ED 367 171   FL 021 896

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TITLE   An Integrated Approach to ESL Teaching.
PUB DATE   Dec 92
NOTE   16p.
PUB TYPE   Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE   MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS   Achievement Gains; Course Content; Course
                Descriptions; *Educational Needs; *English (Second
                Language); *English for Academic Purposes; Foreign
                Countries; Higher Education; Needs Assessment; Second
                Language Instruction; Writing Exercises; *Writing
                Instruction

ABSTRACT
                A University of Waikato (New Zealand) course in
English for academic purposes is described. The credit course was
originally designed for native English-speaking students to address
their academic writing needs. However, based on the idea that the
writing tasks of native speakers and non-native speakers are similar
and that their writing deficiencies are not significantly different,
the course was open to learners of English as a Second Language.
Early in the course, students complete a diagnostic writing
assignment and initial writing exercises follow the pattern of the
diagnostic assignment, drawing on students' personal experiences.
Academic discourse is then introduced into instruction, along with
strategies of invention, editing and proofreading, details of
conventional usage, and genre. In 1992, when non-native speakers were
first enrolled in the course, a study was undertaken to test the idea
that the two groups could be successfully integrated in the course.
Subjects were 33 non-native speakers, of varied linguistic
backgrounds, and 65 native speakers of English. Performance of the
groups on the initial diagnostic assignment, course work, and final
examination was compared. Results indicate that in general, native
speakers attained higher grades but non-native speakers showed
significant gains. However, a specialized course for non-native
speakers is recommended. (MSE)

December 1992

AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

TO ESL TEACHING

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An Integrated Approach to ESL Teaching

Introduction

The pedagogy of second language acquisition is a well developed specialisation. The teaching of writing within the context of language development generally is part of this specialisation, although there has been little research on ESL teacher education which specifically addresses this aspect (Winer 1992). What this paper proposes are the merits of an approach to the teaching of writing in academic contexts which integrates non-native and native speakers of English in the classroom. This approach capitalises on identifiable similarities in language deficiencies of these two clearly defined groups in a way that uses advantages of total immersion as well as advantages of researched methodologies in teaching language for use in academic contexts. The two groups are, on the one hand, first year language majority university students who have self-selected into a course in writing for academic purposes and, on the other, international students and/or immigrants from countries where English is learned as a second or foreign language, also in their first year, who have been advised to enrol in the course on the basis of their entrance qualifications. The strength of the course is the emphasis on language registers and genres commonly in use in first year courses in the University. The medium of teaching in the institution is entirely English. The only opportunity non-native students have to communicate in their mother tongue is informally. An alternative approach would be to address the English language needs of the L2 students as a discrete group.

Essentially, my thesis is that if the writing tasks required of the two groups are the same, and the language deficiencies are more or less the same, or at least not significantly different, then it will be of benefit to the international/new settler students, as well as enriching for the New Zealand students, to use an integrated approach to the teaching of writing to first year university students, integrated in the sense that native and non-native speakers are grouped together. This is an extension of the concept of integration which usually describes an approach where language instruction is based on topics, texts, and tasks from content or subject matter classes. The course which I discuss in this paper also demonstrates integration of language and content in the latter sense of the word.

I wish to emphasise that this paper is, at this stage, a working document, and is part of preliminary work for further study in the area of language teaching/learning across the curriculum as a means to address the needs of non-native speakers of English in New Zealand educational institutions. It also documents a reflective approach to my own teaching practice, and an attempt to reconcile, in a critical manner, my own observations with the results of tested theory and the thinking of others working in the same field as I.

The paper begins with a selective literature review which explores the kinds of writing students are required to do, the extent to which content and language may be integrated, useful pedagogical approaches, definitions of language, transference of knowledge, and individual needs. There follows an analysis of the course, Writing for University Purposes, to demonstrate how it relates in content, design and teaching methodology to the criteria for such courses as documented by research. Then there is a comparative analysis of performance of native and non-native speakers of English in the course in 1992. This analysis gives support to my thesis.

Approaches to the Teaching of Writing to ESL Students

Much research has attempted to ascertain the kinds of writing required of students in academic contexts. Surveys and other studies have explored the significance of experiential writing, criticism, exposition, argument, synthesis, thinking through writing, and genre analysis. Snow and Brinton (1988) give an overview of studies in this area. Kroll (1979) and Ostler (1980), in a study based on self-assessment by students of the writing tasks set for them, found that the personal essay has little place in the EAP writing curriculum. They emphasised a focus on essay-exam writing, critique writing, and summary writing. Bridgeman and Carlson (1984) found a prevalence of expository and critical writing. They suggested that students would best be prepared for cross-disciplinary academic writing by tasks that require them to organise arguments from several sources, and by assignments that require them to analyse and criticise ideas, excerpts, and passages. Horowitz (1986) concluded that the most common writing tasks across the curriculum were the synthesis of multiple sources, the connection of theory and data, the summary of or reaction to a reading, and the report on participatory experience. The writing curriculum should stress the recognition and reorganisation of data by creating assignments that required the application of academic information processing skills. Spack (1988) is critical of an approach to teaching writing that emphasises the cognitive process of writing and relies on the students' use of their own composing strategies to explore ideas. The emphasis here is on self-generated topics with thematically organised readings. These are designed to lead the students to explore their own ideas on the topics. Other researchers have also found this approach limited to writing situations which are likely to arise in the Humanities subjects. A further criticism is that it fails to recognise that most academic writing is in response to an assigned topic. Bizzel (1982) adopts a social constructionist approach, emphasising writing within the context of a discourse community. In order to demystify academic discourse, an understanding of the characteristics of academic genres is necessary (Swales 1986). The complexities of the writing requirements for students are possibly further complicated by what Spack (1988) notes as her suspicion that questions and topics may sometimes be poorly designed and poorly written.

There is considerable support in the relevant literature for content based approaches to teaching academic writing, where the study of writing is linked to the concurrent study of specific subjects. Spack (1988) points to four major differences between traditional approaches and content based approaches. The latter emphasise writing from sources, and synthesis and interpretation, and encourage students to think and learn. In this approach, the skills of listening, discussing and reading are emphasised, as well as writing. There is an in-depth and prolonged study of a topic. All of these features help to simulate the study situation wherein complex thinking, researching and language skills are needed. This content based approach is related to the writing-across-the-curriculum movement, which emphasises, for all learners, the centrality of writing and language in the curriculum as a whole. Spack points to the merits of this approach, but also the associated problems, where staff in disciplines other than English may not have the time or the expertise to teach writing, and English specialists may not have the expertise to appreciate and explicate the writing features of disciplines other than their own (Russell 1987; Fulwiler 1984; Applebee 1986). A development which occurred concurrently with the writing-across-the-curriculum movement was that of English for

Specific/Academic Purposes,which had as its target group L2 students, and offered a practical alternative to the more general orientation to the teaching of writing to this group at the time (Maher 1986). As in the writing-across-the-curriculum approach, this approach involved close collaboration between subject and English language teachers. Spack (1988) also points to the difficulties involved in attempting to teach language in this way, for "each discipline offers a different system for examining experience, a different angle for looking at subject matter, a different kind of thinking" (Spack 1988 p.38; Maimon et al. 1981; Rose 1985).

So we have two parallel developments in content based language teaching/learning documented in the literature, each with its own target group but both with much the same goal, that is the development of competence in writing within academic contexts. Spack (1988) and Shih (1986) both recommend collaboration between subject teachers and writing teachers to achieve this goal. Moreover, classroom materials designed for L1 students are sometimes recommended as useful for L2 students.

A variety of instructional approaches for teaching this kind of writing to L2 students in particular have been researched and documented. Shih (1986) describes five. Topic-centred modules or short courses which are theme based offer one option. Typically this approach is aimed at upper level pre-academic ESL students interested in diverse academic disciplines, an interest which precludes specialisation in subject choice and materials selection. Writing practice is integrated with other language skills. A second approach involves content based material in the form of sets of readings on selected topics. Shih (1986) notes that there are a number of texts useful for this approach which were written for native speakers. Reading and other general study skills are practised, and assignments written, such as: summary, personal response, synthesis, criticism and evaluation, the development of basic expository schemata such as listing, definition, seriation, classification, comparison/contrast. There is some emphasis on the formats of writing which characterise different academic fields. Individual writing tasks which involve material from the students' academic courses may be used. A third approach focuses on the content of a specific academic discipline and a particular course. The fourth approach which focuses on the skills of composition in particular, resembles that of composition courses for L1 students. The fifth approach involves the provision of individualised help with course-related writing at times of need.

In writing about acquisition-based second language teaching programmes, Krashen (1985) proposes four stages: general language teaching; sheltered language teaching; partial mainstream; and full mainstream. Control of anxiety is related to the degree of exposure to native speakers outside the classroom. Stage 1, is pre-speech and, as the name suggests, language input is general. In stage 2, academic subject matter is adapted to the needs of the second language learners. In stage 3, unmodified subject matter is within a restricted range and is selected on the basis of what students are most likely to understand and be motivated to learn. In stage 4, more subject areas are introduced through unmodified material. Krashen uses the term "mainstream" to refer to the content as taught to the general body of students. It does not describe a situation were L2 students are grouped in classes with L1 students.

Under-preparedness at point of entry which includes deficiencies in language competency also of L1 students, is mentioned by both Krashen (1985) and Snow and Brinton (1988). The latter comment on the numbers of

under-prepared students, both language majority and language minority, entering university in USA. They suggest that the development of writing skills offers one way to begin to address this problem. They investigate a programme which used a content based language instructional approach. The programme was based on the adjunct model in which students were enrolled concurrently in two linked courses: a language course and a subject course. Native and non-native speakers were integrated in the content course but the non-native speakers were sheltered in the language component. In the latter, the emphasis was on "essential modes of academic writing, academic reading, study skills development, and the treatment of persistent structural errors" (Snow and Brinton 1988, p.557). In the content class, the emphasis was on thinking and learning in the target language, particularly by synthesising information from the content-area lectures and readings. An assumption was that the L2 students could cope with the authentic subject material.

Variation in language and the specification of features characteristic of each discipline have implications for the curriculum design of such courses in language for academic contexts. Snow et al. (1989) specify two types of language objectives: content-obligatory language objectives and content-compatible language objectives. The former specify the language needed to develop, master, and communicate about given content material. Structural and functional aspects are part of the latter, that is, are content compatible. This division is useful in designing curriculum. Snow et al. describe three models. The first is the mainstream classroom. Together the mainstream teacher and the language teacher assess the linguistic needs of the students and plan to meet them. The content teacher assumes the responsibility of teaching language skills as part of the content lesson. The second model they describe as the "ESL pullout setting", where, as the name suggests, the limited language proficiency students are taught as a discrete group (p.209). In the situation described in one study both content-obligatory and content-compatible language were taught by the language teacher and where there was a deficiency in content knowledge there was opportunity for interactive learning between teacher and students to take place. The immersion class offers a third model. Here the language teacher and the content teacher are the same person. In the fourth model, language classes, instead of operating independently from classes in other areas, concentrate on points of coincidence between the language curriculum and the mainstream curriculum.

The importance of the integration of language and content underlies the thinking of Crandall and Tucker (1990) where they describe three instructional approaches: integrated instruction offered by the language teacher; integrated instruction offered by the content teacher; and integrated instruction in parallel classes. They suggest eight characteristics of a content-based instructional programme. Instructional objectives are drawn from language, academic content, and thinking or study skills. Background knowledge is developed in the language. Language is both content-obligatory and content-compatible. Paired and small-group interaction is frequent, as well as interaction with the content material and negotiation of meaning. A wide range of materials is used, including authentic materials, which sometimes need modification. Multiple media and a variety of presentation techniques are used, as well as experiential, discovery, and hands-on learning. Writing is important as a tool for thinking and learning, as well as a means of demonstrating learning. A

variety of formats is used. Crandall and Tucker make the point that lexical and semantic, syntactic, and discourse features of mathematics and algebra, which may constitute some of the subject matter, may present difficulties for English speaking students solving mathematical problems, as well as L2 students. In giving examples of the application of this approach, Crandall and Tucker cite the development of curricula which integrate language and content instruction. "One school district has developed an elementary curriculum which takes objectives from all the content areas and integrates these with English as a second language objectives into one curriculum" (p.91).

We are beginning to see, then, a growing recognition by researchers of a useful reciprocity between approaches to teaching writing which until recently have been parcelled separately, one parcel for native speakers and one for non-native speakers. Brown (1991) comments on the lack of information in what is a considerable body of literature on the teaching of writing in ESL/EFL contexts, about cooperative efforts between staff who teach writing to native English students, and those who teach writing to ESL students, given what he describes as the amount of common ground there is. Brown describes a study conducted at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, the purpose of which was to investigate the relative writing abilities of native speakers and ESL students at the end of their different first year composition courses. There was an apparent lack of difference between the writing produced by the students in the two groups, and future cooperation between the two groups of staff was recommended as beneficial to both them and the students. A further research question suggested by Brown was the manner in which international students and native students compare in writing performance in regular academic courses. Silva (1990) mentions the relationships between L1 and L2 writing instruction, and Johns (1990) emphasises the usefulness of L1 composition theory for ESL writing, in particular, the notions of the writer, the audience, internal versus external reality, and language in written texts. Krappels (1990) suggests that "a lack of competence in writing in English results more from the lack of composing competence than from the lack of linguistic competence" (p.49).

The individual needs of students are emphasised by Raimes (1991). She traces the development, since 1966, of the teaching of writing to adult (secondary and higher education) non-native speakers of English through four foci: focus on form; focus on the writer; focus on content; and focus on the reader. She discusses five classroom oriented issues: the topics for writing; the issue of "real" writing; the nature of the academic discourse community; the role of contrastive rhetoric in the writing classroom; and ways of responding to writing. Emphasis is placed on the individual differences between ESL students, and the danger of advocating a content-based approach for all. In summing up the current positions of writing theorists, Raimes suggests "five emerging traditions of recognition: recognition of the complexity of composing, of student diversity, of learners' processes, of the politics of pedagogy, and of the value of practice as well as of theory" (p.421). Several of her concerns are relevant to both native and non-native writers.

Shaw (1992), too, sees commonality across languages, but also features which are culture specific or language specific. In a discussion of models of communicative competence, he addresses what he describes as the problem of universality and culture-boundedness. He suggests that a particular piece of knowledge or ability in language is universal, language-specific,

or culture-specific. He does not find answers in Canale's (1983) model for questions such as why some students in international classes "need help with a whole range of skills and strategies, while others seem to want or need only to learn the language" and whether the ESOL teacher needs "to teach a given student to structure a talk or essay (as an L1 teacher would need to)" or whether it is "the anglophone/Western structural conventions that need to be taught, or simply the English words for structuring" (Shaw 1992, p.10). Shaw explores an alternative model (Coseriu 1980) which allows us to relate L1 and second/foreign language teaching, and suggests ways in which communicative competence crosses language barriers. As teachers of writing, following Coseriu's model, we could say that the process approach aims at competence on the universal level. A structure-based approach emphasises second language proficiency, that is, language-specific competence. A genre-based approach emphasises the format and content which characterise particular genres. These aspects are culture-specific. It would seem that in an application of this model, the groupings relate not to L1 students and L2 students, but rather to deficiencies at the levels of the universal, the cultural and the linguistic. There seems to be call for careful needs analysis. However, Shaw (1992) comments on the impracticality of an approach which attempts narrowly to address the needs of individual students, and recommends language courses from which everyone will get something: "alongside practice in general (universal) communication skills there should be deliberate explicit or implicit input of syntax (for non-natives) and vocabulary (for everyone) and cultural/textual information" (p.22).

Changes in attitude towards writing and the teaching of writing in ESL are examined by Winer (1992). Winer's findings arise from a study based on a written practicum course. The students were graduate teacher trainees. In this course there was no grouping on the basis of native and non-native speakers. Over a period of three years students in this course recorded reflections on their writing. These reflections provide the data for the study. Four problem areas were identified: a dread of writing; boredom with general topics, and intimidation with technical ones; insecurity about writing skills; insecurity about teaching skills to do with writing. Winer concluded that most issues in the teaching of writing were the same for native and non-native speakers, although some sources of negative attitudes and insecurities were different.

Course 1021.100A/B Writing for University Purposes
The course, Writing for University Purposes, which is credit-bearing, has several of the characteristics shown by research to be useful in courses designed to meet the language, and specifically, writing needs of students studying at tertiary level. It was originally established in 1988 to address the perceived deficiencies in written language of native speakers of English who are required by the University to demonstrate their learning through the traditional means of written assignments. It is a practical course, taught almost entirely in workshops. There is a tutor for each group of approximately twenty students. Classes meet for three hours each week (usually 1 x 2 hours and 1 x 1 hour) for a period of twelve weeks. The course is offered in the first half of a year and then repeated in the second half. Performance in the course is formally assessed on the basis of three major assignments: a critical review of a book; a report based on secondary data; an essay which develops a proposition or thesis substantiated by documented evidence, and a formal three hour examination.

There is also a small component of assessment allotted to attendance at and full participation in workshops. There is no preliminary test of students at the University to ascertain proficiency in writing, and generally students who enrol in the course have self-selected to do so, although some come in on the basis of academic advice, particularly in the second half of the year. Students may enter the University and the course with a University entrance qualification from a secondary educational institution which they have just left, they may hold an entry qualification but have completed their secondary education some time earlier, or they may enter the University on the basis of special admission and hold no formal entry qualification. Thus the age and experience range of students in the course is wide. Students who enrol in this course are usually enrolled in other courses, which may be in Humanities, Social Sciences, Law, Management, Science and Technology, Computing and Mathematical Sciences, or Education, although some students take only this course, seeing it as a useful introduction to University study. Students are allocated workshops which suit their timetables, so there is no formal grouping on the basis of language competency.

Early in the course, students complete a diagnostic assignment. This takes the form of a continuous piece of writing on a specified topic, and its purpose is to discover as much as is possible through this means about the way each student is writing, so that course content and teaching methodology may be adapted to meet, as far as is possible, individual needs. These assignments are considered on an holistic basis, and assigned a band score of between 1 to 6, with 9 used for writing which is clearly off topic. The band designated 6 at one end of the scale, includes a full treatment of all aspects of the topic, and requires not only description but also reflection, analysis, commentary, evaluation, and generalisation. It requires a development from description of personal experience to the application of that experience to the writer's world view and perspectives held more generally on life, that is from the particular and the personal to the general and the abstract. The scripts in this band demonstrate a progression from one level of development to the next, with clear linkage to guide the reader. They demonstrate a high level of language control, and are free from all but an occasional hasty editing lapse. Rhetorical and linguistic criteria, as well as sophistication and completeness of topic interpretation and execution, provide bases on which raters' decisions are made. The descriptors for level 2 at the other end of the scale, are: one or more levels of development are missing; there is randomness, superficiality, stereotyping. inadequacy of vocabulary, and/or serious deficiencies in sentence structure; there is some misinterpretation of the topic. The descriptors for 1 are: the response lacks substance, drifts off-topic; or consistently ill-structured sentences or mechanical errors prevent ideas from being readily followed.

Early pieces of writing in the course, following the pattern of the diagnostic assignment, draw on personal experience for their content. This is not because it is thought that experiential writing has a place in an academic context, but because it is believed that novice or inexperienced writers will write more readily and easily about subject matter which is familiar to them, such writing being more likely to offer an accurate demonstration of their linguistic control, rather than about subject matter which requires them to wrestle with complex or unfamiliar concepts, a process which has been seen to undermine linguistic control. These early topics involve description, as well as some analysis, interpretation, and

evaluation. These last three characterise much academic writing, and, indeed, academic learning generally. The transition to academic writing is made via analysis of a full-page advertisement, which carries both images and text. The assignment requires description as well as analysis, interpretation, and evaluation, and lesson objectives involve showing the students how to recognise these processes.

Early in the course, tutors and students attempt to ascertain features which generally characterise what may be described as the academic discourse community in which the students are to present themselves as credible writers. The concept of register is introduced, with emphasis on appropriate language and tone. A range of texts is introduced. These are analysed to demonstrate variations in style across the disciplines. Technical language is discussed as being appropriate when specialists are writing for specialists, and as demonstrating, when correctly used, that students indeed belong to the particular community of scholars they are seeking to join. Non-sexist language is explained as a requirement in a University which espouses an equal opportunities policy; and the conventions of documentation are introduced in the context of intellectual property. All of these topics are dealt with in a practical way through exemplification and application.

Aspects of process theory underpin the course. Strategies of invention are introduced and practised. Composition goes on over a series of drafts, with feedback interspersed through conferencing. Editing and proof reading come at the end of the process, and at this time, details of conventional usage are emphasised. Assignments are graded at the completion of this stage. The course design demonstrates a movement from the large to the small, or the general to the specific, which is reflected in a progression from rhetorical structures such as organisational patterns to, for example, intra paragraph transitions achieved through, for example, synonyms and repetition; emphatic manipulation of syntax; and connotative and denotative meanings of words.

The genre approach to the teaching of writing has also influenced the design of the course. There is an attempt to teach the basic requirements for each major genre in use across the disciplines in the University, and some variations. The critical review is characterised by opinionated writing, if the book under review is a novel by the terminology of literary criticism, by the format of the particular book genre, and by a critical approach. A reading audience is specified for the review to determine the appropriate level of formality of tone and language. The report introduces the usefulness of the visual aspect in terms of format, layout, diagrams, graphs, charts, tables, and images. The power of the obviously neutral writer is made clear, and of the transparency of a simple, uncluttered style. All the features of a formal report are applied, but the importance of appropriateness of format to situation is emphasised. The essay is stylised to the extent that the proposition is stated in the first paragraph along with a statement of intent which tells how the argument is to develop. The essay does not have headings. There is discussion, along with analysis of exemplary models, of variations in interpretation of the word "essay" across the disciplines. It is pointed out that the expository essay with headings may sometimes be difficult to distinguish from the report.

Topics for the major assignments are chosen by the students themselves but must be approved by the tutor. This means that if they chose to do so, the students may use material from research they have done on secondary

data relating to other subjects they are studying. For example, a student may review a management theory textbook, write a formal report on the New Zealand film industry, and, in an essay, argue in support of reform of the New Zealand electoral system and, in particular, the merits of mixed member proportional representation. In this way, students are encouraged to use the paradigms and language peculiar to the disciplines and subjects they are studying.

Therefore, the course, Writing for University Purposes, can be seen to include much of what is claimed to be useful in courses designed to prepare students for writing in a university. The genre, content based, and process approaches all contribute. Rhetorical and linguistic aspects are emphasised. There is a recognition of the cultural imperatives of an academic discourse community. The assignments and tasks set are typical of a specific University's requirements across the disciplines.

Integration of ESL Students into the Course in 1992

In 1992, approximately 46 non-native speakers of English enrolled in the course, Writing for University Purposes, along with 120 native English speakers. They were from Tonga, Western Samoa, Fiji, New Caledonia, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Cook Islands, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, Holland, Germany. Mother tongue was not considered as a factor in this study. English language competency was one criterion for entry by these students into the University.

In the course, all students were allocated workshops on the basis of suitability of timetable. The largest number of non-native speakers in any group was 16 in a group which totalled 35. This was an exceptional group both in its overall size and the proportion of non-native to native speakers. For both these reasons it was not considered ideal. The ideal group size is 20 to 24 students, including 4 or 5 non-native speakers, so that, when the class divides into smaller groups as it often does for discussion, shared writing, or peer conferencing, there is the possibility of one L2 student in each group. The L2 students should not outnumber the L1 students in the smaller group.

This particular study involved 33 non-native speakers of English, and 65 native speakers. For both native and non-native speakers, the diagnostic assignments, which were completed at the beginning of the course, were considered in the study, and their performance in the course overall based on work throughout the course and a final examination. The purpose of studying the diagnostic assignments was to ascertain language deficiencies at the time the students commenced the course. Comparison between the language deficiencies evident in the assignments of the two groups was to explore similarities and differences, and the extent of commonality. By looking at performance at the beginning of and in the course overall, it was intended to identify progress in language development where that occurred. A major limitation of the study was the inevitable influence of an almost totally English speaking environment on the language development of the non-native speakers. Also, on occasion, students have been observed to be unable to demonstrate their full language proficiency in the first weeks of living in a new country, so that, to an extent, language improvement may have come about as a result of the influence of the passage of time on prior knowledge, and of a successful orientation to University. There was no control group, for whom there would have been a specialised curriculum and with whom a comparison could have been made.

In the rating of the diagnostic assignments of the 33 non-native speakers, one student gained the band score 6, four students the band score 5 or 5-6, five the score 4 or 4-5, one the score 3-4, four the score 3, nine the score 2-3, six the score 2, and two the score 1 or 1-2. One student's score was not available. Therefore, fewer than half of these students gained a band score of 3 or higher, within a range of 6 bands. In the rating of the diagnostic assignments of the 65 native speakers, no student gained the band score 6, ten the band score 5 or 5-6, fourteen the band score 4 or 4-5, nine the band score 3-4, sixteen the band score 3, seven the hand score 2-3, six the band score 2, one the band score 1 or 1-2, two the band score 9. Therefore, 49, that is more than three quarters of the native speakers, gained a score of 3 or higher. So, in terms of the composition of the integrated group overall, approximately two thirds of the students were native speakers and one third non-native, and there were significantly more native speakers, proportionately, who scored in the range 3 or higher than there were non-native speakers. In terms of numbers overall, sixteen native speakers and seventeen non-native speakers scored below 3, or gained the score 9.

Additional comments recorded by the rater, who was also the writing tutor, about the writing of students in both groups for the diagnostic assignments included, in the range 3 or higher: fluent and controlled writing; very occasional technical error; fluent style but lacks structure; handled task competently but spelling errors; competent and fluent but more analysis needed; syntax needs attention; structure needs attention; competent but some technical errors; stilted but competent; occasional technical error but fluency evident; mature writing in formal style; mature approach but some inappropriate language; mostly correct language but analytical skills need development. At this level, maturity of approach and fluency of style were occasionally marred by technical inaccuracies, structural weakness, or inappropriate choice of language, none of which detracted significantly from effectiveness of communication or the credibility of the writer. Inappropriateness of language was a characteristic of the writing of non-native speakers in some instances.

Scripts of both groups of students which scored below 3 had these comments: inadequate paragraphing, incomplete, lacks fluency; writing flows but problems with idiom, tenses, and prepositions, little analysis; technical errors noticeable; some technical errors, little analysis; fluent, but some problems with idiom, tenses, and prepositions; lacks fluency and disjointed; problems with syntax; technical problems but task well executed; simple ideas clearly expressed but syntax breaks down in expression of complex thoughts.

Generally speaking, the major difference between those who scored 3 or higher and those below 3 was that the scripts of the latter showed a greater range of errors and/or a greater incidence. What was noticeable among the comments on the scripts of non-native speakers was the frequent reference to maturity of approach, fluency, and execution of the task and, at the same time, to errors of usage. For these students, errors often involved idiom, tense, prepositions. For the students, generally, who scored below 3, maturity of approach and fluency were less likely to be evident than for those who gained the higher scores. Native speakers as well as non-native speakers in this group sometimes had problems with syntax. Inadequate analysis was also a characteristic in common.

A breakdown of course results showed that of the 33 non-native speakers, two failed the course, having gained less than 50 percent of the marks available for the internal course work and the final examination, and six gained a C pass, that is, they were within the range 50 to 54 percent which indicates border-line performance only. The two students who failed had a band score of 2 in the diagnostic assignment. Of the six students who gained a pass of C, two did not perform well for identifiable personal reasons which were unrelated to the course. Of the remaining four students, two had a band score of 3, one a band score of 2, one a band score of 1-2.

Among the native speakers, two students failed the course. Of these, one had a band score of 9 in the diagnostic assignment, one a band score of 4. It is thought that both of these students suffered problems of a personal nature which affected performance in the course. Three native speakers gained a pass in the C range. Of these, one had a band score of 9 in the diagnostic assignment, two a band score of 2-3. Five native speakers failed to complete the course compared with none from amongst the non-native speakers.

In the C+ range, that is, 55-59, there were considerably more non-native speakers than native speakers; in the B range, that is 60-74, non-native students scored as well as native speakers. In the A- to A range, that is 75-84, native speakers scored significantly better than non-native speakers.

In a comparison of the two groups, then, eight non-native speakers scored C or lower in the course, and ten native speakers, if those who failed to complete are included. However, on the basis of pass rate, adjustment having been made for numbers in the two groups, and students who failed to complete having been included in the calculation, non-native speakers performed at least as well as native speakers, although, proportionately, significantly fewer non-native speakers gained 3 or higher in the diagnostic assignment. In the course overall, proportionately more native speakers gained higher grades.

Conclusions

It is useful to draw some conclusions from the details of the study. Shaw (1992), following Coseriu's (1980) model, described knowledge and abilities in relation to language, in terms of the universal, the language-specific, and the culture-specific. An application of these ideas to this study and the development of writing within academic contexts, would suggest that the universal and the culture-specific are aspects that native and non-native speakers might explore together. In an application of Shaw's (1992) discussion to the course, Writing for University Purposes, the process approach has universal application. Genre and rhetorical aspects are specific to the cultures of the disciplines, and sometimes to the way things are done at the University at a particular period of time. The analysis given in this paper suggests that, regardless of their backgrounds, students who are interested in developing their language skills and knowledge as a means of learning and of demonstrating that learning, provided that their language-specific competence is such that needs in this area do not dominate their language requirements, are likely to benefit from the course, Writing for University Purposes. Even in the area of language-specific competence, the study found some parallels between the requirements of native and non-native speakers. In this area of competence progress was demonstrated by both groups. Where it is clear

from the diagnostic assignments of non-native speakers that needs specific to language control override other language needs, those students may require a specialised ESL language course. In this study, those students were very much in the minority, which is not surprising since the students had undergone a careful, individualised screening process which included consideration of English language competency, prior to acceptance by the University.

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