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Digital Object Identifier: <https://doi.org/10.13023/etd.2019.376>

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LEARNING TO WRITE IN AN ACADEMIC GENRE: ADULT ENGLISH
LEARNERS' USE OF SOCIOCULTURAL RESOURCES

DISSERTATION

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in the
College of Education
at the University of Kentucky

By
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Lexington, Kentucky
Director: Dr. Kristen H. Perry, Professor of Literacy Education
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2019

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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

LEARNING TO WRITE IN AN ACADEMIC GENRE: ADULT ENGLISH LEARNERS' USE OF SOCIOCULTURAL RESOURCES

In this multiple case study, I examined what types of sociocultural resources adult English learners brought with them from their previous contexts and what new resources they drew upon in the U.S. while learning to write in the essay genre. The study also identified how the participants chose to use previous and new sociocultural resources as mediated by the essay genre in the U.S. The following research foci shaped this study: (1) What types of sociocultural resources do adult English learners use while learning to write in the essay genre prior to and after their arrival in the U.S.? (2) How does the essay genre mediate adult English learners' choices about sociocultural resources in the U.S.?

Data collection involved semi-structured interviews, in-class and out-of-class participant observations and collection of artifacts over a period of seven weeks. Six weeks were dedicated to essay writing in an English composition course and English workshop, and one week was used to conduct a final in-depth interview with each participant. Analysis of data included coding and theme analysis. Four refugee students with diverse cultural backgrounds and who had different contacts within the educational system in the U.S. participated in the study.

Results indicate that the participants relied upon seven categories of social, symbolic, and material resources when they learned to write in the essay genre. The categories are not mutually exclusive, but they do capture the variety of resources participants drew upon as writers in the essay genre prior to and after their arrival in the U.S. To draw upon their resources in the U.S., the participants also made choices that resulted in three types of actions. Those actions included losses, retentions, and gains. The essay genre mediated some retentions and gains. Those choices were driven by the essay genre demands of the participants' new sociocultural context and, consequently, were rooted in their interaction within the new environment. Not all of the participants' choices were mediated by the essay genre; some of them were shaped by contextual influences. Contextual influences shaped losses, as well as some of their retentions and gains. Those were general choices that were situated within particular contextual realities.

As my study shows, the essay genre along with context played a significant role in contributing to shaping participant's agentive capacity. The essay genre, in particular, shaped the kind of competencies they had to demonstrate; contextual influences shaped the types of resources and their access to them. Understanding this interaction and, in particular, how genre helps students make purposeful choices and act as competent writers contributes to a more holistic understanding of learning to write as a sociocultural act. Implications for theory, research, and practice are discussed.

KEYWORDS: Adult English learners, second language writing, the essay genre, sociocultural resources, writers' choices

Lyudmyla Ivanyuk

09/17/2019

LEARNING TO WRITE IN AN ACADEMIC GENRE: ADULT ENGLISH
LEARNERS' USE OF SOCIOCULTURAL RESOURCES

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Working on this project was like climbing a mountain, seeing beautiful vistas that inspire you along the way, and facing challenges that could not be overcome without the valuable support of many people. First and foremost, my deepest gratitude goes to the four participants, who kindly agreed to assist me and generously dedicated their own time to this project. Lilly, Riya, Soso and Martin opened the doors of their homes to welcome me in their lives and share their life stories with me. I will always cherish with gratitude their generosity, kindness, willingness to help, and friendship that they shared with me.

My special gratitude goes to the English 101 professor and the ESL director at the community college. Because of your kindness and willingness to help, I was able to conduct this study. I will forever be grateful for opening this door of opportunity for me and for your invaluable collaboration in helping me learn about the ESL program, the college and for providing access to necessary resources.

I am deeply grateful to my advisor, Dr. Kristen Perry. I will always be thankful for your guidance, support, and commitment. The countless hours you spent reading, correcting, and commenting on my work were invaluable in helping me improve my thinking and writing. I will forever be in debt for everything you have taught me and the learning opportunities you have opened for me.

I am deeply grateful to my other committee members. Dr. Goldstein, I will always be thankful for your wisdom and the time you devoted to meet with me in person and discuss my project. Attending your course in spring 2019 was an important steppingstone in making a breakthrough in my analysis. I will forever cherish everything

I have learned from you and what you have done for me! I am also deeply grateful to Dr. Bailey. Your support and encouragement were always available when I faced difficulties on that mountain trail. Your insightful feedback was extremely helpful! My gratitude also goes to Dr. Almasi. Thank you for your willingness to serve on my committee and for your invaluable and thoughtful critique of my work! The feedback from each of my committee members challenged me to become a better learner and writer.

My special gratitude goes to Dr. Marshall Christensen. I would not be able to be where I am now and have an opportunity to study in this country without you and the opportunities you have opened for me. You have always believed in me more than I did. You were always there to encourage and help me whenever I struggled and stumbled. I will forever be in debt for your kindness, wisdom, commitment and ways you challenged me to grow and think of my work and progress as a way to serve others.

Lastly, I want to thank my parents. Despite the long distance between us and the many ways we have grown apart, you always did your best to understand what I was going through and support me morally.

I am grateful to each of you, along with other friends who encouraged and assisted me throughout this process. The best I can do is to express my deepest gratitude to all of you for enlivening and encouraging my vision of this project. This project would have never seen the light of this day without you!

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The incredible growth of adult English learners in American colleges and universities during the last quarter of the twentieth century has only accelerated at the beginning of the twenty-first century. According to the 2016 *New American undergraduates: Enrollment trends and age at arrival of immigrant and second-generation students* report, immigrant learners (i.e. citizens, permanent residents, or noncitizens eligible for citizenship who were born abroad to at least one foreign-born parent) and second-generation learners (i.e. individuals who were born in the United States to at least one parent who was born abroad) accounted for 24 percent of the undergraduate student population in 2011–12. Students of immigrant background account for 24% of all U.S. undergraduates, or 6.5 million students, enrolled in community colleges, which are the largest providers of adult education English language service in the country (Community College Consortium for Immigrant Education, 2015). Although there is little direct data on the number of English learners enrolled in colleges (Raufman, Brathwaite, & Kalamkarian, 2019), information about postsecondary enrollment by race/ethnicity offers some insights. For example, by 2026 a projected increase in all degree-granting institutions will be 26% for Hispanic students, 12% for students who are Asian/Pacific Islander, and 37% for students who are two or more races. However, the increase among White students is only projected to be 1% (Hussar & Bailey, 2018). English learners are more likely to be Latino and Asian and recent immigrant than non-English learner students (Callahan and Humphries, 2016; Nuñez & Sparks, 2012). These data suggest that the population of English learners in American colleges and universities is on the rise. Higher education is

a steppingstone for this population to gain access to American society. Their success as English learners is essential to their progress.

The above-mentioned trends are also reflected in data about the English learners, who represent the fastest growing segment of the K-12 student population and generate some input of English learners for higher education institutions. The percentage of English learners in public schools in 2016 (9.6% or 4.9 million students) has increased since 2000 (8.1% or 3.8 million students) (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019). Half of all English learners are in kindergarten and elementary schools; the other half are roughly split between middle and high school students (Migration Policy Institute, 2010). Such increase in this population represents a shift towards more linguistically diverse classrooms in higher education. Attending a college provides an opportunity for these students to pursue their hopes and dreams in life. Moreover, many colleges are dependent upon these students to cultivate a diverse learning community, where people from various backgrounds experience different ways of thinking, speaking, and interacting.

Who are English Learners?

Researchers who study English learners use various terms to refer to them. Those terms differ based on what they emphasize about students. For example, *linguistically diverse students* is used to identify students whose home language is other than English as well as students who might speak U.S.-based or overseas varieties of English (e.g., de Kleiner & Lawton, 2015; Karathanos & Mena, 2014; Perryman-Clark, 2012). The *Generation 1.5* term is associated with students who were born outside of the U.S. and completed some K-12 schooling in the U.S. (Roberge, Siegal, & Harklau, 2009). *Emergent bilingual* is used to emphasize dual development of language skills among young children.

In their cases, their bilingual skills in language are a resource rather than a deficiency (Garcia, 2009). In my study, I adopt the term *English learners* which is an institutional designation for students in K-12 educational settings and in colleges. Institutions often deem them to be not proficient, and they need additional English support services.

Adult English learners come from various social, cultural, and national backgrounds and possess diverse literacy experiences, as well as different levels of English proficiency. Some of them are from English-speaking countries; others come from countries where they studied English extensively. Some of them may have had some formal schooling or inadequate schooling in their home countries. In addition, some adults come from multi-lingual societies where they attended school but may not have been able to use key scripts or language such as a majority or national language (Rogers & Street, 2011). These students possess unique histories, social tools and ways to solve problems, social relations, and linguistic experiences and repertoires that they have developed through their participation in families, formal educational settings, and communities. Collectively these tools constitute learning resources that represent a wide range of concepts, such as experiences, relationships, knowledge, artifacts, explored by researchers from an ethnographic perspective, cultural practices, and sociocultural perspectives on learning (Dantas & Manyak, 2010, p. 11). When these resources are recognized, they enhance the success of these newcomers to North American higher education where they are expected to be “active participants of their disciplinary communities and constructors of new knowledge as they progress through their degrees” (Seloni, 2014, p. 79).

Immigrant learners face a variety of challenges in U.S. higher education. For example, researchers who have studied refugee students specifically have identified the

challenges they faced, the types of resources that contributed to the success of students, as well as the importance of English proficiency and college education in their integration into higher education and the American society. In particular, three researchers showed that refugees' challenges go beyond written proficiency in higher education. Blanton (2005), who studied the writing experiences of two refugee students, traced their slow progression in ESL courses and later at a university. This researcher explained that the failure of the students was rooted not in composition issues, but in literacy issues. Given that the focus of their school instruction in L2 was mainly on error correction rather than literacy, their literacy development had not resumed since they left their schools in their home countries. Ortmeier-Hooper (2008) also focused on the experiences of a refugee student from Yugoslavia. The student found it challenging to adjust to the cultural expectations of the mainstream composition classroom in the U.S.A. Unlike his previous experiences in a more authoritative, impersonal approach that he strived in, his performance as a competent student and writer failed him in the new sociocultural environment. He did not have a desire to reflect on his writing, to revise it, and did not see any points in the assignments. In the same vein, Vasquez (2007) focused on the experiences of a Generation 1.5 student from Kosovo. Although the student's written works were poor in quality, her ESL teachers perceived her as a "good student" (p. 362). Presumably, her ESL teachers judged her on the basis of her oral proficiency, a quality that distinguished her from other students in a whole group and in one-on-one conversations. Despite her success in the ESL program, the participant's GPA in degree-seeking courses began to decrease, resulting in either her failing or withdrawing from college. These studies indicate that as educators we should look beyond classroom instruction and learn

more about English learners' lived experiences in order to understand how to support them as writers and as students.

Three studies have also highlighted the types of resources that were significant for refugee students' success in college. For example, Felix (2016) explored the essence of students' experiences from a refugee background. The researcher stated that college and non-college resources, which were one of the identified themes, significantly influenced students' persistence in higher education. Those resources included parents, community members, and college facilities. The role of college and social resources was also important in Hirano's (2014) study. Hirano worked with seven refugee students who were not considered college-ready according to traditional admissions standards. However, they were successful as writers due to the supportive college environment and resources made available to them, including tutors, professors, the academic support director and peers. Similarly, Sadikovic (2017) studied the role of sociocultural factors on how ten refugee women from Bosnia navigated higher education. She found that women's support system, comprised of the host community, their parents, family and their teachers, enabled these women to successfully bridge into college and succeed in higher education. The findings of these studies suggest the important role of college and outside of college resources in the form of social networks. Again, these studies emphasize the importance of focusing on larger contextual influences in order to understand how to support English learners.

In addition, Felix (2016) shows the important role of English mastery for English learners. Participants in her study noted how the degree of English mastery could ease their transition to and through higher education. This finding stresses the importance of

English language mastery as a gateway for these students to their integration into American higher education and society.

The findings of these studies indicate that English learners have unique challenges that are rooted in larger contextual influences. Their success depends in part upon the presence of college and non-college resources. However, little is known about the resources adult English learners bring with them, and how they build upon those resources as writers in a new sociocultural environment.

English Learners in Higher Education

Unless they meet minimum English proficiency requirements, English learners must take ESL and developmental courses. Enrollment in those courses puts financial stress upon students, leads to debt accumulation, and may sacrifice financial aid eligibility (Bailey, 2009). For example, in the 2018-19 academic year, the average tuition for a public community college was approximately \$4,828 per year for in-state students and \$8,587 for out-of-state students (Community College Review, 2019). Moreover, fewer than half of students complete their developmental sequence (Bailey, Jeong, & Cho, 2009). Not completing developmental courses may lead to delay in students' college progress or dropping out of their college studies. Consequently, students either had to take on more financial expenses or drop out of ESL and developmental programs.

Several studies have shown that English learners progress at lower rates than native English speakers towards college completion. Kanno and Cromley (2013), who used the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1998, showed that English learners (18%) lagged behind in college access and attainment as compared with English-proficient linguistic minority students (38%) and monolingual English-speaking students (43%). The

same trend was observed in the analysis of the Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 (Kanno & Cromley, 2015). Only 19% of English learners in the national representative sample enrolled in four-year colleges compared to 45% of native English speakers and 35% of English-proficient linguistic minority students. These data showed that the same trend continued for 14 years. Unlike English native speakers and English-proficient linguistic minority students, English learners are lagging behind in gaining valuable cultural and symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1986; 1991). Such disparity in numbers suggests that English learners do not have equal opportunities with English-proficient linguistic minority students and monolingual English-speaking students in higher education.

Slower rates of college completion among English learners were also observed in studies conducted at the local level. For example, Spurling, Seymore, and Chisman (2008) analyzed records of all students who first enrolled in credit and non-credit ESL programs at the City College of San Francisco from 1998, 1999, and 2000 for seven years each. Their findings showed that only about 8% of students enrolled in non-credit ESL courses matriculated to college. A similar finding was observed in a different study. Howsare Boyens (2015), who investigated student enrollment in non-credit ESL courses at Des Moines Area Community College, found that less than 5% progressed to college within 10 years of taking non-credit ESL courses. Razfar and Simon (2011) analyzed enrollment data of Latino students, enrolled in either the fall or spring terms in credit ESL classes. The analysis of questionnaires in which students had to state their educational goals in terms of defined categories showed that few Latino ESL students aimed at transferring (8.3%) or earning an associate degree (6.8%). Most of the Latino students' goals were career related or basic skills/GED (more than 70%). Only 5% of their full sample and less than 7.3% of

the anticipating transfer students enrolled in English composition courses, thus indicating that only a tiny fraction had an opportunity to get a college education. Hodara (2015) also found that minority students enrolled in an ESL program earned fewer credits during their first and second years in college than other minority students who did not enroll in ESL courses. These numbers indicate that English learners are most likely not getting the support they need in order to progress towards college completion. Given that English learners are on the rise in higher education, there is a need to consider how colleges can improve the quality of their academic literacy programs and support services for English learners.

Academic Essay Writing

Essay writing is one of the mandatory academic genres that English learners engage in post-secondary education. Introducing learners to essay is writing a common practice in basic developmental classes that they first take (Hodara, 2012; Teranishi, Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2011). In navigating this academic genre, students are expected to understand the goals of writing, including developing a purpose for writing, formulating ideas clearly and succinctly, developing and defending the most crucial points in the argument, analyzing evidence, synthesizing ideas, influencing audience, and expressing their points clearly (Sternglass, 1997). Second language (L2) researchers have stated that many English learners struggle with writing arguments (e.g. Hirvela, 2017; Leki, Cumming, & Silva, 2008; Miller & Pessoa, 2016; Mitchell & Pessoa, 2017; Silva, 1993; Zhu, 2001). Moreover, students often come with partial or incorrect understanding of the concept of argument (Wingate, 2012). Despite the importance of argumentative writing, this genre is still under-researched in the L2 writing field (Hirvela, 2017). My research is

an attempt to provide meaningful data upon which to base decisions about how to assist adult English learners when they learn to write in the essay genre.

Learning the essay genre involves more than learning form. Students must understand and develop knowledge of the sociocultural contexts in which the genre is used, the cultural values embedded in the genre, its communicative purpose, and the formal text features associated with it (Perry, 2009; Tardy, 2009). The success of adult English learners in this genre is also affected by various personal, linguistic, social, cultural, institutional, political, and historical factors. The role of their previous experiences with the essay genre and personal histories within their families, educational settings, and communities are all relevant to genre learning. These various influences suggest that learning to write in the essay genre extends backward into the writer's past social and cultural life and outward into the writer's present social and cultural reality. In an attempt to contextualize learning to write in the essay genre as a sociocultural act, I focus on writers' choices as windows into the interaction of the genre and larger contextual influences. Writers' choices serve as a specific point of entry.

An Illustrative Personal Vignette

My interest in this study is rooted in my personal experiences. As an adult English learner who started working on my graduate degree at an American university at the age of 28, I have experienced the struggles and challenges many adult non-native English speakers face. I have come from a cultural environment where creative writing and writing about personal experiences were not encouraged and practiced in the educational system. On the contrary, I was encouraged to copy the ideas of other people by making minor changes with respect to vocabulary. Based on my personal experience, the purposes for

writing revolved around showing that I could produce a written product on a specific topic and the ability to use grammatically correct language and punctuation. I was not taught explicitly about the writing process. I was expected to know how to write a piece. The writing experiences I had were mainly exam-driven. Therefore, writing was associated with showing off my knowledge of language.

When I came to study at an American university, I had to navigate new social and cultural environments of academia with respect to writing. For the first time, I was challenged to write my own thoughts and think critically as a writer. I was expected to express my thoughts and demonstrate my thinking through various academic genres such as response papers, research papers, and a research proposal. As a newcomer to American academia, I struggled with understanding how to communicate my thoughts to a specific audience given the cultural assumptions of each genre. I had to figure out how to build from my limited previous experiences, navigate new genres, and draw from the resources that were available in the new environment. Moreover, the new social and cultural environment opened many opportunities that I did not have in my home country. I was able to get access to quality literature on writing; I had opportunities to discuss my writing with professors, peers, and friends, and I had opportunities to read works in which writers expressed their thoughts in personal ways.

I faced challenges of thinking of writing as a way of communication with others and finding my voice as a writer and person in this new academic world. This realization serves as a basis for my desire to pursue the current study. As a learner who experienced struggles and as an educator who is committed to helping others to discover their potential as effective writers, I believe it is important to understand the ways sociocultural context

and genres interact in shaping a writer's navigational choices and how those contextual factors relate to personal growth as a writer.

Research Questions

This study focused on exploring the lived experiences of four immigrant students when they learned to write in the essay genre in an American community college. I sought to understand the types of sociocultural resources English learners relied upon prior to and after their arrival in the U.S.A., and the choices learners made about those resources when learning to write in the essay genre. The following research questions were addressed:

- What types of sociocultural-resources do adult English learners use while learning to write in the essay genre prior to and after their arrival in the U.S.?
- How does the essay genre mediate adult English learners' choices about sociocultural resources in the U.S.?

Study Significance

This study is intended to uncover how the essay genre mediated adult English learners' choices about sociocultural resources. The study is significant for several reasons. First, as I will demonstrate in Chapter 2, no previous studies have brought together the factors incorporated in this study: (a) exploring adult English learners' sociocultural resources prior to and after their arrival in the U.S.A., (b) studying adult English learners' sociocultural choices in the essay genre, (c) exploring the mediating role of the essay genre in shaping adult English learners' choices about writing resources, (d) investigating the relationship between the essay genre and adult English learners' writing choices about sociocultural resources over a period of working on one essay in an introductory college writing course. In generating multiple data sources, I create a comprehensive picture of

the interaction between the writer and environment as mediated by sociocultural resources in the essay genre.

Second, this study adds to the larger body of theory on learning to write in L2, as informed by sociocultural perspectives. The current learning to write in L2 orientation includes three theoretical frameworks: writer-oriented, reader-oriented, and text-oriented (Hyland, 2016). None of these frameworks has addressed the role of a sociocultural resource construct. However, researchers who have worked with culturally and linguistically diverse groups have uncovered that writers act as cultural producers who adapt their unique social and cultural experiences to the demands of genre tasks and activities (e.g. Dyson, 2003; 2008; Perry, 2008; Roozen, 2009; Tusting, 2015). By focusing on this construct, I was able to identify the categories of sociocultural resources that adult English learners drew upon when learning to write in the essay genre. Although those categories were not mutually exclusive, they captured the variety of resources adult English learners relied upon as writers in the essay genre prior to and after their arrival in the U.S. In addition, I investigated how the essay genre mediated adult English learners' choices about sociocultural resources. Such a focus enabled me to explore systemic patterns within larger contextual influences. The uncovered patterns shed more light upon the challenges adult English learners faced as writers in the essay genre. The identified interactions between the essay genre, writers' choices about resources, and the context contribute to a broader view of learning to write in L2 from a sociocultural perspective.

Third, this study opens potential for further exploring of how genre shapes English learners' choices about sociocultural resources. I provide several possible directions that could explore the interaction between English learners' choices about resources and the

essay genre. As I will demonstrate in Chapter 6, further research could shed more light upon L2 writing as a sociocultural act, and what it means to be strategic from a sociocultural perspective.

Fourth, this study sheds light on how college professors can build on participants' previous essay writing experiences that are rooted in different cultural expectations about the essay genre. My study showed that adult English learners' previous essay writing experiences were based upon different cultural expectations about the essay genre. Participants were expected to rely upon what they knew about a topic. They were not encouraged to be in a dialogue with other writers and their ideas. In contrast, in the U.S. they were expected to synthesize information from different sources to come up with their own arguments. Understanding such fundamental divergence in those expectations could help college professors build upon adult English learners' previous experiences and use them as a bridge in helping adult English learners to grow as writers in the U.S. essay genre.

Fifth, my study indicates that institutions of higher education must provide better support for English learners in their academic communities. As I state in Chapter 6, ESL programs and entire college communities need to think of better ways to help adult English learners grow as writers in argumentative writing.

Chapter Summary

Chapter 1 sets the stage for the significance of the issues under study. By outlining current trends in English learner populations both in higher education and in a K-12 setting, I indicate that the increase in this population represents a shift towards more linguistically diverse classrooms in higher education. I also define who adult English learners are by outlining the challenges they face in higher education and their distinctive characteristics.

The studies I drew upon indicate that English learners have unique challenges. Their success also depends upon the presence of college and non-college resources. However, little is known about the resources adult English learners bring with them, and how they build upon those resources as writers in a new sociocultural environment.

The chapter also provides an overview on how this population progresses in developmental studies in comparison with English speakers and English proficient minority groups. Given the slower rates of college completion among English learners, I state that colleges should improve the quality of their academic literacy programs and support services for this population. The section on academic essay writing shows that learning the essay genre involves more than learning form and is affected by various contextual influences. Finally, I provide an illustrative personal vignette that explains my interest in the study.

CHAPTER 2

Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

This chapter discusses theories and studies related to the phenomenon of English learners' learning to write in an academic genre. In order to explore this phenomenon, I was guided by the two research questions. The purpose of the first question was to identify types of sociocultural resources that adult English learners used when they learned to write in the essay genre prior to and after their arrival in the U.S. The second focused on how the essay genre mediated adult English learners' choices about sociocultural resources in the U.S.

Chapter 2 has five sections. In section one, I introduce a conceptual framework that embodies the specific direction for my study. I provide an overview of key sociocultural theories on learning and development as well as their roots. Moreover, I use sociocultural views of mediational means to explain what I mean by sociocultural resources. In section two, I focus on the meaning of literacy with respect to writing. Highlighting distinctions among the two major theories under the sociocultural umbrella, I focus on key assumptions of literacy as social practice and its major research work to present my understanding of contextual influences. In section three, I discuss the differences between the traditional view of genre and the broadened view. The latter provides the basis for my understanding of an essay genre construct. In section four, I present an overview of theoretical orientations on learning to write in an L2. The purpose is to highlight what we know about learning to write in L2 and how each approach contributes to our understanding of this complex phenomenon. In section five, I overview current scholarship on learning to write in L2 and offer insights that guide this study.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is informed by sociocultural theories of learning and development, literacy, writing as a particular aspect of literacy, and genre. These theories provide context and explanation for why the study of adult English learners' writing choices as mediated by the essay genre is pertinent and necessary. Explaining my theoretical lens also enables me to define the key constructs that guided my work and represented my ways of thinking about the phenomena under consideration.

Sociocultural Perspectives of Learning and Development

Sociocultural theories of learning and development represent a significant paradigm in contemporary scholarship. The approaches within this paradigm emphasize a close relationship between individual and social processes in the construction of new knowledge. Although this paradigm includes multiple theories, I will focus only on several important constructs that align with the purpose of my study. These include learning and development, human action, and mediational means.

Learning and development. Several prominent theorists have studied and explored the social and cultural processes of learning and development. Their ideas are rooted in the original works by Lev Vygotsky. Although his focus was mainly on school learning, Vygotsky (1978) recognized that learning takes place before a child starts a school. For example, before being introduced to arithmetic at school, a child was involved in some forms of operations such as addition, subtraction, or division. With respect to the development of a child's higher-order functions, beginning with the nurturing of his interest, Vygotsky proposed the term *zone of proximal development* (ZPD). ZPD is the distance between what a child can do on his or her own and what the child potentially could

do through problem-solving under the guidance of a more capable other. Based on this construct, the essential feature of learning is to create a zone of proximal development. The process only takes place when a child interacts and cooperates with others in his environment. In order for learning to occur, the presence of more experienced and capable others is critical. Therefore, Vygotsky's ideas stress the importance of exploring the social aspects of learning. Given the role of guidance from more experienced others in learning, I sought to explore who was involved in helping adult English learners when they learned to write in an academic genre. Not only have I asked who was involved, but what role did they play in the learning process of each research participant in their previous and new environments.

Guided by his idea of ZPD, Vygotsky (1978) claimed that "what is in the zone of proximal development today will be the actual development tomorrow" (p. 87). He stated that a child's initial mastery of, for example, an arithmetic operation provides the basis for the subsequent development of more complex internal thinking processes. Given that development is the result of this type of learning which only takes if someone who is more capable or experienced is involved, social influences play an important role in shaping development. Therefore, his ideas emphasize the importance of exploring how social influences affect this process.

Inspired by Vygotsky's ideas, other sociocultural theorists have contributed to the social and cultural nature of learning and development (e.g., Lave and Wenger, 1991; Rogoff, 2003). Their works have expanded Vygotsky's understanding of the social and cultural nature of the two processes by exploring how learning and development took place outside of an educational setting in various cultural environments.

Learning is more than an official academic agenda or the pedagogical goals in a formal setting. This process is shaped by larger social and cultural influences. Lave and Wenger (1991) associated learning with the participation in a community of practice, which they defined as a set of relationships among people, activity, and the world. They showed that learning manifested itself through newcomers' experiences of their identity change and transformation. The outcome was participation by learners with others (i.e., old-timers) in a community of practice. As an illustration, they provided an account of apprenticeship among Yucatec Mayan midwives in Mexico. There, the craft of being a midwife was usually passed from a mother to a daughter. Girls, who are not identified as apprentices in those families, absorb the practices and associated knowledge in the course of growing up. Eventually, they might decide to continue the craft. Therefore, in order to understand how people learn, it is critical to explore how they participate in community practices and view themselves as whole learners in the world rather than learners limited to an instructional environment.

Likewise, Rogoff (2003) explored how children learn outside of instructional contexts in various cultural environments. She showed how children's learning is the result of their participation in a *guided practice* and is shaped by the values and practices of their communities (p. 284). For example, Rogoff noted that Guareno children in Venezuela learned how to fish and hunt in steps. Adults structured their participation by demonstrating the whole complex and providing well-placed pointers during their shared practice. Therefore, stressing the form of participation in culturally guided activities and practices contributes to a broader understanding of the social and cultural nature of learning. In my study, I relied upon the learners' remembered accounts of their learning

experiences prior to their arrival in the U.S. I also studied learning within the community college classroom and related communities. Consequently, my research bridged memory of past learning communities and actual study of observed, current learning community.

Intricately related to the construct of learning is the construct of development. Once again, Lave and Wenger's (1991) and Rogoff's (2003) ideas were instrumental to a broader view of the social and cultural nature of this process among sociocultural theorists. Lave and Wenger (1991) viewed development as cycles of social production that result from the process of learning. Those cycles, they claimed, are the outcomes of struggles and challenges inherent in social practice and identity formation. Specifically, they pointed out the continuity-displacement contradiction that is observed during apprenticeships in communities of practice. In some cases, the master and apprentice have a mutual interest in the increasingly knowledgeable skill of the apprentice, which is a way to achieve continuity over generations in a community and a way for the master to maintain a profitable practice. In other cases, a conflict can be observed between a master's desire for labor and apprentice's desire to learn, which might lead to a direct replacement of an apprentice and, consequently, discontinuity. The ways newcomers and old-timers establish and maintain their identities and resolve conflicts shape their practice and the overall development of the communities. Therefore, in order to understand development, it is important to explore learners' challenges and struggles inherent in a social practice. How my participants experienced challenges and struggles as writers in the essay genre in the two sociocultural contexts has contributed significantly to my understanding of their involvement as writers over time.

Rogoff (2003) has added a different angle to understanding the cultural and social nature of development. In addition to viewing development as taking place within individuals, such as the stages of cognitive development described by Piaget (1964), she argued that transitions across childhood could be understood in light of the values and beliefs of a particular community. To illustrate her point, she examines how transitions are marked by events and achievements, such as the first smile or graduation, or age-based passages, such as the celebration of child's first month of life or first birthday, valued in various communities. For example, the Navajo people believe that the highest form of maturity development is being a leader of other people. The Navajo model distinguishes the eight stages across the life span. They range from the first indicator of self-discipline that manifests itself in becoming aware between ages 2 and 4 to the highest point in life when a person begins to think ahead for things that start at about the age of 30 years (p. 151). Consequently, she argues that human development is a cultural process. In other words, she claims that as human beings, we are defined not in terms of our biology, but our biological nature is defined in terms of our cultural participation. In my work, I sought to explore how my participants' cultural participation in essay writing practices in two different environments contributed to learning challenges they faced as writers in the essay genre in the U.S.

In emphasizing the social and cultural nature of the process, these theorists have shown that learning and development are not isolated processes. These processes are embedded and shaped by social and cultural participation in practices of particular communities. Moreover, they are guided processes that include challenges and struggles inherent in a participation. In order for learning and development to occur, others in a

community always play a significant role. This understanding was important for my work. Given that I attempted to investigate adult English learners' writing choices in the U.S., I needed to understand how they evolved as writers prior to their coming to this country, and how their learning took place in the U.S. This understanding allowed me to investigate what resources they had access to and drew upon in the two contexts. Because of the social and cultural nature of learning and development, I also focused on social and cultural influences that were at play.

Human action. Sociocultural theorists are also interested in explaining human actions and what determines those acts. The works of three theorists, James Wertsch (1991) and Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger (1991) are very instrumental in this regard. Their theories show that an action is a link between the individual and his or her environment, thus serving as a window into the intricate interplay of contextual influences and how they shape an action.

Wertsch's (1991) interest in the construct of human action was rooted in his attempts to explain a sociocultural approach to mind. Two opposing views on mind gave rise to his idea. The first regarded the individual as a passive receiver of information from the environment. The second elevated the individual and treated the environment as secondary, serving as a trigger of some developmental processes. In contrast to these views, Wertsch was inspired by Habermas' idea of goal-directed action and Leontiev's theory of activity. Based on their ideas, he stressed the importance of prioritizing action. Focusing on action allows researchers to understand how human beings interact with their environment, which always involves "cultural and historical and institutional aspect," create it and themselves through the actions in which they engage (p. 121). In order to

understand how the individual interacts with the cultural, institutional and historical, researchers need to focus on real-life actions. Wertsch's emphasis on an action is important for my work, as I focused on writers' actions or choices.

Lave and Wenger's (1991) ideas contributed to a broader understanding of human action among sociocultural theorists. They viewed a learner's action as part of an "evolving, continuously renewed set of relations" that brought together a learner, his or her actions, and the world (p. 50). According to these scholars, an action was at the nexus of learner as a whole person and the intricate interplay of his or her past and present. Understanding a learner as a whole person acting in the world is a way to understand learning as participation in a community of practice. This view presupposes that learning is conceived in relations between the person with his or her past and present, the world, and an action that serves as a link between the person and the world. This contextual reference sets the stage for understanding and applying a sociocultural perspective to learning in general and my research in particular.

Lave and Wenger's views expand the long-standing theoretical basis for practice in social sciences. As the scholars note, earlier structural and phenomenological conceptions of the theory of practice included social structures without regulators and rules, "embodied practices and cultural dispositions concerted in class habitus" (p. 50). These earlier perspectives promoted the dualistic view that reduced a person to their minds, mental processes to actions that focused on the most efficient means possible to achieve an end, and learning to the acquisition of knowledge. In contrast, Lave and Wenger emphasized the importance of historical nature of relations that give rise to socially and culturally mediated experiences that are available to people as actors in the world.

Such relational interdependence between the person with his or her past, the world, and actions indicate the socially negotiated character of meaning, learning, knowing, and action. Action serves as an epicenter where learning and knowing are relations among people acting in the world. Those relations arise from socially and culturally structured personal experiences. Meaning, learning, and knowing are produced, reproduced, and changed in the course of activities that undergird participation in the community of practice. Lave and Wenger's ideas were instrumental for my work. In order to understand how my participants relied upon their previous resources in the new contexts and how they drew upon their new resources, I needed to view a writer as a whole person by exploring their past and present lives.

Given my focus on human action, it is necessary to distinguish human action from agency. According to Duranti (2004), the term agency was first introduced into social science by Anthony Giddens and Pierre Bourdieu. Both social theorists made an effort to define a theory of social action "that would recognize the role played by social actors in the production and reproduction of social systems" (p. 452). Their intentions were to broaden the structuralist and Marxist views of action that was considered to be produced by logic or historical laws, respectively.

Defining agency is not a simple task. Scholars in different fields provide distinct perspectives on what constitutes agency. For example, in a critical sociocultural approach to literacy studies, Lewis, Enciso, and Moje (2007) use the term *agency* as "strategic making and remaking of selves within structures of power" (p. 4). These scholars point out that the word *strategic* in their definition does not imply agency as originating in internal state of mind but rather as a "way of positioning oneself so as to allow for new

ways of being, new identities” (p. 5). In a translingual approach, agency is defined as “the need and ability of individual writers to map and order, remap and reorder conditions and relations surrounding their practices, as they address the potential discrepancies between the official and practical,” thus indicating the mediating role of reading and writing and their teaching in shaping writers’ meaningful responses (Lu & Horner, 2013, p. 591). To illustrate how agency is enacted and presented in language, Duranti (2004) provides a working definition that states three properties of agency, including some degree of control over one’s own behavior, the effect of actions in the world upon others’ actions, and actions as the objects of evaluation (p. 453). Despite distinct explicit definitions of agency, Miller (2014) claims that agency is still under-theorized regardless of adopted research methodologies.

In my work, I am guided by Miller’s (2014) statement about agency. Miller stated that learners should not be viewed “as already agentic” if no recognition is given to how human agency is “thoroughly social, dynamic, and co-constructed rather than an a priori quality” (p. 7). In my study, the participants’ choices about sociocultural resources were affected by larger context influences. By drawing upon the works by Vygotsky, Bakhtin, and Butler, Miller shows how agency is socially mediated, and how historical, cultural, and interactional influences lay the ground for circumstances in which agency emerges. This understanding of agency is important for my work. Agency does not exist in isolation. Making choices about their sociocultural resources, writers demonstrate their agentic capacity.

Mediational means. Several sociocultural theorists have focused on studying the concept of mediational means. Their works contributed to expanded views on human

action as a mediated activity and, consequently, the broader view of social and cultural nature of learning and development. Related theories proposed by Vygotsky (1978), Wertsch (1991), and Rogoff (2003) are relevant and helpful with regard to my research.

Once again, Vygotsky's ideas were foundational in defining the concept of mediational means. In exploring how children learn and develop, Vygotsky (1978) was influenced by Friedrich Engels' ideas of how labor and tools transform the relation between human beings and their environment. Unlike animals that "merely use external nature," Engels claimed that man makes the environment serve his ends by mastering it (p. 7). Building on his claim, Vygotsky extends the concept of tools to the use of signs. He distinguished between physical tools (i.e., objects from the environment) and signs (e.g., various system for counting, maps, works of art), including human natural language. Physical tools are externally oriented to master nature; signs are internally oriented and "aimed at mastering oneself" (p. 127). Given the importance of this construct, it is necessary to understand how tools and signs mediate learning.

Vygotsky's ideas gave rise to the view of mediational means as heterogeneous within a particular group and among various communities. Wertsch (1991) emphasized that these means should be viewed as diverse items, rather than a single undifferentiated whole. His emphasis on the aspect of diversity, he believed, allows a person to make connections between a group and contextual differences, on the one hand, and the array of mediational means that are available to people and the patterns of their choices in selecting those tools for a particular purpose in a specific situation, on the other hand. Rogoff (2003) explored how mediational means shaped thinking cross-culturally, thus proposing to view them as "cultural tools for thinking" in various communities (p. 258). She identified

several categories of tools, including literacy, mathematics, and conceptual systems. Among the latter, she distinguished scientific systems, such as classification of animals and plants, navigational systems that guide seafaring expertise in Polynesia, narrative structures that shape how people provide evidence to support claim and specify ideas to oneself and others. Rogoff provides depictions of various cultural practices to illustrate how these tools mediate people's development as participants in their cultural communities such the distinctions between narrative structures in Japan (i.e., no elaboration; the listener must infer what the narrator's perspective is) and Europe or U.S. (i.e., description, elaboration, and the explicit statement of resolution). With respect to my research, the diverse nature of these means makes it necessary to understand what tools and signs constitute L2 writers' writing repertoires. Each of my participants came from a particular context, participated in a particular essay writing practice, and used particular sociocultural resources to create meaning as writers in the essay genre. In the new context, each brought sociocultural resources from their multiple worlds into their essay writing practices. Exploring that diversity was important in my effort to uncover the types of resources that the participants drew upon as writers in the essay genre.

Cultural tools mediate people's thinking and are shaped by literacy practices of particular communities. Unlike Rogoff (2003) who showed how cultural tools shaped thinking in different cultures, Scribner and Cole (1981) explored how thinking involved learning to use different symbolic and material tools that were specific for particular communities. Scribner and Cole uncovered that the link between literacy and mental processes was in literacy practices of a specific community. Their findings showed that the Vai people did not show any difference in tasks that required logic and classification.

However, differences were observed when tasks included skills practiced in formal educational settings. For example, Vai literates exceeded non-literates on a task that required them to describe a board game in its absence, as this skill was practiced in their letter writing practice. Scribner and Cole showed that literacy promoted particular skills rather than general cognitive advances. Given that I explored writing choices about four participants from diverse backgrounds, this relationships between mediational means as cultural tools and literacy learning, in particular writing in the essay genre, was important for my study. I was able to explore how the essay genre mediated participants' choices about sociocultural resources.

My participants are members of diverse cultural groups. Therefore, each of them developed distinct repertoires of cultural tools as writers when they learned to write in their home countries. For example, some of them grew up in multilingual settings where education was implemented in a colonized language. In order to navigate task demands as writers in the U.S., they relied upon their knowledge of native and colonized languages to a certain extent. For instance, some of them relied upon this resource when they encountered unfamiliar words or when they composed their essays. Therefore, their native and colonized languages served as their mediational means. The tools they employed shaped their thinking and, consequently, their choices as writers. Investigating what tools they utilized enabled me to explore their cultural ways of thinking as writers in the essay genre.

Sociocultural conceptualizations of learning, development, human action, and mediational means are pertinent to the purpose of my study. Learning, development, human action, and mediational means are intricately related and shaped by social and

cultural influences of specific settings in which they occur. Because of their tangled relationship, they are important to understand learning to write as a sociocultural act. They clearly show that in order to explore their intricate relationships, my focus must be on examining participants' lives as writers not so much as individuals, but as members of social and cultural groups.

Sociocultural resource construct. In my understanding of sociocultural resources, I am guided by the views of sociocultural theorists on physical and symbolic tools as mediational means (e.g., Rogoff, 2003; Vygotsky, 1978, Wertsch, 1991). Their views were an integral aspect of the explanation of cultural resources developed by Dyson (2003) and her colleagues, Miller and Sahni (2016). They state that the resources writers use are very similar to what is implied by *artifacts* and *tools* in the sociocultural lexicon, such as the work by Rogoff (2003). The authors draw a connection between the definition of artifacts in *Cultural Psychology* by Cole (1996), stating that as products of human history they are “simultaneously ideal and material” (p. 117). The ideal aspect includes mental concepts that people develop about material objects in the process of using them for various purposes. They exist in their minds, not in the environment. Those concepts are part of their mental schema and help them think about the world in abstract terms. In contrast, the material aspect presupposes that objects are tangible and are part of the environment. Therefore, Miller and Sahni (2016) claim that artifacts and tools are “both private and public” (p. 133). This distinction is important for my work. When adult English learners learn to write in the new environment, they have access to the same tools, such as digital tools or genre materials. However, each of them uses those tools in their own ways. In the process of using them, those tools acquire a new meaning in the minds

of my participants. Exploring their individual ways of using tools was important to understand my participants' writing choices about resources.

Writers rely upon various tools that mediate their learning to write. They include material objects and various sign systems that are unique for each context. Traditional tools such as a pen and paper or more advanced tools such as a computer and cellphone serve as material resources. Language, as a sign system, serves as a symbolic tool. Given that my participants are non-native speakers of English and some of them were educated in their colonized languages, it is important to consider how they draw upon their language repertoires as resources. Moreover, learning to write is a social process. In growing as writers, learners rely upon the help from more capable and experienced others. In addition to teachers, they could be peers or other members of their community. Consequently, people serve as human resources in the process of learning. Given these types of mediations, I defined sociocultural resources as material, symbolic, and human agents that mediate a writing process of adult English learners.

Sociocultural Perspectives on Literacy and Writing

The ideas of such sociolinguists as Mikhail Bakhtin, Michael Halliday, and Paul Gee contributed to the field's understanding of the connections between language, cultural context, and social roles. Bakhtin's (1981; 1986) ideas laid the ground for the social and dialogic nature of language. His ideas revolved around such concepts as *voice* and *social language*. He defined *voice* as "speaking personality" made up of other voices present in a social context (Holquist & Emerson, 1981, p. 434). In particular, he stated:

A word (or in general any sign) is interindividual. Everything that is said, expressed, is located outside the soul of the speaker and does not belong only to him. The word cannot be assigned to a single speaker. The author (speaker) has his own inalienable right to the word, but the listener has his rights, and those whose

voices are heard in the word before the author comes upon it also have their rights (after all, there are no words that belong to no one). (Bakhtin, 1986, pp.121-122)

The choice of words a speaker uses are shaped by *social language*, defined as languages that are used within particular discourse communities such as professional or age group (Holquist & Emerson, 1981, p. 430). Given the interindividual nature of a word, this process creates dialogism or “whereby one voice speaks through another voice” in a social language (Wertsch, 1991, p. 59).

Halliday (1999) built upon Malinowski’s concept of *concept of situation* to view text as a particular semantic system which is associated with a particular type of situation. In order to analyze text, he suggested three concepts. They included field (i.e., what is happening or text topic), tenor (i.e., participants who are involved in a situation), and mode (i.e., the way language is used). For example, field could be a situation in which a child is playing. Tenor could be when a child interacts with parents, and mode, consequently, is spoken in this example.

Gee’s (2014) ideas about d/Discourse were very influential, as well. He claims that our use of language is determined by whom we talk to or whom we write to. The things we say and do create certain identities, different kinds of social roles. He further states that these “identities are socially significant because various and different social groups construct, construe, use, negotiate, contest, and transform them in the world and in history” (p. 21). These sociolinguistic conceptualizations on language and culture inspired sociocultural perspectives on literacy (Perry, 2012).

What is literacy? Because my study focuses on writing, it is important to explain how I define literacy and writing in particular. The sociocultural turn in literacy studies

inspired scholars to study literacy in its social context (Baynham & Prinsloo, 2009). Their ideas serve as guiding principles for my work.

In her overview of influential sociocultural perspectives on literacy, Perry (2012) states that multiliteracies and literacy as social practice are two of the three major theories. Each of these theories offers a different angle on literacy. The literacy theory of multiliteracies focuses on different channels of communication and, consequently, moves beyond the traditional view of literacy as print. Instead, its proponents regard literacy as “involving multiple modes of visual, gestural, spatial, and other forms of representation” (pp. 58-59). The ideas of this perspective partly inform my work. Given the pervasive presence of technology, contemporary writers use digital tools and practices associated with them as their resources in learning. Therefore, exploring their writing choices, I also considered the role of these resources in mediating their learning to write in the essay genre.

The literacy as social practice theory was inspired by ethnographic studies that uncovered how writing and reading are used in various ways and for different purposes (e.g., Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Heath, 1984; Street, 1984). Those ethnographic scholars have uncovered hidden literacies, and how they vary from one cultural context to another. For example, Street (1984) identified hidden literacies, such as understanding different conventions of written representation, that undergirded and, he believed, successfully facilitated trading and commercial enterprise in an Iranian village. He also highlighted connections of those hidden practices to the specific ideology of that literacy community and described some cultural factors associated with particular skills. Heath’s (1984) work is another example of uncovering how literacies in two different communities differed and were shaped by historical and cultural influences. For example, she depicts the role of

literacy traditions in Roadville, a white working-class community, and Trackton, a black working-class community. In both of those communities, writing was not regarded as something of importance. For example, Trackton children were not consciously exposed to any writing behaviors. As Heath noted, “children were left to find their own reading and writing tasks” (p. 190). Unlike Trackton children, Roadville children were exposed to writing, but it was limited. For the most part, adults were the ones who encouraged writing events of children: “parents forcing them to write thank you notes, teachers giving assignments, and coaches asking them to sign pledges of good behavior” (p. 218). The study *Other People’s Words* by Purcell-Gates (1997) is another illustrative example of the influence of social and cultural factors on the literacy development of two adults and their children from a low-literacy urban Appalachian family. In particular, the author shows how social and cultural influences such as socioeconomic status, cultural background, family educational background, and gender interact and affect the writing and reading development of the family.

Given the multiple ways of literacy use and the role of social and cultural factors, Street (1984) argues for the importance to distinguish between *autonomous* and *ideological* models of literacy. The *autonomous* model, he states, views literacy as a set of universal, decontextualized skills that are mainly valued in formal settings. Such an approach, he claims, presupposes a divide into literate and illiterate. Enhancing illiterates’ cognitive skills without taking into consideration their social, cultural, and economic conditions is believed to make magic, changing lives for the better (Street, 2003). Consequently, the literacy of the privileged stratum is considered to be a standard to follow and is taught as universal and neutral skills. The *ideological* model, he states, claims that literacy varies

from one cultural context to another. According to this view, literacy is social in nature and viewed as a practice embedded in a particular context. Consequently, what counts to be literacy practice in one sociocultural setting may differ from what counts to be literacy practice in another context. There is no single literacy, but rather multiple literacies (Street, 1984). Such a view presupposes its situatedness and multiplicity. Street's ideas about the ideological model serve as basis for my understanding of literacy. Each participant in my study developed distinct literacies as writers that were shaped by particular social and cultural contexts. This understanding enables me to explore various aspects of learning to write as a sociocultural act.

Moreover, the view of writing as social practice postulates that writing always has a purpose, is situated within a particular culture and community, and is an element of broader social goals and practices (Barton & Hamilton, 2000). Writing is regarded to be more than just "technology" or "material features" through which it is manifested; it is a "social process, in which particular socially constructed technologies are used within particular institutional frameworks for specific social purposes" (Street, 1984, p. 97). Understanding what purposes drove writing experiences of my participants and what socially constructed technologies they used were important to answer my research questions.

Because I focus on exploring the types of sociocultural resources that the participants used prior to and after their arrival in the U.S., the literacy as social practice theory suits the needs of my study. Although literacy as social practice serves as the major theoretical framework for my understanding of literacy and writing, some of the ideas of the theory of multiliteracies also inform my work.

Sociocultural influences. The ideas of sociocultural scholarship highlight the role of social and cultural influences on literacy and writing development. Unlike linguistic tools that comprise knowledge about language, and unlike skills that constitute mental processes, sociocultural resources are rooted deeply in a writer's social and cultural life. These resources are shaped by sociocultural influences. I view a sociocultural influence as a contextual effect that shapes the resources writers use and how they choose to use those resources.

Given the role of context in shaping literacy practice, Purcell-Gates, Perry, and Briseño (2011) suggest a model that illustrates the connection between observable literacy events (i.e., instances of interaction with print), unobservable literacy practices (i.e., sociocultural ways of using written language) and contextual influences, such as values/beliefs, power relationships, and social institutions. To illustrate this relationship, they provide an example of a woman reading job openings in an online employment database. Her interaction with a text in the database reflects her social purpose of applying for a job. This social goal is shaped by influences within the social domain of work and other contextual layers such as personal and family history, her beliefs and values. These influences affect her choices with respect to which types of jobs she does and does not apply for. For example, if a woman in the example above is an undocumented immigrant with limited literacy skills, power relationships and social structures, they state, will further influence which jobs she could apply for. Likewise, in my study I considered the role of social and cultural influences upon participants' essay writing choices, as mediated by the essay genre.

The findings of the sociocultural theorists and the relationships identified in the model of literacy as social practice between contextual influences and observable events serve as guiding principles for my understanding of sociocultural influences and the ways of exploring them in the lived experiences of my participants. The previous writing experiences of each participant in my study were embedded within particular larger contextual influences. Similarly, their writing experiences when they learned to write in the U.S. were also influenced by larger contextual influences outside of college. Identifying the relationships between participants' writing choices about resources and larger contextual influences was important to understand the role of these influences in shaping their choices.

What is genre?

The traditional view on genre is grounded in an early literary approach focused on categories of literary texts and subtexts (e.g., Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010; Devitt, 2004; Ferris & Hedgcock, 2014). According to this perspective, genres are viewed as abstract, analytical categories that are used for the purposes of text classification. With respect to writing instruction such an abstract view of genre has resulted in decontextualized taxonomies or modes of writing such as description, narration, persuasion, and exposition (Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010). These rhetorical modes separate form from content and assume that all writing "can be classified and explained by way of universally applicable categories" (p. 17). Indeed, many college textbooks have provided explanations and examples of rhetorical modes and writing conventions "as formal, stable, even natural objects" and thus have offered a technical curriculum for teaching them (Macbeth, 2006,

p. 181). These views limit genres to free-standing knowledge that writers internalize, inwardly digest, and reproduce on demand.

Bakhtin's (1986) ideas were influential in broadening the views of genres and establishing the connection between genres and context. He stated that people express themselves through *utterances*, a unit of meaning, in various areas of human activity. These units reflect the goals and conditions of each specific area through thematic (i.e., content), linguistic (i.e., lexical and grammatical means of a language), and compositional (i.e., "types of its relations between the speaker and other participants in speech communication") structures (p. 64). Each area develops its typical utterances, which are called speech genres. Given various possibilities of human activity, Bakhtin emphasized the "heterogeneity" of speech genres, including writing "in all its various forms" (p. 60). His ideas laid the ground for sociocultural conceptualizations of genre.

Sociocultural perspectives on genre were informed by the ideas of Rhetorical Genre Studies in the North American compositional context. This approach was highlighted by Miller's (1984) groundbreaking article "Genre as Social Action." The author stated that genres as cultural artifacts frame and mediate sense-making and actions within various situations. They mediate how we engage, make sense of the world, and make choices that meet the demands of a particular situation. According to Miller (1984), successful communication between a writer and his or her audience is accomplished if all involved share "common types" that are socially created (p. 157). The view of genre as a social construction suggests that writers need to understand the sociocultural context of the situation in which they find themselves in order to make sense of how to act together with others who are involved in it and with their writing.

As social constructions, genres represent specific purposes for writing created by social groups to perform particular actions. Such an emphasis on the role genres play in context presupposes that they are purposeful and goal-oriented (Perry, 2009). This pragmatic aspect of genre guided Miller (1994) in emphasizing the mediational role of genres as cultural artifacts. As cultural artifacts, written genres enable writers to translate real life situations, based upon their personal experiences, into meaningful communication between themselves and society. The terms of the written genre facilitate communication by setting standards that must be followed. The individual writer draws upon personal experiences to make meaning through the written word; society sets the rules to make communication both meaningful and understandable to a given audience. Therefore, written genres are considered to be means that help learners make sense of a situation they find themselves in and understand how to participate in the practices of a community, thus, as Miller states, being at the nexus between the individual mind and society.

The view of genre as a social construction has also contributed to understanding what types of knowledge writers need in order to be involved in a writing act within a particular genre. In particular, Perry (2009) identified written genre knowledge that Sudanese refugees required to effectively navigate genre demands. These included purposes, organization, and text features. For example, Akhlas, one of the participants in her study, had never seen a crossword puzzle before she was given one to practice vocabulary in an ESL class in the U.S. Given that she did not know what to do with empty squares, she turned to the researcher for help. The researcher explained to her how to use the clues and write answers by including one letter per square. This example illustrated the important role of understanding specific genre features to know what to do with a

provided text. With respect to the argumentative essay genre in the U.S., the purpose presupposes that writers are expected to synthesize the arguments of other writers, adopt a particular position and state it in a clear and coherent way. Moreover, they have to follow a particular organization that is different than, for example, a scientific article or letter and use particular text features that might be based on a specific format.

The sociocultural conceptualizations of genre go beyond the form and consider the diverse aspects of genre that are rooted in social and cultural lives of the communities within which they function. Genres are viewed as social constructions that are purposeful and mediate writer's meaning-making and actions. In learning new genres, writers also develop written genre knowledge that is shaped by purposes and demands of a particular situation.

Essay genre construct. When writers learn to write in the essay genre, they navigate, as Miller (1994) noted, socially accepted and meaningful communication structures. The essay genre is, therefore, a written communicative structure accepted by the academic community. The essay genre as a structure provides particular rules and resources that affect the choices writers make in order to demonstrate their competency. Those rules and resources are shaped by educational institutions that frame the essay genre as a social construction. Consequently, the essay genre mediates the interaction between an individual writer's choices and the environment in which the written communication takes place.

Perry (2009) stated that "written genres are social constructions that represent specific purposes for reading and writing within different social activities, created by social groups who need them to perform certain things" (p. 256). Guided by this definition, the

essay genre as a social construction in an academic setting includes particular purposes for writing within specific classroom activities, determined by writing instructors within particular educational institutions for specific academic purposes. In my case, the essay genre was a social construction that was informed by the instructor's decisions in the English composition course. Those decisions included an emphasis on particular written genre knowledge (Perry, 2009) and specific assignment expectations.

In order to act as competent writers in the essay genre in the English composition course, adult English learners were expected to demonstrate particular written genre knowledge. They had to navigate an essay purpose rooted in U.S. expectations about argumentative writing. In particular, an academic essay's purpose is to make a case posed by a writer to an audience. Writers are expected to synthesize evidence from different authentic resources to state their position and to present it in a coherent way. In the English composition course, this purpose represented one element of written genre knowledge, based on the essay genre, as a social construction.

In addition, the English composition instructor provided specific assignment expectations. For example, students had to compare and contrast specific variables, such as audiences and rhetorical strategies, in particular authentic texts, such as the letter written by Martin Luther King Jr. from the Birmingham jail, in which he makes the case for civil disobedience for a just cause, and the speech by New Orleans' Mayor Mitch Landrieu arguing for the removal of confederate monuments as a means of achieving a social good.

I relied upon written genre knowledge and assignment expectations to explore how these two essay genre constituents mediated writers' choices about sociocultural resources. Exploring the mediating role of the essay genre as a social construction in the English

composition course enabled me to uncover hidden processes that explained the interaction between the writer in the essay genre and his or her environment. In particular, I was able to investigate the types of choices that writers experienced while learning to write in the essay genre.

Theoretical Frameworks of Learning to Write in an L2

As a theoretical orientation, *learning-to-write* has contributed significantly to research, pedagogy, and theory in L2 writing (Hirvela, Hyland, & Manchon, 2016). Its empirical efforts played a significant role in expanding our thinking and understanding about various facets of learning to write in L2. For example, Riazi, Shi, and Haggety's (2018) analysis of empirical research in the *Journal of Second Language Writing* from 1992 to 2016 has shown that the top nine research foci included different dimensions of the phenomena such as feedback, instruction, assessment, and composing processes. This theoretical orientation also shaped pedagogical thinking about how to teach writing in L2 (e.g., Hyland, 2016). Theoretically this orientation contributed to our understanding of three distinct frameworks, including focusing on writers, focusing on texts, and focusing on readers (Hirvela, Hyland, & Manchon, 2016; Hyland, 2016).

Focusing on writers. According to Hyland (2016), this theoretical framework has three distinct views on writers. The first view is informed by cognitive theorists and focuses on a writer's cognitive processes. The second view is rooted in the expressivists' assumption that "thinking precedes writing" and free expression of ideas contributes to self-discovery as well as cognitive maturation (p. 12). Consequently, writers are viewed as creative individuals. The third view, he notes, is informed by theories of writing as a situated act and focuses on the role of personal, social, and institutional factors within a

writer's local environment. However, sociocultural theorists have shown that what writers do with writing is shaped by larger contextual influences. These views have underplayed the role of influences that go beyond a writer's mind and his or her immediate context.

Focusing on texts. This theoretical framework includes two distinct views on texts (Hyland, 2016). The first view focuses on texts as decontextualized objects and assumes that meaning “lies in the words” that could be decoded by anyone with the right decoding skills (p. 4). The second view was inspired by sociolinguists' ideas (e.g., Halliday, 1994; Gee, 2014) and sees texts beyond their surface features. Text is viewed as *discourse* – the way written language is used for particular social purposes in a particular context. This orientation inspired several approaches to teaching L2 writing among which two genre approaches played the most prominent role in the field of L2 writing (Hyland, 2011).

The two distinct approaches included studies of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) (Hyland, 2016). The SFL approach reflects Halliday's (1994) ideas of the relationship between language and context. People use linguistic resources to communicate meaning in particular situations. Analyzing the structure of those texts helps English learners understand how to use linguistic resources for communication in specific situations. The ESP approach regards genre as a representation of particular professional discourse communities, rather than as the resource (Hyland, 2016). The focus is on genres that function within particular professional communities that share the same communicative purpose. Those purposes shape how texts are structured and writers' choices with respect to style and content. However, the sociocultural views on genre have uncovered its mediating role as a cultural artifact. Genres are more than resources or possessions of discourse communities. Genres are

viewed as manifestations of cultural knowledge that mediate what writers do and how they make sense of the world.

Focusing on readers. This orientation expands the traditional stereotype of an isolated writer and stresses the importance of interaction between the writer and reader. Inspired by Bakhtin's (1981) view of dialogism, this interaction presupposes that the writer produces a text that the reader recognizes, and the reader makes assumptions about what the writer intends to express in the course of reading a text (Hyland, 2011). Thus, this view emphasizes the importance of audience. In addition, Hyland (2016) states that this framework is informed by ideas of writing as social construction and writing as power and ideology. The social construction orientation views writing as a social act and explores how writers' texts relate to other texts and ideas in their discourse communities. The dyadic communication between an individual writer and reader is replaced by communication between a writer and their community. Writers create texts that display patterns and conventions particular for a specific discourse community. The power and ideology orientation, inspired by researchers who work in Critical Discourse Analysis, focuses on how power and ideology are expressed through texts. Researchers within this orientation uncover how power relationships and ideologies shape text creation. However, sociocultural researchers have shown that navigating a genre involves making sense of cultural, written, and language knowledge inherent in a particular genre (Perry, 2009). None of these views addresses how L2 writers navigate genre knowledge to make themselves understood and heard.

Theoretically learning to write in an L2 has been informed by diverse views. These views have guided L2 writing researchers in exploring various aspects of this orientation

among diverse populations and in different contexts (e.g., Hyland, 2016; Hirvela, Hyland, & Manchon, 2016). How these views reflect what recent research on academic writing among adult English learners in North America reveals will be explored in the following section. Current scholarship and theoretical thinking in the field of how L2 learners develop academic writing skills are especially relevant to me because they help me understand what is problematic and/or missing in what we know about this sociocultural phenomenon as practiced in American educational institutions.

Literature Review

The following literature review situates my research within the context of current scholarship. This review features empirical studies that inform current understanding of the phenomena related to research questions addressed in my study. It also identifies gaps in current research. The research strategy for this literature review includes such key terms as *second language writers*, *multilingual writers*, *L2 writers*, *refugees*, *Generation 1.5*, *college writing*, *academic writing*, *essay writing*, *first-year writing*, *genre*, *qualitative studies*. I searched academic databases such as ERIC, Academic Search, Google Scholar and Proquest, and peer-reviewed journals, such as the *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *Written Communication*, *TESOL Quarterly*, and *Research in the Teaching of English*. Because of my interest in L2 writing among multilingual students in college writing courses in the U.S., I also searched studies that focused on learning to write in an academic genre among L2 writers in writing classes in American colleges. Moreover, I deliberately looked for qualitative studies that addressed in-school and out-of-school writing and suggested insights about the use of sociocultural resources by multilingual writers. I limited the sources to empirical, peer-reviewed studies published between 2000

and 2019. Because writing research has been growing in the past 30 years, this time range allowed me to focus on current themes addressed by writing researchers. In addition to peer-reviewed articles, I included three books and a chapter that depicted a case study that aligned with the purpose of my work.

Empirical Research on Learning to Write in L2

The overview of current scholarship suggests that researchers, who study how multilinguals learn to write in college courses, focus on issues that reflect the trends of three theoretical orientations in the *learning-to-write* in L2. These studies focus on texts, writers, and readers and address various linguistic features of texts, the role of personal, social and instructional influences on writers, writers' mental processes, audience awareness, and source-use techniques.

Linguistic features. L2 researchers continue to demonstrate interest in studying linguistic features of written texts as objects. Recent research has been focused on accuracy, syntactic and grammatical complexity, verb types, and cohesive devices. Accuracy has been explored by looking at various measures such as vocabulary (Polio and Shea, 2014), types of errors (Doolan, 2017; Kleine & Lawton, 2018), error-free units and error counts (Polio & Shea, 2014; Slocum, 2013). Syntactic complexity has been examined at three levels: global (i.e., number of words per T-unit), clausal (i.e., coordination subordination), and phrasal (i.e., types of modified nominal phrases) (Casal and Lee, 2019). Slocum (2013), who addressed grammatical complexity, assessed it as the percentage of dependent clauses to the total number of clauses in a written piece and the percentage of clauses per T-units. Types of verbs have been explored with respect to their argumentative function during paraphrasing and the use of citations (Kibler & Hardigree, 2016) and their

distinction between high-frequency (i.e., general verbs such as *make* and *do*) and low-frequency verbs (i.e., more specific verbs such as *retain* and *distract*) (Yoon, 2016). Crossley, Kyle, and McNamara (2016), who studied cohesive devices, distinguished between three types: local (e.g., connectives that indicate contrast or cause), global (e.g., lexical overlap) and text (e.g., repetition of tense). These types of linguistic features suggest that L2 researchers continue to focus on the surface level of texts and to explore their characteristics outside of context.

Researchers have also explored how these linguistic features vary across groups of writers and texts, forms of language support, knowledge of the first language, and over time. The changes in accuracy were observed across groups of writers who were Generation 1.5 (i.e., graduates from a US high-school; regularly spoke other than English language), L2 (i.e., in the American educational system for 1-4 years; regularly spoke language other than English language), and L1 (i.e., native speakers) (Doolan, 2017; Kleine & Lawton, 2018) as well as early arrivals who had formal bilingual education or only ESL support (Slocum, 2013). Changes in syntactic complexity were studied across three groups of graded research papers from an undergraduate first-year writing course designed for multilingual and international students (Casal & Lee, 2019). Slocum (2013) explored variations in grammatical complexity among non-native speakers based on forms of language support, such as bilingual education and the ESL support, they received in the U.S. as well as formal knowledge they received in their first language. Changes in time have been examined based on Michigan State University data with respect to variations across a semester in accuracy (Polio & Shea, 2014), verb-noun combinations in essays written by students in an intensive English program, and cohesive devices in essays

produced in an English for Academic Purposes course (Crossley, Kyle, & McNamara, 2016). All these findings shed light upon changes in language components. However, these variations do not explain how they occur. The nature of their linguistic analysis has been limited to uncovering what those changes reveal about language, not about meaning-making. By exploring writing through a language acquisition framework, researchers contribute to promoting the technical acquisition of language and knowledge.

Social, institutional, and personal factors. L2 researchers have also examined the role of social, personal, and institutional factors on learning to write among adult English learners. Their findings show how the immediate environment shapes learning to write. Social and institutional factors have been explored within a classroom as socioacademic space and a whole institution, respectively. Siczek (2014) showed how 10 international students, who were enrolled in a mainstream classroom program required a writing course at a private, urban university in Washington, DC, constructed meaning as writers through positive interaction with the teacher and peers. The students pointed out that learning took place through interactions they had in a classroom. Hirano (2014) studied the experiences of seven refugees who were not considered “college ready” by traditional admissions standards. Due to the highly supportive environment, the students relied upon college resources, such as tutors, professors, and peers, thus positively addressing the challenges they faced as writers. Both studies underscore the social aspect of learning and the mediating role of more experienced and capable people in learning to write. Moreover, the authors highlight the aspects that need more research. For example, further research should explore how refugee students deal with academic writing in different educational settings and how their writing challenges and their choices about

resources evolve over time. Given Siczek's (2014) finding that academic literacy is not just writing, but a kit of multiple skills and ways of thinking, the author calls for more research that investigates the interaction of the involved skills.

The role of personal factors has also been addressed in a few studies. Researchers have explored previous experiences of writers prior to participating in writing courses (Finn, 2018; Siczek, 2012; Stuart, 2012). Their findings show that due to writing experiences that differ from the writing standards of American educational institutions, adult English learners feel frustrations and anxiety (Finn, 2018; Stuart, 2012) or experience as if they have been thrown in an unknown situation (Siczek, 2012) at the beginning. However, the three researchers also noted that students expressed positive feelings about the courses at the end and perceived growth as writers. Although these findings about the role of previous experiences are insightful, they only address students' perceptions instead of exploring how those experiences shape what participants do as writers.

The findings of these studies provide insights that go beyond text features and show the role of the immediate environment on adult English learners' as writers. However, these findings fail to address the role of larger contextual layers that shape students' writing experiences over time.

Source-use techniques. Given the importance of the use of additional sources in academic writing, L2 researchers have also explored what textual borrowing techniques L2 writers use. Howard, Serviss, and Rodrigue (2010) analyzed research papers written by both L1 and L2 students. Although they did not control for language, all papers contained instances of patchwriting, defined as "as reproducing source language with some words deleted or added, some grammatical structures altered, or some synonyms used" (p.

181). Stockall and Cole (2016) explored students' understanding of the concept citations. Their findings showed that students did not regard citations as important and viewed them in terms of complying with teachers' requirements. Researchers identified several strategies that L2 writers used, such as copy and paste or unauthored resources (i.e., "If the words or ideas are mine and data/facts do not appear to have an author, therefore, I do not need to put in text citations" (p. 352)). These findings beg the question: Given the sociocultural nature of learning to write, what is the role of larger social and cultural influences in shaping these choices? Questions about the role of sociocultural influences are important to consider in light of the fact that the traces of their influences could be examined in other studies, involving multilingual writers.

Sociocultural Resources

Several researchers who have worked with culturally and linguistically diverse groups have uncovered how writers use sociocultural resources in formal educational settings. Their findings suggest that writing is characterized by the negotiation of participants' resources and is mediated by genre. Writers make choices based upon the available cultural materials, previous writing experiences, and people who are present in their lives and who possess valued cultural capital. These researchers demonstrate that learning to write is not driven "by constraints imposed by the general requirements of universal learning mechanisms understood in terms of acquisition and assimilation" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 52). Their findings point to the personal view of writing that is rooted in writers' unique social and cultural experiences.

Cultural resources. Some studies have painted pictures of how writers engaged meaningfully in the world around them. Students drew upon those resources to understand

their own identities and present their voices as writers (Canagarajah, 2013; Dyson, 1993; 2003). For example, Dyson (2003) identified several types of unofficial resources used by five African American first-graders. They included: (a) content (e.g., names of sports teams and singing stars); (b) communicative practices or genres (e.g., reporting game results); (c) technological conventions (e.g., graphic displays and symbols); (d) actual lines (e.g., specific words spoken or sung by movie characters or singers); (e) ideologies of gender, race, and power (e.g., pictures of singers with slinky dresses) (Dyson, 2003). She depicts how children drew upon available cultural resources to construct themselves. For example, Denise drew herself as a singing star, Tina Turner, in a “long, slinky gown and a lot of lipstick” (p. 137). The picture reflected her anticipated future of being a singer. In a similar vein, Canagarajah (2013) notes how bilingual learners recontextualized their cultural resources in their autobiographies. Some of them used proverbs in their native languages or used a text from a children’s story that a student used to listen to as a child. Canagarajah points out that by making unconventional choices about their cultural resources, students experimented with new meanings. The writers in these studies did not write from the air; they relied upon cultural artifacts they learned in their specific contexts. In these cases, the participants’ choices were characterized by their negotiation of the available cultural resources and the resources they learned in their home countries.

Writers’ genre repertoires. Students drew upon their previous written genre repertoires to navigate academic writing tasks (Chen, 2017; Hirvela & Belcher, 2001; Leibowitz, 2005; Seloni, 2014; Schneider, 2018). For example, Chen (2017) notes that Toni, a first-year international student from China, majored in Chinese language and literature and developed a particular format for writing Chinese academic papers. She

would start with introducing a topic, explaining key terms and concepts, then reference and analyze other scholars and their arguments, and pose her own argument at the end. Toni relied upon the composing format of a Chinese academic paper in her first drafts. However, she would make adjustments by moving her argument to the beginning to meet the American essay organization in her second draft. Seloni (2014) showed how a Columbian art historian, who had considerable experience in professional writing in Spanish, created a conceptual map as a strategy to help him with thesis writing. His creating of the conceptual map to construct theory for his thesis was a combination of various genres that he developed through multiple textual encounters.

Writers also rely upon their previous written genres to express their voices (Dyson, 2003; Rounsaville 2014), to maintain identities and educate others (Perry, 2008), and to express pride (Rounsaville, 2017). For example, Perry (2008) paints a picture of how Sudanese refugees transformed their story genres from oral practice into written practice to maintain their Sudanese identities and educate non-Sudanese about their experiences. The practice of storytelling they learned in Sudan served as their cultural resource in the U.S. The transformed practice of storytelling was a collection of diverse practices such as talking about storytelling and enacting storytelling during interviews. In the process of their transformation, they also reconceptualized the purposes and audiences given their new social and cultural context. Rounsaville (2017) studied how an adult English learner, Clara, evolved as a writer by studying her experiences across generations, borders, and communities. She depicts how Clara infused the genres she experienced, such as her grandfather's letters and poems, her mother's poems and empanadas along with tango, into her writing at school. By weaving and reconceptualizing these genres, she wanted to be

recognized as a proud Argentine. These studies affirm that writers' previous experiences with genres are resources that they use and reconfigure to make effective meaning within particular situations. Genres are not just linguistic resources or possession of particular discourse communities; they are cultural artifacts that mediate how writers make themselves heard and understood.

Social networks. Writers also rely upon their network of people as their social resources. This network could include extended family members (Li, 2012; Morton, Storch, & Thompson, 2015), peers (Stegemoller, 2009; Morton, Storch & Thompson, 2015), and people from their support network (Perry, 2009). Li (2012) depicts how an adolescent immigrant student relied upon help from her cousins who immigrated to the U.S. earlier. Her cousins helped her develop her ideas, wording, and typing of her poem for an annual poetry competition. Stegemoller (2009) depicts how Cristina, a later arrival from Mexico, relied upon cultural informants to help her with the first African American studies paper in which she was asked to write everything she knew about the African American community. She also relied upon her friend's help from another state with writing issues in general. She preferred a friend instead of the service offered in a university writing center because tutors only told what must be fixed instead of giving words or telling what to write. These studies point to the important role that others play in assisting culturally and linguistically diverse students with writing in a formal setting. People from their social networks serve as resources they rely upon. These findings point to the importance of exploring the role of others as resources in writing.

School and college resources. Sociocultural resources also encompass some types of resources available in schools and colleges. They might include teachers or professors,

tutors, and classmates. A variety of studies have shown that students seek help with professors for things such as macro-structure revisions (Chen, 2017), guidance (Gilliland, 2018; Hirano, 2014; Sahni, 2016), genres of writing (Schneider, 2018), as well as help from tutors (Nye, 2006; Hirano, 2014). For example, Chen (2017) notes that Betty, a first-year international student, relied on feedback from her professor. In reflecting upon her revisions, she noted that unlike peers whose comments were mainly about sentence-level revisions, her professor's comments were mainly about structure-level revisions. Given that her professor did not provide direct instruction on how to revise, she exercised agency in deciding whether to modify the suggestions or not. Schneider (2018) notes that Faisal, an undergraduate international student from Saudi Arabia, relied upon his professor to get help with understanding the difference between a reflective paper and an argumentative paper. The professor was an important resource for him, as he had practically no experience with writing in his home country. His only writing experience was in an intensive ESL program.

Students also seek help from peers regarding micro-structure revisions (Chen, 2017), proof-reading (Hirano, 2014; Morton, Storch, and Thompson, 2015), feedback (Yi, 2010). For example, Yi (2010) notes how her Korean participant exchanged her compare and contrast essay with her Chinese classmate via MSN Messenger. They used online chatting to share their feedback with each other. Morton, Storch, and Thompson (2015) showed that a Chinese writer, who had few opportunities to practice extended source-based writing in either Mandarin or English, chose to use different forms of help from her Chinese peers such as proof-reading her papers and explaining APA style step-by-step. This strategy helped her increase her self-confidence and become more proactive in seeking

help from multiple sources of social interaction. The cases suggest that students rely upon professors, tutors, and classmates for various resources to negotiate the terrain of academic writing. Exploring how L2 writers use these resources is important to understand how educational institutions could better serve the needs of this population.

Native languages. Finally, sociocultural resources also involve the use of native languages when writers learn to write in an academic genre. Writing in Spanish was critical for the Columbian art historian in Seloni (2014). As the researcher notes, using his native language helped him make sense of theoretical frameworks and his search for other alternatives. The conceptual map Jacob created included ideas and quotes from English books, main arguments in Spanish, and relationships between texts in both English and Spanish. Jacob especially relied upon his first language when he “gathered and generated” his own ideas (p. 89). Canagarajah (2013) dwells upon unconventional use of native languages by bilingual learners when they worked on their literacy autobiographies in his writing course. Mark began to mix English and Korean in his writing to let the reader experience the challenges he faced when he learned Korean. He noted: “My narrative should be a bit confusing because these experiences were confusing and contradictory and the reader should, perhaps, have to struggle through that to pull what they want from the narratives” (p. 51). In these cases, writers’ intentional choices about native languages represented their multilingual literacy development. Their languages served as resources to create new texts and making meaning, which aligns with Vygotsky’s claims about a mediating role of language.

These studies paint a picture of writers’ sociocultural choices that are situated in their social and cultural lives. Writing does not happen solely in writers’ minds or

embedded in linguistic features of texts. Writing is a dialogic process that involves the use of sociocultural resources (Bakhtin, 1981). They also depict the personal view of learning to write that derives from a person “as person-in-the-world, as member of a sociocultural community” (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 52). While learning to write in an academic genre, writers act as cultural producers who adapt their unique social and cultural experiences to the demands of genre tasks and activities, which are part of “broader systems of relations” in the academic world where they have meaning (Lave & Wenger, 1991). These studies indicate that sociocultural competence “is both in us and out of us” (Rose, 1989, p. 241). How this process of sociocultural experience and the essay genre works among adult English learners is the basis for my research.

What is Missing and/or Problematic?

Given the explored sociocultural views on learning, development, literacy, and genre on the one hand, and the theoretical orientation and its frameworks on the field of learning to write in an L2, on the other hand, I have identified several points of disagreement that suggest gaps in the L2 learning-to-write orientation from a sociocultural perspective.

First, the learning-to-write orientation continues to provide a limited focus on understanding writing as a sociocultural act. Despite its guidance by modern views on writing as social practice, this orientation elevates focus on texts and their relationships to other texts in discourse communities or how they express a particular ideology. Such a focus prevents theorists from viewing the importance of exploring lived experiences which are highly emphasized by sociocultural theorists, including Lillis and Scott (2007) in the academic literacy field. A fundamental assumption of sociocultural approaches to literacy

is that what is to be described and explained is a lived experience. This need also requires that researchers focus on the role of larger aspects of context which have been underplayed (Hyland, 2016). Studying larger social and cultural influences would enable researchers to understand what systematically could be gleaned from them about how L2 writers interact with their environment, and what those interactions suggest about challenges around their writing experiences from a sociocultural perspective.

Second, the learning-to-write in an L2 writing orientation has not yet addressed the construct of sociocultural resources. However, sociocultural theories on learning have uncovered the importance of this construct in the process of learning. When writers learn to write they drew upon various social and cultural resources that include material, social, and symbolic agents. Moreover, Wertsch (1991) has argued how the focus on this construct can help overcome viewing learning as a fragmented process, which is what current theoretical frameworks suggest within the learning-to-write in an L2 writing orientation. Shifting focus to sociocultural artifacts will enable theorists to explore relationships between personal and larger sociocultural contextual influences and depict a more holistic view of the learning to write among language learners. We need to stop losing sight of the forest for the trees (Purcell-Gates, Jacobson, & Degener, 2004).

Third, the current views on genre in the learning-to-write in an L2 writing orientation provide a limited view. SFL and ESP are the two theoretical views that continue to dominate the L2 learning-to-write orientation. Sociocultural theorists have shown that genres are always purposeful and situated. Genres are social constructions that mediate how writers make sense and act, as opposed to viewing genres as linguistic resources (i.e., SFL) or possessions of discourse communities (i.e., ESP). Given the nature of genres as

mediational means that shape writers' patterns of thinking, there is a need to explore how they contribute to shaping writers' meaning-making and, consequently, their choices about sociocultural resources. Therefore, this role of genres should be addressed in L2 writing.

These limitations of the learning-to-write in an L2 writing orientation point to the gap in understanding relationships between the role of sociocultural influences in shaping L2 writers' choices. What writers do with writing is mediated by the essay genre and shaped by larger contextual influences. Consequently, these are intricate relationships with a writer's choices being at the nexus of genre and larger contextual influences. Given the lack of attention to this important interaction, it is necessary to explore how L2 writers respond to those influences, as mediated by the essay genre.

The importance of exploring these relationships is also emphasized by empirical studies. The identified scholarship on academic writing among adult English learners in North America shows that L2 researchers continue to express interest in studying either texts, or writers, or readers within an immediate, instructional context. Those ideas are very important and insightful. However, they are fragmented views that do not provide a whole picture of learning to write as a sociocultural act. Therefore, it is necessary to address this weakness in the field.

I, therefore, explored how adult English language learners used social and cultural resources while they were learning to write within the essay genre. Two constructs undergirded the design of the study: (1) sociocultural resources, which I define as social and cultural tools that writers refer to in the process of learning to write and that are the domain of participants' social and cultural lives, and (2) the essay genre, which is defined

as a social construction in the English composition course. Thus, the study was guided by the following questions:

- What types of sociocultural-resources do adult English learners use while learning to write in the essay genre prior to and after their arrival in the U.S.?
- How does the essay genre mediate adult English learners' choices about sociocultural resources in the U.S.?

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I discussed theories and empirical studies related to the phenomenon of English learners' learning to write in the essay genre. The chapter included five sections. In section one, I introduced a conceptual framework that embodies the specific direction for my study. I provided an overview of key sociocultural theories on learning and development, as well as their roots. In particular, I focused on such constructs as learning and development, human actions, and mediational means. I used sociocultural views of mediational means to explain what I meant by sociocultural resources.

In section two, I focused on the meaning of literacy with respect to writing. Highlighting distinctions among the two major theories under the sociocultural umbrella, I focused on key assumptions of literacy as social practice and its major research work to present my understanding of sociocultural influences.

In section three, I discussed the differences between the traditional view of genre and the broadened view. I explained that the sociocultural conceptualizations of genre went beyond the form and considered the diverse aspects of genre, rooted in social and cultural lives of the communities within which they function. The sociocultural

conceptualizations of genre provided the basis for my understanding of a genre resource construct.

In section four, I presented an overview of theoretical orientations on learning to write in an L2. The purpose was to highlight what is known about learning to write in L2 and how each approach contributes to our understanding of this complex phenomenon. In section five, I provide an overview of current scholarship on learning to write in L2 and offered insights that guided this study.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

In this chapter I explain the process I adopted to conduct my study and to reach conclusions. In particular, I focus on issues that address site selection, informant recruitment, the process of generating and analyzing data, my role as a researcher, and limitations inherent in the process.

This study explored the types of sociocultural resources adult English learners used while they were learning to write in the essay genre prior to and after their arrival in the U.S. Moreover, I studied how the essay genre, as social construction in the English composition course, mediated those choices in the U.S. The data for this study were qualitative in nature. I used a qualitative case study design to generate participants' sharing and reflections about their writing growth over time, based upon their writing experiences in an English composition course and English Workshop, field observations, and participants' writing. Through semi-structured interviews, participant observations, and artifact collection, I attempted to provide windows into the unobservable sociocultural world of my participants as writers. As a qualitative researcher, I tried to understand how my participants evolved as writers, how they viewed their writing experiences, and what meaning they attributed to those experiences. I generated my data over a period of seven weeks in a community college. The first six weeks were dedicated to the English composition course and an English workshop, followed by one week to complete the third in-depth interview. In what follows, I provide the details that explain my methodological decisions.

Study Design

Rationale

My goal was to explore lived experiences of four immigrant students in a community college introductory writing course. More specifically, I sought to understand what sociocultural resources the participants drew upon while learning to write in the essay genre prior to and after their arrival in the U.S. Moreover, I examined how the essay genre shaped their writing choices. My purpose was to uncover systemic patterns within a larger context that influenced their experiences as writers, which are not easily measurable using quantitative methods. There is no fixed set of known or operationalized systemic patterns that can be measured against a pre-determined scale. Rather, I sought to understand unknown, complex and contextualized phenomena – participants' own understandings of their experiences as writers and the meanings they made of them (Seidman, 2013). This study was not intended to evaluate how the participants learned to write in the essay genre, but rather to analyze what their distinct experiences suggest about writing as a sociocultural act mediated by genre. Such exploration required a method attuned to the complexity of individual experiences and interpretations they made of their experiences. As such, I used a qualitative research method with a multiple case study format (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2016) and a phenomenological interview data collection approach (Seidman, 2013).

Case Study Design

Given that my focus was on the learner, context, and relationships between them (Yin, 2003), I adopted the multiple case study approach. This methodology is the most appropriate when the researcher is seeking to understand complex social phenomena in depth and to provide a holistic and real-life perspective. In this section, I present the case

study research design and highlight its characteristics that make it suitable for the requirements of this study.

Researchers have different views on what case study research is. Stake (1995), for example, claims that cases normally focus on people. An educational research study might feature a child, or a classroom of children, or programs. Each case study has unique traits, but they also have many things in common. Researchers study how people function in their natural settings by putting aside any presumptions they might have developed. Thus, the case, Stake claims, is a bounded system that is viewed as an object or choice of what is to be studied rather than a process. Other researchers do not share this view and state that events may be the focus of a case study (e.g., Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2016). In particular, Creswell (2013) views case study as methodology: “a type of design in qualitative research that may be an object of study, as well as a product of the inquiry” (p. 97). Similarly, Yin (2016) defines a case study as an “all-encompassing mode of inquiry, with its own logic of design, data collection techniques, and specific approaches to data analysis” (p. 16). This definition includes particular scopes and features. When doing case study research, investigators study a contemporary phenomenon in depth in a real environment, especially when boundaries between a phenomenon and context are not distinguishable. Its features include a distinctive situation with more variables of interest than data points. Consequently, a situation should be explored based upon a particular theoretical position to guide design, data generation, and analysis while converging information from multiple sources of data generation. Given the purpose of my study, I adopted the second view and regarded a case study as a process rather than an object.

Researchers also apply different approaches in a case study. For example, Merriam (2002) views a case study as an approach for collecting and analyzing qualitative data to describe and explore a phenomenon or a social unit. Yin (2016) in contrast states that case studies could also include quantitative evidence, such as surveys seeking categorical rather than numerical responses. In my study, the focus was on multiple qualitative data to generate a broad array of answers to the research questions. Therefore, I adopted a prior theoretical position to guide my design, data generation, and analysis. Moreover, I explored contemporary events in-depth within their real world context.

In selecting this research method, I was guided by the three conditions stated by Yin (2016) to show why a case study approach was more appropriate to my research questions than other modes of inquiry. The three conditions included (a) the form of research question posed, (b) the control a researcher has over actual behavioral events, and (c) the degree of focus on contemporary as opposed to entirely historical events (p. 9). First, the primary purpose of my research questions was to explore how the essay genre mediated participants' writing choices in the English composition course in the U.S. My intention was to trace the role of genre over a period of time, rather than mere incidences or frequencies. The explanatory nature of the "how" question aligns with the first relevant condition of a case study which is associated with the use of "how" and "why" questions. Second, my intention was to have face-to-face interactions with participants in natural settings. I did not intend to manipulate their behaviors precisely and systematically in laboratory settings as some experiments require investigators to do. Moreover, I conducted direct observations and interviews with my participants which naturally pointed to the case study design, as I investigated a contemporary phenomenon within its real-world context.

Thus, those intentions aligned with the second condition that did not require control over behavioral events. Third, my study focused on contemporary events. In other words, I focused on the present, but also included recent past events that served as the basis for contemporary developments. Although this point overlaps with historical research, the strength of the case study was my reliance upon multiple sources of evidence, such as artifacts, interviews, and direct observations, which are not available in a conventional historical study. Such a focus indicated a distinct advantage of the case study research method and favored its use.

Researchers also distinguish between single case studies and multiple case studies (e.g., Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014; Yin, 2015). A single case is typically used in studies that are critical (i.e., studies that confirm, change, or extend a theory), extreme (i.e., studies that represent deviations from theoretical norms), common (i.e., an exploration of circumstances and conditions of an everyday situation), revelatory (i.e., observation and analysis of a previously inaccessible phenomenon), or longitudinal (i.e., studying a single case at different points in time) (Yin, 2016). Multiple-cases are adopted to add “confidence” to findings by specifying where, how and, possibly, why a phenomenon carries on as it does (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014, p. 33). In my study, I intended to examine distinct experiences and perspectives to more comprehensively understand the phenomena under study. The multiple-case study design was best suited for my research. Generating evidence from multiple cases allowed me to get distinct insights. This would have been impossible if I had conducted a single case study, as one-person case does not represent the divergent complexities of the phenomenon I wanted to study. Moreover, my focus was not on an extreme case, or a critical case, or a revelatory case, which are likely

to involve one case (Yin, 2016). Instead, I sought to explore distinct cases that shed light upon different facets of learning to write as a sociocultural act.

The case study design also requires that a researcher defines what constitutes the case. Cases could include a role (e.g., a nurse supervisor), a small group (e.g., a breast cancer survivor group), space (e.g., a particular place for adolescents to hang out), a process (i.e., organizing and managing an international conference), or a subculture (e.g., female African-Americans in academia) (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014, pp. 29-30). Merriam (2002) states that the unit of analysis rather than the topic of investigation constitutes a case study. In my work, each adult immigrant English learner learning to write an essay in an English composition course at a community college was the unit of analysis. Because of my theoretical perspective, my proposition was that the essay genre, as a social construction, shaped adult English learners' choices about resources in the English composition course in the U.S. Therefore, I focused on a writer as a unit of analysis to obtain necessary evidence. The four participants I selected for the study represented the case.

In conducting a multiple-case design, I also had to encounter the question of the number of cases sufficient for my study. As a qualitative researcher, my intent was not to provide generalizations, but to elicit details and specifics. Exploring writing as a sociocultural act mediated by genre did not require "an excessive degree of certainty" (Yin, 2018, p. 59). Moreover, Creswell (2013) notes that four or five participants could provide plenty of opportunities to identify themes within each case and conduct cross-case analysis in case study research. In addition, I had to consider in-school and out-of-school

constraints within the proposed time frame. Given these considerations, I chose four participants.

Research Context and Site Selection

The primary site of this study was a writing classroom in a local community college located in the Mid-South. The city is home to many immigrants. The growth of this immigrant community is attributed to several factors. First, the city is a home to many foreign-owned companies that are headquartered in Germany, India, Ireland, Japan, and Switzerland. Second, the state's farmers are heavily dependent upon migrant workers. According to the report by New American Economy (2016), foreign-born residents account for 22% of the state's workers in animal production and make up 20.7% of workers in crop industries. Third, foreign-born residents make up a significant share of the labor force in the state. The American Immigration Council report (2017) states that immigrant workers are most numerous in the following occupation groups in the state: production (10,815 workers), food preparation and serving related (10,029 workers), sales and related (9,511 workers), office and administrative support (9,416 workers), and management (8,790 workers). Fourth, local public universities and colleges attract a large number of international students. These students often bring their spouses and families who also add to the immigrant community. Finally, a local refugee non-profit organization provides resettlement services to refugees who have been welcomed from Afghanistan, Bhutan, Burma, Cuba, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Iraq, Pakistan, Palestine, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, and Syria. These foreign-born residents are part of a vital segment of the labor force and make extensive contributions to the state economy, thus benefitting the community at large. Moreover, many of them seek to pursue undergraduate

and graduate degrees in local colleges and universities. The American Immigration Council (2017) reports that more than a third of all adult immigrants were at least college-educated in 2015. These factors indicate that immigrants participate in the state's economy and are, therefore, important to its development.

Such diversity in the immigrant community also reflects the diversity of the local community college's population. The college provides educational services to refugees, undocumented students, other types immigrants and international students from around the world. According to the information provided on the college website, total enrollment by ethnicity in 2018 included: Asian (2.6%), Hispanic (5.9%), Non-resident aliens (0.2%), and Unknown (1.2%). These trends align with national trends of community college demographics nationally. Data from the American Association of Community Colleges (2018) show that the percentage of students enrolled for credit in the same groups included: Asian (6%), Hispanic (24%), Non-resident aliens (2%), and Unknown (4%). Given the provided data, the college serves the needs of diverse groups similar to other colleges on the national level. This is the population my participants represent, as well.

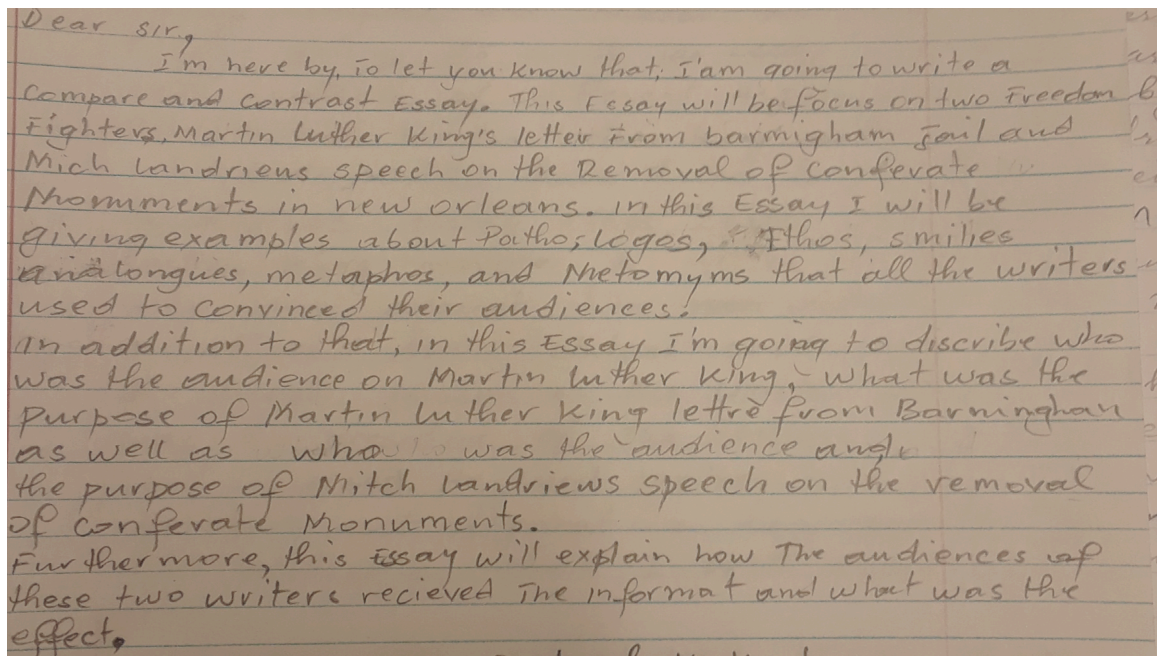
The college opens opportunities for students to improve their academic writing skills. The English as a second language (ESL) program offers a variety of free classes that are not for college credit. The program provides writing classes at the beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels for students who need to improve their academic writing skills before taking college level courses. Students who are novice writers learn to write paragraphs at the beginning level, and then progress to writing essays at the intermediate and advanced levels. Upon the completion of the ESL program, students take developmental writing courses before they enroll in regular academic programs. Those

courses are offered to a mixed group of students who are both native-born and foreign-born. Such an approach is designed to encourage collaborative relationships among these two categories of students. Moreover, this approach intends to help foreign-born students to recognize and adopt model behavior and language specific for a classroom setting. With respect to native speaker, it is an opportunity for them to be exposed to new Americans, as many rural students have never met people from other countries.

Freshman composition courses 1 and 2 are required for native speakers and foreign-born students seeking the associate of arts degree and the associate of science degree. Foreign-born students are assessed according to how well they do on English tests. If they need academic support, they are required to take a section of the English composition course and an associated section of the English workshop. Both courses are credit bearing. English workshop is an elective general education course, the purpose of which is to provide additional support in writing. The same instructor teaches the English workshop in which they focus on the essay written in the English composition course. The English composition course that I observed was structured in such a way that each week students were exposed to new information by means of a mini-lecture and group work in one class and writing in a computer lab during the English workshop. Due to my interest in adult English learners, the availability of suitable participants, and established relationships that allowed me to gain access to the research site, I chose this community college to conduct my research.

The environment of the ESL program and educational values and beliefs of the writing instructors in the program encouraged students to share about their cultural experiences in class. Based on my observations, some writing instructors gave students a

choice to use their native languages in assigned written tasks. For example, during my observations in English workshop, the professor asked students to write personal letters to him in which they had to explain how they were going to organize their essays (see Figure 3.1).

A photograph of a handwritten letter on lined paper. The letter is written in cursive and appears to be from a student to an instructor. The text is as follows:

Dear sir,

I'm here by, to let you know that, I am going to write a compare and contrast Essay. This Essay will be focus on two Freedom Fighters, Martin Luther King's letter from birmingham jail and Mich Landriens speech on the Removal of confederate Monuments in new orleans. In this Essay I will be giving examples about Pathos, Logos, Ethos, similes and analogies, metaphors, and Metonyms that all the writers used to convinced their audiences.

In addition to that, in this Essay I'm going to describe who was the audience on Martin Luther King, what was the purpose of Martin Luther King letter from Birmingham as well as who was the audience and the purpose of Mitch Landriens speech on the removal of confederate Monuments.

Furthermore, this essay will explain how The audiences of these two writers recieved The informat and what was the effect.

Figure 3.1. Martin's letter to the instructor of the English composition course

Students could choose to write those letters in English or their first languages. Although students were taught the essay genre in ESL writing classes and developmental courses, they were given a choice of topics they would like to write about, and they were encouraged to express their own opinions and thoughts, following the set requirements for essay organization, and specified thinking about their audience.

Moreover, instructors encouraged students to consider not just global issues, but also local issues in their communities. For example, when the Trump administration intended to phase out the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, a writing

instructor encouraged students in one of the sections of English 101, which I observed prior to conducting my study, to explore this program and write essays in which they stated their opinions about this program and its advantages and disadvantages to the local community. Students were expected to take a position based upon their intended audience in the community. In another class, an instructor encouraged students to write about their first jobs in the U.S. Other instructors encouraged students to write about their experience in the local community, such as those in their first jobs or in learning English. In addition, classroom procedures allowed students to work with a partner or with group members, helping each other during each step of the writing process while constructing their written products. Instructors attempted to acknowledge students' unique perspectives and viewed their experiences as resources rather than deficiencies. The environment created by these conditions was conducive to exploring students' use of their sociocultural resources, because students were invited to draw upon and share about their previous experiences and knowledge.

In these examples, the specific topic was less important than the methods instructors used to encourage student thought and writing. Students were asked to think, communicate with others, and share their experiences based upon their personal situations. This process of interaction with others and instructors required that students draw upon their personal experiences.

Participants and Their Recruitment

In recruiting participants, my purpose was to select recent immigrant English learners whose distinct backgrounds and experiences with academic writing would allow me to explore unique perspectives. Specifically, I sought to study how their unique

experiences and the meanings they made of them shed light upon various foci of learning to write as a socioculturally-situated act mediated by the essay genre. I sought perspectives and experiences that included different ethnicities, languages, and lengths of contact with academic writing in the U.S. Focusing on immigrant English learners with diverse backgrounds naturally pointed to purposeful sampling, rather than random sampling.

I used purposeful sampling to select participants for this study. This is a process interpretivist-researchers apply to recruit participants who could provide the richest and most pertinent information and insights related to the purpose of the study (Creswell, 2016). As part of purposeful selection, I also referred to the maximum variation strategy. I chose participants who were adult English learners and relatively recent immigrants to the U.S. In addition, I selected the participants who came from different ethnicities, spoke multiple languages, experienced essay writing in native, colonized, and foreign languages, and had various lengths of contact with academic writing in the U.S. This strategy is applied to represent various cases and to depict multiple perspectives about cases (Creswell, 2013; Glesne, 2016; Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). Selecting distinct cases contributed to the richness and depth of the research data and to more comprehensive investigation of the phenomenon under study.

In selecting participants, I used four criteria, each related to my research questions. First, my focus was on participants who were enrolled in an English composition course and spoke English as a second language. I intended to explore adult English learners' choices about sociocultural resources in the essay genre. Therefore, my focus was on non-native speakers enrolled in an English composition course at a community college. However, one possible limitation was that this criterion prevented me from investigating

in-depth cases and the various perspectives of participants who were adult English learners enrolled in writing courses at a four-year institution.

Second, I focused on selecting immigrant students who were relatively new to this country. Because my goal was to explore the lived experiences of immigrant English learners whose population is on the rise in U.S. higher education, I focused on adult English learners who arrived in this country as adults. Focusing on immigrants allowed me to explore their choices about sociocultural resources when they learn to write in the essay genre. However, one possible limitation was that this criterion prevented me from studying perspectives of other groups of adult English learners, such as second-generation learners or international students.

Third, I focused on participants from different ethnolinguistic backgrounds. Because my goal was to explore diverse perspectives on learning to write as a sociocultural act mediated by the essay genre, I considered ethnicity and language as a combined criterion. I viewed ethnicity not as a group, but “groupness” that is variable and contingent instead of static and given (Brubaker, 2002, p. 168). In other words, I thought of ethnicity in terms of cultural processes that characterized a particular group that shared a similar language, traditions, behaviors, values, and beliefs. This criterion reflected diversity that permeates contemporary writing classrooms. Writing instructors typically have students from different ethnolinguistic backgrounds. As members of different ethnolinguistic groups, people actively participate in cultural patterns of academic writing valued and practiced within those groups. Those patterns also involve various types of genre knowledge that characterize the writing practices of those groups. Through their active participation, people develop and adopt shared cultural and written knowledge about the

essay genre to a greater or lesser degree (Perry, 2009; Tardy, 2009). Therefore, choosing participants from different ethnolinguistic backgrounds reflected diversity observed in writing classrooms and contributed to understanding multiple foci of academic writing as a sociocultural act. However, the possible limitation of this criterion is that I was not able to explore in-depth the different foci of essay writing as a sociocultural act among speakers of the same ethnolinguistic background.

Fourth, I focused on participants who had different types of contact with the educational system in the U.S. Given that I sought to explore how U.S. cultural and written genre expectations mediated writing choices, I wanted to focus on participants who had different exposure to academic writing practices in American public schools and colleges. The essay genre is one of the dominant academic genres that are an essential part of the K-12 experience in this country (Shanahan, 2015). Moreover, argumentative essay writing is also the most common genre in American colleges. Although the nature of essay genres varies across disciplines, stating an argument and presenting it in a coherent way is a required skill in higher education (Lea & Street, 1998). Therefore, choosing participants who had different lengths of exposure to essay writing in the U.S., enabled me to provide considerable breadth in my analysis. I was able to explore distinct cases and perspectives on how adult English learners navigated the essay genre at the college level in the U.S. However, one possible limitation was that this criterion prevented me from exploring in-depth cases and perspectives of participants who had the same level of exposure to academic writing in this country.

These four criteria enabled me to construct various perspectives that characterize learning to write as a sociocultural act mediated by the essay genre. By focusing on

ethnolinguistic backgrounds and the length of exposure to the education in American public schools and colleges, I was able to explore distinct experiences. This, in turn, contributed to a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon.

In the English composition course and English workshop, I chose four participants who met the criteria of my study out of five volunteers. Due to in-school and out-of-school constraints within the proposed time frame, I chose to focus on four participants. The four participants were from distinct countries of origin, spoke various native languages, and differed in the length of contact with academic writing in the U.S. (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1.

Participants' General Information

Pseudonym	Riya	Lilly	Soso	Martin
Age	29	36	40	34 *
Country of Origin	Nepal	Haiti	Iraq	Congo
First language	Nepali	Haitian Creole	Arabic	Swahili
Colonized language	0	French	0	French
Additional languages	Hindi Japanese	0	0	Lingala Bemba Nyanja
Year of arrival in the U.S.	2011	2009	2014	2013
U.S. high school	0	0	0	2 years
U.S. community college	3 semesters	4 semesters	5 semesters	5 semesters

(*) Estimate based on the information Martin provided during the interviews

Participants' Anonymity

Initially, I wanted participants to decide whether they would prefer to remain anonymous. Although consideration of protection with participants is central to the design and practice of ethical issues, some researchers have found that participants insist that their real names be used (e.g., Grinyer, 2002; Perry, 2009). As these researchers noted,

participants may be very proud of their personal stories and experiences. Therefore, they have a desire to openly share them with others. Moreover, if participants choose to use their names, it adds a more powerful, personal touch to their profiles. Although I included this option in a consent form that each participant was sent and required to sign (see Appendix A), the community college institutional review board insisted on protection of participants' anonymity. Therefore, I invited each participant to choose their own pseudonyms. These were used throughout my research.

Classroom Context

The English composition course and English workshop took place in classrooms that were in a recently built campus facility. The physical environments of these classrooms were different. The English composition course was in the classroom that accommodated approximately 32 students. The desks were arranged in four rows facing the white board with a computer station for an instructor. Each row accommodated about 8 students. The English workshop took place in a computer lab on the same floor of the building. The computer lab had four rows with two computers per a row on one side of the room, and four rows with four computers per a row across the aisle. The walls contained some of the images with encouraging statements about success, such as “each and every step you take must move you toward your goal” or “it is not because things are difficult that we do not dare; it is because we do not dare that they are difficult.”

I also observed differences in classroom interactions in each of the classes. The English composition course was taught to both native speakers and English learners. There were 12 native speakers, and nine English learners. English learners represented the following countries: the DRC, Haiti, Iraq, Nepal, and Puerto Rico. In the English

composition course, English learners always took the first two rows, while native speakers preferred to take the last two rows. When students came to the English composition course, there was hardly any interaction among native speakers with the exception of the two girls who always sat next to each other and talked with each other all the time. Nor was there any interaction between native speakers and international students. There was hardly any interaction among English learners who tended to sit quietly and wait for the instructor to start a session. However, in the English workshop that followed the English composition course, English learners always interacted with each other during classroom breaks. In addition, they felt more comfortable asking their instructor any questions unlike the English composition course where questions were not often asked.

Instructional procedures revolved around lecturing, occasional group work in the English composition course and independent work in the English workshop. For example, after the instructor introduced the letter by Martin Luther King Jr., I noted the following in my observation notes:

Dr. [instructor] devoted this class to understanding some historical context about Birmingham, Alabama and what segregation was. He showed a few videos that depicted violent protests in Alabama and pictures. The students were surprised to learn that there were separate water fountains for Black and White people, etc. They also talked about the types of audience in the essay by MLK. Students hardly spoke during this session. Dr. [instructor] was the one who talked. But at some point, he did ask two male Nepali students and Martin if their countries were colonized. Students' replies were brief, as they were not very aware of the history of colonization. For example, the Nepali students did not know that their country was "a kind of" colony by the Britain people who fought with one Nepali group and later invited that group to be part of their British military. Dr. [instructor] was more knowledgeable about the history of their countries.

On several occasions, students were invited to work in pairs. For example, one day the instructor provided them with the peer-review worksheet. They had to work with a person

who sat next to them and review their essays. Below I present the feedback Soso provided to her partner (see Figure 3.2). Independent work took place mainly during the workshop. However, the international students often relied upon each other for help during the workshop.

Reader:
Read the paper once without pausing to write comments. Then read the paper again with the following questions in mind.

1. Does the introduction clearly present the writer's goal? If so, please write the goal of the essay below. *How the African American were slaves and other white minorities were against and protested asking for equal right and opportunity*
2. Does the writer use of one the introduction strategies we discussed in order to make the paper's goal appear interesting and important? If so, write down the strategy below. *general introduction - He start what happen in the past*
3. Does the writer employ varied sentences structures or does he/she repeat the same structures throughout the essay? Circle one sentence that would benefit from being rewritten. And, write down the essay's best sentence below. *King wanted to let them know that this is the right time to sit together and stop segregation*
4. Does the conclusion present a judgment or culminating idea? If so, write it down below. If not, provide the writer with an example of how he/she might more effectively end the essay. *there is now conclusion*
5. Does the writer use punctuation properly? Is the semi-colon overused? Does the writer make use of hyphen and colons when appropriate? Circle any places where you think the punctuation may be improved and suggest potential alternatives.
6. List one way this essay could be improved.

Figure 3.2. Soso's feedback on the peer-review worksheet

The English composition course focused on academic writing skills. According to the course syllabus, they included drafting and producing essays in Standard English, reading critically, thinking logically, responding to texts, addressing specific audiences, as well as researching and documenting sources (see Appendix B). In addition to classroom participation and work, students were expected to produce three essays of about 1,500 words.

In the participants' new environment, the English composition instructor emphasized the importance of using authentic texts in essay writing. For example, when students worked on their first essay in the English composition course, they were invited

to read three articles written by three immigrants about their lives in the U.S. from the required textbook titled *The writer's presence: A pool of reading* (2015). The purpose of the first essay was to analyze the articles and infer what home meant to the authors. The instructor asked students to think how the three authors defined the concept of home. In addition, students had also to explain their own understanding of this concept in their first essays. The instructor's emphasis on original works required that students learn how to be in a dialogue with other writers and their ideas.

Given the nature of the assigned texts for the compare and contrast essay that the participants worked on during the data generation period, the instructor provided explanations with respect to the historical context. For example, one day he devoted the entire workshop to explaining the historical background of the letter by Martin Luther King Jr. and the speech by Mitch Landrieu. He pointed out historical facts about the North and South, the concept of sharecroppers, how slaves were brought from Africa to South America and then to the North America, how African-American people were prevented from voting, how the Bible was used to justify White supremacy, and how Confederate statues conveyed messages of authority and power. While providing those explanations, the instructor also tried to illustrate them by drawing on the white board (see Figure 3.3).

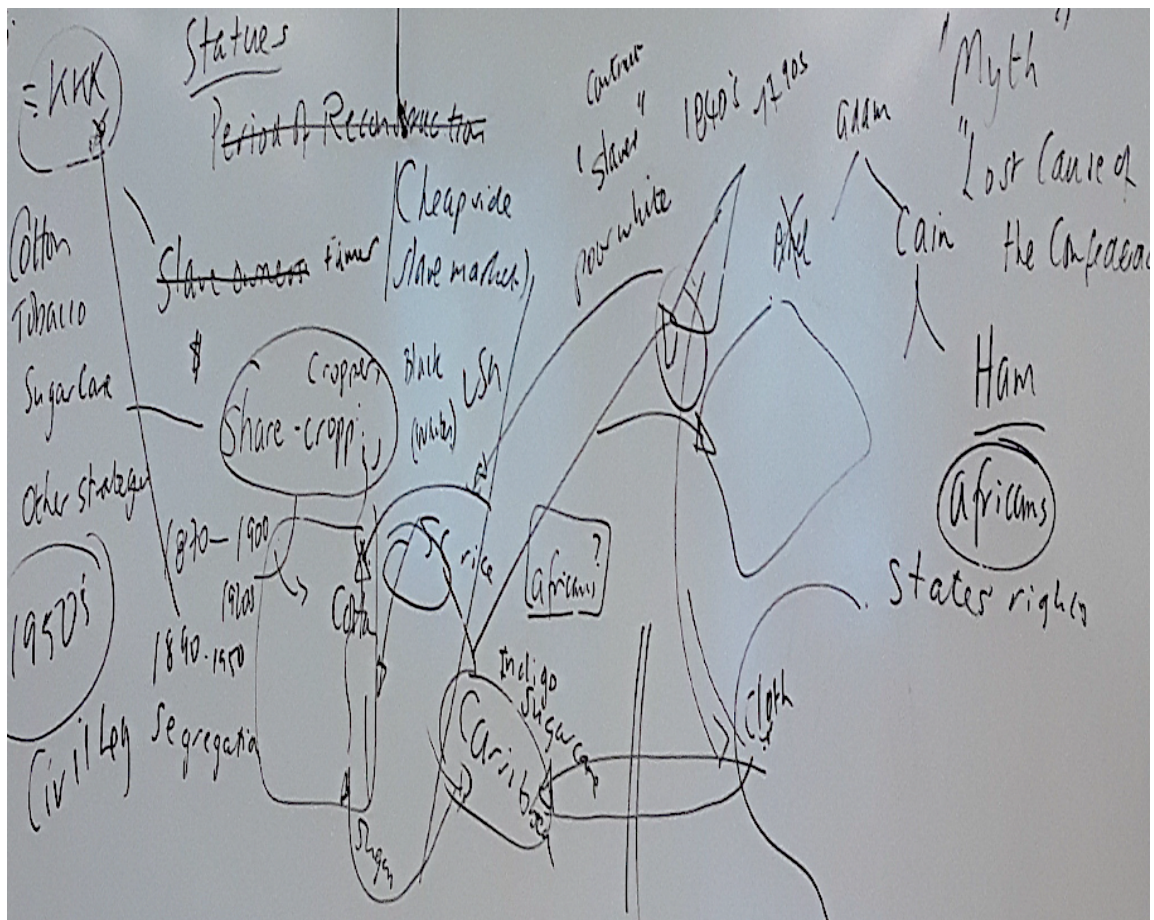


Figure 3.3. Instructor's use of the white board to illustrate his explanations about the historical context of the speech and the letter

Students listened and carefully followed his explanations. In addition, the instructor helped students understand challenging words, phrases, and the rhetorical strategies and figurative language in the two texts. They underlined or highlighted the examples, words and phrases in the paper copy of their textbooks and the speech by Mitch Landrieu. Figure 3.4 depicts the examples of the underlined words and phrases from Martin's copy of the speech by Mitch Landrieu.

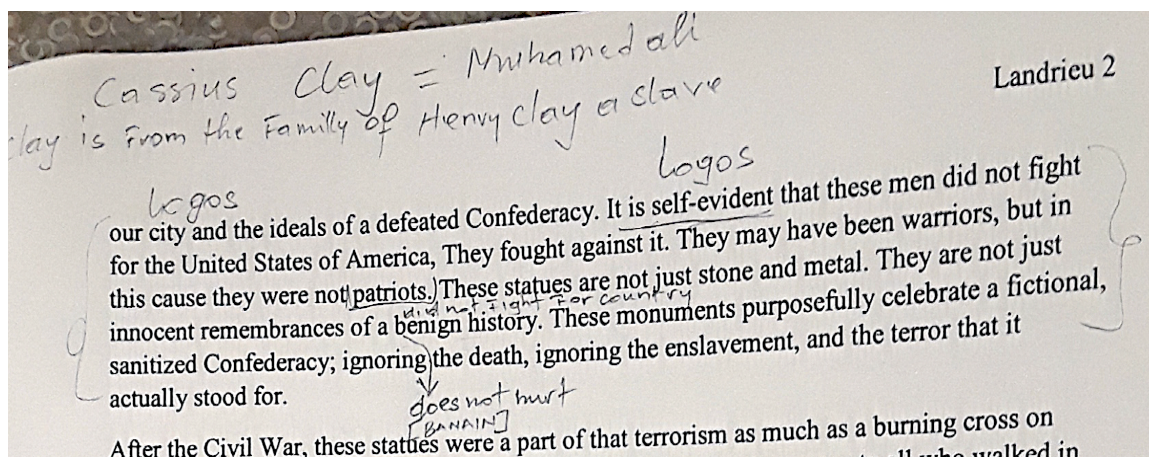


Figure 3.4. Examples of Martin's notes on his paper copy of the speech

This figure shows what Martin paid attention to while listening to his professor's explanations. Martin indicated the examples of logos in the passage, underlined the word *patriot* and provided its meaning that said "did not fight for country." Likewise, he wrote down the definition of the word *benign* that said "does not hurt" and provided its pronunciation in square brackets below. In addition, he also wrote down what the instructor shared about Muhammed Ali's slave last name which was Clay and that the origin of the Clay last name went back to Henry Clay who was a slave owner.

Inasmuch as note taking was expected, not demanded, Lilly and Riya took some notes in the English composition course and English Workshop. Martin and Soso took more extensive notes. Their notes were written by hand in their notebooks. Figure 3.5 shows the examples of notes taken by Lilly and Martin, respectively on the same day that the instructor discussed the letter by Martin Luther King Jr.

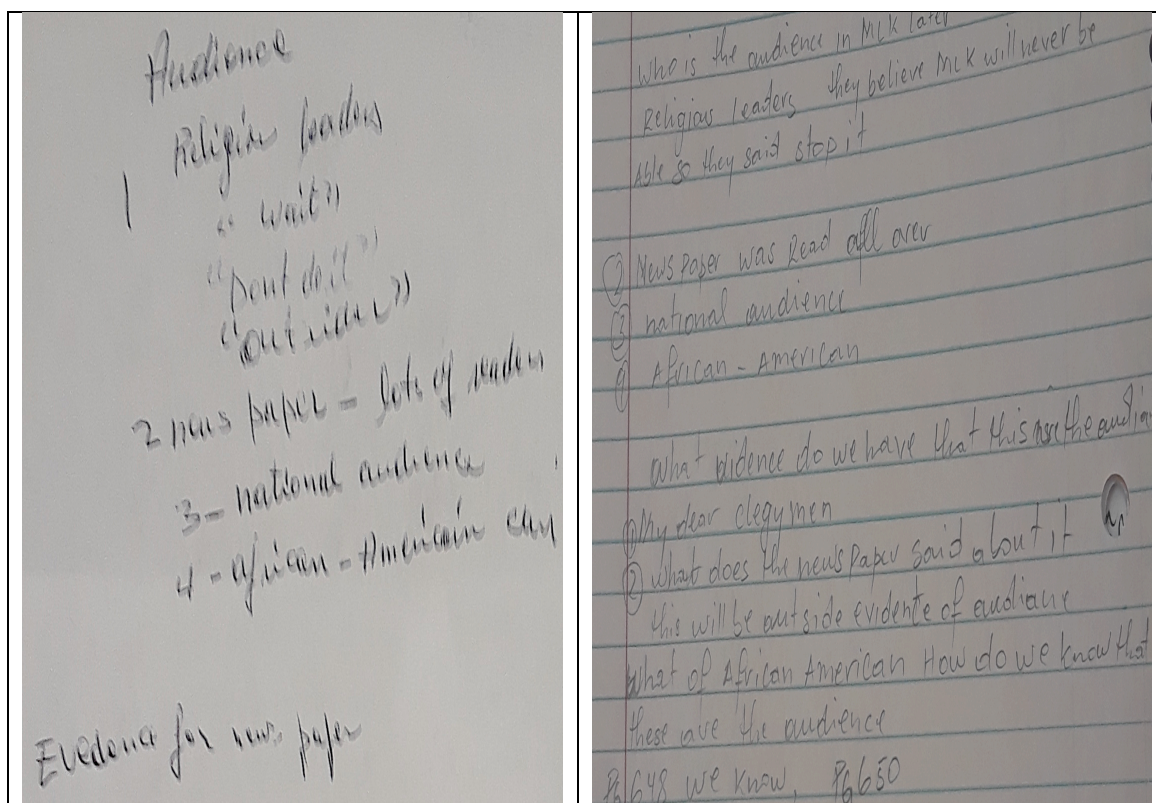


Figure 3.5. Examples of Lilly's (on the left) and Martin's (on the right) notes

Lilly's notes included: a) religious leaders and the words they used (i.e., "wait," don't do it," and "outsider"), b) newspaper – lots of readers, c) national audience, and d) African-American audience. Martin's notes contained more details. In addition to listing the types of audiences, he also took notes about the evidence that proved that specific groups of people were the intended audience. In particular, he wrote: "What evidence do we have that these are the audience? My dear clergymen. What does the newspaper said about it? This will be outside evidence of audience. What of African-American How do we know that these are the audience PG. 648 we know PG.650."

In the English composition course, the participants had to make sense of arguments upon which powerful and convincing essays were based in the U.S. In particular, the

professor expected students to analyze the content of the assigned texts. In order to guide them in their analysis, the instructor distributed a copy that contained variables and guiding questions that helped students think about each variable (see Figure 3.6).

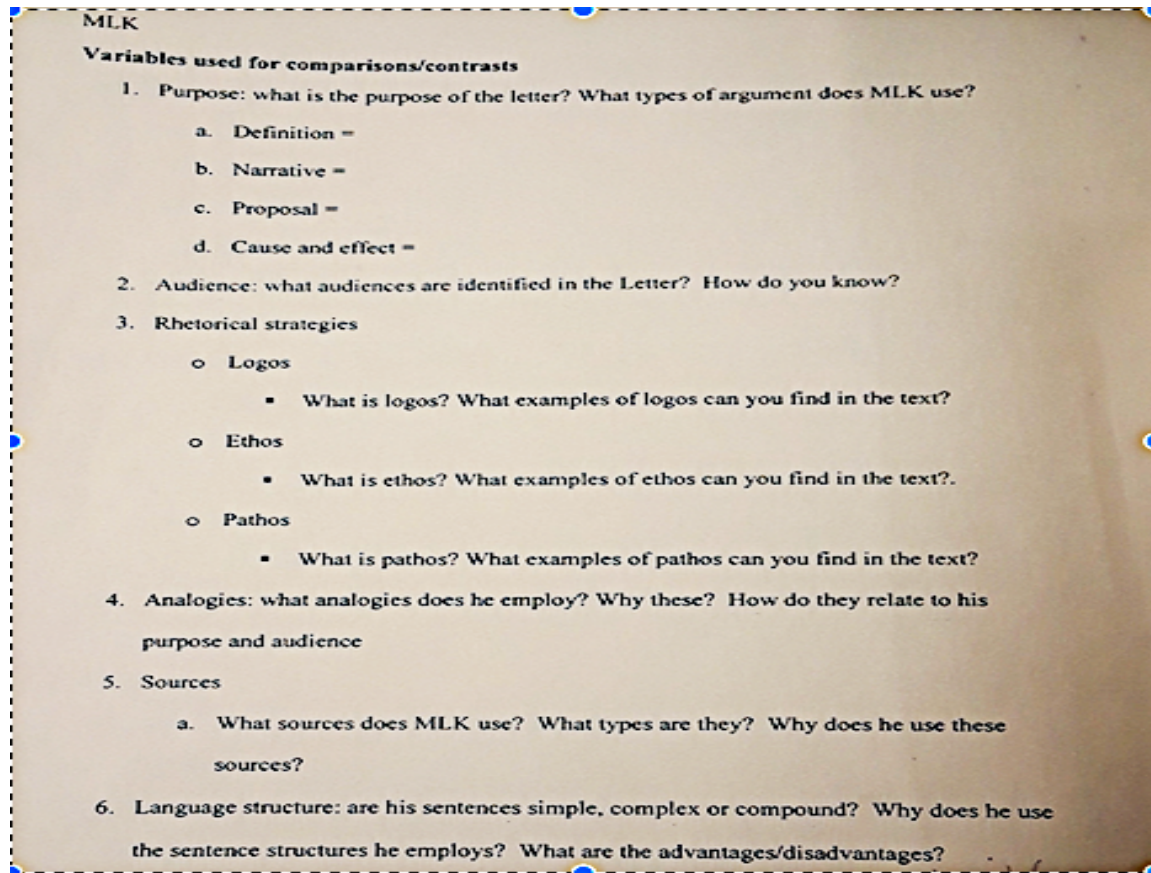


Figure 3.6. Copy of the handout with variables

The instructor also invited students to go over each variable. For example, to illustrate the meaning of analogy, he showed a YouTube video from a movie in which Louis Armstrong sang a song, titled “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.” After discussing who Louis Armstrong was and the title of the song, the instructor made connections to the reference in the letter by Martin Luther King Jr. to the three Jews who refused to worship the Babylonian king and, consequently, were ordered to be burned in the furnace. The

instructor pointed out that Louis Armstrong used the same story but presented it in a song, thus demonstrating the concept of analogy.

In addition, the instructor invited students to think about the examples of figurative language. He wrote on the board the four types of figurative language as a list, including analogy, similes, metaphor, and metonym. To demonstrate the meaning of the first three concepts and the three types of comparison, the instructor used the phrase: Your baby is like Jesus. To illustrate the meaning of metonym, the instructor used the phrase: He is hitting the bottle. He also provided a few examples from the letter and suggested that students find their own examples. They worked on the task individually for about ten minutes. Martin volunteered to share his example by reading it. The instructor noted that he found the hardest sentence in the book. It said:

Just as Socrates felt that it was necessary to create a tension in the mind so that individuals could rise from the bondage of myths and half-truths to the unfettered realm of creative analysis and objective appraisal, we must see the need of having nonviolent gadflies to create the kind of tension in society that will help men rise from the dark depths of prejudice and racism to the majestic heights of understanding and brotherhood (King, 2015, p. 647).

The instructor then dwelled upon the identified sentence by talking about Socrates and what led to his death. Students just listened attentively.

While analyzing the assigned texts, the instructor also expected students to decide their positions and create a way to state their arguments in coherent ways. In stating their positions, they had to think of topic sentences for each paragraph in the body and support them with specific examples from the texts, as well as provide their interpretations. That was the skill the instructor emphasized when they worked on their very first essays. He invited them to produce paragraphs following a particular structure: a topic sentence, a

claim and evidence in their own words. During the data generation period, the instructor emphasized it through his feedback on their essay drafts (see Figures 3.7)

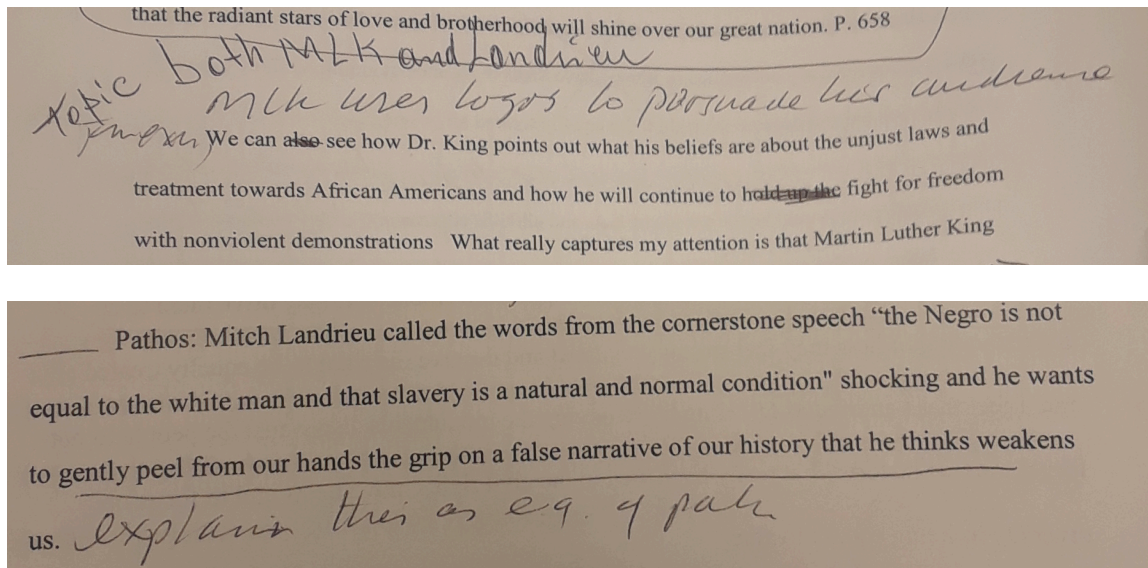


Figure 3.7. Examples of instructor's feedback on Lilly's first draft

The top image of Figure 5.11 shows that the instructor expected students to use topic sentences in the body paragraphs. In this case, he helped Lilly understand what her topic sentence could be by providing an example of it. The bottom image of Figure 5.11 presents the instructor's expectations, asking students to provide interpretations in their own words of the quotations they cited. His comments indicated that he expected Lilly to explain the quote she used in her paragraph.

Throughout the whole course, the instructor guided students in their thinking by answering their questions, commenting on their works, and providing feedback on their drafts. For example, one day the instructor and Martin addressed the topic of audience in the speech by Mitch Landrieu. After listening to Martin's thoughts about the audience, the instructor pointed out that the audience went beyond the people in New Orleans and

included people across the country. At another point Lilly said aloud that she was stuck and asked if the instructor could look at her introduction. When he approached her, she turned the screen slightly to show him the introduction. After reading it, he noted: “You are not comparing two men, but their arguments.” When the instructor provided feedback on participants’ first drafts, he pointed out what they did well and the things they missed or had to delete, along with their grammar, spelling, and stylistic mistakes. Figure 3.8 depicts the examples of instructor’s comments on Soso’s introduction.

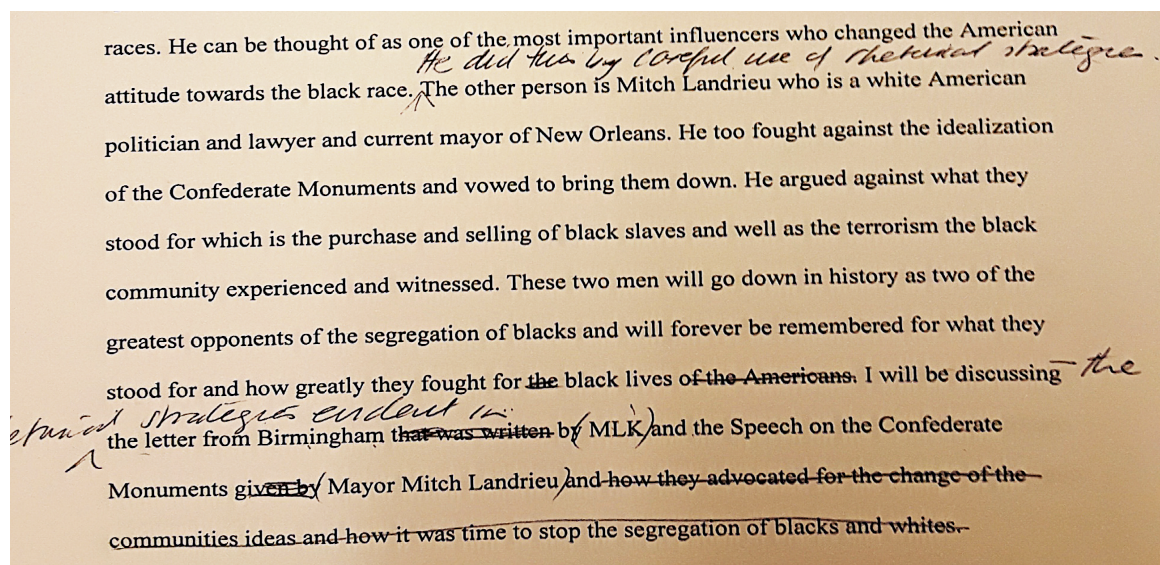


Figure 3.8. Examples of instructor’s comments on Soso’s introduction

Figure 5.12 shows that the instructor observed that she should include the sentence “He did it by careful use of rhetorical strategies” and indicated what she should add and delete in the thesis statement.

In addition, the instructor utilized visuals to guide the participants in their thinking about their essays. The instructor used various videos to support his explanations about the historical context, to illustrate the use of rhetorical strategies in real life in an

advertisement, and to introduce the types of introductions they could consider for their essays. For example, on the day when the instructor introduced the speech by Mitch Landrieu, he also showed a video of a march in New Orleans. He did not first explain what the march was. He just invited students to watch and think about what it could be. The video depicted people dressed up, walking down the street, playing music and some of the women dancing with colorful umbrellas. Students were surprised to learn that the march was actually a funeral procession. The purpose was to help students see a specific culture of New Orleans.

The instructor expected students to use the MLA style which he introduced to them when they worked on their very first essays that semester. In order to help students understand the MLA style, the instructor showed them two YouTube videos. Following those videos, students practiced how to write citations. The instructor projected a few examples on the board and invited students to do them together. After that, they practiced some of them on their own. On a different occasion, the instructor showed the students the Purdue Owl website and invited them to cite their sources following specific examples from the website. The students worked on them in class. The instructor checked on them and answered any questions they had.

In the U.S. all four participants enjoyed the benefits of group work. In both the English composition course and English workshop, the participants were encouraged to work in small groups. However, there were differences in how they interacted with their classmates in these classes. In the English composition course that included a mix of native speakers and international students, participants hardly had any interaction with native speakers. For example, one day the instructor paired international students with American

partners in such a way that each pair had an English learner and a native speaker. However, out of five pairs on that day, only three of them engaged in a conversation. Two pairs worked individually. American students seemed unwilling to talk to international students despite the fact that the international students made an attempt to initiate conversations. For instance, Martin asked his partner: “So, what do you think?” His partner did not reply to the question. In contrast, international students appeared to feel more comfortable interacting with each other in the English workshop. As Soso noted, she perceived that “maybe they (i.e., native speakers) thought we are not speak English very well.”

Gaining Entrée

During fall semester 2016, I was a tutor-volunteer for a Chinese student from the English as a second language program at the college. Beginning in spring 2017, I served as a helper in two writing classes: Advanced Academic English and English 101. In both cases, I volunteered by providing tutoring services and assisting in classes. By providing that kind of assistance, I avoided being just a “user” (Glesne, 2016; Lareau, 1996). Starting in January 2018, I continued to serve as a volunteer in English 101 and English workshop taught by the same professor from Advanced Academic English. That experience allowed me to establish relationships with the four focal participants who took the two classes.

My visits to ESL writing classrooms were beneficial in several ways. Established relationships with writing teachers and students made my access to participants easier. Those relationships also helped me make more informed participant selection choices based on my research criteria. Moreover, my volunteer work enabled me to have a better understanding of the college learning community. Having informal conversations with instructors and observing classroom discussions helped me learn about some of the

resources available to students. In addition, my help as a volunteer enhanced trust with my participants. For example, two of the focal participants took Advanced Academic English that I assisted with during fall 2017. Inasmuch as they knew me in class, they felt more comfortable talking to me and asking for my help. Both of them pointed out this during informal conversations. They knew that I was there to help them and not to judge or evaluate them. That kind of assistance also contributed to my data analysis in a positive way by enhancing my understanding of the role of previous genre instruction as related to mediating participants' choices. For example, the two participants shared with me that they relied upon the skill of paraphrasing they learned in Advanced Academic English.

Moreover, a trustworthy relationship with the English 101 professor helped me realize the misconceptions I developed. After I saw neatly-written paragraphs in Martin's notebook for the first time, I assumed that someone else probably wrote those paragraphs for him. I assumed that an English learner would not have written paragraphs without some hesitation with language and genre indicated by words or phrases crossed out or rewritten. I shared that assumption with the professor. The next day the professor invited students to write personal letters to him in which they had to explain what they were going to focus on in their essays. That opportunity allowed me to observe students' writing in action, which was the only time throughout the whole period of data generation. In observing Martin, I discovered that his penmanship was neat.

I also recognized that my embeddedness in the environment might have caused some possible limitations. It might have affected my behavior as a researcher and the behavior of my participants. However, Glesne (2016) notes that current perception of friendship in the field is somewhat different. She states that some researchers have formed

friendships with their participants that required more than trust and rapport to develop caring connections.

Data Generation

Given that my study was situated within an interpretive perspective, I relied upon *triangulation*, “the incorporation of multiple data sources,” in order to understand how adult English learners used sociocultural resources and how those choices were mediated by the essay genre (Glesne, 2011, p. 47). The sources included: participants’ responses through interviews, field notes from participant observations, and participants’ writing samples. I conducted three in-depth phenomenological interviews with each participant, recorded and transcribed them. I also produced observation notes based on in-class and out-of-class observations and reflections after each visit which took place either in a college or university library or a participant’s place. Moreover, I collected participants’ artifacts that they produced during the period of data generation. Those included their essay drafts, final essays, notes from their notebooks and textbooks, the examples of written samples from ESL classes, and images of their out-of-school writing in the U.S. and their home countries. Because I sought to have an in-depth understanding of the learning process as a sociocultural act mediated by the essay genre, I only focused on generating data that revolved around the period of learning to write one essay in English 101 and English workshop.

I used those sources to understand information about the three constructs that undergirded the analysis: sociocultural resources, participants’ choices, and the essay genre. Unlike field notes that allowed me to capture participants’ actions during observations and writing samples that traced what choices participants made, their

responses shed more light upon additional actions that I did not directly observe as well as why and how they took those actions. Therefore, participants' responses served as my primary data source. Observation notes and participants' writing were used as additional data sources to support the primary data source.

In order to allow time to establish rapport with the participants, I started gathering data during the second half of the semester in spring 2018 when students worked on their third essay out of the three required in the course. I generated classroom data over a period of seven weeks. It lasted from March 21, the first session after they signed the consent form on March 19, until May 4, the last day I had an in-depth interview with a participant.

In-Depth Interviews

The purpose of the interviews was to elicit information that shed light upon the types of participants' sociocultural resources and the role of genre prior to and after their arrival in the U.S. My inquiry was designed to uncover how the essay genre shaped participants' writing choices in the U.S. Because my focus was on unobservable processes, I adopted in-depth phenomenological interviews as a means of exploring those processes (Seidman, 2013). In-depth interviews enabled me to understand what meaning participants made of their experiences, and how they carried out those experiences. Such inquiries through interviews added more consistency between what I observed and what participants actually did as writers in English 101. Moreover, I was able to elicit details about their experiences before their arrival in the U.S. to trace their evolution as writers over time. This method, thus, became the primary means by which data were gathered for my study.

Phenomenological practice. According to Seidman (2013), the phenomenological interview method is based on in-depth, life-history interviewing and is informed by

assumptions drawn from phenomenology. As he states, “it is a powerful way to gain insight into educational and other important social issues through understanding the experience of the individuals whose lives reflect those issues” (p. 13). The distinctive feature of in-depth phenomenological interviews, Seidman claims, involves conducting three interviews with each participant. Seidman states that each interview has a different focus. The first situates participants’ experiences within a particular context. The second invites participants to reconstruct the details of their experiences within the established context. During the third interview, participants make connections between the established context and the details of their experiences to reflect upon what they are doing now. Based on these three themes, I developed a set of questions to generate information about participants’ previous and current social and cultural lives as writers, their current writing experiences in English 101 and their reflections on the meaning of what they do as writers in their lives (see Appendix C). Due to the goals of this method, Seidman notes that the length of each interview should be about 90 minutes, as “anything shorter than 90 minutes for each interview seems too short” (p. 24). Therefore, I followed this advice and planned each interview to last for about 90 minutes. Moreover, all interviews were semi-structured. Because interviewees may come up with unexpected but valuable information, semi-structured interviews are not limited by preset questions as structured interviews are. I did my best to make interviews go more like a conversation than an interview. I also followed up on participants’ responses to get greater details and to elicit more relevant information about their writing experiences in more depth.

During interviews I invited participants to share and reflect about their previous and current experiences with writing. Using this technique helped participants reflect on

how their social and cultural lives have shaped their writing experiences and put them into words so that they could better make sense of their experiences. In-depth interviews helped me reconstruct events that I have never experienced, explore in detail the experiences and motives of participants, see the world from the perspectives of participants, and capture change across time (Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

In deciding what information to elicit from participants' responses during interviews, I was guided by the principles of Purcell-Gates, Perry, & Briseño's (2011) model of literacy practice that explains theoretical relationships between observable literacy events and larger domains of social activity. This model shows how to connect the observable literacy events to practices and contextual influences. Given this model, the interview protocol elicited:

- Participants' previous and current experiences with writing in families, formal settings, and communities as children, adolescents, and adults prior to and after their arrival in the U.S. In particular, I sought to understand what writing events they were involved in - how, where, when, why, and with whom they wrote.
- Participants' previous and current repertoires of writing resources. In particular, I focused on what they did to help themselves with essay writing during those events. In identifying participants' resources, I sought to understand who was involved in those writing events, what material they used, including digital sources participants used, and what learning practices were associated with their use.
- The role of the essay genre in participants' writing prior to and after their arrival in the U.S. In particular, I explored what participants' responses suggested about how

the essay genre affected what they did as writers, how, where, when, why, and with whom.

Eliciting this information helped me understand how participants made sense and used their sociocultural resources. Consequently, it enabled me to contextualize their previous and current experiences with writing and explore how the U.S. cultural and written genre knowledge shaped their writing choices.

The spacing of the three in-depth interviews allowed participants to ponder previous interviews and make connections between interviews. Riya and Lilly were the first participants with whom I conducted the first in-depth interview. Those interviews helped me realize that I needed to redo my interview protocol for the first in-depth interview. I felt we were jumping from one question to another without having a flow and thereby developing a storyline for each. I chose to revise the first in-depth interview protocol by focusing on the same three domains but adding more structure and listing more open-ended questions (see Appendix C).

In revising my questions for the first in-depth interview, I was guided by the interview script provided in Brandt (2001). In devising her interview script, Brandt intended to “lead participants through a chronological account of both ordinary and extraordinary encounters with writing and reading, lingering to explore their detailed recollections of the literal settings, people and materials that animated their memories” (p. 12). Her focus on the chronological account of literacy encounters and the recollections of context in which those events took place aligned with the purpose of my first interview. Because my focus was on participants’ evolvment as writers in the family, school and

community domains, I tailored the script to writing encounters. After revising the protocol once, I did not make additional revisions.

I explained that I needed to revise the questions for the first in-depth interview to Riya and Lilly. I asked them if they would be willing to redo the first in-depth interview with me. Both of them were understanding and willing to help. I used the revised protocol for the first in-depth interview with the other two participants. Thus, Riya and Lilly were the only participants with whom I conducted the first in-depth interview twice. I conducted the initial and revised first in-depth interview with Riya and Lilly and the revised first in-depth interview with the other two participants during the last week of March when participants were introduced to the assigned texts. The second in-depth interview, which I did not revise, was conducted between April 19 and April 28 when participants were finalizing their essay drafts. I had the third in-depth interview with Lilly, Soso, and Martin during the first week of May and with Riya on April 26 due to her family situation (see Table 3.2). Those interviews were conducted after the essay due date. My decisions were driven by the time dedicated to the essay writing in the course.

Table 3.2.

In-Depth Interview Dates

	Lilly	Riya	Soso	Martin
Initial interview #1	March 24	March 21		
Revised Interview 1	March 31	March 28	March 25	March 25
Interview 2	April 21	April 19	April 25	April 28
Interview 3	May 3	April 26	May 4	May 4

Each time I arrived for an interview, we started our conversation with small talk about the participants' day and personal life. Those conversations lasted for about 10 to 15 minutes, but in the case with one participant, they sometimes lasted for about 30

minutes. I also shared things about myself, my life, and my own experiences as an international student in the U.S. I tried to show my interest in their lives and to contribute to a more relaxed conversation. I wanted them to share with me the things they cared about and could discuss with ease, and I did the same in my turn (Corbin & Morse, 2003). One participant, in particular, always made tea to go with our conversation. Based on my perceptions, there was some tension and awkwardness during the first in-depth interviews with each single participant. However, I felt that our subsequent interviews went in a more relaxed and comfortable manner. Respondents seemed to feel at ease and to forget about the use of a recorder.

Interview protocols. The aim of the first interview was to elicit information about participants' social and cultural lives as writers prior to and before their arrival in the U.S. In order to do that, I used the timeline activity described by Thompson (2015) (see Appendix D). Timelines and life history calendars aid participants in recalling information and generating useful data. I used chart paper for my timeline template. The chart paper was divided into three horizontal sections titled childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. Each section contained three columns titled family, school, and community.

My reason for asking participants to recall writing experiences they were involved in families, schools, and communities was shaped by my sociocultural stance on writing. As literacy researchers within the literacy as social practice perspective claim, observable writing events are always part of broader concepts of writing practices which in turn are shaped by immediate concepts such as family and larger layers of context such as schools and communities (e.g., Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Purcell-Gates, Perry, & Briseño, 2011; Street, 1984). Exploring participants' writing experiences in the three contexts as children,

adolescents, and adults enabled me to study the contextual layers that have influenced their becoming as writers over time.

Each participant was invited to fill out the template. Participants were given an option to do it on their own or in the course of the interview. The first two participants tried to fill it on their own. However, they found it challenging to recall their writing experiences. Those challenges were not related to revisions I made in the protocol following the first interviews with Rita and Lilly. The two participants found it difficult to recall their experiences on their own. Therefore, I assisted them in filling it out while they were talking and then we went over it at the end of the interview. In the case of the other two participants, I went over the timeline with them at the end of the interview. The decision was in direct response to the challenges I encountered with the first two participants. We did it together by recalling what they shared during the interview. In this particular case, the decision made it easier for participants to recall their writing experiences. Based on my experiences with Lilly and Riya, asking participants to recall their writing experiences on their own before an interview was not beneficial in my case. Both Lilly and Riya did not find it helpful and preferred to talk about their experiences first before putting them on paper.

The interview protocol enabled me to explore the physical context in which those literacy events took place, invite them to walk me through those experiences, find out who was involved in those activities and why, their purpose for performing those acts of writing, as well as the material things they used to help them with writing and why. Those questions revolved around the following broad areas: early childhood memories, writing at school, extracurricular writing, self-initiated writing, writing in the community college, writing in

the family domain in the U.S., and writing in the community domain in the U.S. In addition, I asked the participants a series of questions about their demographic information, languages and language proficiency in writing, and their immigration experiences (see Appendix C).

The goal of the second interview was to obtain information about the participants' current experiences with writing in the essay genre in English 101. Questions elicited details about what they did in the process of learning to write their essays, challenges they faced and how they approached resolving them, in-class and out-of-class settings where they learned to write in the essay genre, the kind of help they sought, others who were involved in the process of their learning to write essays, material resources they used, as well as the similarities and differences in how they defined the essay genre in their home countries and in the U.S. (see Appendix C).

During the third interview, the participants were invited to reflect on their previous and current writing experiences in the essay genre and make intellectual and emotional connections between what they did as writers and their lives. Questions elicited information about a) the extent their past writing experiences had prepared them for what they did as writers in college; b) how what they did as writers contributed to their roles as students, friends, family members, and/or community members; c) how what they did as writers helped them accomplish their life goals; d) how satisfied they were with what they did as writers, and e) what metaphors they could use to describe their growth as writers in their native languages and in English, respectively. The choice of these foci was based on the idea that learning is intricately connected with becoming a different person (Lave &

Wenger, 1991) with respect to the available possibilities in the systems of relations that exist in participants' social and cultural contexts (see Appendix C).

Time and location. All interviews were scheduled at times and locations of participants' choosing and typically took place at their homes with the exception of the one participant whom I interviewed in a local university library. All interviews took place in the afternoon and most of the time on weekends. When I interviewed a participant in a university library, I always reserved a private room in advance. As for the three participants I interviewed at home, most of the time their houses were quiet. On other occasions, little children, other immediate and extended family members, neighbors, a pastor from a church, pets, and TV frequently interrupted. In some cases, those interruptions contributed to pauses in interviews and a temporary change in a participants' focus of attention.

Recording process. All interviews were recorded using an Olympus WS-853 digital recording device. In the process of recording, I always sat next to the participant, and the device was placed close to the interviewee. During all interviews, I followed an interview guide or a list of clarification questions, but I varied the order of the questions depending upon how the interview evolved. I did not take any notes during interviews with the exception of when I assisted with filling out the timelines. Instead, I tried to maintain eye contact and make my participants feel comfortable.

Follow-up interviews. In addition to the three in-depth interviews, I also conducted follow-up interviews. The purpose of those interviews was to do member-checking and elicit additional details or clarifications. Because I lost contact with Martin in May, 2018, those interviews were only with Lilly, Riya, and Soso. I followed up with

Lilly and Riya four times and three times with Soso. All follow-up interviews lasted from 20 minutes to an hour (see Table 3.2.). During my follow-up interviews, I shared with them my analysis and asked clarifying questions. During the third in-depth interview, I conducted member checks. In particular, I shared the write-ups of their profiles that I created based on the information from the first interviews with all four participants. I suggested that they read them on their own when they had time. When I met with Lilly, Riya, and Soso for follow-up interviews, I inquired if they read their profiles and had any questions. I also asked them to tell me if the things I wrote reflected their experiences. Lilly said that she did not have any comments and noted that she enjoyed reading about herself. Soso and Riya also said that the profiles reflected what they shared with me. No one expressed concerns or doubts about how I depicted their lives as writers prior to their arrival in the U.S.

In scheduling the follow-up interviews, I sent a request to participants via text message. In my requests I explained whether I contacted them to clarify certain things or elicit additional details, as well as asking them to indicate the date and time that would be the most convenient for them. Based on their replies, the dates for follow-up interviews were determined (see Table 3.3).

Table 3.3.

Follow-Up Interviews

Lilly	Riya	Soso
Date: June 3, 2018	Date: June 4, 2018	Date: September 30, 2018
Duration: 53 minutes	Duration: 35 minutes	Duration: 20 minutes
Date: November 6, 2018	Date: June 13, 2018	Date: December 7, 2018
Duration: 20 minutes	Duration: 30 minutes	Duration: 57 minutes
Date: November 11, 2018	Date: December 11 2018	Date: January 5, 2019
Duration: 49 minutes	Duration: 40 minutes	Duration: 20 minutes
Date: December 8, 2018	Date: January 11, 2019	
Duration: 39 minutes	Duration: 20 minutes	

Participant Observations

In-class and out-of-class observations were my secondary data gathering technique. The major focus of observation notes was on participants' current social and cultural contexts and the role of the essay genre with respect to their writing choices.

In-class observations. I conducted observations in English 101 and the English workshop that followed it. Each observation lasted 60 minutes and 50 minutes, respectively. The total number included 11 observations in English 101 and 11 observations in the English workshop. All four participants attended each session, with the exception of Riya who could not attend classes one day. I observed Lilly, Soso, and Martin for 20 hours and 10 minutes each. In Riya's case, she was observed for 18 hours and 20 minutes.

During in-class observations, I acted as an observer. Both courses, English 101 and English workshop, took place in classrooms where desks were arranged in rows. Usually the participants took the same row. In that case, I sat behind them during observations. However, they sometimes sat in different rows. In those cases, I changed my seat to sit close to each participant during a class. I tried to spend equal amounts of time observing

each of the four participants during each session. To ensure that I observed them during different periods of a class session, I changed the order in which I observed the participants. For example, during the first session, I used the following order: Lilly, Riya, Soso, and Martin; during the second session, I observed them in a different order, Martin, Soso, Riya, and Lilly, etc.

However, I also had some interaction with participants when they initiated contacts with me. For example, two of them requested my help with essays. I had to remind them that I was not able to help them, as I used to do with their two previous essays. However, at one point I helped Soso with navigating a Word document. She did not know how to remove the header. I showed her how to do it and then invited her to do it on her own.

In my notes I targeted details about several foci of the classroom context. My intention was to provide descriptive notes about writing moments, participants, and settings. First, I paid attention to how each participant acted in class. In particular, I took notes of what they focused on during mini-lectures and their writing time, who they interacted with, how, and why, as well as their interaction with the professor. For example, during one observation, I produced the following notes:

Students have been invited to write a letter to Dr. [instructor] in which they have to explain what they are working on in their essays and give an example. Lilly started laughing, as Riya said to her that she had not done anything yet. Lilly started typing her letter on a computer. She first typed an essay title. She goes to her gmail account and copies two paragraphs. She shared the first paragraph with me, but not the second one. Now she is writing something in her notebook while keeping the two paragraphs in the open Word document in front of her. She pauses to pick up her phone. Lilly is using her cell phone to look up some words. She goes back to the two paragraphs in the Word document. She deleted the title. Lilly keeps copying, pasting, and editing the paragraphs.

Second, I also took notes of the classroom instruction. Specifically, I tried to capture the things the professor explained about the assigned texts, the concepts he dwelled upon, and the materials he used and provided in class. These foci enabled me to understand how classroom relationships with classmates and the professor, particular essay task demands, and genre instruction contributed to shaping participants' writing choices. For example, during one in-class observation, I wrote the following in my notes:

Dr. [instructor] devoted this class to understanding some historical context about Birmingham, Alabama and what segregation was. He showed a few videos that depicted violent protests in Alabama and a few pictures. The students were surprised to learn that there were separate water fountains for the Black and White people. They also talked about the types of audience in the essay by MLK. Students hardly spoke during this session. Dr. [instructor] was the one who talked most of the time. At some point, he asked two Nepali students and Martin if their countries were colonized in the past. They were not sure how to answer. For example, the Nepali students did not realize that their country was a "kind" of Britain's colony. The professor explained that the British people, who fought with one group in Nepal, later invited that group to be part of their military. The professor was more knowledgeable about the history of their countries.

I did not conduct any formal interviews with the instructor.

Out-of-class observations. Initially, I intended to observe each participant at least once a week outside of class during the time they were working on their essays. The purpose of those observations was to learn what resources they relied upon outside of class and how consistent or inconsistent their choices were with what they did as writers in class. In scheduling those observations, I asked participants to give a convenient date, time, and place for an appointment. I also let them know about the dates and times of the observations I scheduled with other participants in order to avoid a conflict. I did my best to adjust to their schedule. However, underlying circumstances were in the way with some participants. Consequently, I only observed Riya and Martin three times, Soso twice, and

Lilly once (see Table 3.4). Each observation lasted for almost an hour. Lilly and Soso were observed at home; Riya and Martin at college and university libraries.

Table 3.4.

Out-of-Class Observations

Lilly	Riya	Soso	Martin
Date: April 7, 2018	Date: March 28, 2018	Date: April 6, 2018	Date: March 26, 2018
Duration: 60 minutes	Duration: 60 minutes	Duration: 60 minutes	Duration: 60 minutes
Location: House	Location: College library	Location: Apartment	Location: College library
	Date: April 4, 2018	Date: April 17, 2018	Date: April 11, 2018
	Duration: 60 minutes	Duration: 60 minutes	Duration: 55 minutes
	Location: College library	Location: Apartment	
	Date: April 12, 2018		Date: April 18, 2018
	Duration: 55 minutes		Duration: 60 minutes
	Location: Writing Center		Location: College library

During each observation, I sat next to the participant. In most cases, I was able to see what they were writing or doing on a computer screen. However, Riya and Martin sometimes chose to sit at a cubicle which prevented me from having a clear view of what they were writing or looking up on a cell phone. In my notes I paid attention to what they were writing, or typing, or reading, or underlining, or looking up online, or watching on YouTube. For example, during an out-of-class observation with Soso, I made the following notes:

Soso used two different colors to indicate the examples of sources and ethos in the speech by Mitch Landrieu. She used the orange color to code sources and the green color to indicate the examples of ethos. She noted that she took more notes last night to work on her essay today. I also helped her to copy and paste a paragraph

that she wanted to move up. She noted that no one taught her about computers, and she needed help with them.

She is having her notebook open in front of her. She also has an open Word document with her essay. She looks at her notes and then she starts typing in the Word document. She is typing the first sentence and it contains several misspelled words such “oudience” and “crating” (i.e., creating). She looks at me and says: “Don’t worry, I will change it later.” She is very focused and types with her two fingers. She has typed one sentence and then made spelling corrections using the automatic spell-check.

I inquired why she write on the paper (i.e., her notebook). She replied that it is easier for her because the book font is very small, and her vision is not very good. Also, it is not her textbook to make any highlights, but she can do highlights on the paper copy of the essay.

When she types, she does not look at her screen. She just looks at the keyboard and the paper. She continues to type the paragraph without correcting any of the sentences at this point. She has only produced one paragraph, as she was interrupted several times with phone calls and her niece.

Those observations contributed to a more comprehensive understanding of what participants did in order to meet task demands. In particular, they shed light upon what materials and practices participants used and why.

Memos. Upon completing observations and interviews, I produced memos. In some cases, I produced them in the evening after my observation or interview on the same day (e.g., Lareau, 1996). In other cases, I produced memos the following day within 24 hours. However, I lagged behind with a few memos by just focusing on the new information I learned during those visits.

In my memos, I noted the things participants shared with me during breaks or right after out-of-class observations or interviews. I also included information participants shared about their lives during informal chats we had. In some cases, I listed the questions I wanted to follow up or challenges I faced. For example, during my very first interview with Riya, my memo contained the following entries:

The reserved room had two computer desks and two chairs. However, Riya suggested that we sit on the floor. We both sat in a cross-legged position. The chart paper with a timeline was lying in front of us. I was sitting facing the door with my back, and Riya was sitting across from me. The computer and the recorder were to my left. I also had the papers with interview questions, prompts and the open folder in front of me.

I explained to Riya the purpose of the interview and then introduced the timeline. I invited her to recall any instances of doing writing in a family, school, and community. I emphasized that it should not just be a school writing. As an example, I shared with her that when I was a child my mom used to write letters to our relatives in other cities, and I observed her writing them. During the dedicated time, she only provided two examples under *Childhood* in the *Family* and *School* sections. She suggested that I ask her questions and then she would add more.

The beginning of the interview was a little challenging. Her responses were very brief and terse. I think it was difficult for her to understand what I was looking for. But it went better close to the end. She was into it and did not want to leave. But I insisted that we do due to the things she shared with me earlier.

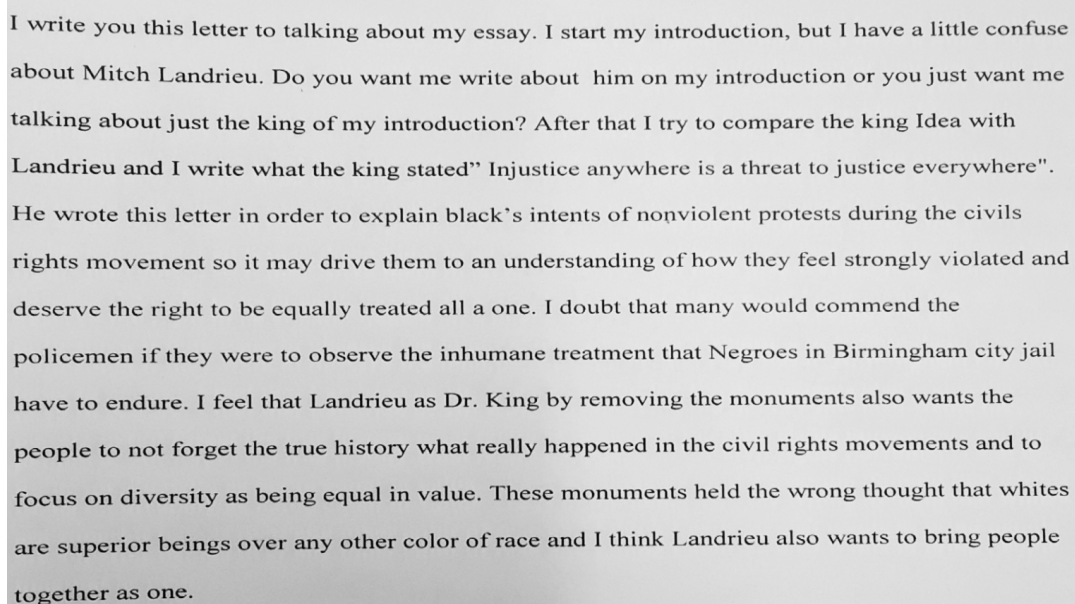
In addition, my observer comments included additional information I learned about the participants during interviews. I provided short descriptions of their homes, people who were present and the interaction that took place and encountered distractions. I also wrote down my feelings and impressions from the visits and things I observed with respect to their writing experiences. When I started coding at the end of April, I also jotted down some ideas and speculated on what is going on. In producing those memos, I tried to “delve beneath the surface descriptions” of what I saw and heard (Glesne, 2011, p. 75).

Artifacts

The third method of data collection was gathering textual artifacts. Because my research question was focused on exploring participants’ writing choices in the essay genre, I initially focused on three types of documents: classroom notes and products, essay drafts, and final essays. In order to collect classroom notes and products, I took pictures of notes participants took in class and products they produced after each session. Also, I requested

that participants share the notes they made during out-of-class study time. In order to collect their essay drafts, I requested that they email me the drafts they were working on in class after each class meeting. However, they were not consistent in their replies to my requests. In total, I had nine drafts of Lilly's essay, six drafts of Riya's essay, four drafts of Soso's essay, and six drafts of Martin's essay. With respect to their final drafts, I asked participants to email them to me on the day when their assignments were due. However, in the course of our follow-up interviews, Lilly, Riya, and Soso also shared additional artifacts with me, such as images of personal writing in their home countries and YouTube videos they watched. Appendix E lists the artifacts, the number of pages indicated in parenthesis, and the date when each artifact was collected for each participant.

Below I pasted an image of the letter Lilly produced in class on the day when the instructor invited students to write a letter to him, explaining what students were going to write about in their essays (see Figure 3.9).



I write you this letter to talking about my essay. I start my introduction, but I have a little confuse about Mitch Landrieu. Do you want me write about him on my introduction or you just want me talking about just the king of my introduction? After that I try to compare the king Idea with Landrieu and I write what the king stated "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere". He wrote this letter in order to explain black's intents of nonviolent protests during the civils rights movement so it may drive them to an understanding of how they feel strongly violated and deserve the right to be equally treated all a one. I doubt that many would commend the policemen if they were to observe the inhumane treatment that Negroes in Birmingham city jail have to endure. I feel that Landrieu as Dr. King by removing the monuments also wants the people to not forget the true history what really happened in the civil rights movements and to focus on diversity as being equal in value. These monuments held the wrong thought that whites are superior beings over any other color of race and I think Landrieu also wants to bring people together as one.

Figure 3.9. Lilly's letter to the professor

I also pasted the examples Soso color coded in the essay by Mitch Landrieu she produced during an out-of-class observation (see Figure 3.10).

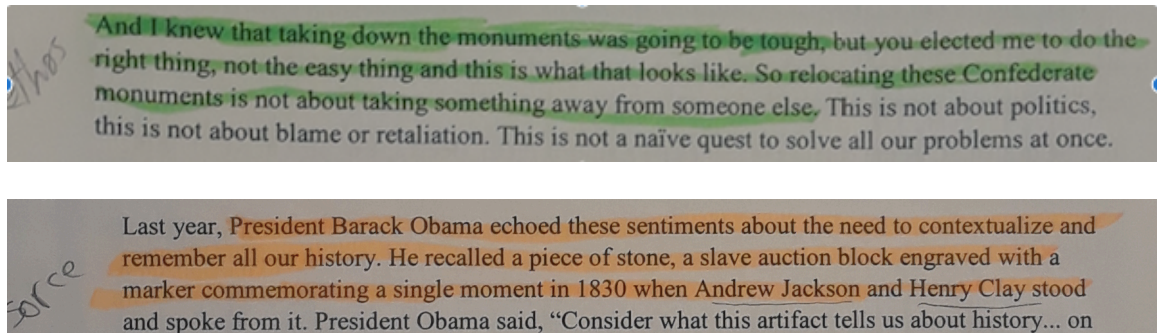


Figure 3.10. Soso’s color-coded examples

I include these artifacts here to illustrate a few examples of the artifacts I collected during data generation period.

Data Analysis

Data interpretation involved analyzing emerging themes through open coding and crafting participants’ profiles. Thematic coding plays a central role in case studies. This technique allows a researcher to make interpretation of dense data “in light of their own views and views of perspectives in the literature” (Creswell, 2013, p. 184). Crafting profiles is an “effective way of sharing interview data and opening up one’s interview material to analysis and interpretation” (Seidman, 2013, p. 122). Crafting participant profiles allowed me to situate participants’ writing choices and sense-making within their social and cultural lives. I was able to depict their becoming as writers from childhood to adulthood in the three domains within the two sociocultural contexts. Therefore, these two techniques were appropriate for the study.

Thematic Coding

Coding is making sense of data (Creswell, 2016). This type of analysis was applied with data from semi-structured interviews, participants' observations, and artifacts. It took place in two stages and was informed by the four broad concepts that undergirded my research questions: sociocultural resources, participants' choices, and the essay genre.

In order to avoid "imposition of meaning from one participant's interviews on the next," I did not conduct any in-depth analysis until all three rounds of interviews were completed (Seidman, 2013, p. 116) and transcribed. Given that my primary focus is on understanding participants' choices about sociocultural resources, I only transcribed words. Consequently, I did not transcribe non-words such as silences, filled pauses (e.g., um, uh, hm), or acknowledgments (e.g., uh-hm). However, I did transcribe acknowledgements such as "okay" and "yeah." I chose to transcribe these two acknowledgements because they mean agreement. It was important to do especially when a participant just replied "Yeah." In the course of transcribing, I took notes of the things I needed to clarify with my participants during follow-up interviews. After each interview was transcribed, I read the transcripts without notating them. This step helped me inform and finalize clarifying questions that I needed to ask my participants during follow-up interviews. It also helped me keep data fresh in my mind throughout the whole process.

After completing the final interviews, I began *open coding* (Creswell, 2013) in Atlas.ti (Friese, 2014). I chose not to do line-by-line coding, as my research questions did not necessarily point to this approach. The questions required that I explore the three broad concepts (i.e., sociocultural resources, the mediating role of the essay genre and participants' choices), which allowed me to look at a broader scale and code against

sentences and paragraphs. I used my analytical notes, reread data several times and started assigning codes. In the process of initial coding or Level 1 or the first cycle of codes (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014; Yin, 2016), I made notations of meaningful words, phrases, and ideas within the data generated for each participant. The table below includes examples of initial codes and data units.

Table 3.5.

Initial Codes and Data Units

Initial Codes	Data Units
Essay ideas in US	<p>Lilly: Like when I am at work, I am thinking about the essay and then I write down and I would not forget this, you know. And then I say: “Ok, the idea come to my head. The idea come to my mind.” And then I write it down.</p> <p>Lilly: Examples of the paragraphs she sent to herself.</p> <p>Martin: I have to write the idea to the notebook. After writing the idea, then I can have even three or to four ideas, then I have to collect now, to put them to the right order.</p> <p>Martin: Examples of paragraphs in his notebook.</p> <p>Soso: I think I just picked one or two like pathos or ethos. Took this from book and then write like paraphrase.</p> <p>Soso: Examples of paragraphs in her notebook.</p>
Non-US essay topics	<p>Riya: Image of her notes about MLK.</p> <p>Soso: It is different topic something like (<i>uses her phone to look up a word</i>) like this Martyr’s Day (i.e., Memorial day). When soldiers call to war, and they died there, we called this . . . this is for defense my country; he sacrificed their lives. Sometimes about home, just about my country.</p> <p>Lilly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When I was an adolescent in my classroom, I remember I wrote down about my chicken. • And then I describe about a cat. • After that, I remember she was talking about to describe family, my mom, dad, sister, everything.

Memorization	<p>Riya: because lots of people like visit Nepal and then we have to write visiting Nepal in this year or that year, how many tourists came, how much money we earn, like that.</p>
	<p>Riya: In Nepal you just have to learn. . . they don't do anything practical. You just have to read the book and you have to remember everything.</p>
	<p>Soso: We had to study big books and we have to know the whole book from beginning to end. Everything inside.</p>
	<p>Lilly: But in my country you have study every single word and vocabulary in a book. You know, to know it. You spell it, you read.</p>

I decided to make discretionary choices about the segments of texts. In most cases I stuck closely to the original data. In some cases, I coded words or phrases; in other cases, I coded chunks of texts. Consequently, the identified units of data ranged from a word to a few sentences and, in some cases, to a few paragraphs. I did it first for each participant individually, and then I looked across participants. It was a circular process, and I ended up conducting it in four rounds.

After completing coding, I went over my codes and eliminated redundancies or overlaps (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014; Yin, 2016). Through this process, I tried to capture various aspects of each core phenomenon and reduce codes to themes. In order to visualize that, I created columns for each theme and corresponding codes listed in each column (see Table 3.6). Doing the first level of coding helped me progress and understand how my data related to broader conceptual issues.

Table 3.6.

Theme Examples

Themes	Codes
Non-US classroom interaction	Individual work “Use your mind” “No talking” Groupwork instance Student – teacher interaction Teacher authority
School values	Discipline Civic engagement Striving for excellence Social development Corporal punishment
Non-US genre written knowledge	Exam-driven writing Organization Types
Non-US essay instruction	Challenges Skills Feedback Frequency Teaching process Languages Length Strategies

I then proceeded to a higher set of codes (i.e., category codes), referred to as Level 2 or the second cycle of coding (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014; Yin, 2016). Those codes revolved around the two broad concepts: sociocultural resources and the essay genre in two different contexts. This stage of coding included two steps.

First, I finalized the list of resource categories across the four participants. The identified categories revolved around symbolic (e.g., language repertoire and genre knowledge), physical (e.g., genre materials and digital materials), and social resources (i.e., people). Moreover, I distinguished between previous (i.e., resources they learned about prior to their arrival in the U.S.) and new (i.e., resources they used after their arrival in the

U.S.) resources within their genre repertoires. Given that the participants had access to some resources through writing experiences other than essay writing, I distinguish between essay-related and non-essay related resources within the previous category (see Appendix F).

Second, I did thematic coding. I traced connections between the identified categories of resources and themes that reflected the role of the essay genre or other contextual influences. In order to do that, I created a table for each participant. The table contained six columns. In the first two columns, I listed resource category and resource type, respectively. The third and fourth columns included the role of the essay genre and other influences in non-U.S. context and U.S. context, respectively. The last two columns contained my summary of data units that supported the role of the essay genre or other influences. Appendix G shows the example of the section of the table I created for Riya. I also included a section of it below (see Table 3.7).

Table 3.7.

Example of Thematic Coding

Categories	Previous Resources	The Role of the Non-US Essay Genre or Other Influences	The Role of the US Essay Genre or Other Influences	Non-US Essay Genre/Other Influences Evidence	US Essay Genre/Other Influences Evidence
People	Classmates	Nepali expectations about an essay introduction	US expectations about an essay introduction	The essay writing approach in Nepal focused on accurate description of pertinent information. If Riya wrote about a person, she had to “write the person’s name, date of birth, where he is come, his hometown.”	Focus on common concepts between the texts and using them to set the stage for the thesis statement.

Thematic coding was also applied to analyze field notes and participants’ artifacts. Once core phenomena and open codes were identified, I then examined field notes and participants’ artifacts to identify information that supported the code categories identified in the analysis of interview transcripts. Using field notes and participants’ artifacts in this way helped bolster the trustworthiness of the participants’ recollections, as well as support the larger themes of meaning I had identified.

After completing my analysis, I got in touch with Lilly, Riya, and Soso. Unfortunately, I lost contact with Martin. He did not reply to my text messages when I

attempted to contact him to schedule follow-up interviews. To my surprise, he wrote to me while I was working on this chapter. I met in person with Lilly and Soso and talked over the phone with Riya due to her relocation to a different city. With them, I went over the categories of identified resources and the role of the essay genre, and my summaries of the data units that illustrated relationships between the resources and the essay genre. In the course of doing that, they also provided clarifications based on what I shared with them and the questions I asked them. For example, Lilly noted that she met with Riya once to ask her for help with an essay. She also provided more details about the kind of an outline she used in Haiti. Riya also helped me better understand how she interacted with her classmates during groupwork when they worked on their essays in class. In the same vein, Soso was able to recall more details about, for example, her writing experiences in Arabic class. Specifically, she described how her essays looked and how she worked on them at home. I used the additional data to support and expand the code categories I had developed.

Crafting Profiles

I produced two types of participant profiles. I used the first type to introduce participants and their backgrounds in Chapter 4. Those profiles were crafted in participants' words. I reordered things to create a coherent chronological picture of their lives. I focused on general information about their lives prior to and after their arrival in the U.S. I avoided using any repetitions or words that disrupted the flow. I used ellipses to indicate where I omitted words or sentence. Below I provide an excerpt from Lilly's first profile.

I am 29 years old. I am from Haiti. I was a psychologist when I was in Haiti. I spent 6 years at the uni. I was working for two years and then I came here.

The country I grew up is a really really nice place. I like my city I was born. . . . It is beautiful. I can't wait to go back there. . . . It is not really too hot; it is really cool. . . . We have orange seasons, lemon season, and mango seasons, and everything. I love about this. The farmer, the farmer . . . like when we have corn, we have black beans and white bean and everything . . . when the season come for corn. . . they just looking for somebody who can help us . . . and then they sing; you know, they dance. That's really fun. In the evening people come together to my house . . . we talk, we laugh. It is a very very good life in my country. We eat together and then on Sunday morning we have plan to go to church together girl like me. And then we always talk about what is your plan, what you wanna be, you know! Just keep talking and then after I finish my high school to my city I was born, I went to Port-au-Prince. The biggest city. I go to Port-au-Prince to finish my University.

The second type of profile provided a comprehensive picture of my data analysis from the three in-depth phenomenological interviews. I created it by grouping ideas by themes within the family, school, and community domains in the two contexts. The focus of this analysis was on presenting participants' stories about their growth as writers in their families, formal settings and communities as children, adolescents, and adults prior to and after their arrival in the U.S. In crafting the second type of profiles, my goal was to tell stories that depicted the participants' experiences in a coherent way. I relied upon the second type of profiles when I wrote my findings. Below I provided an excerpt from Lilly's second profile on sociocultural resources within the family domain in Haiti.

Lilly's use of sociocultural resources as a writer within the family domain revolved around several official and unofficial writing events. They include working on her paragraphs and essays as part of her homework, learning to write in Haitian Creole, teaching her mother to write in Haitian Creole, and writing letters to her relatives. The resources she used during those observable events of writing were shaped by particular contextual influences such as the cultural and symbolic capital of family members, Haitian language policy, school policy, and letter writing as a family writing practice.

Lilly's father and sister *cultural and symbolic capital* was a prominent force in shaping Lilly's choices as a writer. They were the major education and language assets that she drew upon while working on her paragraphs and essays as part of her homework at the elementary and middle/high school levels, respectively, at home. Her father held a college degree in education. He had a full-time job as a

science and social studies teacher in a Catholic school that Lilly and her three-year older sister attended. Due to the history of Haiti, the education at school was in the dominant language – French. Both Lilly and her sister started learning French beginning in pre-school. However, Lilly noted: “Haitian Creole and French it is like the English with the French. It is like the same. I often say: ‘How do you say that in French?’ But you go to school in French, but the French is not your language.” This statement shows that despite her early exposure to French, she still faced challenges in finding right words to express her thoughts in writing. However, she learned to overcome those challenges. Lilly shared: “When I don’t know something, I can ask my sister. And then when my sister told me: ‘I don’t know.’ I can ask my dad.” This statement suggests that she drew upon the language capabilities of her father and her sister. Given that her father was fluent in the dominant language and her sister had more experience with French due to her age, she relied upon their help with language.

In describing participants’ writing repertoires in the second type of profiles, I focused on: (1) resources and participants’ use of them in the family, school, and community domains prior to immigration, and (2) both previous resources and new resources used in the family, school, and community domains after their arrival in the U.S. In writing about the role of the essay genre, I focused on evidence that suggested why an identified role affected participants’ particular choices about sociocultural resources in the three domains prior to and after their arrival in the U.S. These profiles were crafted in the third person.

Cross-Case Coding

During my final stages of analysis, my goal was to provide a very detailed description and to generalize within cases. I sought to understand what identified themes depicted about how the essay genre shaped participants’ choices about sociocultural resources, and how participants made sense of their choices in each case. In order to enhance this understanding, I looked across cases. I started with the participants’ repertoire categories and traced commonalities and distinctions within their uses of symbolic, physical, and social resources. I came up with three major themes that characterized how

they used their resources depending upon the context. The themes included losses, retentions, and gains. Appendix H provides an overview of the types of resources included in each theme.

As my next step, I looked for the most meaningful examples of resources for each category and their connections to the corresponding roles of the essay genre. The identified themes and the connections served as the basis for the Findings section of my dissertation. Appendix I contains an example of these connections within the retained resources. Similarities and differences across cases helped me understand their involvement as writers and the role of the essay genre in this process. This approach along with the feedback I received from my committee members and my participants strengthened the trustworthiness of my findings.

Researcher Role

My personal experiences have shaped my worldview and my perspectives as a writer. My experiences enabled me to relate to the challenges and struggles my participants faced while learning to write in the essay genre. However, I also realized that my experiences represented just one lens on challenges and struggles adult English learners face in American higher education. Conducting this qualitative study made me examine the lens I brought to the study. In what ways did my beliefs, assumptions, and experiences prioritize how I perceived others? Indeed, I learned several lessons.

As a researcher, I had to consider the issues of reciprocity with my focal participants and classroom instructor in order to avoid viewing them as users. Corbin and Morse (2003) note that reciprocity goes beyond “being there with the participant” (p. 342). Researchers could give back in various ways such as providing a ride, or giving particular information,

or helping with some paperwork, or writing letters. I also sought ways to provide some expression of appreciation and to acknowledge the importance of participants' time and English 101 professor's willingness to open his classroom was to me. For example, I brought tea and homemade treats for the class break on a weekly basis. Those little expressions of appreciation contributed to developing camaraderie among international students in that class. The following note is an illustration of this mutual relationship.

During the break most of the students got together in the back of the room with cups of tea and treats. I joined them, as well. They all shared about their personal lives. One student shared about his three grown-up kids and their successes in professional lives. One of them was going to get married. This triggered agitation among Rya and Lilly. They started making jokes about attending the wedding. They also brought up the challenges some couples might experience in marriage. Riya and Lilly also shared about their children by showing their pictures. Soso, who is very close with her niece and nephew, showed their pictures, as well. In addition, Riya, who is into dancing, shared a video of her dancing at a Nepali party. We were surprised to learn that she never prepares her dance. She does it impromptu. Martin was the only one who did not share much, but he was part of the group and smiled with everyone.

This vignette shows that participants felt comfortable in sharing about their personal lives and in laughing together in my presence. In fact, when I had a conversation with one of the participants in fall 2018, she noted that she missed the camaraderie she had with students from the previous writing class. She pointed out that there was hardly any interaction among students in her current class. I often felt empathy with participants. Sometimes I wanted to "fit in" with them. I found it necessary to remember the importance of my role as an observer.

As a researcher and a person who comes from a different cultural background from my participants, I had to be mindful not to be judgmental. As an international student who has experienced living in two cultural contexts for an extended period of time, as a teacher

who has worked with international students from about 15 different countries and has broadened my understanding of teaching writing through the work in a doctoral program, and as a researcher who adopts a sociocultural perspective, I have come to believe that the values and beliefs that I have developed cannot be viewed as having an essential meaning that applies to others. In approaching this study, I made a decision to interact with my participants in collaborative ways and have a mindset of openness, curiosity, and desire to learn from them, about them, and about myself.

I was also aware of the language issues that I faced with respect to having a smooth interaction. None of my participants and I were native speakers of English. Nor did I speak any of the native languages of my participants. Nor did they speak my native language. This factor prevented us from having smooth and fluent conversation. Nevertheless, this reality provided the basis for your mutual understanding of the process of learning to write in the essay genre in English.

Moreover, I have carried several assumptions with me into the field. One of those assumptions I have developed due to my own previous experiences as a language learner. As an English learner, I experienced many struggles with improving my English and being able to express myself easily with others. Because of those struggles, I assumed that I was well-prepared to communicate my questions to my participants in clear and comprehensive ways. However, in the course of the in-depth interviews and some follow-up interviews, I found myself paraphrasing the questions in many different ways. Those instances made me wonder if I should have been more careful with my choice of some words. For example, during an interview with Soso, I asked her what writing competence meant to her. To illustrate, I pointed out that her husband was competent in physics and her cousin was

competent in public health. Although her cousin, who was also present, translated my question into Arabic, she still did not understand what I asked her. I eventually asked her to explain what a good writer meant to her. This kind of situation taught me a lesson: I should be more careful in the choice of words I use in my interview questions. No matter how we might think that our interpretations are clear, we are always in uncharted territory (Baird, 2011).

Another assumption was due to certain biases that I had. I assumed that it would be challenging for me to glean details from Martin, who spent about 12 years in a refugee camp. I was not sure if he would feel comfortable to share the details about his life as a refugee. To my surprise, Martin was the only participant who provided very informative and long answers to all of my questions. When I reread the transcripts, I was surprised by how much shorter the answers of other participants were. This made me wonder if the fact that he came from a culture where oral tradition in storytelling was practiced contributed to his ability to produce those kinds of responses. Another possible explanation that Martin felt the need to share about his life and let others know what he had gone through. This assumption was based upon the fact that he wanted me to use his real name instead of a pseudonym in the study.

In addition, I came to the field expecting that I would be able to observe my participants in the process of writing. However, my expectations were crushed. None of them was open to me in revealing their writing in action. Moreover, during out-of-classroom observations with Martin and Soso, I felt extremely frustrated. Due to their slow typing skills, the two of them spent almost a whole hour typing one paragraph. I must admit that it drove me crazy in a certain way to observe them doing that for that period of

time. However, I tried to look at the bright side and be grateful for their willingness to convey their observations to me.

Finally, I was aware that sometimes participants might share sensitive information. Corbin and Morse (2003) state that in such cases, researchers can provide a sense of presence and listening to a participant. One of my participants did share sensitive, personal information with me. I valued her trust and assumed the role of the listener she needed at that time.

Data Generation

My previous experiences as an international student, an ESL teacher, and a researcher who adopts a sociocultural perspective might have affected data generation in both positive and negative ways. As an international student who has lived in two sociocultural contexts for an extended period of time, I have experienced struggles and challenges as a second language learner similar to my participants. Those commonalities contributed to a stronger bond between me and participants. For example, during our chats they asked me how I was able to overcome language challenges. I shared with them some of the tips that worked for me as an English learner. One of them was related to my belief about reading that I developed in the U.S. Although I read in Ukraine, I was not an avid and reflective reader. However, attending American colleges and meeting people who invited me to read similar books with them and talk about them made a huge difference in my reading practices. Consequently, I encouraged my participants to pay more attention to reading. Those kinds of interactions, I believe, contributed to a stronger bond and mutual respect with each participant. This, in turn, I think, contributed to participants' willingness to meet with me for follow-up interviews and share more details about their past

experiences or provide clarifications. Soso's comment is an illustration of our bond. She often said: "Don't be shy. Any time. I want to help you."

As an ESL instructor, I have worked with international students from about 15 countries. Those students represented different groups of English learners such as international students and refugees. Working with them enabled me to see the different learning challenges they faced and coping strategies they used. The multitude of those experiences contributed to my deeper perspective about learning. It enhanced my view of cultural differences and challenges as social phenomena rather than personal failure. Consequently, I have focused on the importance of what students know rather than what they lack. This perspective, or emphasis, might have affected my data generation in a positive way. When participants shared about certain learning strategies such as paraphrasing practices, I assumed the role of a learner and invited them to share more details about the inherent possibilities involved. If I had viewed that learning practice as a deficiency, I would not be able to generate details about that experience.

My views as a sociocultural researcher might also have contributed in other positive ways. Those views were shaped by my theoretical perspectives and, consequently, ontological and epistemological views on what is knowledge and how people learn. I viewed knowledge as an agreement among people within certain sociocultural groups and learning as the development of certain perspectives through participation in the communities of practice (e.g., Street, 1984; Lave & Wenger, 1991). Such views, I believe, contributed to my more inquisitive approach as a learner during data generation. I identify with the struggles as well as the challenges and opportunities of the learner.

However, I also admit that my previous experiences might have had some negative impact on data generation. As an English learner, it was challenging for me to remain an observer. When I saw students' struggles, I wanted to step in and help them as I did in the past. I had to be aware of my empathy for the learner. For example, when Soso needed help with her computer, I provided it. But then I wondered what she would do if I had not done it and how her choice might have contributed to the kind of data I generated. In the same vein, as a teacher, I struggled at times, too. For example, during an out-of-class observation with Lilly who struggled with understanding how to write an introduction, I put on a teacher's hat and asked her some guiding questions. Looking back at that, I realize that I acted as a resource for her instead of sticking to my role of an observer.

In order to mitigate possible negative effects, I have also used some special techniques. In approaching this study, I made a decision to interact with my participants in collaborative ways and have a mindset of openness, curiosity, and desire to learn from them, about them, and about myself. Because a phenomenological approach to interviewing focuses on seeking participants' perspectives about their experiences and the meaning they make of them, it was very critical for me to work on my listening skills during interviews. For each interview, I wrote small reminders for myself that I need to talk less and listen more. I kept those reminders on the sheet with interview questions and made a conscious effort to look at those reminders.

Moreover, I also asked a lot of clarifying questions. I made a conscious effort to ask participants to clarify the things they shared with me. For example, when Riya talked about sharing an essay draft with her classmates, she noted that they did not cheat. Although it is a common word, I still asked her to clarify what she meant by it. Another

example of this will be my questions about what Lilly meant when she noted that Haitian approach to writing essays was very similar to the American way. She kept repeating: “Nothing changed. It is the same.”

In addition, in designing my interviews and in asking follow-up and clarifying questions, I focused on open-ended questions. I deliberately avoided asking yes and no questions as well as leading questions. However, I did ask them at times. Due to many commonalities in our experiences as writers of topical essays (e.g., I was exposed to topical writing in Ukraine, too.), I consciously made an effort not to share about my experiences. I did not want to distract them from their own experiences. Finally, I made a conscious effort to be patient during moments of silence. Although I did jump into the interview with a quick question during a pause at times, for the most part I think I resisted the temptation of doing that. Despite the mistakes I made, I believe that I was able to project myself as a concentrated, engaged, and truly interested interviewer with my participants. The outcome, from my perspective, was a high level of cooperation and rich data generation.

Data Analysis

My previous experiences of studying in two different contexts, my teaching experiences as an ESL instructor, and my researcher’s stance might have also affected data analysis in positive ways. Similar to my participants, I was educated in a setting where there was a lot of emphasis on memorization and regurgitation as well as topical writing. Those previous experiences might have contributed to my keener perception of the sociocultural influences that shaped my participants’ writing choices. My experiences as an ESL instructor might also have affected my data analysis in a positive way. Specifically, they might have enhanced my sensitivity to the multilayers of participants’ involvement as

writers as a result of their unique experiences. I looked at each participant as an individual who has developed unique meanings. Despite the commonalities in some contextual influences, I avoided viewing them as if they were the same. For example, Lilly, Riya, and Soso were immersed in cultural expectations about writing that were similar in their contexts. However, their writing evolution was affected by distinct contextual influences. Being sensitive to those distinctions contributed to more insights in data analysis. My sociocultural perspective as a researcher might have also been beneficial while I analyzed data. I made a conscious effort to be mindful in my analysis. In other words, I reflected on the circumstances that might have influenced my interpretation. I did not analyze data obliviously or in terms of my agreements with it.

In order to contribute to more rigorous data analysis, I used a few techniques. First, I constantly asked myself questions in the process. In particular, while reading the transcripts, I asked myself: What do my participants try to tell me about the kinds of support they used to help them with writing in English 101? What was available to them? What was not available to them? Why? How did they use those resources? Where, when, and why? Why did they use some of the resources they all had access to in the same way and some of them in distinct ways? These kinds of questions helped me think about the connections between the choices they made as writers and contextual influences that shaped those choices.

Moreover, I relied upon the feedback I received from my advisor and another committee member. In order to do that, I had regular meetings with my advisor during which I reported on my progress and shared what I struggled with. I also enrolled in an Advanced Field Studies course taught by a committee member. One of the conditions was

that I had to complete all of the assignments that were required in the course. Working on those assignment, reading insightful qualitative pieces, sharing about my analysis with other classmates, and discussing my work with the professor were additional strategies that helped me throughout the data analysis process.

Adopting these techniques, from my perspective, helped me probe the data, stimulated my thinking, and generated insights. My choice of those strategies was purposeful and contributed to generating of new knowledge about the participants' involvement as writers in two sociocultural contexts.

Limitations and Encountered Challenges

I faced several limitations and challenges during the designated period of data generation. I fell behind in producing my analytical notes after some visits. As Lareau (1996) states: "Writing up field notes immediately is one of the sacred obligations of field work" (p. 217). However, she also pointed out that researchers are not machines. As human beings, they encounter various challenges in life or sometimes just don't feel like producing field notes after an interview or a participant observation. I found it difficult to keep to a disciplined schedule for writing analytical field notes. In a few cases, I just focused on the new information I learned about participants and their lives in my analytical notes. However, I admit that I should have been more disciplined. As Lareau (1996) points out, "missing sessions of writing field notes can, like skipping piano practice, get quickly out of hand" (p. 218). Not providing detailed analytical notes prevented me from having additional insights about what I saw in the data and having a consistent record of my reflections in writing.

I also fell behind in transcribing after completing each interview. The time I devoted to transcribing was not enough for me to produce a complete transcription before the next interview. Therefore, I did not have an opportunity to go over the transcripts before the subsequent interviews. I must admit that I relied on my memory and what I jotted down in analytical notes to produce clarifying questions that I asked during subsequent interviews and informal conversations before class, during breaks, and after class. Immediate transcription was not especially critical for the first and third interviews. However, delays may have affected the second interviews by not getting all necessary details about their writing process in English 101. I was able to follow up on clarifications after the period of official data generation. This process might have affected the information I learned about participants' essay writing experiences during the second interview. Looking back, transcribing the second interview should have been my priority. I tried to compensate for that with clarifying questions during follow-up interviews. One possible way this limitation might have affected the quality of the data I generated is that I might not have a rich enough picture of all resources they used during the writing process in English 101. For example, all participants relied upon the Internet and YouTube search. I could have retrieved more details about the kinds of resources they searched for and how they looked for them. Moreover, I could have asked them to lead me through that process by inviting participants to show me how they searched for those resources. Another possibility is that I would probably have gleaned more details about the conversations they had with classmates outside of class as well as with their tutors. The availability of these details could have enhanced my analysis and helped me have a deeper understanding of their learning processes.

Another challenge that I faced was related to the participants' recollections. Three participants found it difficult to recall their experiences at school. They all pointed out that it was a long time ago. I tried my best to glean as much as I could by sometimes asking similar questions at various points. I found out that they recalled and shared more details during follow-up interviews. In Martin's case, he struggled with recalling his year of birth. At one point, he said it was 1984. However, he then corrected himself and said that it was 1994. Based on the amount of details he shared about fleeing the country in 1998, the year 1984 seemed to be a more probable date. In addition, he was not consistent with recalling about his school experiences in Congo. At one point he said: "But when I was in the Congo, I was going to school up to six grade." However, later in the interview he denied having any school experience in his country. He said: "In Congo I did not have the opportunity to go to school." When I inquired during the second interview if he did go to school when I asked him about immigration experiences, he replied negatively. These inconsistencies seem to suggest that he was most likely born in 1984 and went to an elementary school in Congo.

One possible explanation of why participants recalled more information during follow-up interviews was that the follow-up interviews took place during the summer break when participants were under less stress. Unlike the in-depth interviews that were conducted at the end of the semester, participants did not have to worry about homework and exams for other classes. Another possible explanation is that in the course of the follow-up interviews participants had more time to think about my questions since their first interview and more familiarity with what I was looking for than they would have in the first interview. The situation I encountered with Soso is a vivid example of this

observation. During some follow-up interviews, her mother was present. Several times she asked her questions to help her recall her writing experiences in Iraq. For example, her mother was the one who reminded her that she only wrote composition pieces in an Arabic class and only answers to comprehension questions in English classes. One day I had an opportunity to meet Soso's husband and had a brief conversation with him. I asked him if he recalled any writing experiences in the community. He shared with me one example. When I shared it with Soso, she also recalled more writing experiences she did in her community such as sending personal messages and poems she copied from books to her friends. As she later clarified to me, she assumed that my focus was on school writing. I think that other participants did not probably share this assumption, as they did not hesitate to tell about their writing experiences outside of school. In addition, Soso and Martin fled the countries due to war. Experiencing war trauma was another possible explanation why they struggled with recalling their past experiences.

I also encountered a challenge with the protocol for the first interview. I followed the questions I initially included in my proposal (see Appendix J). The questions were open-ended and revolved around the experiences in three domains, including family, school, and community. I used the protocol to conduct my first two interviews with Riya and Lilly. The interview with Riya, with whom I met first, was challenging at the beginning and more informative during the second part. However, in the course of the interview with Lilly, I felt that I did not elicit the details I needed. I indicated in my memo after the interview with her: "I feel like we jump from one experience to the other without having a flow and thus having a story. It was like answering factual questions." That same night I decided to redo the protocol. I adjusted the interview script from *Literacy in*

American Lives by Deborah Brandt. I used her statements to tailor them to writing, turned them into questions, and expand some of them. For example, Brandt's script contains the following statement under Early Childhood Memories: Occasions associated with writing/reading. I turned this statement in the following questions: What are your earliest memories of people associated with writing? How did people respond to your writing? Did they like what you wrote? Respond in any way? (see Appendix C). I used the revised protocol with each participant. Riya and Lilly graciously agreed to have additional interviews with me.

Despite my initial plan to have at least three out-of-school observations for each of the four participants, I was only able to observe Riya and Martin three times. In the case of Soso and Lilly, I observed them twice and once, respectively (see Table 3.3). Moreover, I did not have a chance to see them actually doing writing during those observations. They either copied the paragraphs they had in their notebooks, or read the assigned texts, or looked up the definitions of key concepts, or watched a speech on YouTube. I faced the same challenge during in-class writing observations. Most of the time they copied the paragraphs from their notebooks or email or searched online or reread their drafts. Consequently, I did not actually watch students writing their paragraphs or observe what additional resources they might have relied upon. This limitation definitely affected my analysis of data to a certain extent and prevented me from seeing what they chose to do behind the scenes.

Moreover, the participants did not seem to be completely open about all resources they drew upon. For example, during one of the follow-up interviews one participant shared that she actually met with another participant to work on their essays. But neither

of them mentioned that at the beginning. One of those participants had a husband who was fluent in English and got an undergraduate degree in a scientific field. According to another participant, her husband helped her with her essay. However, when I openly asked the participant who was married if her husband ever helped her with writing her essay, she replied negatively. She then added that he could help her with math, but not writing. One possible explanation could be that the participant who was married did not want me to use any information about her husband or his family in my research. She shared with me some personal things that I promised to keep in my confidence. I also have an assumption that one participant heavily relied upon recorded classroom conversations, as his notebook contained very neatly-written paragraphs that he used in his essay. However, I also had a feeling that he did not feel comfortable in opening up about all of the help he received. My impression was that he wanted me to just focus on his efforts and accomplishments. In other words, participants seemed to have different levels of comfort in sharing about their learning practices and sources of help.

Another possible challenge that I faced was related to language issues. None of my participants, including myself, were native speakers of English. We all came from different ethnolinguistic backgrounds. Nor did I speak any of their first or colonized languages. English was the only common language between us, thus being an enabling and a limiting force at the same time. On the one hand, the lingua franca was the only means to communicate among us and for me to learn about participants' lives. On the other hand, we all had a "cultural, language, and knowledge gap" between us due to speaking different first languages (Caretta, 2015, p. 490). Having all interviews in English added to a challenge of having fluent and deep interactions. This dilemma, in turn, prevented me from

gleaning the details I could have obtained if I spoke participants' first or colonized languages. For example, Lilly often noted that one of the major obstacles she faced as a writer was not being fluent in English. When we talked about her essay writing experiences in Haiti, she found it challenging to recall details about essay instruction and tasks in the textbooks she used. I also struggled in understanding how students could answer the same questions from textbooks, use them as their essay outlines and the source of information students wrote essays on different topics. These language issues posed challenges in my research process.

Despite the foregoing mistakes and challenges, I was also pleasantly surprised with the commitment of my participants to help me. Although I lost contact with one participant after the end of the official period of data gathering, I continued to be in touch with the other three participants. They invited me to join their family celebrations and gatherings. I also assisted them by giving a ride when they needed one. The relationships we established, I believe, contributed to more detailed and informative follow-up interviews.

Chapter Summary

Based on my research questions, I used a multiple case study design, focusing on four participants. The site for this research was a writing classroom in a local community college located in the Mid-South, and four participants were selected using purposeful sampling. I focused on participants from different ethnolinguistic backgrounds and who had different types of contact with the educational system in the U.S.

Data generation occurred during a period of seven weeks. Participants were interviewed 3 times each, following Seidman's phenomenological interviewing technique. The purpose of the interviews was to elicit information that shed light upon the types of

their sociocultural resources and the role of the essay genre prior to and after their arrival in the U.S. All interviews were scheduled at times and locations of participants' choosing. In addition to the three in-depth interviews, I also conducted follow-up interviews, in-class and out-of-class observations, as well as gathered textual artifacts, such as classroom notes and products, essay drafts, and final essays.

Data analysis involved analyzing emerging themes through open coding and crafting participants' profiles. This analysis was applied with data from semi-structured interviews, participants' observations, and artifacts. I also produced two types of participant profiles. I used the first type to introduce participants and their backgrounds in Chapter 4. Those profiles were crafted in participants' words. The second type of profile provided a comprehensive picture of my data analysis from the three in-depth phenomenological interviews. During my final stages of analysis, my goal was to provide a very detailed description and to generalize within cases. I sought to understand what identified themes depicted about how the essay genre mediated participants' choices about sociocultural resources, and how the participants made sense of their choices in each case.

In the section on researcher positionality, I explained how my personal experiences have shaped my worldview and my perspectives as a writer. Moreover, I explained how my previous experiences as an international student, an ESL teacher, and a researcher who adopted a sociocultural perspective might have affected data generation in both positive and negative ways. In the same vein, I explained how those experiences might have affected my data analysis in positive ways. Finally, I outlined several limitations and challenges, I faced, during the designated period of data generation.

CHAPTER 4

Findings on Sociocultural Resources

In this chapter I present the study's main findings pertaining to the first research question. The first question that guided my work focused on a sociocultural resource construct. Guided by sociocultural theories on learning (e.g., Lave & Wenger, 1991; Rogoff, 2003; Wertsch, 1991), I viewed sociocultural resources as material, symbolic and social sources of support that participants relied upon while learning to write in the essay genre. I sought to understand what resources constituted participants' writing repertoires prior to and after their arrival in the U.S. My goal was to identify the types of writing resources they drew upon in the two contexts by investigating what resources they brought with them from their previous contexts and what new resources they drew upon in the U.S.

First, I present participants' biographical profiles that depict their lives prior to their arrival in the U.S. Each profile includes a brief summary of their immigration experiences followed by what students predominantly shared about their lives during the first in-depth interview. Each profile is in participants' words. I tried to use as much as possible the participants' unedited words and demographic information. By sharing their voices, I bring the participants to life and contextualize the findings, thus providing a sense of depth to each one.

It is important to include accounts based upon what participants shared about their backgrounds. Understanding their past lives was essential to situating their previous writing resources in the essay genre within the social and cultural context of their home countries. Exploring their past enabled me to understand what sociocultural resources they had access to and how their prior social and cultural context shaped their previous

resources. Such an exploration was necessary to provide the basis against which I was able to examine what resources they had access to and did not have access to in both contexts, and how they recontextualized the use of their previous resources in the new environment.

Second, I provide an overview of learning resource categories available to the participants in my study. My purpose is to operationalize the identified category terms and help my readers understand the theoretical work that guided my thinking about each category. I also provide examples from other works to illustrate how these categories are depicted by other scholars and include the illustrations I identified in my data. My intent is to explicitly communicate what is not directly expressed – my thought process in thinking about each resource category.

Participants' Profiles

In this section participants introduce themselves. Each of them was born into a family that came from the particular corner of the world they called home. Of course, they did not choose the place of their birth, the members of their immediate and extended family, or the occupations of their parents. Nor did they determine which languages they had to speak and use as writers. Yet these elements defined their early lives and contributed to shaping their growth as writers. Each participant had a unique background; each had a particular personal story to tell. Their stories serve as a venue, laying the groundwork for understanding how they developed their repertoires of sociocultural resources as writers in the essay genre. In the context of their personal lives, their family members, school curricula and/or sociocultural circumstances affected the types of resources they had access to and how they chose to use them. Now it is time to meet the four participants.

Lilly

Lilly was born in a Haitian *commune* (town) that had 36,188 inhabitants as of 2009. While growing up, she attended a Catholic school. Her life revolved around her school activities and community service that was strongly advocated by her school. Upon graduating from high school in 2004, she moved to Port-au-Prince, the capital of Haiti, where she joined her older sister. She started attending a college and majoring in psychology. In 2009 she was introduced to a Haitian-American man. They married and moved to the U.S. in 2011. In her own words she adds details about her life:

I am 29 years old. I am from Haiti. I was a psychologist when I was in Haiti. I spent 6 years at the uni. I was working for two years and then I came here.

The country I grew up is a really really nice place. I like my city I was born. . . . It is beautiful. I can't wait to go back there. . . . It is not really too hot; it is really cool. . . . We have orange seasons, lemon season, and mango seasons, and everything. I love about this. The farmer, the farmer . . . like when we have corn, we have black beans and white bean and everything . . . when the season come for corn. . . they just looking for somebody who can help us . . . and then they sing; you know, they dance. That's really fun. In the evening people come together to my house . . . we talk, we laugh. It is a very very good life in my country. We eat together and then on Sunday morning we have plan to go to church together girl like me. And then we always talk about what is your plan, what you wanna be, you know! Just keep talking and then after I finish my high school to my city I was born, I went to Port-au-Prince. The biggest city. I go to Port-au-Prince to finish my University.

My mom was farmer. She did not go to school. My father was my teacher. And then my father just did a little bit on Saturday and Sunday. The best he can, you know.

I have one sister and two brothers. We have same education. But now my brothers are in the university. They are not done yet. They are study right now. My sister working as a teacher. She teaches. . . . I don't know exactly because I came here.

We went to Catholic school. . . . Hard work all the time. Everything was important for them because you know it is Catholic school. You cannot miss. It is really hard. . . . You know, when you don't do your homework in Catholic school, your dad or your mom suppose to take you to school because you don't do your homework. If you go to school, you don't do your homework, they will send you back home. You need to explain why you don't do your homework, the reason.

Before I came to the United States, me and my sister were living together to go to school because we were at Port-au-Prince, not in [home town]. Because when you finish high school in my city, you need to go to Port-au-Prince for the university because in my place we have no university. . . . After that, I remember I get some job to pay my university. . . . When you go to school in Haiti you need to pay from A to Z. . . . Some people need to work, but some people family here and send some support to go to school. Like I have my auntie here. She support me a lot to go to school. My father support us a lot to go to school. But after my father passed away, we don't have no support to go to school. . . . My father was sick. And then me and my sister said: "What are we going to do?" And then we cried because I have my family. They can help us, but they will try to use us like: "Oh, you need to clean my house. You need to stay with my babies. You need to do this. You need to do that if you want your school pay." Yes, and then I said I don't like that life. I am going to my auntie's house every day to watching babies, and then I need to go to school. I will not have time to study. And then I said this must stop. . . . After that, I find somebody here. . . . My auntie looking somebody here in America for me. And then that guy, I was married to, paid my school, paid house for us to take care everything.

When I came here, I go to adult education in [home town]. After that I was pregnant, I stopped going to school because I was really sick. . . . And I was not interested, as I did not like it. Because I don't like the way they teach. . . . When I go to school in adult education, you just repeat one thing for one week, one thing for another. No, that's not English. I don't like it. I don't speak English, I came here to speak English, but the way they teach, I don't like.

My husband told me . . . I am young. I need to go to college. . . . When I got there, I took the test. . . . And then I passed it. They gave me a class. And then they told me before it I have to register for financial aid. . . . And then they ask me for my transcript. I gave it to them. . . . I was quit to go to school because of my daughter. I came back in 2017.

I speak two languages. I speak French and Haitian Creole. . . . I try when I don't know something to say in English, I wrote it in French because I can write in French more than in Haitian Creole because I went to school in French.

Lilly's biographical sketch provided glimpses of the social and cultural context that affected her development as a writer. Lilly's father worked hard to pay for her and her sister's education in school and later at a university in Haiti. In this way, her father enabled Lilly and her sister to have access to literacy, in particular, learning to write in the essay genre. After his death, Lilly and her sister relied upon their extended family members as sources of support to get help they needed in maintaining their literacy education at a

university, where essay writing was not emphasized. As she mentioned, Lilly was proficient in two languages. At times her knowledge of French served as a bridge as she struggled to express herself in English. Exploring the role of previous sociocultural context in shaping participants' writing development served as a fascinating aspect of my research.

Riya

Riya was born in a small village in Nepal in 1982. While growing up, she enjoyed opportunities to live in a nearby town while attending a private elementary school, visiting her relatives in the capital of Nepal and India where her family bought things that were cheaper than in Nepal. Upon graduating from high school in 2001, she moved to stay with her aunt and attended a college in the capital. Upon graduating from college in 2006, she applied to study abroad in Australia. Her dream was to leave Nepal and move to an English-speaking country. She moved to study in Australia in 2008 where she stayed for a year and a half. Her education was interrupted when she won the U.S. Diversity Visa Lottery. In 2009 she and her husband moved to the U.S. In her own words Riya explains:

I born in Nepal in a small village. The place I born . . . have a garden of coconut, and then a garden of betel nut, and we grew a lot of corn, and then rice, lots of things. And then we have a garden of mangos, lychees, and then other fruits . . . The weather is really good, and the water . . . people say that water is like very tasty from our place. . . . The weather is so cool. . . not too much hot, not too much cold. And other thing is like everywhere you can see green area. Here is my house and after my house you can see all the rices or like corn or garden and everything. And even like tea garden. You can see everywhere green, green, green.

My family it was big. We live like my grandmom . . . before I born my grandpa he was die. And when I was born, I saw my grandmom, my mom, and my five aunts, my uncle. We live together in one house. . . . In our country we have servants do the things. They live with us. They are take care of me and my sister was born. Yeah, just helping my mom.

My mom she just passed eight classes. When she was ready for nine, she just go to the couple of small classes and then she got married. So, she is not continue her education. And my dad he just pass 10. We are farmer, so we are doing farming. They worked

together. My dad he was not that good. But my mom say, she was always first in her class. She still wants to go to school. She is so talent. At that time she wrote poem, she write song, she knows a lot of things. . . . I was four or five years when my dad pass away. So, I don't know much about my dad.

We did not have English school in our village. So, my grandmom wants us to go to English school. That's why we stay at our relative's home in the bigger town. And then we go to English school (i.e., elementary school) there. And at that time I stay because I have five aunt. I have the youngest aunt with me and I stay with her and my relative son, and we start go to the school there. . . . After that I go to government school (i.e., middle and high school) that is like . . . that is based on Nepali language.

After that like forever I leave. Sometimes I go to my village. After that I live in capital city and I live with my aunt in his house at that time. . . . I was a dance teacher. First of all, I start . . . when I pass my 10 class I start as a dance teacher and then after that I worked in NGO. After that I worked in Mitsubishi Motor company. And then after that I opened my own business. When . . . I worked as a dance I teach two . . . three schools, then I collect money from there and then I collect money from everywhere and I opened one business. I run the café. I worked like morning shifts, and then I have one uncle . . . he was helping me when I was not here, and my mom was there to help me.

I was done bachelor degree in my country. . . . I would like to learn sociology and help them. Like there is a lot of victims. Most of the women are so victims there. If I learn sociology, maybe in the future I would do joining NGO or something in the good place. So, I can help. . . . And then I went to Australia to do again the bachelor degree. So, I have been there almost two years. Then I got a DV (i.e., diversity visa) lottery and that's why I stay there for two years and not complete my education over there.

Because I had a dream when I was small. . . since that I have a dream to go abroad maybe America and Australia. I don't want to go other place. Always I have a dream to go these place. . . . In our country men are so dominated. . . If you go to public place, men like smack your boobs or do bad things. . . . So, I have gone through a lot with that things. So, it makes me so. . . . I heard like abroad like in America and Australia, they don't have like that kind of things and even women got a lot of rights over there. And in our country the women they don't have that much right, so. . . . I just want to come here and see here how women survive here. Maybe in the future I could do some good things in my country. That's the reason I come here.

I speak Nepali, English, Hindi, and little bit of Japanese, but not that much because I did not get a visa for anywhere, and then I apply to go to Japan. At that time six months I did Japanese language. Not much, little bit. . . . I write in English, Nepali, and Hindi.

In sharing about herself, Riya depicted how her sociocultural context contributed to shaping her literacy development, in particular, learning to write essays, in Nepal. When

she attended elementary school where classes were taught in English, Riya had to leave her village and stay with members of her extended family whose home was in the town where the school was located. She relied upon their help to get access to education in English. She later drew upon the knowledge of English while learning to write essays in English in middle and high school. Her profile also showed that women did not have equal rights with men which contributed to limited formal schooling among women in her country. Those realities affected who Riya could ask for help with essay writing in Nepal.

Soso

Soso, an Iraqi student, lived in her home country from her birth in 1977 until the beginning of the Iraqi war in 2006. That year Soso, her husband, and some of their extended family had to leave everything behind and flee Iraq by bus. They went to the neighboring country of Syria. They stayed with some of their relatives in Syria from 2006 to 2012. During that time, her mother and her younger brother were granted asylum in the U.S. In 2012, Soso and her husband had to leave Syria by car due to the beginning of the Syrian war. They decided to go to Jordan which was close to Syria and Iraq. In 2014 Soso and her husband were approved for refugee status in the U.S. They both moved to a city in the Southwest where her mother, brother, aunts and six or seven cousins had already settled.

Soso fills in the details:

I was born. . . in Baghdad. . . . It is very beautiful. There is a river: Tigris and Euphrates. We have two rivers in my country. I lived close to river. . . . I scared to swim. But you know the boat, I liked the boat. . . . We live in big house for three layers and we have a swimming pool and we had a big garden. My house was very very beautiful. . . . Beautiful everything furniture everything. Bathroom we have a lot of bathrooms. Yeah. We had a big room, nice couch like love seats, and you know chairs everything coffee table, TV, yes. Big cabinets in the living room.

At the beginning, I lived with my grandmother. You know because my mom has a job and also my dad. Then when my grandmother dead, I lived with my parents. . . . I have five aunts and one uncle. I have just one brother. I am big. 7 years. He finished computer science in Iraq. He got bachelor's degree. . . . I also have bachelor's degree, same as my brother – computer science. It's easy. No writing, no read a lot of because something like . . . math. You know, because I like math. I don't like to read and keep memorize anything. I like the class just for understand . . . like math class. For example, math $2 + 3 = 5$. That's easy. You don't have to write something, just to understand what is going on, what's the process for $3 + 5$. I don't know how to explain.

My father he is an English teacher. He has a bachelor's degree and my mom . . . like teacher. She did not work as a teacher; she worked in the Ministry of Housing (for building, engineering, something like that) like a secretary. . . . "You have to study, you have to get a Harvard degree. You have to finish your college, you have to study hard." All the time they told me that. All my family, aunts, uncles they encouraged everybody to finish school and get higher degrees. The education is very strong in my country. We study very hard and we have to study big books, and we have to finish this book and then when we get a final exam, we need to read all the books from beginning and to end. But also we had first exam, second exam, or the middle exam. I was very very smart in my elementary school. I got in all class 100 because my mom encouraged me every time: "You have to study. You have to read."

I never learned how to write. Just how to understand like lessons for the class, not for writing. I told you, they don't focus on writing. You have to know how to write and then you can write. . . . But you have to use grammar, punctuation. . . . You know in my country we have a program in my country. All people they have to learn how to write and how to read. The writing in elementary school is like printing. Because in the elementary school in my country, when you learn the first letter, each letter you have to write it for whole page, repeat it. Practice it. . . . Middle school. Like I don't know how to express yourself. You know because we write in just one class in Arabic class. . . . Maybe two times a whole year. For the middle exam and for the final exam. . . . And I told you it is short paragraph.

I speak Arabic and English. . . . English in elementary school . . . third grade, I can't remember to high school. And also in college. But not all the classes. Just for the computer science. We had to study everything in English. But you know not like there. . . . We have to read English and you answer in English. For example, there is network class, you have to study everything in English, and when you get a first or middle exam, you have to answer in English.

Soso's account also depicted the significant role of her previous context in shaping her literacy development, especially, her formal writing, in Iraq. Soso's description of her house suggested that she came from a higher socio-economic class. This reality contributed

to the kind of resources she had access to in her country. Moreover, the members of her immediate and extended family, with the exception of one aunt, held college degrees. They all encouraged Soso to go to college, as well. As my analysis will later show, they played a significant role in shaping Soso's growth in formal writing at school. In addition, Soso was educated in the system where there was a lot of emphasis on memorization of books. Given that the government made educational decisions that applied to schools all over the entire country, the government's attempts to promote literacy education through memorization was an additional reality that affected Soso's growth as a literacy learner as well as her writing development.

Martin

Martin was born in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in 1984. Due to the beginning of the second Congo war in 1998, his family had to flee their hometown. In 1999 they arrived in Zambia as refugees. Upon his dad's death and his mother's return to Congo to seek Martin's lost siblings, Martin stayed for 13 years in Zambia, living in a refugee camp with an adopted family. In 2011 his adopted family was granted refugee status in the U.S. Martin joined them about two years later. Since that time, he has been living in a city with about 300,000 population in the Mid-south. Martin described his ordeal:

I was born in the Democratic Republic of the Congo . . . in 1984. Previously in Katanga because Congo is big . . . we have like 11 province but for this time now they split it and it is now 24 province. I was born in Katanga, previously in Kalami, it is near the Lake Tanganyika. I grew up in the town of Kalami. When I was a kid, I did not have opportunity to spend time in the Congo because of the war. . . . The war started in 1996 or 7. Until 1996 I was in Congo. When the war broke up, we have been obliged to flee the country up to Zambia. In Zambia that's where I spent most of my time with the family and friends.

I remember the place (i.e., his home place) . . . because it is near the big lake. It is the lake that links Tanzania, Burundi, Zambia, and Congo – four countries. It goes up to 4

countries. I think it is the third or the fourth in the world. In Africa it is the second largest lake. It has a lot of fishes. We used to go to the lake to fish, to swim. I remember when I was a kid I knew how to swim through the lake and we have a river which is called Lukuga just separating the town. It split the town into two parts, so we always call this place like Siri and this place here like Lukuga. So, there is a big bridge that links the Siri. It is a beautiful place. Besides the lake, I remember there are mango trees, and I don't know if you know it . . . we used to call it palma trees. It is a trees that we use to manufacture cooking oil. . . . And it is the place where there is no cold; it is warm or hot, and we are living just in community. . . . It is such a big town. Now it is a province. My house was . . . a three-bedroom house and kitchen and two sittings rooms. What I liked was we were not really far from my neighbors. When I am in the house in the windows, I can just look around and see like all the place like houses, trees.

I have been born to a big family. My grandpa had just one wife. He had nine kids. Eight were girls and only my father was a boy. He was the youngest. So, we were living like in a community because my grandpa had a house with 12 living rooms. It was a big big house. I remember there was a place where we used to go for bath. There was a big place you have to fill water. Then you just swim. Then all of those eight my aunts we used to call them aunts in Africa, they were living with us, and my father was like the father of all of them. . . . When we wanna eat, we were just getting together. In the house, we had big table. About 15 people could sit at the table. There was a table for grown-up people and a table for children and there was a table for my mom and my dad and my aunties.

The usual activity in Congo I can say I was just with my family. I spent day and all the time to go the lake or I can go to play with my friends. Or my mom can send me to the grandma. I used to spend there a week and just playing there.

In my family, we were born eight seven children. I think three of them . . . two of them already passed away and my father died in the refugee camp. I just remember my mother and my brothers. But all of them are in the Congo. I am here by myself. I have three brothers and one sister.

My father was a mechanical engineer. He was good on cars, fridges, like engines. He was good on that. . . . We were good my father had a job, so my mother she just went up to the high school, she did not go further. I can say my mother she has high school education. My father was a professional. He was working to a private company and his own work, sometimes when he is off from work, he usually work for his own company. My mother stayed home with us, taking care of us.

When we came in the refugee camp, I was living with the family that is here (i.e., in the U.S.). They are living here. I was living with the church members, and there were an organization they used to call that was supporting the orphans like an orphanage. So, that's where I was living. They were like my family. In the camp, there was education because UN Refugee Agency opened some classes for children. Then I went to school for some period. Then I did not really be focus because there was nobody to take care of me. It was hard for me to continue with classes. So, I stopped going to school. I was just going to the

English Center where they used to teach English. . . . Because in Congo we were speaking French, in Zambia they were speaking English. I was really obliged to know the language because I did not expect that one day I will go back in the Congo.

In the refugee camp, most of the time the usual life was going to church. It was a Pentecostal church. . . went to church and coming back. I used to play “Dropped.” It was just a game. I never see it here. . . . It was like a square, then it has lines like this and you put something here and here to this side, you just put something and we start playing like this. To move the beans. If yours is finished, I win. Another activity in the camp was riding the bikes. Another activity was going to class like English class. In church we were praying, singing, worshipping God. I was singing in the choir.

In the high school, in Africa I did not know about essays. But when I came here (i.e., the U.S.), it was about writing an essay. Even in the [literacy] center, I did not have that opportunity to write an essay. But when I went to college (i.e., the U.S. high school), they used to give me assignment for writing. I always do good. We were like given assignment like the purpose, like this, then we have to give an idea or a hook. They used to choose a topic for us. Then most of the topic was the book and the video. I remember I do have a small book “Of Mice and Man.” It was like three pages.

I can speak like four or five languages: two international languages, French and English, and these others are just local languages.

Similar to the other three participants Martin’s profile suggested the role of his previous context in shaping his literacy development. Due to the war in the DRC, Martin’s literacy education was interrupted. The reality set the basis for his further trajectory in education. After becoming a refugee, his literacy education, especially learning to write, depended upon the kinds of formal resources and opportunities provided by the UN Refugee Agency in the camp. Moreover, Martin hoped to get employment in Zambia. Due to the language policy in the country, Martin was obliged to learn English.

These glimpses into the lives and literacy development of the four participants in my research study suggest that each participant is unique in background as well as in the sociocultural influences that affected their literacy development and the types of sociocultural resources they had access to. The section that follows describes the resources that constituted each participants’ current writing repertoires.

Categories of Resources

As I developed resource categories, I was guided by sociocultural theorists' views on mediational means or cultural artifacts (e.g., Lave & Wenger, 1991; Rogoff, 2003; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1991). Writers do not compose essays from thin air; they rely upon social, symbolic, and material resources available in their sociocultural contexts. They seek help from people in their institutions and outside of their educational settings. They draw upon their language repertoires and genre knowledge as resources to help them act as competent writers in the essay genre. Moreover, writers rely upon various forms of material resources they have access to in their sociocultural environments.

In my study, participants' writing choices in the English composition course and English workshop provided a window for my understanding of their current repertoires of sociocultural resources. Their repertoires included two types of resources: those available prior to their arrival in the U.S. (i.e., previous) and the resources they had access to after their arrival in the U.S. (i.e., new). After having identified what constituted their current repertoires, I looked for common features to organize those resources into specific subcategories. I identified seven categories that they learned prior to and after their arrival in the U.S. Participants in my study relied upon these categories in their English composition course and English workshop (see Figure 4.1). The people category included social resources participants had access to in both contexts. The essay genre knowledge and language knowledge categories represented the types of symbolic resources participants brought with them from their previous sociocultural contexts. The other four categories, such as genre materials, class materials, digital materials, and digital tools, included different types of material resources that participants had access to in both

contexts. What follows is my analysis of the types of resources that participants drew upon, including their connections to theories and the examples from data.

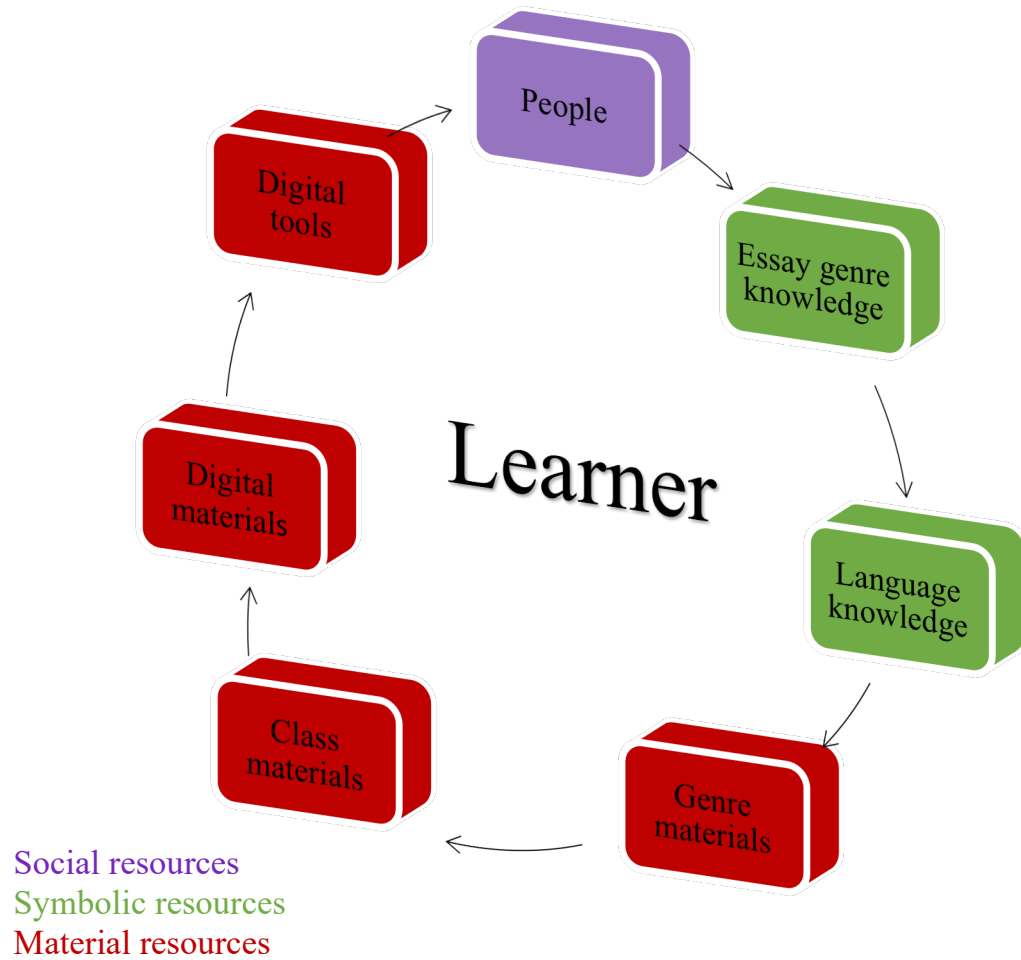


Figure 4.1. A learner's repertoire of resources for the essay genre

Social Resources

The social resource category included people who were more experienced or capable others and who mediated learning to write for English learners through problem-solving and collaboration (Vygotsky, 1978). This category included both formal and informal social resources. The formal social resources revolved around people the participants had access to in their formal educational settings in the two contexts. In their formal context, participants relied upon help from classmates and tutors. Outside of their educational settings, participants drew upon help from people they had access to. In some cases, they were immediate and extended family members; in other cases, they included friends and neighbors, as well as a work supervisor.

Other scholars have identified similar social resources that English learners drew upon in order to get help with academic writing. For example, Morton, Storch, and Thompson (2015) showed that a Chinese writer, who had few opportunities to practice extended source-based writing in either Mandarin or English, chose to use different forms of help from her Chinese peers such as proof-reading her papers and explaining the APA style step-by-step. Likewise, the same researchers uncovered how a Brazilian student decided to have extended discussions about her assignment topics with her husband. Those discussions, she believed, helped her acknowledge alternative views and evaluate them.

Classmates. In my study, all four participants relied upon help from classmates in both contexts. When Lilly, Riya, and Soso learned to write in the essay genre in their home countries their classmates served as sources of assistance with essay writing. Lilly and Riya talked to their classmates about what they could include in their essays. For example, Lilly shared: “We just share ideas. Like I remember some classmates can share their essay

with me. I can share their essay with them to say if it is good. We don't exchange. I could read someone's else essay. They could read mine." Likewise, Riya sometimes could talk to her classmates about what to include in an essay. Riya could ask her classmates about: "How did you start the introduction part? How did you do the body part?" Unlike Lilly and Riya who talked to their classmates about essay drafts, Soso only talked to her classmates about Arabic grammar and punctuation which were strongly emphasized in Arabic writing. When asked about the kind of help they provided, Soso replied: "Sometime when you don't understand some question. . . . Arabic class is too hard."

Unlike Lilly, Riya, and Soso who learned to write essays in their home countries, Martin only learned about essays when he came to the U.S. Prior to his arrival in this country, Martin was only exposed to two different types of writing in the English Center in the Zambian refugee camp. They included writing letters and poetry. His teachers encouraged Martin to work with his classmates on their poems. Martin shared: "We usually met in the class or after class we have to go to like a playground and then we sit together there. We start composing." Poetry writing was a teamwork effort, and they all served as resources for each other.

When Lilly, Riya, Soso, and Martin learned to write essays in the English composition course in the U.S., each of them, along with other international classmates, served as sources of support for each other in essay writing. They relied upon each other's help both in class and outside of class. On several occasions I observed Martin talking to another female student from Africa. Martin shared: "I used to talk to Emma." Both of them recorded classroom conversations and exchanged their recordings outside of class. Likewise, Lilly asked for help from Riya after she received a low score on her first essay

draft. Lilly shared: “And then when I talk to Riya, Riya tell me: ‘Lilly, no, this is not the way to do your essay.’” When Riya struggled with writing her introduction, she drew upon help from the Nepali classmate. Riya shared: “Sometime I talk with my friend, Abiral, from the class.” These examples of mutual support and communication illustrate the sense of dependence English learners share while striving to write in the essay genre.

Tutors. Riya and Soso were the two participants who also relied upon help from private tutors in their home countries. In Riya’s case, she only worked with an English tutor when she attended middle and high school. The service was not free. Riya met with her tutors who were also her schoolteachers at their home. When I asked what kind of help they provided, Riya shared: “Grammar. Sometimes essay. That’s all. They say what to correct. . . . Everything wherever I get a mistake.” Soso worked with both Arabic and English tutors during the last year in high school. Her tutors were teachers from other “better” schools. Soso noted: “Sometimes there is the best school in my country and you know there is good teacher, you have to get that teacher from the best school.” The purpose of those private sessions was to go through the textbooks Soso used at school. Soso shared: “The same book. Everything the same.”

In the U.S. all four participants drew upon help of college tutors. In fact, they were their major sources of support besides their classmates. Each participant pointed out the kind of help tutors provided. Lilly shared: “When you go there, they not really help you to do your essay. But they explain you the way you have to do it.” “By not really help you to do your essay,” Lilly meant that tutors did not write essays for her. They served as her guides in helping her understand how to write an essay. When Riya shared about the help she received from tutors, she said:

It helped me a lot. Even if I don't know the figurative language, how to find it, what it exactly mean, so and then even I don't know any Mitch Landrieu. . . When I read him I don't understand. I read couple of times, but I don't understand. But when I went to the Writing Center, I was more clear.

Riya's statement shows that in addition to helping her identify the examples of specific variables, tutors served as her cultural brokers. They went over the speech by Mitch Landrieu with her and helped her understand its meaning. Martin also noted his reliance upon tutors. He shared:

I always go there when I have an essay to write. . . . Because when you go there, they used to ask you: "What kind of help do you need?" And you need to explain to them I need you to check the essay, and what you want me to do to your essay. I said: "Ok, you need to check the structure, and you need to check the spelling.

Martin's statement indicates the kind of help he requested from tutors. In his case, their help included reviewing his essay structure and spelling. Similar to Martin, Soso also noted that she went to the Tutoring Center every time she worked on her draft. Soso shared: "And if I have to remove something or add something, they help me. Just write and they talk you have to add this or you have to remove this." These examples illustrate the fact that participants in my research were prepared to turn to tutors for help, just as they had in their countries before arrival in the U.S.

People outside of educational settings. The participants also relied upon help from people they had access to outside of their educational settings in both contexts. In their home countries those people included immediate and extended family members, as well as friends/neighbors. When Lilly learned to write essays in Haiti, her older sister and father served as her most important sources of assistance in essay writing. Lilly shared:

I write my essay. When I finish write my essay, I talk to my sister: "Do you think my essay good?" And then, she said: "Ok, you need to put this, put this, and put

this.” And then after, when I finish give to my sister, I go to my father. And my father read it to make sure that everything is ok.

Both her sister and her father helped Lilly check her essays. In most cases, their assistance was about the French language. Lilly noted: “Like I can think *that* or *this*. I put *this* on the place of *that*, and they fix that for me.” Likewise, Soso relied upon help of her family who included both immediate and extended members. In Iraq, Soso did not practice writing essays in class. However, she was required to produce compositional passages on an assigned topic at exams. Soso noted: “It was required. . . . You have to know how to write.” In order to prepare for those exams, Soso relied upon help from her mother and aunts. Soso shared:

Sometimes my mom helped me, sometimes aunts helped me how to write essays. . . . Talking about the topic; maybe they have a lot of information about that topic and they help me to get that information to write in my paper. And sometimes we have to write like try in my house just try and see if I can . . . and then when we took exam, we know about how to write.

Her statement shows that her mother and aunts did not just help her generate ideas for her compositional passages, but they also checked the written passages she produced at home. Unlike Lilly and Soso, Riya’s friends/neighbors were informal sources of assistance in essay writing when she practiced writing English essays before exams. Students practiced writing essays in class and then worked on them at home a few times a year. Riya shared: “Sometimes I ask them for help. . . . If I don’t understand some words because at that time we did not have Google. . . . If I ask them and they know, they give answer. If they don’t, they don’t give answer.” Her example demonstrates the importance of informal resources for students in their search for help in learning to write in English.

In the U.S., the participants had limited access to informal social resources. In fact, Soso was the only participant who had a regular access to a bilingual, college-educated cousin born and raised in this country. Her cousin helped her review her essays and assisted with basic computer skills. When I inquired if she used her help, she replied: “Maybe sometimes let [cousin] to read my essay, to check the grammar. But not with MLK [essay]. I asked the tutoring.” Lilly also happened to have a work supervisor who was enrolled in the same college. When Lilly struggled writing her introduction, she asked him for help. He helped her with an opening sentence and suggested what she could include in the rest of her introduction. However, this was a one-time source of assistance.

The identified examples show that people were important social resources in essay writing for the participants. In order to navigate cultural genre demands, the participants relied upon both formal and informal resources they had access to in the two contexts. The essay genre was a significant mediating influence that shaped the kind of help participants sought from the people who served as their social resources in the two contexts.

Symbolic Resources

In defining the symbolic resource category, I was guided by sociocultural theorists’ views on mediation (e.g., Rogoff, 2003; Vygotsky, 1978, Wertsch, 1991). When humans interact with the environment, they do it with the help of various mediational means, such as language (e.g., Vygotsky, 1978), genres (e.g., Wertsch, 1991), and different cultural tools for thinking (Rogoff, 2003). Language, genres, and cultural tools for thinking constitute specific symbolic systems, which, as Rogoff’s (2003) work has shown, are rooted in particular communities. In my study, when the participants learned to make meaning as writers in the essay genre in the English composition course, they relied upon

their language knowledge and genre knowledge they had access to in their prior sociocultural contexts. Those two types of knowledge served as mediational means and represented particular symbolic systems they relied upon when they learned to write in the essay genre in the English composition course. Therefore, I viewed language knowledge and previous essay genre knowledge as symbolic resources in my work.

Essay genre knowledge. In my understanding of essay genre knowledge, I relied upon the work by Tardy (2009). In her conceptualization of genre knowledge, Tardy distinguished between *formal knowledge*, *process knowledge*, and *rhetorical knowledge*. Given her interest in the knowledge of written disciplinary genre, she also included a fourth category – *subject-matter knowledge*. In my study I only focus on the first three categories. The last category is not a good fit for my work, as my focus was on general writing course which was not tailored to any specific subject discipline.

Tardy viewed formal knowledge as structural elements of genre. In her work, she focused on elements, such as the genre's prototypical forms or lexico-grammatical conventions of the genre. I chose to focus on a particular element that the participants emphasized in their interviews – structural moves common for the genre. Tardy defined process knowledge as procedural practices that characterize the genre. They include the sequence of steps writers take in order to complete an action or actual composing processes. Her conceptualization of rhetorical knowledge included genre's intended purposes and awareness of the writer's positioning vis-à-vis the context and the specific audience. This knowledge, in particular, helps writers understand what the genre intends to do within a specific local context.

In my work, Lilly, Riya, and Soso, who practiced essay writing in their home countries, developed particular essay genre knowledge prior to their arrival in the U.S. The formal knowledge of the essay genre could be illustrated in Riya's explanation of an essay she produced in Nepal:

When I was back to my country, we just know introduction part, body part, and then if you have something you want to . . . like in conclusion. In introduction you have to introduction. . . if they say like write about cow, I have to introduction a cow . . . what cow is . . . in a simple way because we pray for cow in our country. We think like cow a kind of mother for us because cow giving us milk. That's the reason. So, we just say that thing in the introduction part. And then we have to in the body paragraph to write like advantage and disadvantage about cow. . . and in conclusion we have to write why cow is very important for us. That's all.

This example shows that Nepali organization included three essay elements: the introduction, the body, and the conclusion. The structural moves included describing a cow in the introduction, stating advantages and disadvantages in the body, and providing reasons for why the cow was an important animal in the conclusion.

Soso was the only participant who had previously learned to produce a one-paragraph composition passage like a "short story" that had a beginning, middle and concluding part. For example, when she wrote about home, she identified the following components:

At the beginning you identify the home, what is home for you. . . . Like a home is a big house where people live. . . . In the middle part you have to live in freedom or . . . unity. . . like sharing, something like that. . . . Conclusion like your opinion or something like that about your home. . . . Home is the place you can live in it with many people.

This example suggests that Soso's previous formal knowledge about essay writing included the use of three structural moves. In the introduction she had to define the topic,

in the middle of her essay she had to provide basic information, and, in the conclusion, Soso had to state her opinion.

Unlike Riya and Soso, Lilly learned to write several types of essays in Haiti. Lilly shared: “When I was in high school, I wrote about cause and effect, contrast and compare, and then definition.” In each essay, Lilly explained, the requirement in Haiti was that an essay must have an introduction, body and conclusion. When I asked Lilly to give me an example of what she wrote in her essays in Haiti, she said: “Like cell phone. Why cell phone is good? For communication. Why communication is important? You need to explain that.” Given her statements, it could be assumed that Lilly learned to use several types of structural moves that were driven by Haitian expectations about essay organization types she produced in Haiti.

When Lilly, Riya, and Soso learned to write essays in their home countries, they developed different process knowledge. In Lilly’s case, her teachers expected her to read topical essay examples and answer the questions that followed those essays. Those questions served as the basis for their outlines. When she worked on answering those questions, Lilly noted:

You need to explain what you are talking about in your essay. . . . You don’t have to write it good because it is an outline. Let’s say “divorce.” You make an outline what cause divorce, why divorce, and then you explain exactly what you put in an essay.

Her statement illustrates that Lilly learned how to state her reasoning about a particular topic. After producing the first draft, her teachers reviewed it. The teacher's feedback on her essay served as a reminder that her essay must follow the required structure and reflect proper grammar and spelling. For example, Lilly shared: “If you make a mistake, the thesis

go to the body, the body go to thesis. They say: ‘No, you need to fix everything.’ And then she put the number 1,2,3. And then you follow, and then you fix it.” Spelling was especially emphasized. Lily noted: “That’s very important point in Haiti. . . . When you write essays, you have to spell everything good.” If Lilly fulfilled the prescribed expectations, she could work on her final draft. Given that Lilly produced essays weekly, following those steps became part of her routine rationalization of what to do as a writer in the essay genre. As for Riya, she only produced essays before exams a few times a year. Her teacher also expected her to read topical essay examples from textbooks. However, she did not follow any outlines. Riya shared:

The teaching process is like first of all they give us topic and then they explain about the topic and then they say you have to write an introduction part and body and then conclusion. In body part you can list advantages and disadvantages.

Students had to produce their final drafts over three consecutive days. As for the teacher’s feedback, Riya shared: “They are just giving the number. Yeah, grammar corrections. Maybe the word . . . maybe simple or past word.” Riya’s composing processes included reading essays examples, listening to her teacher’s explanations, and writing her essays. Unlike Lilly and Riya, Soso only practiced writing compositional passages under the guidance of her immediate or extended family members. She did not read any essay examples. Instead she just relied upon assistance from her family members to help her generate her passages.

Their cultural expectations about essay writing were rooted in topical essay writing, which is different from American argumentative essay writing. Students were not expected to synthesize ideas from other works to state their own positions. Nor did they have to use examples from other resources or restate borrowed information in their own words. When

asked what kinds of topics they wrote about, they provided examples that required general information such as Nepal, tourism in Nepal, and Mount Everest (Riya) as well as Memorial Day, home, a teacher, and “cleanness” (i.e., hygiene) (Soso). None of them was expected to use any additional resources; they had to write what they knew about a topic. Because of their cultural expectations, they also developed different understandings about essays. For example, Lilly shared:

I know essay is something the teacher give you something like introduction. . . . You need to write down. Something you need to write down talking about, to demonstrate something, you know. That’s what essay mean Writing an essay in Haiti is like . . . boring. It is like you don’t wanna do it, but you have to do it.

Her statement indicates that Lilly developed an understanding of an essay as a school requirement that is only used to demonstrate what she knew about a topic. She also described it as a boring and required routine, which might be due to the school values promoted in her Catholic school. In her profile, Lilly shared that Catholic school had high expectations of students in terms of hard work and strictness. Given that her father was a teacher in her school, she was expected to be an excellent student and follow everything her teachers told her to do, including producing essays every week.

When Riya shared about her understanding of an essay in Nepal, she said:

Essay means in our country writing about something. . . . Maybe learning about new vocabulary and then correction of the grammar. . . . They don’t use anything. . . . It’s like eating a stone. Because we cannot eat stone; it is very hard, right. The essay is like that . . . It is very hard for us; it is like a stone.

Riya’s understanding of essay writing was also associated with a set of learned skills. These were skills that required her to show her knowledge about a particular topic as well as vocabulary and grammar. Riya also associated the practice of essay writing with eating

a stone due to the lack of resources and explanations. Her reference to eating stone was meant to convey how hard it was, from her cultural perspective, to learn to write in the essay genre.

This previous essay genre knowledge provided the basis upon which the three participants built upon while learning to write essays in the U.S. They drew upon this knowledge as their previous resource in helping them to navigate particular essay genre demands in the English composition course.

Language knowledge. I viewed the language knowledge category as a repertoire of languages that writers developed prior to their coming to the U.S. and that they relied upon to mediate their essay writing in this country (Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1991). Language, as a symbolic tool, is an essential cultural artifact that mediates writers' thinking processes. With respect to English learners, they rely upon their knowledge of native, dominant, or colonized languages to express their thoughts in writing. For example, Hirano (2011), who studied how refugee students negotiated academic literacy in the first year of college, noted how one of her participants drew upon his first language for literacy. The participant said: "Sometimes, the essay is really hard, I try to write it in French and then translate it" (p. 237). Similarly, participants in my study relied upon their native and colonized languages. For example, Soso drew upon her knowledge of Arabic to remember the definitions of some unfamiliar words. Her notes contained words written in Arabic (see Figure 4.2).

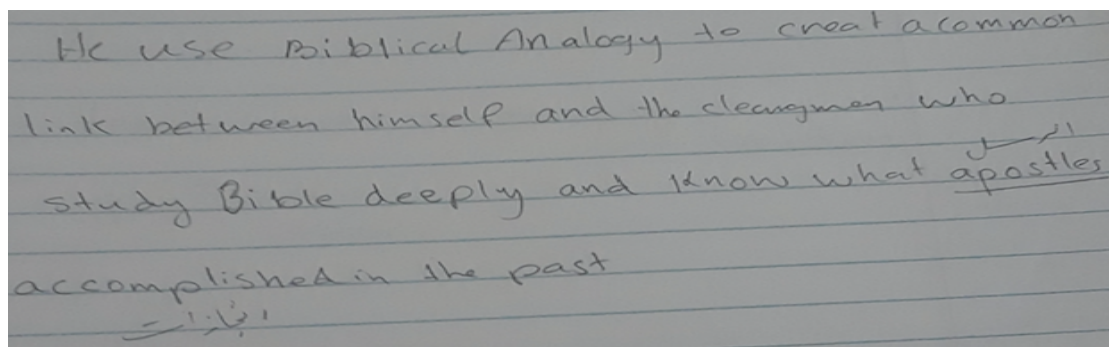


Figure 4.2. Soso's use of her native language as a resource

Figure 4.2 shows that Soso wrote down the meaning of unfamiliar words in Arabic. For example, there is an Arabic word above the words *apostle* and *accomplished* in the image above. As Soso noted it helped her to “know what they mean.” In order to know an Arabic translation, Soso used Google Translate on her cell phone. Her native language served as a resource in the process of learning to write an essay and making sense of the information. Likewise, Riya drew upon her knowledge of Nepali to translate into English what she could not express in English on her own. She said: “I just like think some word in Nepali or some sentence in Nepali and I just convert that one in English.” Unlike Soso and Riya, Lilly and Martin relied upon their knowledge of colonized languages while learning to write in the essay genre in the U.S. For example, Lilly shared: “Most of time when I need to write introduction to my essay, I go to the Google translate and I say in French. And then I put French and English and then I write it down.” Lilly’s statement shows that she used the Google Translate to help her translate what she could not express in English. Martin’s reliance upon his colonized language was unconscious. He shared: “Just like some of my essay Mr. [instructor] used to see, and then he said: ‘No, this is a French way.’ . . . I kept using French words.” In contrast, in their home countries Riya was the only

participant who wrote essays in English, a foreign language, and relied upon her knowledge of the native language. Riya shared:

See the example of essay and I just read that. And then just think about it in Nepali. If we don't understand anything, we can see the word in a dictionary (i.e., Nepali-English) or ask the teacher. We ask the teacher in Nepali and ask the teacher how to say these things in English. And the teacher explain us, so we can do essay.

Her statement shows that in order to translate from Nepali to English she either asked her teacher for help or looked up unfamiliar words in a Nepali-English dictionary. Lilly only wrote essays in her colonized language in Haiti; Soso only produced composition passages in her native language.

Material Resources

In my definition of materials and tools, I was also guided by Vygotsky's (1978) views on mediational means. Similar to language as symbolic mediational means, I viewed material tools as mediational means, as well. I distinguished between classroom materials, genre materials, digital materials, and digital tools.

Classroom materials. In my concept and application of classroom materials, I meant any non-genre and non-digital material objects that writers had access to in the process of writing an essay. Such material objects included classmates' essay drafts, written notes, dictionaries or textbooks. Both Lilly and Riya relied upon their classmates' essay drafts in school in their home countries. Lilly only had an opportunity to look at her classmates' essay drafts during a lunch break, as her teachers did not allow students to interact with each other in a writing class. Although Riya was able to talk to her classmates about their essay drafts in class, it was only allowed "sometimes." Neither of them did that outside of school. In the U.S. all four participants were able to look at each other's drafts

both in class and outside of class. For example, on April 4th I observed how Lilly and Martin took pictures of each other's introductions. On a different day, when Lilly and Riya were working on their drafts in class, I observed how Lilly started rereading the sentences she added to one of her body paragraphs. In the middle of rereading them, she stopped to look at Riya's screen. Riya was sitting next to Lilly. After a few seconds she resumed looking at her screen. In addition, the participant exchanged their essay drafts outside of college. After the Nepali male classmate sent his essay introduction to Riya, she said to herself: "Oh, this way I have to write an introduction part." Her quote indicates that his introduction helped her realize how she could approach writing her own introduction.

Genre materials. I viewed genre materials as any genre-related resources that the instructor introduced to students to mediate genre instruction, such as essay outlines, essay organization, rhetorical strategies (i.e., ethos, pathos, and logos), figurative language (e.g., metaphor) and introduction types (e.g., the funnel introduction). Unlike Lilly who used outlines in Haiti, Riya, Soso, and Martin were exposed to this practice for the first time in the U.S. For example, their professor typed and projected the following sample of the outline on the board on March 26 (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1.

Essay Outline in the English Composition Course

Name
Professor
ENG 101
Date
Compare and contrast: Letter from B. Jail and X
Introduction
Purpose
Both writers share a common purpose. / The writers have different purposes. For example, MLK . . .
Audience
Ethos
Logos
Pathos
Figurative language
Language choices
Sources

All four participants relied upon the instructor's essay outline. For example, Soso copied the outline to her notebook (see Figure 4.3).

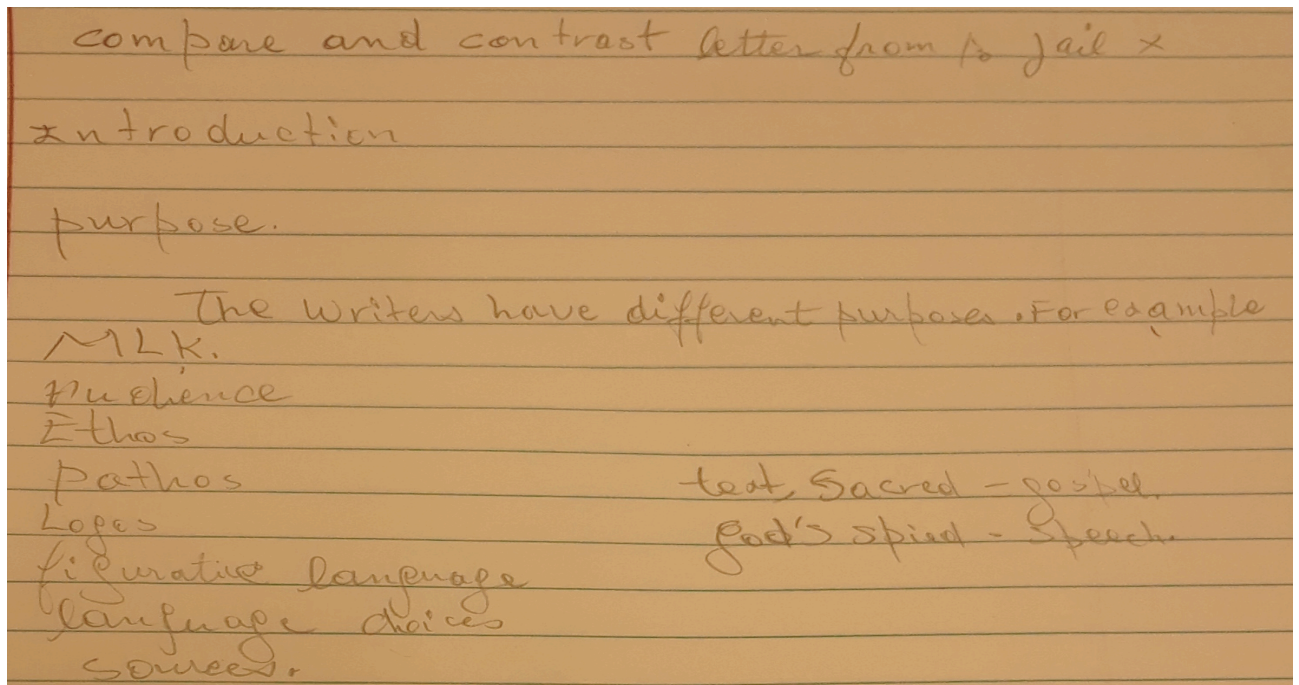


Figure 4.3. Soso's notes of the provided outline

Her notes indicate that she copied the suggested title as well as the required variables that served as the basis for the body. Soso relied upon these notes when she worked on her essay. Likewise, Lilly also noted that she relied upon the outline. She said: "I followed the outline. If I did not follow the paper, I cannot write nothing." Lilly was open about the challenge she faced in following this material resource.

Moreover, all four of them started utilizing such materials as the funnel type of an essay introduction given to them by their instructor. This type required that they open their introduction with general statements, followed by less general statements that led to their specific position stated in a thesis statement. Martin's introduction serves as an example of his effort to follow the funnel type approach. In his opening sentence, he talked about the importance of history in general. Then he turns to talking about the American history which further leads to his thesis statement.

The importance of history in our life is to be aware of what happened during the past and to keep record so that we may never forget and consequently never repeat and fall into the same traps or we may have opportunity to correct and have a lesson in what we have learned in the 'past. History can be taught from different perspective. For example, if you look at the history of the USA what we know these days has been taught from the perspectives of white people who were in privileged positions. These led the country into chaos because people like African Americans and other minorities were unequal and protested, asking for equal rights and opportunity. In order know how the change took place, I am going to compare and contrast the rhetoric of two freedom civil right activists. The letter from Birmingham jail by Martin Luther King and Mitch Landrieu's speech for the removal of Confederate Monument in New Orleans explaining these strategies. In this essay I am going to focus on how these two speakers persuaded their audiences by looking in their rhetorical strategies, who the audience was, their purpose and how they used pathos, logos, and figurative language to convince people to accept change.

In addition, all four participants learned about rhetorical strategies for the first time in the English composition course. When Soso worked on her essay in the English composition course, she was guided by her instructor's explanations about ethos, pathos, and logos to identify examples in the assigned texts. In order to identify those examples, she produced written definitions of each strategy in her notebook. Figure 4.4 depicts the definitions of the rhetorical strategies Soso used to "understand what these word mean" when she decided which examples to select for her essay.

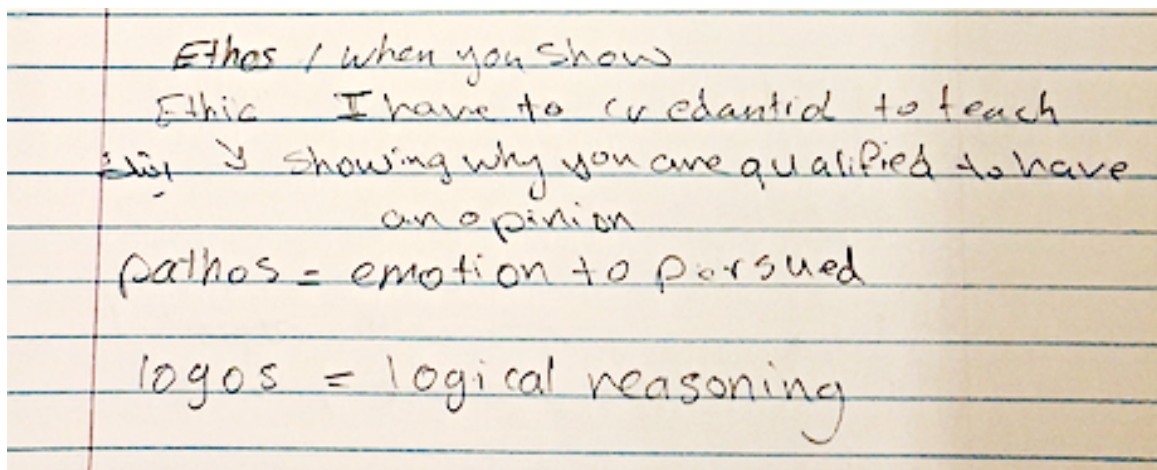


Figure 4.4. Soso's notes of the definitions of rhetorical strategies produced in class

Digital materials. In the category of digital materials, I included any digital sources of support, such as recordings of classroom conversations, essay examples, online articles, or YouTube videos, that the participants produced or identified on their own and relied upon when they worked on their essays. All four of them relied upon Internet searches. They explained their dependence upon Google searches for additional resources. Martin also searched Google to learn more about MLK and Mitch Landrieu. He shared:

The teacher just gave us the letter that MLK write . . . He explain it, but he did not go deep. But if you go to Google, it gonna explain . . . how they took him to the prison, more details than the teacher. Because the teacher has a limited time. . . . Some days when I don't have classes, I can be here in my bedroom, and I spent the whole day just collecting information most of the time to know really what I am gonna to write.

This account suggested that Martin experienced a deep desire to learn more about these two prominent figures. In addition, Martin utilized YouTube. He used it to search for additional information about the two key figures. During one of the observations he explained that he relied upon subtitles, which he claimed to discover on his own, to help him think about ideas for his essay. But he also relied upon videos to better understand the definitions of rhetorical strategies and figurative language. In particular, he noted: "The first time, I was taught by Mr. [instructor] in the class. I write some of the definitions. Then the second time I was watching YouTube." These examples illustrated that the availability of technology in the new context represented a significant resource that the participants depended upon in order to navigate the essay genre demands in the English composition course.

Digital tools. By digital tools, I meant any technological devices that the participants in my study used in the process of working on their essays, such as cell phones,

computers, YouTube, or Google. Access to computers also enabled them to learn how to use Google, YouTube, and Google Translate. The participants soon depended upon these technological tools in the course of working on their essays, using them in different ways. They used computers to look for additional information and type their essays in a Word document, cell phones to record classroom conversations, and Google Translate to help them with paraphrasing. For example, Soso and Riya also utilized their cell phones in the process of essay writing. One way they used these resources was in learning how to paraphrase sources. Soso noted that she learned how to paraphrase in a previous ESL writing class. When asked how she did that, she said: “Understand the sentences and then write in what I understand from these sentences . . . in my own words.” In understanding those sentences she relied upon Google Translate on her cell phone. When she looked up words in Google Translate, she also looked at the list of provided synonyms. She then used those synonyms to replace words in the borrowed sentences. After writing her paraphrases, she then went to a tutor who read what she wrote and pointed out which words needed to be replaced. Riya also applied the same approach Soso used in developing skills in to paraphrasing.

Chapter Summary

This chapter focuses on the main findings pertaining to the first research question. The first question that guided my work focused on a sociocultural resource construct. I sought to understand what resources constituted participants’ writing repertoires prior to and after their arrival in the U.S. My goal was to identify the types of writing resources they drew upon in the two contexts by investigating what resources they brought with them from their previous contexts and what new resources they drew upon in the U.S.

I introduced the participants by presenting their biographical profiles. Understanding their past lives was essential to situating their previous writing choices within the social and cultural context of their home countries. Each profile outlined their immigration experiences and demographic information in participants' words.

Following the profiles, I provided the categories of participants' current repertoires. In order to do that, I operationalized the identified category terms by stating how those categories were addressed in theory and research as well as identifying the examples from my own study.

CHAPTER 5

Participants' Choices About Sociocultural Resources as Mediated by the Essay

Genre

In this chapter I present the study's main findings pertaining to the second research question, focusing on how the essay genre mediated participants' writing choices about sociocultural resources in the U.S. In my view of the construct of choice, I relied upon Lave and Wenger's (1991) work. I defined a choice as a participant's action that was related to both a specific task and to the social and cultural context of a participant's community. Guided by Lave and Wenger's claim, I situated actions in an intricate relation with a learner/person and the sociocultural context that constituted the world they lived in.

My view of the essay genre was informed by Perry's (2009) statement about written genres. Perry stated that "written genres are social constructions that represent specific purposes for reading and writing within different social activities, created by social groups who need them to perform certain things" (p. 256). Building upon this definition, I viewed genres as a social construction in the English composition course in which each of the participants in my research was enrolled. In order to act as competent writers in the essay genre, the participants had to navigate specific written essay genre knowledge requirements and specific assignment expectations (see Figure 5.1).

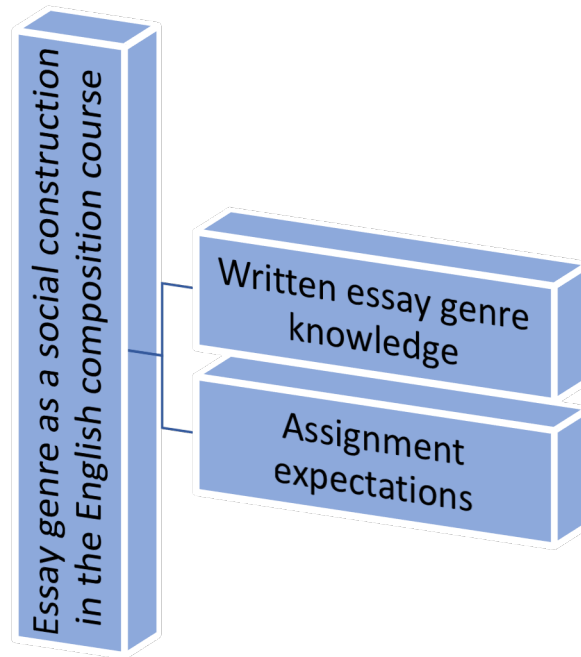


Figure 5.1. The essay genre as a social construction in the English composition course

In my view of written essay genre knowledge, I was again guided by Perry's (2009) work. Perry observed that in addition to language knowledge and cultural knowledge, English learners also needed to have written genre knowledge in order to act as competent participants in a literacy practice. That knowledge included purposes, organizations, and text features of a particular genre. In my study the participants had to demonstrate particular written genre knowledge about an essay's purpose, an essay's organization, and specific text features. Written essay genre knowledge about purposes required that the participants enter into a dialogue with other writers and their ideas to come up with a specific argument of their own and state it in a coherent way. Entering into a dialogue represented an early step in the essay writer's choice. They were given instructions; they chose how to navigate them. The instructor expected them to synthesize information from

two different sources and present their positions in the form of thesis statements at the end of their introductions. For example, Martin's thesis statement said: "In this essay I am going to focus on how these two speakers persuaded their audiences by looking in their rhetorical strategies, who the audience was, their purpose and how they used pathos, logos, and figurative language to convince people to accept change." His thesis statement represented Martin's choice, the personal position he took and the one he developed in the body of his essay. The thesis statement also represented a specific text feature required in the essay genre. Following CPLS's Coding Manual (Purcell-Gates, Perry, & Briseño, 2011), I distinguished between essential and optional text features. Essential features included the ones that identified the textual boundaries of the essay genre from the textual boundaries of other genres, such as the introduction, the body, and the conclusion, a thesis statement, as well as a topic sentence, evidence, and claims within each body paragraph. In order to illustrate some of these text features, I present a paragraph from Riya's body final essay.

Both writers use different figurative language to convince his audiences. For example, he mentions, "Like Paul, I must constantly respond to the Macedonian call for aid." (645). He puts himself as a Paul in Macedonia. Dr. King claims that he was called Alabama for helping people which is one of the most affected cities in the United States like Paul was called by the people of Macedonia. On the other hand, Mitch Landrieu also use figurative language to express the dark aspects of those statues. He says, "...a piece of stone- one stone. (2)." He informs the people how only one side of the history has been reflected and the dark side has been hidden and urges for removal of these monuments at the same time.

Riya opened this paragraph with a topic sentence that stated its focus– the use of figurative language by Martin Luther King Jr. and Mitch Landrieu. Given the assignment, she chose to focus on the use of figurative language. The topic sentence is followed by a quote from the letter and Riya's claim. To show an opposing use of figurative language in the speech,

Riya uses the phrase *on the other hand* to introduce her claim about the use of figurative language by Mitch Landrieu, followed by a quote and additional claims.

Optional features were the ones that were required based upon a particular writing style for academic documents. In the English composition course, this format included the MLA style. Following the MLA style was an imposed requirement, and the participants made choices about who to ask for help to meet this requirement. The participants were expected to list their last names in the header along with a corresponding page number, use in-text citations, and a works cited page. Below I present the screenshot of Lilly's works cited page (see Figure 5.2).

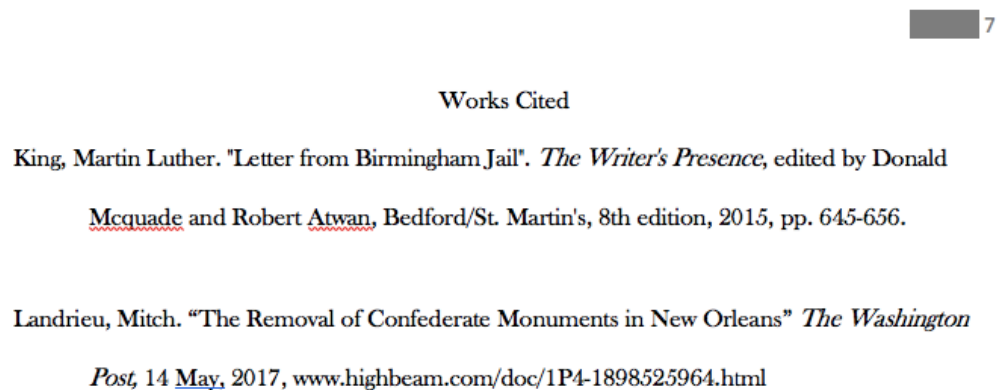


Figure 5.2. Example of Lilly's works cited page from the final essay

This example depicts highlighted in black Lilly's last name and the page number in the header. It also shows that Lilly used the page title and listed two cited works following the MLA format requirements.

The instructor also expected that students organize their essays following either the block-by-block (i.e., they first outline all variables in the speech, then provide a transition paragraph, and then outline the same variables in the letter) or the point-by-point (i.e., they

compare and contrast one variable in each separate paragraph) presentation of their ideas in the compare and contrast writing of their essays. The participants had to make a choice about this kind of required written essay genre knowledge about an essay's organization. For example, Lilly chose to present her ideas following the block-by-block organization. In order to provide a transition from the ideas she wrote about Martin Luther King Jr. in the first part of the essay to the ideas she presented about Mitch Landrieu in the second part of her essay, Lilly used the following transition sentence: "Similar to Martin Luther King, Mitch Landrieu also uses rhetorical strategies such as logos, pathos and ethos, and figurative language such as metaphor in his famous speech to convince the audience."

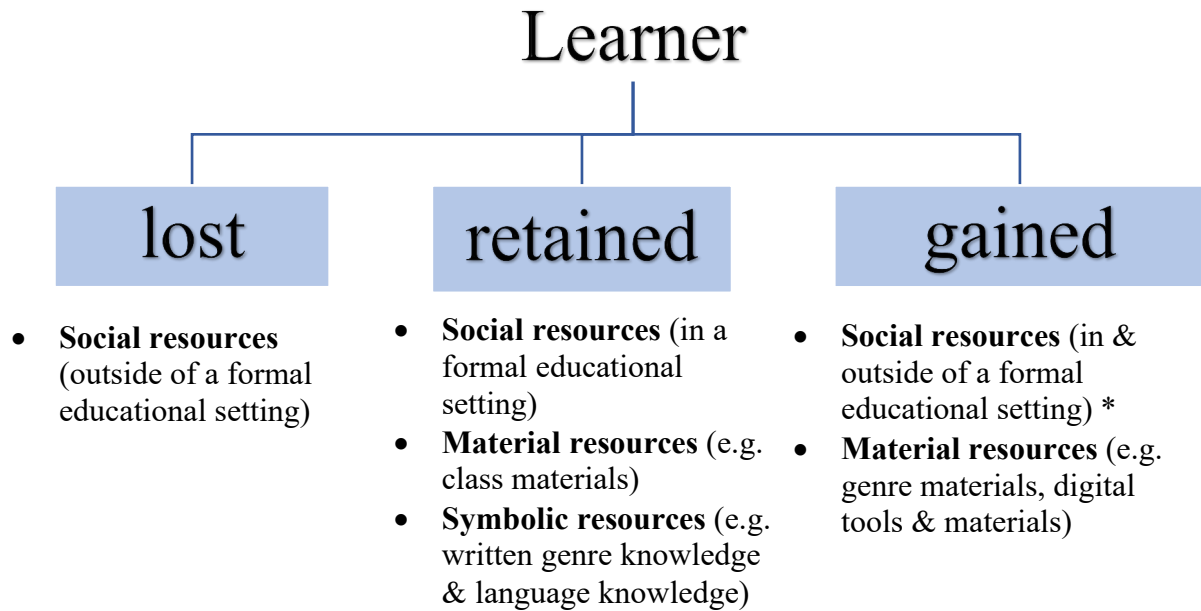
In the English composition course, the instructor also had specific assignment expectations. In particular, students were expected to produce a compare and contrast essay in which they had to analyze two original works: the letter from the Birmingham jail by Martin Luther King Jr. and the speech on the removal of Confederate monuments by Mitch Landrieu. To present their ideas, students had to follow a particular framework. Their instructor gave them a choice to organize their essays either point-by-point or block-by-block. In composing their essays, students had to use a particular set of variables, including audience, ethos, logos, pathos, figurative language, language choice, and sources. The instructor expected that students explore commonalities and distinctions in how both authors addressed these constructs in their works. The instructor's expectations about these assignments partially mediated students' choices as writers in the essay genre.

In the sections that follow, I explain how the essay genre as a social construction in the English composition course mediated participants' choices about their sociocultural resources, which included resources the participants brought with them and the new

resources available to them upon arrival. In particular, I wanted to know about retained, lost, and gained resources. I also wanted to know how the participants recontextualized the previous with the new, and vice versa. In order to do that, I explored how they used sociocultural resources in both contexts and what their choices about those resources suggested about the mediating role of the essay genre in the English composition course. I also illustrated how the change in sociocultural contexts contributed to shaping participants' types of resources and their access to them.

Participants' Choices About Sociocultural Resources

Each participant came from a unique social and cultural background and brought with them sociocultural resources they developed in those environments. Learning to write in the essay genre in the new context was never a simple process. As English learners, they encountered contradictions deeply rooted in learning and social practices that were distinct from their previous writing experiences. As newcomers to an American academic community of essay writing practice, they experienced conflicts that were inherent in navigating the new learning environment. Those conflicts were generated by distinctions in the essay genre as a social construction in the two contexts and the types of sociocultural resources they had access to and did not have access to in the new context. In the course of resolving those conflicts, the participants made choices about sociocultural resources. Figure 5.3 shows the three types of choices that the participants experienced while navigating the essay genre as a social construction in the English composition course. Those choices included losses, retentions, and gains, revolving around their reliance or non-reliance upon particular previous sociocultural resources, as well as the use of new ones.



(*) A discrepant case

Figure 5.3. Learners' choices about sociocultural resources in the U.S.

I viewed losses as the type of participants' choices about sociocultural resources, when they were not able to rely upon some of their previous sociocultural resources as writers in the essay genre in the new context. In most instances, these were not the choices the learners could make; these choices were made for them. Consequently, losses indicated their constrained agentive capacity as writers in the essay genre, as they were not able to choose to rely upon some of their previous resources outside of their educational setting in the U.S. As Figure 5.3 shows, losses in this study occurred in social resources, such as their immediate and extended family members, as well as friends/neighbors. For example, Soso drew upon help from her mother when she learned to write essays in Iraq. However, her mother was not able to serve as her source of assistance in essay writing in the U.S. Due to her limited oral and written English language proficiency and cultural expertise, Soso's mother depended upon Soso in navigating the demands of the new cultural environment.

I identified retentions as choices about sociocultural resources that included participants' reliance upon some of their previous resources used in either new ways or the same ways to navigate the essay genre demands as a social construction in the English composition course. This type of choices indicated participants' agentic capacity as writers in the essay genre in the English composition course. Figure 5.3 shows that those choices included drawing upon their previous formal social, material, and symbolic resources. Formal social resources included the people whose help they relied upon in and outside the classroom or college, such as classmates and college tutors. Material resources included those used in the English composition and English workshop classrooms, such as required texts, written notes, and classmates' essay drafts. Symbolic resources included their reliance upon their previous essay genre knowledge and language knowledge. For instance, Lilly relied upon help from her international classmates in the U.S. Unlike her experiences in Haiti where she could only ask her classmates for help during a lunch break, in the U.S. she could draw upon their help both in class and outside of class.

I identified gains when the participants chose to rely upon new resources that they did not have access to in their prior contexts. As Figure 5.3 shows, those resources included two types: the social and material. Social resources included formal and informal sources of assistance in essay writing in the U.S. For example, college tutors served as new formal social resources for Lilly and Martin who did not rely upon help of tutors in their home countries. Informal social resources included help from extended family members and colleagues. Soso relied upon help from her cousin, while Lilly asked for help in essay writing from her work supervisor.

The types of identified choices the participants were able to make and were not able to make indicated that not all choices were mediated by the essay genre. Some of their choices were in fact shaped by contextual influences of the new context. Consequently, I distinguished between general choices (i.e., choices mediated by contextual influences) and genre-specific choices (i.e., choices mediated by the essay genre as a social construction in the English composition course). General choices included losses along with some retentions and gains. Genre-specific choices revolved around specific retentions and gains. What follows is my analysis of the general choices mediated by contextual influences followed by the analysis of genre-specific choices mediated by the essay genre.

General Choices About Lost, Retained, and Gained Resources

When the participants learned to navigate the essay genre as a social construction in the English composition course, they made choices that were shaped by the particular realities of their new context. As stated above, those choices included losses, particular retentions and gains. The identified losses revolved around participants' inability to rely upon previous social resources they had access to in their home countries. The retentions included participants' reliance upon their classmates and language knowledge based upon their previous resources. The instance of a gain included drawing upon a new informal social resource in the U.S. Below I explain how participants' contextual realities mediated these choices about the identified sociocultural resources.

General choices about lost resources. Participants lost significant relationships with people when they arrived in the U.S. Those losses deeply impacted their experiences as writers in the essay genre in the English composition course. They could no longer turn to people they used as resources to help them with essay writing in their home countries.

Instead they only had access to people who did not have cultural and language competencies to assist them with essay writing in the new context. The losses they experienced were shaped by the realities of the new environment. Lilly's, Riya's and Soso's cases were most dramatic, thus the most illustrative. In the following accounts, I explain how the change in sociocultural contexts constrained and eliminated participants' access to their previous informal social resources in the U.S.

In order to get help in essay writing in their home countries, Lilly and Soso chose to rely upon their immediate family members who possessed cultural and language competencies valued in their formal educational settings. In Lilly's case, the essay genre required that she only produce essays in French, her colonized language. When Lilly needed help in understanding an essay assignment or how to write conclusions, she turned to her older sister and father. She shared: "When I don't know something, I can ask my sister. And then when my sister told me: 'I don't know.' I can ask my dad." Both her father and her older sister were literate in French, the language of instruction at her Catholic school. Moreover, both of them enjoyed the advantages of formal schooling and, consequently, were familiar with the cultural patterns of thinking as writers in the essay genre. With respect to the kind of help she received from them, Lilly said: "My sister give me advice. When I say: 'Ok can you explain me something I can't understand?' And then my sister say: 'Read the first line, what your teacher say, and then start your essay.'" Her sister's advice was about rereading her teacher's instructions. Her father, on the other hand, tried to guide her thinking about how to write conclusions. Lilly shared:

Only one problem I had with my essay in Haiti. How do you say the last part? . . . The conclusion. . . . My father help me with conclusion. My father told me: "Explain like put the body part and everything, I put on the top, and put it, write

just write a little bit about what in the body part. That's it." Because I did not know how to do it.

Her statement shows that her father gave her tips about how she could approach writing her conclusions. He suggested that she "paraphrase" what she put in the "introduction and the body part". Both her father and her sister served as her informal social resources with essay writing. Because of the kind of help they provided to Lilly, Haitian essay assignment requirements and written genre knowledge of an essay's organization mediated her choices about this type of resources in her home country.

Lilly did not choose to rely upon help from her mother in Haiti. Lilly's mother was not a valuable resource in helping her with essay writing. Her mother, who never had an opportunity to go to school, did not possess valued cultural and linguistic competencies. Her literacy experiences were shaped by the realities of her context in a less privileged family. While growing up, Lilly's mother stayed at home and took care of her younger siblings and various chores around the house. Consequently, her mother never learned French. Nor did she know how to read or write. Because Lilly knew that her mother did not have those valuable competencies, she depended upon her father and her sister as resources with essay writing in Haiti. Therefore, the cultural realities shaped who she chose to ask for help in Haiti.

This example illustrates the significant role of context in shaping the types of resources Lilly had access to in her country. Formal education was not free and, consequently, accessible for everyone in Haiti. In order to attend school, parents had to pay from "A to Z." Not every family could afford to send their child to school. Lilly's father came from a family who had financial means to send him to school and later to a

university. Not only did he have a chance to obtain a college degree, he was also literate in both Haitian Creole and French. In contrast, Lilly's mother never had an opportunity to go to school. As a result, her literacy was limited to oral proficiency in Haitian Creole. Because of these contextual realities, Lilly chose to rely upon help from her father and not her mother with essay writing in Haiti.

Likewise, Soso chose to draw upon help from her immediate family members in Iraq. They included her mother and aunts. In her home country, Soso was expected to produce compositional passages during the middle-of-the-year and end-of-the-year exams. The reality of her context was that writing those passages was not practiced at school. By way of preparation, her teachers provided the essay topics that were included in an exam beforehand. Soso was expected to know how to compose composition passages during exams as soon as she learned how to write. In order to get help in composing those passages and generating ideas for them, she relied upon the cultural and language competencies of her mother and aunts. Her father had to travel a lot. Soso, therefore, depended upon her regular access to her mother and aunts. They not only helped her to generate ideas about exam topics, but they also checked the passages she produced at home. After listening to their feedback, Soso rewrote her passages, memorized them, and then reproduced them from memory during exams. Soso's family members served as her informal social resources with formal writing. Iraqi sociocultural realities about formal writing contributed to shaping who Soso chose to ask for help. In order to prepare for a written assignment during an exam at school, she chose to rely upon help from her immediate and extended family members.

Riya chose to rely upon help in essay writing from her friends/neighbors in Nepal. Although she had access to an educated uncle who lived in the same house with her grandmother and her mother, she did not draw upon him as her resource. Her choice was affected by particular cultural realities of her country. Due to male dominance in her culture, young women were afraid of asking male members of their families for help with homework. Riya noted that she was “scared” of asking her uncle for any assistance. She explained: “In Nepal a lot of women they are scared of their parents (i.e., male family members). I cannot explain it. You can feel it. I don’t know how to explain it. I don’t know why.” At another point she noted: “We respect too much them. . . they are so strict and we afraid with them.” Those cultural realities affected her relationships with her educated uncle. Consequently, she chose to depend upon help from her older female friends/neighbors. They served as her resources in helping her with essay writing when she worked on assignments at home. Riya shared: “If I don’t understand, whatever word, I just ask them, you know, for everything.” Nepali cultural realities shaped the types of resources she could access in her home country, thus influencing who she asked for help in essay writing.

However, Lilly’s, Riya’s and Soso’s choices about informal social resources were very limited when they learned to write in the essay genre in the U.S. In some cases, people who used to assist participants died or did not accompany them to the U.S. Neither Lilly’s father nor her sister was present in the new sociocultural context. Her father died when Lilly was a freshman in college in Haiti. Her sister graduated from the university and stayed to work as a teacher in her home country. Similarly, Riya lost access to former friends/neighbors after coming to the U.S. In the new sociocultural environment, she lived

in an apartment complex where mainly Nepali families resided. Although Riya established close relationships with many of them, in her new circle of female friends, she was the only one who attended college. Her other friends were stay-at-home mothers or worked at Amazon or in occupations related to food service. Consequently, she was not able to rely upon their support as a writer in the essay genre. The change in sociocultural contexts contributed to limiting participants' access to people who could serve as their sources of assistance in the essay writing outside of an the American college.

In other cases, participants had access to loved ones, but their language and cultural competencies were not valued in the new context. Three participants had their mothers with them in the U.S. Lilly was able to help secure a U.S. visa for her mother after she got pregnant with her first child. She shared: "I came here before my mom. When I came here, I wanna go to school. I have no one to stay with my kids. Then I said: 'Ok, let me give my mom a visa.' She came here." Soso's mother and brother were granted refugee status before Soso, her husband, and one of her aunts joined them in the U.S. Soso shared: "My mom and brother go to U.S.A. Only me and husband and aunts stay in Syria. In 2011 we went from Syria to U.S.A." They all joined their other family members who came to the country as refugees before them. All of them settled and resided in the same city. In Riya's case, her mother came to stay with her temporarily. In 2018 she was able to obtain a U.S. visa and stayed to live with Riya's family. None of the mothers spoke English fluently. The following vignette depicts the level of oral English proficiency by Lilly's mother:

Lilly's mother has always a welcoming smile when I came to visit with Lilly. She was often in the kitchen, cooking dinner. Even though she was in the middle of cooking, she would always stop to greet me and give a hug. When I tried to ask her something, we had to use gestures and rely upon Lilly's help with translation.

She could not understand me; I could not understand her. Lilly shared that she never had a chance to go to school in Haiti. She only knew a few words in English such as *Hello! Good! and How are you?*

Similarly, Riya's mother could only say a few greeting words in English. When I visited with them, we only spoke via Riya. Her mother always had a beautiful smile on her face and most of the time sat quietly while Riya and I interacted.

Unlike Lilly's and Riya's mothers, Soso's mother was able to use some social English. She could ask me general questions about myself, such as how my day was, and she shared a few things about herself such as her visit to an Arabic party. However, when we talked about specific things that included how she made a particular dish or her life in Iraq, she struggled in expressing herself fluently. Soso and her cousin served as brokers in most cases. In contrast to Lilly's mother, who never had a chance to go to school, and Riya's mother, who only completed 9 grades due to her early marriage, Soso's mother held a degree from a university in Baghdad. However, her cultural and language competencies were not of the same value in the U.S., as they were in Iraq where she could assist Soso with school writing. In the new context their previous roles were reversed. In Iraq Soso relied upon help from her mother with writing in Arabic; in the U.S. her mother relied upon Soso's help with English. Although their mothers were an important resource that often enabled the students to study by caring for their children, cooking, and helping around the house, they were not a resource for essay writing development. Because of the essay genre and academic English demands in the English composition course, relying upon help from her mother was not a choice for Soso.

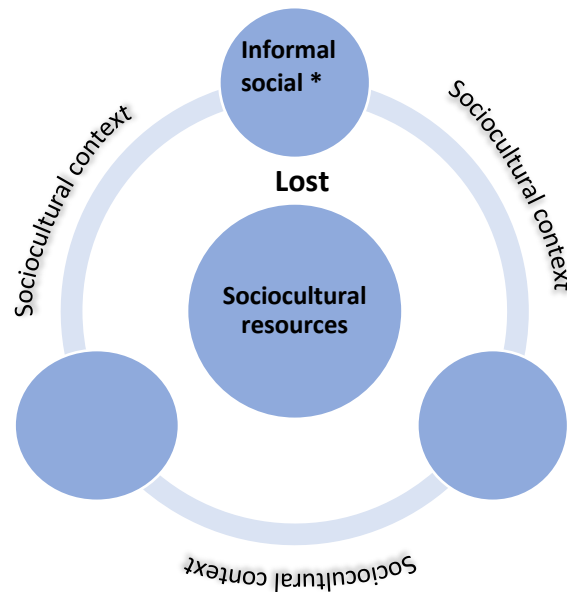
Unlike the other three participants, Martin did not experience any losses in informal social resources with respect to help in academic writing. His formal writing experiences

were limited to learning to write sentences, answers to comprehension questions, letters, and poems in the English Center in the refugee camp. He shared:

When I was in the camp in the English Center they used to give us a test. So, they can give you a test and you have to read and after reading you summarize, things like that. In the test they us to give us like; they give you a note, in the note you can read the note and there are some questions. They ask you like if you read a story and after reading a story, what was the story taking place, what was the purpose of the story, what do you think for this? You have to write.

In learning the nuts and bolts of reading and writing in English, Martin's teachers served as his primary sources of assistance. He had no one else to help him with formal writing outside the formal social resources available in the English Center in Zambia.

The losses the three participants experienced depicted important changes. The effects of those changes manifested themselves through the change in sociocultural contexts. The new context limited participants' access to people who could have served as their sources of assistance in essay writing outside of college (see Figure 5.4). Unlike their experiences in their home countries, where they could rely upon help from their immediate and extended family members as well as friends/neighbors, in the U.S. their choices about who they could ask for help in essay writing were limited. In the new context, their family members and friends were important sources of assistance in navigating daily life. However, they were not able to assist the participants in the essay genre. Those losses were personally painful. None of the participants had control over those changes. The limitations imposed by the new context also indicated the imposed constraints upon participants' agentive capacity. They were not able to make choices about informal social resources, as they were able to make them in their previous contexts, because those choices were already made for them.



(*) A discrepant case

Figure 5.4. The role of sociocultural context in shaping participants’ general choices about lost resources

General choices about retained resources. The participants made choices about some of their previous sociocultural resources that were shaped by particular contextual influences. Those influences included specific academic language demands as well as digital literacy demands in the new context. In my understanding of academic language demands, I was guided by the work of Anstrom et al. (2010). Their review of literature on current understanding of academic language as a construct in teaching and learning sheds light upon its complex nature. The authors state that academic language can be viewed as “part of overall English language proficiency” referred to as a register or a style and used “within specific sociocultural academic settings” (pp. iv-v). In order to define the demands of the English academic language in my work, I focused on the instructor’s feedback with respect to the participants’ use of the English language in the first drafts in the English composition course. His feedback included spelling, grammar, and stylistic corrections. Figure 5.5 presents the examples of corrections from Riya’s first essay draft. These

academic language demands contributed to shaping who participants chose to ask for help in meeting these demands.

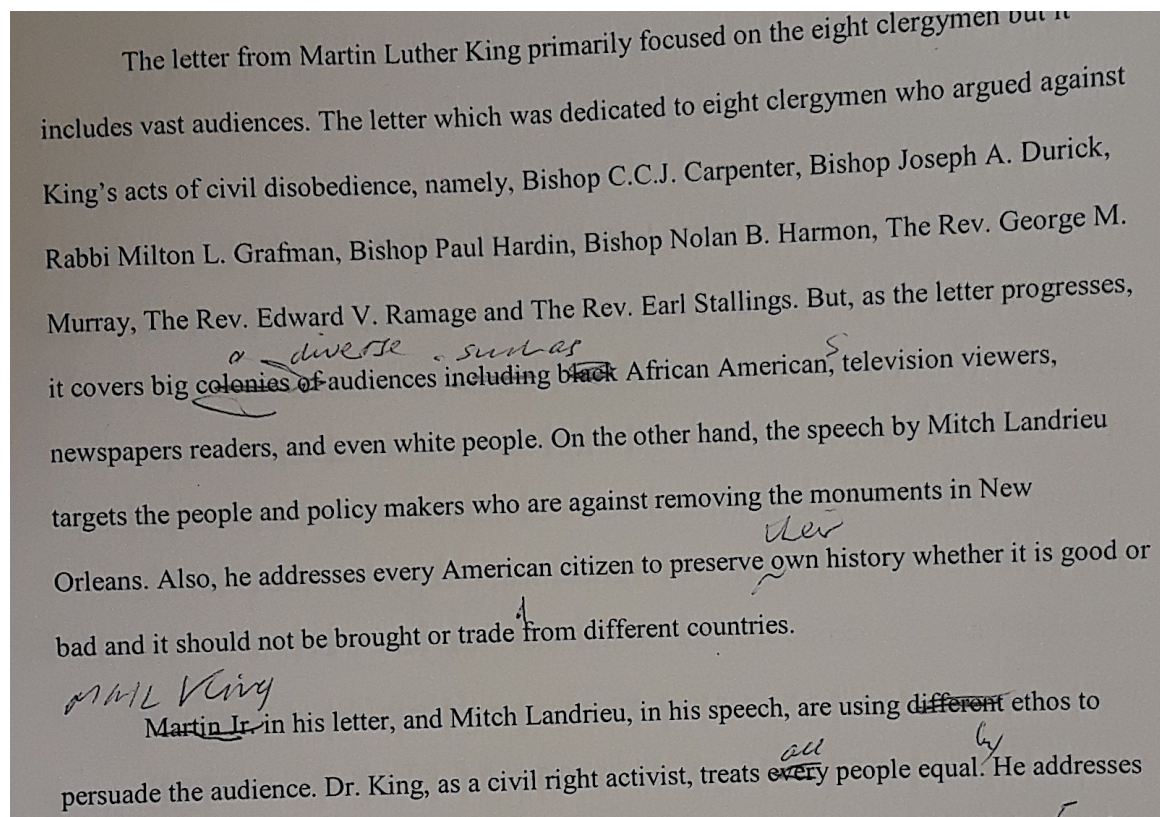


Figure 5.5. Instructor's feedback about Riya's English in her first essay draft

In my view of digital literacy demands, I was guided by Ware, Kern, and Warschauer's (2016) statement about *digital literacies*. These scholars stated that this term referred to writing and reading on electronic devices and broadly includes knowledge, skills, and practices that people need when they write and read on electronic devices. To illustrate, they note that writing an argumentative essay requires a different set of knowledge, skills, and practices than, for example, writing a blog or a text message. Consequently, the knowledge, skills, and practices required for digital literacies are "wide-ranging and context sensitive" (p. 307). In my study, writing essays in the English

composition course required the use of a Word document. Its navigation presupposed particular skills, such as the ability to change the font size, or use the double space, or save a document and attach it to an email. Given that three of my participants were immersed in digital literacy for the first time in the U.S., these digital literacy demands shaped their choices about who they asked for help in using Word document features.

In order to navigate academic language demands in the new context, Martin and Lilly chose to rely upon their previous knowledge of the colonized language – French. Both of them used this previous resource in new ways. When Martin learned English in the English Center in the Zambian refugee camp, he consciously drew upon his knowledge of the colonized language. When he worked on assignments in class, he used his knowledge of French to look up unfamiliar words in an English and French dictionary. Martin shared: “We have like dictionaries to help. So, it was like French and English dictionaries. The word that you don’t know, you have to go to search.” However, Martin’s choices about his previous language knowledge as a sociocultural resource were different in the U.S. In the new context, he made unconscious choices about French as a writer in the essay genre. Martin shared:

A big issue most of my words that is because English is like . . . English and French have like 75% of the words that are similar. So, I can write similar in English, but it is in French. But if you read or the spelling, I thank God for Mr. [instructor] because he knows a little bit of French and he used to tell me: “No, this one is in French.”

His statement shows that English and French cognates imposed particular challenges for Martin as a second language learner. While composing his essays, Martin thought that he used English words, while in reality he unconsciously relied upon his previous knowledge of French. As a second language learner, he has not developed awareness and practice of

drawing attention to those cognates. Consequently, his colonized language was a resource that helped him express unconsciously what he intended to say consciously. The colonized language was his sociocultural resource in both Zambia and the U.S. Unlike his conscious effort to draw upon his knowledge of this language in Zambia, in the U.S. his choices about this resource were unconscious. The academic demands of the English language in the new context contributed to shaping his choices about this previous resource.

Lilly also chose to draw upon her knowledge of French as a writer in the essay genre in her English composition course. Unlike her experiences in essay writing in the Catholic school where she was only allowed to use French, her colonized language served as her previous resource in the new context. When Lilly started taking ESL classes in the community college, her English was very limited. In order to navigate academic writing expectations in the English language, she relied upon help from her French-speaking classmates. Lilly shared:

And when Ms. [ESL writing instructor] say something, and then the African people who speak French try to explain us. . . . She did not know. She talking and then: “Do you understand?” And after that when she is gone, then we ask what she said about this. And then the guy explain us what we have to do.

Her knowledge of French was an important resource for her to navigate academic writing expectations as an ESL student. Likewise, her knowledge of this colonized language played a significant role in helping her to demonstrate her competency as a writer in the English composition course. Lilly shared: “I translate it in French before I put it in English, it does help me. . . . I can write in French more than in Haitian Creole because I went to school in French.” Given that French was the major language of instruction in her school, and she only spoke Haitian Creole outside of school, her colonized language, not her native

language, served as her symbolic resource in writing in both contexts. In both environments, she relied upon her knowledge of French to meet the academic language demands as a writer in the essay genre. Unlike Haiti, where she was not allowed to rely upon her native language, in the U.S. she did not face any restrictions with respect to what language she could draw upon as a resource. Lilly chose to rely upon her colonized language because of the contextual demands that shaped her writing experiences in Haiti. My point is that her reliance upon her colonized language was affected by her previous experiences as a writer in her home country and, consequently, was influenced by her previous sociocultural context. Her previous context shaped the types of symbolic resources she had access to as a writer in the essay genre in Haiti. The academic English language demands in the new environment mediated her choices about her previous language knowledge in the English composition course.

Soso chose to rely upon help from her classmates in a different way in the U.S. When Soso attended school in Iraq, she was not allowed to interact with classmates during sessions. Soso shared: “We are just sitting on the desk, and we have attention to teacher. . . . No talking in class. In class never. Just for the teacher. When she ask, if you need to answer, you can answer. If you don’t, ok.” However, she had an opportunity to draw upon help from her classmates outside of school. When she did not understand something, she could ask them for assistance. Soso noted: “Just called my friends. We met at my home or their home. . . . Everything, grammar for Arabic and English. Most of the time we need help just for the grammar.” Unlike her experiences in Iraq, in the U.S. Soso was able to rely upon her international classmates as resources in the English composition course and English workshop. On several occasions, Soso asked other classmates for help in

navigating Word features. During one in-class observation, I watched how Soso asked Martin to come up to her and help her change the font and the size of the essay she was working on. He did it without any hesitation, providing no explanations about how to do it. It took Martin a few seconds to help her. As he finished, Soso thanked Martin, and he went back to his seat. In the U.S. Soso's classmates served much like her previous social resources. However, the conditions under which she drew upon their help in the U.S. were different from the way she relied upon help of her classmates in Iraq. In her previous contexts, her ability to rely upon her classmates was only constrained to interactions outside of class. In the U.S., she was also able to draw upon their help both in class and outside of class. The change in contexts shaped the conditions under which she could demonstrate her agentic capacity as a writer. Given that she asked them for help in navigating Word features in the English composition course, digital literacy demands of the new context mediated her choices about classmates as her previous resources in the new context about how to use one of her previous resources, classmates, in the new context.

The identified retentions indicate that academic language demands and digital literacy demands were significant contextual influences for the participants in the English composition course in the U.S. These influences contributed to affecting their choices about some of their previous sociocultural resources. The distinctions in how they relied upon their previous resources in both contexts suggest that their contexts shaped the types of their resources as well as access to them, thus indicating a link to the role of larger contextual influences (see Figure 5.6). In choosing to rely upon some of their previous resources, the participants acted agentively in the new context. The new context enabled what the participants could do as agentic individuals.

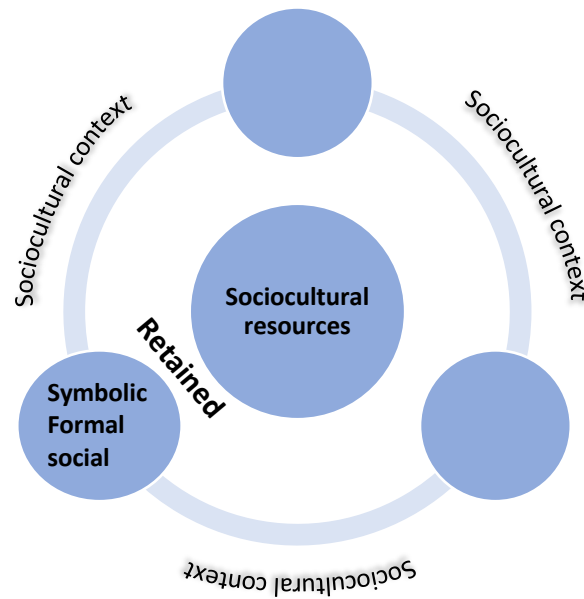


Figure 5.6. The role of sociocultural context in shaping participants’ general choices about retained resources.

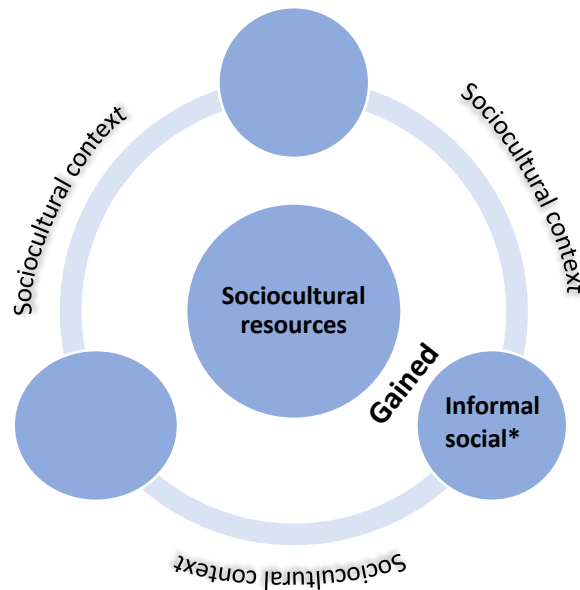
General choices about gained resources. With respect to participants’ gains in informal social resources, Soso represented a discrepant case. Her family network enabled her to have access to a bilingual cousin who was born and raised in the U.S. At the time of data generation, her cousin was working on her master’s degree at a public university. Soso chose to rely upon her help in reviewing her writing and helping with computer skills. She shared:

When I write something, I just speak. And she just sometimes like writing or fix something. . . . When I use Word . . . sometimes when I wrote something, then I want to delete it or make it close with, for example, the first paragraph or the second paragraph. Sometimes I try to change it to New Times Roman because sometimes I can’t find it on my computer, and she help me with that. Sometimes when I wrote, I need to make it like double space. When I tell her, she show me.

Her statement indicates that Soso needed help in revising her writing as a second language learner. That need was shaped by academic language demands in the English composition

course. Her instructor expected her to produce writing in proper academic English. Because of these academic language demands, she chose to draw upon her cousin. Moreover, her reliance upon her cousin was also affected by another contextual reality – digital literacy demands. Unlike her experiences in Iraq where she only used paper and pens to write her essays, in the U.S. she was expected to type her essays on a computer. Soso shared: “I have a problem how to use the computer. I never use it before. I never use the Word. Everything I learn in U.S.A. how to use Word.” Her cousin, once again, served as her resource in helping her to learn the basic skills in producing a Word document. However, the help her cousin provided was not with each essay. As a graduate student, she had her own share of tasks and assignments to work on. Soso tried to be respectful and considerate of her time.

Soso’s case illustrates that academic language and digital literacy demands influenced her choices about the kind of help she asked her cousin for. Her case also underscores a significant role of the sociocultural contexts which contributed to shaping the types of material and informal social resources she had access to. The change in contexts contributed to Soso’s gain in an informal social resource that served as her source of assistance in areas that were not genre-specific in the new context (see Figure 5.7). She was able to make those choices because the new context enabled her to have access to an informal social resource that could provide assistance she needed, thus enabling her agentive capacity as a writer.



(*) A discrepant case

Figure 5.7. The role of sociocultural context in shaping participants' general choices about gained resources

Genre-Specific Choices About Retained and Gained Resources

The participants in my study also made choices that were driven by the essay genre demands of their new sociocultural context and, consequently, were rooted in their interaction with the new environment. Through those choices, they began to express themselves as independent writers in the essay genre in the new surroundings, by demonstrating their agentic capacity as writers in the essay genre in response to what the new context offered to them.

Genre-specific choices about retained resources. Below I present vignettes that depict the non-U.S. contexts in which Lilly, Riya and Soso, who practiced essay writing prior to their arrival in this country, used some of their previous resources. In my analysis that follows those vignettes, I explain why they chose to use some of their previous resources in the new context in order to demonstrate their competency as writers in the

essay genre in the English composition course, thus demonstrating the mediating role of the essay genre in the new environment. I also focus on distinctions and similarities in the types of previous resources they had access to in both contexts to show the role of sociocultural contexts in shaping the types of their resources and their access to them. The essay genre had a significant influence that mediated participants' choices and indicated the kind of help they sought as writers in the English composition course.

Lilly. Lilly attended a private Catholic school located in her hometown in Haiti. She studied in a classroom with about 50 students and two teachers. The room contained some maps, flowers, human body images, and closets with teacher materials, such as tape, scissors, colored paper, and chalk. No digital technology was available. Students only used notebooks, pencils, and print dictionaries.

The school put a lot of emphasis on essay writing. Lilly was expected to produce essays every week while she attended middle and high school. Before she started working on her essays, teachers focused on French grammar, as education was solely conducted in the colonized language, and students could not use Haitian Creole with each other or their teachers.

When she worked on her essays in middle school, she had to use two textbooks: “one from the library like someone’s else history, like a cat, duck, like a human” and the other contained “instructions how to do essay.” Lilly could choose any topic in middle school. In high school, however, students had to “vote for a topic” from a list the teachers created. Lilly only used one textbook with instructions in high school. She was not able to recall any examples, as it was “a long time ago.”

Instruction started with Lilly's responsibility to go home and read essay examples and questions, which served as an outline for her essay. Lilly recalled: "I remember read one time about airplane. When you sit in an airplane, how you feel." Each student read a different story, but they followed the same directions. The next day, her teacher wrote the essay's structure on the board. Students listened and followed the instructions. Lilly noted: "Everything the teacher write down, and you have to write it down." Teachers could say: "Choose a topic . . . use the introduction, topic sentence, and then conclusions." Lilly was expected to produce her first draft by answering the questions in the textbook. Her teachers reviewed it. If her writing met their expectations, she started working on her final draft. Lilly explained: "They give us an essay on Friday, on Monday we need to turn in the first draft. They give us feedback. Wednesday we have another draft. And then on Thursday the essay is supposed to be ready." When she worked on her essay in class, Lilly shared:

You write down and then you feel nervous because all the time your teacher come to you to check on what you are doing. They were so rude. I remember the teacher so rude. You are scare. They beat students. They give you book to go home study. And then in the morning when you go back to school, they question you. If you don't know, you don't listen, or you don't study, they beat you.

Moreover, students were not expected to talk to anyone in class. Lilly shared: "You cannot ask your friend. You use your mind."

In this authoritarian classroom environment, teachers paid attention to spelling, grammar, and essay structure. Spelling was particularly emphasized. Lilly shared: "Even if you can't read, you have to spell good." Every day they expected students to memorize and spell 20 words. Students could not "miss anything," as they had to do it again in addition to new words.

Riya. Riya started working on essay writing when she was in middle school in her village in Nepal. The school had big classrooms that accommodated about 100 students. The room contained only long wooden desks and benches for four or five students. Students put their bags on benches on which they also sat. The walls were white and had nothing besides a big chalkboard. However, students, who were into art, could display their works on them sometimes. Students had to purchase their own textbooks, print dictionaries, copy books, and pencils. Essay writing was only practiced “three or four” times a year to prepare for written exams in Nepali and English.

When it was time to practice essay writing, a teacher would introduce a topic and then “explain about the topic” and essay structure. Topics included writing about Nepal, family, a house, or animals. Throughout her school years Riya only wrote one essay genre in which she had to list advantages and disadvantages about an assigned topic. Her teacher used the following analogy to help students understand the essay structure:

In the introduction part, how you introduce yourself. The body part you have to write what is inside of you. . . . We have also disadvantage and advantage. . . . We can . . . make a lot of mistakes in our life. So, that is our bad thing. Sometimes, we do good things. . . . In conclusion, you have to write everything from you from top to bottom. He said like that one.

This statement indicated Riya’s understanding of what her teacher in Nepal looked for in the structure of an essay. Riya’s teacher drew analogies with who students were. Students were encouraged to write introductions that were similar to the way they introduced themselves to others. In order to help them understand the difference between advantages and disadvantages, her teacher drew parallels with good and bad actions students took in life. In the conclusion, students were encouraged to sum up what they wrote about themselves in their introductions, which was, as Riya noted, “kind of same.” While

listening to her teachers, Riya took notes on everything they said. She shared: “And whenever, teacher says this, this things, and then we have to write. Whatever teacher say, I took note. I try to read. For everything, grammar, spelling.”

In addition, students read essay examples from textbooks that also contained grammar, stories and poems. The teacher pointed out what they needed to pay attention to. They could say: “Did you see these things here? Yes. So, you have to do this this this.” They did not go into further details in their explanations.

Students did not use any outlines. They worked on their “just one final” essay for three consecutive days. On the first day they thought “how to write it and start writing.” They worked independently on their essays. However, “sometimes teacher allow to do group work when he doesn’t want to teach.” The purpose of group work was not based on educational beliefs about learning as social practice. From Riya’s perception, it was a decision that she associated with teacher’s unwillingness to lecture or perhaps her teacher’s laziness. Students could talk at their tables and share their essays, but they could not walk around the room or cheat. In addition to classmates, students could ask the teacher a question. However, they did not do it often, as they were “scared” of their teachers. Teachers used corporal punishment with students who “make a mistake, or not follow rules, or late for class.”

Soso. Starting in high school, students pursued either a science or arts track in their studies in Iraq. Only students with top grades could get into the science track, which opened opportunities to enroll in a prestigious university and to pursue well-paid careers in such areas as medicine and law. Moreover, that division affected how much focus was put on writing. Given that Soso was a top student, she was in the science track. When

asked about her writing experiences, she replied: “I never learned how to write. Just how to understand like lessons for the class, not for writing. . . . They don’t focus on writing. You have to know how to write and then you can write.” During an academic year, Soso only produced one or two composition passages to prepare for the middle-of-the-year and the end-of-the-year exams. She did not recall any in-class writing tasks except when it was an exam. In order to practice writing composition passages, she worked on them at home.

During her last year in high school, her family hired a private Arabic tutor in order to prepare for the baccalaureate exam. The first task in the exam required that students produce a formal passage on one of the assigned topics in Arabic. The government prepared all exam materials. The exam was an important step for Soso, as it determined what university she could pursue based on her exam score.

The tutoring sessions were not one-on-one. Soso and “five students sometimes six, as a group” met with their tutor. When asked what was involved in a tutoring session, Soso recalled:

We met two days a week for about two hours. We came all of us, sit at like this table, and my teacher sit like you (i.e., at the head of the table) and maybe three students over there and three students here. At the beginning we start directly where we stopped the last class. He know where we stopped and then we start a new lesson. He start from book from the beginning.

The tutor explained what Soso had to focus on. The emphasis was mainly on grammar and punctuation. During those sessions, they used the same textbooks that were used in class. The purpose of those sessions was to go over the information in the textbooks. When I asked Soso to describe how her tutors explained things to her and her friends, she provided the following comparison between her classroom teachers and private tutors:

Sometimes a lot of teacher when stand up in the class and explain something not clear or something not to . . . I mean stand up and write , write something, and speak, speak something. But not . . . I don't know . . . sometimes you feel just like when you sitting in place and you did not understand anything or did not get the information or you did not what is going on or what he wants to tell you or what exact name.

Her statement reflected her frustrations with trying to understand things explained in class.

Her classroom teachers seemed to be very focused on lecturing and paid hardly any attention to whether their students understood the material. On the other hand, when Soso shared about her private tutors, she said:

Maybe because we were few students and tutoring class at home or maybe because he is a good teacher maybe he has a lot of experience how to teach people. . . yes. For example, when he give us sentences, he explained or showed . . . For example, for English, he showed where is the subject, the verb, where is the object and what the subject . . . It is like the name, place, something like that. He gave us a lot of examples and also he gave us a lot of exercise. He explained everything.

This statement suggested that private tutors seemed to pay more attention to using examples to help her and her friends understand the material. She also noted that the location and the group size might be factors that contributed to better grasping of the information. In addition, her Arabic tutor sometimes helped with writing a composition passage if she had “any topic.” Her tutor could help her generate information about a topic

Analysis. In order to act as competent writers in the U.S. essay genre, the participants continued to use some of the resources they learned in their home countries. As stated above, those included three broad resource categories: the social, material, and symbolic. Although the participants continued to use some of their previous resources to navigate the essay genre as a social construction in the English composition course, they used most of the resource categories differently in the U.S. from the way they did in their

countries of origin. The new context contributed to those distinctions. I identified the mediating role of the essay genre in shaping what the participants chose to do in order to demonstrate their competency as writers in the English composition course. Their choices indicated their intentions as writers and the kind of help they required to meet essay genre demands in the English composition course. In the sections that follow I present examples that illustrate how the essay genre in the English composition course mediated participants' choices about sociocultural resources. In order to underscore the role of sociocultural context, I also illustrate the differences and similarities in how the participants used some resources prior to and after their arrival in the U.S.

Social resources. In order to navigate the essay genre demands in the English composition course, the participants chose to rely upon help from college tutors and international classmates. Lilly's and Riya's cases illustrated how they made choices regarding tutors and classmates, respectively, in order to navigate particular essay genre demands in the English composition course.

Lilly chose to draw upon college tutors in order to get help in citing works in the MLA style. Unlike her experiences in Haiti the only text feature she was required to use was a title, in the U.S. Lilly's instructor expected her to use text features such as a works cited page. When Lilly needed to cite the letter by Martin Luther King Jr. and the speech by Mitch Landrieu, she went to the Tutoring Center to ask for help. Lilly shared:

When I need to cite my, I just go to the Tutoring Center, and then the tutor help me there. . . . I told them I have website, but I really don't understand how to do it. And then they said they would help me. . . . They go to the Owl Purdue website with you, and they show how. . . . Then they said the letter like A, B, C, D. They said the first letter come first in the first position, and then they help me with that. . . . They explain it, and then they help with that. . . . Me type it, and they sat next to you and then they explain what you have to do. You type it.

They always say: “When you finish typing, let me know.” I just call her, and she come over and look over if everything is good.

Lilly’s statement shows the kind of help her tutors provided her. They helped Lilly to locate necessary examples on the Purdue Owl website. When asked who found the examples, Lilly replied: “The tutor find it.” Tutors also reminded Lilly to list her citations in alphabetical order. Moreover, tutors used examples to explain to Lilly what needed to be included in her citations. After listening to their explanations, Lilly worked independently on her citations. When she finished typing, tutors reviewed her work. Those steps were important in helping Lilly produce the text features required for the particular essay task in the English composition course. Knowledge about text features reflected the type of written genre knowledge she had to demonstrate in order to act as a competent writer in the essay genre in the English composition course. The need to demonstrate that knowledge shaped her intentions in the kind of help she sought for and, consequently, the choices she made about sociocultural resources. Lilly knew that college tutors possessed the necessary information and skills to help her. The service was offered at no cost and was easily accessible to her in the new context.

In contrast, tutoring was available by paying a service fee in Haiti. Lilly shared: “My dad was a teacher. After school my dad can find kids to help them and then they pay him.” Lilly’s dad worked as a private tutor for others after school. Private tutoring was a common practice in Haiti, but it was “not free”. Lilly said:

You have to pay. . . . If you are my teacher. In Haiti . . . it is only one teacher teach everything. You see me how problem in writing or I have problem with reading. Then you talk to my mom or you talk to my dad. . . . You said: “I need help.” My mom or my dad talk to you: “Please give me help and then I will pay you.” . . . You pay the school. It is like a wage. After the paycheck, they give you that money too.

Tutors were schoolteachers. In order to get additional support, the parents of students who struggled academically had to pay for tutoring sessions. Lilly never chose to rely upon help of tutors in her home country. She explained: “I never went to someone to help me. Because I was a perfect student. Everything I do on my own.” Her father and her sister were always there to provide any assistance in essay writing she needed.

Lilly’s reliance upon U.S. college tutors showed that written genre knowledge about text features mediated the kind of help she needed in the English composition course. In order to meet the demands about particular essay genre written knowledge, she intentionally chose to seek help about this required competency. The sociocultural contexts contributed to shaping access to tutors. Unlike Haiti, where students had to pay for tutoring services, in the U.S. the cost of help by tutors was covered by the community college. Moreover, in the new context Lilly had very limited access to other people who could serve as her sources of assistance in essay writing. Consequently, she depended upon college tutors. Her intentions to seek particular help were situated within the essay genre demands about text features in the English composition course, thus indicating the mediating role of the essay genre. The types of resources she chose to use and access to them were shaped by the new sociocultural context.

When Riya struggled with writing her essay introduction, she chose to draw upon help from her Nepali classmate. Riya shared: “I just called him, and he called me how I was writing, how he was writing. And I just explained him, and he just explained me. And that’s the way we do it.” In order to get in touch with the classmate, she talked to him over the phone after classes. Riya also requested that he share his essay introduction with her

via email. Riya said: “I just want to see his introduction part, and he sent me his introduction part. And then I just look at that one how he wrote.” Her request was based upon the fact that she could not figure out what her instructor “is looking for.” Riya noted:

But the more thing I don’t understand was how to write an introduction part. It was really kill me. . . . Because I am thinking in one way and I am writing to write in my way, but when I saw that whatever I wrote, Dr. [instructor] he said not that way.

Riya’s meaning of “my way” was based on the understanding she developed about introduction writing in her country. The essay writing approach she practiced in Nepal focused on accurate description of pertinent information. If she wrote about a person, she had to “write the person’s name, date of birth, where he is come, his hometown.” By drawing upon this previous cultural resource, she initially approached writing her introduction in the English composition course this way. She googled information about Martin Luther King Jr. Figure 5.8 depicts the notes she took from an online source. Her notes included information about when Martin Luther King Jr. was born and when he died, as well as what he was famous for. For example, the first sentence said: “Martin Luther Jr. was the most important voice of the American civil rights movement, which work for equal rights for all.”

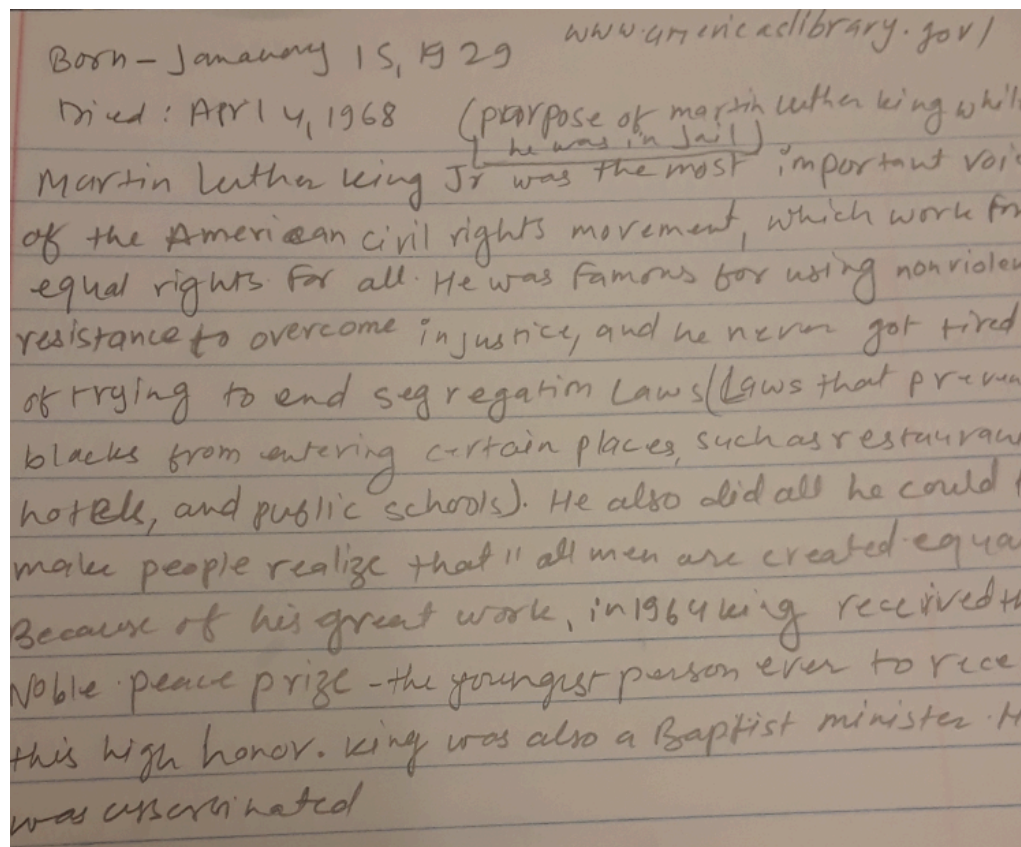


Figure 5.8. Riya's notes about Martin Luther King

After several attempts to produce the draft of her introduction, Riya finally gave in. She said: "I told introduction I did differently than other essay." She further explained that in her previous essays she continued to rely upon her Nepali strategy of introduction writing. But with this particular essay, she had to reject the Nepali way and came up with a different strategy. She chose to ask for help from her Nepali classmate.

When I asked Riya to explain why she talked to the classmate who was from the same culture, she replied:

Because we are kind of close and our language same and it is more comfortable to us. I don't know the other people. . . . In Nepali it is more convenient to us. If I can't. . . I can call him any time, it is not problem, right. So, if other people, we have to ask "Are you free? Are you not free?" So, that's the reason.

Her statement suggests that their common cultural background and language contributed to shaping Riya's choice about who she asked for help in essay writing outside of class. The common ways of interacting with each other did not require any appointments. The ability to fluently express themselves in their native language provided effortless communication experiences for Riya. It also underscores my observation that international students seemed to feel more comfortable interacting with each other than with native speakers. Language barriers seemed to play a significant role in shaping experiences among international students as well as between international and American students.

Unlike her experiences in the U.S., in Nepal Riya did not have access to her classmates outside of school. Riya shared:

What happens in our village, we are girls and we are in teenager. That's the reason our family is very very very strict. They are worried me that we are getting pregnant, or maybe we are choosing boy that is really bad. So, we never go to other friend's home. Our friends cannot come our home. Only school time we can get together. After school we come back home, go to the school. That's all our life.

Riya grew up in a country where women were submissive to men. This is also reflected in a Nepali proverb that says: "Educating a girl is like watering your neighbor's garden." This saying implies that girls are not worthy of investment as they have to leave the house after marriage, unlike boys who stay with their families (Lundgren, Beckman, Chaurasiya, Subhedi, & Kerner, 2013). Moreover, girls are always encouraged to be docile and reserved, while boys are inspired to show their power and masculinity. Such gender expectations dictated how far girls could travel away from their homes, and "the extent to which they are allowed to mix with boys" (p. 129). Due to these expectations, Riya was not able to see her classmates/friends after school because they lived far away from her.

Unlike the U.S. sociocultural context that enabled her to have access to her classmates outside of college, the Nepali sociocultural context constrained her access to her classmates outside of school.

Written genre knowledge about an essay's purpose played a significant role in mediating Riya's intention to seek help in figuring out how to write an introduction in the English composition course. The distinctions between contexts in how she relied upon help from classmates suggest that the sociocultural context laid the ground for who she could turn for help. In Nepal she relied upon older female friends/neighbors. Asking male friends for help was not an option in her home country. In the new context, she relied upon help from the Nepali male classmate, thus indicating the role of the new context in influencing who she could ask for help. The essay genre mediated her intentions about the kind of help she needed and, consequently, her choices about formal social resources; the sociocultural context shaped the types of resources she had access to.

Material resources. To demonstrate their competency as writers in the essay genre in the English composition course, Soso, Riya, and Lilly chose to rely upon some of their previous material resources. Those resources included such classroom materials as their written notes, dictionaries, and classmates' essay drafts. The following examples illustrate the role of the essay genre in mediating their choices about these resources.

In addition to taking notes in class, Soso chose to write down ideas for her essay in the English composition course. Her notebook contained a few pages of handwritten ideas. Figure 5.9 depicts the example of an idea she produced to illustrate the use of logos in the letter by Martin Luther King Jr.

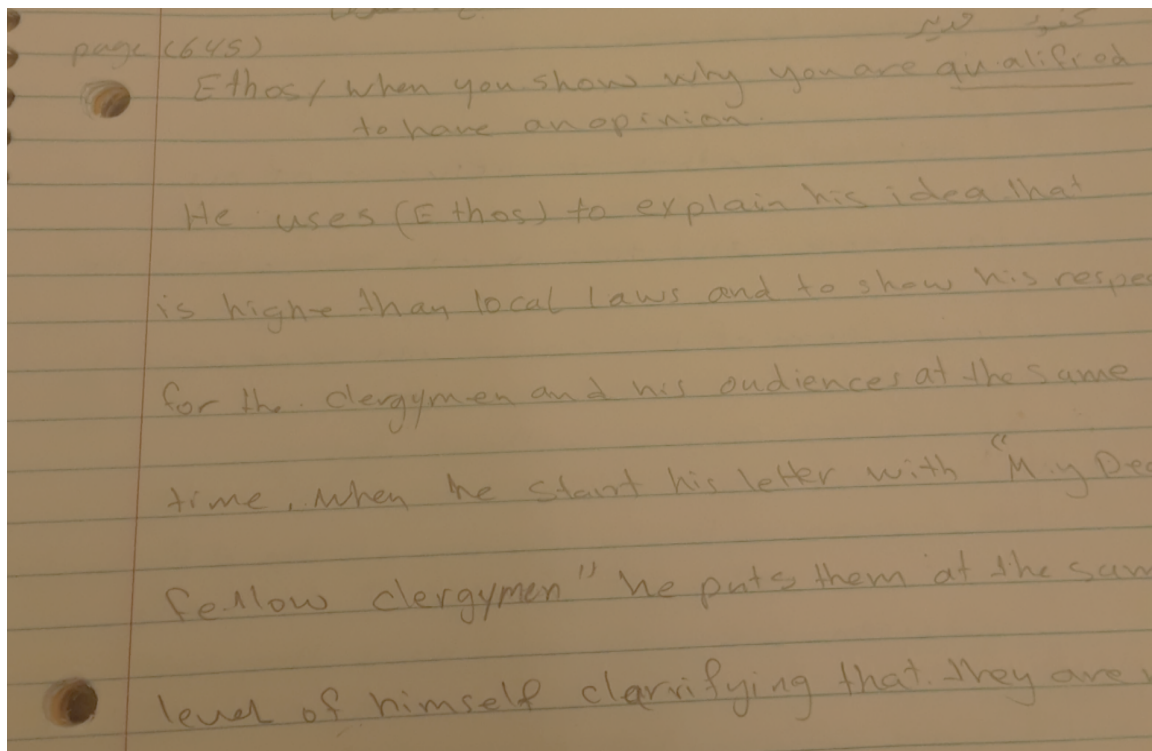


Figure 5.9. Example of Soso' written idea

Figure 5.9 shows that Soso first listed the page number from which she used the example in the textbook that contained the letter. She also provided the written definition of logos in which she underlined the word *qualified* to guide her search for the right example. Then she wrote down her idea. When asked how she produced her ideas, Soso replied: "I just picked one or two like pathos or ethos. Took this from book and then write like paraphrase. . . . When I took these notes, that help me use it for the body." She relied upon ideas gleaned from the textbook, using those ideas as the basis for generating examples of rhetorical strategies for the body of her writing. Specific assignment expectations of the essay genre mediated these choices in the English composition course. In particular, the assignment required that students structure the body of their compare and contrast essays around a specific set of variables which included the three rhetorical strategies: ethos,

pathos, and logos. Because of these assignment expectations, Soso intentionally chose to produce this particular kind of written notes.

Unlike her experiences in the U.S., in Iraq she only used notes to write down what her teachers said. Soso shared: “We had a copy book and we had to write down everything. Yes, he (i.e., a teacher) explain and give us what we have to focus on. Whole copy book! The whole book! A lot, a lot!” When asked how she used those notes, she replied: “Just memorize. When you take exam, that really helps you.” Her statements suggested that her choices about written notes in her home country differed from the way she chose to use written notes in the U.S. In Iraq, grammar and punctuation were important skills to demonstrate during written exams tasks. Consequently, her teachers expected students to memorize information about these two skills to be ready to produce compositional passages with proper punctuation and correct grammar during exams. In contrast, assignment expectations about the variables required that students analyze assigned texts to identify the examples of evidence to support their own positions. In order to do that, Soso intentionally chose to produce written ideas which she used in her essay. Specific assignment expectations mediated her intentions for the kind of notes she needed to produce and, consequently, her choices about the types of written notes in the English composition course.

Soso’s case also illustrated how she relied upon assigned texts differently in the U.S. and in Iraq. The speech by Mitch Landrieu illustrated this point. It was provided as a classroom material resource in the English composition course. In Iraq Soso used textbooks that contained information about Arabic grammar and punctuation with respect to writing. Writing grammatically correct sentences and using correct punctuation was

important to produce composition passages in Arabic during exams in middle and high school. Soso noted: “It was required. Yes, the paragraph or essay was important in education. . . . But you have to use grammar, punctuation.” In order to help students to prepare for the written part of an exam in Arabic, teachers followed textbooks that focused on those skills. Teachers would “pick an example, put on the board, explain and after that ask all students” if anybody had questions. For their part, students had to memorize the information their teachers explained from textbooks. Soso shared:

We had to study big books and we have to know the whole book from beginning to end. Everything inside. You know before the final exam for high school, they gave us 40 days to stay at home and just read all the books like Arabic, English, Religion, Math, Chemistry, all of these. They gave us like a holiday. You have to study, study hard.

Soso’s statement underscores the fact that in order to prepare for an Arabic exam which always included a written task, she memorized the information about grammar and punctuation from textbooks. In contrast, the copies of her pages of the speech by Mitch Landrieu in the English composition course depicted the importance of her analysis of the speech content (see Figure 5.10). The instructor expected Soso to analyze the assigned texts by identifying the provided variables and drawing commonalities and distinctions between them.

Thank you for coming.

The soul of our beloved City is deeply rooted in a history that has evolved over thousands of years; rooted in a diverse people who have been here together every step of the way — for both good and for ill. It is a history that holds in its heart the stories of Native Americans — the Choctaw, Houma Nation, the Chitimacha. Of Hernando De Soto, Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, the Acadians, the Islenos, the enslaved people from Senegambia, Free People of Colorix, the Haitians, the Germans, both the empires of France and Spain. The Italians, the Irish, the Cubans, the south and central Americans, the Vietnamese and so many more.

You see — New Orleans is truly a city of many nations, a melting pot, a bubbling caldron of many cultures. There is no other place quite like it in the world that so eloquently exemplifies the uniquely American motto: e pluribus unum — out of many we are one. But there are also other truths about our city that we must confront. New Orleans was America's largest slave market: a port where hundreds of thousands of souls were bought, sold and shipped up the Mississippi River to lives of forced labor of misery of rape, of torture. America was the place where nearly 4000 of our fellow citizens were lynched, 540 alone in Louisiana; where the courts enshrined 'separate but equal'; where Freedom riders coming to New Orleans were beaten to a bloody pulp. So when people say to me that the monuments in question are history, well what I just described is real history as well, and it is the searing truth.

not of diversity
pathos
pathos
1950: ACP kids

Figure 5.10. Soso's notes on the section from the speech by Mitch Landrieu

Figure 5.10 shows that Soso used the speech to identify the examples of rhetorical strategies, such as pathos, following the instructor's explanations. Her comment *a lot of diversity* in the margin on the viewer's left side was produced in class when the instructor helped students understand the meaning of the first paragraph. Her notes suggested that she attempted to interpret the information in the paragraph. In both contexts, Soso relied upon required class resource materials. Instead of memorizing information from textbooks the way she did it in Iraq, Soso learned how to analyze the speech to generate ideas for her essay. Therefore, written genre knowledge about an essay's purpose mediated Soso's choices about assigned texts in the new context by shaping her need to analyze and explain the content of the speech and letter. Given that Iraqi textbooks focused mainly on grammar and punctuation with respect to writing and the U.S. texts were original pieces written for real audiences, the sociocultural contexts shaped the types of resources she had access to as a writer in Iraq and the U.S.

In the U.S. Riya chose to continue using dictionaries, one of her previous sociocultural resources. When Riya shared about how she approached the body of her essay, she said: “First of all, I don’t know what is pathos, ethos, logos, right. I have to understand what that means. So, I look for the meaning of those things and I tried to understand first of all what the meaning of ethos, pathos, and logos.” In order to understand the meaning of these terms, she looked them up in Google. When asked about which search option she chose, Riya replied: “So, which I feel reliable or confident. Like dictionary. We always listen that dictionary is good, right?” By dictionary, Riya meant Dictionary.com. She noted: “So, when I see dictionary.com, I choose that one.” Riya’s reliance upon this particular website was affected by her previous experiences in Nepal. Her Nepali teachers often emphasized the importance of using dictionaries. Riya continued to be guided by their advice in the new context. Unlike her experiences in Nepal, where she used print dictionaries, in the U.S. she drew upon the digital version of a dictionary.

Again, specific assignment expectations about the required variables for the body were an important genre influence that mediated Riya’s choices about this type of material resource in the English composition course. Riya was guided by the belief she developed about dictionaries in Nepal to look up definitions of unfamiliar terms in the U.S. The new context contributed to shaping the type of her previous sociocultural resources. She no longer relied upon print dictionaries in the new context; she depended upon an electronic version instead. Therefore, the essay genre mediated the kind of help she needed and her choices about these resources. The sociocultural context contributed to shaping the type of material resource she had access to.

Lilly chose to use classmates' essay drafts in order to get help in understanding how to write her essay. One way she did that was by reading Riya's essay draft. Lilly shared: "When he (i.e., the instructor) me grade the essay, . . . I talk to Riya. . . . And then she said: 'Come to my house.' And then when I go there, she show me her essay, how she write it." Lilly also requested that Riya send her the essay draft via email. Reading Riya's essay, Lilly claimed, helped her understand how to make some changes to her own draft. Specifically, she paid attention to how Riya used topical sentences in the body paragraphs. Lilly said: "I read them the way she did them. It helped." Indeed, the paragraphs in Lilly's final draft contained topical sentences unlike her earlier version of the essay draft. The following examples illustrate how she turned the notes from her first essay draft into a paragraph in her final essay (see Figure 5.11).

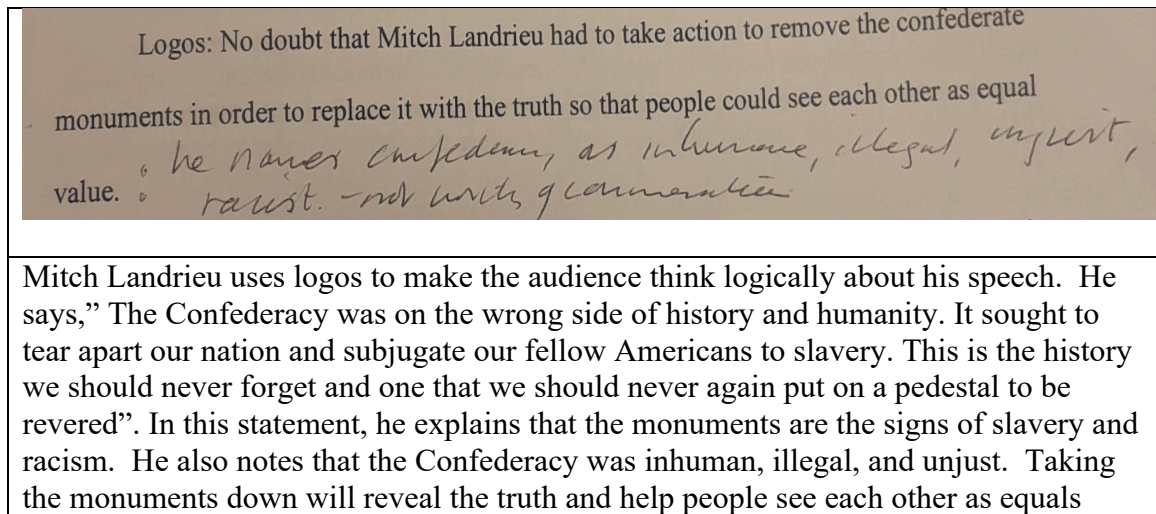


Figure 5.11. Examples of Lilly's notes from the first draft and the paragraph from her final draft

The top section of Figure 5.11 depicts the image of Lilly's writing in which she intended to talk about the use of logos by Mitch Landrieu along with the instructor's comments from the first draft that she turned in. The bottom part of Figure 5.11 contains the paragraph

from her final essay. Unlike her draft, her final version starts with a topic sentence followed by a quote and Lilly's comments.

In addition, to relying upon classmates' essay drafts outside of class, Lilly and other international classmates looked at each other's drafts in class. I observed them doing that on various occasions during in-class observations. In my notes on April 9, I noted that Lilly, who kept repeating that she felt stuck while working on her introduction, said that Martin had a good introduction. As soon as she did that, Riya got up and approached Martin to look at his introduction. She just read it without taking any notes or making any comments and went back to her seat. Their professor never discouraged them from doing that in class. On the contrary, he encouraged students to learn from each other. For example, after the professor provided his feedback on their first drafts, he suggested that Soso share her essay draft with Martin to help him see how she approached writing topic sentences in the body.

Unlike Lilly's experiences in the U.S., in Haiti she was not able to look at her classmates' essay drafts during a writing class. Lilly noted: "You do on your own. You cannot ask your friend." Her teachers emphasized the importance of writing as an individual skill, as opposed to social practice. Only during a lunch break did students have an opportunity to share what they were going to write in their essays. When asked if they had enough time in Haiti, she replied: "It was an hour. We had enough time."

Lilly's reliance upon her classmates' essay drafts, in particular Riya's draft, suggested that she struggled with understanding how to write the essay body. The examples indicated that her struggles were most likely rooted in understanding written genre knowledge about an essay's organization. Unlike the body in her first official draft

that lacked structure, which was also stated in one of the instructor's comments, her final version of the essay was more clearly organized. Therefore, written genre knowledge about an essay organization was a mediating influence that shaped her choices. The distinctions in circumstances under which she could rely upon her classmates' essay drafts in Haiti and the U.S. suggested that sociocultural context affected when, where, and how she could have access to her classmates' essay drafts.

Symbolic resources. Particular essay genre demands affected how the participants chose to rely upon some of their previous symbolic resources. Those resources included their previous written genre knowledge about an essay's purpose and organization, as well as their language knowledge. Below I present examples that illustrate the mediating role of the essay genre with regard to their choices about these symbolic resources.

In the English composition course, Lilly chose to rely upon her previous written genre knowledge about an essay's purpose, used in a different way. In Haiti Lilly learned to write topical essays that required general information about a topic. Those topics included writing about her pets, her friends or a weekend experience. Lilly was not expected to use any additional resources; she had to write what she knew about a topic. In contrast, in the U.S. she was expected to write essays that required that she state her own position, analyze original works, support her assertions with evidence from other sources, and her own interpretations. The purpose was to produce a piece of argumentative writing that demonstrated her dialogue with other writers and their ideas. In my last in-depth interview with Lilly, she was still working on the final draft of her essay. She noted:

Essay is not easy to write. You need to thinking a lot, thinking, thinking, thinking. So, until now, I still have my essay because it is not easy to thinking. . . . The introduction is not easy because it is in your own word. You know, you need to think about how I would write the introduction to do my essay. And then when you

finish write the introduction, you can start the body because the body from the book, just quote, put your own idea.

This quote showed her struggles with meeting new cultural expectations about the essay genre. She especially pointed out the challenge of writing an introduction. Her early essay drafts contained the introduction in which she mainly focused on Martin Luther King, Jr.'s letter and his argument in favor of non-violence as a means of social change. She also provided a quote from his letter and made a connection to Mitch Landrieu's purpose for removing the Confederate monuments. In other words, she concentrated on specific details of the two written works. However, the final version of her introduction included common concepts for the two works, such as unfairness, persecution, and mistreatment. She used them to point out discrimination in the society and the people who resisted social change. She then connected them to the actions of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Mitch Landrieu and stated her thesis statement (see Table 5.1). The changes in these examples illustrated that she was figuring out how to write an introduction in her own words the way she did in Haiti but in a new way that required her to think of common concepts between the two written pieces and to write about them in her own words.

Table 5.1

Lilly's Early and Final Drafts of her Essay Introduction

Early Draft	Final Draft
<p>In this letter from " Birmingham city of the Jail" Martin Luther King stands in contrast to how the confederate government handled the civil rights moment using violence in how Dr. King was approaching his fight for all human rights in a non-violent way; keeping strong in his faith and pointing out the difference between unjust laws and humane laws. What really captures my attention is that Martin Luther King kept his fight for all human rights regardless of being confined in jail. Just as the prophets in the eighteenth century left their small villages to carry out the message "Thus saith the Lord" Dr. King let them know that he too like them had to carry out the gospel of freedom no matter the distance he had to travel where ever human rights needed to be defended. He stated, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere". P645 He wrote this letter in order to explain blacks intents of nonviolent protests during the civils rights movement so it may drive them to an understanding of how they feel strongly violated and deserve the right to be equally treated all a one. I doubt that many would commend the policemen if they were to observe the inhumane treatment that Negroes in Birmingham city jail have to endure. I feel that Landrieu as Dr. King by removing the monuments also wants the people to not forget the true history what really happened in the civil rights movements and to focus on diversity as being equal in value. These monuments held the wrong thought that whites are superior beings over any other color of race and I think</p>	<p>In the society in which we live today we are still experiencing unfairness, persecution and mistreatment from people who carry hatred from the past and are racist. In a sense, we can see in many states where people separate themselves from others whom they think are inferior to them, criticize the way they approach things, and put them down just because of arrogance. In our courts today, we also see justice not being served by certain judges who claim discrimination, and their judgements are unfair to certain people of color or religion. Like these men and women, we too need to stand up and be brave in our daily lives in order to survive another day. I believe many of these people can relate to Martin Luther King's letter from the Birmingham city jail and Mitch Landrieu's speech on removal of confederate monuments in New Orleans. This essay will help us understand differences and similarities in how the two authors address their audiences by using rhetorical strategies such as logos, pathos, and ethos, and figurative language such as metaphors.</p>

Landrieu also wants to bring people together as one.

In the course of navigating new written genre knowledge about the purpose of writing an essay, Lilly had to adjust her previous cultural essay genre knowledge to the demands of the new academic environment. She had to think in new ways. Instead of just thinking about what she knew about a topic in general, she had to analyze the thoughts and ideas of other people and to figure out common and/or distinct concepts between their works. The new cultural expectations about the essay genre stimulated her to experience a “dialogue” with other writers in new ways (Bakhtin, 1981). The U.S. written genre knowledge about an essay’s purpose mediated the ways Lilly chose to adjust her previous written genre knowledge about an essay’s purpose to the demands of the new environment.

Although all four participants chose to adjust their previous written genre knowledge about an essay’s organization to the demands of the English composition course, Riya’s case was illustrative in how she chose to rely upon her previous written genre knowledge about writing her conclusions in the same way. When I asked Riya to explain how she wrote her conclusions in the English composition course, she shared:

Conclusions, I just whatever I write in introduction part, I just do a little bit different from the introduction part. It is kind of same, but little bit different not that much. For example, like in introduction I am just telling how they are just trying to convince their audience. And in conclusion I say they both have the same way . . . same thing to do. . . . They both have goals to convince their audience. Either letter or speech, but their both goal was to convince their audience. I wrote that one.

To illustrate what Riya meant about her approach to writing conclusions, I present her introduction and conclusions from her final essay (see Table 5.2).

Table 5.2

Riya's Introduction and Conclusions from the Final Essay Draft

Introduction	Conclusion
<p>Martin Luther King, Jr. was a social activist and Baptist minister who played a key role in the American civil rights movement from the mid-1950s until his assassination in 1968. In his "Letter from Birmingham Jail", he addressed several clergymen who had written an open letter criticizing the actions of Martin Luther King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) during their protests in Birmingham. The clergymen unequivocally supported the civil rights movements but were concerned about the violence and tension of Martin Luther King's methods. Martin Luther King told the clergymen that he was upset about their criticisms, and that he wishes to address their concerns. Dr. Martin Luther King and Mitch Landrieu had different goals in trying to convince different audiences. On one hand, Martin Luther King was trying to respond to the eight clergymen who agreed with the African Americans cause but opposed their means to achieve it. On the other hand, Mitch Landrieu, a mayor of New Orleans city, is addressing and explaining the removal of the confederate monuments to a heterogeneous audience of mixed opinions. While some folks, primarily African Americans argue for the removal of this confederate monuments, other strongly opposed the removal believing the monuments to be essential representation of their own history and heritage. This paper will delve into how Martin Luther King and Mitch Landrieu convince their audience. I also will be presenting their use of logos, pathos, ethos, figurative language, sources, audiences, language, and will be using</p>	<p>Martin Luther King and Mitch Landrieu both have a goal and determination to help people come to realize that all humans are considered equal and no one should feel inferior to anyone in their community or feel that they are treated differently because of the color of their skin. In other words, seeing the white race as superior is wrong and should not be known as being part of our history. For this, Dr. King writes a letter from jail addressing the clergymen to clarify them regarding accuse against his acts. Mitch Landrieu delivers a speech in public to bring down the four monuments of persons that had terrible impact on the American History during the Civil War. Both use different rhetorical strategies to persuade and convince their audience (in general, the whole people), for freedom, equal rights, and prosperous future generation.</p>

rhetorical analysis to compare both the letter from Birmingham and Mitch Landrieu's speech.

Riya opened her introduction by stating who Martin Luther King Jr. was. She then explained who he addressed in his letter from the Birmingham jail and why. In order to introduce Mitch Landrieu, she pointed out the distinctions in Martin Luther King's and Mitch Landrieu's audiences and the distinctions in what they emphasized in addressing their audiences. Riya concluded with her thesis statement in which she stated the variables she would focus on in the body of her essay.

In writing her conclusions, Riya first pointed out the commonalities in goals between Martin Luther King Jr. and Mitch Landrieu. She used those commonalities to restate what both prominent figures produced and why. To conclude, Riya restated that both Martin Luther King Jr. and Mitch Landrieu used rhetorical strategies. Indeed, her conclusions focused on the same points she addressed in her introduction, but she restated them in a slightly different way. Although I have not observed the instructor's verbal instructions to students in how they had to write their conclusions, the peer-review sheet that students used in the English composition course to review their essays included the following: "Does the conclusion present a judgement or culminating idea? If so, write it down below. If not, provide the writer with an example of how he/she might more effectively end the essay." This particular task suggested that the instructor expected students to present their reflections about what they stated in the body of their essays. In order to meet this assumed essay genre expectation, Riya chose to be guided by her previous written genre knowledge about writing conclusions.

In order to act as competent writers, the participants had to navigate the essay genre as a social construction in the English composition course. In navigating those genre demands, the participants made choices about some of their previous formal social, material and symbolic resources. They used most of their previous resources in different ways; however, they used some of them in the same way. The essay genre as a social construction mediated the kind of help they needed as writers in the essay genre and, consequently, their choices about resources in the new context. The types of sociocultural resources and their access to those resources were situated within their contexts. The essay genre mediated participants' choices; the sociocultural context affected the types of resources and their access to those resources (see Figure 5.12). In relying upon some of their previous resources and using them in either new ways or different ways, the participants demonstrated their agentive capacity as writers in the essay genre.

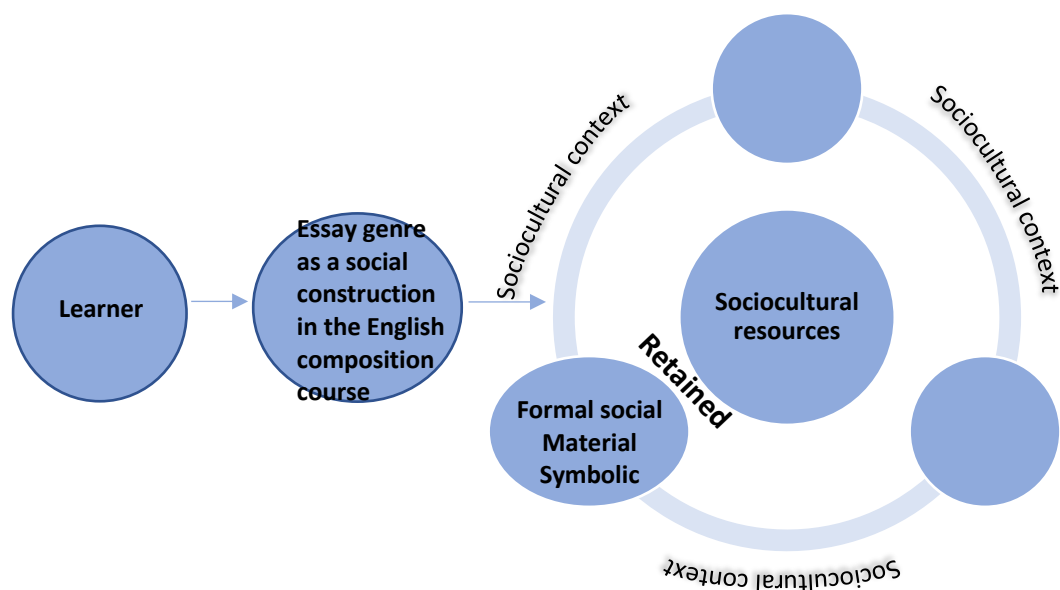


Figure 5.12. The mediating role of the essay genre in participants' choices about retained resources

Genre-specific choices about gained resources. In order to act as competent writers in the essay genre in the U.S., the participants made choices that resulted in gains. They experienced those gains in material resources, such as digital tools, digital materials, and genre materials, and informal social resources, such as a work supervisor's help. Participants' reliance upon new resources played a significant role in helping them to navigate the essay genre as a social construction in the English composition course in the U.S. Lilly's and Martin's cases are especially illustrative.

Material resources. In order to generate ideas for her essay, Lilly chose to rely upon her cell phone and online resources. I often observed her with an open Word document that contained an essay draft and her cell phone next to her in class. She used her cell phone to look up the paragraphs that she sent to herself. In working on her essay, she often copied and pasted those paragraphs from her email account into a Word document

that contained her essay draft on a classroom computer. Although she copied and pasted paragraphs using a classroom computer, she looked through them on her personal cell phone. When I inquired how she came up with those paragraphs, she replied:

Like when I am at work, I am thinking about the essay and then I write down and I would not forget this, you know. And then I say: 'Ok, the idea come to my head. The idea come to my mind.' And then I write it down. And then I say: 'Ok, I am gonna talking about this.' . . . that's why you can see my email full with the essay. . . And then I write it down and then I send it to myself.

When I probed further about how she came up with those ideas, she said that she looked up essay examples online on her cell phone at work. While reading essays, she picked up information which she wanted to use in her own piece. For example, Lilly shared the following idea with me:

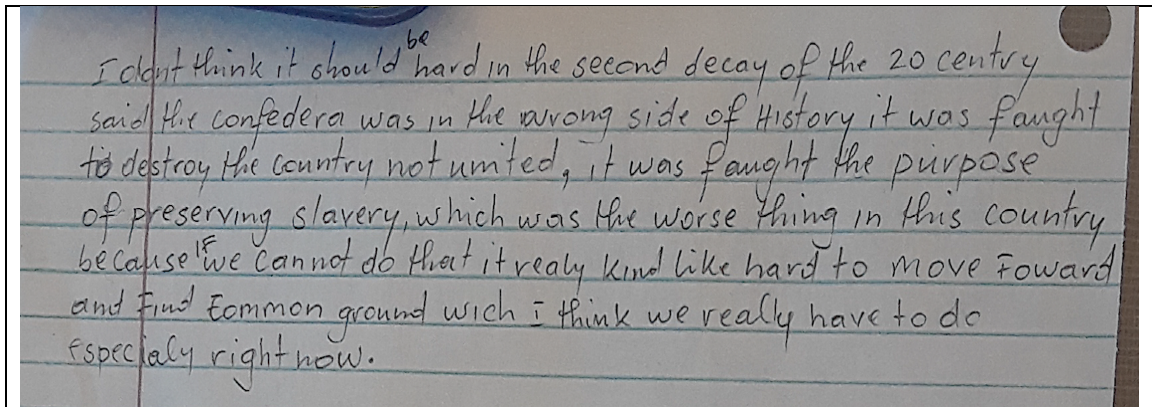
In a sense we can see in many states that people separate themselves from others they think are inferior to them and also criticize the way they approach things and put them down just because of pride I think. In our courts today we also see justice not being served by certain judges who claim no discrimination but their judgements are unfair to certain people of color or religion. We too like these men need to stand up and be brave in our daily lives in order to survive another day.

She relied upon this borrowed idea when she worked on her essay introduction. Given that her work responsibilities did not require her to focus all the time, she was able to do that when she had free time in the office. Due to the fact that she was not supposed to use her own computer at work, she used her cell phone to look up those essays, produce paragraphs, and then send them to herself. When asked why she relied upon online resources instead of the letter and speech, Lilly replied:

I feel like online is better. . . . I can't go to work with a book. And then online has lots of resources than you have a book because the book has only one author. And then online they have so many authors. They put ideas online.

Her statement suggests that online resources helped her learn about ideas expressed by other people, especially a wide variety of people. It also indicates her desire to use multiple resources in generating ideas for her essay and her adaptability in using online resources to navigate written essay knowledge about an essay's purpose in the English composition course. Her cell phone was the tool she chose to use in order to access those online resources. Her need to generate ideas was mediated by written genre knowledge about an essay's purpose. In the English composition course, her instructor expected her to demonstrate analysis of the two assigned texts. The new context enabled her to have access to digital tools and digital materials she chose to draw upon in order to generate ideas for her analysis as a writer in the essay genre.

Martin also chose to use a cell phone to assist him with essay writing in the English composition course. However, he relied upon it in a different way by recording what his professor explained in class. Martin shared: "When I ask questions, I was always recording. . . . After that I had to go and get some ideas what I wrote down, in what I recorded." His statement indicates that Martin used the recordings to generate ideas for his essay. Indeed, his notebook contained several neatly written paragraphs that he copied to a Word document when he wrote his essay. Figure 5.13 depicts the example of a paragraph from Martin's notebook and the example of a paragraph from his final essay, illustrating how Martin incorporated that idea in his final essay.



Mitch Landrieu also used Pathos so that emotion may be able to invite people to be open to the fact that the confederacy was a mistake and people should admit. He used pathos so that people have to know that **in the second decade of 20th century the confederacy was on the wrong side of history.** The confederacy sought to destroy and tear apart the nation and subjugate Americans to slavery. **It was fought for the purpose of preserving slavery... (29) which was the worst thing in the country.** If people cannot accept it so it will **be hard for them to move forward and find common ground** which they must do to deal with what the country needs. He used pathos so that people can accept they are the ones that are losing not just African American who are living the city but also doctors, engineers and great artists that can help them to build the city more than these confederate statues.

Figure 5.13. Example of Martin’s written idea and a paragraph from his final essay based upon that idea. The words put in bold in the paragraph indicate the sections borrowed from the written idea depicted in the top image.

I have put in bold the phrases that Martin borrowed from the paragraph produced in his notebook to compose a paragraph in his final essay. He used his notes to paraphrase what Mitch Landrieu said in his speech (i.e., the sentences in bold, used before the parenthesis) and to provide additional comments (i.e., the sentences in bold, used after the parenthesis). Below I also provide the same paraphrase by Martin of the quote by Mitch Landrieu from the paragraph used in his final essay and the direct quote (see Table 5.3).

Table 5.3

Example of Martin's Paraphrase and the Original Quote

Paraphrase	Original Quote
He used pathos so that people have to know that in the second decade of 20 th century the confederacy was on the wrong side of history . The confederacy sought to destroy and tear apart the nation and subjugate Americans to slavery . It was fought for the purpose of preserving slavery...(29)	"The Confederacy was on the wrong side of history and humanity. It sought to tear apart our nation and subjugate our fellow Americans to slavery ."

The sections in bold are the phrases that were similar between Martin's paraphrase from the paragraph in the final essay and the direct quote by Mitch Landrieu. By comparing his paraphrased section with notes from the notebook and the direct quote by Mitch Landrieu, Martin, as a second language learner, seemed to rely upon his notes from recordings and the direct quotes to come up with his own paraphrase. He did not just borrow the quotes as they were, but he tried to expand them by adding his own words to make his point. In this way, Martin learned how to demonstrate his competency as a writer in the essay genre in the new context. The ability to use original sources was an important gain. In the English composition course, the instructor expected students to paraphrase the ideas they used from other sources. This was the skill required by the written genre knowledge about an essay's purpose. Consequently, the written genre knowledge mediated Martin's choices about paraphrasing, as well as the use of a cell phone and online materials.

In addition, Lilly, Riya, Soso, and Martin chose to rely upon the provided genre resources in the English composition course and English workshop. For example, they all chose to organize their ideas following a particular assignment expectation about an essay's organization, using either the block-by-block framework or the point-by-point framework.

Each of them had to make their own decisions about which organization to follow. Figure 5.14 shows that Martin produced an outline that reflected the block-by-block organization that he relied upon in writing his compare and contrast essay. This organizational strategy shows how Martin planned to organize and present his ideas in the essay.

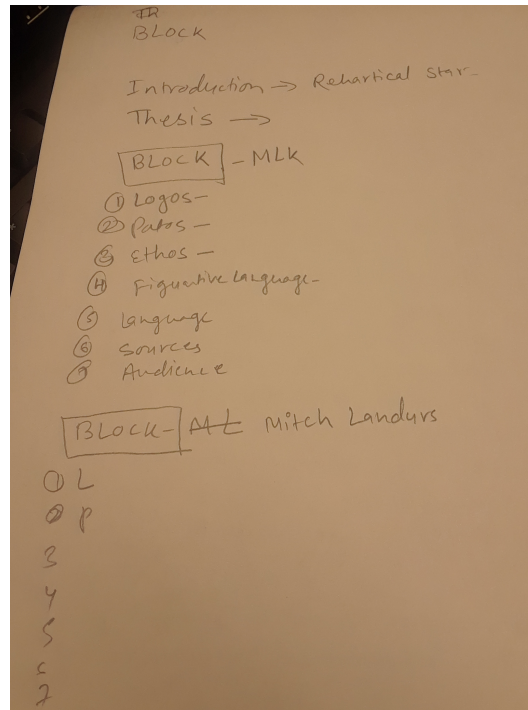


Figure 5.14. Martin's outline of the block-by-block organization

The use of genre resources contributed to expanding participants' repertoires as writers. Essay assignment expectations was a significant influence in mediating their choices about these resources. Given that these were new resources for them, the new sociocultural context shaped the types of genre resources and their access to them.

Social resources. In navigating the essay genre demands in the English composition course, Lilly chose to seek help from a work supervisor. Unlike her

experiences in Haiti, Lilly did not have anyone to rely upon from her family and ethnic community to help her with essay writing in the U.S. Lilly noted: “I cannot find help. I cannot find nobody to help me.” Since divorcing her husband in 2016, she had lived in a house with her mother, who took care of her children and helped her around the house, her two children, and her uncle. Neither her mother nor her uncle spoke English fluently. She also had a few friends from the Haitian community. But they saw each other only on specific occasions, such as birthday celebrations, as Lilly was a full-time student and worked 40 hours a week as an operator at an automobile company. However, she happened to have a work supervisor who also attended the same community college. In fact, they were enrolled in the same class during the period of data collection. When she struggled with writing her introduction, she asked him for help. Lilly shared:

I was at work, and my supervisor was there, too. He has English 101, and I have English 101. And then I said: “This is my last essay. You can help me a little bit.” And then he said: “Ok, I can give you some ideas.” He said: “If me you, I can start like this.” He gave me just one sentence, and then I followed the sentence. And then he explained to me this (i.e., the rest of the introductory paragraph), and I wrote all this.

As this statement illustrates, Lilly’s supervisor assisted her with the opening sentence for her introduction and then explained what she could focus on in the rest of the introduction. However, it was a one-time source of assistance. Consequently, it was an exceptional case and not typical for other participants. Lilly’s choice in asking for and accepting her work supervisor’s help was affected by her need to understand how to write an introduction and, consequently, her need to understand its purpose in the English composition course. Therefore, written genre knowledge about an essay’s purpose mediated her choice. The fact that she relied upon her supervisor was influenced by her current context. Unlike her experiences in Haiti, she had limited access to people who could serve as her sources of

assistance in essay writing. Therefore, the new context shaped the type of social resources and her access to them.

Gains in these additional resources suggested that the participants developed new competencies as writers in the essay genre in the U.S. Access to digital tools and materials expanded the ways they searched for new information and presented their ideas as writers in the essay genre. Technology enabled them to access various online resources and produce digital resources, such as recordings. Those resources played a significant role in helping them generate their essay ideas. In addition to gains in technology, genre materials shaped how they organized those ideas as writers. The new materials required that they present their thoughts following particular, culturally valued organization patterns about the essay genre. The choices they made were necessary to navigate the essay genre as a social construction in the English composition course. The new sociocultural context shaped the resources they relied upon and their access to them, thus contributing to enabling their agentive capacity as writers in the essay genre (see Figure 5.15)

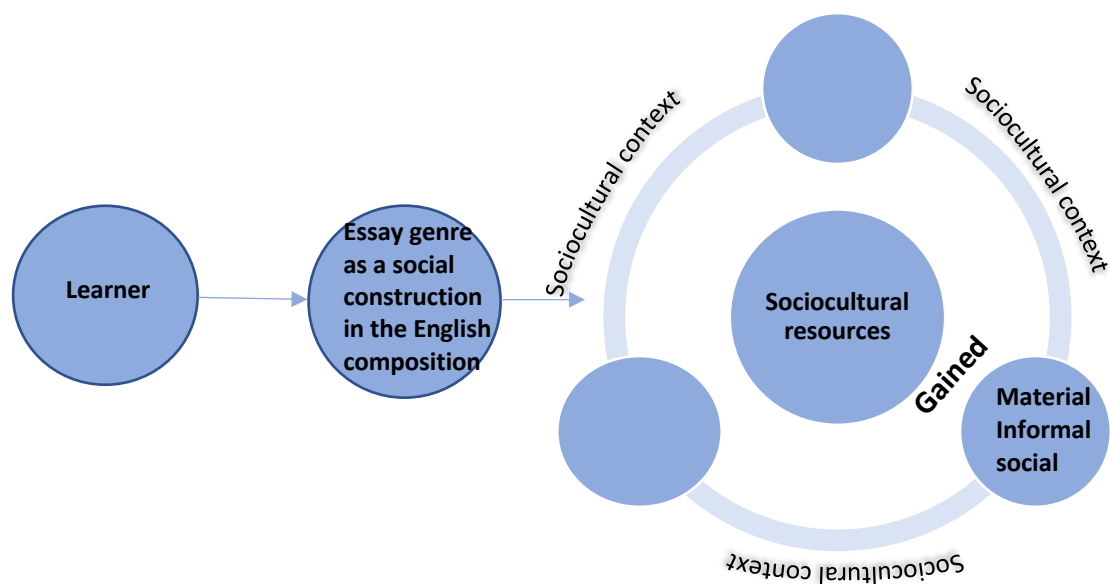


Figure 5.15. The mediating role of the essay genre in participants' choices about gained resources

Chapter Summary

In this chapter I present the study's main findings pertaining to the second research question, focusing on how the essay genre mediated participants' writing choices about sociocultural resources in the U.S. I first explain how my views of the choice construct and the essay genre were informed. In the sections that follow, I explain how the essay genre as a social construction in the English composition course mediated participants' choices about their sociocultural resources, which included resources the participants brought with them and the new resources available to them upon arrival. In particular, I explain the three types of choices that the participants experienced while navigating the essay genre as a social construction in the English composition course. They included losses retentions, and gains.

The types of identified choices the participants were able to make and those choices they were not able to make indicate that not all choices were mediated by the essay genre.

Some of their choices were in fact shaped by contextual influences of the new context. Consequently, I distinguished between general choices (i.e., choices mediated by contextual influences) and genre-specific choices (i.e., choices mediated by the essay genre as a social construction in the English composition course). General choices included losses along with some retentions and gains. Genre-specific choices revolved around specific retentions and gains. I further provide my analysis of the general choices mediated by contextual influences followed by the analysis of genre-specific choices mediated by the essay genre.

CHAPTER 6

Conclusions and Recommendations

In order to understand the ending, I go back to the beginning of my research. Early on I began exploring learning to write as a sociocultural act by working closely with four refugee students of diverse backgrounds. I was guided by the following research questions: 1) What types of sociocultural resources do adult English learners use while they are learning to write in the essay genre? And 2) How does the essay genre mediate adult English learners' choices about their resources in the U.S.? Specifically, I wanted to know about the interaction between the resources they used, their choices, and the essay genre, and what systematic patterns suggest about learning to write in a second language from a sociocultural perspective. In reading the literature in the field of L2 writing, it soon became obvious that the sociocultural perspective required much greater attention by scholars.

To answer my research questions, I chose to focus on four immigrant students with diverse ethnolinguistic backgrounds and various lengths of exposure to academic writing in the USA. They were enrolled in a community college that represented national colleges in serving the needs of linguistically and culturally diverse students. Methodologically, I adopted an interpretive perspective as my guiding principle. I believe that reality is “socially-constructed, complex, and ever changing” (Glesne, 2011, p. 8). Consequently, I viewed each individual participant as a constructor of his or her own meaning. I wanted to explore their multiple perspectives to inform the understanding of learning to write as a sociocultural act. I embraced thematic analysis as the primary method and triangulation of the generated data, including in-depth interviews, in-class and out-of-class observations, and written artifacts. My interview protocol was guided by my sociocultural views on

learning and literacy and was intended to explore learning as shaped by larger contextual influences.

Key Findings

My findings are not dependent upon data alone. In order to substantiate my data, I incorporated other scholarly resources, including recent research, the personal stories and experiences of my participants, and the generous sharing of wisdom by my committee members. My analysis was an intricate interplay of various voices and perspectives. I sought ways to make meaning and generate ideas that represent a dynamic interaction between data, empirical works, and theory. Focusing on shifts in participants' resources between the two contexts enabled me to come up with the following central findings, which I present by revisiting the research questions.

RQ 1: *What types of sociocultural-resources do adult English learners use while learning to write in the essay genre prior to and after their arrival in the U.S.?*

I present the categories of social, symbolic, and material resources that participants relied upon when they learned to write in the essay genre. The categories are not mutually exclusive, but they do capture the variety of resources participants drew upon as writers in the essay genre prior to and after their arrival in the U.S.A. These categories are based upon the analysis of in-depth interviews, in-class and out-of-class observations, and written artifacts that I collected during the seven-week period of data generation. I identified seven categories that included the following types of previous and new resources.

First, participants relied upon assistance from people other than the instructor. They included immediate and extended family members, friends/neighbors, private and college tutors, classmates and a supervisor at work. Those people served as sources of help

with essay writing in the two contexts. They helped the participants to navigate the essay genre by talking with them about a topic of an essay (e.g., Soso's mother and aunts), helping when a participant had a question about an essay (e.g., Riya's friends/neighbors), pointing out what corrections should be made in an essay (e.g., Riya's private English tutor), acting as cultural brokers of texts written for real audiences and revising participants' essays (e.g., college tutors), talking with a participant to help her figure out what a professor "is looking for" (e.g., Riya's Nepali classmate), and helping a participant to think about what to include in an essay introduction (e.g., Lilly's supervisor at work).

Second, essay genre knowledge, as another category, included three types of knowledge that the participants developed in their home countries and relied upon in the new context. Formal knowledge included structural moves common for genre. Each participant developed distinct structural moves in their home countries. Those distinctions were based upon the types of essay they learned to write: compare and contrast, cause and effect, and definition essay organizations in which a participant had to state assertions and support them with reasons (i.e., Lilly); an organization in which a participant had to describe a topic in an introduction, list advantages and disadvantages in the body, and explain why the topic was important in the conclusions (i.e., Riya), and a composition piece in which a participant had to narrate about a topic (i.e., Soso). Process knowledge included the sequence of steps the participants took in order to compose an essay. Each participant brought distinct knowledge about essay writing, a process rooted in their cultural practices about the essay genre. They included reading essay examples, answering questions, producing an outline, and then a final essay for Lilly; reading essay examples and producing a final essay for Riya, and generating ideas and then composing a passage for

Soso. Rhetorical knowledge was based upon cultural expectations about topical writing. They were expected to write about such general topics as home, Mount Everest, or a pet. Because of their cultural expectations, they also developed different understandings about essays as a school skill, as opposed as a communication means.

Third, language knowledge included the repertoires of languages the participants brought with them to this country, such as a first language, colonized language, and additional languages. When participants learned to write in the essay genre, they drew upon their first language (i.e., Riya and Soso) and colonized language (i.e., Lilly and Martin).

Fourth, class materials included materials the participants relied upon when they worked on their essays in their educational settings prior to and after their arrival in this country. The participants used textbooks with topical essay examples and print dictionaries in their home countries. They relied upon textbooks with pieces written for real-world audiences in this country. For example, the letter from the Birmingham jail by Martin Luther King Jr. was provided in their textbook titled *The Writer's Presence* by D. McQuade and R. Atwan (2015). The participants also shared and looked at their classmates' essay drafts and took written notes in both sociocultural contexts.

Fifth, genre materials included provided essay outlines, essay organizations, such as block-by-block organization for a compare and contrast essay, introduction types, such as a funnel introduction, the examples of MLA work cited from the Purdue University Online Writing Lab, the definitions of rhetorical strategies, such as ethos, pathos, and logos, and figurative language, such as a metaphor.

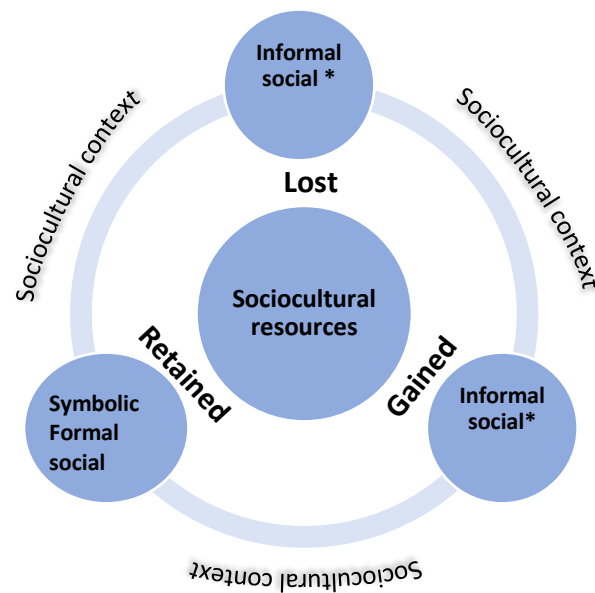
Sixth, digital tools comprised computers, cell phones, Google, Google Translate, and YouTube that the participants relied upon in the new sociocultural context. They used these tools to search for additional information, to look up unfamiliar words, to paraphrase borrowed information, and to type their essays.

Finally, digital materials included online resources the participants found on their own, such as online essay examples, articles, and YouTube videos, and the recordings of classroom conversations they produced in class. They relied upon those sources to generate and borrow ideas for their essays.

RQ 2: *How does the essay genre mediate adult English learners' choices about sociocultural resources in the U.S.?*

To draw upon their resources in the U.S., the participants made choices that resulted in three types of actions. Those actions included losses, retentions, and gains. I viewed losses as the type of participants' choices about sociocultural resources, when they were not able to rely upon some of their previous sociocultural resources as writers in the essay genre in the new context. I identified retentions as choices about sociocultural resources that included participants' reliance upon some of their previous resources used in either new ways or the same ways to navigate the essay genre demands as a social construction in the English composition course. I identified gains when the participants chose to rely upon new resources that they did not have access to in their prior contexts.

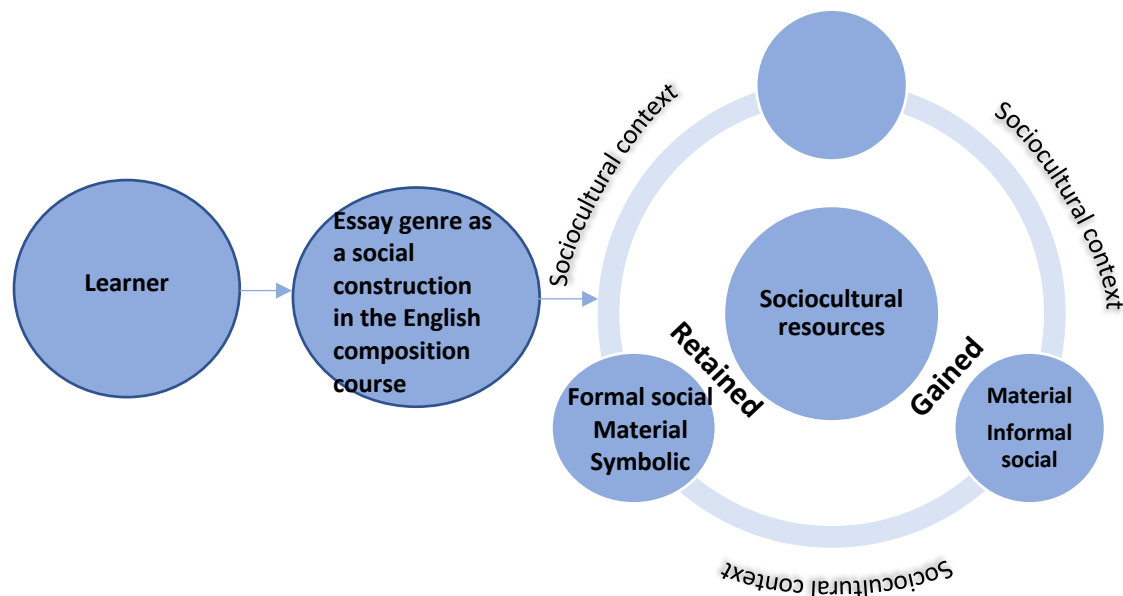
Not all of the participants' choices were mediated by the essay genre; some of them were shaped by contextual influences. Contextual influences shaped losses, some of the retentions and gains. These were general choices that were situated within particular contextual realities (see Figure 6.1).



(*) A discrepant case

Figure 6.1. The role of sociocultural context in shaping participants' general choices about losses, retentions, and gains

The essay genre mediated some retentions and gains. Those choices were driven by the essay genre demands of the participants' new sociocultural context and, consequently, were rooted in their interaction within the new environment. Through those choices, the participants began to express themselves as independent writers in the essay genre in the new surroundings, by demonstrating their agentive capacity as writers in the essay genre in response to what the new context offered to them (see Figure 6.2).



(*) A discrepant case

Figure 6.2. The mediating role of the essay genre in participants' choices about retentions and gains

Discussion

Relationships involving the essay genre, resources, and choices made by participants in this research study provide an expanded view of the processes used by adult English learners. The research draws heavily upon their sociocultural realities before and prior to their arrival in the U.S. My analysis uncovered the situated nature of learning to write in the essay genre by shedding light upon how individuals and the environment interacted. Those interactions were not only rooted in internalizing knowledge and skills through discovery or transmission from their instructors (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Those interactions were mediated by the essay genre and shaped by larger contextual influences. This conclusion serves as the foundation of my discussion.

Learning to write in the essay genre involved an active participation on participants' parts. The essay genre as a social construction in the English composition course promoted a particular worldview for the participants. Their instructor's decisions determined the competencies the participants had to demonstrate. Those decisions set the stage for the participants' intentions as agentive writers and, consequently, contributed to shaping their deliberate choices.

As my study showed, contextual influences either enabled or constrained participation in the practice of essay writing. In some cases, sociocultural influences constrained participants' access to particular resources; in other cases, they enabled that access. Their agentive capacity was affected by the types of resources they had access to or did not have access to in both contexts. Consequently, the participants' were not agentive writers in essence. Their agentive capacity did not exist in isolation, rather their agentive capacity as writers in the essay genre was a social construction that developed over time and through participation in the essay genre practice. Their agentive capacity was affected by the essay genre and sociocultural influences, thus indicating an interactive dynamic between the individual and the environment.

As my study showed, the essay genre along with context played a significant role in contributing to shaping participant's agentive capacity. The essay genre, in particular, shaped the kind of competencies they had to demonstrate; contextual influences shaped the types of resources and their access to them. Understanding this interaction and, in particular, how genre helps students make purposeful choices and act as competent writers contributes to a more holistic understanding of learning to write as a sociocultural act.

The focus on writers' choices underscores the evolving nature of learning to write that is at the nexus of relationships between a writer and the world. The choices a writer makes and the resources a writer relies upon arise from the socially and culturally structured contexts, including the interaction and interplay of the past and present. For example, when Lilly learned to write in the essay genre in the U.S., she was not able to draw upon the help from any of her family or community members. Only once did she ask for help with her essay introduction from her work supervisor. In other cases, she heavily relied upon college and online resources. Her classmates and tutors served as her major sources of help with essay writing in the new environment. Online resources, in particular, helped her to generate ideas for her essay. Such heavy reliance upon college and online resources, along with the loss of significant social resources, suggests participants' isolation as learners in the new sociocultural environment. This finding also uncovers the challenge those writers faced in higher education in the U.S. Outside of college, adult English learners were largely solitary learners.

My analysis shows that learning to write involves a holistic view of a writer as a whole person. This view implies a relation between specific writing activities and the larger contextual influences. When participants learned to write, the activities they performed as writers in their classrooms were mediated by the essay genre and shaped by the previous and new environments. In learning to write in the essay genre, participants' intentions in the kind of help they needed, resources and actions were not isolated; they were shaped by larger contextual influences. Acknowledging this aspect of learning is crucial to understanding what undergirds a sociocultural logic of learning to write in L2

through a sociocultural lens and, consequently, understanding the roots of the successes and challenges that adult English learners face as writers in the essay genre.

Implications

To extend these findings, I turn to discussion of implications derived from this work. My discussion is presented in three parts: theoretical, empirical, and practical.

Theoretical Implications

As discussed in Chapter 2, the contemporary scholarship in learning-to-write in L2 has not yet adequately examined the concept of writers' sociocultural choices about resources. The writer-oriented framework focuses on either a writer's expression of ideas, or a writer's cognitive processes, or a writer's performance as affected by personal, social, and institutional factors within the immediate, instructional context. Each framework has been informed by sociocultural views. As Hyland (2016) stated, sociocultural views have expanded our understanding of the three orientations. However, he also noted that these frameworks have not yet explored the role of larger contextual influences. Despite the significance of theoretical views of each framework, there is no coherent, integrative picture of a holistic view of learning to write as a sociocultural act. The current study shows how that focusing on participants' choices enabled me to holistically explore the interaction between writers and their lived experiences as mediated by the essay genre. Such an approach avoided fragmentation and brought together historical, cultural, and institutional influences as well as genre. My study indicated how interaction between a writer and his or her lifeworld could be explored through a focus on sociocultural processes of learning to write in L2 - writers' choices about sociocultural resources.

Empirical Implications

My study opens potential for further exploring how the essay genre and sociocultural influences shape English learners' writing choices. Given the identified categories of adult English learners' resources and their choices regarding those resources in the essay genre, this study proposes several possible venues for exploring the relationships between writers and larger context as mediated by genre.

New research could further explore the categories of resources used by different groups of English learners in the essay genre. For example, researchers could investigate the types of resources used by refugee students, Generation 1.5 and international students, who represent different age groups, nationalities, and have different length of contact with the essay genre in the U.S. Those explorations could shed light upon commonalities and differences in the types of their resources and provide a taxonomy or a thorough categorization of sociocultural resources used by English learners when they learn to write in the essay genre.

Future research could also further explore the types of sociocultural influences that shape writing choices of refugee students, Generation 1.5 and international students, who represent different age groups, nationalities, and have different length of contact with the essay genre. Such inquiry could uncover a more detailed picture of sociocultural influences and the interaction among those influences in shaping writers' choices. Having a broader picture of sociocultural influences would enable scholars to understand what drives English learners' agency as writers in the essay genre – a sociocultural logic of learning. Such findings, in turn, would bring to light what constitutes the roots of English learners' challenges and successes as writers in the essay genre.

These relationships could also be explored across distinct academic genres, such as a research report, a literature review, a critique or different type of essay. In particular, researchers might study how sociocultural influences, resources, and choices are similar or different across academic genres. Also, further research could look at how learning to write might be similar or different when English learners encounter an entirely new genre, which they did not have access to before, as opposed to learning to write in a familiar genre that is rooted in different cultural expectations.

The interaction between the essay genre, English learners' choices and resources could also be explored based upon type of educational context. The current study looked at the interaction between these constructs within the context of a community college. However, other studies could explore how the essay genre, choices, and resources as well as the interaction between them differ based upon educational context, such as a public or private university, a regional university, as well as K-12 schools. These explorations could shed light upon similarities and differences in the challenges and successes of English learners in the essay genre in those settings and what educational institutions could learn from each other in terms of how to enhance and mitigate those successes and challenges, respectively.

Understanding these different types of relationships between English learners' resources, choices, and the essay genre would allow researchers to shed light upon systemic patterns that undergird learning to write as a sociocultural act, mediated by genre. Such explorations would, in turn, enrich our understanding about how genre and larger contextual influences mediate writers' choices and what it means to be strategic from a sociocultural perspective.

Practical Implications

This section addresses implications this study has for practice. The findings in response to the second research question showed that participants' previous essay writing experiences were rooted in unique cultural expectations about the essay genre. They were immersed in topical writing that required that they have a monologue with themselves, rather than be in a dialogue with other writers and their ideas. Moreover, they wrote for different social purposes. For example, Lilly learned to list causes and effects, to compare and contrast, and to define a topic. Riya only wrote to state advantages and disadvantages about a particular topic. Soso's writing purpose was to narrate about an assigned topic. Given these unique cultural expectations about the essay genre, writing instructors need to consider ways to build upon those resources. Adult English learners' previous essay writing experiences should be used as bridges into introducing these learners to the American expectation about argumentative writing. Inviting students to explore cultural differences that undergird cultural and written knowledge about essay writing in their home countries and in the U.S. would enable adult English learners to be exposed to different ways of thinking about argumentative essay writing. The purpose should not be to impose the American way of thinking and writing, but to help students see multiple cultural patterns of stating an argument and acknowledging diverse ways of thinking as argumentative writers.

Instructors also need to explore their views of argumentation and their approaches to emphasizing this kind of thinking, how they introduce it to students and for what purposes and applications. Instructors need to consider what kinds of instructional tasks they assign and how those tasks help learners think about argumentation. Moreover,

instructors need to take into consideration what constitutes a good argument and how they help English learners grasp the mastery of an effective argumentation. Engaging adult English learners in meaningful and relevant argumentation and learning would open opportunities for them to become more responsible as learners and connect with the world outside of their classroom.

My study also demonstrates that participants' reliance upon online and college resources indicated their isolation in the new environment. Unlike their experiences in their home countries where their families, friends, and neighbors served as important academic resources, they experienced a very limited access to people with cultural and symbolic capital who could serve as their sources of assistance with essay writing in the U.S. ESL programs and entire institutions of higher education need to consider how to reduce social isolation of this population in ways that might contribute to academic benefits for adult English learners. ESL programs and institutions need to think of ways to create opportunities that would allow them to be actively and meaningfully connected with people outside of classes. For example, a campus dialogue, involving students, teachers, and administrators might be initiated about how to create communities of learners and formal structures for supporting study/writing groups outside of classroom instruction and writing centers. Personal, social, and institutional responsibility should be achieved about agreed-upon ways of helping adult English learners be more involved with members of their learning communities.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I presented the central findings pertained to the two research questions. I first focused on explaining the identified categories of previous and new

sociocultural resources that the participants relied upon when they learned to write in the essay genre. Next, I outlined the findings with respect to the second research question in which I explored how the essay genre shaped participants' choices about resources. My findings uncovered the role of genre and other contextual influences that were most significant in enabling or constraining participants' agency. To extend the findings, I turned to discussion of the theoretical, empirical, and practical implications those findings may have on scholarship and practice. My discussion was presented in three parts: theoretical, empirical, and practical.

APPENDIX A

Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Learning to Write in an Academic Genre: Adult English Learners' Use of Sociocultural Resources

WHY ARE YOU BEING INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH?

You are being invited to take part in a research study that explores how adult English learners draw from their social and cultural experiences to navigate essay genre demands. You are being invited to take part in this research study because you are an adult who speaks English as a second language.

WHO IS DOING THE STUDY?

The person in charge of this study is Lyudmyla Ivanyuk, a doctoral student in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Kentucky. She is being guided in this research by Dr. Kristen Perry, professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Kentucky.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY?

By doing this study, I hope to learn how social and cultural forces and genre interact and shape the manners in which adult English learners choose to navigate the essay genre. Given that writing is socioculturally situated, there is a need for teachers of writing to understand how adult English learners use their social and cultural resources while they are learning to write in the essay genre.

ARE THERE REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD NOT TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?

Your participation in this study is voluntary. To protect your privacy, you may request that the researcher use a pseudonym in any reference to your personal information about you in any future publication based upon this study. Therefore, there are no personal reasons for not taking part in this study.

WHERE IS THE STUDY GOING TO TAKE PLACE AND HOW LONG WILL IT LAST?

The research procedures will be conducted at the Bluegrass Community College during the period of two weeks (four weeks) dedicated to working on an essay in the writing class. The researcher will observe you during each class for the period of two weeks (four weeks). Also, the researcher will observe you outside of class for about 60 minutes once a week. In addition, you will be interviewed three times. Each interview will last

approximately 90 minutes. The total amount of time you will be asked to volunteer for this study is about 7 (9) hours over the period of one semester.

WHAT WILL YOU BE ASKED TO DO?

You will be asked to participate in individual interviews. If you agree to participate in these interviews, you will be asked questions about your early experiences as writers over years up until the present time. Moreover, you will be asked to reconstruct your present experiences as a writer within your current cultural and social contexts and reflect on what you as a writer is doing now by making intellectual and emotional connections between what you do as a writer and your life. Also, the researcher will also ask you to have copies of your written products that you will produce in class and for class during that time such as notes, essay drafts, and a final essay. In addition, you will be asked to be observed out-of-class once a week at your convenience.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS?

To the best of my knowledge, the things that you will be doing have no more risk of harm than you would experience in everyday life. The researcher will respect your ideas, your decisions and your opinions. This study will have no bearing upon the grade you receive from the teacher of your course. You will not be judged or evaluated in terms of the quality of your writing or your personal character.

WILL YOU BENEFIT FROM TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

There is no guarantee that you will get any benefit from taking part in this study. Your willingness to take part, however, may, in the future, help educators better understand how to build upon social and cultural resources that adult English learners bring with them.

DO YOU HAVE TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY?

If you decide to take part in the study, it should be because you really want to volunteer. You will not lose any benefits or rights you would normally have if you choose not to volunteer. You can stop at any time during the study and still keep the benefits and rights you had before volunteering. As a student, if you decide not to take part in this study, your choice will have no effect on your academic status or grade in the class.

IF YOU DON'T WANT TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY, ARE THERE OTHER CHOICES?

If you do not want to be in the study, there are no other choices except not to take part in the study.

WHAT WILL IT COST YOU TO PARTICIPATE?

You may have to pay for the cost of getting to the study site and any parking fees. However, the researcher will make every effort to meet you in a place that is convenient for you.

WHO WILL SEE THE INFORMATION THAT YOU GIVE?

The researcher will make every effort to keep private all research records that identify you to the extent allowed by law. You will be given the choice about whether or not to use your real name in this study. If you do not want to use your real name, you will be given a pseudonym (a different name) that will be used throughout the study. I may present the results of this study at a national literacy conference; however, I will keep your name and other identifying information private if you choose not to use your real name.

I will keep private all research records that identify you to the extent allowed by law. However, I will have to show your information to other people. I may be required to show information which identifies you to people who need to be sure I have done the research correctly; these will be people from the University of Kentucky.

CAN YOUR TAKING PART IN THE STUDY END EARLY?

If you decide to take part in the study you still have the right to decide at any time that you no longer want to continue. You will not be treated differently if you decide to stop taking part in the study.

WILL YOU RECEIVE ANY REWARDS FOR TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

You may receive some small monetary reward for taking part in the study.

WHAT IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, SUGGESTIONS, CONCERNS, OR COMPLAINTS?

Before you decide whether to accept this invitation to take part in the study, please ask any questions that might come to mind now. Later, if you have questions, suggestions, concerns, or complaints about the study, you can contact the investigator, Lyudmyla Ivanyuk at (270) 403-1252 or lyuda2280@yahoo.com. If you have any questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact the staff in the Office of Research Integrity between the business hours of 8am and 5pm EST, Mon-Fri at the University of Kentucky at 859-257-9428 or toll free at 1-866-400-9428. We will give you a signed copy of this consent form to take with you.

WHAT IF NEW INFORMATION IS LEARNED DURING THE STUDY THAT MIGHT AFFECT YOUR DECISION TO PARTICIPATE?

If the researcher learns of new information in regards to this study, and it might change your willingness to stay in this study, the information will be provided to you. You may

be asked to sign a new informed consent form if the information is provided to you after you have joined the study.

WHAT ELSE DO YOU NEED TO KNOW?

For this study, you can choose whether or not to be identified by your real name. If you do NOT want to use your real name, please sign option 1 below. If you DO want to use your real name, please sign option 2 below. If you change your mind for any reason, at any time, please let the researcher know. You will be asked to sign a new form at that time.

OPTION 1

I do NOT want to use my real name in this study. The researcher must give me a pseudonym (pretend name) to protect my identity.

Signature of person agreeing to take part in the study

Date

Printed name of person agreeing to take part in the study

Name of [authorized] person obtaining informed consent

Date

Signature of Principal Investigator or Sub/Co-Investigator

OPTION 2

I DO want to use my real name in this study. I understand that the researcher may present the information at a conference with my name in it. I also understand that I can change my mind.

Signature of person agreeing to take part in the study

Date

Printed name of person agreeing to take part in the study

Name of [authorized] person obtaining informed consent

Date

Signature of Principal Investigator or Sub/Co-Investigator

APPENDIX B

Course Syllabus and First Unit Outline

ENG 101 Writing I
Spring 2018: MW 11:00- 12:15 pm
Sections: J103/ J111 (77902 / 77914)

MONDAY Rm 303 (Lab) & WEDNESDAY Rm 301

Instructor Information			
Instructor:		Email (<i>preferred contact</i>)	
Office/Mailbox:	AT 101	Office Phone:	
Office Hours:		MW 8:30 – 9:30 1:20 – 1:50;	TR 11:00 - 12:15
Humanities Division Information			
Assistant Dean:	AT 101A		
Coordinator:	AT 101B		
Website:			
Bluegrass Community & Technical College Information			
College Website:	Access Peoplesoft, Blackboard, Email, Info		
College Policies and Resources:	College Contact Info, email, withdrawal, accommodations, Student Code of Conduct, financial aid, emergency closing, tutoring info, etc.		
Blackboard:	Course syllabus and other important course information		

OFFICIAL COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Focus on academic writing. Provides instruction in drafting and revising essays that express ideas in Standard English, including reading critically, thinking logically, responding to texts, addressing specific audiences, researching and documenting sources. Includes review of grammar, mechanics, and usage. NOTES: (a) credit not available by special examination; (b) ENG 101 and ENG 102 may not be taken concurrently. Prerequisites: Appropriate writing placement score or ENC 91.

On successful completion of this course, students can:

1. Write clear and effective prose in several forms, using conventions appropriate to audience including academic audiences, purpose, and genre.
2. Listen and speak competently in a variety of communication contexts, which may include public, interpersonal, and/or small-group settings.

3. Find, analyze, evaluate, and cite pertinent primary and secondary sources, including academic databases, to prepare speeches and written texts.
4. Identify, analyze, and evaluate statements, assumptions, and conclusions representing diverse points of view, construct informed, sustained, and ethical arguments in response.
5. Plan, organize, revise, practice, edit, and proofread to improve the development and clarity of ideas.

COURSE OUTLINE

Provided on separate sheet

COURSE MATERIALS

Required Technology: Computer using WORD or equivalent; access available at college campuses

Required Materials: *The Writer's Presence*, 8th Ed. Donald McQuade and Robert Atwan. Available at the bookstore and copies are on library reserve at [REDACTED].

CLASS POLICIES

Attendance: Students attend all classes. Students more than 15 minutes late on 3 occasions will earn an absence. Five absences will result in an invitation to leave the class. Participation is required and graded.

CHEATING/PLAGIARISM AND DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR POLICY

An effective, well-rounded education requires learner exposure to new, different, and varied ideas, thoughts, concepts, and information. Thus, to facilitate thinking, learning, growth and development, [REDACTED] facilities are learning environments that recognize and respect a diversity of ideas, viewpoints, backgrounds, and people, regardless of whether we personally agree with them. Accordingly, honesty, integrity, openness, and civility are essential tenets of our environment.

As a condition of enrollment in and attendance at any [REDACTED] course, program, or event, all [REDACTED] students accept the Student Code of Conduct and are responsible for knowing, understanding, and complying with the rights, privileges, and obligations contained therein. Ignorance of the Code or its provisions shall not be just cause for violations of this Code.

Students caught cheating or plagiarizing on an assignment, quiz or exam, or assisting another in doing so, will:

- Receive a failing grade on the requirement, and
- Will be reported to the Offices of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs for potential further academic discipline.

Disruptive behavior is not permitted in the course, or in emails sent to the class as a whole, sub-groups or individuals. Examples of disruptive behavior include, but are not limited to:

- Habitually arriving late or leaving early (in-class sections),
- Inflammatory/derogatory verbal or written statements directed at the instructor or another student,
- Excessive discussion of topics not directly related to the content of lecture, and
- Other behavior that disturbs the teaching/learning environment (including non-class related use of technology or doing work for another course during class time).

The instructor reserves the right to classify an activity as disruptive and request that the student cease the behavior. If the disruptive behavior continues after an initial warning the student will be:

- Asked to leave for the day if in-class or in a “live” setting online (such as a chat room),
- Will have their overall course grade reduced by one (1) letter grade (10% of total course grade), and
- Will be reported to the Dean of Student Affairs for potential further disciplinary action.

See [REDACTED] for links providing further information on College Policies regarding cheating, plagiarism and/or disruptive behavior.

CLASS REQUIREMENTS/EXPECTATIONS

Draft and Final Essays	Points	All essays 1500 words	Due date
Essay 1: Descriptive Essay First Draft	50	3 sources	Jan 31
Final Draft	100	3 sources	Feb 12
Essay 2: Compare and Contrast First Draft	100	3 sources	Mar 7
Final Draft	150	3 sources	Mar 21
Essay #3 C& C First Draft	100	4 sources	April 18
Final Draft	150	4 sources	April 30
Participation & class work	100	Due each class as assigned	
Total possible points = 750			

MAKE-UP WORK/LATE WORK:

I do not accept late work. If you know you are going to miss a class, make arrangements beforehand.

COURSE GRADE:

Assignments and Grading. The grade for English 101 will be determined by the assignment and percentages shown below. You must complete all three essays and associated drafts to

pass the class. If you do not complete all essays and associated drafts, you will fail the class which could hurt your chances of receiving financial aid in the future.

Grading Scale

750 – 675	Grade A
674 - 600	Grade B
599 - 525	Grade C
524 - 450	Grade D
< 450	Grade E

A key element of a successful essay is the application of critical revision. It is expected that any final draft that you submit for grading has already been carefully proofread, revised, and edited. Tutors at the Tutoring Center can help you do this.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY:

Withdrawals permitted any time with appropriate paperwork completed by student.

Instructions on how to withdraw from a class: [REDACTED]

Students may withdraw from the class without the instructor's permission up until Midterm. After that time, students may only withdraw with instructor permission. Instructor permission will be granted only if the student maintains active participation in the course. Refer to the [REDACTED] Withdrawal policy for more information on how to withdraw from a course:

COLLEGE POLICIES AND RESOURCES

[REDACTED]

ACCOMMODATIONS: Students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids or services) for a course, must contact [REDACTED]'s Disability Support Services (DSS) Office. Students should not request accommodations directly from the instructor.

- DSS Website: [REDACTED]
- DSS Email: [REDACTED]
- DSS Toll-Free Phone: [REDACTED]

First Unit Outline

ENG 101

Weeks 1-2 Grammar Review, Reading, & Writing Process

Complete in class diagnostic writing sample

Read M&A Introduction for Students: 1 – 22.

Review Standard English and essay components

Help with grammar, syntax and mechanics

<http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/>

Citation systems: <http://www.bluegrass.kctcs.edu/en/Library/Citations.aspx>

Review MLA (videos and online sources)

Video instructions:

<https://youtu.be/24Y31UrG2q4?list=PL4917D9E21FA6EDFF>

<https://youtu.be/EaFcJ3f4fJk?list=PL4917D9E21FA6EDFF>

Website resources:

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/11/>

Review APA (videos and online sources)

Video instructions:

<https://youtu.be/pdAflqRt60c?list=PL8F43A67F38DE3D5D>

<https://youtu.be/HpAOi8-WUY4?list=PL8F43A67F38DE3D5D>

Website resources:

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/10/>

Weeks 2-4

Week Definition : ‘Home’

Read M&A Read: Personal Writing pgs 25 – 33.

Read M&A Read essays by 3 writers:

- Ha Jin: pg 161- 168; Complete responses as assigned
- Manuel Muñoz: 208 – 212; Complete responses as assigned
- Dinaw Mengestu: 202 – 207. Complete responses as assigned

APPENDIX C

In-Depth Phenomenological Semi-Structured Interview Protocol

(Each participant should have already read and discussed the Informed Consent letter with the interviewer and have signed the consent form)

This protocol is to be administered over three sessions.

Revised Interview 1

Life History of a Writer

The purpose is to ask participants to reconstruct their early experiences as writers over years up until the present time. The focus is on understanding how their social and cultural contexts shaped their writing experiences from childhood to adulthood.

I will prepare a timeline template for each participant to use. The template will be on the piece of a chart paper divided into three sections horizontally titled “Childhood,” “Adolescence,” and “Adulthood,” and three columns within each section titled “Family,” “School,” and “Community.” See the example below. Each participant will be invited to fill out the template. If a participant chooses to do it on his or her own, I will give him or her about 20 minutes to do that. Otherwise, the participant will do it in the course of the interview.

I will introduce the timeline activity in the following way: *The purpose of this interview is to learn about your previous experiences with writing as a child, adolescent, and adult. In particular, I am interested in learning about these experiences in three contexts: family, school, and community. On this piece of paper, I would like you to create a timeline showing the writing experiences you remember in the three contexts from different periods of your life.*

Demographic information

- Tell me when and where you were born.
- Describe the place where you grew up.
- How big was your family?
- What is your parents’ level of schooling and occupation? *Did they encourage you to be a good student and to pursue your education at university? How?*
- If you have siblings: What is your siblings’ level of schooling and occupation? *Was education important to them? Why?*
- What schools have you attended in your country and in the U.S.? *Have you been satisfied with your education? What challenges did you encounter? Any surprises about the academic expectations in this country? How did you deal with these challenges?*
- What degrees do you have? When did you receive them?

- What were your past occupations? What about your current occupations? Have you had been employed? Where? What?
- What languages do you speak? Why is it important for you to be fluent in more than one language?
- What languages do you write? How proficient are you in writing in those languages? Why do you think writing in a second language is important?
- When did you arrive in the U.S.?
- What brought you here?

Early childhood memories (these memories would probably be within family and community)

- What are your earliest memories of seeing other people writing? Probe: What did they write? Where? How? Why?
- What are your earliest memories of writing yourself? Probe: What did you write? Where? How? Why?
- What are your earliest memories of direct writing instruction? (i.e., Earliest memories of learning writing from others.) How did others (teachers, parents, friends) encourage you to write?
- What are your earliest memories of indirect writing instruction? (i.e., Earliest memories of learning writing on your own.) Was personal writing important for you? Why?
- What are your earliest memories of occasions associated with writing? Did you enjoy writing? What did you want to communicate in writing? Did writing skills satisfy you? Empower you? Why? How?
- What are your earliest memories of people associated with writing? How did people respond to your writing? Did they like what you wrote? Respond in any way?
- What are your earliest memories of the kinds of materials available for writing?
- How did you get those materials (i.e., pens, pencils, computer, etc.)?
- Did you share your writing with family, friends, teachers?
- Did you use any technology?

Writing at School

- What are your memories of writing at school?
- What are your memories of the kinds of writing you did at school? Tests, essays, creative writing (poems, stories)?
- What are your memories of direct instruction? Did you enjoy instruction about writing? Did your teachers make it interesting? Boring? Hard? Fun?
- What are your memories of self-instruction? Did you find time at home to write? Why? Why not?
- What are your memories of peer-instruction? Did your friends enjoy writing to each other?

- How did you review your written works? Did you have special friends with whom you shared your writing?
- What were the audiences of school-based writing? Did teachers ask you to read your writing to your classmates?
- What knowledge did you draw upon when you worked on writing assignments at school? *Did you write about the books you had read? Tel me more about it. Did you write about personal experiences? Tel me more about it. Did you have a desire to express your feelings and opinions in writing? Tel me more about it.*
- What resources did you use when you worked on writing assignments at school?
- What kinds of materials did you use for school-based writing (i.e., pens, pencils, computer, etc)?
- What kinds of materials were not available to you?
- Did you use any technology? How?
- Who read what you wrote? What purpose? What responses do you remember?
- Did your teachers grade your writing? *How did you feel about your grades (evaluations): encouraged or discouraged? Why?*

Writing with peers or other people in the community

- What are your memories of sharing writing with peers or other people in the community? Who did you write to?
- What are your memories of writing to friends? How did they respond? Did you enjoy writing to friends?
- What are your memories of writing in play?
- What are your memories of seeing peers or other people in the community writing? Was writing a boring task for your peers or was it an important skill?
- What are your memories of reading your friends' writing?
- Did you ever publish something you wrote? (school newspaper, play, editorial publication?) Tell me more about it.
- Did you ever publish something you wrote? (school newspaper, play, editorial publication?) Tell me more about it.

Extracurricular Writing

- Do you have any memories of organizations in the community where you grew up (i.e. not school-related) that involved writing? If so, tell me about them.
- Do you have any memories of extracurricular activities (e.g. writing contests) that involved writing? If so, tell me about them.
- Did such memories encourage you to express yourself in writing?
- Do you have favorite authors? Who? Why? What did you learn from them?

Self-initiated writing

- What kinds of self-initiated writing did you do?
- What were your purposes for self-initiated writing (i.e., not school-related; writing that you do on your own) as a child, adolescent, and adult?
- What genres (i.e., kinds) of self-initiated writing did you do as a child, adolescent, and adult?
- Who was your audience at each of these stages?
- What kind of teaching was involved in each of these stages?
- What kind of learning was involved in each of these stages?

Writing in the community college

- What kinds of writing do you do at ____?
- What are your purposes for writing at ____?
- Who is your audience?
- What kind of help besides ENG 101 and the Writing Workshops do you receive to help you with writing? How do you get that help? When?
- What kind of learning do you do to help yourself with writing? How do you do that?

Writing in the family domain in the U.S.

- What kinds of writing do you do in your family in the U.S.?
- What are your purposes for writing?
- Who is your audience?
- What kind of help do you receive to help you with writing? How do you get that help? When?

Writing in the community domain in the U.S.

- What kinds of writing do you do in the community in the U.S.?
- What are your purposes for writing?
- Who is your audience?
- What kind of help do you receive to help you with writing? How do you get that help? When?

Interview 2 Details of Present Writing Experiences

The purpose is to ask participants to reconstruct their present lived experiences as adult English learners in the essay genre within their current cultural and social contexts. The focus is on understanding how their current social and cultural contexts shape them as adult writers.

1. Tell me how you approached to structure your essay:
 - Who was your audience? Why?
 - Introduction: Why did you include this information?
 - Thesis statement: How did you come with this statement? Why?
 - Which variables did you include? Why?

- Why did you include this information in your conclusion?
2. Tell me what you find helpful and what you did not find helpful about instruction you received in the class. Why?
 3. What was difficult? What was easy? Why?
 4. You took these kinds of notes _____. How did they help you with essay writing?
 5. What kind of learning did you do outside the class/on your own? Please describe how you did it. Where? Why?
 6. What resources (i.e., online, Youtube videos, books, magazines, newspapers, etc) did you use to help you with this essay? How did you choose them? Why was it important for you to use these resources?
 7. Who besides Dr. _____ (i.e., the professor) helped you with your essay? Describe how they helped you. Why did you need this kind of help?
 8. What kind of feedback did they provide? How did it make you feel?
 9. How did you review your essay? What did you do? Why?
 10. What knowledge about the essay genre and writing did you already have before you started working on this essay? What did you already know about the essay genre and what you already could do?
 11. What kinds of materials were not available to you? How would they help you if you had access to them?
 12. What challenges did you face while working on this essay? Why?
 13. How did you approach to resolve them?
 14. While working on this essay, what did you do differently from what you learned about how to write essays before? Why?
 15. While working on this essay, what did you do similar to what you learned about how to write essays before? Why?
 16. When you were learning how to write essays back in your home country (Raphael: high school in the U.S.), how did you define the essay genre at that time? What metaphor could you use to describe it?
 17. How do you define the essay genre now? What metaphor could you use to describe it?

Interview 3

Reflections on the Meaning of Writing Experiences

The purpose is to ask participants to reflect on what they as writers are doing now by inviting them to make intellectual and emotional connections between what they do as writers and their lives.

1. Did this assignment help create a new understanding about the differences and similarities between the culture of your country (including cultural values, social norms and writing practices) and the American culture?
2. Academic writing is highly valued and widely practiced in American institutions. How did your previous experiences with writing help you make transition into this culture?
3. How did your previous writing experiences prepare you for what you do as a writer in college these days?

4. How have all of your writing experiences shaped you as a writer?
5. How does what you do as a writer contribute to your role as a college student?
How does what you do as a writer contribute to your role as a friend? How does what you do as a writer contribute to your role as a family member? How does what you do as a writer contribute to your role as a community member?
6. How satisfied are you with your writing skills in general? How satisfied are you with your writing in the essay genre?
7. What does writing competence mean to you?
8. Professionally and personally speaking, where do you see yourself in 5 years or 10 years? How does writing an essay like this help you envision the role you will play in society?
9. What metaphors or analogies would you use to describe your growth as a writer in their native languages? Also, what metaphors or analogies would you use to describe your growth as a writer in English?
10. Do you wish to add anything about the meaning of these experiences?

Potential Probes

Clarify what they said

- Say what you mean by [term or phrase]
- It sounds like you are saying, "...". Is that a fair summary?
- So you are saying ...? [any time you paraphrase what you think your interviewee said, you need to be sure and ask them if your paraphrase accurately captures what they meant]

Get more details

- Tell me more about that.
- Can you give me an example?
- What would that look like?
- How did you do that?
- Can you tell me more about that?
- What did _____ (involved people) doing?
- If I were watching you do this, what would I see?

Get their feelings, thoughts, and rationale

- Why was that important to you?
- Why does that stand out in your memory?
- Why do you think you noticed that?
- Why did that matter?
- What motivated you?
- How did you feel about that?
- What was significant about this to you?

APPENDIX D

Timeline Template

Childhood		
Family	School	Community

Adolescence		
Family	School	Community

Adulthood		
Family	School	Community

APPENDIX E

Collected Artifacts

Lilly	Soso	Riya	Martin
Name: Timeline Date: March 24	Name: Timeline Date: March 25	Name: Timeline Name: Nepali letter image Date: March 21	Name: Timeline Date: March 25
Name: In-Class notes (1) Name: Pages of MLK's letter Date: March 21 Name: Pages of MLK's letter Date: March 26	Name: Outline Name: In-class notes (9) Date: March 21 Name: In-class notes Name: Essay draft Date: March 26	Name: In-class notes Date: March 26 Name: In-class notes Name: Speech by ML Name: Out-of-class observation notes Date: March 28	Name: In-class notes Name: Letter by MLK Date: March 21 Name: In-class notes Name: Notebook Name: Out-of-class observation notes Name: Out-of-class paragraph work Date: March 26
Name: In-class notes Name: Speech by ML Date: March 28 Name: Homework Date: March 30	Name: In-class notes Name: Speech by ML Date: March 28 Name: In-class notes Name: Speech by ML Date: April 2	Name: Letter to the professor Name: Speech by ML Date: April 2 Name: Grammar worksheet Name: Notes Date: April 4	Name: Speech by ML Date: March 28 Name: Letter to the professor Name: Notebook Name: Essay introduction Date: April 2
Name: Letter to the Professor Name: Essay draft Name: Body paragraph Date: April 2 Name: Grammar worksheet Name: Essay draft Date: April 4	Name: Essay draft Date: April 4 Name: Essay draft Name: Peer Review Date: April 11	Name: Peer review paper Name: Essay introduction Date: April 11 Name: Essay drafts Date: April 16	Name: Grammar worksheet Date: April 4 Name: Essay draft Name: Paragraphs Name: Speech by ML Name: Youtube video image Date: April 9

Name: Paragraphs Date: April 8	Name: Essay with feedback Name: Essay draft Date: April 16	Name: Essay with feedback and grade Date: April 23	Name: Essay draft Name: Martin's feedback on the classmate's essay Date: April 11
Name: Essay draft Date: April 9	Name: Essay draft Date: April 17	Name: Final essay Name: Poem in English Date: June 4	Name: Essay draft Date: April 16
Name: Peer review paper Date: April 11 Name: Essay draft with some feedback Name: Essay draft Date: April 16 Name: Essay draft Date: April 18	Name: Essay draft Date: April 18 Name: Essay draft with a grade and feedback Date: April 23 Name: Memory book page Date: March 24, 2019 Name: Personal message Date: March 25, 2019		Name: Essay draft Date: April 18 Name: Final essay Date: May 17
Name: Essay draft with feedback and grade Date: April 23 Name: Essay draft Date: April 25 Name: Pre-final essay Date: April 27 Name: Final essay Date: June 3 Name: Sample of writing from fall 2017 Date: Nd Name: Written examples completed in ESL classes Date: November 6 Name: Online resource example Date: November 11 Name: Examples of types ideas Date: November 11			

Name: Riya's essay

Date: November 11

Name: A

screenshot of

Youtube video with

ML

Date: November 11

Name: A

screenshot of

business in Haiti

Date: November 16

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- Yin, R. K. (2016). *Qualitative Research from Start to Finish* (2nd ed.). New York: The Guilford Press.
- Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods* (6th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Yoon, H. J. (2016). Association strength of verb-noun combinations in experienced NS and less experienced NNS writing: Longitudinal and cross-sectional findings. *Journal of Second Language Writing* 34, 42–57.
- Zhu, W. (2001). Performing argumentative writing in English: difficulties, processes, and strategies. *TESL Canada Journal*, 19, 34-50.

Lyudmyla Ivanyuk

Vita

EDUCATION

- University of Kentucky** 2013 – December, 2019 (expected)
Ed.D. - Instruction and Administration (emphasis on Literacy Education)
- Dissertation title: Learning to Write in the Essay Genre: Adult English Learners' Use of Sociocultural Resources
- Campbellsville University** 2012
M.A.- Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
- Northwest Nazarene University** 2010
M.Ed. - Educational Leadership
- Kyiv National Linguistic University, Kiev, Ukraine** 2003
Specialist of Language (English and German) and Literature,
Teacher of English, German, and Foreign Literature

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

GRADUATE-LEVEL TEACHING

- Supervisor, Literacy Clinic** Summer 2016
University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky
- Teaching Assistant** Fall 2013 – Spring 2014
Literacy Clinic
University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky

UNDERGRADUATE TEACHING

- Primary Instructor** Fall 2016, Spring 2017
Teaching Reading and Language Arts
University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky
- Teaching Assistant** Fall 2015, Spring 2016
Elementary Practicum,
University of Kentucky
- Teaching Assistant** Spring 2016
Teaching Reading & Language Arts
University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky

Primary Instructor. Designing a Reading and Language Arts Program for the Elementary School University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky	Fall 2015
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Teacher of English Kyiv National Linguistic University, Kyiv, Ukraine	2003 – 2008
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TEACHER SUPERVISIONS

Student Teacher Supervisor Elementary Education Program University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky	Spring 2017
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Elementary Practicum Supervisor Elementary Education Program University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky	October, 2015
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Elementary Practicum Supervisor University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky	Fall 2014 - Spring 2015
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OTHER RELEVANT TEACHING

ESL Instructor Language Center for English as a Second Language University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky	Fall 2019 - present
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ESL Volunteer ESL Program at BCTC, Lexington, KY	2017 – 2018
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ESL Volunteer Operation Read, Carnegie Center for Literacy, Lexington, KY	Spring 2017
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Microteaching Group Leader University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky	August, 2012; August, 2016; January, 2017
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Volunteer Tutor ESL Program at BCTC, Lexington, KY	Fall 2016
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Instructor 2016 Gear Up Program University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky	July, 2016
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ESL Volunteer Operation Read, Carnegie Center, Lexington, KY	June, 2016
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Teaching Assistant Gear Up Program University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky	July, 2015
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ESL Instructor Language Center for English as a Second Language University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky	Summer 2014
ESL Instructor Center for English as a Second Language University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky	2012 - 2013
Volunteer ESL Co-Teacher Community ESL classes, Lexington, Kentucky	Fall 2012 – Spring 2013
ESL Instructor English as a Second Language Institute Campbellsville University, Campbellsville, Kentucky	2010 - 2012
Teaching Assistant ESL program Northwest Nazarene University, Nampa, Idaho	Fall 2009

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant Project PLACE University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky	October, 2017 – August, 2019
Research Assistant Culturally Responsive Instruction Project University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky	2014 – 2015
Research Assistant, Functional Literacy Project University of Kentucky	2014 – 2015
Graduate Assistant Education Department Northwest Nazarene University, Nampa, Idaho	2008 – 2010

PUBLICATIONS

*Indicates peer-reviewed publications

- *Perry, K. H., Shaw, D. M., **Ivanyuk, L.**, & Tham, Y. S. S. (2018). The “Ofcourseness” of Functional Literacy: Ideologies in Adult Literacy. *Journal of Language and Literacy Education*, 50(1), 74-96. doi: 10.1177/1086296X17753262
- *Perry, K. H., Shaw, D. M., **Ivanyuk, L.**, & Tham, Y. S. S. (2017). Adult functional literacy: Prominent themes, glaring omissions, and future directions. *Journal of Language and Literacy Education*, 13(2), 1-37.
- *Shaw, D. M., Perry, K. H., **Ivanyuk, L.**, Tham, Y. S. S. (2017). Who researches functional literacy? *Community Literacy Journal* 11(2), 43-64. doi:10.1353/clj.2017.0003

Cantrell, S., Correll, P., Malo-Juvera, V., Cornelius, C., & **Ivanyuk, L.** (2015). *Culturally responsive instruction observation protocol (CRIOP). Professional Development: Year 3. Program Evaluation.* University of Kentucky.

Cantrell, S. C., Correll, P., Malo-Juvera, V., & **Ivanyuk, L.** (2014). *Evaluation of CRIOP professional development, 2013-2014.* Report prepared for the U.S. Department of Education Office of English Language Acquisition, Washington, D.C.

Studenets, G.I., & **Ivanyuk, L. B.** (2007) *Methodology recommendation for the history of English language.* Kyiv: Kyiv National Linguistic University/Lenvit.

Fedorova, Y., **Ivanyuk, L.**, Korolchuk, V., & Yemets, N. (2006). *The catchers in the rhyme.* Kyiv: Kyiv National Linguistic University/Lenvit.

PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS

REFEREED NATIONAL

Perry, K. H. & **Ivanyuk, L.** (2017, December). *Meaningful Literacies for Nurturing Family: Expanded Notions of Family Literacy from a Cross-Case Analysis.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Literacy Research Association, Tampa, FL.

Perry, K.H. & **Ivanyuk, L.** (2016, December). *Literacy with and on behalf of the family: A cross-case analysis of adults' practices.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Literacy Research Association, Nashville, TN.

Shaw, D. M., Perry, K. H., **Ivanyuk, L.**, Tham, Y. S. S. (2016, December). *Who researches functional literacy?: Mobilizing research across disciplinary boundaries.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Literacy Research Association, Nashville, TN.

Susan, C., Correll, P., Malo-Juvera, V., Powell, R., & **Ivanyuk, L.** (2016, December). *Moving in the Right Direction on the Way to Transformation: The Impact of Coaching- Based Professional Learning on Teachers' Efficacy and Practice With Culturally Responsive Literacy Instruction.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Literacy Research Association, Nashville, TN.

Perry, K. H., Shaw, D. M., **Ivanyuk, L.**, Tham, S. (2015, December). *Reimagining Functional Literacy: Insights from a Systematic Literature Review.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Literacy Research Association, Carlsbad, CA.

REFEREED STATE

Ivanyuk, L. (October, 2017). *A Review of Recent Scholarship on Writing Development for Second Language Adults.* Poster presented at the KY TESOL conference.

Ivanyuk, L. (November, 2011). *A Self-Questioning Strategy to Guide Paragraph Writing: ESL Experience.* Paper presented at INTESOL conference, Indianapolis, Indiana.

Ivanyuk, L. (October, 2009). *Perceived Parental Involvement and Support and Undergraduate Students' Academic Achievements*. Paper presented at the meeting of Northern Rocky Mountain Educational Research Association, Jackson Hole, Wyoming.

STUDENT CONFERENCES

Ivanyuk, L. (March, 2019). *Learning to Write in an Academic Genre: Adult English Learners' Use of Sociocultural Resources*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Students Research Conference, Lexington, KY.

Ivanyuk, L. (February, 2005). *Literature Awareness*. Paper presented at the REDES seminar, Hintersee, Germany.