs assessment, and writing educators' difficulties in Korea, as well as student learning in limited English environments. The second part, which responds to the second research question, includes students' difficulties in asking routine questions, their discussed topics and communication approaches, and different understandings about dialoguing between Myong and the students. The last part, which answers the third research question, discusses the class silence and its reasons as well as the students' suggested solutions to overcome this pervasive silence.

#### **First Research Question**

The following is the first research question: *What perceived expectations and needs are brought to a writing course in Korea by both the teacher and his students, and how do the students' perceived needs transform as the writing class progresses throughout a semester-long writing course?*

This section aims to discuss the results related to the first research question as well as provide explanations regarding the transformation of the participants' perceived needs during the semester-long writing class.

## **Recognizing Varied Perceptions about Writing in English**

Myong and the seven student participants revealed different understandings regarding English writing, which could make Myong's teaching approach difficult for the students. Myong, the writing teacher, saw teaching writing in English as a philosophical and educational tool that could help his students raise their critical awareness through the writing process. On the other hand, the participant students identified a range of relatively practical goals; their objectives for learning to write in English were to develop their general English language proficiencies and to enhance their future job prospects. Adam, Blair, Christine, and James specifically cited advantages to their future employment. Although Young, Hae-chul, and Dong-hwan, agreed that English language proficiency (including writing proficiency) was important, they perceived English writing to have a weaker connection with their future job. Instead, Hae-chul mentioned that he might need to write in English for personal purposes, such as writing emails to friends who spoke other languages. As they had prepared other certification tests in a similar way, Christine and Dong-hwan equated learning writing in English to learning writing formulas in an English writing class.

It was also worth noting that these Korean students revealed that they had received limited academic writing instructions in either the Korean or English languages. Christine, Hae-chul, Dong-hwan, and Young explained that since they were not familiar with the writing process even in Korean, they experienced more difficulties in the writing class than they had in other English classes. In the same light, Adam and Young revealed that Myong's class was their first formal English writing class. Many studies have reported how L2 learners' lack of experience in academic writing in their mother tongue can impede the process of their learning to write in English. (Hirose, 2001; Kobayashi & Rinnert, 2002; Leki, 2001). Thus, the participants' lack of

prior academic writing experience, both in Korean and English, may have caused difficulties in the students' learning in Myong's writing class.

Notable here is the fact that many students approached the writing class with trepidation and misconceptions about the class. As one of their misconceptions, they assumed English writing classes were mostly intended for those with advanced mastery of English. Like other Korean universities, Green University offered very limited opportunities to learn English writing and the participants thought that such writing classes were intended mostly for those with advanced mastery of English. As there exists a large gap between the college students who had previous cram-school English writing experiences and those who did not (Chung, 2004; 2005), students in the class who had had these experiences were highly advanced; their presence tended to intimidate their peers. For instance, Christine and Young expressed uncomfortable feelings at finding highly advanced English writers in their writing classroom. When these less advanced students saw that proficient writers could finish a long essay in a restricted time, they were inclined to feel inferior, and feared that they would receive a lower grade. As evidence for this, Christine said that only after she gained her confidence from an English writing cram school did she feel able to decide to take English writing class at Green University. She also assumed that, since English writing was perceived as difficult class, it would be the least favorite class among Korean university students. Misinterpretations such as these may have led some Korean university students to avoid English writing classes, ultimately causing them to develop imbalanced English proficiencies. This may also mean that the students who enrolled in this class may have approached it with fears that clouded both their confidence and their ability to formulate goals.

### **Different Expectations about Myong's Writing Class**

As Myong and the seven student participants shared different understandings about English writing, they also expressed diverse expectations about the writing class. Due to the constraints of the large number of students in his writing class, Myong had to modify his syllabus. This led to his feeling a mixture hope and worry on his part. In order to manage the large number of students, he realized that it would be a challenge to meet his goals which were providing many writing experiences, and raising his student's critical awareness through the process of writing itself. Since he could offer his students only minimal comments on their drafts using out-of-class office time for such a large group, he intended to assist them with their inquiries during the in-class writing time. Even though it was a difficult to use a process approach in a large scale writing class, Myong wanted to practice his teaching philosophy and expand his students' thinking through this class. He also expected to compensate for not being able to provide enough sophisticated teacher feedback in two ways: first, by giving the students short comments, and second, by making himself available for brief individual conferences during the in-class writing time. In general, rather than focusing on the formulaic skills that are central to test-oriented writing instruction, he designed his English writing class in order to nurture his students' literary thinking.

However, the seven participants viewed the class quite differently. They generally chose this class because they imagined that Movie English for Writing would be more interesting than other English language classes, since the class involved watching movies and writing about them. They also expected that this writing class would be helpful for their future job searches by helping them learn how to write in English. This seems to reveal that the participants had only a vague understanding of Myong's stated goals. In contrast to Myong, the participants appeared to

equate learning English writing to developing their general English language proficiency; students assumed that this English writing class would be beneficial for them in helping them expand their English vocabulary and speaking skills (Lee, 2003; 2004).

These disharmonious perceptions caused some students to lose interest in learning English writing in Myong's class. For instance, Dong-hwan and Hae-chul suggested that this writing class was beyond their expectations, in that Myong was asking them to write a "literary" (Dong-hwan, Second interview; Hae-chul, Second interview) essay, a concept that clearly seemed to leave them confused. Hae-chul said that he had a problem in Myong's writing class because he had received limited training in expressing his critical ideas through written language (Second interview). Further, he explained that due to the schematizing characteristics from his major, computer science, he felt more comfortable creating formulas for computers. Because he considered himself to be a beginning learner of English writing, Hae-chul wanted to write more simple descriptive essays, and to receive more detailed instructions on how to write these. Dong-hwan also stated that because of the disappointment caused by mismatched expectations between Myong and himself, he lost interest in this writing class and ended up paying less attention to the class than he expected at the beginning of the semester (Third interview).

Since it is common to find students and writing teachers who have different expectations toward a composition class (Thaiss & Zawacki, 2006), teachers often design their writing classes based on their knowledge and judgment. However, an English writing class is not necessarily of a higher quality when it is designed based on the teacher's expectations, particularly when the writing teacher's goals do not match student expectations. Acknowledging students as critical and intelligent beings who are agents of their learning (Freire, 2000; McLaren, 2009) will foster a healthy milieu of negotiation and discussion for an effective English writing class (Benesch,

2001). Otherwise, as the results show, a writing class that fails to address and negotiate these different expectations (i.e. which displays monologic discourse), may eventually hinder students' learning by making them feel discouraged, and lose interest in learning English.

### **Transformation in the Students' Perceived Needs**

**First interview: Uncertain needs.** In the first interview, the seven students generally stated their needs in uncertain and vague terms. Even though the students explained that they wanted to learn something practical, such as the logical flow and structure of writing, they neither describe the meaning of their statements nor could provide precise examples. Blair and Young appeared to be surprised when I asked their opinion of their writing class. Suggesting that a syllabus was beyond their control and thus, outside of their realm of concern, they were at first resistant to this question and took a relatively longer time than other participants to respond.

**Factors affecting the uncertainty.** There were three reasons for the difficulties the students encountered in addressing their needs about this English writing class. First, since the Korean students tended not to have an urgent writing need in English outside of class (Lee, 2006), they consequently found it difficult to identify what they wanted to learn from an English writing class. Even though they wanted to learn how to write a resume, TOEFL essays, business writing, and personal writings in English, they were unable to articulate what specific kinds of learning or what writing skills would be required for these genres. For example, Adam and Dong-hwan were not able to explain what they meant by business writing, noting only that they might need to write some papers in English if they happened to be hired by a foreign company. Since Adam and Hae-chul presupposed that they might need to write resumes or TOEFL essays in English when they applied for jobs, they expected to learn them in Myong's writing class; however, they were not able to address the kinds of skills they would need to master in learning to write these

types of documents. Hae-chul and James wanted to learn to write in English for their personal needs, such as a keeping a diary, posting a web entry, or drafting an email; these statements again name outcomes, kinds of writing, but do not show an understanding of how one develops the ability to produce texts in these genres.

Second, as mentioned before, the students' limited K-12 writing experiences in both of the Korean and English languages was one of the factors leading to the vagueness of their stated needs for the English writing class. The participants were unable to imagine how a writing class would be carried out and, consequently, it was hard for them to state what they want to learn from such a class. Since this was the first English writing class for five of the participants, they commented that it was difficult for them to answer Myong's survey about what they wanted to learn from the class in the first class. Thus, their inarticulate responses may have been caused by their lack of formal writing experiences, not by indifference to learning English writing.

Third, the participants also explained that since they rarely had an opportunity to think and talk about what they wanted from a class, it took a relatively longer time for them to articulate their response to these questions, as opposed the other interview questions. Blair and Young even asserted that it was a teacher's, not a student's, job to contemplate and decide what she needs to teach. While these students appeared to be resistant to even having an opportunity to discuss their needs, the other participants (Adam, Christine, Dong-whan, Hae-chul, and James) strongly wished for opportunities to express their needs and wants, and actively engaged in the conversation from the first interview.

**Students reluctant to express their needs.** It would is worthwhile to note again that even though the participants were reluctant to discuss their needs due to their past experiences, they gradually became enthusiastic about discussing their needs and wants, when they were



speaking to a listener who appeared to be interested in their opinions. In the beginning, Christine and Hae-chul conveyed their reluctance to express their needs, stating that students' alienation from class decision making was common. Since they did not expect that a professor would be interested in listening to their voices, and their stated needs would not likely be reflected in the professor's class, they felt it was useless to discuss their needs and wants. In Myong's case, when he tried to assess his students' needs, since he failed to demonstrate his efforts to reflect his students' voices, he was not able to elicit enthusiastic responses from the students. In turn, when they failed to respond to his request in the first class, he assumed that Korean students were not interested in talking about what they wanted. However, the results of this study indicate that if a teacher can convince students that he is attentive and willing to negotiate with students, students are apt to be more engaged in enthusiastic discussions about their needs.

**Reflecting student needs.** Students were pessimistic about the chances that their opinions, if expressed, would be reflected in the design of their class. They assumed that it was a waste of their efforts and time to express their opinions at the teacher's request, since their endeavors would not likely reap any benefit for them. Accordingly, some participants resisted expressing their perceived needs in their interviews, mentioning that they were not able to see the point of discussing such issues. Furthermore, Christine revealed her fear about relating her perceived needs to her professor. It appears that, contrary to Myong's expectations, the participants were not indifferent to the class; however, they did not attempt to express their needs, since they thought it was not worth talking about them.

Critical pedagogy educators (Benesch, 2001; Freire, 2009; McLaren, 2009) explain that educators need to recognize students as co-constructors, and to re-organize their teaching in ways that reflect students' needs. As a devoted English teacher, Myong understood this perspective of

critical teaching, and he did conceive of his students as critical agents who just needed to practice articulating their ideas. However, unfortunately, it appears that he failed to effectively communicate this viewpoint to his students or to actively encourage them to share their opinions.

Students need to understand that their teacher recognizes them as cognitive agents and co-constructors of their class. Otherwise, because the students assume that they will gain no benefits from the exercise, they are prone not to respond thoughtfully to a teacher's need assessment questionnaire or an invitation to discuss needs in class. Also, if a writing teacher asks what the students want without reflecting their opinions for the class, the teacher is turning her students into objects of study, rather than recognizing them as cognitive co-constructors of their class. The participants' testimony in this study suggests that, from their point of view, their instructor did not provide these essential kinds of support for them, even though the teacher's own statements showed a desire to empower his students. Both sides were hampered by culturally rooted assumptions (Myong's assumption that Korean students would be passive and the students' assumptions that teachers would not listen or act on their opinions).

**Second interview: Clarity and the current writing class related needs.** From the second interview, the participants began to clearly state what they wanted from an English writing class. However, their stated needs were more related to the perceived needs and lacks from Myong's class rather than related to a general or an imagined English writing class. Even though I rephrased the question, suggesting to them that they talk about their perceived needs for a general English writing class, the participants usually went back to talk about Myong's class and express their opinions about it. This may reflect that, as Benesch (e.g. 1999a, 1999b, 2001) and Flowerdew (2005) have emphasized, the students were sensitive to their immediate situation, and interested in discussing their immediate needs in their current writing class. Instead of using

the term “needs,” Benesch used “rights,” which contained the political connotation of unbalanced power in the classroom to be negotiated through dialogue between teacher and student. Suggesting that rights analysis should be conducted and reflected in ESL writing classes, she highlighted that these rights were “not pre-established but must be discovered in each setting” (Benesch, 2001, p. 109) and “the aim of rights analysis is to discover what is possible, desirable, and beneficial at a certain moment with a particular group of students.” The students’ desires to change their current English writing class according to their immediate needs may support and help legitimize claims about the need to analyze student rights and negotiate their rights, “fulfilling target requirements while experimenting with ways to modify them” (Benesch, 2001, p. 109).

**The need of dialoging to write.** Most importantly, even after the student participants had gained an understanding of the nature of a critical essay, they expressed frustration about their difficulties in writing, claiming that a lack of communication was the greatest disadvantage in Myong’s writing class. The need to have a conversation with someone else was distinct from the need to receive feedback from others, in that the participants were willing to expand their writing ideas through this process. Their suggestions are supported by Strauss and Xiang (2006) who point out that “language in collaborative interchanges has the capacity to advance, broaden, and clarify our understandings” (p. 359). Discussing the ways that his student writers engaged in interactive communication, Bereiter (1994) found that “new criticism and alternatives keep being brought into the discourse, thus enlarging with no inherent limit the circle of those for whom the discourse represents progress” (p. 6). It appears that even though the participants had limited learning experiences in the Korean and English languages, they seemed to naturally perceive writing as a socially engaged and constructed practice. Recognizing peer discussion as a form of

feedback, they stated their discomfort at not obtaining an opportunity to share their ideas and receive feedback from other classmates. This suggests that when the dialogic nature of writing (Killoran, 2005) has been disturbed or not put into practice, students may feel discomfort, which also may hinder their development of English writing skills.

**Peer and teacher feedback.** In a similar light, the student participants also expressed their perceived need to receive feedback from either Myong or other classmates. Participants spoke of two functions of feedback: one was error correction and another was reader evaluation. While Blair addressed her desire to correct her awkward expressions in English through teacher feedback, she also implied that it was Myong's obligation to review students' submitted drafts, because of the time and effort spent on them. Even though she understood the contextual constraints caused by the large number of students in her writing class, she appeared to regret not having the opportunity to receive teacher feedback about her mistakes. When Blair referred to peer discussion, her comments were more focused on peer revision for linguistic error correction, which she saw as an alternative to teacher feedback on grammatical mistakes. Not until the last interview did Blair express her need to have feedback on her essay's content.

Even when peer review involved only simple compliments, Hae-chul liked the activity because it entailed evaluative processes. His statements about receiving feedback may be regarded as an extension of interactive exchanges with peers in order to satisfy his longing to be evaluated through his readers' responses. Young also mentioned that he wanted to receive feedback, which was another one of his terms for peer communication.

**Sample writing.** Without having an opportunity to reexamine their writing process through peer reviews or teacher feedback, and since the participants had to understand the writing genre and find an essay topic by themselves, some participants addressed their wish to

read examples of the assigned genre. This need for writing models also related to the issue of the lack of dialogue in this writing class. Basically, the participants saw the writing sample idea as an alternative answer to teacher and peer feedback. Given the lack of teacher and peer feedback, they felt that reading examples of critical essays would serve to help them to better understand how to write a critical essay and to expand their range of essay topics.

**Teaching formulaic writing.** It may also be noteworthy that Dong-hwan repeatedly claimed that Myong needed to teach him formulaic writing features. Dong-hwan appeared to equate learning how to write in English to learning formulaic English sentences so that he could modify the sentences and use them in his essay writing. Dong-hwan maintained this stance until the last interview, counting it as one of the reasons that he found it difficult to learn English writing from Myong's class. Dong-hwan assumed that he was not able to obtain much benefit from this writing class since there existed a large gap between Myong's teaching and Dong-hwan's expectations. It appeared that the mismatch in expectations between Myong's teaching and Dong-hwan's expectations could impede Dong-hwan's development as a writer, as this mismatch led him to feel disappointed and suspicious about the "efficiency" of Myong's teaching.

**Third interview: Longing for creating dialogue.** In the third interview, stating more specific perceived needs about Myong's writing class, the participants suggested over again that they most wanted to have student to student conversations, correlating this idea with peer feedback. At the end of the semester, Blair discovered that a classmate from her discipline was taking the class, and after that, she benefitted from sharing her ideas with him during the in-class writing time. However, Adam, who was not able to find any acquaintances with whom to have a discussion, emphasized that class communication was the most important element in an English writing class. Pointing out that this important feature was missing from Myong's writing class,

Adam expressed his disappointment that even students did not attempt to interact with each other.

**Teacher feedback.** Even though the participants understood that Myong would not be able to provide them with teacher feedback on their drafts, they still expressed their need for teacher feedback for two reasons: they wanted to learn from their writing mistakes and they needed help to expand their ideas. Even at the beginning of Myong's writing class, some of the students (e.g., Blair) were disenchanted by the lack of teacher feedback. However, as the writing class progressed, the student participants realized that they were losing an important opportunity to learn how to write in English. Thus, they began to clearly express their need to receive sophisticated written teacher feedback, even though they had originally understood about Myong's inability to provide more than minimal comments on their drafts. James even used the word, "crucial" to describe the importance of teacher feedback, which was missing from this English writing class.

As noted earlier, the students' complaints about the unavailability of teacher feedback also appeared to relate to their complaints about Myong's monologic feedback approach. By providing students only evaluative language, such as "good" or "weak," Myong was maintaining an authoritative voice which might have conveyed a negative impression to students, since such minimal feedback can be perceived as dismissive. Lillis (2003) explains that, if a teacher "denies students' contributions to [...] meaning making" (p. 196) and, then, the teacher still holds her authority for problem posing, assuming she is the only one who knows the answer as "interpreter of the world" (p. 196). When Myong provided these minimal comments, his goal was actually to show his enthusiasm and interest in his students' writing practice within the limited teaching environment of the large class and his heavy teaching load. However, unfortunately, students interpreted the practice quite differently, finding this brief feedback monologic and ineffective,

judging that it was not a kind of teacher feedback; this perception then fed into their notion that the instructor was not interested in their writing.

**Writing samples.** Continuing from the second interview, Christine and Dong-hwan once more suggested that Myong should provide them with writing sample as another alternative solution to teacher feedback. Their explanations for reading model essays was different from learning formulaic writing features, in that the participants wanted to learn by reading various examples of a particular genre. Christine's insisting that "the more students read, the more they can learn" indicated her desire to read and analyze other writing to better her understanding of how to write a critical essay. Dong-hwan also expressed his wish to read other writers' finished critical essays in order to expand his ideas by learning from others' topics and writing skills. Christine and Dong-whan suggested that they had learned TOEFL essay writing and Korean argumentative writing (*Non-sul*), respectively, by imitating sample writings.

In contrast, Myong did not like the idea of providing models, because he feared that his students might lose their creativity by copying sentences or writing structures. That was why he did not try to provide a finished example of a critical essay. Unfortunately, this choice was prone to create another disparity in expectations between the students and Myong. While Myong concentrated on the dangers of imitation, the participants believed they would have a better understanding of the critical essay if they analyzed various writings in the target genre. This appears to be reasonable because students also learn English writing while they read other writers' (peer or relatively proficient writers) work (Crinon & Marin, 2010). Additionally, the participants appeared to have another reason to request writing samples as part of their English writing learning: they had had formal experiences of learning test-oriented writings (TOEFL and *Non-shul*) by imitating sample writing. Due to these experiences of learning writing through

reading others' essays, they wanted English writing classes to provide them role models or examples of critical essays. Still, of course, given the experiences of these students, one cannot discount Myong's fear.

**Informal presentations.** Suggesting that peer discussion might be able to lighten Myong's burden, Young worried about Myong's work load due to the large number of students in the writing class. For this reason, Adam and Young suggested that informal presentations done by the students would be beneficial for both parties as another feedback approach. This suggestion indicates that even students were aware of the fact that the size of the writing class was overwhelming to the teacher. Due to the large class size, students did not expect to have sophisticated teacher written feedback; instead, they thought of alternative approaches for such feedback. It shows that the participants understood that a large scale English writing class was not ideal.

**Diverse writing classes.** As another specific writing related need, some participants began to understand that they needed to learn other genres, possibly through other types of English writing classes, based on their English proficiencies and goals for learning to write in English. Unlike the first interview in which participants mentioned but did not clearly understand writing genre lists and had uncertain goals for learning the mentioned genres, Christine was able to explain her needs and aims in relation to learning certain genres. This suggests that she had begun to develop genre awareness through her experiences in Myong's writing class, and also perhaps through writing her statement of purpose for her application to a university in the United States. This also shows that she had become aware of the need to have different kinds of writing classes based on specific genres to meet students' varied writing needs.

Additionally, some participants advocated that Green University provide different



English writing classes based on students' differing writing proficiencies. When considering the seven participants' distinctively varied levels of learning experiences and proficiencies, their suggestions appear to be reasonable for the betterment of their learning.

**Writing mechanics and punctuation.** In the third interview, Christine and James stated that they wanted to learn mechanics and formatting for academic writing from Myong's class. This was the first time that the participants had mentioned writing style and specific formatting for English academic writing. This suggests that they had become aware of detailed differences between Korean and English writing. This statement also appeared to be a result of having learned some elements of English writing through Myong's writing class. Even though the participants were not able to receive precise written feedback, through the experiences and writing practices they had had, they were able to at least partly understand what they needed to learn.

### **Revisiting Needs Assessment in a Dialogic Frame**

Educators have emphasized the value of an on-going needs assessment process (Benesch, 1996, 1999a, 2001, McLaren, 2009) which is used to modify a class and embrace student voices (i.e., rights analysis). The students in this study expressed views that are consistent with this concept; they wanted to contribute to class design, allowing this design to reflect their needs in an on-going process. Whether their stated needs would be reflected in the current writing class was an important issue to the students. Freire (2009) emphasizes that the departing point of the transformation of people is the "here and now" (p. 59), which is why a problem posing approach is an on-going process, reflecting reality in a situated context. The participants stated that they were not interested in a student needs assessment conducted at the beginning of the class that did not reflect their collected voices or that promised future class modifications only after their class

was over.

In speaking of a “dynamic present,” Wong (2006, p. 85) indicates that students are constantly changing and have varied kinds of knowledge from their diverse experiences. Even within the single semester of this study, we witnessed the participants’ transformation through their varied writing experiences and interpretations of their learning. Through the three interviews, they shared differing understandings about English writing and displayed varied perceived needs and wants for the class, although they felt more able to frame their immediate needs for this one class rather than their needs more globally as developing writers.

Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, it is important to note that participants wanted their needs assessments to be an on-going process, instead of occurring only at the beginning or end of the class. Christine argued that when it came to classes where she did not have much previous experience, such as an English writing class, she could not imagine, at first, what she needed, because it was difficult for her to envision such a class. In fact, for other participants as well, it was not until the second interview that they were able to clearly express needs in connection with their current English writing class.

Unfortunately, Myong only conducted a student needs assessment in the first class. When he made no subsequent attempt to reflect their needs, students assumed that the assessment had merely reflected transient interest on Myong’s part, rather than a sincere effort to understand them. The participants’ miscomprehension was understandable since they were not able to benefit from the assessment: at best, Myong’s needs assessment process was designed to only target his future students, not his current ones. The results of the assessment would have been different if he had made changes in this English writing class. Unfortunately, due to his excessive workload, Myong was unable to reflect his students’ wishes and modify the writing

classes.

### **Reconsidering Functions of Feedback**

Through the interviews, three functions of teacher and peer feedback were identified: learning from mistakes, understanding teacher expectations and assignments, and expanding the students' thoughts. Blair exemplified the first function, as she was the one who mostly clearly stated her need to correct the "weird" expressions in her drafts. By using the words, "right" and "wrong", or "problems," Dong-hwan and James also focused implicitly on feedback as error correction.

Second, the students called attention to teacher and peer feedback, as helping them to better understand their assignments and their instructor's writing expectations. Noting that students often found teacher expectations for writing unpredictable, Thaiss and Zawacki (2006) pointed out that students often relied on teacher feedback in order to gauge the expectations of their writing teachers. In this sense, it was understandable for the participants to feel frustrated and anxious about deciphering Myong's expectation of a critical essay. The cases of Dong-hwan, Young, and James, who were not able to gain a clear understanding of their assignments, seem to demonstrate that the lack of teacher feedback might have negatively affected student learning in this area. The literature on writing instruction supports this claim. For instance, Lillis (2003) advocates dialogic interaction in teacher feedback, suggesting that writing educators provide "talkback" (p. 204), which opens space where a student writer and teacher can negotiate their different expectations.

Third, it is worthwhile to note again that participants appeared to equate teacher and peer feedback with opportunities to develop their writing practice and expand their thoughts. Adam and Young focused on feedback as a way to improve the content (e.g. the organization and logic)

of their drafts. Young most clearly expressed the importance of peer feedback by referring to peer-discussion/ communication as “a kind of feedback.” The participants’ views here are amply supported in the literature. For instance, Strauss and Xiang (2006) suggest that students need to have encounters to understand, express, and expand upon their ideas. Pointing out the importance of interactions in peer feedback, Thaiss and Zawacki (2006) suggest that when students are given more time to discuss or write about their assignments and expectations of their situated writings, the students are more likely to achieve greater insights and understandings about them.

### **Struggling College Writing Educators**

The writing teacher, Myong, also expressed needs that related to those expressed by the participant students. In particular, he spoke of several desirable changes that would allow him to provide more detailed feedback to student writers. He wanted to teach a smaller number of students so that he would be able to provide sophisticated teacher feedback on students’ drafts. If the class size could not be reduced, he proposed that the payment for his writing classes be raised, which would allow him to teach fewer classes at other universities, thus, giving him enough time to provide teacher feedback. As another alternative option, he mentioned hiring and training graduate assistants who could help him provide extensive feedback to his students.

Myong also expressed other desires that coincided with those of his students. For instance, he suggested that writing classes should be subdivided into different levels so that students could avail themselves of different writing practices according to their English language proficiencies and learning goals.

Given the difficulties that Myong experienced, it appears that factors beyond his control contributed to his failure to create a dialogue. In other words, it was not solely Myong who had the responsibility for failing to understand and act on his students’ needs. Myong struggled to

create a meaningful class within the context of severe external limitations (McLaren, 2009).

Myong could not be expected to provide teacher feedback while coping with a teaching load of thirty to forty hours a week.

The problem of external constraints and circumstances, too, is addressed in the literature. Lee and Schallert (2008) suggest that a teacher's unstable status can negatively impact the development of a caring relationship between the teacher and the students. According to these authors, when a writing teachers' workload conflicts with the required time and effort for a particular writing class, this causes an erosion of trust, which in turn poses a major obstacle to nurturing a positive teacher-student relationship.

Unfortunately, Myong is not the only college teacher who suffers from an unstable status which negatively influences teaching. A recent newspaper article reported that, in Korean higher education, part time college (adjunct) teachers, who are paid 1/ 15 of a tenured professor's salary, were teaching either 34% or over 50% percentage of the course load in a department, depending on the source information (Teaching at least, 2010). The article pointed out that, if the income from part-time teaching was the only source of family income, the teacher needed to teach at least five three credit classes per semester to make enough money to support a household. Another newspaper article suggests that if their subjects are in demand, such as English or Korean literature, it is common for adjuncts to teach 20 hours or so each semester (Jung, 2009). However, only a few teachers were engaged in improving part-time teachers' difficult situation (Bae, 2011) due to complicated power issues in Korean universities. Thus, through Myong's case, we are able to glimpse the difficulties that many Korean adjunct professors experience regularly in their English writing classes.

## **Learning in Limited Environments**

As has been pointed out repeatedly, this class was a difficult environment in which to develop as a writer. Misunderstandings and confusion over what was expected of them were common among students, and were not always cleared up in the course of the semester. Dong-hwan and James even misinterpreted the word, “critical” to mean that they should criticize a movie’s portrayal of morality, a misunderstanding that persisted until they had submitted their final drafts.

However, in spite of the many constraints, the participants did manage to learn about English writing, sometimes in ways that appeared to match Myong’s goals and sometimes in unexpected but nonetheless valuable ways. For example, Adam, Christine, Blair, and Hae-Chul stated that they had learned how to write an English essay through the writing process, even though the class had not provided extensive practice in these steps: brainstorming, deciding a topic, organizing ideas, making quotations, drafting concepts, and revising. Through her experiences of weekly English writing practice, Christine said she learned the distinction between translation and English writing. By watching movies and studying movie scripts, Adam, Blair, and James divulged their enjoyment of learning new words and expressions. Most of all, Christine, Dong-hwan, Young, and Blair appeared to feel content with their English writing experiences through the writing process.

Even though it was not specifically included in Myong’s teaching goals for this writing class, participants appeared to make progress in other areas, such as genre awareness and appreciation for the importance of feedback. Christine was also able to gain genre awareness through both in-class and out of class experiences. Young, who at first stated that feedback was unnecessary in an English writing class, appeared to become aware of the importance of

receiving teacher or peer feedback as the term went on.

It is also worth noting that some of this learning came through negative experiences in the class. For example, through their failure to produce satisfying drafts in rushed last-minute efforts, Dong-hwan, James, and Young realized that it might be problematic to ignore the steps in the writing process.

Thus, the above examples of learning indicate that Myong's efforts to create an effective English writing class within the limited teaching environment was, at least in part, fruitful. Despite the difficulties, Myong was successful in fulfilling most of his teaching goals that he wanted to provide. These results suggest that, even with the limitations of large scale classrooms, English writing classes can provide students with valuable English writing learning experiences.

### **Second Research Question**

The following is the second research question: *What means of dialogue development is there between the teacher and his students during this semester-long course, and what topics do the students discuss in these student-teacher dialogues?*

Illustrating students' difficulties in asking routine questions, this section will convey the topics discussed and the communication methods chosen as well as the relationships between the two domains. This section will also present differing understandings about the definition of dialoguing between the seven students and Myong, as well as the emphasis on providing affectively safe places for meaningful engagements.

### **Difficulties Asking even Routine Questions**

This large English writing class appears to have posed problems even for students' asking routine questions and making inquiries relating to their needs and wants. It is important to note that most of the interactions between Myong and his students (including the two negotiation

examples discussed in the previous chapter) hardly qualify as meaningful exchanges on course content or organization. The first example, checking on midterm test results, could merely be regarded a normal class routine, although I observed Myong endeavoring to remember the names and faces of each student who conferred with him, an admirable effort given his work load. The second example, involving the final test date, consisted of largely predictable material, as most students preferred to finish their writing class a week earlier than was regularly scheduled. Moreover, this exchange again failed to address anything about the writing process or the kind of learning covered in the course. In fact, the second of these exchanges seems to have been unsatisfactory even for the limited goal that was set for it.

In fact, many students did not feel comfortable calling for Myong to come help with their writing or other inquiries. Many students often appeared to be hesitant to ask questions, or withdrew their questions after their attempts to catch Myong's attention had failed during the in-class writing activity. This indicates that there were many unresolved student questions about Myong's writing instructions and the process of writing their essays.

### **Topics Discussed**

As discussed earlier, most discussions between Myong and his students involved grade-related issues such as attendance checking, test results, and other test related questions. These were largely initiated by students; this was understandable since grades are among the primary concerns for college students concerned about their job searches.

Aside from these grade issues, Myong sometimes initiated small talk exchanges in an effort to build intimacy with his students. Myong's intention was to provide his students with an unthreatening opportunity to ask questions and obtain teacher feedback. However, unfortunately, the students did not recognize this indirect overture on Myong's part; when asked about



communicating with Myong, many participants answered that they had no opportunity to engage in a dialogue with him. In turn, this lack of student response to Myong's overtures caused a misunderstanding on his part, namely that his students did not want his help during the in-class writing time.

Questions about writing were also initiated by students during the in-class writing sessions and even at other times, when students sought Myong's approval of their essay topics or his agreement on their decisions about their draft writing. However, it was difficult to define these interactions as negotiations focused on developing the students' ideas and thoughts, because most of these exchanges involved a simple question/answer sequence, a brief student-initiated question, to which Myong gave an equally brief answer.

A few students made requests of Myong. Some asked him to provide handouts or PowerPoint files from the classes they had missed, while others made personal requests, such as asking permission to audit the class, or to review their grades in preparation for an English job interview. That the students asked for handouts can be partially interpreted as a grading issue, since the handouts and PowerPoint files were crucial in preparing for their midterm and final tests. These materials contained the answers to questions about words and expressions in their textbook. Even though only a few students asked a personal favor of Myong, their willingness to approach him shows that at least some students saw Myong as being willing to help them. However, the rarity of such requests may indicate that many students still felt reticent or uncomfortable talking with Myong.

### **Favored Communication Approaches**

Students' favored varied communication approaches according to their goals. Most of all, perhaps partly due to cultural reasons, the students' favored approach was to meet their teacher

before or after class. The students considered this method to be appropriate since it showed their sincerity about the subject and conveyed their politeness toward the instructor. Participants mentioned that they felt more secure when they engaged in a private conversation with their teacher before or after class, since this allowed them to avoid the attention of other students. Participants also used this approach to gauge their professor's willingness to engage with them. For instance, Adam explained that, in asking questions before or after class, he was exploring the possibility of creating a dialogue with the professor, hoping to develop a stronger acquaintance with him. Similarly, when James felt that Myong was not enthusiastic in responding to a question he asked after class, he interpreted this as Myong's lack of interest in communicating with his students.

Asking questions during the class or the in-class writing time was another approach that students used. Students used this approach in two different ways; asking questions in public or asking questions in person by calling for Myong's attention. When the questions were closely related to classroom activities and writing assignments, students tended to ask Myong a question in public. In other words, they used this method when they felt secure and felt that the answer to the question would benefit other students as well. However, most conversations took place in private when students raised their hands and waited until Myong approached them. Most of these questions, both public and private, ranged from simply confirming their understanding of Myong's writing instructions to briefly seeking his agreement about their writing decisions.

Thus, it appears that students did not actively try to elicit in-depth teacher feedback. Further, although Myong expected to provide teacher feedback to his students during the in-class writing time, their exchanges were again limited to simple questions and answers which could not be classified even as a conversation, let alone as feedback on their drafts. Some students

appeared not to try to appeal for Myong's help, presumably due to the prevailing belief that he was not interested in providing feedback.

Email was Myong's favored communication approach to answer questions from the large number of students in this English writing class; Myong expected his students to make use of email for a variety of literacy activities such as discussing their drafts or making suggestions about the class. However, unfortunately, some students were reluctant to use email for questions or discussion; they mostly used email only to request and receive class materials. Christine specifically noted that she would be uncomfortable emailing the professor as a way to make suggestions about the class. She worried that this might be seen as intrusive or bold, and might affect the professor's perception of her, jeopardizing her grade. Thus, it tended to be typical that Myong had mostly received routine class questions via email. Also, as Blair did not use email when she interacted with her peers and other people, Myong's favored approach was not an option for her.

In contrast, due to its anonymous nature, students were often willing to express their thoughts about their writing course in the comment box in the on-line teacher evaluation form. In fact, some participants suggested that this was the only place to express their complaints about their classes and professors. This suggests that Korean students may actively engage in discussing their opinions when professors provide them with guaranteed anonymity. However, Christine rightly noted that this approach could not benefit her, since such opinions only reach the professor after the term ended, and could not lead to ongoing changes in a current class.

Visiting the professor's office was the least utilized method for either the professor or the student participants; many students expressed their discomfort with visiting a professor's office. Besides, this was impossible in Myong's case, since Myong had no office of his own, as is

typical of most adjunct professors in Korea. Discussing a previous unpleasant experience of being deflected to a graduate student to obtain an answer about his question, Hae-chul concluded that this approach was inappropriate for an undergraduate student to use. However, expressing a rare view, Christine found it effective to visit a professor's office; she recalled an experience of discussing a class project with a professor, which she counted as one of her most valuable learning experiences. However, this example had involved her favorite professor; and she suggested that she would not feel as comfortable discussing her writing drafts with Myong. Basically, though conversations outside of class could be an effective approach to enhance meaningful learning, it represented an untapped resource for this class.

Blair cited one idiosyncratic method that had worked for her, namely writing in the margins of her essays to communicate with Myong during drafting process. When she used this approach, she successfully engaged Myong in a discussion about her draft and received a satisfying answer from him. This example is worth noting here as it provides a rare instance where an exchange seems to have addressed a students' writing; however, by definition, this exchange could not develop into a full-scale negotiation.

Some students cited other methods that they wished to use when they interacted with their professors. These included cell phone text messages, instant chat computer messages, and on-line anonymous bulletin boards (which did not exist in connection with this class). These methods deserve note, because they are so familiar and comfortable to many students, in spite of their limitations.

### **Different Notions about Dialoguing**

It appears that Myong and the participant students held differing understandings of teacher-student communication. When asked in the last interview, Myong expressed his

satisfaction about this by saying: “due to the small number of students, I [was able to] have good communication with my students this semester” (Myong, Third interview). Myong explained that because he had a relatively smaller number of students and a physically smaller space than for previous writing classes, which had ranged from 80 to 100 students, he expected that these students would feel closer to him. Due to this physical closeness, he felt he had more chances to converse with students in this writing class than he had had in previous classes. Thus, “good communication” meant that he was able to provide more opportunities to resolve his students’ inquiries in person than he did in the previous classes. Judging from this response in his last interview, it is clear that Myong felt that the students had adequate opportunities to request help from him.

However, the participant students appear to have seen the situation very differently. They suggested that they had had few opportunities to “talk” with Myong, by which they meant they had few opportunities to create a meaningful dialogue with him. They did not regard these questions about drafts and writing assignments as “conversations” with him. For this reason, even after some participants recalled brief exchanges they shared with Myong, they still claimed that they were not able to engage with Myong in the writing class.

This result illustrates how the external obstacle, the large student numbers, can affect expectations about student-teacher communication. After years of experience in teaching large English writing classes, Myong was inclined not to expect to create a meaningful dialogue with his students. In previous writing classes, he had had trouble even when he needed to interact with his students to solve their routine class questions. Thus, when he taught the smaller number of students in this class, Myong came to feel that he was able to engage with his students during the semester. By contrast with his previous experiences, he was right. However, judging from the

student perspective, the quality of teacher-student communications in this course did not meet their needs.

### **Affectively Safe Zones for Nurturing a Dialogue**

Given the cultural situation in Korea, it is important to provide an affectively safe place where students can freely discuss their writing as well as their needs without fear that their grades will be affected. In designing the in-class writing activity, Myong intended to provide such a safe space. However, students did not feel safe to discuss their thoughts using this approach. Canagarajah (1999) points out that it is important for critical pedagogy practitioners to provide a “safe house” (p. 191) in the class room where students can freely negotiate “texts, discourses, and codes” (p.185). He suggests that “the safe houses show that there may be learning processes of considerable critical potential” (p. 191), enabling students to orchestrate and test the sometimes chaotic voices they are trying to understand, “without jeopardizing their academic success” (p. 192). McLaren (2009) also emphasizes the need for a safe space in the classroom where students can unconditionally ask questions and discuss assumptions. Myong appears to have assumed that personal discussions during the in-class writing time would provide his students a level of comfort to discuss their drafts and ask questions. However, the results of this study show that, contrary to his expectations, students felt uncomfortable even asking for the most basic help during that time.

In the following sections, which address the third research question, the reasons why students felt it was difficult to communicate with Myong will be discussed, as well as the phenomenon of student silence.

### **Third Research Question**

This is the third research question: *To what extent is it difficult to create a dialogue in such a writing class? If dialogue fails to take place, what effect does this have on the large scale writing class, and on the learning that takes place, as perceived by the instructor and the students?*

Since the dynamics of this class involved so much silent time and so many unexpressed questions, I will respond to this question first by addressing the issues of silence in educational contexts.

#### **Silence**

In connection with this research question, it is worth looking at the notion and the meanings of ‘silence’ in educational contexts. The varied interpretations about and functions of silence in whole class and small group discussion in ESL and EFL English language classes have been discussed extensively in the literature. For instance, Giles, Coupland, and Wienmann (1992) explain that, in Western education, where active class discussion and individual verbal presentation of knowledge is valued in class, silence tends to be negatively interpreted as: “lack of interest; an unwillingness to communicate; a sign of hostility, rejection, or interpersonal incompatibility; anxiety or shyness; or a lack of verbal skills” (p. 219). However, other studies attempt to understand the positive impact of student silences, as they found silent students utilizing their silence “to gain access, organize and absorb new material” (Jaworski & Sachdev, 1998, p. 286).

More recent studies relating students’ silence in class in mono or multi-linguistic/cultural contexts suggest that silence “takes various forms, and functions at many different levels of human interaction” (Nakene, 2006, p1813) and obtains varied interpretations by individuals from

different cultures (Giles et al. 1992; Tartar, 2005). For example, discussing the positive (sign of solidarity and rapport) and negative (distancing tactic) strategies involving silence, Nakene (2006) reported Japanese students' use of silence as a politeness strategy, though their silence was interpreted differently by their Australian lecturers and peers. Through a multiple case study of Turkish graduate students in the USA, Tartar (2005) found his participants used silence as an alternate mode of participation; Tartar suggests that ESL educators value the different uses of silence by their intercultural students. Harumi (1999) explains Japanese students' use of silence as face saving, as an avoidance strategy, and even as a silent request for help. In a later study, Harumi (2010) also cites Japanese students' active use of silence as an appropriate listening behavior and an alternative way of communicating in an EFL context.

The significance of student silence in class is also supported by Goldstein (2003, 2008) using the concept of "attentive silence." Cheung (1993) identifies five different types of silence: attentive, inhibitive, oppressive, protective, and stoic. Among them, Goldstein (2008) focuses on attentive silence. Explaining attentive silence as "a quiet understanding" (Goldstein, 2008, p. 226), Goldstein suggests that Cheung's modes of silence are "empowering and thus the antithesis of passivity" (p. 226). By using this attentive silence, Goldstein (2003) interprets his students' silence as an acute listening skill which expresses empathy toward others and awareness of speakers in an EFL context. Later in his study about peer social capital of multilingual students, Goldstein (2008) suggests that educators focus attention on students' silence as "all modes of silence can fluctuate between being enabling or debilitating" (Goldstein, 2008, p. 226). In other words, silence can have either a negative or a positive influence on the students' language learning. Due to the silence in this class, participant students appear to have perceived difficulties, which hindered their learning. Given this, it is important to examine the meanings of the silence



created in this class.

Before entering into a detailed discussion about silence in Myong's English writing class, it is necessary to clarify what types of phenomena involve silence in this study. The silence noted in this study involves the lack of responsive answers and questions during lectures, and the lack of active student involvement during the in-class writing activity. Furthermore, the silence in this study was created in a monolingual context where the teacher and students shared the same culture and used their mother tongue, Korean, as the means of communication.

The participating students and the teacher shared differing interpretations of these silences in this writing class. Myong seemed to understand and accept this silence as a cultural phenomenon, a result of Korean students' ingrained cultural values. Myong acquiesced in the silence, feeling that he could read his students' silent responses, such as nodding their heads or answering by moving their lips. In contrast, the seven participants viewed this silence as unnatural, expressing both discomfort and difficulties with the silences created in the class. These students noted that they were not able to ask Myong questions due to the silence that reigned during the in-class writing activity.

Of course, Myong's viewpoint is reasonable: there is some possibility that these silences are at least partly rooted in values and behaviors intrinsic to Korean culture. Still, it is difficult to simply dismiss silence as a unique characteristic of Korean college students, without looking for deeper meanings or intentions on the part of the students. As "silence can carry a variety of junctions and meanings that vary with individuals and cultures" (Goldstein, 2008, p. 225), the silences in Myong's writing class tend to represent varied meanings on different levels. Myong's lecture period resembled a typical Korean classroom, where students are supposed to be quiet and take precise notes. Kang (2005) explains that in such lecture-based classes, even though

students are sometimes invited to answer teacher's questions, class discussions are rarely prompted, as the questions aim to evaluate students' comprehension of the teacher's lecture rather than to invite discussion. In this sense, Lee (2009) suggests that "the role of classroom talk tends to take on more of an evaluative than explorative function" (p.143) in a Korean classroom environment. However, it is worth noting that even Myong's evaluative questions, which only required simple answers such as "yes" or "no," frequently ended up eliciting only silence from his students.

These silences, during his lecture and in-class writing activity, might be seen in light of four possible interpretations: a strategy expressing anxiety; resistance and accommodation to Myong's monologic teaching; resistance to a sudden shift of power structure; and mistrust (of Myong's willingness to communicate with them). All four of these may be relevant, and each will be discussed here in turn.

First, in part, the silence of the participant students seems to represent an expression of anxiety about the prevailing classroom silence. Commenting on the intentionality of silence, Kurzon (1997) identifies intentional silence as a strategy, as compared with unintentional silence, which he views as an identification of anxiety and embarrassment, or even panic. Judging from their own testimony, the seven participants' intentionality in their silences seemed to fluctuate between intentionality and un-intentionality. While the students did intentionally participate in the prevailing class silence, their silence can also partially be interpreted as unintentional owing to their expressed anxiety about the silence. For example, even though Adam and Blair strongly resisted the class silence by actively engaging with Myong, they soon were reluctantly pulled in to the silence for various reasons, such as *Noon-chi*. Christine was one of the students who actively participated in classroom silence, answering Myong only by moving her lips and

nodding her head. However, even she expressed discomfort, emphasizing that she sometimes felt a strong urge to participate by loudly answering and asking questions of Myong. While the other four participants felt discomfort, they were accommodating to the class silence, partially as an expression of boredom. Thus, the silence in this class had different meanings for different participants. In connection with this topic, one might mention the conventionalized politeness strategy in the Japanese classroom, which does not reflect “a face - threatening and obstructive behavior” (Nakene, 2006). Even though the students’ silence was not a face-threatening or obstructive student behavior aimed at Myong, the participant students did find it uncomfortable and described it as obstructing their learning.

Second, the students’ silence during lecture periods may reflect their mixture of resistance and accommodation to Myong’s monologic teaching. It is difficult to say that a particular student’s behavior falls into one clear-cut classification or the other, reflecting either resistance or opposition (Giroux, 1983). Rather, students’ behavior can often be interpreted as a mixture of both resistance and accommodation (Canagarajah, 1999). In the interviews, while most of the student participants expressed their satisfaction about Myong’s lecture for its ability to impart linguistic knowledge, some students found his monologue boring and uncomfortable. Thus, their silence acts as one way of expressing resistance, while on another level, the students are also silently accommodating Myong’s monologue (Flowerdew, 2008) for its ability to convey knowledge.

Third, the silence during the in-class writing period may indicate resistance on the part of the students due to their difficulty with abrupt shifts in the power structure of this class (where the teacher, moments before seen as the authoritative voice, suddenly shifts gears and asks for student input). One of the problems, noted by Freire (2000) in student-teacher relationships,

involves a pattern wherein the teacher owns the power of the class, making decisions for most class-related issues. In those classes, teachers are narrating subjects and students often are the patient, listening recipients. As discussed earlier, Myong's lecturing took around two thirds of the class, leaving only 15-20 minutes for the student writing time, during which he hoped to establish rapport with his students. When he asked his students to write their drafts after the long lecture, students were probably unconsciously aware of the dramatic change in power relationships: the passive recipients (students) suddenly became the agents of decision making involving their own writing. Thus, it is understandable that they felt bewilderment when Myong suddenly asked them to write their drafts right after his lecture. To be more specific, they appeared to find this difficult, and they may have felt somewhat resistant to suddenly taking on all the responsibilities for their essay writing, including the task of deciding on a topic and organizing the contents of their drafts.

Finally, the silence during the in-class writing activity may be interpreted as a sign of mistrust-in particular, the student participants' mistrust of Myong's expressed willingness to interact with them. Whereas some students tried to ease their discomfort with the silence by asking Myong routine questions, other students kept silent, expressing their skepticism about Myong's intentions. Harumi (2010) suggests that students are "likely to respond better to teachers who empathize with their use of silence" (Conclusion section, para. 1). However, due to his misunderstanding about his students' silent response strategies, Myong was not able during his lecture to express empathy with his students' silence. Unfortunately, this lack of response on Myong's part led to a situation where his students saw Myong's indifference to their use of silence. Underscoring this last point, if indirectly, Young even described Myong as a "one-sided kind of style" professor.

Most of all, it is worth emphasizing that, unfortunately, silence acted as a major hindrance to student learning. The student participants often suffered from confusion in understanding Myong's instructions about the critical essay they were expected to write. However, they generally kept their silence, avoiding the option of consulting either Myong or their peers. In this state, some participants (Blair, Christine, and James) even asked my help; even though Myong invited inquiries from them, they felt they could not turn to him for advice or help. Recall that Young was not aware that he could make use of Myong's help during the in-class writing activity.

### **Reasons for Failing to Establish Dialogue**

The participant students revealed the factors which influenced their decisions when they asked (or rather, decided not to ask) questions of Myong. These included the large number of students, the value of *Noon-chi*, respect for the professor's authority, past negative experiences with professors or teachers, concern over the low grade assigned to their drafts, individual personality factors, and misunderstandings between the teacher and the students. These factors will be reviewed here.

First, the large number of students was most often cited as the critical obstacle which made students uncomfortable interacting with Myong. Due to Myong's workload, the participants were reluctant to try to create a dialogue with him. Some participants (for example, Adam and Young) frequently mentioned that they did not expect to receive sophisticated written teacher feedback from this elective course.

Second, the cultural phenomenon of *Noon-chi* was also associated with the pervasive classroom silence. Pointing out the lack of acquaintances among students in the same classroom as a crucial factor, participants claimed that the classroom silence accelerated the effects of

*Noon-chi*. Introducing varied examples from their previous class experiences, the participant students suggested that this problem could be alleviated if some attempt were made to build intimacy among students.

Third, the classical notion of hierarchy involving the professor-student relationship also influenced the Korean participants' lack of involvement in seeking Myong's help with their revisions. The participants cited uncertainty about the cue signals from Myong, including his use of small talk; they also implied that they might find a professor more approachable if he or she shared more personal ideas and anecdotes. Bartlett (2005) explains that "conversation, laughter, expressions of concern" (p. 353) are the main approaches that informant educators used to offset their students' tension and frustration in the classroom; judging from the participants' comments, these strategies might help bridge the traditional distance between a professor and students in a Korean classroom.

Past negative teacher-student relationship experiences were a fourth factor that hindered participants from asking for Myong's help on their drafts. Though the instances were few, this study shows that even one, past unpleasant experience with a professor could exert a powerful influence even years after it had occurred. In a study of influence of a teacher's "caring" (Noddings, 2001) in an EFL writing class, Lee and Schaller (2008) suggested that "memories of past encounters" (p. 525) could influence students' levels of trust in a writing teacher, also affecting the students' learning. The results from this study underscore the potential importance of this factor.

As a fifth reason for their silence, the students counted the fact that Myong did not grade most of their drafts. In trying to interpret this, some of the participants (James, Dong-hwan, and Young) assumed that Myong did not value their writing. Thaiss and Zawacki (2006) explain that

“a teacher’s passion” (p. 117) for her students’ projects was “a significant contributing factor to the students’ ability to internalize disciplinary motives, goals, and genres” (p. 117). Unfortunately, students misinterpreted Myong’s attempt to decrease their writing anxiety as lack of interest, which led to their feeling de-motivated to seek teacher feedback.

As a sixth factor, some students (Christine and Young) pointed out their personality as a factor, which caused them to keep silent. In a multicultural classroom where students use their second language, Lee (2009) suggests that students often perceived “an introverted personality, such as shy, quiet, and reflective, etc., as a negative factor for participation” (Lee, 2009, p.151). Since Christine identified herself as shy and Young was a relatively quiet and serious student, these students may find it difficult to participate in class discussions. However, in this study, it appears that these students had difficulties even when they needed to ask the teacher for help or a question using their mother tongue.

Exacerbating most of these factors, and often leading to misunderstandings, was a last important factor, a pervasive sense of mistrust between Myong and the students. The student participants and Myong misinterpreted each other’s intentions on across a whole range of issues, as has been discussed repeatedly. Myong’s previous experiences appear to have influenced him to prejudge Korean students as passive, and as indifferent toward creating a dialogue with him. Unfortunately, in turn, when these beliefs, were reflected in a sarcastic joke in class, the students assumed that Myong was not interested in communicating with them. These results indicate that Myong and the students failed to build trusting relationships which caused various problems in students’ learning.

To cite just one more specific case, Myong believed that Korean students would feel uncomfortable if he approached them directly in order to comment on their drafts. But Young

claimed that it was Myong's responsibility to clearly articulate his intention to provide feedback. Once again, Myong's expectations and those of the students were divergent and led to lost opportunities at conversation.

The impact of the trust issues in teacher-student relationships in students' general learning have been discussed in many studies (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Kim, 2005; Lee, 2007; Roessingh, 2006). For example, Bryk and Schneider (2002) suggest that the "quality of school community member's trust relationships has been linked to school success" (p. 210). For students' better learning in reading education, Kim (2005) emphasizes that the caring element in teacher-student relationships helps to build trust through dialogue between the two parties. In a study of predictors of adolescent school adjustment, Lee (2007) also points out that a trusting relationship between a student and a teacher is a key predictor of the students' "school adjustment, academic motivation and performance" (p. 209). Roessingh (2006) also suggests that trust in a teacher was the key factor that influenced students' positive academic outcomes in an ESL high school program.

In the context of the present study, it is particularly helpful to refer to the work of Lee and Schaller (2008a, 2008b). In a Korean EFL English writing context, they found that the level of trust between a teacher and a student played a critical role in making teacher's comments effective on the students' drafts and in enhancing the students' learning (Lee & Schaller, 2008a). For example, a student who developed a high level of trust in his teacher showed improvement in most of his writing drafts. However, when another student lacked trust in his English teacher, his English writing learning was negatively impacted, partly due to his frequent rejection of the teacher's comments. On the writing teacher's part, she expressed enjoyment in making comments for the students who have stronger trust in her. In contrast, she expressed discomfort



when giving feedback to a student who had failed to build a trusting relationship with her, as she was uncertain if the student would regard her comment as useful. The authors suggest that trust is built by “reciprocal interactions” (Lee & Schaller, 2008a, p. 533), which involve a “complex interplay of reactions and responses mediated by the words in the drafts of the students and the teacher’s word in response” (Lee & Schaller, 2008b, p.179). Thus, student-teacher communications in the revision process seem to be a crucial constituent in the trust building relationship between the two parties.

### **A Further Note on Mutual Trust**

Lee and Schaller (2008a) emphasize that “it was not the teacher alone who could determine the quality of relationships she established with her students” (p. 531); rather, these relationships are affected by “the greater society and program context, the course, the teacher, and the students” (p. 531). This claim is valid for the current study, since many obstacles were found to be hindrances in establishing trust between the students and Myong, ranging from individual traits to broad cultural values. However, in the Korean culture where the professor’s authority still dominates student-teacher interactions, it may still be the teacher who holds the key to taking the first step in solving this vicious cycle of misunderstandings. For example, if Myong had been able to understand his students’ desires and intentions, the story of this English writing class might have been very different.

## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

#### Conclusions

This qualitative study has aimed to unpack the needs of Korean college students in a large scale English writing class and to explore the dynamics underlying various aspects of communication in the class, including the factors behind a pervasive pattern of student silence.

Among the findings and discussions presented earlier are the following:

- The participant students' perceived needs appear to have evolved toward greater awareness of the writing process throughout the course of the semester.
- Students were eager to have ways to express their immediate opinions about their class in ways that could lead to changes in their current class, rather than being applied in a future class.
- Some participants were resistant to express their needs at first, but when they were able to find someone willing to listen to their voices, they enjoyed the conversations.
- Among their stated needs, the participants repeatedly emphasized their most important need, i.e. their desire to converse with others about their drafts in terms of teacher or peer feedback.
- When students' varied expectations were not discussed and negotiated with their teacher, the mismatch appears to have created misunderstandings in both parties.
- The writing teacher's unstable status and heavy workload constituted major hindrances to his chances of providing precise teacher feedback.
- However, even with these environmental obstacles, the students successfully acquired many of Myong's teaching goals, as well as gaining some valuable literacy experience.

- Students experienced difficulties even when they needed to ask routine class questions.
- Student participants utilized differing communication channels according to their varied conversation topics.
- A mismatch in their favored communication approaches between student and teacher tended to cause much difficulty in their engagement.
- Due to the large number of students, student participants and the teacher were found to share differing perceptions about dialoguing with each other.
- There existed few places for the students to freely express their opinions and ask questions.
- The pervasive class silence during the lectures and the in-class writing activities indicated the level of communicative difficulties.
- Diverse class, socio-cultural, and other factors influenced the students' silences.
- The fact that the silence caused discomfort for most of participants, leading some to even try to break it, indicates their need to change this phenomenon.
- Mistrust, created by their misinterpretations of each others' willingness to engage, was one of the critical reasons for the pervasive student silence.

Based on these conclusions and results of this study, the following sections discuss suggestions for educators, directions for future research, and the limitations of this study, as well as providing a final section concerning my reflections of this study.

### **Implications and Suggestions**

Derived from the results and discussions of this study, several implications for English writing education in Korea are suggested from administrative and pedagogical points of view. These will be discussed in the sections below.

## **For Administrators of Korean Universities**

This section will present four suggestions for administrators in Korean universities relating to course offerings and adjunct teachers. Due to time and economic pressures, these suggestions cannot be easily or rapidly applied in the Korean education system. Nonetheless, even with the hindrances inherent in the system, these proposals need to receive considerable attention for the betterment of Korean university students' English writing development.

**Course offerings.** 1. Smaller class sizes for English writing courses should be provided to college students in Korea.

As the study results show, decreasing the number of students would allow teachers to provide better quality literacy education through more sophisticated teacher feedback and peer review. Also, since some of the participants found the large scale classes to be inferior to their K-12 classes, administrators may need to consider lowering class size in order to improve overall class quality throughout the educational system.

2. Students' differing writing goals and language proficiencies should be considered and a variety of English writing classes should be provided to accommodate student needs.

Students with little experience in Korean and English writing need to be taught using different instructional strategies and content than more advanced student writers. Thus, insightful discussions should be conducted between English writing educators and university administrators to create more diverse English writing courses based on differing student interests and language proficiencies.

3. Even with environmental constraints, English composition classes need to be regularly offered to Korean college students.

Despite the substantial constraints caused by the class size and the teacher workload,

participants still gained valuable literacy experiences which, without this class, would not have been possible. Thus, even when universities have difficulty offering varied English writing classes and struggle to solve the problems of class size and teacher workload, they need to continue providing English writing classes. However, given the possible problems and obstacles predicted from the study results, administrators in Korean universities should work to gradually improve conditions in the writing programs.

**The writing teacher's position.** 4. The unstable status of adjunct English writing teachers should be improved.

The study results found that the unstable status of writing educators considerably impeded the possibility of creating an effective class. In order to solve the difficulties of the teachers, Myong proposed two solutions that should be considered. One involves increasing the salary of writing instructors, so that they would not feel pressed to take on teaching appointments at multiple universities. Another possibility for dealing with the workload issue, suggested by Myong, is hiring graduate assistants to provide sophisticated teacher feedback. Even gradual steps in these directions could considerably enhance class quality and student satisfaction.

### **For English Literacy Educators**

Thirteen suggestions for English writing practitioners emerge from the findings of this study. These include:

1. Conducting dialogic needs assessments will foster a deeper and more insightful understanding of students' needs.

Students in the present study wanted to discuss their needs and desires in an ongoing assessment process (Benesch, 2001). It is worth noting that when a teacher shows her sincere intention to listen to student voices, students appear to be more likely to share their ideas with

the teacher.

2. After a teacher examines her students' perceived needs and wants, she needs to reflect upon them and modify the current writing class accordingly.

Freire (2000) speaks strongly about the need for two-way negotiation in education: "Any situation in which some individuals prevent others from engaging in the process of inquiry is one of violence. The means used are not important; to alienate human beings from their own decision-making is to change them into objects" (p. 85). As Freire also points out, the importance of dialogic needs analysis takes place in valuing the students' participation in the class decision-making process. Of course, this does not mean to suggest that a teacher should accept all student proposals. Rather, this study suggests that a teacher should invite students to discuss their needs, and should be prepared to modify the class as needed to better meet student needs. In particular, the instructor's willingness to listen and respond should be communicated clearly to students.

3. English writing educators should provide varied kinds of teacher and peer-feedback.

As shown by the results of this study, lack of teacher or peer feedback can cause many problems. Importantly, the students viewed teacher and peer feedback as constructive communication between them and Myong or their other classmates. They also felt that these activities would help to expand their thinking. In fact, when they did not receive adequate teacher feedback or feel able to communicate with the teacher, some students even failed to understand the requirements of their critical essay assignment.

4. Writing educators in Korea need to pay special attention to creating a dialogue with students.

As seen in this study, lack of communication appeared to have both hindered significant learning opportunities and created mistrust between the teacher and the students. Regular, open interaction could help each side overcome such difficulties by reconstructing trust and negotiating their varied understandings. This is a particularly important point in a Korean situation, where cultural factors sometimes work against open student-teacher communication.

5. The relationship between writing and grading is a delicate issue that must be worked out for each situation.

Myong expected that assigning fewer grades on drafts would reduce students' writing anxiety. However, students viewed this practice as a sign of indifference to their work. Educators should be more careful when they consider grading strategies, and should explain the motives behind their choices clearly to the students.

6. When an English writing educator wants to engage with her students, she may need to utilize various communication channels according to differing topics.

Korean participants divulged their favored communication approaches based on different conversation topics and goals. A teacher should think of utilizing these preferred student approaches, while combining them with the teacher's own chosen methods. Further, the instructor may sometimes need to use secure, anonymous methods so students will feel safe discussing their critical viewpoints.

7. In order to indicate her willingness to interact with her students, a writing teacher may need to provide certain cues for which Korean students are looking.

These cues, such as sharing small talk and personal stories, may look very minor and

sometimes may seem to be a waste of time. However, these signals, to which participants appear to be sensitive, tend to encourage them to approach their professors. The Korean students in this study spoke positively of professors who shared more of such conversations, since the students saw such professors as being ready to listen to their voices no matter how trivial the issue.

8. Writing teachers should provide affectively safe encounters.

For eliciting questions and suggestions, the approaches need to affectively support students. Since most participant students felt insecure asking questions in public, smaller zones, such as small group discussions, would allow them to candidly confirm and discuss their understandings and drafts. Also, anonymous approaches, such as blank cards and on-line bulletin boards, help students express their opinions without jeopardizing their grades.

9. Writing practitioners may need to build bonds among Korean students in order to avoid *Noon-chi* and promote active involvement.

Results indicate that, in part, student silence was caused by *Noon-chi*. This is a phenomenon unique to Korean students who feel uncomfortable when they publically engage with their professors, or are apprehensive of appearing self-centered, prideful, or obsequious. Thus, in order to help Korean students avoid *Noon-chi*, the participants suggest writing educators provide students with both time and space to encourage them to become better acquainted.

10. If a professor wants to interact with her students, it is suggested that she initiates conversations with them.

It was found that the professorial hierarchy still influenced many Korean student participants, which made them feel inappropriate and uncomfortable about approaching their professors first. This hierarchical relationship may have negative or positive aspects, but when this becomes an obstacle in building a meaningful relationship with her students, an educator



needs to elicit interactions from them. By doing so, the hindrances associated with the teacher as authority figure are expected to wane.

11. Providing writing samples can be effective for students learning a particular genre.

As participants and other researchers have suggested, reviewing other's writings or sample writing can be an effective springboard to understand how to write a target genre. In this manner, writing educators can guide their students to imitate the substance and organization of the model writings, instead of simply copying its phrases. Appropriate examples can provide students the opportunity to critically review other writings, which may help them envision a desirable final draft.

12. A teacher may need to reexamine and restore her trust in her students.

After years of bitter disappointments and unsuccessful experiences, sometimes a teacher can lose hope in the possibility of a meaningful student-teacher relationship. Unfortunately, students possess a remarkable ability to read this mistrust through the teacher's speech and body language. Complicating this situation is the teacher's difficulty in restoring her own belief after experiencing so many failures. However, it is important to point out again that the teacher is the only person who can initiate this positive restoration. Even though Myong assumed that his students were not ready to open their minds, as a matter of fact, some of them had wanted to communicate with him, if only they had known how.

### **Directions for Future Research**

As the results of this study suggest, researchers need to examine English writing classes in which a teacher practices dialogic needs analysis by discussing students' perceived needs and modifying her curriculum based on their discussions (Benesch, 1999, 2001). Due to various constraints, this study was not able to examine a class where a teacher conducted such an

analysis. The reactions, views and behaviors of Korean university students as they participate in such a class, as well as the results of applying this approach, need to be investigated.

More attentive studies should be conducted about the relationship between Korean and English literacy practices, because results indicate that students' lack of experience in L1 writing education may negatively affect their L2 literacy learning. Through a deeper understanding of the two literacy practices and their possible interrelationships, such studies are expected to help literacy educators gain more insight into the writing development of Korean university students.

Studies on oral-literate connections through dialogic writing practices in English writing classes may need to be conducted in EFL settings. More specifically, the main foci could be placed on the functions of dialogic interactions in the pre-writing and revision processes. The Korean participant students in this study wanted to expand their ideas, in part, by receiving feedback on their drafts through various kinds of dialogic interactions, such as communication via written teacher feedback and conferencing with teachers or peers. The ways in which students learn English writing through these dialogic activities needs to be investigated to promote better literacy development for Korean students. Overall, such investigations are expected to nurture a deeper understanding of how to provide more meaningful and effective English writing experiences.

Researchers can examine ways to restructure English writing classes in ways that are suitable for the Korean cultural and educational context. Many teaching approaches have failed when educators have applied Western pedagogy directly to Eastern or other cultural teaching contexts with lack of awareness or understanding of the cultural contexts (Gore, 1993). You (2004) has emphasized the important differences in English writing instruction in China and North America, suggesting the development of more holistic English writing courses to

incorporate elements of Chinese style in English writing. In contrast, Myong's writing practice and values were mostly drawn from American academic writing. These practices varied greatly from Korean literacy practices. Korean English writing education may need to develop its own practices, in line with the needs of Korean students and their culture.

Along the same line, the role of the teacher in the English writing class also needs to be examined for a Korean educational context. It is a healthy pedagogical approach to help students feel empowered by inviting them to make writing decisions. However, if this is achieved in abrupt ways with limited teacher guidance or explanation (as Myong did in his class), students may feel uncomfortable and even confused. In her study exploring Chinese students' perceptions and attitudes on Western composition practices in China, He (2009) emphasizes that Western writing practices, such as peer review, should be introduced gradually considering Chinese students' teacher-centered culture and their discomfort in giving personal feedback on peer's drafts. Korean students feel similarly overwhelmed when given too much freedom and power in an English writing class. To mitigate these gaps, a teacher should guide students to progressively gain comfort and agency. Transporting Western values to Eastern classroom contexts can be challenging, forcing students to transition into unfamiliar circumstances which inhibit their learning.

There is a need to investigate ways to engage Korean students in conversation about their drafts in large scale English writing classes. As Wong (2006) suggests, dialogic interaction is possible when English literacy educators have a good understanding of their students' individual perspectives and needs. Writing instruction in Korea needs to consider two important factors: the students' limited English and Korean writing instruction in K-12; and Korean students' favoring of personal or small group conversation.

In order to decrease the gap between national policy and classroom cultural reality, future researchers need to re-envision English writing education in Korea. There exists a large disparity between actual classroom practices and the 7th national curriculum of the Korean government that defines goals to increase students' literacy development such as communicative competence in writing and speaking in English. Due to conflicts between official statements and classroom reality, most of the government's goals in English literacy education have barely been achieved. Moreover, Korean students come to experience severe difficulties from this disparity, as university education suddenly forces them to write and speak English in their classes in the name of national survival in the international community. Even though it would be ideal to achieve a perfect match between education policy and reality, policy makers must value their own culture when creating their educational goals and policies (Gorsuch, 2001).

I also want to examine how the stability of a teacher's position can empower the writing teacher and affect his teaching. In this study, Myong's economic instability as an untenured part-time professor decreased his ability to invest time and effort into the class, preventing him from creating an effective writing class. Although Myong has achieved economic and emotional stability by receiving a tenure track position since the completion of the study, it should be kept in mind that a teacher whose position is uncertain and whose teaching load is likely to be very heavy may face problems in implementing sound pedagogical ideas. Therefore, future research might focus on both tenured and untenured instructors, to gain better insights into the effects of the instructor's position on his or her teaching.

More qualitative studies should be conducted through class observation, and the practice of classroom observation should be encouraged in Korea. Unfortunately, when I began this study, I found that some Korean teachers felt insecure and uncomfortable about opening their classes to

researchers. This is understandable, since they may have felt vulnerable, or that such observations might lead to negative evaluations of their teaching. However, even for a teacher's teaching development, mutual understanding may need to be nurtured so that both teachers and researchers understand that classroom observations aim not to critique a teacher but rather to learn from and with her. Fortunately, Myong agreed to help me with my research by sharing his experiences and his writing class. However, it would be advisable for studies like the present one to become more common and more widely welcomed in Korea so that a better picture of university writing classes can be drawn.

### **Limitations of This Study**

By including only Korean university students, this study's conclusions cannot be generalized, either to students from other cultures, or even to Korean students at other institutions or at the secondary education level in Korea. However, these results might help suggest insights that could be applied to understand Korean students more broadly, since these do share similar sociocultural, economical, and educational backgrounds. Therefore, it is suggested that the findings of this study should be interpreted and transferred to other Korean students with considerable caution.

Another limitation with this study is related to the examining tools. This qualitative study made use of ethnographic interviews, class observations, researchers' notes, and participants' final essays, trying to interpret them in a larger frame with a great caution to avoid subjective interpretation of the data. However the interviews were subject to some technical difficulties. For instance, sometimes the voice recording was difficult to retrieve due to the quality of the digital voice recording. During the second interview with Christine, some information was left out as the recorder had automatically turned off. In such cases, it is noted that follow up

interviews were conducted by emails and phone calls with the participants in order to recover the unrecorded information.

All three rounds of interviews were conducted in Korean, which was the choice of the eight participants. Translation was done through a series of discussions with the other two reviewers and confirmed by participant review. Also, I consulted a Korean and English bilingual educator to check the accuracy of the translated data where necessary. However, there may be a possibility that some nuances of meaning may have been lost in translation, particularly when the English words chosen may not have carried the full set of connotations of the Korean terms used by the participants.

### **Researcher Reflections**

What I have learned most through the process of conducting this study is that I need to deepen my belief in dialoging for the betterment of teaching and learning. This study had begun from my past experience, which had helped me to see the possibility of creating meaningful interactions with my students and understanding their need to communicate with their professors. While preparing the data collection, I was able to confirm these insights, since both the students and teacher suffered from the prevailing lack of communication in the course being studied.

This study has had a recursive influence on my teaching and practice of dialogic needs analysis. During the study, I taught another class which allowed me to confirm my belief in these assessments. As soon as I discovered that the class was comprised of non-traditional students, whose ages ranged from the late twenties to the middle fifties, I felt a tremendous need to change my syllabus. Even though I felt frustrated and hesitant to engage with them, I tried to believe in the students' wishes to communicate with me. Through my efforts to discern their perceived needs and difficulties, I made modifications based on our semester-long discussions. As a result,

these dialogues became valuable and unforgettable memories, as well as providing me with understandings about these students. I must say that these pleasant and magical experiences became one of the driving forces which strengthened my ability to finish this dissertation.

In the process of data analysis, when I listened to the first recorded audio files, I realized that I am the one who, literally, still needs to listen to students' voices. As I listened, I was both surprised and annoyed whenever I found myself talking longer than the participants or interrupting them. This was one of the bitter but important lessons that I gained from the process of this study. As a result, when I had later interviews with my participants I eventually developed a new habit. I would simply put my index finger on my lips whenever I was listening to interesting statements from the participants.

As I wrote about the implications and suggestions in this chapter, I reminded myself repeatedly to trust in my future students. As a dedicated professor, who has been teaching English for over 15 years in Korea, the example of Myong's issues of mistrust attests to the idea that these problems can happen to any teacher, even the most well-intentioned. This will serve as a reminder to continually renew my faith in engaging with students. Thus, whenever I find myself feeling doubts or skepticism, I will remind myself what my participants have taught me through this long journey.

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## Appendix A

### Syllabus of Movie English for Writing

**2009 Fall**

**Green University**

#### Movie English for Writing

**Professor:** Myong

**Contact:** [000000000@hotmail.com](mailto:000000000@hotmail.com)

(If you have any questions, please contact me only via e-mail. Calls from unknown and unidentified numbers will never be answered. Sending an e-mail is the surest way to get in touch with me. All of your inquiries will be answered in less than 24 hours. So don't call me please !!!)

**Time** (2 hours a week) : Thursday (Class 01, 02) 09:00~10:50, 11:00 ~ 12:50

Friday (Class 03, 04) 14:00 ~ 15:50, 16:00~17:50

**Textbook :** Movie English for Writing 2009 Spring      Author: Myong

**Movies :** A (1995)  
B (2004, 2005)

#### **Purpose :**

This course aims at (1) teaching students to have some necessary skills for writing in English, (2) increasing students' vocabulary & grammatical knowledge needed for English writing, (3) having students memorize useful expressions frequently used in various kinds of English writings, and (4) giving students as many chances as possible to write different kinds of English writings.

#### **Structure :**

Warm-Up (Vocabulary, Idiomatic Phrases, Routines etc.)  
Movie Watching (Selected Segments)  
Script Reading (Some Necessary Parts)  
Lecture (Genre Explanations, Structure etc.)  
Wrap-Up (Reviews of Vocabulary, Grammar, Useful Expressions)  
Questions & Answers  
Practice Writing  
Submission

#### **Grading Policy :**

Attendance : 20 % (-2 for 1 absence, -1 for being late, -3 for anyone who ruins the atmosphere of the class)  
There will be also -1 deduction with 'absence' for negligence)

Mid-Term Exam : 40 % (Exam: 28% + Practice Writing : 12 %)

Final Exam : 40 % (Exam: 28% + Practice Writing: 12%)

This is subject to change.

**\*NOTICE :** Every student is supposed to submit 'the practice writing' at the end of the class. The marks on these writings will be counted as big part of his exam. So, students should show their interest and efforts on their writings. The scale for these writing goes on the scale from 0 to 3. (0: nothing, 1: poor, 2: ordinary, 3: better than ordinary or

excellent)

### **Syllabus**

Week 1: Orientation, Initial Assessment(Questionnaire), Movie Watching  
Week 2: Skills for English Writing, Writing Practice  
Week 3: Unit 1  
Week 4: Unit 2  
Week 5: Unit 3  
Week 6: Unit 4  
Week 7: Unit 5  
Week 8: Mid-Term Exam  
Week 9: Movie Watching  
Week 10: Unit 6  
Week 11: Unit 7  
Week 12: Unit 8  
Week 13: Unit 9  
Week 14: Unit 10, Closing Assessment (Questionnaire)  
Week 15: Final Exam

\* This syllabus is subject to change.

\* Students are strongly advised to use the writing sheets as an appendix at the end of the textbook. Students are supposed to write their names and numbers on it. Students also have to submit their practice writings if they want to get some marks. Content, length, organization and above all their zeal will be considered. If students use other sheets, they might get disadvantaged a little on their attitude for the reason of negligence or indifference etc.

## Appendix B

### Myong's Pre-needs assessment (Korean)

#### ※ 2009-2 "0000" 수업진행을 위한 사전설문

이 설문조사는 향후 수업에 반영할 자료로 사용될 것입니다. 성의 있게 답변해 주십시오. 본 설문 조사는 연구목적으로 사용될 수 있습니다. 개인의 정보는 절대 노출되지 않으며, 답안을 작성하시면 연구목적으로 사용되는 일에 동의하시는 것으로 간주됩니다.

학년: 학과(부): 성별: 남·여

1. 당신의 영어 수준은?

- 1) basic (lower) 2) basic (upper) 3) intermediate (lower)  
4) intermediate (upper) 5) advanced

2. 스크린 영어 과목(영화이용, 미국 드라마, 시트콤, 뉴스 등의 강의)을 수강해 본 적이 있으십니까?  
(대학, 사설 학원 포함)

1) 예 2) 아니오

3. 영화 작문 과목을 왜 신청하셨습니까? (두 개 선택 가능)

- 1) 영화 작문 과목이 영어 글쓰기에 도움이 되기 때문에  
2) 영화 작문 과목이 토플 등의 시험이나 유학에 도움이 될 것이기에  
3) 영화 작문 과목이 취업 준비에 많이 도움이 될 것이기 때문에  
4) 관심이 있었지만 수강할 기회를 못 가지다 개설이 되었기 때문에  
5) 시간표 작성 상 선택의 여지가 없었기 때문에

6) 수업할 때 영화를 보는 게 재미있고 지루하지 않을 것 같아서

4. 평소에 미국 영화나 드라마, 또는 원어로 방송되는 프로그램을 자주 또는 가끔이라도 시청하십니까?

1) 예 2) 아니오

4-1. 4 번에서 1)에 답변한 경우, 주로 무엇을 보십니까? 골라 보십시오. (두 개 가능)

- 1) 영미권의 영화 2) 미국 드라마 3) CNN 등의 뉴스 4) 토크 쇼  
5) 시트콤 6) 케이블의 영어 연예뉴스 7) 퀴즈 쇼나 게임 쇼

8) 그 외 \_\_\_\_\_ (무엇이든 좋습니다. 써 주세요.)

5. 영화 작문이 여타의 스크린 관련 영어 과목과 차별성이 있을 거라 생각하십니까?

1) 예 2) 아니오

5-1. 5 번에서 1)로 대답한 경우, 그 이유는 무엇입니까?

- 1) 영화의 사용 방법이 여타 스크린 관련 영어 과목과 다를 것이다.  
2) 매시간 영작 과제가 많을 것 같고 그에 따른 평가가 이루어질 것이다.  
3) 영화를 통해 배우는 것이 듣기, 말하기가 아닌 작문이란 것이 새롭다.  
4) 말보다 글로 된 영어를 배우는 것이 다를 것이다.

5) 그 외 \_\_\_\_\_ (무엇이든 좋으니 써 주세요.)

6. 영화 작문 수업이 다음 중 어느 것 중심으로 나가기를 원하십니까?

- 1) 단문표현위주 암기와 연습 2) 논리적 흐름에 맞는 글을 쓰는 연습  
3) 문법에 맞는 정확한 문장 쓰기 4) 학술적 논문이나 비평 써보기

7. 영화 작문 과목을 들으면서 본인이 얻고자 하는 것은 무엇입니까?

- 1) 영화장면에서 쓰이는 표현을 접하면서 실생활 영어 표현을 학습

- 2) 미국인들의 생활상과 문화를 간접적으로 경험하기
- 3) 현지인들의 생생한 발음을 익히면서 리스닝 실력 늘리기
- 4) 대화하는 장면을 보고 영어 대화를 잘하는 전략을 배우기
- 5) 영어로 글을 써보는 기회를 가급적 많이 가져보기
- 6) 다른 이유 : \_\_\_\_\_

8. 대학 입학 전(신입생만 해당, 입시를 위한 과외, 학원수업 등은 제외), 후 영어를 배웠다면 어디에서 얼마나 배우셨습니까? (대학수업 제외)

- 1) 학원에서(교내 특강 포함) - 기간
- 2) 개인교습 - 기간
- 3) 어학연수 - 기간 나라:

9-1. 위의 학습 기관에서 영어 공부를 한 후 효과가 있었다고 생각하십니까? 예, 아니오로 답해 주십시오.

1) 예 2) 아니오

10. 현재본인이 영어를 학습하는데 부진하시다면, 그 이유가 무엇이라고 생각하십니까?

- 1)내 자신의 문제: 게으름, 나태, 노느라고, 성격문제 등등
- 2)다른 일로 너무 바빠서 시간이 없기 때문
- 3)영어를 사용할 수 있는 환경이 없기 때문
- 4)해도 지속적이지 않으면 소용이 없는 것 같아서
- 5)기초를 잘 못 잡아 이젠 따라가기 너무 어려워서
- 6)열심히 하고자 했으나 어학이 적성에 안 맞고 재미가 없어서
- 7)마음에 드는 강의나 강사, 또는 교재가 없어서
- 8)영어에 관심이 없어 안 하다 보니 이젠 어떻게 할 수가 없어서
- 9)영어에 관련해서 너무 안 좋은 기억이 있어서 (영어선생님 등)
- 10) 다른 이유: \_\_\_\_\_

11. 만약 본인이 영어 학습에 관심이 있다면 주로 이용하는 교재는 무엇입니까?

- 1) 영상매체 2) 영미문학작품 3) 시사잡지나 신문 4) 토익, 토플 교재
- 5) 팝송 등 6) 패션 잡지 7) 그 외 \_\_\_\_\_

13. 본인이 영화 작문을 가르치는 교수라면 무엇을 가르치고 싶으십니까? 성의껏 기술해 주시기 바랍니다.

14. 앞으로 수업 진행을 위한 기타 건의 사항을 써 주세요.

※ 수고하셨습니다. 감사합니다.

## Appendix C

### Myong's Pre-needs assessment (English)

This survey will be used for the needs assessment for designing writing classes in the future. The information obtained in the study may be published in academic journals or presented at scientific meetings, but your identity will be kept strictly confidential and your name remains anonymous. If you agree to conduct this study, please answer this survey.

Year:

Major:

Gender:

1. How would you estimate your English language proficiency?

1) Basic (lower) 2) Basic (upper) 3) Intermediate (lower) 4) Intermediate (upper) 5) Advanced

2. Have you ever taken any of screen English classes such as using movies, drama, sitcoms, and news (including universities and private institutes)?

1) Yes 2) No

3. Why do you take this "English Writing through movies" class? (You can choose multiple answers)

1) I think this class can be helpful in learning English writing.

2) I think this class can be helpful in preparing some tests such as TOEFL and study abroad.

3) I think this class can be helpful in preparing job searching.

4) I was interested in taking this class and finally can enroll this class.

5) I just took this class because I did not have choice in scheduling this semester.

6) I think it will be interesting to watch movies in class.

4. Are you watching movies, dramas, and any TV programs in English?

1) Yes 2) No

4-1. If you answer Yes to the number 4, choose the programs that you watch. (You can choose multiple answers)

1) Movies 2) Dramas 3) News programs such as CNN 4) Talk shows 5) Sitcoms 6) Entertainment news 7) Quiz or game shows 8) Others (\_\_\_\_\_)

5. Do you think there are some differences between English Writing through movies and other movie related classes?

1) Yes 2) No

5-1. If you say yes to the number 5, choose the reason.

1) Usage of movies in the classes will be different with other movie related classes.

2) I expect that this class will have many assignments and will be graded based on the assignments.

3) It will be interesting to learn English writing through movies.

4) It will be different to learn spoken language with written language.

5) Others (\_\_\_\_\_)

6. What do you expect learn from this class?

1) writing and learning short sentences 2) practicing logical writing 3) writing practice with good grammatical sentences 4) writing academic essay and critics

7. What do you want to learn from this class?

1) I want to learn daily life expressions through movies.

2) I want to experience daily lives and culture of American people.

3) I want to develop listening skills learning correct pronunciations in movies.

4) I want to learn conversational strategies through the movies.

5) I want to have many experiences in writing in English.

6) Others (\_\_\_\_\_)

8. If you learn English before (for the freshmen: except personal tutoring and private institutions for *SueNung*)/ after enter this university (except the course in this university), choose the places where you learn English.

1) private language institutions : How long?

2) personal tutoring: How long?



3) language institutions in abroad: country/ How long?

9-1. Do think it was successful in learning English for you? (Yes/ No)

1) Yes

2) No

10. If you feel that it was not successful for you to learn English, what do you choose for the reason?

1) personal issues such as laziness, not interested in learning English, and personal characteristics

2) I was too busy to learn English

3) I do not have any places to use English.

4) I feel it is not effective since I cannot learn English for a long period. (VVV)

5) I do not have basic proficiencies to learn English.

6) I am not interested in learning language and it is boring.

7) I could not find good language teachers and textbooks.

8) I was not interested in learning English before and now I gave up.

9) I have bad experiences regarding learning English (such as English language teacher)

10) Others (\_\_\_\_\_)

11. If you are learning English now, what kind of texts are you using now?

1) movie clips    2) classic literatures    3) news magazines and news papers    4) TOEIC/TOEFL  
textbooks    5) pop songs    6) fashion magazines    7) others (\_\_\_\_\_)

**12. What do you want to teach if you are a writing teacher?**

13. Any suggestions for this class?

Thank you!!

## Appendix D

### Student Contact Information Form (Korean)

#### 학생 연락처

여러분이 이 연구에 참여자로 참여하시기를 원하신다면, 다음에 여러분의 이름과 연락처를 적어주세요:

이름:

학과:

연락처 (전화 혹은 이메일, 혹은 둘다):

어떻게 연락하는 것이 좋으십니까?

연락 받기 좋은 시간이 있다면, 언제입니까?  
(원하는 시간에 맞춰 연락을 하겠습니다.)

#### 연구자 연락처

연구자: 김소연

연락처: 문의사항은 000000@hanmail.net 으로 연락주세요.

## **Appendix E**

### **Student Contact Information Form (English)**

**If you are willing to be contacted as an interview participant in this study, please provide your name and contact information here:**

**Name:**

**Contact (phone, email, or both)**

**What is the best way to contact you?**

**Are there days and times when it is better to contact you?**

#### **Contact information of the researcher**

**Name: Soyeon Kim**

**If you have any questions or inquiries, please feel free to contact via [ooo@hanmail.net](mailto:ooo@hanmail.net)**

## Appendix F

### The Informed Consent Form (Participant students\_ Korean)

여러분은 다음과 같은 제목의 연구에 초대되었습니다: “한국 학생들과 그들의 작문 교사의 작문수업에 대한 필요와 절충 연구” 여러분이 이 연구에 참여를 할 것 인지, 아닌지를 결정하는 것을 돕기 위해서, 이 연구에서 다루는 내용을 알려드리겠습니다. 질문이 있다면, 지체 없이 질문을 해 주세요.

이 연구의 목적은 작문 수업과 그 밖에서의 교사와 학생들을 연구하는 것 입니다. 또한 이 수업이 진행되는 방법에 대한 연구가 포함되어 있습니다. 다음과 같은 부분에 참여를 해 주시기를 부탁드립니다:

여러분은 3번의 인터뷰를 하게 될 것 입니다. 인터뷰들은 녹음이 될 것 입니다. 3번의 인터뷰는 60분 정도 진행되며, 모두 문서화 될 것 입니다. 여러분은 제가 이 내용을 맞게 기록했는지를 확인 하게 될 것 입니다. 인터뷰를 위한 시간과 장소는 여러분의 편의에 따라 정해질 것 입니다. 연구자는 작문수업에 들어가 수업을 참관 할 것 입니다. 저와 나누는 일상대화 일지라도, 대화가 연구에 관련이 되어 있다면, 여러분의 동의 하에 그 내용들은 이 연구에 포함이 될 것 입니다. 마지막으로 수업에서 한 활동 자료, 저와 교사에게 보낸 이메일, 문자 등이 있다면, 이들을 연구에 쓸 수 있도록 여러분의 동의를 구할 수 있습니다.

여러분의 이 연구에 대한 참여는 자발적입니다. 여러분은 연구자나 연구 기관과의 관계에 영향을 주지 않고, 언제든지 연구에 참여 의사를 취소 할 수 있습니다. 이러한 결정은 여러분이 기존에 가지고 있던 여러 혜택에 영향을 주지 않을 것 입니다. 연구 참여를 취소 한다면, 여러분에 대한 모든 정보는 파기될 것 입니다. 만약 이 연구에 참여하기로 결정한다면, 여러분의 정보들은 비밀이 보장될 것 이며, 여러분이 학교에서 받는 서비스나 성적에 영향을 주지 않을 것 입니다. 여러분이 제공한 정보는 다른 참여자의 정보와 비교하여 사용될 것 입니다. 이 연구는 학술 저널에 출판되거나 학회에서 발표가 될 수 있으나, 여러분의 신분은 철저히 비밀에 부쳐질 것 이며, 이름은 익명으로 남을 것 입니다. 이 연구로 인한 알려진 위험은 없습니다.

만약 이 연구에 참여할 의사가 있다면, 다음 동의서에 서명을 해 주십시오. 사인을 하지 않은 동의서를 가져가세요.

협조에 감사 드립니다.

혹시 연구에 대한 질문이 있으시다면, 다음의 연락처로 지도교수님이나 저에게 언제든지 연락을 해주십시오.

지도교수  
**Dr. Jeannine Fontaine**  
영문과 부교수  
**347, Sutton Hall, 1011 South Drive**  
**Indiana University of Pennsylvania,**  
**Indiana, PA 15705 (주소)**  
**전화: 724-357-2457**  
**이메일: jfontain@iup.edu**

연구자  
김소연  
**Composition and TESOL**  
**1213 Church Street**  
**Indiana, PA 15701 (주소)**  
**전화: (010)7410-2207**  
**이메일: cxsl@iup.edu**

이 연구는 Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects에 의해 승인 되었습니다. (Phone: 724/357-7730).

**Informed Consent Form (Focal participants) (continued)- Korean translation**

연구 동의서:

나는 문서에 있는 내용을 모두 읽고 이해했으며, 이 연구에 연구 대상자가 되는 것을 동의합니다. 나는 나에 관한 모든 정보가 모두 비밀이 보장되며, 언제든지 취소할 수 있는 권한이 있음을 알고 있습니다. 나는 서명되지 않은 동의서를 받았습니다.

이름 \_\_\_\_\_

서명 \_\_\_\_\_

날짜 \_\_\_\_\_

나는 위에 명시된 사람에게 이 연구의 목적, 연구로 인해 발생 될 수 있는 혜택, 위험을 설명해 주었고, 발생한 모든 질문에 대답을 하였으며, 서명하는 자리에 있었음을 증명합니다.

\_\_\_\_\_  
날짜

연구자 서명:

## Appendix G

### The Informed Consent Form (Participant students\_English)

You are invited to participate in this research study entitled: “Dynamics under the silence: Exploration of needs and negotiations between Korean students and their writing teacher” The following information is provided in order to help you to make an informed decision whether or not to participate. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask.

The goal of this study is to explore dynamics and relationships of students and the teacher in and out of this writing class. Also, it aims to understand the ways of this writing class work. I am asking for your participation in the following areas:

You will be expected to participate in 3 interviews. The initial and follow up interviews will be tape recorded. The three interviews will be about 60 minutes’ long and the interviews will be transcribed. You will have chance to read the transcriptions, to make sure that I have recorded your statements correctly. The time and place for the interviews will be decided at your convenience. I will come to your class and observe the class sessions. Also, sometimes when we talk casually, if you allow me, I will include some of what is said in these conversations in my study. Finally, I may ask you to share some artifacts with me, such as outcomes from classroom activities, emails, and text messages exchanged with the teacher. In all cases, these will only be materials that you volunteer to share with me.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to decide not to participate in this study or to withdraw at any time without adversely affecting your relationship with the investigators or the institution. Your decision will not result in any loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you choose to participate, all information will be held in strict confidence and will have no bearing on your academic standing or services you receive from the University. Any use of information you provide in this study will be considered in combination with those from other participants. The information obtained in the study may be published in academic journals or presented at scientific meetings, but your identity will be kept strictly confidential and your name remains anonymous. There is no known risk associated with this research.

If you choose not to participate, you can read quietly during the time.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the director of the study or me at the following addresses:

**Project Director:**  
**Dr. Fontaine**  
Associate Professor, English Department,  
347, Sutton Hall, 1011 South Drive  
Indiana University of Pennsylvania,  
Indiana, PA 15705  
Tel. 724-357-2457  
E-mail: jfontain@iup.edu

**OR**

**The Principle Investigator:**  
**Soyeon Kim**  
PhD. Candidate in Composition  
and TESOL  
1213 Church Street  
Indiana, PA 15701  
Tel. (010)7410-2207  
E-mail: cxsl@iup.edu

**This project has been approved by the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (Phone: 724/357-7730).**

**Informed Consent Form (Focal participants) (continued)**

**VOLUNTARY CONSENT FORM:**

I have read and understand the information on the form and I consent to volunteer to be a subject in this study. I understand that my responses are completely confidential and that I have the right to withdraw at any time. I have received an unsigned copy of this informed Consent Form to keep in my possession.

**Name (PLEASE PRINT)**

**Signature**

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone number or email address**

**Best days and times to reach you** \_\_\_\_\_

I certify that I have explained to the above individual the nature and purpose, the potential benefits, and possible risks associated with participating in this research study, have answered any questions that have been raised, and have witnessed the above signature.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**Investigator's Signature**

## Appendix H

### The Informed Consent Form (Teacher participant\_Korean)

교수님은 다음과 같은 제목의 연구에 초대되었습니다: “한국 학생들과 그들의 작문 교사의 작문수업에 대한 필요와 절충 연구” 여러분이 이 연구에 참여를 할 것 인지, 아닌지를 결정하는 것을 돕기 위해서, 이 연구에서 다루는 내용을 알려드리겠습니다. 질문이 있다면, 지체 없이 질문을 해 주세요.

이 연구의 목적은 작문 수업과 그 밖에서의 교사와 학생들을 연구하는 것 입니다. 또한 이 수업이 진행되는 방법에 대한 연구가 포함되어 있습니다. 다음과 같은 부분에 참여를 해 주시기를 부탁드립니다:

교수님은 3번의 인터뷰를 하게 될 것 입니다. 인터뷰들은 녹음이 될 것 입니다. 3번의 인터뷰는 60분 정도 진행되며, 모두 문서화 될 것 입니다. 교수님은 제가 이 내용을 맞게 기록했는지를 확인 하게 될 것 입니다. 인터뷰를 위한 시간과 장소는 교수님의 편의에 따라 정해질 것 입니다. 연구자는 작문수업에 들어가 수업을 참관 할 것 입니다. 저와 나누는 일상대화 일지라도, 대화가 연구에 관련이 되어 있다면, 교수님의 동의 하에 그 내용들은 이 연구에 포함이 될 것 입니다. 마지막으로 수업에서 한 활동 자료, 저와 학생에게 보낸 이메일, 문자 등이 있다면, 이들을 연구에 쓸 수 있도록 교수님의 동의를 구할 수 있습니다.

교수님의 이 연구에 대한 참여는 자발적입니다. 교수님은 연구자나 연구 기관과의 관계에 영향을 주지 않고, 언제든지 연구에 참여 의사를 취소 할 수 있습니다. 이러한 결정은 교수님이 기존에 가지고 있던 여러 혜택에 영향을 주지 않을 것 입니다. 연구 참여를 취소 한다면, 여러분에 대한 모든 정보는 파기될 것 입니다. 만약 이 연구에 참여하기로 결정한다면, 교수님의 정보들은 비밀이 보장될 것 이며, 교수님이 학교에서 받는 서비스에 영향을 주지 않을 것 입니다. 여러분이 제공한 정보는 다른 참여자의 정보와 비교하여 사용될 것 입니다. 이 연구는 학술 저널에 출판되거나 학회에서 발표가 될 수 있으나, 교수님의 신분은 철저하게 비밀에 부쳐질 것 이며, 이름은 익명으로 남을 것 입니다. 이 연구로 인한 알려진 위험은 없습니다.

만약 이 연구에 참여할 의사가 있다면, 다음 동의서에 서명을 해 주십시오. 사인을 하지 않은 동의서를 가져가세요.

협조에 감사 드립니다.

혹시 연구에 대한 질문이 있으시다면, 다음의 연락처로 지도교수님이나 저에게 언제든지 연락을 해주십시오.

지도교수  
**Dr. Jeannine Fontaine**  
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**347, Sutton Hall, 1011 South Drive**  
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연구자  
김소연  
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**1213 Church Street**  
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**전화: (010)7410-2207**  
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이연구는 Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects에 의해 승인 되었습니다. (Phone: 724/357-7730).



**Informed Consent Form (The teacher participant) (continued)- Korean translation**

연구 동의서:

나는 문서에 있는 내용을 모두 읽고 이해했으며, 이 연구에 연구 대상자가 되는 것을 동의합니다. 나는 나에 관한 모든 정보가 모두 비밀이 보장되며, 언제라도 취소할 수 있는 권한이 있음을 알고 있습니다. 나는 서명되지 않은 동의서를 받았습니다.

이름 \_\_\_\_\_

서명 \_\_\_\_\_

날짜 \_\_\_\_\_

나는 위에 명시된 사람에게 이 연구의 목적, 연구로 인해 발생 될 수 있는 혜택, 위험을 설명해 주었고, 발생한 모든 질문에 대답을 하였으며, 서명하는 자리에 있었음을 증명합니다.

\_\_\_\_\_  
날짜

연구자 서명:

## Appendix I

### The Informed Consent Form (teacher participant\_English)

You are invited to participate in this research study entitled: “Dynamics under the silence: Exploration of needs and negotiations between Korean students and their writing teacher” The following information is provided in order to help you to make an informed decision whether or not to participate. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask.

The goal of this study is to explore dynamics and relationships of students and the teacher in and out of this writing class. Also, it aims to understand the ways of this writing class work. I am asking for your participation in the following areas:

You will be expected to participate in 3 interviews. The initial and follow up interviews will be tape recorded. The three interviews will be about 60 minutes’ long and the interviews will be transcribed. You will have chance to read the transcriptions, to make sure that I have recorded your statements correctly. The time and place for the interviews will be decided at your convenience. I will come to your class and observe the class sessions. Also, sometimes when we talk casually, if you allow me, I will include some of what is said in these conversations in my study. Finally, I may ask you to share some artifacts with me, such as outcomes from classroom activities, emails, and text messages exchanged with students. In all cases, these will only be materials that you volunteer to share with me.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to decide not to participate in this study or to withdraw at any time without adversely affecting your relationship with the investigators or the institution. Your decision will not result in any loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Upon your request to withdraw, all information pertaining to you will be destroyed. If you choose to participate, all information will be held in strict confidence and will have no bearing on services you receive from the University. Any use of information you provide in this study will be considered in combination with those from other participants. The information obtained in the study may be published in academic journals or presented at scientific meetings, but your identity will be kept strictly confidential and your name remains anonymous. There is no known risk associated with this research. If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign the statement below. Take the extra unsigned copy with you.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the director of the study or me at the following addresses:

**Project Director:**  
**Dr. Fontaine**  
Associate Professor, English Department,  
347, Sutton Hall, 1011 South Drive  
Indiana University of Pennsylvania,  
Indiana, PA 15705  
Tel. 724-357-2457  
E-mail: jfontain@iup.edu

**OR**

**The Principle Investigator:**  
**Soyeon Kim**  
PhD. Candidate in Composition  
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Tel. (010)7410-2207  
E-mail: cxsl@iup.edu

**This project has been approved by the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (Phone: 724/357-7730).**

**Informed Consent Form (the teacher participant) (continued)**

**VOLUNTARY CONSENT FORM:**

I have read and understand the information on the form and I consent to volunteer to be a subject in this study. I understand that my responses are completely confidential and that I have the right to withdraw at any time. I have received an unsigned copy of this informed Consent Form to keep in my possession.

**Name (PLEASE PRINT)**

**Signature**

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone number or email address**

**Best days and times to reach you** \_\_\_\_\_

I certify that I have explained to the above individual the nature and purpose, the potential benefits, and possible risks associated with participating in this research study, have answered any questions that have been raised, and have witnessed the above signature.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**Investigator's Signature**

## Appendix J

### Structure of Movie English for Writing

Procedure	The minutes for each procedure	Explanation of the procedure	
Attendance check + workbook time	10-20	The teacher checks attendance by calling the names of the students and marks the names on the attendance sheets. Students are supposed to answer the questions in the sections 'Warm up' and 'Routines'.	
Warm up & Idiomatic phrase	5-10	The teacher shows PowerPoint in order to let students know the answers for the Warm up section. He elucidates the words by giving some examples of usages and possible situations. After he finishes the explanation of expressions, the teacher lets students repeat after him.	
Routines	10	Prewriting activity. Students need to translate Korean expressions into English ones. The sentences are preselected by the teacher and important expressions and chunks of expressions which are used frequently in English are embedded in these sentences.	
Watching movie	15-20	Students watch the day's part of the movie together.	
Translating of the script	15-20	The teacher translates the assigned part of the movie for the day and explains words, expressions, and the movie itself.	
	10-15	Explanation	The teacher explains to the students the procedure for the day's writing activity, clarifies the writing activity, and shows an example.
Writing	30-40		Students are required to write one or more paragraphs in response to the writing assignment of the day. Students can leave whenever they finish their writing. If some students are still working on their writing, the class is officially dismissed by the teacher when the given class time is over.
	15-20	In class writing	
Total	100~110	Without break – individual break	

## Appendix K

### The Main Activities of Movie English for Writing

Movie English for Writing		
	General class activities	Writing activities
1st	Introduction of the class, the movies, basic principles of English writing, process of writing with detailed examples.	Practicing of making a simple question and answer it with a paragraph after watching a short video clip, <i>Sign</i> on YouTube.
2nd	Watching the first movie	
3rd	Observation of Chu-Suk*– No class	
4th	Unit 1	After watching a short video clip from <i>Black Hole</i> , ask Questions and answer about one of them.
5 <sup>th</sup>	Unit2	Ask Questions and decide the main question addressing the first movie.
6 <sup>th</sup>	Unit3	Looking for the evidence and answers to their questions in order to make their themes clear. Find at least three pieces of evidence for your questions.
7 <sup>th</sup>	Unit 4	Writing a thesis sentence for their writing
8 <sup>th</sup>	Midterm test	
9 <sup>th</sup>	Unit 5	Practicing the three kinds of writing body: Compare, contrast, trace, and debate
10 <sup>th</sup>	Watching the second movie	
11 <sup>th</sup>	Unit 6	Writing the introduction
12 <sup>th</sup>	Unit 7	Writing the body
13th	Unit 8	Writing conclusion
14th	Final Test	

*Note.* \*Chu-suk is Korean Thanksgiving Day (August 15th in the lunar calendar)