

“EVERYTHING IN THE MIDDLE:” A CASE STUDY OF A GENERATION 1.5
STUDENT’S ACADEMIC WRITING PROCESS

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Chapter One: Introduction

Background

When I began teaching English for Academic Purposes (EAP) writing courses, I first became aware of a group of students who have very different language and educational experiences from their international student peers in the classroom. These “Generation 1.5” students in university classrooms have graduated from United States high schools where they completed ESL coursework; then as university students, some of them place into ESL/EAP coursework. In conversation, these students may seem to be native English speakers, having honed their oral English and social skills in the U.S., but their academic writing skills are often not native-like. Having immigrated to the U.S. at some point during their childhood or adolescence, and often lacking academic literacy skills, these students bring a complex set of viewpoints and needs to EAP courses. I became interested in learning more about these students and their experiences in EAP writing courses, and so I conducted a case study of one Generation 1.5 student in one such course. A case study such as this is particularly well-suited to portray the richness and complexity of an individual’s experience as a Generation 1.5 student writer. I focused on the student’s revision processes as she responded to instructor feedback, both written and oral, on an EAP writing assignment, and I contextualized the text analysis of her writing and revisions within her overall educational experiences.

Definitions of Generation 1.5 Students

In educational terms, Generation 1.5 students are generally defined as English language learners who have been educated partly in the United States. They are foreign-born U.S. residents who immigrated to the U.S. at some point during their childhood. Like first-generation immigrants, they are born outside the U.S., and like second-generation immigrants, their education and socialization experiences occur partly within the U.S. The “1.5” term attempts to reflect this status of being in-between first- and second-generation immigrants.

Despite the use of a group-identifying label, this group of students is remarkably diverse. A Bosnian refugee who came to the U.S. in mid-childhood, the adolescent child of a successful Chinese entrepreneur, and an undocumented immigrant from Central America may all be classified as Generation 1.5 students. These students’ language and education histories, however, may share little in common, and their education and socialization in the U.S. will likely differ greatly from one another. Thus, learning about the individual stories of these students is an important step toward understanding their needs and challenges. It is not only by describing their common defining factors, but also by portraying their individual situations that researchers and educators can gain a full picture of Generation 1.5 students. In-depth case studies such as the present study contribute to a fuller understanding of the mosaic that comprises these students.

It is important to understand some of the challenges these Generation 1.5 students face because they are a growing percentage of the student population in the U.S. Reflecting general U.S. immigration trends of the post-1965 era, the number of immigrant children in U.S. schools has risen sharply. According to a 2003 Urban

Institute report (Fix & Passel, 2003), from 1970 to 2000, the children of immigrants (both U.S. and foreign-born children) as a share of students in U.S. K-12 schools rose from 6% to 20%. By 2015, that number is estimated to be 30% of the K-12 student population. Of these children of immigrants, one out of every four is foreign-born, fitting into the Generation 1.5 group.

Indiana and Indianapolis

The Generation 1.5 group is a fast-growing student population across the U.S., particularly in immigrant destination states such as California, New York, and Texas.¹ Indiana used to be considered a second-destination state for immigrants, meaning that immigrants moved to the state after settling in their first destination. In this first destination, they usually acquire or improve language, education, job skills, and socialization. Now, however, Indiana is becoming a first-destination state for immigrants, in particular immigrants from Central America and Mexico (Sagamore Institute, 2007).

Reports by the Sagamore Institute (2007; 2009) provide some state-specific immigration statistics. Though only about four percent of its population is foreign-born, Indiana has experienced a rate of immigration growth that outpaces the national average. From 2000 to 2005, Indiana experienced a 30% increase in its number of foreign-born residents (Sagamore Institute, 2007).² The Indianapolis metropolitan area and Marion county, the site of my study, is one of the three counties (Marion, Lake, and Elkhart) that

¹ Data that specifically tracks Generation 1.5 students is not readily available; however, growth patterns in overall immigration can be applied to the demographic patterns of Generation 1.5 students.

² The number of all immigrant categories in Indiana “stagnated or declined,” however, between 2006 and 2007, due to the economic recession (Sagamore Institute, 2009, p. 3).

are home to over half of Indiana's immigrants. Mexico is the single largest home country of Indiana's immigrants (Sagamore Institute, 2009).

The data from these Sagamore Institute reports has implications for Indiana immigrant students' language and educational needs. While immigrants to Indiana used to settle first in a first-destination state, where they would gain language and socialization skills, Indiana's more recent status as a first destination for immigrants means that the language and educational needs of immigrant students, including Generation 1.5 students, present more challenges to educators and communities.

EAP Program Overview and Placement

The English for Academic Purposes (EAP) Program at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) serves approximately 450 students each academic year. Students place into EAP courses depending on their score on the EAP Placement Test. All international students whose native language is not English are required to take the placement test. Additionally, students who have graduated from a U.S. high school and who are identified as non-native speakers of English are sometimes encouraged to take the placement test. Students who fall into this second category may have been conditionally admitted to the university, or they may have low standardized test scores. The EAP placement test comprises four parts: the listening, reading, and grammar sections are machine-scored, while the fourth section, writing, is rated by EAP writing faculty on a 4-point scale. Students' scores on the EAP writing placement test will determine their placement in or exemption from EAP courses.³

³ A score of 4 on the essay test generally exempts a student from EAP writing courses. A score of 3 generally places a student into an EAP section of the university's required composition course for all undergraduates, W131, English Composition. A score of 2

IUPUI's EAP program does not specifically track Generation 1.5 students, and only estimates of their numbers are available. In a typical EAP course, instructors estimate that one to three of the 18 to 20 students in each section are U.S. high school graduates (M.C. Beck, personal communication, June 5, 2009). A total estimate per academic year is anywhere from 25 to 50 Generation 1.5 students in the EAP program per academic year.⁴

EAP Program Courses

The participant in my study was enrolled in English W001, Fundamentals of English. The focus of English W001 is academic writing, with an aim of preparing students for the mandatory composition course required of all university students. The course has an emphasis on process writing and portfolio assessment. Thus instructor feedback, in the form of written comments and in-person writing conferences, plays an important role in students' writing and revising processes.

indicates that a student should take the EAP section of the course that prepares students for English Composition; this preparatory course is titled Fundamentals of English, W001 (M.C. Beck, personal communication, June 5, 2009).

⁴ The university's Office of Information Management and Institutional Research reports that 83 non-international students took an EAP course during the 2008-2009 academic year (B. Dobbs, personal communication, June 24, 2009). This number, however, also includes groups such as graduate students and full-time university employees, who would not be considered Generation 1.5 students by most definitions. The difference between this figure and the estimate made by EAP instructors reveals a need for better tracking of these students.

Goal

The goal of this study was to present the experiences of one Generation 1.5 student in an EAP writing course, and examine that student's revision process as she integrated instructor feedback, both written and oral, into her writing. Specifically, this case study will shed light on the complexity of one individual's experience as a Generation 1.5 student writer, using a textual analysis of the student's writing and revisions, and interpreting the findings through her own reports of her educational and personal experiences with writing in English.

Outline of Thesis

The second chapter of this thesis will review the literature on teacher response, student revision, and writing conferences. This chapter will conclude with my research questions, which focus on the need for a close examination of the individual factors that contribute to the Generation 1.5 student's writing and revision processes. In the third chapter, I will describe the methods used in my study, and I will present the case study, the results of my data analysis, and discussion of the results. The thesis will conclude with implications and suggestions for EAP programming and pedagogy.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

In this chapter, I will present a review of the research relevant to this study. First, I will discuss the use of the term “Generation 1.5” and some variables within and challenges to the label. Then I will review the research on instructor response, writing conferences, and student revision, highlighting some issues specific to Generation 1.5 students.

Definitions and Labels

Generation 1.5 students can be broadly defined as U.S.-educated learners of ESL. The term was first introduced by Rumbaut and Ima (1988) in research on the status of U.S.-immigrant Southeast Asian children. Researchers often describe these Generation 1.5 students as falling in-between first-generation immigrants, foreign-born individuals who immigrate as adults, and second-generation immigrants, who are the U.S.-born children of first-generation immigrants. Members of the 1.5 generation do not fit neatly into the categories of either 1st or 2nd generation immigrants, but they share characteristics of both groups (Harklau, Losey, & Siegel, 1999; Roberge, 2002). In terms of writing, they also fall in-between categories as student writers, since Generation 1.5s may share characteristics with commonly held definitions of ESL writers and basic writers.⁵

⁵ Other terms used to describe the same group of students, or students with similar language and immigration situations, are “language minority students” and “long-term English language learners.”

The definition of Generation 1.5 student that I use for the purposes of this study is an immigrant ESL student in the IUPUI EAP program who has spent at least two years in the U.S. before entering university and who has graduated from a U.S. high school.

Problems with the Label

The term “Generation 1.5,” though used widely, is not without its critics. The “1.5” aspect of the label implies that these students’ experiences exist somewhere mid-way between first- and second-generation immigrants. Like first-generation immigrants, they are born outside the U.S., and like second-generation immigrants, their education and socialization experiences occur at least partly in the U.S. As Roberge (2002) has pointed out, however, their actual experiences may differ from those of both groups (p. 108). Label problems are also a result of these students’ placement in a variety of instructional settings. For example, it is common for these students to be placed into mainstream college composition classes with native English speakers. In a case study of Generation 1.5 students in mainstream composition courses, Ortmeier-Hooper (2008) encouraged a discussion of the use of the Generation 1.5 label. In her summary of studies on these students’ perceptions of institutional labeling and their own identities, she points out that labels such as ESL, linguistic minority, and Generation 1.5 imply a “deficit model” of language and academic ability that these students internalize (p. 392). Schwartz (2004) questioned the term "Generation 1.5" and introduced the term "cross-over student" as a more descriptive label for many students labeled as 1.5 (p. 42). She described cross-over students as a subset of 1.5s who take some ESL at the college level, but are in mainstream college composition classes.

Finally, the use of a label, while perhaps necessary, fails to acknowledge the great variance that exists among Generation 1.5 students. This group of students is far from monolithic, as Reid (1997), Roberge (2002), Matsuda et al. (2003), and Schwartz (2004) have pointed out. Variables such as socioeconomic status, first language literacy experiences, age of immigration, time spent in the United States, and the quality and content of the students' education in the United States all affect students' language learning and postsecondary educational experiences. Some Generation 1.5 students, for example, have had substantial early educational experiences, even English as a foreign language experiences, before immigrating to the United States, while others have not yet gained full proficiency in a first language.

Proposing yet another variable, Rumbaut (2004) has further broken down the Generation 1.5 category into generations he has labeled 1.75 and 1.25. Members of the 1.75 generation arrived between ages 0 to 5, and members of the 1.25 generation arrived between ages 13 to 17. The later-arriving 1.25 generation may struggle more in U.S. schools than the other groups, perhaps because the middle and high schools they enter provide fewer language and literacy services to newcomers than do elementary schools. Furthermore, the later-arriving students face more challenging academic and language tasks than do the earlier-arriving students.

An additional factor may also affect their English language learning. When students arrive in middle school or high school age, they have often studied at least some English in their home countries. Until students' arrival in the U.S., their English courses have usually focused on grammar and reading. This focus on grammar and reading can be a positive or a negative factor for students' academic English skills, according to

Roberge (2009); it may hinder classroom interaction, or it may help students with academic writing tasks (p. 17). In conclusion, though closer study is needed on the sub-categories within the Generation 1.5 group, it seems that age of arrival is one important factor in the educational experiences of these students.

Despite the limitations and problems of the term Generation 1.5, it is currently used broadly in the fields of ESL and composition studies. My use of this term is in keeping with the existing research on this group of students, varied and heterogeneous though the group is.

Characteristics of L2 and Generation 1.5 Writing Processes

Much has been written on the nature of second language writing, including L2 writers' composing and revising processes. Silva (1993), in a summary of the research, noted that second language writers use different and less effective composing techniques than do first language writers, including goal-setting and revision strategies. Revision is more difficult for L2 writers than L1 writers, and they are less adept at revising "by ear."

Generation 1.5 students, however, are thought to fit somewhere between first- and second-language writers. These students are not the same as the international ESL students with whom they share writing classrooms. As Reid (1997) has pointed out, the writing of these Generation 1.5 students is often conversational in tone, phonetic, and "ear-based." Because these students have often learned English "by ear," their writing and revising processes also differ from those of other second-language writers. Some of these differences in the writing and revising processes are rooted in students' interactions with instructors in the form of teacher response and writing conferences.

Response and Revision

In an ESL context, where students' needs for feedback on style, language, discourse, and grammar are even greater than in an L1 composition context, a teacher's responsibility to provide careful and intentional response and commentary is an important factor in students' composing and revising processes.

Raimes (1991) noted that very little of the research on teacher response to ESL writing addresses what happens after the act of responding. She saw this as the "heart of the problem" in the complicated task of responding to writing (p. 419). In other words, the teacher response should not constitute the end of the teacher-student interaction in the writing process. She suggested ways to extend the teacher-student interaction and bring the student back into the process. Providing specific assignment(s) and revision tasks for students to complete as a follow-up to the teacher's response will continue the interaction.

In her study of writing students who were mostly Generation 1.5 students, Ferris (1995) found that many ESL writing students have difficulty interpreting their teachers' comments on their writing. One particular problem she noted relates to the issue of appropriation. In an effort to avoid appropriating student text, and also to encourage students to think reflectively about their text, teachers sometimes phrase their response comments as questions. (An example of a question response might be "What does this paragraph mean?") Such responses phrased as questions are sometimes confusing to L2 student writers, Ferris found, as students do not understand what kind of action or revision is intended to result from this form of response to their writing. The study also found that ESL students do find teacher feedback on their writing to be useful, and they

particularly appreciate positive feedback and encouragement, and they valued preliminary draft comments more than final draft comments.

In a later study, Ferris (1997) examined instructor responses to multiple drafts of L2 student writing and their effect on student revisions, finding that instructor comments appeared to lead to significant student revision. Certain types of comments, including requests for specific changes and summary grammar endnotes, produced the most substantive student revisions. As she found in her 1995 study noted above, Ferris again observed that instructors often pose questions to students in their responses, but these questions are often confusing to L2 students.

Generation 1.5 Students, Response and Revision

Researchers have discussed the question of how response and revision issues may be relevant to Generation 1.5 students in particular. In a summary article that drew attention specifically to Generation 1.5 student writers, Ferris (1999) continued the discussion of her 1997 study on teacher feedback and student revision, raising two important issues related specifically to Generation 1.5 writing students and teacher feedback.⁶ These issues can interfere with students' abilities to engage fully in the composition and revision processes.

First, these students are still in the process of acquiring academic literacy skills, despite their previous experiences in the U.S. educational system. Ferris (1999) noted that many writing students, not only Generation 1.5 students, are also in the process of acquiring these kinds of skills. The Generation 1.5 students, however, have often experienced more disruption in their education than many other students, both L1 and L2.

⁶ Ferris used the term "immigrant student writers" in this study.

In addition, they may have been educated in multiple languages, either sequentially or simultaneously. As a result of this lack of continuity in their education and incomplete academic socialization, these students may have difficulty both interpreting and meeting the challenges posed by their instructors that involve higher order questions that are cognitively more challenging. For example, an instructor's feedback to a student about logical matters in the student's writing (rather than surface-level concerns) may present a difficulty to students who have not had practice in responding to questions about the logic in their writing.

Second, these students may not have the metalanguage to discuss grammar terminology and rhetorical structures (Ferris, 1999). This difficulty with interpreting and using metalanguage can be explained by several factors. The oral nature of Generation 1.5 students' English acquisition means that they often have not learned formal grammatical and rhetorical terms. Thus, when an instructor provides feedback on student writing, discussing a Generation 1.5 student's writing using the terms such as "verb agreement" or "thesis statement" may not be helpful to that student unless such terms are explicitly defined and taught (Ferris, 1999). Simply put, one cannot fix a "verb agreement" problem or improve a "thesis statement" if one does not know what is meant by that.

Roberge (2009) also noted that Generation 1.5 students can have problems interpreting metalanguage when it comes to student writing. A special problem for Generation 1.5 students can arise when they are placed in a classroom of international students, a scenario that is common in university composition courses. International students have often had extensive English training and are familiar with metalinguistic

terminology. Generation 1.5 students, on the other hand, have often acquired English orally, without the use of extensive linguistic terms. Further, the U.S. English dialects that Generation 1.5 students acquire are often nonstandard dialects that do not match the English demanded by academic writing courses (Roberge, 2009, p. 17). If instructors are not aware of these characteristics, a mismatch of expectations can occur in the classroom.

Writing Conferences

Writing conferences between teacher and student also serve as important sources of teacher feedback and writing instruction. These individual meetings between teacher and student often involve both verbal and written commentary on the part of the teacher, and this feedback is intended to result in later revisions by the student writer. Patthey-Chavez and Ferris (1997) found that the feedback teachers presented in writing conferences did impact the student writers' subsequent revisions. Students incorporated the conference feedback of their instructors in their revisions, and those revisions did improve their writing.

However, the feedback students receive during writing conferences, as with written teacher commentary, does not always lead to positive revisions by student writers. In a case study of undergraduate ESL writers, Goldstein and Conrad (1990) found that while some positive revisions did occur as a result of conference interactions, both the conference interactions and the quality of the resulting revisions differed among students. The nature of the instructors' comments, the student writers' individual characteristics, and the types of revision problems students are asked to address were all found to affect the students' revisions. More specifically, the degree to which students themselves engaged in the conference through negotiating meaning and seeking clarification was

found to have an effect on students' revisions. Those students who actively engaged in the conference discourse were more likely to revise their writing in successful ways.

Cultural issues may also arise during a writing conference, which may be a non-native English student's first or only individual and personal interaction with an instructor. Expectations about a student-teacher relationship are often culturally-bound. Goldstein and Conrad (1990) pointed out that writing conference discourse between teachers and native English speakers differs from that between teachers and non-native English speakers. However, among the small sample of ESL students in Patthey-Chavez and Ferris's (1997) study, no significant differences were found in the number and types of subsequent text revisions between native and non-native speakers after their writing conferences. Even if the resulting text revisions do not differ between L1 and L2 students, however, it is important to recognize the cultural dynamics of a writing conference, including L2 students' willingness (or reticence) to engage actively in the conference.

Specifically addressing the question of Generation 1.5 students and writing conferences, Thonus (2003) pointed to a difference between 1.5s and international students. She maintained that 1.5s are often familiar with the process approach to writing, and that they have had experience with student-instructor writing conferences prior to their university composition courses. Their international student classmates in EAP courses, in contrast, often lack these previous experiences. Thus, Generation 1.5 students' previous experiences in English writing instruction, including the process approach and student-instructor writing conferences, can benefit them in university composition courses.

Research Gap and Questions

This review of the relevant research has highlighted several issues relevant to this study; specifically, the characteristics of the Generation 1.5 group, the issues surrounding instructor response, writing conferences, and student revision. However, this review points to a need for continued research on the social aspects of writing, examining the individual educational and personal stories of Generation 1.5 student writers in tandem with text analysis of their writing.

As a heterogeneous group of students with widely varying linguistic and educational backgrounds, Generation 1.5 students have complex experiences and language needs. Because of their language and educational experiences, their interactions with teachers in an EAP context are different from those of their international student peers. The wide variety of these students' situations and histories, however, means that it is crucial to study the factors in students' personal and educational histories that contribute to their development as writers. An in-depth case study such as this contributes to the growing body of research on the individual characteristics of students' writing experiences and writing processes.

I began this study with the following questions:

1. What does the Generation 1.5 student in my study report about her experiences of writing in English?
2. How do feedback and interaction with her instructor shape her revisions?
3. What kinds of revisions does she make in her writing, based on this feedback and interaction?

Chapter Three: The Study

The study was conducted at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI), a large public university with a growing number of both international and resident immigrant students. To select participants for my study, I informally surveyed instructors of the target EAP composition course, Fundamentals of English, asking whether they had any students in their current sections who had graduated from a U.S. high school. Students place into this course by the EAP program's placement test, and the students in the course are all non-native English speakers; that is, the course has no "mainstream" composition equivalent. For students who place into the course, it is a prerequisite for the next composition course required of all university undergraduates. I chose this course as my target course because as a former instructor of this course, I was familiar with the learning objectives, writing assignments, and teaching methods often used in this course. The course is based on a portfolio approach, with three major writing assignments over the course of the semester. The subject matter for these essays varies by section, but all essays focus on students' responses to issue-based articles. Two of these essays are revised for inclusion in the student's final portfolio.

Two of my colleagues responded that they had students who fit my description, and after I met individually with three students, two of the students indicated that they were eager to participate in the study and interviews. This small number of respondents was not unusual for this course; in a typical section of 15 to 20 EAP students, one to three students per section might be considered Generation 1.5 by my definition for this study, having graduated from a U.S. high school.

Both participants completed the interview component of the study; however, I was unable to use the data from one student. The instructor commentary and student-instructor conferences were insufficient for the purposes of my data analysis. Thus this study presents the case of one student participant.

The student participant in this study, whom I will call Nura, was a first-year student at IUPUI, who had lived in the United States for just over two years at the time of this study. Born in Somalia, she spent much of her childhood in Kenya before coming to the United States with her family at age 16. Her Kenyan education was conducted in English and Swahili, while Somali continued to be her home language.

After graduating from high school in the U.S., Nura matriculated at IUPUI, where she placed into EAP courses. During the course of this study, she completed two EAP courses, including the writing course Fundamentals of English, and ESL for Academic Purposes, an integrated grammar and reading course.

Methodology

Data

The data for my student participant included the following:

1. Writing samples from the student's Fundamentals of English course, including drafts and written teacher commentary on one essay. The written comments on the student's draft were made using the Review/Comments feature in Microsoft Word. Students in the course are required to learn how to use this feature of the word-processing software.
2. Transcribed audio-recorded writing conference with the student and the writing instructor. This 30-minute required individual conference involved teacher and student conversation about the essay and recommendations for further revision.⁷
3. Transcribed audio-recorded interviews with the student. I held three interviews throughout the semester. The first interview was based on the student's educational and language history; the second interview focused on the student's writing and revising of the essay; and the third interview focused on the student's overall university writing experiences and their conference and tutoring experiences.

Metalanguage

Finally, I examined the instructor's use of metalanguage to discuss the writing task. It has been suggested that metalanguage may be a particular problem for Generation 1.5 writing students who have learned English aurally/orally (Ferris, 1999; Roberge, 2009). I was interested to see whether these kinds of terms in her instructor's

⁷ Another source of feedback for student writers was the University Writing Center. Nura did seek assistance from Writing Center tutors; unfortunately, scheduling problems made it impossible for me to observe those meetings. According to Nura, her meetings with Writing Center tutors focused on editing and revising grammar errors.

feedback caused difficulty for Nura in her revision process. For this writing task, metalanguage includes terms used to talk about the academic writing task and explain linguistic and rhetorical conventions used in writing. I identified those metalinguistic terms in the written instructor feedback and in the transcribed writing conference that were used to explain the rhetorical and composition tasks of the writing assignment.⁸ The metalanguage used in the instructor's written and oral comments are the following terms: *thesis statement, focusing question, topic sentence, main idea, development, supporting detail, transitions, concluding sentence, counterargument, rebuttal, conclusion, and works cited*. The revision effect was noted as Positive, Negative, Mixed, or No Effect for each instructor comment topic, then the presence or absence of metalanguage was observed to see whether a correlation was present between metalanguage in feedback and the resulting revision effect.

Results and Analysis

This section begins with a discussion of the case study participant's personal and language background and her English learning experiences. Then it documents the participant's writing sample revisions based on her instructor feedback as well as an analysis of the instructor's use of metalanguage in the feedback.

Case Study: Nura

Somalia. Nura lived mostly in Somalia and Kenya until she was 16 years old, spending a brief period of one year in Tanzania. Born in Somalia, she and her family moved to Kenya when she was 6 years old to escape the civil war and to seek medical help for young Nura and one of her aunts. Nura was suffering from an undiagnosed

⁸ Grammar metalanguage was not found because specific grammatical comments are not a feedback priority at this stage of this writing course.

disease and was unable to be helped by the overwhelmed Somali medical system. She received medical help at a Kenyan hospital, and this childhood experience has stayed with her until today, leading to her plans to become a nurse. The family was able to make a life in the capital city, Nairobi, where Nura spent much of her childhood and where she was educated.

Education in Kenya. She attended a series of private schools in Nairobi, where the languages of instruction were Swahili and English. Though Swahili was spoken by most of her classmates, and Nura herself studied Swahili speaking and writing in school, English was the preferred and more prestigious language, and acquiring it was always foremost in Nura's mind. "... I always wanted to come to the United States, yeah, so I was like, if I go to the United States, I'm not gonna use Swahili, so I have to learn English!"

She had a series of private English tutors with whom she worked outside of formal schooling. As she grew older, English became the primary language of instruction, replacing Swahili instruction. Nura reported that she had had instruction in academic writing in Kenya, learning about paragraph writing and essay writing, in addition to her English grammar studies.

Education in the United States. Nura's father left Kenya alone and immigrated to the United States around 2001. Several years later, he returned to Kenya to bring his family, including 16-year-old Nura, to the U.S. They first settled in Ohio in 2006; soon afterwards they moved to Indianapolis in order to enroll their children in a small Islamic school here. This school, School of Knowledge (Madrassa tul-Ilm, or MTI), played a

crucial role in contributing to 16-year-old Nura's education, self-confidence, and determination to meet her educational and career goals.

...we came to MTI like one week after we came here [to the U.S.]! And we were like OK! Everything was amaaazing to us at the time so we came to School of Knowledge, and it was amazing, because like, they would come to us, and they were like, we want your kids to come, and we were like, Nura wants to graduate early, they were like, We can help you, and we were like, the environment just, you know, made us feel this is gonna be our home...

In fact, Nura did not even begin attending school in Ohio, her family's first place of settlement in the U.S., because, according to Nura, the public school authorities in Ohio would not accept her Kenyan educational records. Thus, she explains, she would have been made to start school at the 9th grade U.S. level, which she and her family felt was not appropriate for her, as it would have set her back. So while in Ohio, she read and studied independently (in English) over the summer until she could begin at MTI, the Islamic school in Indianapolis.

Nura entered MTI as a junior (11th grade) with the intention of graduating from high school a year early. She accomplished this goal of early graduation, despite her late arrival in the U.S., in part by taking an online independent study course on English grammar in order to meet state graduation requirements. While in high school, she developed a close relationship with her English teacher, who helped her with her English and other academic tasks both inside and outside of school. This teacher helped her navigate the high school administration so that Nura could meet her goal of graduating early, and she continued to serve as a mentor for Nura as she transitioned to her life as a college student. She said that her experiences with her U.S. high school English teacher

helped her feel more comfortable establishing relationships with her university instructors. She contrasted this with her experiences with her Kenyan teachers:

I feel comfortable with teachers [at IUPUI]. But like in Kenya it's like "let's get to business. You came here to learn, and you're gonna learn, and you're gonna disappear." So um, I never got, um, good relationship [in Kenya].

Nura entered IUPUI as a first-year student with the intention of applying to the nursing school, a competitive academic program, after her first year. By matriculating at university, she became the first person in her immediate and extended family, male or female, to attend university. Her EAP placement test placed her into the W001 EAP writing course as well as G011, an integrated reading and grammar EAP course. Nura said that the two EAP courses were different than she had expected them to be, and that at times she felt that she was not learning anything new or useful to her. These courses are often viewed by students as impediments to their "real" academic coursework, and Nura is no exception:

I was really mad, actually, I was like, I hate, I don't wanna take ESL! It's time-wasting. Now I take 7 credits of ESL, which I could have taken other classes and finished my prerequisites next summer, but that's why I have to take [more nursing pre-requisite classes] during the summer.⁹

⁹ Nura took a credit overload of courses during her first year of college so that she would complete the necessary courses to apply to the nursing school. Her EAP writing course did not count for credit toward graduation, thus potentially delaying her academic plans. Nura's W001 instructor indicated that Nura's placement in W001 was an appropriate placement, given her writing skills at the time.

She worked to change her initial negative attitude about taking these required EAP courses. In doing so, she confronted her ideas about her own identity as an ESL student.

R: So have your thoughts changed at all, now that you are halfway done with the [EAP writing] course?

N: Yeah, I changed. I used to be like, oh my gosh, what time, when is it gonna end, I can't take this anymore, it's too much, um, I said it's too ... basic, even the way [the international students] speak? Um, you know, it's like, really basic and they take time for a looong time ... But now I'm like, you know, you [Nura] didn't come here to judge any people, you came to learn, and you paid money, so how 'bout you just, you know, take advantage of it. So, yeah, you know, I tried my best, I'm trying my best to take advantage, some way or the other.

In another interview, Nura spoke more about her experiences in her W001 EAP course:

Sometimes I wish I could be doing something else at that moment, because I think I'm kind of higher in that, I'm not in the same level as with the students, I'm higher, and I'm a little bit, I'm less than the native speakers, so I'm like in-between. So, um, like when I'm in real English class [with native English speakers] I would be like, Oh my gosh, I feel kind of behind, because they notice all these things and when I'm with the international students I'm like, I know all of this stuff, we're wasting time, we should go on to that stuff [other topics].

Though Nura does speak with a slight British-influenced inflection, her spoken language, like that of many Generation 1.5 students, sounds much like a native-English speaking American college students. With her U.S. high school diploma in hand, she views herself as separate and different from the international non-resident EAP students with whom she shares classes.

She discussed the differences she perceives between herself and the international students in her EAP courses:

R: So when you -- how did you react when you found out that most of the students in your W001 class are international students?

N: I don't like, I don't consider myself international student because I'm not gonna go back [home]. Um, I consider myself like, not American... but ... again, I'm in the middle, everything, like, in the middle.

The concept of overlapping identities, of being both an experienced English speaker from a young age and an ESL student at age 18, of being both American and international, is an idea that Nura has grappled with since she was a young child. Having left her birthplace at a young age influenced her nascent sense of national and cultural identity. Immigrating to the U.S. seems to have cemented this idea that she can, and indeed, must hold on to all the aspects of her identity. Here, Nura explains an experience she had while at a culture fair at her high school. She was representing two booths: Kenya and Somalia.

This lady, I brought the Somali booth and the Kenyan booth ... So this lady comes to me and she goes "Why is this Kenya booth here? Who's Kenya?" "It's me," and she goes, "You're not Kenya, you're Somali," and I'm like, "You're not gonna decide who I am, it's my country." Legally I'm Kenyan, but like ethn- like, culturally and stuff I'm Somalian, so I carry both those things in my hand and I am like, you know, I am both those things and you cannot take one away from me.

Transitioning to the university. Nura credits a university elective course with providing her some of the skills she needed to succeed in an American university environment. This first-year course focused on helping entering students acquire the skills and information needed for success in college. Nura reported that she learned about the student-instructor relationship in this course.

... I came up with this myth that college professors they, um, don't care about, yeah, they just give the lecture and get out of there. But in that class they taught us that if you have a problem you can go to them, and uh, I did that actually and I have a good relationship with the with the professors....

Indeed, she reported that she introduced herself to her economics professor after the first class, and she made a point to sit in the front of the 400-student lecture class and ask questions. Similarly, she practiced these interaction skills in her writing conferences, and at times during the conference she set the agenda for topics or questions, rather than only allow the instructor to raise topics. As I will discuss in the final chapter, these skills became important elements of her ability to improve her English academic writing through revision and working with feedback.

Text Analysis

The next part of this chapter presents the textual analysis of Nura's writing samples. The essay under analysis was a six-paragraph persuasive essay presenting a response to an assigned article about young people using text-messaging devices. The essay assignment is highly structured; in addition to practicing the already-taught skills of summarizing, responding, and supporting statements within a paragraph structure, students learn in this assignment how to present a counterargument and a rebuttal to that counterargument.

In the text analysis, I examined all the instances of explicit instructions that the writing instructor provided in writing on Nura's essay draft and that the instructor gave orally during the writing conference. I then examined the written essay drafts to see what kind of revisions Nura made as a result of her instructor's feedback. Was the effect of the revision positive, negative, or mixed? In evaluating the revisions from the first full draft to the final essay submitted for grading, I adapted a rating scale for revisions based on one developed by Ferris (1997), using the following four categories: no change; change with negative effect; change with mixed effect; and change with positive effect. Using my knowledge of the writing course's assignments and objectives, I was able to apply the rating scale to the revisions in a straightforward manner, as shown by the rating examples in Figure 2.

Rating scale for revisions. Ferris developed her rating scale for a similar research project intended to evaluate the effect of teacher commentary and feedback on ESL writing students' revisions. One of the research questions was whether the student revisions influenced by teacher feedback led to successful changes in the student writing. In other words, students may make changes to their writing in response to instructor commentary, but do those revisions improve the student's overall paper? Ferris noted in a later (1999) article that the student subjects in her 1997 study were, in fact, mostly Generation 1.5 students. Her study was large scale (110 papers from 47 students), and so I adapted the scale to fit my more limited categories of revision assessment. While Ferris evaluated the effects only of written instructor commentary, I examined both written commentary and transcribed commentary from an in-person writing conference.

Figure 1 shows student writing examples of Ferris's (1997) revision rating categories, while Figure 2 shows writing examples of the present study's revision rating categories and my estimation of those writing samples' revision effects. The revision ratings and explanations of the rationales for the ratings shown in Figure 2 are further discussed later in this chapter.

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| No change | (Student's text was identical in both drafts.) |
| Change with negative effect | <p>From first draft: She is also a very convenience friend. When ever I need a ride to school, she's always there to take me. We have been spending lots of time together.</p> <p>Teacher commentary: Explain what Viorst means by "convenience" and "special interest" friends.</p> <p>From revised draft: She is also a very convenience friend. When ever I need a ride to school, she's always there to take me. As what Viorst said, "a convenience friend, whom lend us their stuffs or take us to places." We have been spending lots of time together.</p> |
| Change with mixed effect | <p>From first draft: First of all, Jessica will be losing everything she is familiar with. She has to adapt to a completely new home in a strange town, two new parents, a new sister, and even a new name later. All these are far too much for a two and a half years old toddler.</p> <p>Teacher commentary: What is far too much – and why?</p> <p>From revised draft: In addition, she had to immediately adjust to two new parents who were virtual strangers, a new sister, a new home in a strange town, and even a new name later ("Uprooting Jessica"). These new changes are all imminent problems that a toddler has to face alone. How can we expect a two and a half years old toddler to bear all these changes alone?</p> |
| Change with positive effect | <p>From first draft: Besides, do you think we can have best friends when we never ask for convenience or participate in any part-of-a-couple gatherings?</p> <p>Teacher commentary: Can you explain this a bit?</p> <p>From revised draft: Besides, if we never participate in any part-of-a-couple gatherings, we will lose the chance of meeting new friends.</p> |

Figure 1: Student writing examples of Ferris's (1997) revision rating categories

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| No change | (Student's text was identical in both drafts.) |
| Change with negative effect | <p>From first draft: In Laura Holson's article, "Text Generation Gap," talks about how texting messaging used among children and is increasing. The article states that children use these devices to express who they are. Laura states that e-mails, texting messaging and such have encouraged children to create their own world by writing with different language.</p> <p>Teacher commentary (written): Refer to the author by her family name, not first name.</p> <p>From revised draft: In Holson's article, "Text Generation Gap," it talks about how texting messaging has become popular among children. The article states that children use these devices to express who they are and thus have encouraged children to create their own world by writing with different language.</p> |
| Change with mixed effect | <p>From first draft: [essay title] Should parents permit text-messaging among children?</p> <p>Teacher commentary (oral): your title should reflect your position... something that makes it clear, that this is gonna be about why children should not be text-messaging.</p> <p>From revised draft: Technology Vs Parents</p> |
| Change with positive effect | <p>From first draft: In the old days parents used to worry about where their child was, but now because of technology parents worry more about what their children are doing even when they are with them. Because of texting message children learned new ways to cheat their parents.</p> <p>Teacher commentary (oral): You need a strong topic sentence that makes...your position clear. ... Bring [the first sentence] down further in the paragraph, treat it like ... a supporting detail.</p> <p>From revised draft: Texting message have allowed children to cheat in new ways. In the old days parents used to worry about what the children and what kind of trouble they will end up in. But now parents worry more because they have released they are not facing the same problem a generation ago.</p> |

Figure 2: Student writing examples of the present study's revision rating categories

Metalanguage. My second area of inquiry was the instructor's use of metalanguage to discuss the writing task and its effect on student revision. It was anticipated that the instructor's use of metalanguage in feedback would result in less successful revisions for this Generation 1.5 student writer. Metalanguage was present in all but two of the instructor comments, both written and oral; thus I was unable to find a correlation between the presence of metalanguage and the ratings of the essay revisions. It is interesting, however, that Nura did not show that she had a particular problem interpreting metalanguage in her instructor's comments. Of the 13 instructor comment topics that included metalanguage, seven resulting revisions were Positive, four were Mixed, and two were No Effect. Table 1 shows the metalanguage terms used in instructor comments and the revision effects of those comments.

Table 1
Instructor's Use of Metalanguage in Feedback and Ratings of Resulting Student Writing Revisions

| Comment topic number | Mode of feedback | Metalanguage terms used by instructor | Revision effect |
|----------------------|------------------|---|-----------------|
| 1 | written | (none) | Negative |
| 2 | both | thesis statement, focusing question | Positive |
| 3 | both | thesis statement, focusing question | Positive |
| 4 | both | topic sentence, support | Positive |
| 5 | both | supporting detail, development | Positive |
| 6 | both | counterargument, rebuttal | No Effect |
| 7 | both | rebuttal | Positive |
| 8 | written | main idea | Positive |
| 9 | both | concluding paragraph, thesis statement | Mixed |
| 10 | both | works cited | No Effect |
| 11 | written | (none) | Mixed |
| 12 | both | concluding sentence, conclusion | Mixed |
| 13 | oral | transitions, counterargument, topic sentence, focusing question | Mixed |
| 14 | oral | counterargument, development | Positive |
| 15 | oral | focusing question | Mixed |

Feedback and revision cycle. In this writing course, the instructor typically provides multiple cycles of written feedback to students in the form of Microsoft Word comments. Drafts are transmitted between student and instructor via the messaging and attachment features of the university's online course environment, Oncourse. During the

week before an essay is due, individual writing conferences are held, during which the instructor and student review the student's writing, clarify the instructor's written comments, review assignment requirements, and ask any questions.

My study participant received only one set of written instructor comments for the essay I will discuss in the following section. She did not submit her drafts to her instructor by the deadlines, as she explained in an interview, and thus she had only one set of written comments as she revised her essay:¹⁰

... we usually send [the instructor] a lot of, like um [drafts], [but] because I have huge, uh, issues with my computer or the internet, I didn't have, I didn't have the opportunity to send her. And also the other thing was that I had a class –what was it? I had a test? I had a psychology test and math cla- uh, test on Monday. So I was like, “Oh, I'll do it another day.” I was just procrastinating it.

To put this process in chronological form, Nura submitted her first draft for comments on November 11. Her instructor returned it with written comments on November 12. Her writing conference was November 13, and she submitted her final draft on November 18.

¹⁰ This anecdote was not the only time Nura discussed her difficulties with computer access at home. Most writing instructors make ample use of technology, particularly in the commentary and feedback process. So although students have access to university computers while on campus, students who have problems with computer access sometimes encounter problems keeping up with the fast pace of this writing course.

Writing samples. Drafts of two sample paragraphs (labeled A and B) are shown in this section in order to provide a sense of the revisions that were made and the format and content of the instructor's written comments.¹¹ In addition to the written comments, sections of the transcribed writing conference that addressed each paragraph are included. The two sample paragraphs were chosen because the revisions of these paragraphs illustrate examples of each of the four categories used in this study's rating scale: no change; change with negative effect; change with mixed effect; and change with positive effect.

Writing sample A. Paragraph A below is the opening paragraph of the six-paragraph essay. The assignment goals in this paragraph are twofold: 1. to summarize the article to which they are responding; and 2. to end the paragraph with a thesis statement that states the writer's position and response to the question: Should parents allow their children to use text-messaging? Figure 3 shows the first draft and the instructor's electronically written comments of the opening paragraph (Paragraph A).

¹¹ The format of the original essay's first draft has been altered slightly to fit the page.

With technology increasing in our society, it is common to see even young children with devices that at the time of our growing didn't exist. Technology has helped improve the world and is progress everyday used to make life much easier. In Laura Holson's article, "Text Generation Gap," talks about how texting messaging used among children and is increasing. The article states that children use these devices to express who they are. [Laura] states that e-mails, texting messaging and such have encouraged children to create their own world by writing with different language. In the article it mentions that because of these devices children loss the social skills social. [Although some people may argue that texting message doesn't change how children communicate with their parents, texting message make it easier for children to communicate among each other, and because of texting message they express who they are.]

Comment: Refer to the author by her family name, not first name.

Comment: Add an indicator that this is your opinion and not more summary of the author's, as we discussed in class on Tuesday. Also, the thesis statement should respond to the focusing question and make your position clear. Yours doesn't do either.

Figure 3. First draft and instructor written comments, Paragraph A

The following excerpt from student-instructor writing conference addresses the opening paragraph (Paragraph A). The topic of this section of the writing conference addresses the essay's thesis statement, which is the final sentence of Paragraph A. In the transcript excerpt, the instructor is coded as *I*, and Nura is coded as *N*.

I: Actually, you've got the structure [of the thesis statement]

N: Yeah, but I don't say, I didn't show my position.

I: Oh, yeah, all you had to do... All you need is this.

N: Mm-hmm, "I think."

I: Yep. 'Cause what this is, this is the same as the attributive tags, or the summary reminder phrases up here [earlier in the paragraph]. Cause when you use these up here, you're telling your reader, this is the author, this is the author, this is the author. Now you need to let us know, it's not the author anymore, it's me. So, you can start with the "although" structure, it's a nice neat way to write this thesis statement, but if you put "I think" in front of your thoughts, then your reader knows, "Ah, oh, this is no longer the author."

Figure 4 shows the student's final draft of the opening paragraph (presented here as Paragraph A), with revisions noted.

With technology increasing in our society, it is common to see even young children with devices that at the time of our ~~growing~~ generation didn't exist. Technology has helped improve the world and is it progress is making everyday ~~used~~ ~~to make~~ life much easier. In ~~Laura~~ Holson's article, "Text Generation Gap," it talks about how texting message~~ing~~ ~~used~~ has become popular among children ~~and is~~ ~~increasing~~. Laura The article states that ~~e-mails, texting messaging and such~~ children use these devices to express who they are and thus have encouraged children to create their own world by writing with different language. ~~In the article it mentions that because of these devices children loss the social skills social.~~ Although some people may argue that texting message ~~doesn't change how children communicate with their parents,~~ has improved the relationship between parents and children, I think texting message ~~make it easier~~ has made it possible for children to ~~communicate among each other,~~ build secrets, and because of texting message ~~they express who they are~~ children have lost the basic social skills.

Underline: text added
~~Strikethrough:~~ text deleted

Figure 4: Final draft, Paragraph A

Analysis of sample paragraph A revisions. The two versions of the essay's opening paragraph show how Nura made several revisions in response to her instructor's comments. Many of her revisions to this paragraph and throughout her essay, however, do not respond directly to her instructor's comments, either written or oral. Because this study examines only those revisions that are made in response to instructor feedback, my analysis of this paragraph's revisions focused on three revision topics. The first revision topic (Topic 1 in Table 2) was Nura's use of the article author's name. In her first draft, Nura referred to the author first by both names ("Laura Holson"), then later in the paragraph by only the author's first name ("Laura"). Her writing instructor told her in a written comment directed at the "Laura" usage to "Refer to the author by her family name, not first name." In Nura's final essay draft, she attempted to fix this problem by changing her use of the author's first name ("Laura") and making "the article" the subject of her summary sentence. In the previous sentence of the summary, though, when Nura introduced the author by name for the first time, she used only the author's family/last name ("Holson"), and omitted the author's full name. Thus I rated this revision as a Negative revision effect. She responded to her instructor's concern, but in doing so, she made another error by omitting the author's first name entirely. This Negative revision effect seems to result from one of the few instances of misinterpreted comments between Nura and her writing instructor.

The second revision topic in this paragraph (Topic 2 in Table 2) is the thesis statement; specifically, the insertion of Nura's position and opinion about the question of whether children should be allowed to use text messaging. Her instructor's written comment told Nura to "make your position clear." Then in the writing conference, the

instructor emphasized that “now you need to let us know, it’s not the author anymore, it’s me,” and both Nura and the instructor mentioned the “I think” marker as a necessary addition to the thesis statement. Nura’s revised thesis statement in this paragraph includes the “I think” structure, thus marking the statement as her own opinion, and resulting in a Positive revision effect.

The third revision topic directed toward this paragraph is a written comment, Topic 3 in Table 2, reminding Nura that the thesis statement needs to answer the focusing question of the assignment: “Should parents allow text-messaging among children?” Her revised draft more clearly answers the question than did the previous draft’s thesis statement, indicating her negative response to the question of children using text-messaging. Thus this revision was rated as a Positive revision effect. Interestingly, Nura not only clarified, but entirely changed her thesis statement’s position on the focusing question, moving from an affirmative answer in her first draft to a negative response in the revised draft.

Writing sample B. The two versions of Paragraph B below are the fourth paragraph of the six-paragraph essay. The assigned goal of this paragraph is to present one counterargument (sometimes abbreviated as CA) to the essay’s overall main points in the body paragraphs (sometimes abbreviated as BPs). Figure 5 shows the first draft and the instructor’s electronically written comments of the counterargument paragraph (Paragraph B).

Despite the disadvantage of texting, some disagreement could exist. Some people may argue that texting messaging does not interrupt the way children communicate with parents. In the article it mentions how one girl communicates with her mother by texting anytime and anywhere.

Comment: This counterargument is actually a response to BP2 instead of a new idea, which is what it should be. You may need to rearrange your ideas as I showed you in class so that you have an idea for the counterargument which can be refuted in BP4. Additionally, this paragraph needs to be developed a lot more.

Figure 5: First draft and instructor written comments, Paragraph B

The following two excerpts from the student-instructor writing conference address the counterargument paragraph (Paragraph B). The topic of the first excerpt of the writing conference addresses the main idea of the paragraph, and the topic of the second excerpt addresses the need to develop a longer counterargument paragraph.

I: So now what you do, once you've made this decision, I now know that this goes here, this is your rebuttal, (writing on paper) "communication problems in family," which means the counterargument is what?
 N: Um, that there is there is more problems?
 I: Beyond that... what did you say before?
 N: The opposite of this one [the rebuttal main idea]? That they will have advantage of texting.
 I: Yeah, so, I'm gonna just abbreviate... "advantages to communication within family."

.....

I: And then, you need more development in your body paragraphs. You've got some very short paragraphs.
 N: Yeah.
 I: I can see here this [counterargument paragraph] is a little
 N: Too short.
 I: Yeah, but you wanna be fair. Only two sentences, is not enough.
 N: Okay.

I: I mean, I don't think you wanna develop a really strong counterargument because you wanna persuade me that your side is right, but two sentences is almost, um, um... (pause) If you don't give a fair representation of their side, it looks like you are deliberately trying to withhold what the other side would say. Okay?

N: Okay

I: So I think you need a little more development here.

N: Okay.

Figure 6 shows the student's final draft of the counterargument paragraph (presented here as Paragraph B), with revisions noted.

Despite the disadvantage of texting, some disagreement could exist. Some people may argue that texting messaging does not interrupt the way children communicate with parents. In the article it mentions how one girl communicates with her mother by texting anytime and anywhere. Children carry around devices that they could use anywhere and communicate click few letters and send. It is easy and fast.

Underline: text added
~~Strikethrough:~~ text deleted

Figure 6: Final draft, Paragraph B

Analysis of sample paragraph B revisions. The revisions to Paragraph B, when compared to Paragraph A, show a less in-depth response to her writing instructor's comments and revision instructions. Nura did not respond to her instructor's first and most important piece of feedback for this paragraph: that she revise this paragraph's main idea. She kept the main idea and the paragraph's first two sentences intact, even though her instructor recommended that she revise the main idea to present more clearly the opposing viewpoint. This revision, then, was rated No Effect. Even though Nura herself in her writing conference suggested the language to revise her paragraph by

saying “[children] will have advantage of texting,” that idea did not appear in her final draft. She instead retained the less-strongly-worded main point that there may be “some disagreement” to the negative viewpoint about children’s text messaging.

Following her instructor’s written comments and oral conference instructions to develop the paragraph by using more than two sentences, Nura did add two more supporting detail sentences at the end of the paragraph to support her paragraph’s main idea. Thus this revision was rated a Positive revision effect.

Effects of revisions made in response to feedback. The revision effects are organized in Table 2 according to the comment topic they addressed. Because only the revisions that were made in response to an instructor’s comment are analyzed in this study, some other revisions are not addressed. The comment topics are organized in the order of their appearance, first the written comments, followed by the oral comments raised in the writing conference. Many of the topics were addressed both orally and in writing, as I will discuss later in this chapter.

Table 2
Instructor's Feedback Comment Topics and Ratings of Resulting Student Writing Revisions

| Comment topic number | Comment Topic | Mode of feedback | Uses meta-language | Revision effect |
|----------------------|---|------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Format/editing: name of author | written | no | Negative |
| 2 | Thesis statement: add marker of writer's voice/opinion | both | yes | Positive |
| 3 | Thesis statement: needs to answer essay's focusing question | both | yes | Positive |
| 4 | Begin body paragraphs with strong topic sentences | both | yes | Positive |
| 5 | Develop paragraphs with more supporting details | both | yes | Positive |
| 6 | Revise content/main idea of counterargument paragraph | both | yes | No Effect |
| 7 | Revise content of rebuttal paragraph | both | yes | Positive |
| 8 | Add an idea from article to each paragraph | written | yes | Positive |
| 9 | Add concluding paragraph | both | yes | Mixed |
| 10 | Works cited page | both | yes | No Effect |
| 11 | Edit/format/grammar: general | written | no | Mixed |
| 12 | Concluding sentences for each body paragraph | both | yes | Mixed |
| 13 | Transitions to counterargument and rebuttal paragraphs | oral | yes | Mixed |
| 14 | Develop longer counterargument paragraph | oral | yes | Positive |
| 15 | Essay title | oral | yes | Mixed |

Findings

In the combined written and oral instructor comments, 15 separate topics were raised. Of these 15 topics, nine were raised in both written and oral form, three topics were raised in written form only, and three topics were raised only in the writing conference.

Nura addressed 13 of the 15 revision topics in her revisions to her essay. Seven of the 13 revisions were Positive effect revisions, and five of the revisions were Mixed effect revisions when compared to the previous draft. One of the revisions resulted in a Negative effect.

The two topics Nura did not address, thus leading to No Effect revisions, were 1. revise the content/main idea of her counterargument paragraph; and 2. add a Works Cited page to the essay. These two topics were raised in both written and oral form.

Of the seven Positive effect revisions, five of them were made in response to instructor comments provided in both written and oral form. The six Mixed effect revisions, on the other hand, were made in response to two written comments, two oral comments, and two comments made in both written and oral forms. This may underscore the need for writing instructors to provide feedback in multiple forms, both written and oral, and perhaps in even more modalities, in order to provide students the best opportunity to use the feedback to revise effectively.

Another point must be made, however, about the revision topics and their written vs. oral forms. The nine revision topics that the instructor presented in both written form and during the writing conference were macro-level topics of organization, thesis statement, paragraph development, and essay content. These topics are also those to

which a greater number of points are assigned on the essay's grading rubric, which was provided to students (Appendix B), compared to a relatively lesser point value for topics such as grammar and format. Thus it is possible that Nura devoted more time and attention to those topics that carried more points in the essay's grading. At two points in an interview, she noted that her revision process for this essay was somewhat rushed:

N: I had a [writing] conference ... on Thursday, I didn't [work on the essay] the whole time until, like, [the following] Tuesday. So I was just like, just type stuff, and then in the morning I typed it.... And then right before class I was just like, you know, I'll take this, take out this, because I didn't have time, probably [to make] the changes we talked about in conference, yeah.

... And that [happens] a lot, if you didn't work on something, you're gonna have trouble a lot.

.....

R: In your conference with [your instructor] you talked a lot about organizing and you went over all these things (pointing to essay), so it sounds like you weren't able to address these things as much as you wanted?

N: Yeah, um, yeah, especially, like the counterargument, um, yeah, I didn't get to, but yeah, just like in general, I tried meeting [with the University Writing Center] as much as I could. But because I also knew that I will have an opportunity to do it, and I'm doing this for the final portfolio, I was like, it's okay if I do a mistake now, or something like that, yeah.

Nura refers at the end of the interview excerpt to her final portfolio for this writing course, for which she would submit another revised version of this same essay. Keeping the big picture of the entire course in her mind, she points out that she will have another opportunity to revisit this essay and make further revisions at the end of the course. It seems that, like most college students, she is budgeting her time and energies according to her most pressing priorities. While writing instructors, who spend a great deal of time providing feedback on students' writing, may not appreciate or approve of a student's choice to address some comments but disregard others, it is important to

acknowledge that this prioritizing is part of student writers' exercising their autonomy, both as writers and as college students.

Discussion

If one considers broadly her traits as a student writer, it is notable that Nura was willing to make large-scale revisions to her writing; in some cases, she re-wrote entire paragraphs of her first essay draft. In addition, most of her revisions were rated as Positive ones.

More specifically, Nura showed no particular difficulty interpreting and using metalanguage in her instructor's written and oral comments. So the results of this case study do not support previous work that suggests metalanguage can be a problem in Generation 1.5 writing students' communication with their writing instructors. Nura's experience with English writing instruction differs from that of many Generation 1.5 students, who are often educated in under-resourced urban high schools. In contrast, Nura had several years of English instruction with teachers and tutors in Kenya, as well as a great deal of personal interaction and tutoring with her high school English teacher at her small private school in Indianapolis. This relationship, as well as her formal instruction in university academic culture, provided her with the ability to work together with her writing instructor to revise her academic writing. As a later-arriving Generation 1.5 student, she also had the benefit of previous training in the metalanguage of academic writing, which Roberge suggests may provide later-arriving students with an advantage in their English acquisition (Roberge, 2009, p. 17). This result may point to yet another difference among the diverse group that is Generation 1.5 students.

Her writing instructor's skills and experience in making comments and conducting conferences also contributed to Nura's success in using this feedback to improve her writing. Only three new topics were raised in the writing conference. Thus, most of the revision topics and instructions were introduced first as written commentary, then emphasized and explained further in the instructor-student writing conference. The written comments were in the forms of both textual commentary and a summative list; Nura used both of these written forms of feedback in her revisions.

Nura's personal story is markedly different from the stories of some other Generation 1.5 students, in that her U.S. high school was a much smaller and more personalized experience than the large public high schools most immigrant students enroll in. Though she would be considered a later-arriving, "1.25 Generation" student, and thus would be expected to face large academic and social challenges during her two years in an American high school, this does not seem to be the case with Nura. She also had the benefit of many years of English experience during her childhood in Kenya. This case study underscores the variance within the Generation 1.5 group.

Chapter Four: Conclusion

This study was a case study of one Generation 1.5 university student's experiences in an EAP writing course and a text analysis of her revision process in that course. The study found that the case study participant reported complex educational and English language learning experiences both before and after her immigration to the U.S. She made largely successful revisions to her academic writing by using her instructor's written comments and writing conference feedback, including the feedback that used metalanguage.

At this university, the number of Generation 1.5 students like Nura is relatively small. Thus wholesale program changes such as those discussed by Roberge (2009) may be unwarranted.¹² However, even with relatively small numbers of these students, both EAP and mainstream composition instructors can develop better awareness of the presence of Generation 1.5 students in their classrooms. This may be done by simply adding questions about students' language and educational histories to an opening-day course questionnaire. In addition, instructors should examine their pedagogical techniques in order to recognize and include these students in the classroom discourse. In other words, instructors should recognize that not all EAP students are international, and not all mainstream composition students have received their entire education within the U.S. system.

¹² Roberge notes that issues of Generation 1.5 students have been important in revisions to the College ESL program at San Francisco State University, including re-naming the program "Composition for Multilingual Students" (Roberge, 2009, p. 7).

Finally, writing center tutors, who contributed to Nura's writing process, should also be aware of the presence of these students.

For the composition instructor, this study also supports the principle that the mode of feedback matters; writing comments and orally emphasizing comments in conferences resulted in successful revisions.

Though the purpose of this project is not to examine institutional policy and make recommendations, it would be useful to this group of students, as well as to their teachers and advisors in both high school and college, if the pathway to EAP courses and mainstream composition courses were made clear from the start of students' university careers. Students are encouraged but not required to take the EAP Placement Test; therefore, it is likely that some students place themselves inappropriately into English composition courses. Those students who are placed into EAP courses should receive more complete information about how the placement process works and what students can expect in EAP courses. Improving the information these students receive from their advisors may help to dispel some of the misconceptions and negative attitudes that some students (including Nura) have regarding EAP coursework. Additionally, better identification and tracking of these students may point to the need for increased academic support tailored toward their needs. The course for first-year students transitioning to college was a useful experience for Nura; perhaps even more Generation 1.5 students could be served by more of these types of courses that are specifically designed for them.

As a case study of one Generation 1.5 student, this study presents the situation of an individual. As I have discussed, the wide variability within this

group of students means that the results should not necessarily be applied broadly to Generation 1.5 students. In addition, the analysis of feedback and revisions does not take into account every revision that Nura made between drafts of her essay. Student writers make revisions to their writing based on many factors and multiple sources of feedback; for example, in Nura's case, she also sought feedback from writing tutors in the university's writing center. Writers also make revisions based on their own decisions, using no direct feedback from others. I examined only those revisions that were based on her instructor's written and oral feedback.

Nura's comments in her interviews underscore the popular, "in-between" conception of Generation 1.5 students; she described herself as "in the middle, everything, like, in the middle." Though she may or may not consider herself a member of the "Generation 1.5" group, her comments provide further support that the "in-between-ness" is a valid element of these students' identities.

Future research can expand upon the individual characteristics that were brought to the surface during the course of this study. In terms of revision, it would be interesting to analyze the revisions by taking the student writer's perspective. Revision journals or think-aloud protocols completed while the student revised would provide useful information about students' "real-time" revision decisions and interpretation of feedback.

In addition, this study shows that more research is needed into the characteristics and differences within the Generation 1.5 group. As researchers continue to study this growing population of students and language learners, it is

important that individual factors be considered, such as age of arrival, language history, and educational experiences both before and after arrival in the U.S.

Finally, the process and experiences Nura showed in her revisions and interviews show that while Generation 1.5 college students do bring particular language challenges and needs to the classroom and the writing conference, they also have experiences in writing courses that are similar to those of many college students, whether L1 or L2, international or resident. It is important that Generation 1.5 students such as Nura be recognized for their common identifying characteristics as immigrant language learners and student writers. At the same time, it is important that these students be seen not only as members of a group, but also as individuals with their own histories and experiences.

Appendix A: Essay Assignment Sheet

Writing Project 3 – Persuasive Essay

| | Due: |
|---|------------------|
| Reverse Outline Worksheet and Vocabulary Worksheet | Oct. 30, 2008 |
| Summary, BPs 1 and 2 | Nov. 4, 2008 |
| BPs 3 and 4, Thesis Statement | Nov. 6, 2008 |
| Complete draft at Writing Conference | Nov. 11-13, 2008 |
| 24-Hour Rule – No reviews of drafts after 1:30 p.m. | Nov. 17, 2008 |
| Submission Draft/In-class Writer’s Statement | Nov. 18, 2008 |

Purpose: During this project you will learn how to write a persuasive essay based on the opinions and views expressed in an article. You must try to convince someone to consider your viewpoint. This writing project requires you to develop the following writing skills:

- Choosing a topic and controlling ideas for individual paragraphs
- Choosing a topic and controlling ideas for the essay in the form of a thesis statement
- Using transitions that guide readers effectively from one supporting detail to another:
 - Within your paragraphs and
 - From one paragraph to another
- Acknowledging and refuting a counter-argument
- Writing persuasively
- Writing effective introductions and conclusions

Writing Tasks:

1. Reverse Outline Worksheet/Vocabulary Worksheet

In the article “Text Generation Gap,” Laura Holson discusses the impact of cell phones and text-messaging on families. Read the article carefully and complete the **Reverse Outline Worksheet**. When you finish the **Reverse Outline Worksheet**, you will have completed the first part of **Paragraph 1** of your essay. Complete the **Vocabulary Worksheet** to help familiarize you with some of the vocabulary used in the article. This will help you use some of these new terms when you write your essay.

2. Persuasive Essay

Write a 6-paragraph essay (outlined below) that answers this Focusing Question:
Should parents permit text-messaging among children?

Paragraph 1 - Introduction: First, a summary of the key issues raised in the article. This paragraph should end with your thesis statement: a summary of **your** argument. Your argument will either agree or disagree with some of the article’s arguments. This thesis statement should provide a “roadmap” to where your essay will take the reader and serve as an answer to the Focusing Question.

All Body Paragraphs: Each body paragraph must include:

- A topic sentence and a concluding sentence,
- At least one quote or paraphrase from the article that supports the main point of your body paragraph, **and**
- Your response or reaction to the author’s ideas expressed in that quote or paraphrase, including supporting details/evidence.

Body Paragraphs 1 and 2: Each of these body paragraphs should use one main point of your argument (from your thesis statement) to persuade your audience to agree with your point of view.

Body Paragraph 3: A presentation of (or concession to) the strongest argument in opposition to yours. This is the counterargument.

Body Paragraph 4: A rebuttal (refutation) of the counterargument in Body Paragraph 3.

Paragraph 6 - Conclusion: A summary of your argument and an appeal.

Reading:

- **Article:** [Posted in Oncourse, Resources]
- **Model Persuasive Essay:** Posted in Oncourse, Resources.

Format (also see Model Persuasive Essay in Oncourse, Resources):

- Heading in upper left corner (on first page only):
Name
W001, Writing Project 3
Date [Month date, year]
Submission Draft
- Double-spaced, 12-point font
- Page numbers in bottom right corner
- Title centered over first paragraph

Submission Draft Packet: In a two-pocket folder, submit the following on Thurs., Nov. 18, 2008.

In left pocket

Previous drafts
All Worksheets
Peer Reviews

In right pocket

Grading Rubric
Writer’s Statement
Submission Draft

| Calculation of Grade for WP3 | Point Value | |
|---|-------------|--------|
| Reverse Outline and Vocabulary Worksheets | 10 | points |
| Summary, and BP1, BP2 | 7 | points |
| BP 3 and 4, Thesis Statement | 7 | points |
| Writing Conference Draft (complete) | 6 | points |
| Submission Draft | 100 | points |
| In-class Writer’s Statement | 20 | points |

Appendix B: Essay Grading Rubric

| Writing Project 3 – Grading Rubric: Persuasion Essay | | Possible |
|--|--|------------|
| Summary | | |
| Concisely summarizes article’s main points | | 5 |
| Thesis Statement | | |
| States overall main idea of essay | | 5 |
| Responds to arguments from article | | 5 |
| Provides roadmap to essay development | | 5 |
| Body Paragraph 1 | | |
| Topic sentence(s) focuses paragraph/identifies argument | | 2 |
| Topic sentence(s) develop(s) idea from thesis statement | | 1 |
| ¶ stays focused on one idea | | 2 |
| ¶ provides convincing supporting details | | 4 |
| ¶ has coherence within/between ¶s: transitions, pronouns, repetition, and/or parallel structures | | 2 |
| ¶ includes adequate Concluding Sentence | | 1 |
| Body Paragraph 2 | | |
| Topic sentence(s) focuses paragraph/identifies argument (different from other ¶s) | | 2 |
| Topic sentence(s) develop(s) idea from thesis statement | | 1 |
| ¶ stays focused on one idea | | 2 |
| ¶ provides convincing supporting details | | 4 |
| ¶ has coherence within/between ¶s: transitions, pronouns, repetition, and/or parallel structures | | 2 |
| ¶ includes adequate Concluding Sentence | | 1 |
| Body Paragraph 3 | | |
| Topic sentence provides transition to counter-argument | | 2 |
| Topic sentence clearly identifies counter-argument from thesis statement | | 1 |
| ¶ provides convincing supporting details | | 4 |
| ¶ does not rebut counter-argument | | 2 |
| ¶ has coherence within/between ¶s: transitions, pronouns, repetition, and/or parallel structures | | 2 |
| ¶ includes adequate Concluding Sentence | | 1 |
| Body Paragraph 4 | | |
| Topic sentence(s) provides transition to rebuttal/refutation | | 2 |
| Topic sentence(s) develop(s) idea from thesis statement | | 1 |
| ¶ specifically rebuts counter-argument | | 2 |
| ¶ provides convincing supporting details | | 4 |
| ¶ has coherence within/between ¶s: transitions, pronouns, repetition, and/or parallel structures | | 2 |
| ¶ includes adequate Concluding Sentence | | 1 |
| Grammar/Format | | |
| Grammar problems? | | 6 |
| Sentence structure problems? | | 5 |
| Followed format requirements? | | 5 |
| Drafting | | |
| Significant changes made from original drafts w/copies of all drafts in folder | | 2 |
| Followed instructor’s suggestions for revisions/improvements | | 4 |
| Overall Quality | | 10 |
| Total Points for WP3 Essay | | 100 |

Appendix C: First Essay Draft with Instructor Comments

[Nura]
10/30/08
W001, WP3
Draft

Should parents permit text-messaging among children?

With technology increasing in our society, it is common to see even young children with devices that at the time of our growing didn't exist. Technology has helped improve the world and is progress everyday used to make life much easier. In Laura Holson's article, "Text Generation Gap," talks about how texting messaging used among children and is increasing. The article states that children use these devices to express who they are. Laura states that e-mails, texting messaging and such have encouraged children to create their own world by writing with different language. In the article it mentions that because of these devices children loss the social skills social. Although some people may argue that texting message doesn't change how children communicate with their parents, texting message make it easier for children to communicate among each other, and because of texting message they express who they are.

Children depend on text-messaging, that on daily basis they use to communicate so much among themselves and it has become easier for them. In the article it mentions two teenagers who are in the same that use the texting to communicate. Because children use to communicate among each other with texting

Comment [MCB1]: Refer to the author by her family name, not first name.

Comment [MCB2]: Add an indicator that this is your opinion and not more summary of the author's, as we discussed in class on Tuesday. Also, the thesis statement should respond to the focusing question and make your position clear. Yours doesn't do either.

they don't learn the basic social skills needed for every day life. Children used to spend time talking to their friends, playing games or going to each other house, but now they have replaced all learning skills with just clicking and sending.

Because of texting message among children, and the children use to express who they among each other. It changes how they communicate with the parents.

Children carry around devices that they could use anywhere and communicate with friends it cuts down the time they used to spend with parents.

Despite the disadvantage of texting, some disagreement could exist. Some people may argue that texting messaging does not interrupt the way children communicate with parents. In the article it mentions how one girl communicates with her mother by texting anytime and anywhere.

Children have learned acronyms and these words that make them only they know, so that they could have the privacy they could have. If parents didn't know what the acronyms or the "private written language" children could text anyone or talk about anything they want. The private world they create makes children live in another world that is different from their family environment.

[Nura],

You have several problems that need to be addressed before our conference tomorrow:

1. Revision of the thesis statement
2. Reorganization of the Body Paragraphs as outlined on the assignment guidelines
3. Addition of strong topic sentences for each Body Paragraph, making your position clear
4. Inclusion of one idea from the article in each of the Body Paragraphs
5. Development of each Body Paragraph with at least 3 main points and supporting details for each
6. Addition of a concluding paragraph
7. Addition of the Work Cited Page
8. Edit for format, grammar, and sentence structure errors

[Instructor]

Comment [MCB3]: As we discussed in class on Tuesday, begin your paragraphs with a strong topic sentence that makes your position clear. Then develop that idea with support/examples.

Comment [MCB4]: See comment 3 above. This is supposed to be a persuasive essay, so don't save your opinion/position for the concluding sentence. Additionally, this paragraph needs a lot more development: support and examples.

Comment [MCB5]: This counterargument is actually a response to BP2 instead of a new idea, which is what it should be. You may need to rearrange your ideas as I showed you in class so that you have an idea for the counterargument which can be refuted in BP4. Additionally, this paragraph needs to be developed a lot more.

Comment [MCB6]: This is supposed to be the rebuttal or refutation of BP3, but it is actually a new idea. See Comment 5 above.

Appendix D: Revised Essay Draft

10/30/08

W001, WP3

Technology Vs Parents

Great ideas but
the grammar
problems make
this difficult
to read.

With technology increasing in our society, it is common to see even young children with devices that at the time of our generation didn't exist. Technology has helped improve the world and is its progress is making everyday life much easier. In Holson's article, "Text Generation Gap," ^{full name needed} it talks about how texting message has become popular among children. The article states that children use these devices to express ^{who?} who they are and thus have encouraged children to create their own world by writing with different language. Although some people may argue that ^{ing} texting message has improved the relationship between parents and children, I think texting message has made possible for children to build secrets, and because of texting message children have lost the basic social skills.

Structure
problems

Fix
throughout

Texting message have allowed children to cheat new ways. In the old days parents used to worry about what the children and what kind of trouble they will end up in. But now parents worry more because they have released they are not facing the same problem a generation ago. Even though parents are mostly seeing their children in the house, they don't know what they are doing because texting message have allowed them to create ^{repetitious} new ways to cheat. Children have learned acronyms and these words that make them only they know, so that they could have the privacy they could have. If parents didn't know what the acronyms or the "private written language" children could text anyone or talk about anything they want. The private world they create makes children live in another world that is different from their family environment.

Page
numbers?

Texting message has made easier for children to communicate in new ways that they lose the basic social skills. In the article it mentions two teenagers who are in the same car but use texting to communicate. Because children use to communicate among each other with texting they don't learn the basic social skills needed for every day life. Children used to spend time talking to their friends, playing games or going to each other house, but now they have replaced all those skills with just clicking and sending. Children don't learn the basic social skills to communicate each other and with adults and these brings misunderstanding and that's why children incline to phone more nowadays because they says what they want without touch and feeling and understanding the speaker. Basic social skills are important and because of texting message children will not learn that.

Despite the disadvantage of texting, some disagreement could exist. Some people may argue that texting messaging does not interrupt the way children communicate with parents. In the article it mentions how one girl communicates with her mother by texting anytime and anywhere. Children carry around devices that they could use anywhere and communicate click few letters and send. It is easy and fast.

Although, some may say that texting improves the relationship between parents and children, technology breaks them harder than anything. While children are new with their new phones and such, they may communicate with their parents by saying thank you, but as they start to learn the device more and develop new techniques and has some friends to communicate with then children get into their own world. The most problem that occur within the family is about the for example the bill, and the time they spend on these devices. Parents argue that children have to spend less time for example on the texting because of the huge bill they get. The problem tat could occur s tat children spend too much time on tat they don't spend time with their family

and this may upset the parents. In the article it mentioned how a family in a restaurant were not enjoying themselves because the children were texting instead of talking or eating.

In short, parents shouldn't allow children texting among each other because they will not learn how to cheat but also lack the basic social skills they should learn. Technology starts in other places either first as helping device and then later becomes as a problem. When technology comes in family it first taken as helpful device, but it becomes a huge that breaks the family relationship. Every generation has something to offer to the next generation, for example a lesson that they have learned and warn the others who are coming. If parents allow children to use devices such phones, iPods and such, they not only let them be free but also not teach their children the basic skills they will need tomorrow.

?
Seems to
Contradict
your whole
essay.

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