THE EFFECT OF USING CLASS DISCUSSION AS A
PRE-WRITING ACTIVITY IN TEACHING
COMPOSITION TO ESL STUDENTS

DISSERTATION

Presented to the Graduate Council of the
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Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

By

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This study examines the effect of class discussion as a pre-writing activity on actual writing performance. The experiment was conducted with all the Level 3 and Level 4 students enrolled in the Intensive English Language Institute of North Texas State University in the Spring, 1986 semester. Cochrans C test was performed to test significant differences between groups at the beginning of this test. Multivariate analysis of variance tests were used to determine the treatment effect between and within groups, and a matched t-test was also utilized to analyze the difference within tests. Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was calculated to determine the relationship between the discussion activity score and the actual writing score. Analysis of covariance tests were used to determine which variance of discussion activities had greater effect on the actual writing score.

The following conclusions may be drawn from the data collected for this study:

1. There were no significant differences between the group which had class discussion as a pre-writing activity
and the group which had no class discussion as a pre-writing activity in actual writing abilities in each test. Even though the differences between groups were not statistically significant, writing performances for both groups were significantly improved after treatment (class discussion).

2. The groups in the lower level which have a more limited speaking ability, showed no significant differences between groups and within groups after treatment.

3. The verbally active students in pre-writing class discussion produced significantly better compositions than the non-verbally active students in class discussion in the upper level.

4. The correlation between the discussion activity score and actual writing score was significant in the upper level. Time, frequency, and quality of the discussion significantly affected the actual writing, especially the quality of the discussion.

The improvement shown by the students can be attributed to their experiences in class discussion rather than to chance.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIST OF TABLES</th>
<th>vii</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS</td>
<td>ix</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Chapter

### I. INTRODUCTION 1

- Statement of the Problem
- Purposes of the Study
- Hypotheses
- Significance of the Study
- Definition of Terms
- Delimitation of the Study
- Limitations
- Procedures for the Collection of Data
- Procedures for Analysis of Data
- Chapter Bibliography

### II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE 17

- Overview
- Current Trends
- Pre-Writing
- ESL Writing
- Speaking-Writing Relationship
- Small Group Discussion
- Summary
- Chapter Bibliography
III. PROCEDURES FOR COLLECTION OF DATA . . . . 39

Overview
Population of the Study
Design and Instrumentation
Data Collection and Scoring
Chapter Bibliography

IV. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA . . . . 55

Overview
Results
Discussion of the Findings
Chapter bibliography

V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS . . . . . . . . 76

Summary
Conclusions
Implications
Recommendations

APPENDICES . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 86

Appendix A MEMORANDUM: Instructions to Students for Writing Composition

Appendix B Demographic Questionnaire

Appendix C Notice of Consent

Appendix D The CUNY Writing Skill Assessment Test

Appendix E Writing skills Assessment Test Evaluation Scale
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Appendix F</th>
<th>Tree-Diagram</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appendix G</td>
<td>Writing Essay #1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix H</td>
<td>Writing Essay #2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix I</td>
<td>Evaluation of Discussion Skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix J</td>
<td>The Answers According to the IELI Guideline for Research Proposals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix K</td>
<td>To the Class Instructor, Graders, and Video Operators</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix L</td>
<td>Transcript of Group 3's Discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

BIBLIOGRAPHY. ........................................... 107
LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Daily Schedule for Pre and Post-Test</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Schedule of the Experiment</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Topics Assigned on Post-tests</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Adjusted Scale for Discussion Activity</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Means and Standard Deviations for the WAT Pre-test</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. Means and Standard Deviations for Post-tests 1 and 2</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. Analysis of Variance: Post-test 1 and 2</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII. Analysis of Covariance: Pre-test and Post-test 1</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX. A Comparison of Pre and Post-tests Between Groups</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X. A Comparison of Differences Within Groups</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI. A Comparison of Differences Within Groups in Level 4</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XII. A Comparison of Differences Within Groups in Level 3</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIII. Descriptive Statistics of Writing Scores and Discussion Scores</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIV. Analysis of Covariance: Writing and Discussion</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XV. Correlation Matrix for Time, Frequency, Quality, and Writing</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVI. Analysis of Covariance: Writing and Each Discussion Factor</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVII. Variables in the Equation</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Plot of Inter-rater Reliability of Two Graders on Pre-test Essays</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Plot of Inter-rater Reliability of Two Graders on Discussion Activity</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Profile of the Mean Scores of Pre and Post-tests</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Regression Line of Writing Scores on Discussion Score</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Why do so many international students who come to universities in the United States to study fail in their composition classes even if their Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) scores are high enough for admission? Why do they meet with so much difficulty in preparing term papers even after they are admitted as university students? The possible answers for these questions are as follows: (1) TOEFL cannot measure the writing ability and communication skills, (2) most international students have not had much experience in writing English composition, even if they have studied English for several years.

Is there any better method to help these students who are highly motivated to continue advanced study? What is the best way to help them start practicing writing without so much tension? Many recommendations have been voiced for the practice of speaking as a meaningful pre-writing activity, emphasizing that pre-writing oral brainstorming reduces tension, makes students more aware of their
idiosyncratic skill weakness, and makes them more favorably disposed to the subject of English. These kinds of procedures have been developed for a variety of native speakers as well, such as experienced professional writers (11), traditional college freshmen (14; 17), high school students (18), children (6), and teachers (13).

Is there an advantage in a pre-writing speaking activity insofar as English composition is concerned? Although class discussion as a pre-writing activity has been discussed extensively in the literature (1; 9; 10; 15), very little research has been carried out to examine the relationship between class discussion as a pre-writing activity and the written product, especially among students who study English as a Second Language (ESL).

Writing is becoming increasingly important in the ESL classroom, recognized not only for its own sake, but for the valuable practice it affords in encoding the language. A study which would delineate this problem and find ways of helping the students write better compositions without as much tension would be beneficial to the profession of teaching writing to ESL students.
Statement of the Problem

This study examines the effect of class discussion as a pre-writing activity on actual writing performance.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to compare the class discussion method with the conventional method in low and high level students in order to determine the effect of class discussion on the actual writing performance in a carefully controlled study.

Hypotheses

The experiment was designed to test the following experimental hypotheses.

1. Subjects who have class discussion in pre-writing will produce significantly better compositions than subjects who have no class discussion.

2. Within the experimental groups, the verbally active students in pre-writing class discussion will produce significantly better compositions than the non-active students in class discussion.
Significance of the Study

The proposed study focuses upon the effect of in-class discussion as a pre-writing activity for ESL students. This study is significant in that it can contribute to the determination of the effectiveness of in-class discussion for ESL students by comparing the compositions of the experimental groups which have class discussion prior to actual writing with the control groups that have no discussion. The study also provides a rationale for an explicit pre-writing strategy in teaching composition for ESL students if positive effects are found.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following terms are defined.

1. ESL students are defined as students who study English as a Second Language, whether in an English-speaking environment or in a non-English-speaking environment.

2. Verbally active students are those who show a comparatively high score during their discussion activities.

3. Pre-writing activities refer to everything that a writer can do to loosen up and to get ideas flowing about a topic before beginning to write. Class discussion is considered one of the pre-writing activities.
4. The conventional method refers to the think-write method rather than the talk-write method in writing compositions.

**Delimitation of the Study**

1. This study was limited to students enrolled in Level 3 and Level 4 of the Intensive English Language Institute (IELI) at North Texas State University during the Spring, 1986 semester.

2. This study was limited to expository writing.

**Limitations of the Study**

The group sizes were naturally limited by the normal size of the classes offered at the Institute. No generalizations can be made beyond the population of this study.

**Procedures for Collection of Data**

Permission to conduct the experiment was obtained from the IELI at North Texas State University. During the first session, each subject filled out a Demographic Questionnaire (Appendix B) and signed a Notice of Consent (Appendix C) after reading the Memorandum (Appendix A) which explained the research project. To find out any differences between the experimental group and the control group, and to determine the criterion to measure the succeeding two post-tests, the subjects took as a pre-test the CUNY Writing
Skills Assessment Test (WAT), as shown in Appendix D. Since Diederich considers inter-rater reliability of 0.80 as appropriate for placement purposes (4); the WAT, with a reliability coefficient of 83.2, is thus a reliable instrument for determining minimum competency in writing (3, p. 15).

One week later, three topics restricted to the problem-solution form as a rhetorical mode were given to both the experimental group and the control group as post-test 1. Hafernick demonstrated through an opinion survey on topic preference of ESL students in composition class that the majority preferred a choice of two or three topics over a single topic and disliked free choice of topics (7). Thus, a variety of well-prepared writing topics would help students start writing without as much tension.

In an effort to help students generate ideas and organize these ideas before they begin to write, the instructor distributed a Tree-Diagram sheet drawn by Meyer (Appendix F) and gave a mini-lesson on the topics to both the experimental group and the control group. Each student in the experimental group chose one topic and formed a small discussion group with three or four students who selected the same topic. Then the groups were asked to suggest possible causes for the problems they selected, and discussed a possible solution for each of the causes of the
problem. It was possible to assign students to groups to ensure equal opportunities to talk. During the fifteen minute class discussion, students were encouraged to talk freely, but not to exceed one minute at a time.

Video-taping and audio tape-recording were required for observation and measurement of performance during class discussion. During the recording, all four or five groups are displayed on two screens, while each group had its own recorder. Zamel notes that video-taping, "... by focusing on fundamental concepts of communicative language teaching and by stimulating thought and discussion, can sharpen the ability to analyze and evaluate classroom interaction and can develop attitudes about effective ESL instruction" (20). Grant found that students' behavior while being videotaped or recorded was natural and spontaneous (2, p. 176). Tovatt also found out that when students were aware that their talking was recorded, they were more lively (19).

Students in the experimental group were given forty minutes to write immediately following the discussion. They were asked to write as well as possible within that class time and to try to bring their composition to some sort of a conclusion focusing on content rather than on correctness in mechanics. The students in the control group followed the same procedure with the exception of the discussion. Instead of spending time with discussion, they had fifty-five minutes to write.
One week after post-test 1, all the subjects had a
second writing session, post-test 2. For post-test 1, the
treatment (class discussion) was given to group 1, and for
post-test 2, group 2 took the treatment. Using two
post-tests, and allowing each group the opportunity to be
evaluated experimentally, was considered to be a more
powerful method of determining the treatment effect. In the
post-tests, the control groups were given fifty-five minutes
to think-write a composition; the experimental groups were
given forty minutes to write immediately following the class
discussion.

Even though Group 1 and Group 2 had the treatment
alternately, the group having the treatment is consistently
called the experimental group. Teacher matching in the
comparison classes would have been desirable in order to
control the effects of teacher personality, teacher
competence, and style of presentation. However, because of
personnel availability and scheduling limitations, the
matching of teachers was not possible. Considering these
factors, and striving to avoid teacher variables, this study
specified the use of a teacher who had extensive experience
in teaching ESL in the Intensive English Language Institute,
and specified the use of a teacher in a neutral position,
i.e., one who was not the class teacher of the subjects
employed in this study. He conducted all classes for this
study, including the experimental group and control group of each level in pre- and post-tests. Group 1 was initially the experimental group and Group 2 the control in post-test 1, but positions were reversed in post-test 2. The Daily Schedule is presented as Table I.

**TABLE I**

**DAILY SCHEDULE FOR PRE AND POST-TEST 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours of Testing</th>
<th>Level 3 Group 1</th>
<th>Level 3 Group 2</th>
<th>Level 4 Group 1</th>
<th>Level 4 Group 2</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:30 - 9:30</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 - 10:30</td>
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<td>10:30 - 11:30</td>
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<td>11:30 - 12:30</td>
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<td>1:15 - 2:15</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>2:15 - 3:15</td>
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<td>3:15 - 4:15</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:15 - 5:15</td>
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X: Class for research project  *: Regular class of IELI

The Population

The population of this study included all the Level 3 and Level 4 students enrolled in the Intensive English Language Institute of North Texas State University during the spring semester of 1986.
The Sample

The sample could not be randomized because of intact groups. As the Institute is divided into levels based on the results of a placement test, the sample was already matched in terms of language proficiency. The Writing Assessment Test was administered prior to the experiment to determine whether or not the two groups differed significantly prior to instruction.

Group size was limited by the normal size of the classes offered at the IELI. Each class has 7 to 12 students and each level has 3 to 6 sections. To ensure an adequate sample and to avoid differences due to different levels of progress in classwork, permission to combine two same-level sections was obtained from the Institute. The morning classes of Level 3 and Level 4 were Group 1 and the afternoon classes of Level 3 and Level 4 were Group 2 as shown in Figure 2.

The total number of students was seventy-four, ranging in age from 17 to 32. The majority had studied English for at least 5 years, but had never received English composition instruction in their country (78.6 per cent). Languages represented included Arabic (18), Farsi (17), Thai (11), Chinese (10), Japanese (6), Spanish (6), Korean (3), and French, Greek, and Indonesian (1 each). Other information about the subjects is addressed in Chapter III.
Procedures for the Collection of Data

Data were collected at three times during the study, and the following test instruments were used. At the beginning of the experiment all students in four sections of Level 3, and four sections of Level 4 were given the Writing Skills Assessment Test (WAT) designed by the CUNY (Appendix E).

One week later all subjects had post-test 1. At that time, only the experimental groups had class discussion in pre-writing time. The subjects were video-taped and tape-recorded during the class discussion to make it possible to measure the time, frequency, and quality of their talk as discussion activity factors. When video-tapes were analyzed, the talking time was measured with stop watches, and the frequency of participation in discussion was tallied for each subject. The quality of their recorded talk was judged by two qualified scorers based on the Evaluation of Discussion Skills (Appendix I). These three factors, i.e., time, frequency, and quality of their talk are rated on a six-point scale in which 6 is the highest rating.

As the units of time, frequency, and quality are different, unifying the unit of each of them was necessary to add three factors as one discussion activity. In measurement of time and frequency, it was also necessary to
adjust the score according to the number of each group member. Table II in Chapter III shows how to unify the unit to get the score based on a scale of 1 (low) to 6 (high). One week later, all the subjects had post-test 2, following the same procedure as post-test 1, with the exception of changing the treatment groups.

Two judges read all the papers to allow for the computation of inter-rater reliability. All the compositions, which were written in Blue Books, were sent to the researcher who removed all identifying marks from each, entered each author's name on the list, and then assigned a different code number to each test using the table for random numbers (8). These Blue Books, without covers, were mixed together prior to distribution. Thus each scorer could not know whether the composition was from an experimental group or from a control group, from a low level or from a high level. The two graders were identical for both the experimental groups and control groups in pre- and post-tests, for consistency of grading.

As two graders read these essays independently, they recorded scores on their scoring sheets for each student. The scoring sheets were returned to the researcher for tabulation. Their judgmental norm was based on CUNY's evaluation scale (Appendix E). If more than a one-point difference occurred, a third reader would be necessary. The
total score for an essay of the two graders could range between 1 and 6. After computing the score, a correlation was determined for inter-rater reliability of the two raters' grading of essays on the Pre-test. The same graders scored the post-tests. The test scores were coded and computer analyzed using a standard computer program from the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, 12) at North Texas State University.

Procedures for Analysis of Data

As a Pre-test, the Writing Assessment Test was administered to determine whether or not there were significant differences between the experimental group and control group. The number of subjects taking the test totalled 74 at the beginning of this study. There were 51 subjects who finished the study. To make sure of homogeneity among the two groups in each level, and among the combined Group 1 and Group 2, Cochrans C test was performed. Group means and standard deviations of all subjects were calculated and the results of the comparison were reported in Chapter IV.

To test Hypothesis 1, the statistical design used to test for treatment differences was a two-factor analysis of variance with repeated measures on one factor. The analysis of variance test was used to determine the significant difference between groups. the analysis of covariance test
was utilized to analyze the significant difference within groups.

To test Hypothesis 2, The Spearman product moment correlation coefficient was calculated to determine how discussion activity and writing score are related. As the correlation was high enough, regression analysis was performed for the expectation of writing scores on discussion activity scores. The level of significance was arbitrarily set at the 0.05 level. The resulting values of F for critical values in analysis of variance were checked using the tables given in Kirk (8, pp. 814-817) for Hypothesis 1. To test Hypothesis 2, the critical values of the correlation coefficient were checked using table given in Ferguson (5, p. 523). All the completed data are reported on the Tables in Chapter IV.


CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Overview

The following overview of the literature especially relevant to the proposed study focuses on the following topics: (1) Writing in General, (2) Current Trends, (3) Pre-writing, (4) ESL Writing, (5) Speaking-Writing Relationship, and (6) Small Group Discussion.

Writing in General

Writing is an organic unity, a total process: while the whole owes its being to the co-existence of the parts, the existence of the whole is a necessary condition to the survival of the parts. Each part is both ends and means (48). As Winterowd describes it, "writing is a whole fabric that can be taken apart only schematically and for theoretical purposes" (58, P. 709). Murray also visualizes the act of writing as "a continuing cycle, with the writer collecting information and connecting bits and parts to create a whole" (37, P. 79).
Writing is a great aid for learning, not merely a way to report what has been learned. Cooper maintains that the writing process is essentially composing, that is, the forming of relationships among pieces of information (8). The process of writing is, therefore, a powerful learning process, as a record, as a means of understanding, and as a means of discovery. Oster believes that writing is considered a thinking process, an organized, intelligent activity, and not just an exercise in covering paper with correct signs, or choosing the right word, or applying the proper grammatical rules (42).

**Current Trends**

The teaching of writing has changed recently from the view of writing as a product, to seeing it as process (34, 54, 60, 61). In an effort to change the emphasis from an error-free product to a more communicative process, Raimes talks about the various language skills which need to be taught not as ends, in and of themselves, but as means with which to better express meaning (45).

If students learn that writing is a process through which they can explore and discover their thoughts and ideas, then the product is likely to improve as well. Bartholomae, who works with basic writers, has also supported the idea that certain errors will disappear and others will become less frequent as students simply practice
writing (1, p. 96). So it is desirable to look at the writing class not primarily as a means of teaching linguistic competence, but as a way of teaching writing, of helping students to discover thinking processes and new strategies for expressing ideas through writing.

It is axiomatic in the profession to say that matters of correctness in writing are secondary in importance to content and ideas, yet the principle is often violated. McKay notes that a great deal of time in composition classes is devoted to usage exercises and errors in mechanics, with teachers only paying lip service to content (32). Recently, Williams indicated that in America, student writing, in general, has deteriorated. He believes that the main reason is that high-school teaching often presents writing in terms of rules and formulas, handy references to yield correct answers (57).

Pre-Writing

In recent years the prewriting stage of composition has begun to receive attention in textbooks and publications for teachers. As Johannessen points out, however, current theory and practical applications of prewriting instruction generally neglect a crucial aspect of preparing students to write, i.e., teaching students the thinking strategies essential to different types of written communication (23).
Many researchers advocate the view that writers do not always follow a neat sequence of planning, organizing, writing, and then revising, as many textbooks advise. Writers are constantly planning (pre-writing) and revising (re-writing) as they compose (write), and not in any clear-cut stages. In Zamel's study with advanced ESL students, she addresses the fact that students' writing behaviors are not entirely amenable to this type of breakdown, a fact which in and of itself attests to the non-linear nature of writing (61). As Perl and Raimes describe, a writer's product is presented in lines, but the process that produces it is not linear at all (43, 46). Instead, it is recursive. Flower and Hayes also claim that "planning is not a unitary stage, but a distinctive thinking process which writers use over and over again during composing" (14, p. 375).

Writing is a whole process. But pre-writing is the initial and crucial stage for this whole writing process. Ziegler has stated that

Prewriting includes "getting into the mood" and mulling - sifting and sorting through potential material. During this time an embryo is forming: you may not know what, but you sense that something alive will emerge...Many students do not realize that they may need an incubation period before they begin writing and that they should not feel pressured do get started right away. (60, p. 34)
Thus he emphasizes that it is a teacher's job to help students understand this and that they should avoid admonishing, or helping, those who have not begun to write, when, in fact, they may be engaged in pre-writing.

This pre-writing stage is for rehearsing (37), preparation (3), and planning (9), which involve gathering data and making preliminary plans for what one is going to say. Students can discuss and jot down lists of information, ideas, feelings, or recollections related to the topic. Discussing the relevant components of a composition topic could arouse the interest, and initiate a common base of ideas among students.

Perl observed students in her study and presents the planning strategies in pre-writing that they used as three principal types:

1. Rephrasing the topic until a particular word or idea connected with the student's experience. The student then had "an event" in mind before writing began.

2. Turning the large conceptual issue in the topic into two manageable pieces for writing.

3. Initiating a string of associations to a word in the topic and then developing one or more of the associations during writing. (43, p. 328)

Once pre-writing activities have aroused student interest and expanded his/her fund of knowledge about a topic, the student is then expected to outline the key ideas, listing them and then arranging them for the greatest effect before writing.
ESL Writing

Although the methods of teaching writing as a process were initially developed for native speakers, the present shift from viewing writing as product to seeing it as process is gradually being adopted by ESL writing theorists and teachers (33, 54, 61). In the ESL class, traditionally, the most important thing in writing a composition is to avoid mistakes. However, the ESL teacher's emphasis on helping students find and correct their errors may push students into writing with less fluency, perhaps with little or no concomitant gain in accuracy.

Results of Scarcella's research in 1984 indicate that native English writers employ a wide variety of linguistic devices to engage their reader's attention and to help their readers identify the participants, objects, and events about which they write. By contrast, both common sense and the research tell us that non-native English writers are more limited in their ability to orient their readers. Scarcella says, "their use of attention-engaging and clarity devices is comparatively restricted" (49, p. 671). They have not yet acquired the social, cultural, and linguistic rules of English which would enable them to engage their reader's attention, and present their ideas clearly in the beginning of their essays. Even if they are native English writers, according to Perl:
They, unskilled college writers, wrote from an egocentric point of view. While they occasionally indicated a concern for their readers, they more often took the reader's understanding for granted. They did not see the necessity of making their referents explicit, of making the connections among their ideas apparent, of carefully and explicitly relating one phenomenon to another, or placing narratives or generalization within an orienting, conceptual framework. (43, p. 332).

Moreover, ESL writing has laid too much emphasis on mechanical parts. If the writer must devote conscious attention to demands such as spelling and grammar, the task can interfere with the more global process of planning what one wants to say. Shaughnessy argues that too much emphasis on mechanical parts leads to frustration for the writer (51).

Differences in cultural backgrounds present a barrier in ESL writing. Cultural anthropologists point out that given acts and objects appear vastly different in different cultures, depending on the values attached to them. According to Kaplan there are significant differences between the construction of expository paragraphs among writers (26). Differences are most noticeable in the pattern of logic which writers use in ordering ideas within paragraphs. These patterns arise from systematic differences in cultural modes of thinking, which are reflected in each culture's rhetorical style.
**Speaking-Writing Relationship**

In 1969, Zoellner conceived of writing as verbal conditioning by which systematic applications of reinforcers can influence the probability of various verbal behaviors; thus overt speech utterances could be used to improve writing ability. He outlines a theoretical model that proposes principles of operant conditioning to get a student to say what he cannot write (63).

In contrast, Emig points out the differences between writing and speaking:

Writing is learned, artificial and technological, rather than natural or organic. Writing is slow and stark, without context or immediate audience. Writing is a graphic record, permits review and provides feedback in a way denied by talk. As a consequence, the process of writing can be guided by that part of the product already recorded. (12, pp. 123-124)

In spite of these differences between writing and speaking, many educators have discussed the effective benefits that accrue from injecting speech into the composing model. In 1983, Dyson stated that after her case study with children, she found that "initially talk is used to invest written graphics with meaning; eventually talk is viewed as the substance of written language" (11, p. 17). She notes also that oral language is a tool for seeking needed information, assisting oneself in encoding and decoding. Crane, Dicker, and Brown provide evidence for the advantage of speech communication over writing. After a
study of the physiological responses of subjects, these authors conclude that "words said will be remembered longer than words written" (10). In 1969, Moffett observed 1968 that oral representation is vital to literacy:

The best strategy for discussing a certain topic might be exactly the strategy the student should adopt in writing about that topic. And this is the point; through discussion, students can learn together about handling some of the problems of abstract writing, from how to assert single statements to how to phrase an attack on a subject. Interaction between discussion and writing is essential.(36, p. 63)

Carroll recommends a non-threatening classroom enriched by active talking times and punctuated with serious writing times. Talking enables students to rediscover the creativeness of language, to verbally reconstruct their reality, to practice with expansion, imitation, and meaning, all attributes of writing (6). Hannan advocates pre-writing oral brainstorming (19), as does Schwartz, emphasizing its tension-reducing benefits (50). Wixon and Stone describe students pairing up into teams prior to writing (59). This technique, they maintain, promotes pupils building their developing writing skills with speaking skills.

Developmental theorists agree on a very strong link between speech and thinking. Speech becomes internalized and silent, and functions as a tool in thinking (9). Britton, et al. claims that monologue, i.e., an uninterrupted utterance able to be sustained in spite of the
lack of stimulus from another speaker forms the best basis for writing (3). Some theorists, however, have different opinions about speaking and writing. Emig notes that,

A silent classroom or one filled only with the teacher's voice is anathema to learning.... talking is valuable, even necessary, from pre-writing....(but) that talking is a valuable form of pre-writing is not to say that writing is talk recorded....talking and writing may emanate from different organic sources and represent quite different, possibly distinct, language functions. (12, p. 123)

She also believes that there are hazards, conceptually and pedagogically, in creating too complete an analogy between talking and writing, in blurring the very real differences between the two.

Newman and Horowitz analyzed discourse samples by college students, with topic and time controlled. They found that speaking produces more words and ideas of all kinds and is more repetitious than writing. They argue that "even when spoken expression and written expression are reduced by control to their most basic levels, a great many differences exist between them" (39, p. 162). They conclude, quite forcefully, that writing and speaking are "fundamentally and essentially different – as modes of verbal formulation and expression, as indicators of different psychological aspects of the person, and as channels of communication" (39, p. 164).
Lopate proposes that, to progress in writing, students must learn to generate text freely without respondent, and also emphasizes that the oral language production system cannot be carried over intact into written composition but must in some way be reconstructed so as to function autonomously instead of interactively (30).

Small Group Discussion

Over the last decade collaborative learning has become an important method for college English composition. Small-group work as a mode of instruction in writing also makes sense when it is connected with the idea of writing as process. Murray argues that the conference method is the single most effective tool in both direction and provocation (38), and Hawkins states that talking refines, shapes, and generates thought, and asks students to talk among themselves in small groups to promote critical inquiry (20). Psycholinguistic research has also stressed the benefits learners can draw from conversing with one another in the language classroom (28).

Many investigators (16, 15, 30, 56) have suggested collaborative class writings to bridge the gap between oral discussion and independent writing, recognizing that the transition from speaking to writing is not easy for many students. Long and Porter recommend small group work in the second language classroom, emphasizing the potential of
group work "for increasing the quantity of language practice opportunities, for improving the quality of student talk, for individualizing instruction, for creating a positive affective climate in the classroom, and for increasing student motivation" (29, pp. 207-208).

Macdonald and Roger-Gordon (31) examine the problem of students being frustrated and threatened by having to speak before the whole class, often finding it difficult to live up to their expectations of themselves and those of the teacher and their classmates. Berwick reports that even most foreign teachers of English as a Second Language in oriental countries have been occasionally frustrated during discussion periods with a classroom full of students who seem extraordinarily unresponsive (2). Cheung also has found that students are too shy to speak or they fear speaking up individually in response to a question asked of the entire group (7). Rivers (47, p. 203) and Stokes (53, p. 5) have found that groups of fewer than four members increase the dangers of over-sensitivity to the teacher's presence and the need to contribute an inordinate amount (from the student's point of view) to the discussion.

Small group talking is also valuable for making students responsible for their own learning and responsiveness to one another. Judy (24, p. 37) states that this kind of collaborative learning encourages students to
be cooperative rather than competitive. It can also be a framework which allows students to generate their own language without much tension and with minimal interference from the teacher. Kaltinick suggests that the instructor should direct, but not control the discussion. The motive power of the discussion is the students, but the directional power is the instructor in that, "he holds the tiller and so should gently move it this way or that to keep the class from drifting or running aground" (25, p. 346). Hafernink (18, p. 13) believes that the more involved students become, the more means they discover to communicate their ideas.

Neither inactive nor nondirective, the teacher in the collaborative classroom must plan and organize the session so that students know that the end is not simply to work in groups but to work in groups in an effort to reach consensus for an important task. According to Wiener, "The effective collaborative learning teacher is one who understands the basis and structure of collaborative learning and who knows how to lead students to work productively within it" (56, p. 61). Bruffee also argues that organizing collaborative learning effectively requires doing more than throwing students together with their peers, with little or no guidance or preparation (4). It takes time to build these group skills, because often students have spent much of their time in teacher-dominated classrooms, where
cooperation with fellow students has been irrelevant. Moreover, many non-native speakers of English come to American universities from school systems wherein it would be unthinkable to challenge what the teacher says. Class discussions are minimal or non-existent. Free inquiry and debates are not encouraged in all countries or in all educational systems. Students' confidence in one another, however, comes with time, with patience, and above all, with the commitment of the teacher to its importance.

Summary

Today, writing has been recognized as an essential part of language learning, and the view of writing as a tool for learning and not just a means to demonstrate learning is one of the major contributions of the research into the writing process. The phrase "process, not product" has now risen to the heights in writing. Although Horowitz (22) presents rebuttals to this trend, worrying that this gentle approach of process-oriented classrooms may foster a false impression of the realities of academia, where students' product-oriented attitudes may in fact be more adaptive. The effectiveness of such a process approach to teaching ESL writers, while limited, has so far yielded positive results (40, 12, 21).

Writing makes our thinking processes more clear and helps us become more capable learners, thus making a unique
contribution to our development (8). One of the hallmarks of good writers is the amount of time they spend thinking about how they want to affect a reader. Throughout the writing process, the writer is constantly selecting and rejecting words, and thinking associatively. As many investigators claim, although a writer's product is presented in lines, the process that produces it is not linear. It is a cyclical process during which writers move back and forth on a continuum, discovering, analyzing, and synthesizing ideas (13). Since the purpose of writing instruction is not to break down the stages themselves but to help the students think more effectively, leading students during pre-writing time might be facilitative.

Many researchers support the idea that discussion, when applied effectively, leads to logical, creative, and critical thinking. Also, it frequently greatly enriches the meaning of ideas on a subject, thereby resulting in clarification and increased understanding. Oral preparation for writing, in pre-writing, is generally endorsed by language art specialists. Their studies indicate that the speech communication behavior of subjects during pre-writing tasks helps the subjects see the problem more clearly, and develops greater problem-solving accuracy, and produces clearer ideas. Moreover, if oral and written language are closely related, student should have many opportunities to
express themselves orally before being expected to write. As Bruffee has indicated, collaborative learning certainly cannot induce creativity, but it does make a place for it (5). This study is designed to test Zoellner's talk-write hypothesis and follow-up studies of Radcliffe (44), Wixon and Stone (59), and Meyers (35). This study, however, will be concerned with unskilled ESL student writers. The main purpose is to find out whether or not the discussion method in pre-writing is really helpful to the ESL students despite the difficulty they may have in speaking.
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CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES FOR COLLECTION OF DATA

Overview

This chapter presents a description of the methods and procedures used for the collection of data. Included are an identification of the population, an examination of the data source, an overview of design, the instrument used, and the data collection and scoring techniques.

The Population

The population of this study included all the Level 3 and Level 4 students enrolled in the Intensive English Language Institute of North Texas State University during the spring semester of 1986. Most of the subjects, representing twenty-one countries, were planning to attend NTSU after completing the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), a university requirement for international students at most United States colleges and universities. The Institute meets their need for further preparation for university classes by offering six levels of English study, the first for those with little knowledge of English, and the sixth for those needing special emphasis in a particular area (13).
The Sample

The sample consisted of intact groups. As the Institute is divided into levels based on the results of a placement test, the sample was already matched in terms of language proficiency. Group size was limited by the normal size of the classes offered at the IELI. Each class had 7 to 12 students and each level had 3 to 6 sections. To ensure an adequate sample and to avoid differences due to the progress of classwork, permission to combine two same-level sections was obtained from the Institute. The morning classes of Level 3 and Level 4 constituted Group 1 and afternoon classes of Level 3 and Level 4 constituted Group 2 as shown in Table II.

The number of subjects who indicated their willingness to participate in the study by signing the Notice of Consent (Appendix C) came to 74 students, ranging in age from 17 to 32. Twenty-nine were female, forty-five were male. The majority had studied English for at least 5 years, but had never received English composition instruction in their country (90.4 per cent). Languages represented included Arabic (18), Farsi (17), Thai (11), Chinese (10), Japanese (6), Spanish (6), Korean (3), and French, Greek, and Indonesian (1 each). Some students (54.1 per cent) planned to study in undergraduate school, some (39.2 per cent) in graduate school after they complete the course in IELI.
When they have a writing assignment, most of them (79.7 per cent) utilize a think-write technique rather than discussing the subject beforehand with someone (16.2 per cent).

Procedures and Method

Brief research proposals (Appendix J) were submitted to the Steering Committee of IELI, and permission to conduct the experiment was obtained. Prior to the experiment, the researcher, class instructor, graders, and video taping operators met twice and made sure the schedule for the experiment and their roles during and after the experiment were clear. Appendix K shows the guideline for each of them.

At the beginning of the experiment, during the first session, in order to obtain the information and solicit cooperation of the subjects, a Memorandum explaining the study (Appendix A), a Demographic Questionnaire (Appendix B), and a Notice of Consent (Appendix C) were given to all subjects. They completed these forms within 10 minutes and returned them to the class instructor. Immediately upon completion of these forms, the Writing Skill Assessment Test (WAT), designed by CUNY (Appendix D), was distributed as a fifty minute pre-test. Students were provided a Blue Book for writing paper. The instructor distributed a Tree-Diagram sheet (Appendix F), drawn by Meyer (9, p. 77) and gave a mini-lesson on topics. Meyer recommends that
tree diagram could be used as a pre-writing strategy for brainstorming and organizing ideas (9). This Tree-Diagram was intended to help students to develop their writing strategies and was also intended to be a discussion stimulant. Students consulted with the teacher as necessary for further explanation of the topic, but they were not allowed to ask questions about their compositions per se. The Schedule of the Experiment is as shown in Table II.

TABLE II
SCHEDULE OF THE EXPERIMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Group 1 (Lo. &amp; Hi.)</th>
<th>Group 2 (Lo. &amp; Hi.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Session</td>
<td>Demographic Questionnaire: 5 minutes</td>
<td>Topic-explanation with Tree-Diagram: 5 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Notice of Consent: 5 minutes</td>
<td>Discussion with topic (video-taping): 15 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Writing Assessment Test: 50 minutes</td>
<td>Essay writing #1: 40 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Topic-explanation with Tree-Diagram)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Session</td>
<td>Topic-explanation with Tree-Diagram: 5 min.</td>
<td>Topic-explanation with Tree-Diagram: 5 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion with topic (video-taping): 15 min.</td>
<td>Discussion with topic (video-taping): 15 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Essay writing #1: 40 min.</td>
<td>Essay writing #2: 40 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Session</td>
<td>Topic-explanation with Tree-Diagram: 5 min.</td>
<td>Topic-explanation with Tree-Diagram: 5 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Essay writing #2: 55 min.</td>
<td>Discussion with topic (video-taping): 15 min.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the second session, Writing Essay #1 (Appendix G) was assigned as post-test 1. At this time, students were
also given a Tree-Diagram and mini-lesson. Following this five-minute presentation, the control groups were given fifty-five minutes to think-write a composition, each student writing on the topic of his or her choice. The experimental group had class discussion in pre-writing for fifteen minutes. Lawrence mentions that pre-writing need not be lengthy; a limited amount of class time should be planned for group discussion (8). Regardless of how interesting a class discussion may be, the bulk of class time should be devoted to writing. As Rivers and Judy suggest, each student in the experimental group chose one topic and formed a small discussion group with two to four other students who selected the same topic (12, 6). Then students discussed possible causes and solutions for the problem they had selected.

During the fifteen minute class discussion, students were encouraged to talk freely, but not to exceed one minute at a time. During the class discussion, they were video-taped with two cameras, each of the groups had its own tape recorder. The fact of being on camera did not seem to interfere with the students' performance; indeed, as Parish observed, there was probably a positive element in their knowing that their verbal behavior was recorded (11). The students in the experimental group were given forty minutes to write, immediately following the discussion. During the
third session, Writing Essay #2 (Appendix H) was assigned as post-test 2, following the same procedure as post-test 1, with the exception of changing the treatment group.

Six topics were developed: three for post-test 1 (Appendix G), and another equivalent three for post-test 2 (Appendix H). The topics assigned on post-tests, and the number of subjects who chose one as a writing topic are shown in Table III.

### TABLE III

**TOPICS ASSIGNED ON POST-TESTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Number of Writers on topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post-test 1 (n=64)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Improving Study Skills</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Adjusting to Life in the U.S.</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How to Find True Happiness.</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test 2 (n=58)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. The Best Way to Learn a Second Language</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Dealing with People from Other Culture</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How to Settle Disagreement between Nations</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Care was taken to design essay topics so that they would engage the interest of students, and efforts were made to be culturally fair, that is, not to be biased in favor of writers from some cultures over others. Because the WAT has
been administered a number of times, other equivalent topics were necessary to avoid the potential-for-practice effect.

Many writers find that free writing is a good technique for exploratory writing (15), but, as Winterowd states, if students have sets of topics to write on, then the whole process of composition is unified under the auspices of invention, generally conceived to be the least mechanical and most creative in the task of writing performance. "Topics should not shackle the mind. They should liberate it" (14, p. 709).

The expository essay was selected because of its appropriateness to the university setting. Arena states that expository writing is one of the four broad types of written discourse and more commonly used than the other three categories of narration, description, and argumentation. The primary function of expository writing is to inform a reader, not to narrate a story, describe an event, or convince an audience. Expository writing is "a type of discourse whose final purpose is to explain, to state, or to support a subject, idea, event, or some factual information" (1, p. 95). Hottel-Burkhart mentions that purely descriptive or narrative essays are rarely required of students in universities in the United States (5).
Design and Instrumentation

Since the groups were already established by the Institute's level and section assignment procedures of the Institute, an intact-group design was used. The Writing Assessment Test (WAT) was administered before the experiment to determine whether or not the two groups differed significantly prior to experimental treatment. To avoid the potential-for-practice effect, Writing Essays 1 and 2 which had topics similar to the WAT pre-test, were developed to assign as post-tests. Group 1 was initially the experimental group and Group 2 the control; after post-test 1, the positions were reversed.

Post-test 1, designed to examine the effectiveness of class discussion, was conducted one week after the pre-test. Just before the writing, experimental groups had in-class discussion for fifteen minutes while the control groups wrote essays without discussion. During the discussion, students were video-taped and their talk was recorded. During the interim, the students were continuing their study of English for 20 hours a week. One week later, all the subjects had post-test 2 following the same procedures as post-test 1, with the exception of a change of the treatment groups both in low and high levels. As the fifteen-minute class discussion was considered a pre-writing activity, a part of writing, the actual writing time of the experimental
groups which had class discussion was fifteen minutes shorter than that of the control groups which had no class discussion.

An overview of the design is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 1: Pre</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>Post 1</th>
<th>-------</th>
<th>Post 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 2:</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>Post 1</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pre: Pre-test, Post: Post-test
X: Treatment (Class Discussion)

**Scoring for Essay**

Two judges were selected from the teaching staff of the Institute on the basis of their experience in teaching and in holistically evaluating the written product. They had had the experience of teaching ESL students for more than five years, and had exhibited high inter-rater reliability in the grading of the essay test for international students.

Before beginning the scoring, the two graders met together to set the criteria based on the Writing Skills Assessment Test Evaluation Scale by CUNY. These standards, shown in Appendix E, spelled out criteria on which a holistic, six-point general-impression rating was to be based.

Much has been written about the paradigm shift from writing-as-product to writing-as-process. If writing programs emphasize the writing process and the development of composition skills, they must use evaluation procedures
that measure these skills. "Objective, indirect tests of writing subskills do not measure the ability to compose. Holistically scored essays should, therefore, play a leading role in assessments of writing programs and writing competence" (2, p. 406).

According to Coffman's suggestions (3), all the essays both pre- and post-tests, were assigned a random number using a random number table (7, p. 808). This number was written at the top of the cover and on the inside first page of the Blue Book which was used for all three tests. The cover page, which was set aside for future tabulation, included all other identifying information such as level, section, class roll number, essay random number.

The essays were arranged numerically by the randomly assigned numbers and a list of the numbers were provided to each rater for the recording of scores. Each rater thus was able to read the essays with no identifying knowledge of the student nor record of other rater's scores. Each rater took half of the essays to read, recording scores on the numerical list and passing the essays on to the other rater. If more than a one-point difference had occurred, a third reader would have been necessary, but that did not happen. The score ranged from 1 (low) to 6 (high). The total score of each essay read by two graders was averaged by computer. Diederich believes that $r = .80$ is adequate to be accepted for
inter-rater reliability (4, p. 33). The correlation between the two raters on Pre-test turned out to be highly correlated ($r=.968$), (see Figure 1).

![Figure 1. Plot of Inter-rater Reliability of Two Graders on Pre-test Essays](image_url)
Scoring for Discussion Activity

The results of the essay scores showed that only high level students took advantage of class discussion in their actual writing; therefore an analysis of the discussion activities of lower levels was not meaningful. Two raters were selected from the teaching assistants in the English Department of NTSU to analyze the quality of the subjects' discussion. Both raters were ESL majors and native speakers of English.

Before starting, the raters met to determine standards, based on the Evaluation Scale for Discussion Skill (Appendix I). This scale has been used in the IELI for discussion and feedback. In an attempt to establish an easier method to measure time, and frequency according to the number of group members, a slight modification was necessary from the original scale.

In order to identify the subjects, two raters watched the video tapes and heard the tape-recorded discussions together. (The researcher coordinated the video-tapes and the recorders so as to make it more convenient for going back and forth repeatedly.) They, however, graded independently on separate grading sheets without discussion. The time of the subject's talk was measured with two digital stop watches. The frequency of participation in the discussion was tallied for each subject. A transcript of
each subject's talk was made to help determine the duration of talking time and to determine the frequencies of participation. (See Appendix L for a sample transcript.) The quality of their recorded talks, the time, and frequency were rated on a scale of 1 (low) to 6 (high). The Adjusted Scale for Discussion Activity is presented in Table IV.

### TABLE IV

**ADJUSTED SCALE FOR DISCUSSION ACTIVITY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Quality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minutes</td>
<td>Score</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2-3)*</td>
<td>(4-5)*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 +</td>
<td>3 +</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-4.59</td>
<td>2.31-2.59</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-3.59</td>
<td>2.00-2.30</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-2.59</td>
<td>1.31-1.59</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1.59</td>
<td>1.00-1.30</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- .59</td>
<td>- .59</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* number of group members  
** score in Quality does not reflect results of scores on Time or Frequency. It is based on the Evaluation for Discussion Skill (Appendix I)

The correlation between the two graders on discussion activities of all subjects was \( r = .820 \), as shown in Figure 2. No student's grade on the two sets of ratings differed by more than one point. All the test scores were coded and analyzed using a standard computer program from the
Figure 2. Plot of Inter-rater Reliability of Two Graders on Discussion Activity
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CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Overview

This Chapter contains a presentation of the results of the experiment and a discussion of some possible interpretations of these results. Included are the Experimental Hypotheses, an explanation of the Collection and Reporting of the Data, Findings of the Hypotheses, and the Summary.

Experimental Hypotheses

The analyses of data in this chapter focus on testing two experimental hypotheses:

1. Subjects who have class discussion in pre-writing will produce significantly better compositions than subjects who have no class discussion.

2. Within the treatment groups, the verbally active students in pre-writing class discussion will produce significantly better compositions than the non-verbally active students in class discussion.
Collection and Reporting of the Data

Data were collected at three times during the study and the following test instruments were used. At the beginning of the experiment all subjects were given a pre-test with the Writing Assessment Test (WAT) designed by CUNY. This instrument has a reliability coefficient of 83.2 for determining minimum competency in writing. One week after the pre-test, Writing Essay #1 was assigned as post-test 1. At this time, only the experimental groups had a fifteen minute class discussion during the pre-writing time. These groups were video-taped and tape-recorded during the class discussion.

One week after the post-test 1, Writing Essay #2, which offered topics equivalent to Writing Essay #1, was given as post-test 2 following the same procedure as post-test 1 with the exception of changing the treatment groups. Two graders read all the essays of pre- and post-tests, and they showed very strong correlation coefficient, \( r = .968, .917, .958 \) respectively. The total score for an essay or discussion activity of the two graders could range between 1 and 6 in which 6 is the highest rating. The level of significance was arbitrarily set at the 0.05 level. The test scores were coded and analyzed using a standard computer program from the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS, 4) at North Texas State University. Initially the number of
subjects was 74, but only 51 students participated in all three tests. Thus all the following data were analyzed with 51 subjects. Means and standard deviations resulting from the analyses of the WAT pretest scores of all groups are presented in Table V.

**TABLE V**

**MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF WAT PRETEST**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Low (L.3)</th>
<th></th>
<th>High (L.4)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the WAT was administered to determine whether or not there was a significant difference between the experimental and control groups in both levels, in order to make sure of the homogeneity of the two groups in each level, and of the homogeneity of combined Group 1 and Group 2, Cochrans C test was performed. The post hoc comparison from analysis of variance tests revealed that there were no significant differences between Group 1 and Group 2 (p>0.394) at the beginning of the study. The post-tests could be administered with these findings.
Findings on the Hypotheses

The findings concerning Hypotheses One and Two are presented below. For clarification, it is necessary to point out the grouping patterns utilized in the analysis of the data:

Group 1 in Level 3 vs. Group 2 in Level 3
Group 1 in Level 4 vs. Group 2 in Level 4
Groups 1 in Level 3 & 4 vs. Groups 2 in Level 3 & 4
Group 1 and Group 2 in Level 4

These patterns were chosen because the same instructor conducted all the classes for this study, and the same two raters graded all the essays consistently. It was assumed that no particular variables existed in instruction or grading.

The First Hypothesis

Post-tests were given providing treatment alternately. Group 1 had class discussion as a pre-writing activity and Group 2 had conventional method without class discussion on post-test 1. The positions were reversed in post-test 2. The statistical design used to test for treatment differences was a two-factor analysis of variance with repeated measurements on one factor. Descriptive statistics for the two tests are included in Table VI.
### TABLE VI

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR POST-TESTS 1 AND 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Post-test 1</th>
<th>Post-test 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2.76*</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Experimental-group score*

As there were no extreme scores, it was not necessary to adjust the scores. The scores ranged from low of 1.25 to a high of 4.75 in post-tests 1 and 2. The experimental group performed better than the control group in post-test 1 (2.76, 2.44 respectively) but the score of the experimental group (2.84) appeared to be little lower than that of control group (3.04) in post-test 2. When the mean differences were compared between post-tests 1 and 2, however, Group 2 showed more higher score than that of Group 1.

With the data in Table VI, Analysis of variance tests were conducted for cross-comparison between and within groups (3, p. 128). The data were analyzed by the multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) program of SPSS as shown in Table VII.
### TABLE VII

**ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE : POST-TESTS 1 AND 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>df.</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Mean Squares</th>
<th>F Ratio</th>
<th>Sig. of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Between</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>.117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject/Group</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>32.67</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Within</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tests</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>12.52</td>
<td>.001**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group/Test</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.573</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>11.58</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** P<.01

There were no significant differences between Group 1 and Group 2 (F=2.55, p>.05). There were, however, significant differences within subjects (F=12.52, p<.01).

Analysis of variance revealed no significant difference between Group 1 and Group 2 on post-test 1. Analysis of covariance, however, using the scores from the pretest as the covariate, showed that the main effects between experimental and control groups were significant (F=5.40, p<.05). The score of the post-test 1 were significantly related to the pre-test scores (F=25.57, p<.01). Analysis of covariance table for these data is shown in Table VIII.
TABLE VIII

ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE : PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>df.</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Mean Squares</th>
<th>F Ratio</th>
<th>Sig. of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Covariate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.57</td>
<td>6.57</td>
<td>25.57</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Effects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>5.40</td>
<td>.024*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explained</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.97</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>15.48</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>12.34</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>20.30</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** p<.01    * p<.05

Hatch and Farhady mention that if analysis of variance gives a high F-ratio, it is still necessary to test the differences to be sure that they are where we believe them to be (3, p. 140). They also state that if the experiment is one which compares each subject's performance on two different tests, then the matched t-test formula should be used (3, p. 115) to determine which pair or pairs, of group means differed significantly (1, p. 674). Accordingly, matched t-tests were performed to determine whether the difference between the two mean scores is significant. (See Table IX)
TABLE IX
A COMPARISON OF PRE AND POST-TESTS BETWEEN GROUP 1 AND GROUP 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tests</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post 1</td>
<td>Group 1#</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>1.78</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post 2</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>0.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group 2#</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# Experimental group

The results of these matched t-test revealed that there were no significant differences between Group 1 and Group 2 on pre and post-tests (p=0.87, p=0.08, p=0.32 respectively) at the .05 level.

In the comparison of differences within groups, Group 1, which had treatment in post-test 1, showed significant improvement in actual writing when one compares the scores of post-test 1 with those of the pre-test (t=2.96, p<.01). While Group 2 showed slightly positive results, they are not statistically significant (t=0.28, p>.05) as shown in Table X. The opposite was true in post-test 2.
Table X indicates that Group 2, which had the treatment following post-test 1, were significantly improved after their treatment ($t=0.66, p<.01$). Also Group 1 considerably improved after comparing the scores of post-test 1 with post-test 2. It could be conjectured that Group 1 was sensitized by the experience in post-test 1. Ferguson states about carry-over effects that performance under prior treatment could effect performance under subsequent treatment (2, p. 318). Especially, in this experimental
design on which treatment was given alternately, the increases would be partially due to test effect. The increases in Group 1, however, were not statistically significant ($t=-1.99$, $p>.05$).

A summary analysis of both groups, performed with matched t-tests, manifested that no significant differences were found between groups ($p=.87$, $p=.08$, $p=.32$), but there were significant differences within groups after comparing pre-test and post-tests on which groups had treatment ($p=.007$, $p=.005$ respectively). Consequently, the first hypothesis was supported.

Figure 3 shows the pre- and post-tests means for the 51 cases. Inspection of this Figure reveals clearly that both group 1 and 2, when they had treatment, show significant improvement. Initially, in the WAT pre-test, the mean score of Group 1 (2.37) was lower than that of Group 2 (2.48). In the post-test 1, however, on which Group 1 had class discussion, the mean score of Group 1 (2.76) was higher than Group 2 (2.44) which had no treatment. Although no treatment was given to Group 1 on post-test 2, their scores increased noticeably (3.04). As mentioned earlier, the possible explanation is because Group 1 might have been sensitized by the experience in post-test 1. That increase was not statistically significant though.
The Second Hypothesis

Matched t-tests were utilized to determine significant differences within groups on pre and post-tests in Level 3 and Level 4, on which Group 1 had class discussion as a prewriting activity and Group 2 had conventional method without class discussion in post-test 1. The positions were reversed in post-test 2. Table XI summarizes the results in Level 4.
### TABLE XI

**A COMPARISON OF DIFFERENCES WITHIN GROUPS IN LEVEL 4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>Mean Diff.</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1 (N=12)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre / Post 1 #</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>-2.81</td>
<td>.017*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postl/Post 2</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>-1.81</td>
<td>.098</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2 (N=11)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre / Post 1</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>.365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postl/Post 2 #</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>-3.07</td>
<td>.012*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* * p<.05
# The tests with treatment

The results indicated that in Level 4, Group 1 which had the treatment showed significant improvement in actual writing in post-test 1 (t=-2.81, p<.05), while no significant differences were found in post-test 2 (t=-1.81, p>.05) on which no treatment was given. Group 2 showed no significant differences in post-test 1 on which they had no class discussion (t=.95, p>.05). In post-test 2 on which treatment was given, however, Group 2 showed significant improvement in actual writing (t=-3.07, p<.05).
The groups in Level 3, however, demonstrated no significant improvement after treatment ($p=.116, p=.158$ respectively) as shown in Table XII. Thus, discussion as a pre-writing technique was not significantly facilitative in Level 3. Consequently, the groups in level 3 were excluded from the test to determine the effectiveness of class discussion to actual writing.

**TABLE XII**

**A COMPARISON OF DIFFERENCES WITHIN GROUPS IN LEVEL 3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>Mean Diff.</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group 1 (N=13)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre / Post 1 #</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>-1.69</td>
<td>.116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>post1/post 2</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>.392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group 2 (N=15)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre / Post 1</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>-1.27</td>
<td>.224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post1/Post 2 #</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>-1.49</td>
<td>.158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# The tests with treatment

The scores of discussion activities in Level 4 were obtained to test hypothesis 2, as stated: Within the
treatment groups, the verbally active students in pre-writing class discussion will produce significantly better compositions than the non-verbally active students in class discussion. Means and standard deviations of writing scores and discussion scores are shown in Table XIII.

TABLE XIII
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS: WRITING SCORES AND DISCUSSION SCORES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing Time</td>
<td>3.091</td>
<td>.772</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Time</td>
<td>4.731</td>
<td>1.126</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Frequency</td>
<td>4.500</td>
<td>1.631</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency Quality</td>
<td>5.039</td>
<td>1.341</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
<td>4.654</td>
<td>.711</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In general, discussion scores were higher than writing scores. With these data, analysis of covariance tests were performed in advance in order to determine the significant differences in the combined two groups in Level 4. The result of these tests revealed that there was absolutely no main effect between Group 1 and Group 2 ($F = 0.003$, $p = .958$) as shown in Table XIV. These twenty-six subjects in Level 4 were included for testing the second hypothesis.
TABLE XIV

ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE: WRITING AND DISCUSSION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Mean Squares</th>
<th>F Ratio</th>
<th>Sig. of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Covariate</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9.200</td>
<td>9.200</td>
<td>37.174</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Effects</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>.958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explained</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.200</td>
<td>4.602</td>
<td>18.589</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>5.692</td>
<td>0.253</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>14.892</td>
<td>0.596</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** p<.01

Analysis of covariance tests, using the scores from the discussion scores as the covariate, revealed that class discussion significantly effected actual writing scores \(F=37.17, p<.01\).

Correlational analysis provided systematic information about the relationship between discussion activity and actual writing scores. An inter-correlational matrix was generated in order to check on the correlations and inter-relatedness between actual writing scores and scores of each discussion factor, i.e., time, frequency, and quality. (See Table XV).
The matrix showed that each discussion factor, time (r=.721), frequency (r=.682), and quality (r=.794) is highly correlated not only to the actual writing scores but also to one another. Among the three factors of discussion activities, quality contributed most highly to the writing scores.

Analysis of covariance tests were also performed with the obtained correlation coefficient. The results of these tests, using the scores from time, frequency, and quality as covariates, revealed that only quality was significantly effected to the writing scores ($F=4.78$, $p<.05$) as shown in Table XVI.
### TABLE XVI

**ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE: WRITING AND DISCUSSION ACTIVITIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>df.</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Mean Squares</th>
<th>F Ratio</th>
<th>Sig. of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Covariates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9.798</td>
<td>3.266</td>
<td>13.527</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.379</td>
<td>0.379</td>
<td>1.570</td>
<td>.224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.031</td>
<td>.861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.155</td>
<td>1.155</td>
<td>4.783</td>
<td>.040*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Effects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.025</td>
<td>0.025</td>
<td>0.103</td>
<td>.751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explained</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9.822</td>
<td>2.456</td>
<td>10.171</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5.070</td>
<td>0.241</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>14.892</td>
<td>0.596</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p<.05

Some students talked very little while others participated in the discussion frequently, but they sometimes led the discussion in the wrong direction with questions which were not helpful for themselves or group members. It was not always true that the more often or the longer they talked, the better discussion scores they made.

Pearson Product Moment Correlation between discussion activities and writing abilities were calculated, correlation coefficient, r=78.6 was obtained. By knowing this high, positive linear relationship, the writing score
of each individual could be predicted from that individual's score on discussion activities. Observing the interrelationship between analysis of variance and regression may be helpful in conceptualizing the variance accounted for or explained in a given data analysis (3, p. 226). Additional information was obtained when calculations were made using discussion scores which combined the three discussion factors, i.e., time, frequency, and quality, as one independent variable in the equation on the simple regression analysis. (See Table XVII).

**TABLE XVII**

VARIABLES IN THE EQUATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLE</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>BETA</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>SIG T</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>.539</td>
<td>.087</td>
<td>.786</td>
<td>6.23</td>
<td>.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>.544</td>
<td>.420</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>.2088</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B: The slope
BETA: The standardized regression coefficient
SE B: Standard error BETA
Constant: The Y intercept

The predictability equation is \( y = a + bx \), in which \( y \) is the predicted writing score, calculated with the \( a \) (constant) and \( b \) (regression coefficient=the slope of regression line) provided on the computer printout and the scores of the predictor variables \( x \), discussion scores.
But doing this overlooks the possibility that the independent variable may be intercorrelated, or that they may interact with the effects of the dependent variable (6, p. 6).

With the data in Table XVII, the regression equation for the writing on discussion, \( y = 0.543 + 0.539(x) \) were gained. By regressing writing score on discussion activity, the best-fitting straight line was drawn as in Figure 4.

![Figure 4. Regression Line of Writing Scores on Discussion Score](image)
Inspection of Figure 4 reveals that the verbally active students in pre-writing class discussion produce significantly better compositions than non-verbally active students in class discussions. Whichever tests were used to determine the relationship, the same results came out. Consequently, the second hypothesis appears to be positive.

Summary

1. There were no significant differences between the group which had class discussion as a pre-writing activity and the group which had no class discussion as a pre-writing activity in actual writing abilities in each test. Even though the differences between groups were not statistically significant, performances for both groups were significantly improved after treatment.

2. The groups in the lower level, which have a more limited speaking ability, showed no significant differences between groups and within groups after treatment.

3. The verbally active students in pre-writing class discussion produced significantly better compositions than the non-verbally active students in class discussion in the upper level.

4. The correlation between the discussion activity score and the actual writing score was significantly high in the upper level. Time, frequency, and quality of the discussion significantly affect the actual writing, especially the quality of the discussion.


CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study examined the effect of class discussion as a pre-writing activity on actual writing performance. The purpose of this study was to compare the class discussion method with the conventional methods used in ESL classes to determine the effect of class discussion on the actual writing performance in a carefully controlled study.

The participants in this study included the Level 3 and Level 4 students enrolled in the Intensive English Language Institute of North Texas State University during the Spring semester of 1986. The morning classes of Level 3 and Level 4 became Group 1, and, the afternoon classes of Level 3 and Level 4 became Group 2.

The instrument used as a pre-test in this study was the Writing Skill Assessment Test (WAT). This test, designed by CUNY, has a reliability coefficient of 83.2 for determining minimum competency in writing.
To avoid the potential-for-practice effect, Writing Essays #1 and #2 were developed to assign as post-tests, which had topics similar to the WAT pre-test. Data from the scores made on all tests given during the study, compiled by two qualified graders, were sorted and processed at the North Texas State University Computing Center.

Cochrans C test was performed first to determine the significant difference between Group 1 and Group 2 in each level. Group 1 and Group 2 combined on the WAT pre-test. The results of these tests revealed that there were no significant differences between Group 1 and Group 2 in both levels. Analysis of variance tests were used to determine significant differences between Group 1 and Group 2 of Level 3 and Level 4. No significant differences were found between groups at the beginning of the study.

Analysis of variance tests were utilized to determine significant differences between groups and within groups on post-test 1, before which Group 1 had class discussion as a pre-writing activity and Group 2 had conventional method without class discussion. The results of these tests showed that there were no significant differences between groups. However, Group 1, which had the treatment showed significant improvement in actual writing when the scores were compared on post-test 1 with those of the pre-test (p<.01). While Group 2 showed slightly positive results, they were not statistically significant.
Post-test 2 was utilized during the second section of the study in order to determine the treatment effect caused by group 2 being involved in class discussion. The results indicated that there were no significant differences between groups. Group 2, however, showed significant improvement in actual writing when their scores on post-test 2 were compared to their scores on post-test 1 (p<.01). Group 1 also showed positive results when their two scores were compared, but the results were not statistically significant.

A summary analysis of both groups was performed using two-way analysis of variance. No significant differences were found between groups but there were significant differences within groups after comparing pre-test and post-tests (p<0.001). Matched t-tests also provide evidence that demonstrates that both groups in Level 4 showed significant improvement (p<0.01) after treatment (class discussion). The groups in Level 3, however, demonstrated no significant differences between and within groups after treatment (p>0.12, p>0.16, respectively). Consequently, the groups in Level 3 were excluded from the test to determine the effectiveness of class discussion on actual writing. Thus class discussion as pre-writing technique was not utilized in Level 3.
Analysis of variance tests were performed in advance to determine the significant differences in the combined two groups in Level 4. The results of these tests revealed that there was absolutely no main effect between Group 1 and Group 2 \((p>0.96)\). Analysis of covariance tests, using the scores from the discussion activity as the covariate, revealed that class discussion significantly effected actual writing scores. There was a high, positive linear relationship between discussion activities and writing abilities \((r=78.6)\). The results of analysis of covariance tests, using the scores from time, frequency, and quality as covariates, to determine which variance contributed more to the actual writing, revealed that the scores of time, frequency, and quality were highly correlated to the writing scores. Among the three factors of discussion activities, quality produced the most significant effect.

Conclusions

Based on the experiments, several conclusions can be made. One such conclusion is that this research lends tentative support to the belief that class discussion as a pre-writing activity, when applied effectively, helps ESL students in their discourse to communicate them in the new language. With reference to a topic, hopefully a topic that truly engages them, students can make decisions about the most effective way to communicate their ideas.
Many ESL students are shy and reluctant to speak to the whole class. A small group discussion seems less threatening to ESL students who are reluctant to commit themselves on an issue before the entire class. As students hear other responses, they begin to sharpen their own notions about good writing and they are more likely to contribute ideas in a group.

Less skilled learners may have difficulties in controlling and managing the topic of the conversation, which may lead to tensions and impede communication. They paused so often and between such short period of discussion time that the overall relationship between ideas begins to suffer. Consequently, in the lower level groups, the fifteen minute discussion time might become a disadvantage.

The findings strongly support the assumption that students learn to write more effectively if they are actively involved in the writing process. Students talking about the topics they are to write on appears to play a crucial role in shaping the language used in their writing. Accordingly, the verbally active students produced better compositions after a pre-writing class discussion, than those non-active students after a class discussion. The quality of the talk during the discussion contributed most to their actual writing. The improvement they showed can be attributed to students' experiences in class discussion rather than to chance.
Implications

Today writing has been recognized as an essential part of language learning. While process-centered studies have already had an impact on writing instruction, ESL composition teachers, researchers, and textbook writers have, by and large, paid little attention to the findings. Recently, recognition of the usefulness of speaking as a pre-writing activity has been forthcoming at all educational levels. It is, however, relatively minimal or non-existent in an ESL writing situation. Teachers still emphasize sentence correctness too much and pay less attention to organization in writing. Free inquiry and debate are not encouraged in all countries, nor in all educational systems. It is necessary to make the composition class a forum for the exchange and development of ideas. When a person wants to develop and share an idea with an other person, he or she begins shaping and structuring papers and thus learns something of structure and organization. In-class discussion that precedes the act of writing can act as a focus on what is meant as a good idea, especially if discussions allow students to construct meaning for themselves and to share meaning with others.

The findings of this study suggest that such an approach is especially warranted when dealing with advanced ESL students in terms of class placement. Such findings
indicate that the same pedagogical strategies should not be used for ESL students in a writing class. Attention to process is thus necessary but not sufficient for low level students. There is a need to determine whether or not a minimum level of language competence is required before students are able to view writing in a second language as a process of discovering meaning.

Given the large class sizes in most ESL teaching situations and given the abundance of writing that persistent practice produces, it is especially urgent that students not be treated as passive recipients of knowledge. Instead of asking students to accept the prescribed meaning conveyed by teachers and language in textbooks, teachers should train students as frequently as possible to use language to construct meaning. Considering the effectiveness of class discussion in pre-writing, it is necessary to permit the integration of spoken and written language in the classroom, even to the lower level students who have more difficulties in speech access, encouraging them to place a priority on meaningful and purposeful speech.
Recommendations

This study included only a part of the many kinds of pre-writing activities, and only a part of the many levels of ESL students within a certain period. Students have wide differences in experiences and expectations. Selected activities compatible with the abilities and needs of the students are the essential parts of the writing program. A more complete investigation is needed.

Discussing the relevant components of a composition topic could arouse interest and initiate a common base of ideas among students. Only selected topics for discussion have been presented and discussed in this work. This observation seems especially true for writing done in the mode of exposition. A broader investigation including other rhetorical modes of narration, description, or argumentation should be undertaken.

Materials, instructional media, and evaluation procedures presented in the study are applicable to and effective in certain situations. Adaptation and modification may be necessary for other situations.

For maximum effectiveness in analyzing discussion activities, a microphone for each participant is also essential in each group beside a tape recorder when they are discussing a topic. As Rivers suggests, the size of the room should permit at least two discussion groups, because
the background noise from two or more groups tends to intensify the motivation to speak and reduces the isolation of the individual. The background noise, however, should be minimized for the sake of the experiment itself.

Rather than only offering definitive answers, the results of this study raise other questions. In this regard, additional research is needed in order to explore the following questions:

1. What would happen if the disadvantages to the experimental groups inherent in this study were removed, i.e., if the experimental or control group had the same amount of time for actual writing?

2. How big a difference would it make if the treatment were given to one group consistently instead of to both groups alternately?

3. What would happen if a teacher directed the group discussion instead of remaining absolutely out of it?

4. What would happen if this study were conducted with the students who all had the same language background?

5. What would happen if those students who have limited speaking ability had class discussions during pre-writing in their native languages?

ESL writing has been primarily a matter of observing correct grammar and mechanics rather than expressing an idea clearly and coherently. Moreover, the interest in
researching the relationship between speaking activities and writing has been a relatively minor trend. Even if most ESL students have limited exposure to language varieties, if only it is sure that writing can be reinforced by what has been practiced orally, a more effective technique for teaching composition should be employed and developed together by theorists, researchers and ESL teachers.

Some tension-reducing technique should be provided for ESL students who think that they have a serious language barrier to integrate speaking and writing. The meaning or content of the writing and speaking should be primarily emphasized. It is not enough to explain away ESL student writing problems as being caused by the language barrier.
Appendices
Appendix A

MEMORANDUM

To : Students of IELI
From : Hwa-Ja Park Bang
Date : April, 1986
Subject : Instructions to Students for Writing Composition

You have been selected to participate in an important experiment in writing. English teachers are interested in improving how they teach writing, and this experiment may help to improve the teaching of English composition, especially for ESL students and may help to increase your enjoyment of writing. The results, of course, will depend on your willingness to stick with the experiment and on your willingness to do your best.

Each week you will be given three topics about which you will probably have a great deal of knowledge and interest. You may choose the one you like. Your class teacher's mini lesson and the Tree-diagram will help you start your composition.

The experiment requires that no information about the experiment be given until after it is over. I hope you will cooperate and will find the experiment worthwhile.

Thank you again for your cooperation.
Appendix B

Demographic Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Today's Date</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Sex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

1. What is your native country?  
2. What is your native language?  
3. How long have you been studying English?  
   - more than 10 years  
   - 2-4 years  
   - 5-9 years  
   - less than 2 years  
4. How long have you been in the U.S.A.?  
   - more than 5 years  
   - 2-4 years  
   - 1-2 years  
   - 6-11 months  
   - less than 5 months  
5. Have you ever taken English composition course in your country?  
   - Yes.  
   - No.  
   - If ever, more than 3 courses  
   - 1-2 courses  
6. What do you plan to do after you complete the course in IELI?  
   - study in undergraduate school  
   - study in graduate school  
   - go back to your country  
   - others  
7. What is your living arrangement in N.T.S.U.?  
   - dorm  
   - apartment  
   - private room  
   - with American family  
8. How much do you practice writing composition outside of class a week?  
   - more than 10 hours  
   - 2-4 hours  
   - 5-9 hours  
   - less than 1 hour  
9. When you have a writing assignment, do you usually discuss it with someone or just think-write alone?  
   - discuss with someone  
   - think-write alone  
   - both of them
Appendix C

Notice of Consent

I understand that I am participating in a research project and that I am assured anonymity in the report of the finding of this study. I agree to cooperate fully in three one-hour composition sessions.

I also understand that these recordings will be held in strictest confidence by the researcher.

Name _______________________

Date _________________
Appendix D

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
WRITE SKILLS ASSESSMENT TEST

DIRECTIONS

You will have fifty minutes to plan write the essay assigned below. (You may wish to use your fifty minutes in the following way: 10 minutes planning what you are going to write; 30 minutes writing; 10 minutes rereading and correcting what you have written.)

You should express your thoughts clearly and organize your ideas so that they will make sense to a reader.

Write your essay on the lined pages of your booklet. You may use the inside of the front cover of the booklet for your own notes.

You must write your essay on one of the following assignments. Read each one carefully and then choose either A or B.

A. It always strikes me as a terrible shame to see young people spending so much of their time staring at television. If we could unplug all the TV sets in America, our children would grow up to be healthier, better educated, and more independent human beings.

Do you agree or disagree? Explain and illustrate your answer from your own experience, your observations of others, or your reading.

B. Older people bring to their work a lifetime of knowledge and experience. They should not be forced to retire, even if keeping them on the job cuts down on the opportunities for young people to find work.

Do you agree or disagree? Explain and illustrate your answer from your own experience, your observations of others, or your reading.
Appendix E

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

FRESHMAN SKILLS ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

Writing Skills Assessment Test Evaluation Scale

The essay is competently organized and the ideas are expressed in appropriate language. A sense of pattern of development is present from beginning to end. The writer supports assertions with explanation or illustrations.

Sentences reflects a command of syntax within the ordinary range of standard written English. Grammar, punctuation, and spelling are generally correct.

5-4

The writer introduces some point or idea and demonstrates an awareness that development or illustration is called for.

The essay presents a discernible pattern of organization, even if there are occasional digressions.

The essay demonstrates sufficient command of vocabulary to convey, without serious distortion or excessive simplification, the range of the writer's ideas.

Sentences reflect a sufficient command of syntax to ensure reasonable clarity of expression. The writer generally avoids both the monotony of rudimentary syntax and the incoherence created by tangled syntax.

The writer demonstrates through punctuation an understanding of the boundaries of the sentence. The writer spells the common words of the language with a reasonable degree of accuracy. Exceptions can be made for the so-called spelling "demons" which frequently trouble even an advanced writer.

The writer shows the ability to use regularly, but not necessarily faultlessly, the common forms of agreement and of grammatical inflection in standard written English.
An idea or point is suggested, but is undeveloped or presented in a purely repetitious way.

The pattern of the essay is somewhat random and relationships between sentences and paragraphs are rarely signaled.

The essay is restricted to a very narrow range of language, so that the vocabulary chosen frequently does not serve the needs of the writer.

The syntax of the essay is not sufficiently stable to ensure reasonable clarity of expression. The syntax often is rudimentary or tangled.

The writer frequently commits errors of punctuation which obscure sentence boundaries.

The writer spells the common words of the language with only intermittent accuracy.

The essay reveals recurrent grammatical problems; if there are only occasional problems, this may be due to the extremely narrow range of syntactical choices the writer has used.

The essay suffers from general incoherence and has no discernible pattern or organization. It displays a high frequency or error in the regular features of standard written English. Lapses in punctuation, spelling, and grammar often frustrate the reader. Or, the essay is so brief that any reasonably accurate judgment of the writer's competence is impossible.
Appendix F

Tree-Diagram

Appendix G

WRITING ESSAY #1

DIRECTIONS

You will have 55 minutes to write the essay assigned below. (40 minutes for the students who have the class discussion)

You will be asked to write as well as possible within class time and to try to bring your composition to some sort of a conclusion focusing on content rather than on correctness in grammar and spelling.

Write your essay on the lined pages of your booklet. You may use the inside of the front cover of the booklet for your own notes.

You must write your essay on one of the following assignments. Read each one carefully and then choose one of them.

1. Improving Study Skills

A major problem facing foreign students in the U.S. is how to study effectively. Language problems are an obvious part of this problem; however, a foreign student must also read and take notes effectively to succeed in American schools. Discuss what you believe are effective ways to improve study skills.

2. Adjusting to Life in the U.S.

Perhaps the biggest problem facing someone from another country in the U.S. is the American culture and lifestyle. Life in the U.S. is so different in some ways from life in other countries that many foreigners in the U.S. do not know how to adjust to American life. Discuss how a foreigner in the U.S. can successfully adjust to the American lifestyle.

3. How to Find True Happiness

Many people in the past have written down many ideas on how to find true happiness, but most people still do not feel that they are truly happy. Money, power, fame—all these things have been thought of as roads to happiness, but still people are not satisfied. Discuss the best ways to find real happiness in this life.
Appendix H

WRITING ESSAY #2

DIRECTIONS

You will have 55 minutes to write the essay assigned below.
(40 minutes for the students who have the class discussion).

You will be asked to write as well as possible within class time and to try to bring your composition to some sort of a conclusion focusing on content rather than on correctness in grammar and spelling.

Write your essay on the lined pages of your booklet. You may use the inside of the front cover of the booklet for your own notes.

You must write your essay on one of the following assignments. Read each one carefully and then choose one of them.

1. The Best Way to Learn a Second Language

There are many benefits to knowing a second language—being able to communicate with people from another country and learning about other cultures are two examples. But what is the best way to learn a second language? Discuss what you believe are the best ways to learn a second language.

2. Dealing With People From Other Cultures

International students in the U.S. face many problems. Learning to deal with Americans can be difficult enough, but classes in the U.S. often put an international student together with not only Americans but also people from many different countries. Discuss how a student can learn to deal with people from many different cultures.

3. How to Settle Disagreements Between Nations

Nations have disagreed with other nations since the beginning of history. Often, this leads to war. In modern times, attempts have been made to settle these disagreements peacefully, but wars still happen. Discuss what you believe are the best ways for nations to settle disagreements.
Appendix I

EVALUATION OF DISCUSSION SKILLS (QUALITY)

Student's name: ______________________
Date: ______________________
Topic # ________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Gives attention to the member of the group who is talking</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Responds logically to questions or comments made by other members</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Makes helpful comments or asks relevant questions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Exhibits good spoken fluency when contributing to the discussion</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total ________
Appendix J

February 7, 1986

TO: The Steering Committee

FROM: Hwa-Ja Park Bang, Researcher

RE: The answers according to the IELI Guideline for Research Proposals

1. Research Topic: The Effect of Using Class Discussion as a Pre-writing Activity in Teaching Composition to ESL Students

2. Research Techniques or Instruments:
   a). To obtain the information and solicit cooperation of the subjects, Demographic Questionnaire (Appendix B), Memorandum for explanation of this study, and Notice of Consent (Appendix C) will be given to the students during the 1st session.
   b). The Writing Skills Assessment Test (WAT), designed by CUNY, will be used as a pre-test (Appendix D). This instrument has a reliability coefficient of 83.2 for determining minimum competency in writing.
   c). During the 2nd session, Writing Essay #1 will be assigned as post-test 1. At this time, only the experimental group will have class discussion in pre-writing time (15 minutes). This group will be video-taped and tape-recorded during the class discussion.
   d). During the 3rd session, Writing Essay #2 will be assigned as post-test 2 following the same procedure as post-test 1, with the exception of changing the treatment group. The schedule of the Experiment is shown in Table 2.

3. Sample and Time: Students of Level 3 and Level 4 will be the sample for this study, and they will have three one-hour session for writing, one per three weeks. The Daily Schedule is shown in Table 1 and 2.

4. Directions for Administration:
   a). Teachers, Class, Grading: In order to make groups of 15-20 students, Section 1 and 2, 3 and 4 of each Level
The proposal is attached.
Appendix K

March 12, 1986

TO: The Class Instructors, Graders, and Video Operators, Intensive English Language Institute (IELI)

FROM: Hwa-Ja Park Bang, Researcher

RE: The Instructions for Conducting This Study

1. Research Topic: The Effect of Using Class Discussion as a Pre-writing Activity in Teaching Composition to ESL Students

2. Sample: The subjects of this study will include Level 3 (Section 1, 2, 3, 4) and Level 4 (Section 1, 2, 5, 6) students enrolled in IELI during the Spring semester of 1986.

3. Location: The subjects will have three one-hour session for writing, one per three weeks in the conference room of IELI.

4. Procedures and Tasks:

4.1. Tasks of the class instructors

a). In order to make groups of 15-20 students two sections of each Level need to be combined (1 and 2, 3 and 4 in Level 3, 1 and 2, 5 and 6 in Level 4).

b). During the 1st session, to obtain the information and solicit cooperation of the subjects, Memorandum for explanation of this study (Appendix A) Demo-graphic Questionnaire (Appendix B) and Notice of Consent (Appendix C) will be given to the students. They should complete these forms within 10 minutes and hand them back.

c). Immediately upon completion of these forms, the Writing Skills Assessment Test (WAT), designed by CUNY (Appendix D), will be assigned as a pre-test for 50 minutes. Students will be provided a blue book for writing paper and they can use the inside of the front cover page for their own notes. The Instructor will distribute a Tree-Diagram sheet (Appendix F) and give a mini-lesson on the topics. Students may consult with the teacher as necessary for further explanation of the topic, but they are not allowed to ask questions about their
compositions per se.

d). During the 2nd session, Writing Essay #1 will be assigned as post-test 1. The instructor also distributes a Tree-Diagram sheet (Appendix F) and gives a mini-lesson on the topics to both the experimental group and control group. This Tree-Diagram, drawn by Meyer, should help students generate ideas and organize these ideas before they begin to write. (Following this presentation for 5 minutes, the control group will be given 55 minutes to think-write a composition, each student writing on the topic his or her choice.

The experimental group will have class discussion in pre-writing time (15 minutes). Each student in the experimental group will choose one topic and form a small discussion group with four or five students who select the same topic. Then students should suggest possible causes for the problem they have selected and discuss possible solutions for each.

During the 15-minute class discussion, students are encouraged to talk freely but not to exceed one minute at a time. During the tape-recording of their talks, each of the groups will have its own tape recorder and will be recorded on VCR.

The students in the experimental group will be given 40 minutes to write immediately following the discussion.

e). During the 3rd session, Writing Essay #2 will be assigned as post-test 2 following the same procedure as post-test 1, with the exception of changing the treatment group. The Schedule of the Experiment is shown on next page.

f). Right after each class, all the papers will be sent to the researcher who will remove all identifying marks from each, enter its author's name on the list, and assign a code number to it.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Session</th>
<th>Group 1 (Lo. &amp; Hi.)</th>
<th>Group 2 (Lo. &amp; Hi.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Session</td>
<td>Demographic Questionnaire: 5 minutes</td>
<td>Topic-explanation with Tree-Diagram: 5 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Notice of Consent: 5 minutes</td>
<td>Tree-Diagram: 5 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Writing Assessment Test: 50 minutes</td>
<td>Essay writing #1: 55 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Topic-explanation with Tree-Diagram)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Session</td>
<td>Topic-explanation with Tree-Diagram: 5 min.</td>
<td>Topic-explanation with Tree-Diagram: 5 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion with topic (video-taping): 15 min.</td>
<td>Essay writing #1: 55 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Essay writing #1: 40 min.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Session</td>
<td>Topic-explanation with Tree-Diagram: 5 min.</td>
<td>Topic-explanation with Tree-Diagram: 5 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Essay writing #2: 55 min.</td>
<td>Discussion with topic (video-taping): 15 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Essay writing #2: 55 min.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2. The Tasks of Graders

a). Two judges will read all the papers to allow for the computation of inter-rater reliability. As the blue books, without covers, are assigned only a code number instead of student's real name, each scorer will not know whether the composition is from an experimental group or a control group, from a low level or a high level. The two graders should be identical both for experimental groups and control groups in pre- and post-tests for consistency of grading.

b). As two graders read these essays independently, each grader will record scores on his or her scoring sheets for each student, and not in the blue books. The scoring sheets will be returned to the researcher for tabulation.

c). The judgemental norm will be based on CUNY's evaluation scale (Appendix E), and essays will be rated on scale of 1 (low) to six (high). Each grader's holistic rating based on this predetermined criteria will be used for determining writing ability.

d). If more than a two-point difference occurs, a third
reader will be necessary. After computing the score, correlation will be determined for inter-rater reliability of two rater's grading of essays on pre- and post-tests.

4.3. The Tasks of Operator for Video-taping

During sessions 2 and 3, video-taping is needed for 15 minutes during the class discussion only in experimental groups of Level 3 & 4; two times for morning classes, two times for afternoon classes. All groups must be captured in two screens.

4.4. The Tasks of Scorers for Discussion Activity

When video-tapes and recorded talk are analyzed the talking time will be measured with a stop watch and frequency of participation in discussion will be tallied for each subject. The quality of their recorded talk will be judged based on the Evaluation of Discussion Skills (Appendix I). These three factors, i.e., Time, Frequency, and Quality of their talk as discussion activities will be rated on a six-point scale in which 6 is the highest rating as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjusted Scale for Discussion Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minutes Score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2-3)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4-5)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Times Score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2-3)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4-5)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Score</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Quality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minutes</td>
<td>Score</td>
<td>Times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2-3)*</td>
<td>(4-5)*</td>
<td>(2-3)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5+</td>
<td>3+</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4–4.59</td>
<td>2.31–2.59</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3–3.59</td>
<td>2.00–2.30</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2–2.59</td>
<td>1.31–1.59</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1–1.59</td>
<td>1.00–1.30</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– .59</td>
<td>– .59</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* number of group members

** score in Quality does not reflects results of scores on Time or Frequency. It is based on the Evaluation for Discussion Skills (Appendix I)

This project explores the effect of class discussion on actual writing performance. Results will be given to all of the participating teachers and students. I hope future classroom activity can be guided by these results.
Appendix L
Discussion Activity
(Post-test 1)

Group 3

Topic #2: Adjusting to Life in the U.S.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>TIME( MIN.)</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
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Camera 2

I: First of all, I think we have to find exactly what is the problem. In my opinion, maybe the culture shock. Why foreign students suffer in the United States? (.22)

J: The problem is different custom of the people from your country. You have to find the different custom of the country. (.20)

N: I think that most problem is culture. Student came from different culture. We find the culture problem. Sometimes we find the different culture in the United States. You don't know the way how to make friends. American is difficult, because Americans have different culture from other culture, and the way they think. (.55)

C: I think that one way is we have to adopt to American style, not doing same thing they do but trying to respect the way they do, we can live with them. (.25)

I: I think we all mentioned the problem. Why don't you divide into sections of these problems and then we try to find solution? (.20)

J: You mean the communication, culture, life style? (.10)
It's OK but I think we can, we have to give the solution if we deal with, for example, food. the people in our apartment, he has to cook his own food because he doesn't like to eat American food. (.50)

Then, in your opinion, the solution maybe that person cook his own food instead of trying to American food? (.15)

No, It's not my idea. If he has that problem, for him, he is used to having trouble. He can solve problem and adopt it in that way. (.20)

We try to treat American ... Before you came to America, you had an idea to communicate with this people. (.12)

How we can communicate, We couldn't. (.5)

I mean, I am not talking about communicate, English language problem, I am talking about the way of communicate. (.15)

You are not talking about the problem of communicate, you are talking about life style. Communicate is help to express yourself and culture understanding. (.20)

Language can be a problem but even if you can speak English well, but if you don't understand life style and American people, you can not communicate. (.25)

What's the solution of these? (.5)

This is very difficult to describe. You had to read some books before you came here to try to understand American people, American culture, the way they think, the way how they communicate with them. (.40)

After you read and you know how to understand that, What are you going to do after that? Are you going to respect their idea? (.10)
N: Yea, I respect the idea, and tell them the way, and I have to get used to it. (.15)

C: I think, even if you try to change the whole American people, you can never change life style, only to try to compare with them. (.20)

J: You are trying to say communicate, but language is best important when people came to U.S. I think this problem is very difficult to adopt to in this country. When you need to communicate, if you don't know language, you can't speak, you can't understand other people. (.45)

C: If you can go to university, you can speak English well but the very very difficult thing is life style. (.20)

J: If you understand life style, you must know language. (.10)

I: OK, You are right, but only thing is we break down these problem. We have no enough time to finish this. Let him talk about. We talk about another problem. (.20)

J: I say, if you know the American people, you must know language. When you are going to the restaurant, you are going to the theater, you are going to live with the people, and when you want to know the culture, if you don't know the language, you can't know the people and communicate. The important is the language, and then you can do everything. (1.00)

I: Then, This may be the solution. How to learn quickly? (.10)

J: Study. (.2)

C: What do you think, we have talk food, culture, communicate, language, what's the another problem? (.20)

I: 
Maybe another problem and important problem is, foreign students feel alone. They feel separated. The unique solution of their problem is trying to find something he can do it, he can enjoy it here. (.50)

C:
Main thing is you have to not change, just adopt it, be yourself. (.10)
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