



Writing Process Performance in English Language Learners

Laura Landon-Favatas
George Washington University, Washington, DC
Anthony D. Koutsoftas
Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ



Introduction

- Second Language (L2) Learners perform poorer than their first language (L1) peers in all areas of the writing process, in particular: planning, translation, accuracy, and revision (Beal, 1996; Beare, 2000; Campbell, 1990; Hafernik, 1990; Hu, 1982; Kobayashi, 1992; La Paz & Sherman, 2013; Moragne & Silva, 1991; Silva, 1993; Stevenson et al., 2006; Stevenson, 2005; Uzawa & Cumming, 1989).
- Hayes and Flower (1980) defined writing as a recursive process that includes planning, translating, and revising.
- Survey research found that writing instruction is conducted in a linear fashion, over extended periods of time (Gilbert & Graham, 2010).
- First and second language proficiency levels impact writing process performance, as does task complexity (Kuiken & Vedder, 2012; Robinson, 2009).

Sample

N = 40	ELL (n = 20)	MTD (n = 20)
Mean Age in Years	11.55 (SD = .69)	11.50 (SD = .69)
Mean Mother's Years of Education	12.44 (SD = 2.41)	13.28 (SD = 1.41)
Girls : Boys	9 : 11	9 : 11
GRADE Reading Test (Williams, 2001)		
Vocabulary – Scaled Score*	100.2 (12.83)	108.89 (13.84)
Total Test Composite-Scaled Score	99.65 (13.21)	107.20 (12.10)

* $p < .05$

Procedures

- This data is a subset of data from a larger study evaluating the writing process in **sixth grade** students.
- Writing samples were collected across three days, one for: 1) planning; 2) translating; and 3) revising.
- Language transcription techniques (Koutsoftas & Gray, 2013; Puranik et al., 2008; Wagner et al., 2001) were used to analyze writing samples.

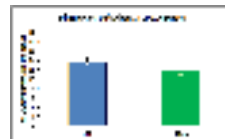


Discussion

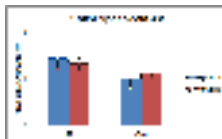
- This exploratory study provides descriptive information about writing process performance between bilingual and monolingual 6th grade students.
- No significant differences were observed on planning, translating, and revising measures, suggesting that bilingualism and the language differences associated with English language acquisition may not negatively impact these abilities; especially by the 6th grade.
- Descriptively, bilinguals outperformed monolingual peers on measures of planning, translating, and revising.

Results

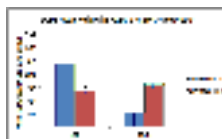
Planning:



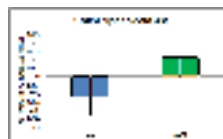
Translating - Complexity:



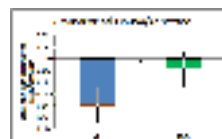
Translating - Accuracy:



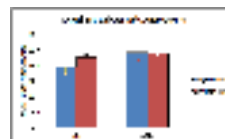
Translating - Complexity:



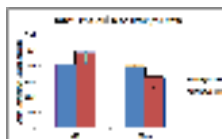
Revising - Accuracy:



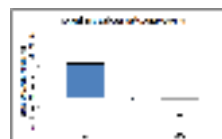
Translating - Productivity:



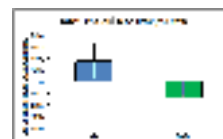
Translating - Mechanics:



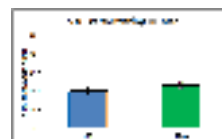
Revising - Productivity:



Revising - Mechanics:



Quality Score*:



* Six-traits writing rubric (Education Northwest, 2006).

- Bilinguals appear similar to monolinguals in the areas of: translation and accuracy.
- Accounting for SES and reading ability, we speculate that bilingual students show potential advantages over their monolingual peers on aspects of the writing process.
- By providing extended time and an engaging writing prompt likely contributed to relatively strong writing samples for all students in this study.
- A larger sample size is necessary to confirm these findings.

Acknowledgements

- Data collection for this project was funded by a graduate research support grant from the Graduate Professional Student Association @ Arizona State University.
- Many thanks to the students, families, schools, classrooms, teachers, and research assistants who participated in this study.
- For more information e-mail: lfavatas@gwmail.gwu.edu
- For more information e-mail: anthony.koutsoftas@shu.edu
- Be sure to visit: <http://blogs.shu.edu/row-lab/>



• Wang and Wen (2002) used the Hayes and Flower (1980) model to account for English Language Learners' differences, suggesting that task examination and generation are L2 dominant processes, while process controlling, idea generation, and origination are first language dominant.

• The **purpose** of the present investigation is to compare how bilingual (ELLs) and monolingual (MTD) 6th grade students attend to all three components of the Hayes and Flower (1980) model of the writing process in a linear manner. The **research questions** are:

1. Are there between group differences (ELL, MTD) on measures representing planning, translating, and revising?
2. Are there within group differences from first drafts to final copies?

References

- Beal, C. (1996). The role of comprehension monitoring in children's revision. *Educational Psychology Review*, 8(3), 219-238.
- Beare, S. (2000). *Differences in content generating and planning processes of adult L1 and L2 proficient writers*. (Ph.D., University of Ottawa (Canada). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses (304665364). Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com.proxygw.wrlc.org/docview/304665364?accountid=11243>;
- Campbell, C. (1990). Writing with others' words: Using background reading text in academic compositions. In B. Kroll (Ed.), *Second language writing: Research insights for the classroom second language writing: Research insights for the classroom* (pp. 211-230). New York: Cambridge Applied Linguistics.
- Education Northwest (2006). 6 + 1 trait writing. Retrieved November 21, 2006, from <http://www.nwrel.org/assessment/department.php?d=1>
- Gilbert, J. & Graham, S. (2010). Teaching writing to elementary students in grades 4–6: A national survey. *The Elementary School Journal*, 110(4), 494-518.
- Hafernik, J. (1990). *Relationships among English writing experience, contrastive rhetoric, and English expository prose of L1 and L2 college writers*. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 51(12), 4007A.
- Hayes and Flower (1980)
- Hu, Z. (1982). Some linguistic differences in the written English of Chinese and Australian students. *Language Learning and Communication*, 1(1), 39.
- Kobayashi, H. (1992). Effects of first language on second language writing: Translation versus direct composition. *Language Learning*, 42(2), 183-215.
- Koutsoftas, A.D. & Gray, S. (2013). A structural equation model of the writing process in typically developing sixth grade children. *Reading and Writing: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 26(6), 941-966.
- Kuiken, F., & Vedder, I. (2012). Syntactic complexity, lexical variation and accuracy as a function of task complexity and proficiency level in L2 writing and speaking. In A. Housen, F. Kuiken & I. Vedder (Eds.), *Dimensions of L2 performance and proficiency* (pp. 143-169). Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- La Paz, S., & Sherman, C. (2013). Revising strategy instruction in inclusive settings: Effects for English learners and novice writers. *Learning Disabilities: Research and Practice*, 28(3).
- Moragne e Silva, M. (1989). A study of composing in a first and second language. *Texas Papers in Foreign Language Education*, 1(1), 32-151.
- Puranik, C.S., Lombardino, L.J., Altmann, L.J.P. (2008). Assessing the microstructure of written language using a retelling paradigm. *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*, 17, 107-120.
- Robinson, P. (2009). Time and motion: Measuring the effects of the conceptual demands of tasks on second language speech production. *Applied Linguistics*, 30(4), 533; 533-554; 554.
- Silva, T. (1993). Toward an understanding of the distinct nature of L2 writing: The ESL research and its implications. *TESOL Quarterly*, 27(4), 657-677.
- Stevenson, M. (2005). *Reading and writing in a foreign language: A comparison of conceptual and linguistic processes in Dutch and English*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam.
- Stevenson, M., Schoonen, R., & Gloppe, K. (2006). Revising in two languages: A multi-dimensional comparison of online writing revisions. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 15, 201-233.
- Uzawa, K., & Cumming, A. (1989). Writing strategies in Japanese as a foreign language: Lowering or keeping up the standards. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 46(1), 178-194.
- Wagner, R.K., Puranik, C.S., Foorman, B., Foster, E., Gehron, L. Tschinkel, E., Thatcher Kantor, P. (2011). Modeling the development of written language. *Reading and Writing: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 24, 203-220. DOI: 10.1007/s11145-010-9266-7.
- Wang, W., & Wen, Q. (2002). L1 use in the L2 composing process: An exploratory study of 16 Chinese EFL writers. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 11(3), 225-246.
- Williams, K.T. (2001). *Technical manual: Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation*. Circle Pines, MN: American Guidance Service.