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Maximizing Cross-Cultural Opportunities: Pre-service Teachers and Pakistani Teachers Writing Together

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In Pakistan, English is taught to students starting at a young age since English is one of two official languages. Despite an early start to instruction in and for English, Kamran (2008) asserts that the students lack English fluency for communicative purposes even when they enter college. This problem continues past the secondary and tertiary levels of education. Ahmed confirms, "When Pakistani students step out of the educational institutions into practical life, they are 'confronted' with English, the reason being that they are never taught to feel at ease with the language as no stress was laid on the teaching of English for functional/communicative purpose" (2004, p. 55). Pakistani teachers need exposure to new instructional ideas to assist them in designing more dynamic lessons for communicative purposes in English. In 2011, secondary English teachers from Pakistan began to attend six-week professional development programs within the United States. These in-service teachers reported the need for communicative English on an interest inventory at our first class meeting. They also wanted more instructional ideas for each of the language domains—reading, writing, listening, and speaking—though they were not yet exposed to literacy frameworks and the need to integrate the domains.

In the first year working with the Pakistani participants, it was evident that these teachers had high esteem for the written word. They could recite pieces of poetry from the English-speaking world, from the many tribal languages of Pakistan, and from their national language Urdu. They could discuss pieces of well-known world literature including those by Jonathan Swift and Arundhati Roy, and they respected and showed high regard for members of their group who authored poetry themselves. Based on these strengths, I (first author/researcher) wanted a methodology class that would encourage them to write and discuss writing with other English speakers. Furthermore, I wanted other learners to have the opportunity to learn about these Pakistani visitors. My colleague (second author/researcher), who also teaches a required Content Literacy course for undergraduate secondary pre-service teachers in the local area, agreed that it would benefit our students to work with the visiting scholars. This study reports on the cross-cultural instruction of writing in a functionalist framework that we, the

authors, designed in the following year to integrate the learning of the in-service Pakistani teachers and local undergraduate pre-service teachers.

Background of Study

The lack of communicative competence in English among the Pakistan population has been attributed to a number of factors within the educational system. These factors include: (a) grammar-translation focused curriculum, (b) teacher-centered classrooms, (c) lack of concentration on teaching English for communicative purposes, (d) untrained teachers, (e) lack of motivation, (f) overcrowded classrooms, and (g) unsuccessful language policies (Ahmed, 2004; Jabeen, 2013). Although the latter two are more difficult to address as a non-citizen of Pakistan, the initial four issues could be addressed in a methods class with a design to increase motivation of both teachers and students through a more communicative-based instructional approach that integrates language domains. Ideally, after participating in such a classroom, the in-service teachers would provide similar instructional approaches to their students in Pakistan to help them "feel at ease with the language" (Ahmed, 2004, p. 55).

We chose to work within a Systemic Functionalist Linguistics (SFL) theoretical framework for the cross-cultural writing activity because it complemented the instructional goals of both the Methodology class of the Pakistani group, and the Content Literacy class of the undergraduate pre-service group. SFL examines how the context in which discourse takes place impacts the language system, or the choices that have evolved to serve our needs (Halliday, 1976, 1994). It shows, for

example, how the language typical of oral discourse among friends is different from a formal oral presentation; or how the language of science is different from the language of literature. Thus, SFL has the linguistic demands that Pakistani teachers were comfortable with from their grammar-translation methods, and SFL emphasizes a sociocultural approach to language that undergraduate students are taught to use for apprenticing their secondary students into the disciplines they will teach—including science, social studies, math, physical education, music, and literature.

Literature Review

Academic literacy, or disciplinary literacy, is well-known among literacy researchers working within a socio-cultural framework (Gibbons, 2002; Schleppegrell, 2004; Zwiers, 2008). Research studies have provided evidence to support the systematic integration of language and content in classroom instruction for the academic success of English language learners in the United States (de Jong & Harper, 2005; Huang, Berg, Siegrist, & Damsri, 2017; Schleppegrell & de Oliveira, 2006). In Europe, scholars working within the educational model known as Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) also find that CLIL instruction, informed and empowered by SFL, leads to a wider range of form-function connections in student use of academic language (Llinares & Pastrana, 2013; Llinares & Pena, 2015). A functional perspective, specifically SFL, recognizes that a language emerges from context and that people make choices based on those contexts. In this tradition, "language is considered from and for its use, and all the linguistic elements are seen to fulfill functions in communication" (Llinares & Pastrana, 2013, p. 82). The situational context influences the kinds of choices we

make from the language system. Context of situation is described through three variables that influence the use of language: (a) field—the topic or content being talked about and the social activity being pursued; (b) tenor—the relationships between the people involved; and (c) mode—the medium and role of language in the situation. Thus, a functional linguistic approach to teacher development for development of content specific writing would consider the disciplinary context, science for example, as the starting point and take into account the three variables in context of a situation such as exploring water pollution (field) as science students (tenor) who will write (mode) about the pollution. Teachers would then make decisions about the linguistic resources which need to be introduced and explored for increasing students' literacy skills within the situational context.

A key premise of SFL is that language is a resource for meaning, thus learning is viewed as a linguistic process. This linguistic view of learning results in a unified view of learning language, learning through language, and learning about language (Halliday, 2007). In this view, the child learning language for the first time is engaged in a process of language socialization (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986; Ochs, 1988); the child is seen to be learning language and simultaneously learning through language, that is, learning about the world. In this process, the focus is on how people use language to make meaning with one another as they carry out the activities of their social lives. They do this through their selections from the sets of choices that are available in the language systems (Christie & Unsworth, 2000, p. 3).

Meaning construction, as a process of learning about the world, is realized

through the use of a combination of available linguistic resources in the forms of words, sentence, and discourse. Therefore, the learning of academic content is the development of the language/literacy skills in a process of language socialization for disciplines such as physiology, biology, and mathematics—which were areas the Pakistan visiting scholars teach in addition to traditional English language arts.

Within the tradition of SFL, literacy is viewed as a form of social action where language and context co-participate in making meaning (Halliday, 1976; Lemke, 1990). As Schleppegrell (2004, pp. 4-5) asserts, "Because all language use contributes to the construal of the social contexts in which it occurs, a functional theory of language enables us to identify linguistic choices that realize particular kinds of contexts." Thus, the functional linguistic perspective views language as a system with a set of options to create different kinds of meanings. We needed to teach the under-graduates how to analyze linguistic choices at the discourse, syntax (sentence), and lexicon (word/phrase) levels in order for them to teach the Pakistani teachers the valued academic genres in the English language (Derewianka, 1990; Rose & Martin, 2012). This three level stance toward academic language also aligns with state English language development standards (WIDA, 2012) of which the undergraduate must demonstrate knowledge to teach their discipline in secondary schools. Therefore, the local students continued to work toward fulfilling state standards with an opportunity to learn more about the Pakistani culture; and, the Pakistani teachers benefited from a series of lessons with a smaller teacher-student ratio for discussion on the various perspectives

3

represented in the classroom. We can find no research that has addressed pre-service teachers working with in-service Pakistani teachers to achieve (a) an instructional approach workshop, or (b) a cultural exchange based in writing, or (c) a combination of the two such as in this unique project.

The Teaching-Learning Cycle

The teaching-learning cycle was developed through a number of historical phases as pedagogical researchers, particularly in Australia, sought to support students who had independent levels of writing lower than the output required of them for quality academic work (Rose & Martin, 2012). The teaching-learning cycle we used to train undergraduates consisted of the following four broad steps: (a) *negotiating the field* in which undergraduates would discuss with class members what the subject of a text will be, what prior knowledge the class has on the subject/field, what part of a text and field that will be explored; (b) *deconstruction of the text* in which the pre-service teachers discuss with the class the stages of the writing, the linguistic choices of the author, and the relationship of the author to the audience (tenor); (c) *joint construction* in which the pre-service teachers write with the class to develop a unique piece of writing that uses the same organizational stages, linguistic features, and tenor as the deconstructed piece though perhaps not from the same field; and (d) *independent construction* in which the individual Pakistani learners use the deconstruction and joint construction as models for their own writing. The undergraduate students were expected to complete steps (a) and (b) as a whole group and then work within small groups with one pre-service teacher instructing four to five Pakistani in-service

teachers for a joint construction before encouraging the Pakistani teachers to write on their own.

This Study

The background literature shows issues with the Pakistani educational approaches for the acquisition of English. We chose the teaching-learning cycle because it situates the text at the center of classroom discourse; therefore, it respects the Pakistani's high regard for the written word and allows for authentic communicative purposes as they work with other educators to analyze the language choices of authors. Finally, it draws on the Pakistani's strength for such discussions due to their educational experiences with grammar-translation. An SFL approach to the teaching of writing has been shown to be effective in a variety of contexts including disadvantaged schools in Australia (Rose & Martin, 2012), Arabic dominant schools in the northern United States (Moore & Schleppegrell, 2014), and mixed linguistic schools on the East Coast (Gebhart, Chen, & Britton, 2014). The SFL approach is beneficial for students who demonstrate a variety of abilities (Achugar & Carpenter, 2012; Berg & Huang, 2015). This strong research-base of improvement in students' academic performance in diverse classrooms, where English is the target language, indicated that the approach would benefit the Pakistani teachers faced with diversity in the classrooms of their Southeast Asian home.

An instructional choice was made to have the undergraduates focus on teaching the Pakistani teachers the teaching-learning cycle, allowing the pre-service teachers the opportunity to gain instructional experience. Teaching information to others who do not hold the same information prepares pre-service teachers by making

4

them deal with the uncertainties that come with teaching (Grzega & Schoner, 2008). Additionally, the approach opened the door for the undergraduate students to listen to the Pakistani students as they developed ideas for writing, thus deepening the cultural exchange. As Eraut (1994) points out, many areas of professional knowledge can be found in books and journals, but pedagogy "is constructed through experience and its nature depends on the cumulative acquisition, selection and interpretation of that experience" (pp. 19–20). We sought to have all teachers—pre-service and in-service—take away not only knowledge of academic writing genres and a pedagogical approach, but also a unique experience to add to their world knowledge.

Three questions guided this mixed-methods inquiry. The first two questions focused on the learning of pre-service undergraduates, and the third question centered on the Pakistani teachers' impressions of the instructional approach.

(a) How did the local pre-service teachers' knowledge base about the genres of schooling increase, if at all?

(b) How did the local pre-service teachers' understanding of Pakistani people increase/change, if at all?

(c) What were the perceptions of the Pakistani in-service teachers about the curriculum cycle?

Methodology

This research is pragmatic in nature as can be seen from the above section on the background of the study, and thus a mixed-methods design was selected (Creswell, 2014; Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007). Specifically, the research design is an embedded mixed methods design because we wanted to incorporate the perspective of the Pakistani teachers through a focus group discussion. The qualitative and quantitative data together minimize "the limitations of both approaches" (Creswell, 2014, p. 218) and provide a deeper understanding of the change in the undergraduate teachers' knowledge of central written genres of schooling in the English language, and of the Pakistani culture. A limitation of this study is the short amount of time the pre-service and in-service teachers worked together on this cross-instructional writing project.

Participants

The study took place at a mid-sized university in the western United States. The 27 undergraduate pre-service students were in their junior year in the teacher education program, and had focused majors in a variety of content areas such as history, science, music, and language arts. These students were all approximately 20 years of age. The 17 visiting scholars from Pakistan were all secondary level classroom teachers, also from a variety of disciplines. They ranged in age from the early 30s to their mid-40s and came from both rural and urban areas. They often teach their classes in English in addition to Urdu and/or a local language. The Pakistani teachers had been in the U.S. for one month before meeting the pre-service teachers in this activity. The local teachers had been in their required Content Literacy class for two weeks before this activity. Teachers participating in the study received funding through a Teacher Exchange program sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, funded by the U.S Government, and administered by IREX. This study was not funded by these agencies and the findings and opinions are only those of the authors.

Data Collection

The undergraduate, pre-service teachers were given a questionnaire before and after their six-week period of instruction with the Pakistani teachers. The questionnaire consisted of five questions, though only three were used for this analysis. The questions on the pre-questionnaire were as follows: (a) What are some of the academic genres, other than those traditionally associated with narrative fiction, are you familiar with from schooling? (Please name and briefly describe a few if possible; if not, okay, just say so.); (b) What do you know about the nation of Pakistan? (c) What do you know about the people of Pakistan? These prompts changed slightly on the post-questionnaire to include the word "now." For example, "What do you know about the people of Pakistan *now*?" Students had the opportunity to opt-out of having their responses analyzed by marking off a box at the end of the questionnaire; only one student did so. Therefore, the total analyzed questionnaires were 52 with 25 pre-instruction and 27 post-instruction.

The Pakistani teachers were asked to discuss, in a focus group, the following question: "What are your thoughts on the teaching-learning cycle approach to learning?" A focus group method was selected for two reasons: First, it is a fast and efficient method for obtaining data from a small group (Krueger & Casey, 2009) and second, the participants' sense of cohesiveness within a group promotes a climate of safety allowing participants to share information more comfortably (Vaughn, Schumm, & Sinagub, 1996). This attention to a safe environment aligns with good instructional practice. After the initial question about participants' impressions in relation to the approach, they were reminded of the group of students who taught particular genres and asked to provide strengths and weakness of the instruction. The moderator (first author/researcher) was responsible for facilitating the discussion and encouraging all members to contribute. Notes were taken by the moderator as the Pakistani teachers engaged in conversation related to the questions. The notes were fleshed out more fully in an ethnographic-style approach (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995) following the class session in which the focus group took place.

Data Analysis

The questionnaires were analyzed using a mix of constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998) to locate emergent codes/descriptors, and classical content analysis (Wetherell, Taylor, & Yates, 2001) to provide frequency counts of categories. In the first phase, the researchers read through the notes for "open" coding that entertained all analytic possibilities to account for the data, followed by "axial" coding that linked categories and subcategories of patterns (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Occurrences of similar ideas were tallied for frequency counts as categories were developed (Wetherell et al., 2001). In a second phase, the questionnaires were revisited to ensure a match between the categories and data. This two-step process was repeated on the post-instruction questionnaire. Finally, a third of the 27 undergraduate students were randomly selected to examine the individual learning from pre- to post-questionnaire. A simple linguistic analysis of word, sentence, and repetition was completed on the questionnaires of nine students.

The fleshed-out notes of the Pakistani discourse, taken by the moderator, were

6

analyzed with the focus group as the unit of analysis (Morgan, 1997) rather than any particular member, or members, or their utterances. The assistant moderator (second author/researcher) helped the moderator to analyze and interpret the focus group data (Krueger & Casey, 2009). The method of constant comparative (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) was brief due to the small quantity of data collected from a single focus group at a single meeting of a class; however, the data was redundant (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) to a degree that allowed the research question to be addressed within the next section of this article and the concluding discussion.

Findings
Questionnaires

On the pre-questionnaire to the undergraduate students, the question related to "academic genres, other than those traditionally associated with narrative fiction" resulted in a list of 22 labels with the most prevalent response being "non-fiction" (seven occurrences). The next most common response was to simply leave the space blank (seven occurrences). After these undergraduates taught the basic academic genres identified by SFL researchers as important to the school context—narrative, recount, instructional, explanation, informational report, and argument—their responses better aligned with the basic genres described in SFL literature (Derewianka, 1990; Derewianka & Jones, 2012). Table 1 shows a wide variety of labels often used for fiction including mystery, horror, and romance, though the prompt distinctly asked for "other than" narrative. The post-survey demonstrates an extreme shift to genres other than

narrative. Students also used the labels "creative" (two occurrences) and "descriptive" (one occurrence). Since neither of the two students who listed "creative" listed "narrative," these could have been collapsed, but we were uncertain so chose to list them separately. It is also interesting to note that while "argument" was the most frequent genre listed in the post-questionnaire, it was not listed at all in the pre-questionnaire. This omission seems odd because argument or persuasive writing is often taught in schools of the United States, and is required on the two major college entrance exams (i.e., ACT and SAT).

The undergraduates demonstrated a lack of knowledge about Pakistan. Thirteen students stated that the country was located in the "Middle East" though most geographers categorize it as south or south-central Asia. Eight students wrote "not much" when asked about the nation and people. Three stated that they could find Pakistan on a map. Three stated that Islam was the main religion. Two students identified bordering countries of Afghanistan and India. Two more students listed "political conflict" and "mountainous" as ideas they had about the nation of Pakistan. "Oil is main natural resource" was also written by two students though this information is incorrect. Additional single comments included: "small in size," "different culture," "small military," "minimal oil," "history of religious conflict," and "home to Bin Laden's sketchy compound." Although culture was mentioned, the comments demonstrate an overall inability of the students to articulate cultural differences and similarities. The post-questionnaire demonstrated an increased knowledge of Pakistan.

7

Table 1

Genres Cited

Pre-questionnaire (N=25)	Occurrences	Post-questionnaire (N=27)	Occurrences
Non-fiction	9	*Argument	26
No response	7	*Recount (Recall)	23
Biography	6	*Informational Report	23
Journals	5	*Instructional/Procedural	19
Science Fiction	4	*Explanation	18
Historical Fiction	3	*Narrative	5
Newspapers	3	Creative	2
Autobiography	2	Descriptive	1
Non-narrative Fiction	2		
Horror	1		
Romance	1		
Children's Literature	1		
Mystery	1		
Editorial	1		
Letter	1		
Poetry	1		
History	1		
Fantasy	1		
Dystopia	1		
Youth Novels	1		
Fiction	1		
Informational	1		

*Genres included in Derewianka (1990) and Derewianka and Jones (2012), and taught by undergraduates in this study.

The categories that emerged in relation to the culture of Pakistan on the post-questionnaire include social organization, customs and traditions, and the humanities. Within social organization, three subcategories are present: family, friends, and the occupation of teacher. Four undergraduates recorded the fact that Pakistani people tend to have arranged marriages. Ideas that connect to those marriages were that they "value family" including "extended family." Friends, the undergraduates learned, were also valued and though the Pakistani people tended to be "friendly," within the country there were

"regional conflicts." Finally, the undergraduates stated that the teachers from Pakistan are "intelligent" and "hungry to learn" though they have "many limitations" in a "different school system" where "science is a new subject," but women are active in the system and have careers in "education and leadership."

The customs and traditions undergraduates noticed amounted to a dozen different items. The most frequently cited, with six mentions, was that the visiting Pakistanis "love cricket." This fact was made evident when one of the men in the group insisted an important game be

8

shown on the big screen in the room from an internet stream. Despite what might be interpreted as a disruption to learning, the second most frequently cited fact, with four statements, was that the Pakistani group viewed "education as a means to further society." Three students remarked that the Pakistani people were "hard workers" and took "similar holidays" to those enjoyed locally, such as a Labor Day. Other comments about customs and traditions included ideas that the Pakistanis "love chai (tea)," "love taking pictures," "like gold better than silver," "live in valleys," have "great food," "beautiful dresses," "homes of clay and dirt," and use "mustard flower oil as a hair treatment."

The last category of the humanities are a cluster of concepts related to language, arts, religion, and history. One student remarked that s/he had been uncertain before, but with the exchange s/he now knew that the majority of Pakistani people were Muslim, while another student stated that these religious teachings were extremely important. Another student connected religion to the history of the partition (when the British finally left the area and two independent nations were created—Hindu-majority India and Muslim-majority Pakistan). One statement was written regarding Eid, a Muslim religious holiday at the end of Ramadan, which requires particular prayers. Three students mentioned that while the Pakistani educational system teaches with a cultural-historical perspective of Islam, the system is now in a "state of change." Finally, one student stated that Urdu was the language that allowed the different ethnic groups of Pakistan to communicate in schools and society.

Individual Growth Sample

The increase in knowledge about Pakistan is further demonstrated through the comparison of a random sample of nine (one-third of the full sample) undergraduates' pre- and post-questionnaire responses (see Table 2). The post-questionnaire comments were used in the coding analysis above, but that analysis fails to take into account how individual students' progressed in their cultural-knowledge and language ability. Table 2 exhibits how undergraduates use a combination of words and phrases with few full sentences in the pre-questionnaire phase; however, after the cultural exchange, all these students employ more complete sentences, and fewer fragmentary words and phrases, to demonstrate their understanding of Pakistan. A simple word count shows 35 words for the pre-questionnaire verses 148 for the post-questionnaire. The post-questionnaire responses also demonstrate a greater variety of word choices within the sentences while the words "I", "know", "very", and "much" appear twice each across the small pre-questionnaire sample. These high-frequency, single-syllable words account for approximately 23% of that data. The bracketed information about "arrows" in Table 2 relate to the directional symbols many undergraduates included on their post-questionnaire.

In the pre- and post-questionnaire, there were two questions related to knowledge about the people of Pakistan and another about the nation of Pakistan. In the post-questionnaire, students drew in arrows, 11 total, between these two questions to connect ideas between their responses to them; and in some cases, they drew a double-headed arrow to demonstrate that the responses for people

and nation are interchangeable. Students did not take this initiative on the pre-questionnaire indicating that the constructs of nation and people became more complex as a result of this international teaching exchange.

Table 2

Individual Growth (Random Sample)

Pre-questionnaire	Post-questionnaire
They are darker skinned. Not very wealthy in some parts.	I know that they love cricket. [Double arrow] Kind, friendly, arranged marriages.
Religion in Muslim, very poor	They are just like us, but just have a different language. Like to take pictures and are very friendly.
Pakistani, Islam	People are friendly and the women are conservative.
I don't know much.	I know the people are eager to participate and they are very outspoken. I learned the women are very strong-willed and individual. I was not expecting that. I was expecting them to be soft spoken.
"Nothing"	The people I met were intelligent, friendly, and value education.
Mostly Islamic	Many schools that are corrupted by extremist groups. [Arrow to the other] They are smart, love cricket, arranged marriages.
Not much at all	They seem strong and determined. They enjoy learning and taking pictures.
I don't know anything	They strive to do their best, during our lesson everyone was very vocal and engaged.
No before data	The teachers want to learn more but don't have the same resources we have. Their leaders are very important and impact their daily lives.

10

Perception of the Teaching-Learning Cycle

The focus group of in-service Pakistani teachers found the instructional approach taken to teach the writing "explicit," "well-organized," and "useful." Their criticism of the undergraduates' teaching was constructive and consisted of five points. They assert that the approach is best if the instructors (a) give an introductory statement with a sound explanation of the genre, (b) provide an explanation of the features and language points first without rushing to group work, (c) focus on the genre being taught and then provide information about sub-genres, (d) recognize student expertise, and (e) select content that is close to the lived experience of the students. Regarding the last two points for example, the undergraduate group that taught a recount about cricket (the sport) were esteemed more highly by the Pakistani teachers at the end of the exchange than the group who used the topic of peanut butter sandwiches to teach the procedural genre. The choice of cricket showed the Pakistani group that these students were willing to research the culture a bit to tap into the expertise of their students. However, the students who chose to teach about a peanut butter sandwich only re-enacted a lesson that they may have been exposed to in their own education (though no bread or knives were used in the lesson with the Pakistani group). This error required unnecessary cognitive demand on the Pakistani students who were learning not only how to write an academic genre, but also the peculiarities of food in America. An advantage of recognizing the students' knowledge of cricket is that the students did not have to learn the content, and could focus more of their cognitive energy on the organizational features and linguistic elements of the target genre.

Discussion

The findings indicate an increased knowledge of academic genres and Pakistani culture among undergraduate students, and that the teaching-learning cycle can be beneficial to teachers who were educated in a grammar-translation tradition like in Pakistan. The pre-service undergraduate teachers narrowed their conceptions of academic genres down to a more manageable and thus teachable eight genres to include the six identified in research by SFL scholars (Derewianka, 1990; Rose & Martin, 2012), and these genres were the ones the students themselves were charged with teaching (Grzega & Schoner, 2008). The Pakistani teachers described the approach the pre-service teachers took with words that could also be used to describe the grammar-translation method: well-organized and explicit. Therefore, the genre and methodological paradigms developed within SFL are an excellent bridge between traditional language-learning approaches and more communicative-based content approaches.

The joint construction phase of the writing approach allowed for the interaction of one local student with four to five Pakistani people. Although we have no evidence to demonstrate how the conversations contributed to the Pakistani teachers' oral discourse, the post-questionnaire responses from the undergraduates indicates a richer understanding of the Pakistani nation and people that was articulated in fuller language with a larger repertoire of word choices within sentences explaining their new knowledge. This increased cultural information adds to their "cumulative

acquisition, selection and interpretation of that experience" (Eraut, 1994, pp. 19–20) for their developing pedagogy. This acquisition process also applies to the Pakistani group in connection to the teaching-learning cycle, and the six genres that were taught to them. Both groups benefited from the cross-cultural writing experience.

Those benefits outweigh the problems encountered in this situational context (Halliday, 1976; 1994). Because the Pakistani group arrived and departed towards the first half of the semester, the undergraduates did not have sufficient time to prepare. As a result, sometimes the teaching was less thoughtful than is optimal; for example, selecting peanut butter sandwiches as the content of written discourse and a graphic organizer from the internet that did not match exactly the target genre. The undergraduates had trouble moving the small group conversations into the topic of culture. This shortcoming was pointed out after the initial instruction to the Pakistani group, after which they made an effort to guide the undergraduates to be open to topics about Pakistan that could be written about in the target genre.

Although it can be difficult to convince local students of the importance of focusing on a few genres and instructing those chosen with a teaching-learning cycle, we do have anecdotal evidence from a student who reported that when he applied this method of instruction in his student-teaching experience in a local secondary school, his cooperating teacher told him it was the most effective lesson of his year. Unfortunately, electronic follow-up inquiries to the Pakistani group about the use of the SFL genres and approach gained no response. However, the approach has

the potential to address several of the concerns about Pakistani education that researchers have highlighted.

Ahmed (2004) and Jabeen (2013) put forth seven problems that Pakistan must face to change their educational system. The teaching-learning cycle can address several of them through extension of ideas and techniques rather than fully supplanting them. The approach builds on the already dominant grammar-translation focused curriculum as previously discussed by drawing on the keen linguistic knowledge that this tradition has developed. The deconstruction and joint construction phase of the cycle maintains a teacher-centered classroom to point out the organizational and linguistic features of a target writing before releasing full responsibility to the students. Communicative purposes are created as students work in whole and small groups to negotiate the field and provide input for a joint construction. This opportunity to negotiate and contribute content, though limited by the genre, may increase motivation of students, particularly if they can demonstrate their individual expertise in something of interest to them in their independent construction of writing. The teaching-learning cycle is controlled enough that untrained teachers may be able to learn the approach quickly; however, as Eraut (1994) emphasizes, pedagogy is cumulative and related to experience. Two shortcomings of the Pakistani educational system which cannot be ameliorated through a teaching-learning cycle approach are unsuccessful language policies and overcrowded classrooms. This final problem is compounded with this instructional approach in that it demands a great amount of teacher time to read the students' writing and to provide necessary

12

feedback for the improvement of language and ideas.

The significant outcomes of a cross-culture writing project in the SFL framework are increased knowledge of other people and of an instructional approach that can be employed in both societies. Additionally, because this genre approach allows for a wide variety of content choices of topic to demonstrate mastery of the genre, the teaching-learning cycle presents an opportunity for learners to engage in discussions about different aspects of culture. The question remains as to whether or not this approach to cross-cultural writing instruction would be effective with other populations; however, this study indicates that cross-cultural opportunities enhance the education of pre-service teachers through building a knowledge base about cultures that is situated in a lived experience. Teaching students to engage in discussions regarding the specifics of culture will develop their abilities to learn from such events. An increased focus on anthropology, in equal or greater proportion to psychology, within teacher education programs could facilitate such inquiry; in the meantime, teacher educators must take advantage of exchange programs to maximize the learning opportunities for all people involved.

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13

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