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# Enculturation Pedagogy

Robert Lane Rockett

*Kennesaw State University*, [rockett.robert@gmail.com](mailto:rockett.robert@gmail.com)

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Enculturation Pedagogy

By

Robert Lane Rockett

A capstone project submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in  
Professional Writing in the Department of English

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Certificate of Approval

This is to certify that the Capstone Project of

Robert Lane Rockett

has been approved by the committee  
for the capstone requirement for

the Master of Arts in Professional Writing  
in the Department of English

Summer, 2016  
at the (month and year) graduation

Capstone committee:

Mary Lou Odom  
Member

Todd Harper  
Member

Note: Submitted to [digitalcommons@kennesaw.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@kennesaw.edu) for Sturgis Library listing.

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **I. An Introduction to Enculturation Pedagogy**

As instructors, it is very clear to us that our students all come from different backgrounds, different places, and different social environments. Some students are returning to college as they change vocations, while others are entering a brand new environment quite different from those they may have encountered in previous scholastic endeavors, whether they come from another country or even a somewhat different part of the United States. Much like travelers entering a foreign land, a student begins writing for the academic environment while trying to adopt the customary expressions, rhetorical choices, and language used in order to meet the expectations of those already well-versed in the numerous academic discourses. First year composition courses tend to be the gateway to the varied academic disciplines students wish to enter, and we, as their instructors, help them to understand and develop within the new environment by giving them the tools they need. However, a student doesn't always make a successful adjustment to the new environment as she struggles to find a new voice in a new culture.

Often, international students face issues acculturating to colleges in countries far from home. Some students face a sense of ineffectiveness when failing to meet academic standards, expectations for written work, or even high expectations from peers (McLachlan 29-30); this can lead to issues with self-efficacy. Other students struggle with identifying their own roles within the new environment, feeling uncertain how to establish themselves and identify themselves within the new culture (Saylag 534-535). Finally, some students have issues working through the new language as anxiety from trying to adapt to the new culture interferes with language acquisition (McIntyre 93-96).

Looking at the problems international students face, it is hard to imagine students would face similar problems adjusting to new environments at home, but they do.

Here, many of our students coming from American high schools face similar issues as they learn to adjust to the college environment. Research has shown that students struggle with efficacy-issues as they try to establish their own authority within the academic discourses (Adams; Brunning; Martinez, Kock, & Cass; Macle; Rogers; Rose “Rigid Rules”; Woodrow). Other studies point out how students may have problems developing identities as academics when trying to write within academic discourses (Fishman et al; Melzer and Zemliansky; Lunsford, Fishman, and Liew). Other scholars have shown how our students might struggle trying to write using academic vernacular for the various discourses (Bartholomae “Inventing the University”, Marriot, White & Ali-Khan). These problems seem to share similar origins in how students adjust to the academic environment and writing in its many discourses.

Few theories that examine student difficulties negotiating academic discourse communities, developing identities as writers, understanding the academic audience they write for, and working through writer’s block tend to deal with these issues as elements of a greater problem: how does the student connect to and establish themselves within the academic environment while developing a sense of identity as a writer through negotiating their understanding of the greater audiences in the new environment? In a sense, these problems mirror the same problems faced by people who enter a foreign land faced with a foreign language amid foreign cultural expectations. In many cases, these people face symptoms similar to culture shock: a breakdown in trying to acclimate, understand, and develop an identity within an unfamiliar culture with unfamiliar

expectations and modes of expression. In short, if we see our students entering college as if they are also entering an unfamiliar environment with new ways of writing and thinking within the academic environment, then we should start looking at ways to help them adjust much like a process of enculturation. Enculturation is when a person in an unfamiliar culture develops the linguistic tools and behavioral skills to adapt to it and thrive as a part of it.

Enculturation pedagogy is a matter of looking at our students first year composition experiences as part of a process of acclimating to the college environment, to their roles as academics, and to new expectations while preparing them for the many discourses found within the academic disciplines of their respective majors. Students, like travelers to foreign lands and cultures, enter the university facing new expectations and ideas for which many frequently find themselves ill-prepared. They might struggle as they learn to speak and write amid the expectations found within the discourse communities. Their identities may be challenged as they face new roles as academics. They may even struggle to develop confidence, self-efficacy, or ownership of their texts amid the many other voices in academia.

This pedagogy has its roots in culture shock studies, because the process of enculturation has been widely studied to help those who face difficulties adjusting to foreign cultures. Travelers to foreign lands, people facing drastic changes within their own cultures, and people entering unfamiliar subcultures of their own societies all face similar transitional phases as they slowly learn to adapt to the new environment (Spradley 521). Theorists have separated this transition into four distinct phases: the Honeymoon Phase, the Culture Shock or Crisis Phase, the Adjustment or Reorientation Phase, and the

Adaptation or Acculturation Phase. Each of these phases characterize different types of reactions to the new culture and are sequential and cyclic, returning from adaptation to culture shock and back to adjustment as new crises are faced (Oberg 142-144, Winkelman 122). Individuals build roles, identities, and behaviors to fit within the new culture.

Culture is the sum total of experiences, language, inflections, behavior patterns, customs, diet, etiquette, and social interaction that comprises what any individual uses as a lens to view the world. E.H. Schein describes culture as:

the pattern of basic assumptions that a given group has invented, discovered, or developed in learning to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, and that have worked well enough to be considered valid, and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to these problems. (qtd. in Hatch 671)

Thus, a given group builds a series of expectations based on how it learns to cope with the problems of its environment and social integrity which are then taught to new members so that they might learn to adapt not only to the world around them but to the ways that the group expects things to be done and perceived. These assumptions can include but are not limited to how symbols are utilized such as language, behavioral patterns, traditions, clothing styles, food preparation, designing shelter, music, and writing.

Within the domain of culture is the notion of subculture, a subset of the larger culture that includes deviations in some but not all of the assumptions and expectations

the larger culture carries, especially in comparison to other subcultures within it. One example of a subculture found in the U.S. would be the high school academic environment while still another subculture might be the college academic environment. These subcultures contain the same language, but many of the expectations for their members are quite different. High school students follow a series of specific expectations set by the school boards, Department of Education, school administration, teachers, and students. These expectations include acceptable practices in the classroom, formats for assignments, acceptable forms of language and dress, and expectations for written communication. As we are well aware, these expectations are quite different on the college campus.

Another important aspect of culture is the series of embedded uses of language, expectations for expression, activities, identities, and socially-based group conventions; James Paul Gee refers to these means of communication and the social group that uses them as Discourse, with a big D. This definition includes the people and practices that make up these groups that continue through time (Gee 2). The other aspect of social communication is the language currently in use and the common expectations that surround it, discourse, with a small d (Gee 1). For our purposes, discourse refers to the specific language in use by groups, academic disciplines, and the expectations that surround communicating within that discipline.

Critics of enculturation pedagogy might argue that it is grounded on research on psychological and sociological issues people face when traversing from one culture into another and as such might bear little relevance on composition. While it is based on research within these disciplines, these theories provide insight into cognitive and

emotional issues that people face as they learn new expectations and languages in unfamiliar environments as well as ways to aid people in adjusting to these conditions (Alvez et al, Furham, Lombard, Malachowski, Oberg, Piet-Pelon & Hornby, Spradley, Winkelman, Zhou et al). Studies in composition have shown that writing is an extension of language and thus an extension of the writer's various discourse communities and the inherent ideologies that produce them (Bartholomae, Berlin, Canagarajah, Elbow, Freire, Gee, Hyland, Lu, Pratt, Scott). Other scholars have described how the writer develops a voice, identity, and sense of self-efficacy within those discourses (Bizzel, Elbow, Lunsford & Ede, Magnifico, Martinez, Romano).

Accepting that the writing, dialects, cultural expectations, ideologies, and discourses inherent to one culture or subculture will be different from those of other cultures or subcultures, then those differences are what make it no surprise that our students face various difficulties with writing as they try to negotiate academic discourses with far different expectations and forms of expression from those discourses they faced prior to college (Bartholomae, Crick, Fishman et al, Gee, Harris, Post).

If we consider the college environment as a subculture of the larger nation that houses it, then it is clear that students transitioning from the high school subculture might face the same sort of culture shock to some degree as those students studying abroad. This complex interaction of anxieties and reactions can also occur as transitioning students face different pedagogical styles from varied classroom environments quite different from those they are accustomed to (Jack, Sommers & Saltz 140). The curriculum, homework, writing assignments, and approaches found in many high school classes might seem vastly different from college as public high school instructors are

highly accountable for meeting state standards for average performance in the classroom versus college level instruction with places most of the weight of achievement in the hands of the students. All of the aforementioned issues faced within culture shock can lead to three distinct Culture Shock reactions: Personal Shock, Role Shock, and Cognitive Fatigue.

In some instances, students of one subculture can face culture shock when entering another. In one study of two groups of lower-income black American students entering an elite American undergraduate institution, Anthony Abraham Jack found that as a result of class marginalization that some of the subjects actually faced culture shock as they tried to acclimate to their surroundings. The subjects faced personal shock as they isolated themselves from the surrounding students and community. They faced role shock as they could not find ways to identify themselves as members of the student population and lost sense of their identities. If English-speaking American students from a different subculture can face culture shock when entering a university, then we should start looking at enculturation pedagogy to help our students negotiate the expectations for writing within new academic discourses while developing strong identities as writers with a supportive sense of self-efficacy.

It is clear that not all students entering the university will suffer a form of culture shock as they begin the enculturation process, but using methods to help our students acclimate to the college environment could help even those students who do not face a form of shock as they develop stronger writing to address academic discourses. I have developed several approaches based on culture shock theory and composition studies for helping our students who struggle with several different issues in first year programs.

Students need a developing sense of self-efficacy, a toolset for working with new discourse practices, a means for understanding the new roles they face as developing academics, and a platform for discussing the new practices in the academic environment that helps them develop their identities as writers. To that end, we should incorporate a combination of methods to help them through the process of acclimating to the college discourses and expectations: the analytical notebook; assigned reflection essays; and peer-based workshops and student-facilitated discussions.

## **II. The Analytical Notebook**

First, I recommend that our students develop an analytical notebook, whether physical or digital, where they would reflect on various differences in expectations for writing from high school through their first year college experiences. Unlike a journal or diary which would record day to day observations and personal notes, this notebook is to have objective and descriptive assessments of the writing practices those students face and how their expectations may have shifted regarding those practices as the semester progresses. For example, students could begin the journal writing about what they were expected to accomplish for high school writing assignments and how those assignments were graded. Later, they could write about their own expectations for what college assignments will be. In time, they could reflect on the differences, if any, between the high school assignments, what they expected for college assignments, and how their first college assignment compared to their previous entries. This notebook could be an ongoing process for the rest of the semester, used to analyze not only assignments but also compare their own work to models of academic writing.

The point behind this notebook is to give the students a chance to see their own previously accepted roles as writers in high school, what they expect of their role as an academic writer, and shifts in how their understanding of those roles change throughout the semester. This concept of roles and understanding them has its roots in the notion of role shock in culture shock theory.

For someone under the effects of culture shock, role shock can result from a drastic change in social context that forces the individual to leave behind previously assumed roles leading to the loss of identity due to a newfound dependence on authority figures, ambiguity with personal identity, or adopting new roles inconsistent with those she may have taken on before (Winkelman 123). This can lead to confusion about her social position, the loss of prior roles, and a deeper sense of dependence on an authority figure in the new environment. Similar to role shock, students face problems with self-efficacy issues or even a lack of ownership on their writing as the foundations they developed in their previous assumed roles as high school students have given way to college-level expectations.

The analytical notebook is based on the analytical notebook suggested by Tony Magistrale and Kenneth Wagner in *Writing Across Culture*. Wagner and Magistrale suggest that students studying abroad keep an analytical notebook for reflecting on their activities and the differences faced when within a new culture (44-55). However, the notebook for students in a composition course is meant to be more focused on roles and expectations as writers from high school through their first year of college. Further, we could encourage students to later reflect back on these materials as they work through

their upper level subjects as a means of seeing the overall changes in their roles as academic writers.

The notebook provides an opportunity for students to record moments, observations of their experiences, and points of contact for new encounters with discourse. The notebook also serves as data for students to draw from when reflecting on different changes in their writing and their developing identities, but it is important to assign reflections with specific goals in mind to help students through that process.

### **III. Assigned Reflection Essays**

The analytical notebook is just one tool for helping our students to better understand their developing roles as writers and the discursive practices they use; I also recommend focused reflection essays for the students based on the analytical notebook and feedback from their assignments throughout the semester. The first reflection essay would be a short but focused assignment where the student examines the high school expectations for their work, compares it to the expectations they assumed for college, and finally utilizes feedback from their first essay assignment in the class to determine what changes have occurred in their writing and their expectations for college writing. As another example, the second essay would be a reflection on what the student perceives for their own development as they progress through the major assignment and in-class workshops as compared to their first reflection. Their final reflection essay would be an in-class writing toward the end of the semester to examine their journeys as writers and to review what they have discovered about writing for college level courses. They would finish this essay with what expectations they have for future coursework as they continue their paths through college. For our students, this series of reflections could be brief but

important metacognitive practices of self-assessment to develop confidence in their growing abilities.

This series of reflection essays is based on psychosynthesis, a counseling technique used to help study abroad students examine their own identities within the new culture and how they can develop roles to better adapt to it. In using psychosynthesis to treat culture shock, therapists help the subject to identify with their emotions, environment, personality, and physical state by having them separate their identity from the physical state they are in while redefining themselves as a conscious entity who is in control of their emotions, immediate environment, personality, and physical state rather than someone who reacts to them (Lombard 177). Put simply, the subjects are taught to see themselves as actors in the environment as opposed to victims of their environment.

For our composition students, this adaptation serves to help them develop their identities as academics and to see how they successfully apply their skills as writers. They become active writers who understand their developing capabilities as opposed to any passive self-imposed student roles. Finally, it gives the students a more objective view of their own writing by giving them the tools to further analyze how they write and why.

When reflection writing is combined with peer support activities, the combination helps to reinforce insights gained from reflection with affirmation from peers as students see changes in their work as writers. To that end, students could use peer-based workshops and student facilitated discussions in conjunction with their reflections.

#### **IV. Peer-based Workshops and Student Facilitated Discussions**

Student writers in many college composition classes already utilize peer-review workshops for developing drafts as they progress through assignments, but the same workshopping methods should be used to analyze models of academic writing, to develop group analyses of the different discourses found in academia, and to develop a series of student-led workshops for dealing with concerns and errors within their assignments.

Student-led workshops are already used in many different writing centers for handling different writing problems, but applying this practice in the classroom helps students develop a stronger sense of community which in turn gives the students a peer-support base for working through assignments. It would begin with a skills inventory checklist administered early in the semester, preferably after their first assignment; this checklist would help students to identify their strengths and weaknesses in writing. Those students with particular strengths, such as being able to write effective transitions, could moderate discussion threads or in-class workshops to help other students who struggle with their areas of expertise. This activity would help students to identify their own ability as writers and give them an opportunity to develop confidence in their writing skills.

Student facilitated discussions, either online or in-class, are a viable means for analyzing characteristics of academic writing models and for discourse analysis. In these discussions, the teacher would serve as a consultant as the students examine academic articles for rhetorical practices, stylistic approaches, and differences from the students' own discursive practices. They could also utilize this time to examine assignment sheets from this class and other upper-level subjects to see the variances in expectations as well

as to decode different ways assignments are given. Students would be encouraged to engage this activity as part of a participation grade for the course.

This practice is meant to help students develop their own voices within academic environments as they work with one another to better understand the academic environment and the work they engage. It is also meant to give students a place to develop their identities as academics without struggling under the teacher/student power dynamic. This approach changes the traditional power dynamic between teacher-controller and student-responder to a more dialogic relationship of interaction rather than instruction and reaction. Thus, the students can focus less on their self-imposed roles as students and more on their roles as developing academics and writers.

These student-led workshops and student facilitated discussions are derived from Robert Brooke's concept of underlife and Mary Louis Pratt's notion of the contact zone. Robert Brooke describes underlife as an environment that supports "a whole stance towards their social world that questions it, explores it, writes about it" (731). Similarly, Mary Lois Pratt's contact zones are defined as places where "cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power" (Pratt 34). The highly asymmetrical relation of power occurs between the priority of the academic discourse over those of the students. This power relationship forges a focus on developing an identity that fits within the new discourse based on unfamiliar rules of expression. In both cases, the power relationships are muted by allowing the students to moderate the discussions leaving the instructor in more of an advisory capacity.

The practice of developing a contact zone in the classroom was used previously by A. Suresh Canagarajah. Canagarajah conducted an introductory writing course for

ethnic minority students entering the university the following fall with the focus on inducting the students gradually into the academic culture in order to raise retention rates among these students (174). This course was constructed around the idea that the classroom was a safe house (Pratt 40) where the students could evaluate, construct, deconstruct, argue, and develop their understanding of how they fit culturally into the university and maintained a “a sensitivity to the vernacular discourses and communicative conventions minority students bring to the classroom, while enabling them to gradually cross discourse boundaries and get acquainted with the academic conventions”(175). In this environment, student produced texts (drafts, emails, discussion threads) were compared with texts produced within academic discourses to see how each approached argument and what style of writing was present for the different rhetorical situations. He found that the students analyzed the placement of language and how it was prioritized with specific expectations in each discourse; he also saw that his students further realized that academic discourses might be necessary for successfully completing their degrees, but the power relationships between their own discourses and those within the academy would eventually lead to deracination of their expressive discourses (189). The students also understood they had pragmatic limits to how much they could rebel against the academy through writing. They also developed partial but “significant insights into a wide variety of discursive issues: contrasting rhetorical conventions, linguistic features, ideologies, socio-political ramifications, and implications for identity and group solidarity” (190-191). The safe house provided an environment for these beginning academic writers to not only engage academic discourse, but also helped to develop a lens with which to view discursive practices.

Canagarajah argues that this pedagogical approach in the classroom can “play a significant role in providing the critical distance, the oppositional stance, and the personal space needed to help students find a voice for themselves in academic discourse” (192). Our digital teaching and learning environments provide a number of ways we can offer such places for our students to interact and question discursive practices through discussion threads, active chat rooms, and collaborative writing projects.

Enculturation pedagogy provides us with ways of working through student difficulties with issues such as developing roles as academic writers, understanding ways to engage the academic discourses, and analyzing their own writing as it develops. It is clear that not all students face difficulty adjusting to college writing and their roles as developing academics, but the collaborative work in these methods gives them all a chance to help one another develop as writers. While it is clear that this pedagogy is rooted in culture shock studies and composition, we will now look at how it fits within some of the other relevant composition scholarship.

## **Chapter 2: Composition and Enculturation Pedagogy**

There has been much debate over how we should prepare students to engage writing for academic pursuits. Students face a wide range of difficulties as they enter first year programs and beyond. They struggle with issues such as getting their writing to fit in among the various expectations found among competing discourses, forging an identity of authority as an academic while developing their own individual voices, and learning the modes of expression required by the various academic communities found within the disciplines. Our students deserve ways not only to deal with these issues, but also a platform within which they can approach these issues as part of enculturating to the academic environment.

While culture shock theory provides insights on how students might struggle while facing cultural issues of adaptation, language, and new expectations, composition theory has an extensive tradition at looking student problems with writing under similar circumstances. What follows is a brief examination of relevant composition scholarship and how it ties into the acculturation process for our first year students. I will look at how composition views the way students have to fit their writing into various expectations, how they forge an academic identity, and how they learn the modes of expression as academic writers.

### **1. Fitting in Among Various Expectations**

Students leave high school with a series of expectations for how they write, what they write, and what rules they must follow. Entering college, those rules are often quite different than those they were taught previously. The issues a writer faces in trying to adopt new rules and expectations were seen in a study conducted on ten UCLA students

of varied writing proficiency, Mike Rose found that two of his subjects faced writer's block due to following rigid rules interpreted from loose heuristics meant to guide the writing process rather than serve as an algorithm to define it ("Rigid Rules" 398) In this case, writer's block is defined as a problem that goes beyond issues of basic writing skill or levels of commitment to projects in that "blocking is not simply measured by the passage of time ... but by the passage of time with limited productive involvement in the writing task (18)." A person facing writer's block delays the action of producing a written work or a finished written work due to some inability due to psychological distress. This blocking can be characterized by anxiety, frustration, anger, and confusion. The written work produced might be a few sentences, false starts, repetitious arguments, or the essay is stopped mid-way with some semblance of satisfaction (Rose *Writer's Block*, 18). He also found that in some of the subjects that did not suffer writer's block, they interpreted similar rules as merely heuristics meant to guide the process. In the case of the blocked students, they misinterpreted the expectations placed before them and applied those faulty constructs to their own writing practices.

As Rose describes throughout "Rigid Rules", many of the faulty practices students brought to college writing were rules they derived from high school coursework and treated as absolute. The practices the students used could not conform to the new expectations they faced in college classroom. These students needed an opportunity to step away from writing their assignments and an opportunity to study what expectations surround their assignments and how those expectations differed from those they entered college with.

The expectations students face as they write academically come from the various academic discourses that occur within the academic communities; writing for these different communities can be quite like writing for a new culture in a new language with new rules to define it. Students may face issues as they attempt to enculturate into an academic discourse; the new mode of writing comes packed with what the student could perceive as new and unexpected expressions and rules. As David Bartholomae points out, the students often struggle as they confront the enormous task of writing for different discourse communities in college, each with its own structure and expectations derived from the work of established scholars within the individual academic disciplines. He further points out that some students cope by retreating into their own accustomed modes of communication and established sub-processes without acclimating to the new modes of expression. He also stresses that students sometimes write against their own expectations of writing but they also falsely assume that to succeed in writing at the college level they must abandon their familiar methods and adopt comparable levels of authority to the experts within the discourse communities which often leads to self-alienation and writing that does not fully communicate what they intended (“Inventing the University”). Students need to examine the expectations within the academic discourses as they learn how to engage writing for the academy.

Each discipline’s community is a representation of the scholars who have contributed to the ongoing conversation within that discourse. As Richard Post points out “when we speak of a discipline, therefore, we speak not merely of a body of knowledge but also of a set of practices by which that knowledge is acquired, confirmed, implemented, preserved, and reproduced” (751). The practices serve not only as the

means that governs the discourse, but also a series of expectations on how that knowledge is argued, countered, and revised. Each discipline maintains its own cultural norms for communication, but as Post indicates “the practices of disciplines are continuously adjusting to the changing interests of disciplinary practitioners and to the emergent demands placed on disciplines by exogenous forces like universities and society at large” (753). This suggests that like any culture, the traditions and expectations shift due to demands placed from inside and outside forces. This concept complicates the idea of a discipline’s unified discourse by representing it more as a complex interaction of inside voices and outside voices that change and shift positions based on a vast network of influences. For students facing the academic discourse of any discipline, this concept could be problematic as they already struggle to enter the discourse with expectations they have about a unified notion of what that discipline represents. For example, students facing writing for academic journals in Biology might enter the conversation on their topic thinking that the discipline has a unified notion of the principles that underlie the premise of their work only to find that there are various opinions and studies with different views, leaving her to pick and choose from discordant voices to find the ones she agrees with. For any beginning writer, this could be a very daunting task, but if they have a support system of peers in student-moderated workshops and discussions, they do not have to face learning new discourses alone.

As we have discussed, the discourse community is a representation of the culture that produced it as much as the language the community uses is a representation of the ideology of that culture, but what happens at the point of contact between different discourses and conflicting expectations, like where the beginning academic writers meet

academic discourse? Andrea Scott describes writing within an academic discourse community as a paradox, “we need to know the codes, but we also need to know how to resist the codes in order to do ambitious and original work” (75-76). Scott’s 2014 study on writer’s block found that:

Writer’s block is often triggered by the difficulty in starting, engaging, and sustaining an argument developed in relation to other sources. It’s not just caused by a failure of confidence or nerve, but rather by the complexity of rhetorically and conceptually managing the often competing and expansive voices informing academic debates over time. The writer must find a way to assimilate those arguments efficiently and truthfully while foregrounding his or her own position. (76)

These subjects faced anxiety, frustration, and anger as a result of struggling to assimilate arguments among the many sources used in their writings. The students had issues trying to develop identities of authority among the many other authorities they were using in their essays. As Scott argues, “we first write our way *into* expertise before we can write *from* it” (77). It then becomes our task to enable students to approach scholarly writing with an open mind, being mindful of the conversations they enter and how they unfold.

There is an area of concern with trying to teach our students the numerous academic discourses; accepting that writing in the university setting is challenging and very new to beginning academic writers, Joseph Harris points out that the idea that there is one academic community is problematic because the various disciplines each have their own means and modes of expression that contain the jargon used by their respective bodies of knowledge, so students developing a voice for one disciplinary community

might have to reinvent that voice for another and another and so on. He also indicates that even in the classroom there are not two competing discourses (students vs. academia) but an overlapping series of many discourses that a student must realize she needs to reposition herself amid a variety of conflicting beliefs and practices. He argues that for a student writing in a new discourse is not something limited to learning a new language because she has already had some of her language formed through schooling, thus representing some aspect of academic discourse. His ideas about discourse present an overall picture that the phenomenon of writing in college is one built from a diverse system of different cultural expectations, but are in many ways relatable as the student already has some connection to them through what academic approaches they have learned in high school. Thus, it would help to have our students examine their own understanding of academic writing as they learn new methods for writing in college through reflection writing and the analytical notebook.

The act of teaching our students how to do that is laden with further conflicts; Min-Zhan Lu argues that writing within the new discourse means the writer must contend with the conflicts between their own biases (gender, family, work, religion, recreational life) and the competing views of others around them, including the instructor, the department, and the university (772-773). Our students' notions of correct and incorrect or good writing versus bad writing is, in part, shaped by how we respond to their approaches to writing. The process of correcting errors should be tempered by using student-moderated discussions and student-led workshops so that the traditional roles of dominant-instructor/reactive-student give way to more open forms of dialogue.

What about first year students who bring high school expectations as they work to develop a voice in academic discourse communities? While we could engage those students' writing and correct it until it matches academic writing, we have to remember that, as Lu further argues, this approach only "circumvents the [students'] attention to the potential change in their thinking and their relationship with their home and school" (778). In this case, our students' cultural biases regarding writing have been replaced with new ones without giving them a chance to understand why or how to meet these changes on their own terms. This replacement could undermine the confidence she has placed in her own ability to communicate as they lose ties to what roles and expectations they were comfortable with before. If the student have a more forum-driven approach to engaging dialogues about these discourse communities, their understanding of how they fit in to those discourses is driven by trying to fit in to the conversation and not succumbing to it.

What those students need are ways to engage these practices within a sense of community. Utilizing methods from enculturation pedagogy, our students would start the semester off with reflections on their high school writing in the analytical notebook and take the time to discuss those reflections in the peer discussion boards, they might be able to build a sense of what identity and expectations they had as writers before engaging academic discourse. Students would then have a firm foundation as they start working initially alone and then in groups to analyze academic writing and what expectations underlie them with more of a common understanding of their own roles as developing writers.

Developing writers need to understand how to meet expectations just as much as they need the metacognitive skills to see how their identities as academics take shape. Beyond that, our students need the tools to understand how they forge their own identities as academic writers.

## **II. Forging an Academic Identity**

Discourses are part of the languages our students learn as writer, but their identities are often changed to fit new roles as they develop in the new discourses. We should also consider how we go about helping our students develop confidence while maintaining their own set of practices and roles; James Berlin argues that the teaching of composition and rhetoric to students carries with it the act of teaching them the ideology present behind the rhetorical practices of the academic community. He further points out that “every pedagogy is imbricated in ideology, in a set of tacit assumptions about what is real, what is good, what is possible, and how power ought to be distributed” (492). Thus, each class carries the roles, expectations, and beliefs of the pedagogical practice brought to the room which could in turn conflict with those of the student. Now, ideologies by themselves are not an issue; in fact, we could teach quite a bit to our students through understanding the relationships between an ideology and a culture via discourse analysis. They might see new ways to meet expectations for communicating within a discourse and develop their own voices accordingly.

As our students adopt new approaches to writing in the discourse communities, they have to align their patterns of expression, mannerisms, and thinking to be acceptable within the new discourse (Bizzell 488). Patricia Bizzell argues that even though students can infer some conventions “through analyzing the community’s texts...but because the

conventions also shape world view, the texts can never be an adequate index of community practice” (488). In short, text analysis to teach a new discourse cannot adequately prepare students for writing within the new discourse because we need to be able to show them more than just what the text suggests. They need the varied nuances of engaging the academic community while respecting the various cultural expectations for communication within that discipline. Disciplines are represented their own individual discourses (Biology, Computer Science, etc), but each of these discourses represent the expectations, ideas, and rules of engagement, and modes of communication within the dialect they use. Thus, our students need ways to engage new discourses through analysis as objective as possible so that they may decide how to affect their own ideological practices; this can be accomplished through student mediated discussions of the discursive practices.

Facing new roles and expectations when writing within a discourse can be quite challenging for our first year students. Ken Hyland points out that a beginning college writer tends to translate what she perceives in the physical world into the grammatical system of language: calling it as she sees it (“Writing in the University: Education, Knowledge and Reputation” 55-56). The problem arises when academic writing turns her way of expression on its head by changing a chronological sense of expression “this happened, then this happened, etc.” to a cause and effect expression of analysis and logical systems based on the idea that actions are more important than the actors. The writer produces a theory and proves that theory with empirical evidence as opposed to relating events as they happened. These practices, Hyland argues, “often confuse newcomers and force them into roles, identities and ways of writing which run counter to

their experiences and intuitions about how language is used, forcing them to represent themselves in certain ways” (56). This means that the writer divorces herself from a sense of cultural identity and starts to adopt the new one represented by the language of the university. He concludes by saying that teachers of composition need to understand the complexities of writing as a situated activity within the academy by having students write within the academic discourse while questioning the nature of the discourse and how their own identities can fit into that community. Students should then reflect on changes in their writing versus what they perceive in the discourses they analyze; this, in turn, gives students ways to develop a voice for these academic discourses.

A writer’s voice is a construct of the language they use and is shaped by the languages they learn, the words they adopt, and the situations they are in. The writer’s voice is then, as Tom Romano argues, “the human quality of written language that is directly related to its sibling, the spoken word” (50). The specific nuances, stylistic choices, individual approaches, and cultural influences that make up a writer’s style in prose is how she expresses herself. In a sense, this connection between the social aspect of conversation to the act of writing shows how writers’ voices are adapted to the circumstances or environment they write in just as the speaker’s voice adapts to the social environments they face. Romano also argues that composition should be about developing that voice and helping a student to use that voice to make rational arguments with careful planning and structure while avoiding a language that sounds “erudite, distant, complex, convoluted, and unassailable” (51). Students should develop their written voice to carry the weight of who they are not only what they are expected to sound like. The concept of voice in writing is important in helping our students develop

strong identities as writers while they enter the academic discourses, but we might benefit from sharing with our students what type of voices are present within academic writing. They would benefit from in-class group work that looks for voices within academic writing that go beyond just informative, objective, and argumentative, so that they might see some of the rhetorical approaches used to make the writing engaging.

Developing a voice within academic discourses does not have to mean that an identity is lost in the wake of competing ideologies; Jane Tapp conducted a study utilizing a participatory pedagogical approach when teaching students how to write for academic discourses. Tapp developed a module for first year first semester students with workshops containing embedded academic literacy practices combined with content-focused lectures (324). Her 32 participants were recorded during a series of workshops throughout their first term in higher education. She found that most of her participants began to describe themselves as emerging academics congruent with their success in the lectures and workshops. For these workshop participants, developing an identity as a writer was tied to being able to engage in metacognitive discourse with their peers reflecting on their activities in the workshops and the lectures. This research puts forward the notion that participatory methods with some success combined with reflection, as these students do in the recording, might help students develop self-efficacy as academic writers.

Self-efficacy could have a serious impact on student performance. In his article “Writing Blocks and Tacit Knowledge”, Robert Boice examines data from several studies on writer’s block and other forms of blocking. He finds that among faculty self-competence and self-efficacy have a direct effect on their academic writing and

productivity. He found that people who don't feel confident in their work nor see the effectiveness of their work are less likely to produce as they could face writer's block. He also mentions that people can overcome writer's block and other anxieties by ridding themselves of "negative self-talk and maladaptive expectations" (43). He suggests that fluency garnered through workshops on grant writing could increase productivity as the faculty members would "be induced to write with benefit for themselves and for their campuses" (46). This notion can be applied to our students by having them work together socially to define academic writing and develop fluency with it through group text analysis with less potential for misunderstanding on an individual level which could in turn provide reinforcement from within those groups thus helping our students develop a sense of self-efficacy.

Efficacy is tied to the development of goals with consistent feedback. In the study "Examining Dimensions of Self-Efficacy for Writing," Bruning et al. examine self-efficacy for writing using a larger sampling from two high schools and one middle school. They base this study on four primary assumptions with regards to writing: "writing is a complex cognitive act generating high demands on working memory...writing development advances slowly...writer's form strong impressions of their own writing experiences...writers group their writing-related experiences into psychologically meaningful categories" (27-28). These assumptions help them to divide their approach to studying efficacy into three domains. First, they examine ideation, or the writer's beliefs about their abilities to generate ideas. Second, they examined conventions, or the generally accepted standards for sharing ideas through writing in a given language. Finally, they look at self-regulation, or the writer's confidence of their

ability to direct themselves through the various tasks when writing. They found that writers value self-regulation as it becomes one aspect of the writer's self-perception, maintaining that writers can manage some conclusions about how they articulate goals, embark on writing tasks and focus on the writing, but that they also highly value being able to successfully translate ideas into linguistic forms (35). These findings suggest that a writer feels a stronger sense of efficacy when they are not only able to guide themselves through tasks but even more so when they can effectively see how they are able to express their ideas in writing. Thus, an environment with consistent feedback within a student-led series of workshops would be a great place to nurture this sense of self-efficacy.

Writers of many backgrounds often struggle developing an identity while writing for varied discourses, especially in the case of second language learners. Alister Cumming compiled data from several studies to examine three phenomena of writing development for second language learners: "heuristic search strategies involving language switching for choices of word and phrases while composing...expressions of personal identity while writing for specific discourse communities, and...reciprocal modeling during dynamic assessments of writing and reading" (131). Essentially, he sought for connections between these three phenomena, culture, language, and the acquisition of literacy skills for developing writers. In looking at the heuristic search strategies, he examined what approaches the students took to writing in the second language. He found that the subjects frequently switched to their L1 or first language to search for phrases and words to determine the selection accuracy and relevance of phrases while writing (132). This language switching was determined to be a cognitive

process that could not be turned off but was often more frequent with more skilled writers. This also implies that those learning new forms of expression will frequently return to familiar lexical choices from discourses they are already familiar with.

Next, Cumming examined how these authors expressed personal identity in written discourse. He found that although the students had issues with expressing in the new language and awkward writing styles, these problems come from their struggle “to reconcile competing personal goals and aspirations, adopt new language and discourse forms, acquire and display new knowledge, and satisfy perceived expectations of professors and others” (138). His complex understanding of Second Language learners developing a written and expressive identity sheds light on some of the same issues faced by our first year students; even first year students speaking the same primary language used at their universities struggle while learning to develop written identities amid competing discourses while trying to meet the expectations of their professors, peers, and parents.

Finally, Cumming looked at ways educators could “optimally help students develop their literacy abilities” (140). For this, he drew on research on culturally diverse students judged at risk for developing literacy skills that participated in an after-school tutoring program. He closely examined the one-to-one tutoring process at the core of the program. This study highlighted the centrality of individual identities, development of mutual respect and trust, systematic instruction, and reciprocal modeling between tutor and student. He found that through repeated modeling first from the tutor then from the student that each student developed profound improvements in literacy skills. From his findings, Cumming argues that identity, language, literacy, and culture are integrally

connected in multiple ways in the practice of reading and writing, in modeling expert and novice writer behaviors, and in individual development (145). His point implies that writing, identity, developing a voice in writing, and the experience from personal discourses are interconnected in forming literacy skills.

Students forge identities based on the writing they feel is accepted or welcomed. In one aspect, their self-efficacy is dependent upon producing work that is seen as successful. To help our students build identities as writers, a combination of reflections on the successes and failures of their work in class as well as community feedback from their peers in peer-moderated groups and workshops will support that sense of efficacy beyond what the instructor gives as feedback on assignments. Amid the discourses and varied projects, students still need to understand what their audiences expect from them and the modes of expression they need to reach those audiences.

### **III. Learning the Modes of Expression**

Whether they are trying to engage a different discourse community or they are trying to write for a business venue, students face the daunting task of writing for their own expectations of what the audience might be looking for. Walter Ong describes the concept of audience as a fiction for the writer who must produce her written work without a conversant listener thus imagining each potential response as the work is crafted and the audience who must envision for themselves what kind of audience was expected to receive this written work ("The Writer's Audience is always a Fiction"). For example, the writer who composed *Beowulf* did so with specific expectations of how it might be received as she wrote it, while current students of literature must envision the cultural landscape in which it was written to better grasp how an audience contemporary

to the writer should receive it. Ong argues that it is practically impossible to understand the complex motivations of the writer as a member of the audience and vice versa, so a fictional set of expectations must be crafted. In some ways, Ong's ideas address the notions that a writer cannot be completely certain as to how a reader might understand the work produced. Students need a way to see the audience beyond what is produced within their own expectations.

Lisa Ede and Andrea Lunsford set forth a different notion of audience in their article "Audience Addressed/Audience Invoked: The Role of Audience in Composition Theory and Pedagogy." They describe the complex relationship between a writer developing a written work and seeking feedback from others while revising it in several iterations as audience addressed or AA for short (156). This means that writer sees the notion of their audience as a concrete reality with understandable beliefs, expectations, and attitudes that must be addressed in some form. Alternatively, they describe that when a writer does not use a concrete perception of the audience but instead uses semantic and syntactic tropes as "cues which help to define the role or roles that the writer wishes the reader to adopt in responding to the text" (160). This side of their theory follows that a writer must use the work to guide the reader through their ultimate vision for the work and the expected response from the audience invoked or AI for short. They further point out that the audience then is a carefully balanced notion of when the audience is addressed directly or invoked through guiding rhetorical strategies all of which depend on the type of work created and the rhetorical situation surrounding it, coined as Audience Addressed/Audience Invoked, AA/AI. What this means for developing writers is a deeper understanding of when a writer is crafting the work and how that work evolves as the

writer makes decisions based on audience, but it also needs to be inclusive of the social situations and struggles within language that define the authority and lack of authority present when language is used (Lunsford and Ede “Representing”). When a developing writer is looking to craft a work for their audience then breaking down the concept of audience should have a richer and broader perspective of the political, social, and economic landscape that surrounds the writer and her readers. Students can examine these audience analysis concepts as they analyze published academic articles to help them shape their writing to fit the discourses they encounter.

It is helpful to involve the audience when writers seek to engage their discourse. Robert R. Johnson describes the concept of Audience Involved, when a writer or group of writers repeatedly consult a specific audience on the creation of a written work (“Audience Involved: Toward a Participatory Model of Writing”). This interaction develops a product defined by the needs of the audience and shaped throughout its composition to meet those needs. He describes how he used such a method in assignments for his own class by having the students devise a plan for recycling and composting, then consulting members of the community (374). Ultimately, this project ended up being a huge success with a real product produced by the class. In this instance, it is interesting to note how the direct participation between writer and intended reader builds a rather different relationship from that in the aforementioned AA/AI theory. This approach could mean a more direct way of entering a discourse community as the expectations are described through the interactions between reader and writer. Another way to consider this approach is to position our writers so that they are addressing either a living breathing audience in the room or one represented in a digital environment, such

as a discussion board, blog, message board, email correspondence or any other number of communication outlets online.

In any case, it is important for our writers to consider their audience as they conceptualize their work, develop a process for writing, and craft it with relatable, supportive content. Alecia Marie Magnifico argues that writing for authentic audiences, or digital/live audiences that involve peers or professionals outside the domain of an instructor, is a “communicative opportunity to advance ideas and receive feedback”; she further stresses that this activity infuses the “writing with meaning and motivating its production in ways that the typical school assignments often cannot” (181). With this interaction, the writer is placed in a position where they know the expectations of their reader directly without the added anxiety of the teacher/academy looming over the activity. For a student drafting their work, this could put her in a position where she can utilize a metacognitive approach to her writing as a process as she reflects on various levels of feedback in order to please her audience more effectively.

We can give our students the tools to engage various audiences under varied circumstances by providing them with ways to reflect on their own writing in contrast to group analysis of other written discourses. In combination with feedback from peers, students will develop a sense of who they are as developing academic writers and how they can fit in to different discourse communities. Finally, within the confines of student moderated discussion, these writers can begin to understand the varied relationships between their own discourses and those they encounter in and out of the academy.

Composition studies shed light on a great number of issues for our first year students, and we need every tool in our toolbox to help them. Enculturation pedagogy

sheds new light on old problems with new methods for helping our student writers achieve success. Now, it is just a matter of using those tools; what follows is a chapter describing this pedagogy in practice.

### **Chapter 3: Enculturation Pedagogy in Practice**

Enculturation pedagogy gives first year composition students an opportunity to develop the metacognitive skills needed for critically assessing their own work for errors, for peer-review, and for audience appeal. Our students can develop a stronger sense of self-efficacy and develop identities as academic writers if we employ the aforementioned methods: the analytical notebook, the peer-led discussions, peer-moderated workshops, and reflective essays. To further illustrate this point, I am providing examples from some of my students' work and several contemporary composition studies to show the relevance and application of enculturation pedagogy.

In a composition class, the cues for finding cultural transition issues might be difficult to spot in contrast to problems learning new techniques. In learning a new technique, students will struggle, but they will also show that they have background knowledge to fall back on, whether it's thesis development, revision techniques, using examples, etc. For a student who struggles transitioning from high school to college academic culture, we first might see the apparent problems in their writing (structure, organization, word choice, using examples), but those will be combined with other problems in their writing: problems with developing their role as an academic writer, problems working in groups, problems with how they perceive their abilities as writers, problems expressing themselves with a comfortable use of language, and/or problems identifying the differences between their work in high school and that in college.

## I. Application Examples from Student Work

The following examples of student work are from a research writing course I taught as part of a first year composition program in 2012 and 2013. This course is the second semester of their first year program, so students must have already passed the first semester writing course by showing proficiency in developing an argument, structuring a paper, and basic writing skills. For this first assignment, students were required to write a paper of their choice arguing how they would reach their career goal or their personal definition of success. They were required to use at least one credible source to support the argument.

Sometimes expectations carried over from previous writing, such as high school, just don't work well with new expectations for college level writing. My first example comes from Lawrence, name changed to protect his identity, a traditional student from one of the local communities. He began his paper with a clear structure arguing that he had the skills and goals in place to become a personal trainer and physical therapist. The next two paragraphs offer support by analyzing what knowledge is required and what classes he needed to obtain it, but his organization was hindered by the five paragraph essay format. He thought he was expected to use that format even for college writing. Because of this organizational issue, he combines topics into one paragraph:

I am also very hard-headed; I don't give up on people even when they have given up on themselves. I am already on the borderline of becoming a personal trainer, it comes to me naturally; I go to the gym very often and tend to drag along one or two people each time. Of the people that I drag along more than three fourths notice a difference in their wellbeing,

stamina, strength, or all the above. My experience as a lifeguard also brings me closer to this goal because personal trainers as well as lifeguards must be CPR certified and know how to deal with emergencies such as injuries or worse.

The discussion shifts from his experiences at the gym supporting his choice as a physical trainer to his experiences as a lifeguard supporting both career choices. Later, I asked him about the structure of this paper and he clarified that he had been told to use the five paragraph structure in high school and thought he needed it for college writing.

Lawrence had problems recognizing when to use and when not to use a five paragraph structure. Now, we might first see this as just learning to write longer papers, but we should also take into account that he had already finished a semester of first year college writing and in passing the course, should have completed papers that were more complex and involved. Next, note how he regresses back to high school format and when questioned seemed certain that was appropriate. This is not unlike how a person facing culture shock retreats back into the familiar and comfortable in order to cope with the new situation.

This student and other students like him write with these expectations in mind, but if they have an opportunity to review and reflect on high school writing expectations as in an analytical notebook and then compare those expectations to what they find in college discourses with peer-discussion, then organizational paradigms like the five paragraph essay, might take a step back for new expectations. Thus, they could use peer-led workshops on decoding assignment sheets and assignment expectations. In Lawrence's case, he might see that although the five paragraph essay does provide a consistent and

effective organizational tool, it needs to be adjusted to incorporate complex analysis in a longer format.

Another student, Mary, came to me at the beginning of the semester to confide that she was a non-traditional student and that she had no idea what to expect from college research writing. She approached the first assignment with very different expectations from what was being asked for. This selection from her introductory paragraph demonstrates some of that disparity:

Consider this, the words success and successful have several factors separating their commonalities from being the same. In the case of what success means to me and what I would do with it, borders on a tantalizing state of mind more than anything. The inclusive elements of executing both long and short term goals will be the foundation which my success will be built. Accomplishing these goals within the allotted timeframes will bring personal achievements, possible foresight, an education and a degree upon graduating in my course of study.

At this point, halfway through the paragraph, Mary has not concisely described her objective. Rather, she focused on defining the general notions of success and uses language that distances herself from the reader as she tries to invent the university's expectations for her writing. She came to me later about the essay and told me that she wrote what she thought a college professor wanted. She wasn't at all comfortable with the language that she used.

In the case of Mary, we have the benefit of knowing that she was a non-traditional student who had been out of school for quite some time. Her expectations of the work

had become situated in what she experienced while in the working environment and her view of college vocabulary drove her choices in what she was writing. She did step out of her comfort zone, but she took on a role that she created in order to try and fit in. Initially, she was very confused by the comments on her rough draft because she couldn't connect to her own roles and her own style of writing and depended on what she thought would please her idea of what I wanted as an instructor. We met a few times to discuss this paper in the next week and a half, and each time, she wanted me to tell her what to say and how to say it. It did take some convincing and several meetings to show her how her own language could be used for academic writing. This is not unlike role shock where a person becomes uncomfortable with the roles they are expected to take on and lose track of their own identity while becoming dependent on an authority figure. In role shock, the confusion is such that there seems no way out other than what the authority figure provides as explanation.

Mary's essay shows what has often been described as inventing the university, but it also shows a clear gap between what language the student is comfortable with, the language the student thinks she needs to use, and the language is expected from her. To close this gap, students need a chance to analyze varied academic writings to show that not all academic writing is the same, rather the expressions used are often quite varied, leaving room for students to develop a style more comfortable for them. In defining her role as an academic and learning to incorporate her own style of writing, Mary would have benefitted from student-moderated discussion and analysis on varied academic writings for style and content followed up with writing a reflection on the differences between what she analyzed and what she expected college writing to sound like. In a

student-moderated discussion, she might find comfort and confidence in knowing that her peers either face the same difficulties or that they share ways to overcome them.

Another example comes from Thomas, a traditional student from another local high school. He wrote about his notion of success being a meaningful job and travelling as much as he can. This excerpt is from the second paragraph of his paper:

In today's economy the best way to find a decent job is to have a college degree. In an article written for The Red and Black Berrak Bahadir says, "The economy needs a more educated labor force, more educated labor forces mean they are more skilled than a high school dropout would be."

From this you can see how important it is to complete your college education.

In the first sentence he is somewhat vague about the economy, but the real issue lies in the use of his example. He gives us a quote from the article, but he does little to explain how or why we need to understand its relevance. Throughout his essay, there are similar instances of placing a citation with little or no analysis. For his essay, the writer-based prose contains his thinking and examples but not a way for him to relate those thoughts and evidence to his audience.

Thomas' essay is more in line with students who are learning how to cite sources and incorporate them into an essay. While his problem isn't necessarily a cultural one, Thomas would benefit from a combination of an analytical journal and writing reflections based on understanding audience-based prose. He would start with writing how was expected to treat quotes and citations in high school and his previous composition course. Then, he could examine a model essay and look to see how those examples are treated

and write a reflection on the differences in usage. This activity would be supported with peer-moderated workshops focused on audience awareness. The students would work together from example academic writing to see how credible sources are utilized and what explanations are needed for incorporating those sources.

These students starting out in the research writing course came into it with varied expectations and specific methods carried over from high school. Through observations in the analytical notebook, combined with peer-moderated discussions, peer-led workshops, and reflection writing, they might have had more success as developing writers. Now, let's see these practices as applied to popular research in composition studies.

## **II. Application Examples from Research in Composition**

Enculturation pedagogy helps expand what we know of approaching academic discourses, audience analysis, maintaining voice while developing new styles, and interpreting potential cultural conflicts. Now, we will look at how this pedagogy can be applied to resolving student issues found in other studies. The following applications for enculturation pedagogy come from examining some recent work from the Stanford Study of Writing and Joyce Adams' research in "Self-Efficacy: A Prerequisite To Successfully Entering The Academic Discourse Community."

Many students struggle with developing a voice for academic discourse. Some of these issues are examined in "Performing Writing, Performing Literacy," a report from the first two years of the Stanford Study of Writing, a five-year longitudinal study that followed the writings of 189 students from the class of 2005 for the four years of college

and one year beyond. This study followed materials volunteered by the subjects including conventional academic texts, new-media compositions, and extracurricular materials (including but not limited to plays, email, journals, newspaper articles, etc.). They followed up these submissions with questionnaires and interviews using a series of set questions and unscripted follow-up questions. For this article, they use performance arts as a lens for viewing how the students acted out their writing during interviews and further how performance seemed to affect their approaches to composition, invoking the rhetorical canon of delivery as a genuine part of the composition process.

They found that each of the students interviewed tied some aspect of performance and subsequently delivery into their writing as the students described the cognitive choices they made for composition. In one case, a student uses performance when describing her “dramatization of ‘think-aloud protocols,’ [and] reveals the sometimes paralyzing and potentially alienating process of internalizing academic discourse, while her solution, the transformation of her most formal self into a character poised-or perhaps posed-to deliver academic prose, updates one of the fundamental strategies of rhetoric, imitation” (242). In that instance, the writer takes on a new persona to overcome the struggle with academic discourse imitating the nuances and methods of communication she finds.

These students utilized some aspects of dramatic personae to redefine their roles and act out what they understood what was expected from them as they engaged the new discourses. While it is clear that the students interviewed for this particular study arrived at that approach on their own, we cannot be certain that all students learning academic discourses will do the same. However, those students more inclined to adopt a dramatic

persona to would be ideal candidates for leading student workshops on developing a voice in academic writing. As part of the skills inventory, students who show an aptitude for writing for varied audiences would have a lot of insight to offer their classmates as they prepare to engage academic discourses. The class would use discussions surrounding models of academic writing to analyze the audience they write for, the discipline that audience represents, and some of the rhetorical choices made by that writer. Student-led workshops would then use student samples of writing for comparison to see how they would revise their work to suit that particular audience. This process could be repeated for varied works from other discourses to show how audiences and expectations vary.

Another researcher provides a more detailed perspective on how first-year students develop writing skills, identities, and roles as academics; in his dissertation, Paul Rogers examines the data accrued by the Stanford Study of Writing to “understand the factors that contribute to the student writing development and the knowledge domains which together support and indeed comprise writing abilities” (98). He uses textual analysis and coding techniques to examine papers from across disciplines and years for the length of the study. He also examined the recorded interviews and correlated the transcribed observations to understand the students’ points of view of their experiences writing throughout their undergraduate years.

He found that participants described their first year writing instruction as too general, with few specific offerings on developing writing skills. The students mention peer review, writing centers, thesis/outline workshops, conferences with tutors, teaching fellows, and teachers. They also mention that even the comments on the paper discussed content more than the writing itself. They reported that thesis development seemed to

stand out as the most important element of first year instruction. In 51% of the interviews for all five years of the study, students reported that dialogic interactions with peers, mentors, teachers, writing assistants, and teaching fellows as contributing factor in their development as writers. He also finds that many of the students in the second year of the program found that they needed more work with mentors, peers, teachers, etc. to develop the skills needed to write in their respective disciplines, something they did not encounter in their first year. Ultimately, the Stanford Study participants point out a number of areas where dialogic interactions led to positive outcomes: general improvement in writing abilities, increased confidence and sense of self-efficacy, the fostering of mentoring relationships, knowledge of teacher expectations, supporting the writing process, improved final products, and the shaping of the writer (271). Rogers suggests a multi-paradigmatic approach may be more helpful: teachers using individual knowledge of students' strengths and weaknesses as writers to provide specific feedback to encourage them to develop in problem areas using a combination of dialogue and written feedback.

Based on Rogers' findings and what was reported by roughly half of the students interviewed, students need interactive work that provides positive feedback which in turn develops their sense of self-efficacy and continued success as writers. The peer-led workshops combined with peer-moderated discussions would foster this dialogic interaction between the students. Further, the students in these workshops would address the skills needed for writing in their respective disciplines through analysis of models of the varied discourses. These skills would be deepened by objective analysis in the analytical notebooks immediately following the workshops. The reflection writing could also reinforce this activity by having students utilize workshops, discussions, and

notebooks as justification for any observed changes in writing skills as they learn to address different discourses.

In order to develop a voice in writing, students also need to develop a sense of value for their writing or self-efficacy as writers; Joyce Adams conducted a detailed case study on four students seeking to develop skills for entering academic discourses. Adams seeks to understand students facing issues with confidence, efficacy, and identity as they seek to join one of the many academic discourses. She uses observational and non-observational strategies for data collection. Observational strategies included observing as an instructor in the classroom with close attention to comments and student behavior. Non-observational strategies were used in examining assignments and through weekly interviews. She found that students seeking to enter the academic discourse communities are unaware of the amount of writing that takes place and the rhetorical differences that exist among the different disciplines. This misunderstanding comes as a surprise to the students and often leads them to resist writing in courses other than English. She suggests that instructors should teach students how to assess and develop their own writing abilities as they work through efficacy issues.

Many students face issues of self-efficacy, lack of confidence, or disconnection to ownership of their writing. These issues are primarily rooted in the notion that the students do not identify themselves as writers or have trouble seeing their writing as having any sort of value. As noted above, feedback and continued support through student-driven workshops and discussions will give the students the type of individual support and success they are looking for. If these activities are also tied to defining an academic or the roles an academic must undertake, students may start to see the

characteristics of an academic within themselves as they make observations in the analytical notebook or through reflection writing about their progress throughout the semester.

As we have seen, many students face entering the university and its many discourse communities with individual struggles as they seek to define themselves, develop ownership of their abilities, and establish identities as writers. These problems are readily addressed if we view their progress as students as a form of enculturation to academia. This progress is mediated by the students if we help them utilize the analytical notebook, workshops, discussions, and reflections.

## **Chapter 4: Concerns and Recommendations**

### **I. Concerns about Enculturation Pedagogy**

This pedagogy is not meant to isolate those students who face difficulties adjusting to college writing and expectations. The methods from enculturation pedagogy for developing an identity as a writer applies to all students who struggle to describe themselves as an efficacious writer. The concept of a contact zone for developing a stronger rapport among the students to better understand the nature of academic discourses would serve as a developed peer group and enhance a sense of community in the classroom. This pedagogy is applicable for developing our students as academic writers, not just those who face difficulties acclimating to college writing and roles as academics. There are some very similar pedagogies that focus on some of the same principles.

Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy, or Culturally Relevant Pedagogy 2.0 as Gloria Ladson-Billings has coined it, bears some striking similarities to enculturation, but there are substantial differences. Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy focuses on teaching through three major domains: academic success, cultural competence, and sociopolitical consciousness. Through academic success, instructors help intellectual growth and development that students experience as a result of learning experiences and classroom instruction. When focusing on cultural competence, students develop skills in appreciating and celebrating their cultures of origin while gaining an understanding of at least one other culture. Lastly, sociopolitical consciousness is learning how to take the learning beyond the classroom and using skills and school knowledge to analyze, identify, and solve real-world issues (75). Instructors have the “dual responsibility of

external performance assessments as well as community- and student-driven learning” (83). This focus on community is one of the major differences between this pedagogy and CS Theory. It is important for our students to have ties with the local community, but in the scope of developing a safe house environment of the classroom, CS theory places priority on forming an in-class community as opposed to service learning. Ladson-Billings remarks on the application of her pedagogy:

By focusing on student learning and academic achievement versus classroom and behavior management, cultural competence versus cultural assimilation or eradication, and sociopolitical consciousness rather than school-based tasks that have no beyond-school application, I was able to see students take both responsibility for and deep interest in their education. (76-77)

While this pedagogy has a very close focus on developing not only a cultural identity but also a cultural knowledge to better understand similarities and differences between multiple cultures, this pedagogy is rooted in service-learning and community development. Enculturation pedagogy looks to help students maintain personal and cultural identities while developing a deeper understanding of the cultures presented in the various academic discourses through identifying, analyzing, and developing voices that address from within different discourses. Acculturation to the academic environment is part of this process but it is not a means of eradicating the cultural identity of the student. Rather, the goal is to try and synthesize what the student sees as her identity with notions of who she is when addressing different discourses with authority.

Indeed, there are also similarities between enculturation pedagogy and sociocultural pedagogy. Sociocultural pedagogy is based on sociocultural theory, which is defined as learning through social development at a young age and then through interaction the individual develops internal problem-solving skills that are honed through mentorship (Vygotsky). This places the process of learning as a cultural activity prioritizing human intelligence as a development of the relationships between individuals. Remi van Compernelle and Lawrence Williams expand the notion of sociocultural theory as a pedagogical practice with a focus on second language teaching. Their pedagogy “is about creating the conditions for, and supporting, development (i.e. the internalization of psychological tools, and while this often involves a physically present human mediator, not all aspects of pedagogical activity require this” (279). They place emphasis on the pedagogy’s design to promote control over the language the students are engaging. This emphasis implies a focus on efficacy and identity within the new language. Overall, this is a second language instruction pedagogy intended to be used either in classroom or online with collaborative work that may or not require some mediation dependent on the type of lesson. While enculturation pedagogy has some of the same principles in helping students acquire unfamiliar discourses, the focus of this pedagogy is more on the acclimation to the academic environment and learning to build an authoritative identity among the academic discourses while maintaining the student’s own cultural identity and voice through student-led workshops and student-moderated discussions.

Students struggle every year in first year programs to define themselves as academic writers. We have an obligation to help them with those problems. This

pedagogy has its place in composition, but I do believe there is always more we can teach and more we should learn to help our students.

## **II. Recommendations**

While there is a great deal of data on students learning to write for college-level instructors, we need to study how our students transition into college as a process of enculturation to the role of an academic. I believe it would be helpful to see how the students adjust to the changes faced when entering college. The goal behind this study would be to determine which aspects of academic writing they are prepared for as they enter college and how they perceive they have been prepared for upper level courses as part of their first year composition programs. This should be a longitudinal study to determine the readiness at outset and how the students handle the new roles and expectations they face. Much like the Stanford Study of Writing, student work, interviews, and reflection writing at different stages would be effective in showing the difficulties faced from the student perspective. Further, we could encourage students to describe which aspects of their experiences best prepared them for writing in their respective disciplines. For more data, we could invite instructors to review student work to examine differences from first year composition and papers from second year disciplinary courses, and we could invite participants to discuss the vast differences between writing for first year composition courses and their respective disciplines. This data would better assess what sort of changes could be implemented at the composition course level to better facilitate the transition from first year composition to the disciplinary coursework in upper levels.

Beyond studying how our students acclimate to becoming academics, it helps to see how this pedagogy might look as part of a semester in composition. What follows are some suggestions for using this pedagogy as part of a research writing course for first year composition.

### **III. A Sample Course Utilizing Enculturation Pedagogy**

A semester of research writing based on enculturation pedagogy would require a great deal of participation from the students and it would not be prudent to make that an important part of the final grade for the course. The course could consist of three or four major assignments; reflection writing before and after each major assignment; several student-led workshops; student-led discussions occurring weekly; peer-review workshops; and lectures as needed.

The analytical notebook is where the students would make most of their observations about varying expectations throughout the course. As such, they would require a daily prompt at the beginning and/or the end of class to write for a few minutes. For example, students would be prompted to describe one of their more involved high school writing assignments and what expectations surrounded a good grade and how they might have met or had trouble meeting those expectations. At the end of that class, students would be prompted to write about what they believe it will take to produce successful writing in college. This sort of writing gives them an opportunity to see what sort of biases they carry with them as they start the course. Later, they could write about what expectations they see from their first assignment sheet and what it will take to produce a successful project.

Reflection writing is a crucial companion to the analytical notebook. As students complete the first two example entries and prepare to write for their first assignment, they should be encouraged to write a reflection that compares their high school expectations, their own perceived college expectations, and the expectations laid out in the first assignment sheet. This comparison serves to dismiss initial unrealistic biases while at the same time provides the students with a more realistic understanding of their own first steps as academic writers. The reflection after the first assignment would ask the students to examine how successful or unsuccessful they were at meeting the assignment and what they could do to prepare for the next one.

After one class of peer-review with the rough drafts from their first assignment, students would fill-out a skills inventory checklist based on their successes with writing prior to the course. This checklist serves as a guide for the students to determine some of their strengths and weakness before beginning the student-led workshops. Workshops based on the different strengths of the students would be setup with those students who are experts in certain areas of writing as leaders. The initial workshops would be setup with a focus on some of the common writing issues students struggle with in the first major assignment. Student leaders would be asked to provide insight for the rest of the class on those issues and volunteers who face those problems would share their own work for assistance. This workshop could be handled in-class or as a series of discussion threads in the class's online blackboard system. Later workshops could be devised for composing strategies, revision strategies, etc., based on what the students agree will make them successful writers.

Student-moderated discussions would be placed as part of major lessons following instructor lectures or presentations. By having the students moderate in-class discussions of the topics, it opens up a free-form debate and dialogue based on the previous lecture as well as an opportunity to analyze different academic texts for discursive practices. The discussions themselves would be quite similar to group activities in other classes but with the instructor on the sidelines serving as more of a consultant than moderator of the discussions. To guide the students to fruitful results, groups could be required to fill out a progress report about their discussion and what they felt was helpful and what they felt was not. They could also report on what they wished to cover in the next discussion or workshop; in that way, students could guide future discussions and provide opportunities to address issues they see within their own writing.

For analyzing discursive practices within models of academic writing, groups would be provided with a series of questions about the model to help them tease out rhetorical choices, elements of style, methods for citations, overall tone, etc. The progress reports and questionnaires could serve as assessment tools for participation levels of the groups. If the discussions are online, the discussion threads themselves would serve as tools to determine student participation levels.

It is clear that all of these methods will add up to a great deal of time spent by the instructor to review and assess the student work. Students might not initially warm up to the group work and interdependence for results, but these are collaborative skills that many of them will need in the workforce when they finish college. The major assignments for the course could be anything suitable for the first year program requirements as directed by the instructor, but to emphasize the pluralistic nature of their

work, but it would be helpful to have a collaborative project as one of the major assignments.

Enculturation pedagogy is a means for helping our students adapt to becoming academic writers as they find their own voices and define their roles amid the new discourses. We should not ignore possibility that our students can benefit from developing academic identities as they enculturate to the university's cultural expectations. They can critically examine themselves and the expectations around them through the analytical notebook and written reflections. They can engage learning how to express themselves in academic discourses through dialogue. They can develop identities as academic writers with confidence as they teach and learn writing skills with one another in workshops. While we do know that not all students have trouble acclimating to college, the beauty of this pedagogy is that they can all contribute to helping each other develop as academic writers.

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**Robert Rockett**  
Curriculum Vitae

**EDUCATION**

KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY	Kennesaw, GA	3.79
GPA/Dean's list		
B.A.'s in English & Spanish	Graduated Dec 2009 with honors	
 KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY	 Kennesaw, GA	 4.0
GPA/Dean's list		
Masters of Arts in Professional Writing	Graduated July 2016 with honors	

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

SUBSTITUTE TEACHER AUG 2014-APR 2016

*Bristol/Warren School District*

*Rhode Island*

Managed classrooms and attendance records for elementary, middle, and high schools in the Bristol/Warren Regional School District. Worked with a wide variety of students at different ages to accomplish goals set by instructor's lesson plans in a vast array of subjects.

TEACHING ASSISTANT/ PART-TIME INSTRUCTOR 2011-2013

*Kennesaw State University*

*Kennesaw, Ga*

Prepared syllabi/ schedule of assignments. Designed course format, grading, and lesson plans. Lead all discussions. Assessed student work.

WRITING CENTER ASSISTANT 2007-2011

*Kennesaw State University*

*Kennesaw, GA*

Helped to create a wide variety of writing projects in all academic areas for a diverse blend of students and instructors from the U.S. and abroad. Performed public relations.

**COURSES TAUGHT AT KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY**

1. English 1101: Composition 1, 2 times
2. English 1102: Composition 2, 2 times

**PROFESSIONAL SERVICE**

EAST PAULDING HIGH SCHOOL PROJECT 2010-2013

*East Paulding High School*

*Dallas, GA*

Supervised by Dr. Beth Daniell, Director of Composition, KSU English Department. & Jeff Cebulski, Lecturer, KSU English Department

Worked with seniors in select English classes at East Paulding High School to prepare them for college level composition. Tutored students on composition. Reviewed and commented on drafts.

## **CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS**

Rockett, R., Mary Lou Odom, Rachel H. Greil, and Rose Afzal-asr. "The Road to China Runs Through the Writing Center: Responding to the Internationalization of the University" presented at Southeastern Writing Center Association Conference 2009: Geensboro, NC.

Rockett, R., Mary Lou Odom, Rachel Greil, Micheal Ruther, Jared Miller, and Imani Marshall. "Harboring Spies of All Kinds: Ethical Dilemmas in the Expanding Role of the WC" round table discussion at International Writing Center Association Conference 2010: Baltimore, MD.

Rockett, R., Jeff Cebulski, Robert Barrier, and Micheal Ruther. "Turning the Tide in College Prep Composition: A University/High School Partnership" presented at Southeastern Writing Center Association Conference: 2011 Tuscaloosa, AL.

Rockett, R. " "Guiding Across the Borders: A Look at Rhetorical Strategies in a Diverse Classroom" presented at Conference on College Communication and Composition 2011: Atlanta, GA.

Rockett, R., Micheal Ruther, and Christine B. Ghattas. "The Next-Gen Writing Center: an invaluable Resource for ESOL Students" presented at Southeastern Writing Center Association Conference 2012: Richmond, KY.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Kennesaw State University Study Abroad Program: San Cristóbal de Las Casas, Chiapas, Mexico. Intensive Spanish Program, Department of Foreign Languages June 2009-July 2009.

Kennesaw State University Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning: Course Design/ Engaging Teaching Series. Lecture. 16 March 2012. Kennesaw, Georgia.

Kennesaw State University Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning: Millennial Students on Campus. Lecture. 5 April 2012. Kennesaw, Georgia.

Kennesaw State University Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning: Beyond Words/ Engaging Teaching Series. Lecture. 12 April 2012. Kennesaw, Georgia.

East Bay Educational Collaborative: Certificate for Teaching Assistant Training. RIDE certified training course. April- May 2015.