ESL STUDENT RESPONSES TO A SIMULATION CURRICULUM IN THE WRITING CLASSROOM

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF ESSAY TOPIC QUESTIONNAIRE EXCERPTS

INTRODUCTION

A startling development in education is the notion of accountability. One need only look to fiascoes like the recent efforts of Massachusetts to assess its public school teachers' proficiencies in English and mathematics[i] to realize that a sea change is occurring throughout the educational domain. This revolution is fueled by the fact that education is the only profession which–by its very nature–strives to foster expertise in those who partake of its services. While other professions (take the medical or legal fields as examples) do their utmost to maintain the trappings of what they themselves unashamedly refer to as *professional distance*, schooling is, in the United States at least, available to virtually every member of society. While this accessibility marks a remarkable social and cultural accomplishment, it also serves to erode the notion of education as a profession. To put it bluntly, many *long since absent* from the educational domain, unabashedly drawing upon the results of their heretofore unencumbered access to a minimum of 12 years of state-subsidized schooling, have had few to no reservations about voicing harsh critiques of a field they, in reality, have evaluated from only one perspective: through *remembrances* of their school days' cramped desks. Surely this reality signals the need for innovative approaches to in-process and on-going assessments of student responses to educational initiatives.

As unlikely as it may seem, English as a Second Language (ESL) educators actually fare worse in this critical environment than 'regular' teachers. This is so for a number of reasons. First, the student populations ESL practitioners serve here in the United States, foreigners and/or recent immigrants, are unique in their degree of linguistic, social, and political marginality in relation to the surrounding community. Second, while the federal government has mandated the presence of ESL staff in every public school that serves non-native speakers, funding for the specialty comes grudgingly, the resultant monetary draw often viewed as being made at the expense of a school's 'regular' population.[ii] Third, as will be quickly noted by anyone who follows the on-going postings to TESLJB-L[iii] regarding the state of the field, the fact that so many disparate organizations offer teacher training (and where the range of available 'diplomas' becomes a surrealistic alphabet soup) has created a crisis in terms of defining and comparing both EFL and ESL teacher qualifications. Finally, an international work environment in which it has long been held that any native speaker of English is suited to the ostensibly limited challenge of teaching their native tongue serves to further sap any dregs of credibility EFL/ESL professionals might otherwise claim.

To be sure, professional organizations do exist in support of refining the field. Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. (TESOL) is the most widely recognized of these. Yet with no governing authority to enforce standards of practice TESOL remains on the margins of the world-wide English language industry. As compared to other professional organizations (take the American Medical Association or the American Bar Association as examples), TESOL appears rather ephemeral. We may be on the cusp of change - within the realm of Intensive ESL instruction in the United States, TESOL has announced its Commission on Accreditation (TCA), a new accreditation initiative for American IEPs beginning in 1999. Whether the program achieves the lofty goals its organizers are presently espousing remains to be seen; nevertheless that such efforts are being made at all is heartening. The success or failure of this and similar undertakings will play a significant role in determining the place and degree of professionalism in ESL in the next century. It will also mark whether or not

ESL practitioners will be able to withstand increasingly common calls for accountability from both their customers and the society at large. In any event, ESL practitioners must be prepared to account for their field and work, and this accounting will have to include responses elicited from those at whom our efforts are aimed.

A fundamental irony of the recent emphasis on making language learning communicative is the lack of research that has been conducted regarding students' attitudes and perceptions about the learning activities in which they participate. As shall be detailed in the next chapter, theories of communicative language learning (CLL) and communicative language teaching (CLT) are predicated on the notion of *authenticity*: that the tasks learners are asked to perform be representative of the linguistic functions they will need to master *en route* to their language learning goals. But how is it determined whether or not a specific task is authentic? Leaving such judgments to the sole discretion of either of the two immediate stakeholders in the classroom, the teacher or the students,[iv] presents challenges. Most would agree that few students possess the expertise to design and implement their own learning programs. Conversely, and as indicated above, present educational theory holds that decontextualized learning (i.e.: that witnessed under the grammar translation or the audio-lingual methods) while constituting perhaps the easiest lessons to teach is, at best, of marginal utility to would-be language learners. As teachers, then, we must strive to develop an understanding of the linguistic milieus in which our students find themselves. Given the potential for the existence of competing realities between teachers and students it seems that both stakeholders would be better served by coming to a mutual understanding of their respective needs and goals, thereby establishing a shared context for learning. One way for teachers to facilitate this process is to elicit timely feedback from their students about *their* perceptions of the process in which they are engaged. As SLA researchers assert that neither learning nor teaching should occur in a decontextualized vacuum, it is incumbent upon educators to create a learning environment which welcomes and responds to the real-world needs and demands of our students. In so doing we will be able to point to this reciprocal exchange of information as a manifestation of our attempts to remain responsive to and accountable for our students' needs.

This case study documents recent efforts to bring the curriculum of International Freshman Composition II[v] to a closer accordance with current notions of CLT. Early in the Fall of 1997 the then instructors of English 1033 became convinced that the lessons through which the course was taught, along with the types of tasks required of the students, were not congruent with the tenets of communicative language teaching - lacking, in particular, the notion of authenticity. Given the fact that English 1033 is taught by graduate students who are asked to approach their teaching duties with a critical awareness of past and current SLA theory, it was determined that English 1033's curriculum would be revised in the hopes of bringing it into better alignment with our present understanding of second language acquisition. Over the course of the Fall 1997 semester a committee of graduate teaching assistants set to the task of redesigning the course. The resultant curriculum found its basis in the use of a series of simulations designed to encourage students to develop a shared context from which they would be asked to grapple with and write about the design, development, and upheavals of an imaginary town, Muir Valley. The curriculum was first implemented in the Spring 1998 semester and both student and teacher responses were, in the main, positive.

This being the case, I began to wonder whether it might be possible to gauge and possibly account for differences in student responses to various curricular designs. I hoped to demonstrate that just like their teachers, the students in the Simulation section would respond favorably to the revised curriculum – perhaps more favorably the students engaged in the Traditional curriculum. Having previously had the opportunity to work with both the pre-Simulation and post-Simulation curricula,[vi] I requested permission to present[vii] one section of each during the Summer 1998 semester. Following my assertions regarding the importance of including timely student perspectives on coursework in our quest for greater educational accountability, this study will detail not only the rationale and steps behind the curricular revisions but also students' responses to them.

Before describing & assessing the means by which our students' opinions were elicited, I will present a review of literature in a number of areas related to the design and implementation of this study. Chapter One looks to establish a definition of communicative language teaching and the strategies employed in bringing both the classroom activities and coursework of English 1033 into agreement with its tenets. While the first chapter focuses on English 1033 from the point of view of the curriculum designers and instructors (who were, in this case, one and the same), Chapter Two turns the tables and provides background not only as to what is currently understood about SL learners' attitudes and motivations toward language learning, but also how these data have been collected. The chapter thus opens broadly in an effort to identify, to explore, and to problematize *the* four decade old paradigm that continues to dominate research into motivations and attitudes towards language learning: Gardner and Lambert's *instrumental* and *integrative* motivation dichotomy. As this study includes alternative approaches to collecting and assessing information about student motivation and attitudes at a time when researchers are calling for just such efforts, the second chapter also reviews a number of early studies in an attempt to establish a context for the instruments and procedures used in collecting data for this study.

Chapter Three will profile the instruments and means by which student evaluations of the two curricula were collected while Chapter Four will provide an analysis of that data. This document will conclude with brief discussions of the study's implications, methodological weaknesses, and suggestions for future research.

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[i] Fifty-nine percent of the state's teachers and teacher trainees failed the tests (Hart, 1998).
[ii] An advisor to this thesis once remarked that her public school ESL "classroom" was actually a janitor's closet.
[iii] An e-mail listserver sponsored by the City University of New York dedicated to work-related issues in ESL.
[iv] To say nothing of administrators and others.
[v] Hereafter English 1033.
[vi] Hereafter referred to as the 'Traditional' or 'simulation' curricula
[vii] In conjunction with my colleague Gloria Pierce.

CHAPTER ONE—

Communicative Language Teaching & English 1033

Communicative Language Teaching: a definition

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) was born of the integration of theories from the fields of psychology, sociology and linguistics. It marks a departure from methods-based language teaching and has been the dominant paradigm in applied linguistics since the late 1970s. As myriad definitions exist as to just what CLT is (see Canale & Swain, 1980; Savignon 1983; & Angelis and Henderson 1989 for the essential examples of these), I will defer to the four-tiered definition offered by H. Douglas Brown (1994) which, he asserts, exemplifies the shared characteristics of CLT models:

> 1) Classroom goals are focussed on *all* of the components of communicative competence and not restricted to grammatical or linguistic competence.
> 2) Language techniques are designed to engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes. Organizational language forms are not the central focus but rather aspects of language that *enable* the learner to accomplish those purposes.
> 3) Fluency and accuracy are seen as complementary principles underlying communicative techniques. At times fluency may have to take on more importance than accuracy in order to keep learners meaningfully engaged in language use.
> 4) In the communicative classroom, students ultimately have to *use* the language, productively and receptively, in *unrehearsed* contexts. (p. 245)

Chapter Overview

In this chapter I will demonstrate, through an analysis of each of Brown's CLT characteristics, how the English 1033 Traditional and Simulation curricula fit with the overall requirements of CLT and argue that the adoption of the simulations-based approach resulted in a curriculum exhibiting a closer match with the tenets of CLT than that of previous efforts. This later section of the chapter will draw upon and respond to a side-by-side comparison of the two versions of the English 1033 curriculum. However, before moving to this discussion I will provide a more detailed overview of the emergence of CLT and its theory-driven, multidisciplinary approach to language teaching along with a review of a number of articles that comment on the paradigmatic significance of the shift from earlier methods-based language teaching efforts to the curricular approaches which constitute the bases of CLT.

The Emergence of CLT

As mentioned in the opening of this chapter, CLT has developed out of an integration of theories from the fields of psychology, sociology and linguistics. Corder (1978) identifies three conceptions of the SLA processes:

(i) as acquiring a body of linguistic knowledge;

(ii) as acquiring a new set of habits or changing linguistic behavior;

(iii) as being able to interact in a social situation in an effective way.

Each of these notions of SL competence has been manifested in approaches to second language teaching over the course of the twentieth century. The grammar translation method, contrastive analysis, and audio-lingual efforts each represented formalistic approaches to language teaching and may be held to have been in accordance with characteristics (i) and (ii) of Corder's taxonomy. Chomsky (1965) rejected these behavioralist models of language acquisition, asserting that they failed to account for the complexity of language acquisition and use. He noted that language users have the spectacular ability to both construct and comprehend a seemingly infinite number of utterances, each unique. Based on this assertion, which has been elaborated considerably over the last thirty years, it is now held that theories of language learning and teaching should take into account not only the *product* of language learning, but also the *process*.

This conclusion coincided nicely with changes in the concept of individuality among psychologists. During the 1970s a growing emphasis was placed in the notion of holistic considerations in psychology and Stevick (1971) saw the value in bringing such ideas to bear on the experiences of language learners:

> Because language is ours alone, and language learning is a doubly unique experience, we often talk about it as though it is carried out by minds without bodies...this book will emphasize the ways in which language learning depends on the deeper reaches of the personalities of all those who are involved in the process-on their emotions and symbolic lives (p. 3).

Assertions such as these ushered in what Brown (1994) refers to as the "designer methods of the seventies" including Curran's (1972) Community Language Learning; Lazonov's (1978, 1982) Suggestopedia; Gattegno's (1972, 1976) Silent Way; Asher's (1977) Total Physical Response; and Krashen's (1982) Natural Approach. Brown asserts that these methods—while now held to have taken the holistic approach to some rather absurd extremes—did serve to advance theories of language learning and teaching beyond the programmatic to placing an emphasis on responsiveness to learners' needs (Brown, 1994, p. 95). He concludes that by eschewing the very concept of method, CLT will take the discipline into the next century:

> *methods*, as distinct, theoretically unified clusters of teaching practices presumably appropriate for a wide variety of audiences, are no longer the object of our search. Instead, the last few years of the twentieth century have been characterized by an enlightened, dynamic *approach* to language teaching in which teachers and curriculum developers are searching for valid communicative, interactive techniques suitable for specified learners pursuing specific goals in specific contexts (Brown, 1994, p. 158).

Our revisions to the English 1033 curriculum—and this study—represent efforts to create examples of the valid and interactive techniques—or *approaches*—Brown calls for.

From Methods to Approaches – A Paradigmatic Shift

Pennycock's (1989) examination of the concept of Method[i] in second language education (SLE) marks the proverbial first shot in an on-going debate between SLE theorists and ESL practitioners. Pennycock contends that teaching methods as prescribed by teachers and academics (and those he identifies as the *interested* supporters of academics) are positivist, progressive, and patriarchal in construct. He strives to demonstrate that the concept of Method is marked by three fundamental weaknesses, and that these weaknesses reinforce what he identifies as the non-reciprocal and unequal relationship of authority that exists between SLE researchers and the practitioners of applied linguistics, ESL teachers. Given the previous section's focus on the evolution of ESL teaching practices over time, and the fact that this study is based in the notion of improving teaching, it seems appropriate to look further into the controversy surrounding the concept of Methods here. As we shall see, Pennycock and others question the coherence—indeed, the very value—of the concept of Method; both as it is foisted upon would-be teachers and more or less successfully applied by these selfsame teachers in their classrooms.

Pennycock's article is predicated upon two assertions; first, what he refers to as the inherently political nature of knowledge and, second, the interested nature of knowledge. Before I move on to his consideration of the weakness in the notion of Method, I will attempt to clarify these two assertions. The former begins with the contention that hierarchical and unequal power relationships exist between academic theorizing and all teaching practices (p. 590). Furthermore, these inequities are especially evident in the SLE in North America and Europe. This is so, Pennycock argues, for two reasons: one, the very nature of SL students, who are frequently drawn from marginalized groups; and two, the relative infancy of the field of SLE research. According to Pennycock, "(SLE) is involved in a complex nexus of social, cultural, economic, and political relationships that involve students, teachers and theorists in differential positions of power" (p. 590). Knowledge, he posits, is political in that it enables either the affirmation or questioning of social and cultural inequities as well as the acceptance or criticism of particular forms of power. Citing Giroux (1983), Pennycock states that efforts toward the scientific management of curriculum—with an implicit prescription of acceptable and unacceptable knowledge—have marked educational theory during the 20th Century:

> This philosophical shift in the purpose and function of schooling not only abstracted schools from the context of wider society, it also ushered in a mode of rationality that relegated the political nature of schooling to the anteroom of educational theory and practice. Citizenship education became entwined in a "culture of positivism," one that displayed little interest in the ways in which schools acted as agents of social and cultural reproduction in a society marked by significant inequities in wealth, power, and privilege. (Giroux, cited in Pennycock, p. 591).

Denying that schools are a site of political importance thus corresponds to maintaining an inequitable educational, social, and cultural status quo, observes Pennycock.

His latter assertion has to do with what he calls "the interested nature of knowledge" (p. 589). By this Pennycock means that one particular type of knowledge—derived from the empirical-analytic approach—has been afforded special currency by SLE theorists. The result is that these social scientists have striven, rather uncritically, to model their research on the research methods undertaken by practitioners of the natural sciences:

> Generally speaking-there has been a tendency to validate only one type of knowledge, to affirm that an ahistorical and apolitical approach is more scientifically sound, and to believe in objectivity (in an objective/subjective dichotomy), in the efficacy of investigative procedures that emphasize quantification and prediction, in the linearly progressive cumulation of knowledge, and in the universal applicability of human rationality (p. 594).

The empirical-analytic approach and its over-arching positivism and progressivism have been subject to harsh criticism from diverse sources: from critical theorists, to third world writers, to fellow social scientists.[ii] Each has indicated that the concept of Method emerged from early scientism, "and attempts to delineate modes of inquiry and define the problematic" (p. 597). The issue each critic raises, and the issue echoed by Pennycock, is just who exactly has a role in the production and in the institutionalization of Methods and how this production is related to the favoring and enforcement of the educational (and by extension political, social, and cultural) status quo.

As indicated above, Pennycock identifies three fundamental problems spawned by the emphasis on Methods in SLE. The first has to do with the positivist nature of the concept itself. As the author correctly points out, during the course of their training, it is not uncommon for future ESL teachers to be regaled with descriptions of method after successive method, the underlying assumption being that researchers are progressing in their quest toward what will inevitably be proven as the best method—which those researchers will then graciously bestow upon teachers. We are justified in asking from whence does this confidence arise. Pennycock provides a brief, albeit convincing, historically-contextualized discussion of the cyclical nature of the debate over teaching techniques—a discussion that encompasses language education scholarship from the Middle Ages forward! Provided his summary is credible, very little appears to have changed in the debates about the "proper techniques" (later Methods) of language instruction of the last 800 years or so. In short, creating new terminology in an effort to repackage and market an old concept is not progress.

An obvious offspring of this positivism is the notion of the linear development of SLE theory. Here Pennycock is critical of Richards and Rogers (1986), a work that remains in discussion more than a decade after its publication. According to Pennycock, Richards and Rogers contrast older approaches to teaching where "tradition was for many years the guiding principle" (Richards and Rogers, 1986, p. 14) to the Methods of the modern era which "benefit" from a "principled approach to the study of language and learning" (Richards and Rogers, p. 8). This principled approach is no doubt informed by the previously problematized empirical-analytical formula. Trapped in their own framework, according to Pennycock, Richards and Rogers strain to, "clarify and expand (these) categories by subsuming *approach, design,* and *procedure* under the umbrella term *method*" (Pennycock, p. 602). The result is not, as we might expect, clarification of the discrete flaws or successes of any given Method; instead, it is further obfuscation—leaving very little sense of the conceptual coherence of any of the Methods. Based upon these objections, Pennycock concludes, "despite attempts to clarify the Method concept and to use it analytically, serious doubts exist about its conceptual validity" (p. 606).

The final flaw in the notion of Method, according to Pennycock, is the question as to whether what was happening in classrooms at any given point in time actually matched the theory concurrently in vogue. Pennycock points out that most of what has been termed classroom evaluation has been based in pre- and post-test of student performance. Very little work has been done in actual classroom observation to determine whether teachers actually do what they report they do, and whether these activities fall under the strict parameters of any one particular method. It would appear to be more realistic to posit that teachers' decisions about what takes place in their classrooms are dependent upon a host of as yet unmeasured variables—variables presumably not allowed under the strict "umbrellas" of method previously discussed.

Prabhu's (1990) article follows closely on the heels of Pennycock. While Pennycock's historically contextualized criticism of the flaws in the concept of Method is engaging on a theoretical level, Prabhu brings the debate back into the trenches, demonstrating that teachers' criticisms and suspicions of methods are a consequence of methods' inherent conceptual weaknesses. He takes this argument one step farther in contending that theorists and teacher trainers who encourage would-be teachers to adopt methodological eclecticism might be undermining any hope of what he refers to as "further pedagogical understanding" (p. 162). This is so, writes Prabhu, as suggestions for eclecticism are typically predicated on one of two levels: the first he labels the concept of there being "some truth in every method" (p. 165). The problem with this notion is that what emerges is the blending of methods resulting in nothing more than a *new method* forged out of the conceptual overlaps of previous methods. Hence, no new pedagogical understanding or advancement results. The second suggestion for eclecticism takes the form of teachers simply taking their chances with any number or assortment of methods in the hope that one will prove particularly successful. As most would agree, this approach to the use of methods is "an act of gambling or a hedging of bets" (p. 168). In either case, concludes Prabhu:

> indiscriminate blending of methods adds nothing to our pedagogic understanding, since it offers not perception of what may be true about which method. It simply plays it safe-as safe from truth as untruth. An eclectic blending that constitutes a form of pedagogic understanding at least offers us an additional method; an eclectic blending that does not constitute an additional method in that sense leads us away from any furtherance of understanding, while offering us a change at what may be called "truth by accident" (p. 168).

Like Pennycock, Prabhu would like to see the abandonment of the positivist fascination with the concept of Method. As mentioned above, while aware of the theoretical arguments against Methods, Prabhu's primary criticism is how the idea of Methods reduces the importance of teachers and their craft:

> A method, in this view, is a set of procedures that carries a prediction of results; the fulfillment of the prediction depends only (or mainly) on an accurate replication of the procedures, not on any perceptions of those who do the replication-rather in the way the replication of a procedure in chemistry yields the predicted result regardless of the chemist's thoughts or feelings about it. No doubt the idea looks fairly absurd when put in this form: It reduces teaching to a faithful following of a highly specified routine—something of a pedagogic ritual (p. 171).

We, as teachers, might be inclined to consider this nothing less than insulting. It appears as there might truly be—as Pennycock argues—a chasm between the creators of Methods and the educators grudgingly entrusted with putting them into practice.

Diane Larsen-Freeman (1990) follows on Prabhu's assertions regarding the disparity of interests between SLA researchers and ESL practitioners. She argues that what SLA researchers are interested in differs quite dramatically from the needs of those who are engaged in SL teaching. Larsen-Freeman notes:

> over the course of its history the second language teaching field has either been without a theory or it has had its theoretical needs inappropriately met by relying on related disciplines outside of itself, most notably linguistics and psychology (p. 260).

This reliance on related disciplines began to be challenged in the 1970s by the emergence of SLA as an independent field of study. According to Larsen-Freeman, early SLA research focused on natural (or untutored) language learning, to avoid the potential for the contamination of data as a result of the unpredictable nature of instructional settings. Thus, from the birth of independent SLA research, an immediate discrimination was forged between said so-called 'natural' learning settings and educational or instructional settings. Larsen-Freeman charges that the prevailing orthodoxy among SLA researchers is that

> teaching is an involuntary reflex of natural acquisition such that what is present and natural in untutored acquisition should be present in abundance in classroom instruction; what is absent in natural acquisition should be prohibited from the classroom (p. 262).

According to the author, however, teaching is not an involuntary reflex of natural SLA; her argument strives to strengthen the position of SL educators, concluding that SLA research and theory should inform—but not substitute for—an independent theory of second language teaching (SLT).

For Larsen-Freeman, there are four significant differences between SLA research/theory and her proposed SLT research/theory. The first lies in the differing goals of each discipline:

> The former are intent on identifying what is minimally necessary for SLA to occur; the latter should be intent on understanding the teaching/learning process so that learning may most effectively be managed. What is *minimally necessary* in order for SLA to take place outside the classroom does not automatically constitute the *most effective* means of learning in the classroom (p. 263, emphases hers).

Therefore, methods for classroom use prescribed by SLA researchers may not accurately reflect the situational challenges posed by classroom learning. These varying goals are a consequence of what Larsen-Freeman cites as the second difference between the two schools of thought: differing research goals have resulted in differing research agendas. According to Larsen-Freeman, SLA research has attempted to provide an explanation for the process of SLA with an eye toward the general prediction of human behavior whereas SLT research "should be concerned with understanding how and why classroom interactions or features contribute to learning opportunities" (p. 263). The contrast between the fields' respective emphases: SLA with its focus on a generalized prediction of human behavior; and SLT with its focus on the social nature of interactions between teacher and student as well as those between student and fellow students marks Larsen-Freeman's third difference. She argues that this means SLA research tends to be reductionist while SLT must be, by its very nature "particularistic…from the need to comprehend the complexity of a particular context" (p. 265). As we might expect, from this third difference comes the fourth: the varying degree to which the role of the teacher is valued by each school of thought. SLA research, Larsen-Freeman indicates, has largely ignored the role of teachers. Larsen-Freeman leads one to the disappointing conclusion that the fascination with Method as a prescriptive device strives to virtually remove teachers, considering them instead as intervening and unpredictable variables who challenge a particular Method's potential for success. SLT, on the other hand, emphasizes the dynamic nature of the teacher—basing its theories upon an inductive accumulation of classroom observations and consequently empowers the 'front line' of SLE. Larsen-Freeman concludes:

> The language teaching field need no longer look outside itself for its theoretical needs to be satisfied...true independence of theory, practice and research in second language teaching will be achieved when SLT is illuminated by a theory of its own making (pp. 268-9).

Agreeing with Larsen-Freeman's conclusion, Kumaravadivelu's (1994) position is that this *post-Method*[iii] condition offers the possibility for a reconsideration and consequent re-organization of the relationship between SLA theorists and SL educators. While Kumaravadivelu allows that the superficial intent of methodological practices is appropriate,[iv] he is stubbornly opposed to the relegation of teachers to what he refers to as "the disempowered periphery" of SLE efforts (p. 29). According to Kumaravadivelu, the post-Method condition necessitates a redefinition of the relationship between the "center" and the "periphery," an effort that he predicts will lead to several powerful consequences.

For Kumaravadivelu, the first step in the effort to re-situate power in SLE theory will come when classroom-based research is afforded sufficient recognition within the discipline. He writes that method imposed from above, as it were, cannot be realized

> in the actual classroom primarily because they are not derived from classroom experience and experimentation but are artificially transplanted into the classroom, and, as such, far removed from classroom reality (p. 29).

Kumaravadivelu's solution is to encourage teachers to propose and test theories based on attempts to explain and problematize their classroom experiences. In effect, he is calling for an inversion of the current system of studies in SLA and SLE. Such efforts will, according to the author, increase teacher autonomy while simultaneously fostering among teachers increasingly reflective approaches towards their work. Furthermore, he argues, this emphasis on reflection will do much to bring into question frequently heard suggestions that teachers adopt an eclectic approach in their work; Kumaravadivelu argues that "eclecticism at the classroom level invariably degenerates into an unsystematic, unprincipled, and uncritical pedagogy" (p. 30). He concludes that the long-term results of this emphasis on the empowerment of teachers will be a series of classroom contextualized (and tested) alternatives to methods. Furthermore, these alternatives will have been informed by what Kumaravadivelu refers to as a "principled pragmatism," the product of motivated and self-reflective educators, those he calls "strategic teachers and strategic researchers" (p. 44).

The purpose of this article review has been to demonstrate the degree to which the concept of Method has been problematized over the last decade. I must admit that I am struck by the willingness on the part of some of these theorists (Larsen-Freeman in particular) to so eagerly criticize the relationship between those they refer to as 'academics' on the one hand and 'teachers' on the other. It would seem more productive to encourage a greater degree of reciprocity between the two groups; and, to be fair, Larsen-Freeman and Kumaravadivelu do offer such models. I might also mention that the line between the two 'disciplines' (a term about which Foucault [1995] had as much to say as he did the concept of Method) seems rather hastily drawn; again, a situation of reciprocity appears decidedly more agreeable. One exciting trend that each of these articles does consider is the emphasis on empowering teachers to further empower their classrooms and students. In encouraging a higher degree of self-reflection on the part of teachers, each of these theorists acknowledges the incredible dynamism of SLE classrooms. Kumaravadivelu, in particular, succeeds in offering a compelling vision of newly empowered SLE classrooms.

My own research, and this study in particular, are in accordance with these theorists' calls for change—but given the notion of bringing a principled approach to such efforts, we should make certain we share a common context as regards what is at stake in terms of English 1033 itself. Establishing this shared context is the goal of the next two sections: the first will provide a definition of simulations as well as an assignment-by-assignment comparison of the two English 1033 curricula; the second will argue that one result of the revisions is an English 1033 curriculum more reflective of the tenets of CLT.

Simulations Defined

Since its first international conference in 1969, the International Simulation and Gaming Association (ISAGA) has held tantamount the notion that simulation-gaming[v] marks an interdisciplinary approach to curricular development and implementation (Crookall & Arai, 1994). Indeed, the range of fields represented in Crookall & Arai's (1994) volume demonstrates that simulations have been employed across an array of disciplines as diverse as psychology, statistics, allied health, and commerce. The simulation-based approach to academic writing as profiled here, then, is but a single manifestation of a much broader movement. This notion of interdisciplinarity was the first attribute of simulations that struck me as intriguing. Here I must confess a certain bias towards the notion of integrating theories, ideas, and approaches from diverse fields so as to forge connections between them and broaden one's perspective. Given that my undergraduate studies with the Integrated Liberal Studies Program at the University of Wisconsin were modeled on this philosophy, I was, in a sense, brought up with this approach to teaching and learning. That simulations emerged out of the desire to broaden learning opportunities makes them intellectually & philosophically attractive to me.

According to Robert H. R. Armstrong (1994), a founding member of ISAGA, simulations are set apart from other curricular approaches as a result not only of their components, but also their uniquely pragmatic nature. First, a simulation's components are two: the Game, which is further subdivided into roles and the decisions based on these roles; and the Simulation itself (pp. 214-215). The Simulation is the scenario or environment in which the decision-makers (the students, in our case) face a problem they are to attempt to solve. The scenarios faced by English 1033 students (to be detailed below) revolved around a number of issues in the development of a fictional town, Muir Valley. The Game, according to Armstrong:

> consist(s) of people playing roles and taking decisions appropriate to these roles. Definition of roles can lie anywhere along a continuum from abstract/symbolic to realistic. Constraints on decision-making behavior can be embodied in rules or emerge during an exercise as a result of roles interacting (214).

For the purposes of the revised English 1033 curriculum (and this, too, will be detailed below), in addition to the Games' results, the problem-solving *processes* through which these ends were achieved acted as triggers for the course's major assignments. These processes are left unscripted, and thus run their own unique course. This marks a central distinction between a simulations-based curriculum and other, more prescriptivist approaches to teaching. Armstrong makes just this point:

> Central to the distinctive nature of gaming-simulation is the decision-making behavior of role-players. In the course of an exercise, learning involves changes in, or the reinforcement of, the understanding and perceptions of the role-players. Gaming-Simulation differs from most other learning situations in that it is non-linear in character. There is no defined sequence of steps leading to production of any given outcome...It is the admixture of diverse bases for decision making and the possibilities inherent in their interaction that give gaming-simulation its potential richness as a learning environment. In addition to the acquisition of accepted and habitual answers to problems, gaming-simulation provides opportunities for developing new insights, which can lead to original responses to problems (p. 217).

In combination with the negotiations that contribute to the plot of a simulation, Armstrong's "original solutions" (the dénouements, if you will) reveal the previously asserted pragmatism of the simulations-approach. We instructors were hopeful that in bringing simulations to English 1033 we could broaden its theme and increase the applicability of the skills learned therein. What follows is a description and comparison of both the Traditional and Simulations-based English 1033 curricula, with an eye to demonstrating how the design and execution of the Simulation curriculum agrees with and makes manifest Armstrong's assertions as to the learning process inherent in the simulations-approach.

English 1033 Before and After

In this section I will contrast the two incarnations of English 1033. Sequenced by assignment, this discussion opens with a description of them, including the instructors' rationales behind and expectations for each of the tasks. This will be followed by a catalogue of the curricular changes resulting from our adoption of the simulations-based approach. Table 2.1 indicates the titles of the major assignments and the chronological order in which they were presented to and completed by each class.[vi]

Major Assignments: Traditional Curriculum	Major Assignments: Simulation Curriculum
Diagnostic Essay	Diagnostic Essay
Documentation Essay	Documentation Essay
Library Research Essay	Library Research Essay
Questionnaire Essay	Summaries & Response Papers Project
Final Exam Essay	Final Exam Essay

Table 2.1 Major assignments of the Traditional & Simulation curricula

As noted in Table 2.1, the pre-Simulation English 1033 curriculum incorporated five major writing assignments over its sixteen week duration. In accordance with composition and rhetoric's current emphasis on the use of the process approach[vii] to essay writing, each of the major assignments was written and submitted in multiple drafts. Subsequent submissions of any given essay were to have incorporated the corrections and other suggestions proffered by the instructor on previous drafts. The following are comparative descriptions of each of the major assignments of both curricular incarnations:

- *Major Assignment #1 – The Diagnostic Essay*

Writing of the Diagnostic Essay[viii] assignment began in the third class period of the summer semester. This assignment differed from the semester's other major assignments in that it was written, in its entirety and across multiple drafts, during class time. The title of the essay suggests why this was so. The Diagnostic was designed to provide the instructor with a controlled writing sample for each student, so as to establish a benchmark from which to identify present weaknesses and judge future progress. The Diagnostics also served the less pleasant albeit essential role as examples of a student's unaided writing; in the unfortunate event that the authorship of any subsequent essays should come into question, the Diagnostics often prove to be telling.

The Diagnostic was written in two drafts: the first over the course of three class periods; the second (following the instructor having read and made comments on the first draft) over two additional class periods. It is important to note that unlike later essay assignments, both the Simulation and Traditional sections of English 1033 prepped for the Diagnostic in the same way. The first two days of class were dedicated to establishing a shared context on the Diagnostic topic—town planning—and students from both sections were given readings in support of the topic at the end of the first class meeting.[ix] It was strongly suggested to the students that they begin reading the materials that very evening and bring any resultant questions to the second day of class. The second day of class was dedicated to answering such questions through group discussion; the instructors also provided additional, though intentionally limited, information as to the format expected for the Diagnostic.

A review of the Diagnostic's prompt and supporting materials shows that this assignment possessed certain attributes of the simulation; most notably, students were asked to take on the roles as community leaders so as to make their town planning decisions from fictional positions of authority. Yet the Diagnostics were not simulations, for this assignment did not incorporate the (external) negotiations elemental, as Armstrong held, to the simulation-based approach.

The choice to hold the materials, the activities and the prompt the same in the Diagnostic across sections was made in the belief that the results of this first essay would serve as a norm when later comparisons were made between student responses to either the Simulation or Traditional curriculum. Whether or not this was successful will be discussed later in this study.

- *Major Assignment #2 – The Documented Essay*

The goal of the Documented Essay assignment was constant between the two curricula, students were to develop an understanding of the rationale behind and application of in-text and reference page citation techniques in a research-based essay. Like the Diagnostic, the Documented Essay was controlled in topic. This is to say that students did not have free rein to select topics for this essay. The instructors felt that in controlling the number of potential research avenues the otherwise time-consuming task of verifying sources would be eased in favor of the evaluation of quotation, paraphrasing, citation, and documentation techniques.

Though the Traditional and Simulation curricula both opened this assignment with discussions of documentation and citation techniques, related activities differed.[x] Where the Traditional curriculum followed the standard pattern of pre-writing activities and multiple drafts (written outside of class and based on individual preferences), the Simulation curriculum involved a group research project capped by an oral presentation. In groups of three, the Simulation curriculum students negotiated amongst one another to plan Muir Valley. These negotiations, along with the background materials to be cited, constituted the bases of their essays. Before drafting their final drafts, however, each group presented its plan to the rest of the class. Students in the audience were invited not only to challenge the findings of their classmates, but also to incorporate others' conclusions (following appropriate citation techniques, to be sure) in their final drafts. Through the deployment of group negotiations in the quest to find solutions—here to plan Muir Valley—this assignment marked the first full-scale simulation as a product of the curriculum revisions. Student responses to both permutations of this task will be presented below.

- *Major Assignment #3 – The Library Research Essay*

As with the previous two essay projects, the topic of the Library Research essay was held constant across sections. At the outset of this assignment both classes participated in a web-based research methods workshop at the Edmon Low Library. Students then conducted extensive, individual research on the topic—city ordinances—and wrote argumentative papers (in multiple drafts) incorporating their research findings.[xi]

As a prewriting exercise, students in both sections were required to submit not only the supporting documents they had selected for use in their essays, but also a detailed outline of the planned essay. This allowed the instructors time to evaluate the source documents and provide individual feedback (in one-on-one tutoring sessions held during office hours) as to said documents' appropriateness to the task at hand. The Simulation curriculum took this scrutiny farther. Once again students were asked to organize oral presentations in which they were to discuss their research findings and how they were to be brought to bear on the essays. A question and answer period in which the students assumed various roles as stakeholders in zoning arguments was appended to each presentation, thereby satisfying the simulation requirement for negotiation as a component of the larger problem-solving effort. Student responses to both permutations of this assignment will be presented below.

- *Major Assignment(s) #4 – Section-Specific Variations*

In contrast to the previous major assignments, the Questionnaire Essay was completed only by students in the Traditional section of English 1033. Students in the Simulation curriculum worked on the Summaries and Response Papers project, to be described below. Each assignment was designed so as to set the groundwork for the Final Exam essay, and students from both sections convened and shared the results of their respective research efforts before the Final Exam began. This collaboration will be discussed at greater length following an overview of both the Questionnaire Essay and the Summaries and Response Papers project.

The Questionnaire Essay witnessed students conducting primary research, including the drafting of a questionnaire but also analyzing and reporting the data resultant from having conducted the questionnaire. The purpose of the Questionnaire project was to broaden the types of writing genres covered in English 1033 to include a basic scientific report. In the process of writing this essay, students were introduced to the conventions of stating an hypothesis, reporting methodology and results, analyzing said results, and drawing conclusions & making suggestions for future research.[xii] Unlike the semester's previous essays, student were teamed into groups of three for this project so as to make data collection (via the questionnaire) more efficient. While this may be said to have brought in negotiations reflective of those demanded by the simulation approach, students here were not *in role*. This marks a significant contrast to what was occurring in the Summaries and Response Papers project.

The Simulations curriculum brought time constraints which made a questionnaire-based project untenable. The curriculum designers regretted this, but also saw the situation as an opportunity to include a series of shorter writing assignments that nevertheless were to serve as support documents for the Final Exam Essay. For the Summaries students were first introduced to the process of summarizing a brief article, thus a shared model of summary writing was put into place. The students were then asked to research, collect, and summarize three articles which (and this they were not told) would later inform their Final Exam Essays. This project, while smaller in scale than the Questionnaire Essay, nevertheless broadened the range of skills treated in English 1033.

The Response Papers took this effort further and ushered in the earliest components of the most comprehensive simulation used in the revised curriculum: that utilized in support of the Final Exam Essay. In preparation for the final, each student (in both sections) purchased a set of newspaper articles which, although presenting differing perspectives, all focussed on the emergence of corporate hog farms in Oklahoma. Students in the Simulation section were assigned roles similar to some of the real-life players introduced in the newspaper articles' coverage of the hog farm controversy. Over the following two weeks the students worked their way through the reading packet and wrote four brief (two pages or less) response papers—from the perspective of their roles. These response papers would later be made available, along with the newspaper readings, as support material for the Final Exam Essay.

- *Major Assignment #5 – The Final Exam Essay*

As was suggested in the Major Assignment #4 section, there was variation across sections in the way the Final Exam Essay was completed. Nevertheless, the topic and the prompt were held constant across sections.[xiii] The means by which the Questionnaire

Essay was designed to lend background support for the Final Exam Essay has already been detailed. Likewise, the Summaries and Response Papers project served the same goal for the Simulation section. Additional prewriting activities were sponsored for both sections, including a screening of the Oklahoma Education Television Authority's *Hog Heaven or Hell?*, a critical, though balanced, hour-long documentary on the growth of corporate hog farming in Oklahoma and a fieldtrip to the OSU Swine Farm. There were, however, other variations in the means by which students in both sections prepared for the final.

Along with their Questionnaire research, students in the Traditional curriculum were engaged in frequent question and answer sessions in which the articles in the Final Exam Essay's reading packet were the primary foci of attention. Furthermore, a review of outlining techniques was conducted during which time the students were asked to draft an outline based on the final exam topic—though the fact that this was the topic was not revealed. Finally, each Questionnaire Essay group prepared and presented a ten minute discussion of their research and findings. These presentations were given at a joint meeting of sections a few days before the Final Exam Essay writing began.

Meanwhile, students in the Simulation section were working on their role response papers and making preparations for the capstone simulation event of the semester, the Muir Valley Town Hall Meeting. The Town Hall Meeting was designed as a gathering in which each student from the Simulation curriculum section would present the opinions and position of the role they had previously been creating in their response papers. The Town Hall Meeting was held in a joint-section class period, and students from the Traditional curriculum section voted as to which side—pro or con regarding the establishment of a corporate hog farm in struggling Muir Valley—had presented a stronger argument. By the time they actually began to write the Final Exam Essay, both sections had had the opportunity to research, consider and discuss the topic from a number of perspectives. Student responses to both permutations of this assignment will be presented below.

English 1033 as Communicative Language Teaching

As shown at the opening of this chapter, the first attribute of CLT as indicated by Brown (1994) is that lessons move beyond previous *methods'* emphases on grammatical and linguistic forms. This, most assuredly, does not mean that such components are to be absent from the overall course. However, CLT does mandate that classroom-based language learning consider the sociolinguistic competencies also seen as critical to success in efforts to communicate in the second language. The Traditional English 1033 curriculum encouraged students to understand the importance of the notion of specific writing genres; for the purposes of this class this meant persuasive essays and scientific reports, both of which drawing upon outside materials. English 1033 thereby strove to raise students' awarenesses of their audience and the resultant format their writings were to take. These goals may be held to be representative of attempts to broaden the course to include the sociolinguistic competence so fundamental to CLT. The Simulation curriculum, however, takes this farther. Here in all but the Diagnostic Essay an increased emphasis is put on group work and problem solving. When presented with their essay prompts, students were encouraged to come together and tease-out potential solutions. Later, as the students began the actual composition process they came back together to report on their progress and to solicit advice and comments from their classmates. All of this culminated in individual or group presentations in which the class members shared their approaches to the original problem and everyone was free to draw upon these solutions in producing the final draft of their own essays. As ours was an ESL environment these negotiations and presentations had to occur in English; this set the stage for a greater emphasis on achieving sociolinguistic competence than would have been present if not encouraged in the first place.

With the exception of one assignment,[xiv] such group work and on-going reportage was not a part of the Traditional English 1033 curriculum. This is not to say that group work was wholly absent from classrooms in which the earlier curriculum was followed. Where the group work differs was in the degree to which the assignments of the Simulation curriculum were recursive in nature and topic. This was intended to impart a greater significance to the group work: it was transformed from being one of a number of situational techniques as employed in the earlier curriculum and became, instead, an elemental and revisited component of the revised English 1033.

The second component of CLT places its emphasis on the nature of the tasks deployed in the classroom. Previous to the adoption of the Simulation curriculum, English 1033 used a number of composition textbooks, the last being Jarmul's (1993) *Headline News Science Views II* (HNSV). Like many composition texts, HNSV is a medley of brief magazine and newspaper articles organized by topic. As the title suggests, the theme running through this collection is that of the place of science in today's world. HNSV suffers from a number of intrinsic weaknesses shared by the genre. First, given the long lead-time necessary to produce such compilations, much of the information presented in the articles was dated by the time these texts are actually published. Such collections also strive to address widely known topics. While this is laudable in the short run – for most everyone can be assumed to have heard of global warming, for instance, and this thereby affords immediate recognition of the topic in the classroom—it is an unfortunate reality that due to this approachability these selfsame topics are often revisited in textbooks. Consequently, it is not uncommon for students to have had previous writing experience with the same (or similar) topics and simply resubmit those works. This subverts the purpose of the entire course. Finally, culled as the articles are from the popular press, the style of writing presented in such texts is generally not in accordance with what would typically be considered academic writing. This is not to say that HNSV's articles are not well-written nor informative—they are—but they are not representative of the sort of work we expected our students to be able to produce at the end of the semester or the style of writing they might have been expected to produce as research for another class. For all these reasons, I conclude that, in the main, the composition textbooks previously utilized in English 1033 lacked *authenticity* where the notion mandated that the models and tasks presented be representative of the language skills English 1033 sought (and seeks) to elicit.

The problem of inauthentic materials has only been partially solved by the adoption of the Simulation curriculum. A significant change from earlier versions of English 1033, many of the materials for the Simulation curriculum were written by my fellow teaching assistants and me while others were taken from the popular press. While we strove to produce and choose models as closely representative as possible of the type of work we were hoping to elicit from our students, this was not entirely possible given the fact that very few traditional 'five paragraph' essays appear in publication. This remains an issue that needs to be addressed to strengthen our claim to having achieved authenticity in this regard. Perhaps as the curriculum is expanded and some of the original topics are retired a more authoritative set of examples can be collected and presented through our printed course materials. While this is a weakness, I nevertheless assert that our homegrown course materials allowed us to be more flexible and timely than was possible with traditional texts.

In addition, because we the teachers wrote the materials we have a unique perspective on the issues presented and learning goals anticipated. We could thus lead more insightful analyses than were likely with the outsourced textbooks. In short, we had a greater investment in and understanding of the materials. The materials therefore did achieve a greater *degree* of authenticity in two ways: first, given that they were either written by the instructors or culled from outside sources their content was more closely attuned to the course's curricular goals than outside options. This course-length internal consistency allowed the instructors to shape day to day class work in such a way as to model and encourage problem solving skills that were to be brought to bear on any such debatable topic. Admittedly, these skills were here applied to problems faced by fictional members of a fictional community; nevertheless, the processes of negotiation that contributed to the resolution of these issues were very real and certainly characteristic of the approaches to problem solving expected in other college-level courses and in the 'real world' of work. It has been suggested that all teacher-designed and written materials suffer, in a fundamental way, a lack of authenticity. I am unable to agree with this proposition, for an item's authenticity is measured in whether or not it is representative of reality. For the time being, at least, a major part of English 1033 students' realities is the

American university where definable, albeit culturally-located, modes of critical thinking and problem solving are assumed. Thus our materials *are* authentic in that they model and contribute to the development of these skills. In effect, we do more than a little consciousness-raising; helping our students gain an awareness of these cultural expectations in a 'safe' environment.

Second, and as indicated above this is as yet to be fully achieved, we did and should continue to select documents and design tasks with an eye to fitting, topically and stylistically, the students' writing needs in their later studies and occupations. An initial component of this effort to gain a better understanding of OSU students' writing needs began with the Writing Needs Questionnaire distributed to faculty members across the university in late 1996 and begs to be continued for the sake of the students and the curricula. Doing so will further answer potential challenges to the claimed authenticity of the tasks we have (and will have) designed for the Simulation curriculum; to say nothing of the research potential implicit to such an effort.

CLT's third attribute, according to Brown, is its emphasis on keeping students "meaningfully engaged" in the target language (p. 245). The Traditional English 1033 curriculum suffered in this respect. While HNSV did succeed in maintaining a consistent theme – the place of science in today's world – the *tasks* as they were assigned in the class lacked a similar sense of continuity. The result was that major assignments became isolated from one another; leaving the students unable to build upon their understanding of an issue from one essay to the next. The Simulation curriculum tackled this directly. We created a thematic curriculum in which each of the topics covered contributed to a larger whole: each of the papers may have been used as a resource for the next. The classroom tasks were thus recursive, exemplifying one of the characteristics held to be critical not only to a successful writing process, but to learning in general. Thus, from the first day of the revised curriculum students took on the role of planner for the community of Muir Valley. Each essay built upon the tasks performed for the last, so that this theme was carried throughout the semester. From the teachers' perspectives, this was intuitively appealing. Our hope was to encourage our students to develop a sense of investment in the community and carry that concern over to their coursework.

In addition, while students enrolled in the Traditional English 1033 courses only concentrated their efforts on two of the four linguistic skill areas (reading and writing but not listening or speaking), the Simulation curriculum required attention to all four. Not only were students given the opportunity to present their findings to their classes, they were also expected to produce critiques of the oral presentations conducted by their classmates. These revisions brought the curriculum into closer agreement with Brown's third tenet of CLT.

The fourth of the CLT attributes is the notion that unrehearsed productive and receptive use of the target language must be encouraged both inside and outside the classroom. Here again the Simulation curriculum, with its emphasis on group work and negotiation, more closely achieved this goal than did the Traditional curriculum. This is not to say that all work in the Traditional classroom was done in isolation. However, the timing of the group work differed between the two course plans. In the Traditional course, students were frequently engaged in peer critique and other post-draft analysis. In contrast, the Simulation curriculum placed a heavier emphasis on group work and problem-solving before the writing process actually began. In a sense this pre-writing discussion and planning may be said to have been less rehearsed than the post-writing feedback garnered through the use of peer critiques—for these assessment instruments typically followed a teacher-prepared critique form or script. Obviously, no such scripting was possible in a discussion of future writing plans or reactions to research findings. Such preemptive group work was and is certainly possible in non-simulation curricula, but given the aforementioned recursive nature of the simulations the pre-writing activities and negotiations took on a greater significance than had previously been the case in English 1033. Target language usage outside the classroom is obviously more difficult to measure. The Traditional curriculum did include one assignment (the Questionnaire Essay) which moved toward this goal. Unfortunately, time restrictions forced this essay assignment to be dropped from the new curriculum. It was our hope, however, that as our students gained expertise with the overall theme of the Simulation curriculum–community–they would spend more time discussing related ideas outside class. A component of this study includes research into the difference between the Traditional and Simulation sections in terms of out-of-class time spent discussing class topics. I will present the results of this query in the data analysis chapter. An early albeit non-systematic review of the students' responses in this respect led me to believe the Simulation curriculum had achieved this goal to a greater degree than had the Traditional curriculum despite the absence of the Questionnaire Essay in the former.

To sum up, the Simulation curriculum is a close match to the demands of CLT as enumerated by Brown. One component–that of authenticity–remains a challenge in need of further consideration. As indicated above this is a consequence of an unavoidable lacuna in not only the popular press but also a result of the relative infancy of our homegrown materials. I have every reason to expect that this gap will be filled as the Simulation curriculum is further developed and, most intriguingly, if my call for additional, more broadly-based research is conducted, as to the writing needs of our students in the wider university and work communities. In any event, the curriculum revision effort that witnessed the development of the simulation coursework does bring English 1033 into closer accordance with CLT than the curriculum that preceded it. What is more, and this brings us back to the methods controversy detailed above, the process of designing, writing, and implementing the Simulation curriculum has certainly afforded my colleagues and me the opportunity to become more self-reflective as both teachers and academicians, this study being one (and hopefully not the last) tangible manifestation of this trend.

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[i] Method here is capitalized as the term was attached to any of a number of formalized teaching strategies, beginning with the Grammar Translation Method and through what Brown (1994) has referred to as the "Designer Methods" of the 1970s.
[ii] Pennycock's list is exhaustive, see p. 595.
[iii] To borrow his phrase.
[iv] This goal he defines as encouraging learners to acquire the abilities necessary to engage in meaningful communication.
[v] Henceforth simply 'simulation(s).'
[vi] 'Course Calendars' for each curriculum are presented in Appendices 2.1 & 2.2.
[vii] That is to say, writing multiple drafts of any given essay.
[viii] Henceforth simply "the Diagnostic."
[ix] Appendix 2.3 contains copies of the Diagnostic Essay's preparatory readings and prompt.
[x] Appendix 2.4 contains the Documented Essay's prompt.
[xi] Appendix 2.5 contains copies of the Library Research Essay's prompt.
[xii] See Appendix 2.6 for the Questionnaire Essay's prompt.
[xiii] See appendix 2.8 for the Final Exam Essay prompt.
[xiv] The Questionnaire Essay, described above.

CHAPTER TWO—

Motivation and Attitudes in SLA

Chapter Overview

Thus far this review of literature has focused on the revisions to English 1033 from the perspective of the curriculum designers and instructors. This chapter marks a shift in emphasis from the curriculum to students, and the means by which student responses to curriculum have been collected for both this and previous studies. As indicated in the introduction, one component of this study was dedicated to the collection and interpretation of student responses to the two 1033 curricula. Consequently, a number of instruments were used to elicit student responses regarding both their previous ESL/EFL learning experiences and their reactions to English 1033. These instruments were designed to tap into our students' motives for and attitudes towards a number of concepts: the most general assessments were designed to plumb the students' experiences with and perceptions of studying English; in addition, a series of specialized instruments were brought into play to elicit focused responses to discrete tasks and assignments as well as the students' perceptions of English 1033 as a whole. While the individual instruments will be identified and discussed in the chapter on methodology, it is important to provide a background not only as to what is currently understood about the study of SL learners' attitudes and motivations toward language learning, but also how these data have been collected. This chapter thus opens broadly in an effort to identify, explore, and problematize the four decade old paradigm that continues to dominate SLA research into learners' motivations and attitudes towards language learning. Following this, I will review a number of approaches to the collection and assessment of information about student motivations and attitudes with an eye to providing a segue into my own approach and methodology.

SLA & Student Motives and Attitudes

A review of research into motivation and its place in second language acquisition demonstrates that an overwhelming majority of these studies are abstract in the sense that motivation has been grouped under the larger canopy of affective variables, thereby making the concept difficult both to delimit and define. That a single theoretical construct has dominated SLA researchers' approaches to affective variables, and motivation in particular, for nearly forty years has served to further cloud inquiry into this area. This paradigm is, of course, that of *integrative* and *instrumental* motivation—first posited by Gardner and Lambert in their 1959 article *Motivational variables in second language acquisition* and thereafter oft revisited by these researchers and a panoply of their collaborators and others (Gardner and Lambert 1972; Lambert 1967; Gardner 1968, 1979, 1980, 1983, 1985, 1988; Gardner, Clément, Smythe, & Smythe 1979; Schumann 1978a, 1978b, 1986; Giles & Byrne 1982; Beebe & Giles, 1984; Beebe, 1988; Spolsky, 1969).

Language learners may be motivated, according to Gardner and Lambert, by either *instrumental* or *integrative* goals. The former includes the desire to acquire a language for material or other external gains: i.e. for one's career, studies, or social prestige; the latter represents learners who have a positive view of the target language and are striving to earn access and/or acceptance into a given language's community of speakers. The common thread running through the menu of studies identified above is that language learners judged to have been motivated to reach integrative goals achieved higher scores on second-language proficiency tests than did those exhibiting instrumental desires.

This dichotomy is, from an instructor's point of view, both intuitively and philosophically attractive. Which students would you prefer working with, those who are pursuing language studies for some worldly gain (which inevitably seems tainted when couched in such selfish terms) or those seeking instruction for less tangible, but somehow more appealing, personal goals? At this point a few caveats should be noted: first, this is a rough presentation of the original integrative-instrumental dichotomy; one that has been fine-tuned over the course of the last forty years. Second, neither Gardner nor the others who have followed his lead wish to link any sort of value judgement to learners' motivations; they have simply noted that those whose goals are integrative seem to have fared better on proficiency assessments. Third, Gardner and Lambert's subjects, Canadian students enrolled in bilingual schools, represented only a small and unique slice of the overall EFL/ESL spectrum. Nevertheless, by 1980 efforts to refine this construct resulted in the emergence of what Gardner has since referred to as the socioeducational model (1979, 1980, 1985, 1988).

The socioeducational model's most recent incarnation (Gardner, 1985) holds, first, that language learning must be differentiated from other school subjects as it requires students to form a degree of empathy with another culture. This empathy is manifested in the performance of skills or behaviors akin to those possessed or expressed by members of the target language community and is referred to as the student's "cultural beliefs" regarding the target language group (146). In addition to seeing the target language community in a positive light, Gardner posits that four individual variables play a causal role in successful second-language acquisition: (1) intelligence; (2) language aptitude; (3) motivation; and (4) situational anxiety. Here intelligence is defined as the student's ability to understand not only tasks as they are assigned, but also any instruction in support of said tasks. Language aptitude (Gardner cites Carroll, 1958 & Carroll and Sapon, 1959), "is defined as a series of verbal and cognitive abilities," successfully applied in the student's first language and transferred to the new language (p. 147). Motivation is the language learner's desire to succeed and it may be measured through an analysis of the amount of time and effort she is willing to expend on target language study. Lastly, situational anxiety is linked to the student's disposition towards taking risks in his use of the target language: those who are less threatened by the frequent false starts and stops that occur *en route* to language acquisition are less inhibited in terms of performance than non-risk-takers and thus are likely to acquire levels of target language proficiency beyond their more inhibited counterparts. Gardner notes, "In the model it is proposed that these four classes of individual difference variables influence how well individuals perform in any situation where they have the opportunity to learn about or develop proficiency in the language" (p. 148). Finally, Gardner's model also takes into account the milieus in which the language learner finds herself engaged with the target language. The two alternatives are *formal* and *informal* environments. The formal is marked by overt instructional efforts (e.g. classrooms or language labs). Informal situations are ones in which the target language is in use but with goals other than instruction in mind (e.g. attending a film or reading in the target language for entertainment). While certainly a possibility, language acquisition is an ancillary benefit of informal environments, not the outright goal.

Objections to this model have been raised on a number of fronts. Oller (1981) and Au (1988) subjected the results of a number of the proficiency assessments and measures of integrative motivation cited by Gardner and his cohort to factor analyses, demonstrating that different testing contexts yielded widely varying, and at times negligible results. Oyama (1978) and Purcell & Suter (1980) demonstrate that claimed correlations between integrative motivation and proficiency become untenable when other characteristics (most notably age) are controlled. While acknowledging that the results of studies into the effects of attitude and motivation on SLA performance have produced wide ranging and often contradictory results, Gardner (1988) does hold that a significant correlation has been shown to exist between some components of the integrative motivation schema and increases in language proficiency.

That Gardner's model asserted a demonstrable link between the level of one's integrative motivation and the potential for one's success in second language acquisition has also brought criticism. Savignon (1972) and Strong (1984) have both wondered aloud whether this is a 'chicken & egg' situation: does being motivated bring language acquisition success or, rather, does success encourage greater motivation? And, to turn this around, do students who have difficulty in the language classroom develop negative attitudes toward the target language and its community of speakers (thereby extinguishing integrative motivation) to the further detriment of their potential for success in language learning? Gardner has responded that his review of literature regarding changes in student attitudes has revealed "no support" for the assertion that success as judged either by language learners and/or proficiency assessments results in attitudinal or motivational change among subject language learners (1985, p. 99). Along with the variations in correlations between measures of integrative motivation and language proficiency, the controversy surrounding this "causality hypothesis" remains a point of contention (Au, 1988, p. 81).

Other models of motivation and its influences on second-language acquisition have also emerged, particularly as the socioeducational model began to be questioned. Giles and Bryne's (1982) Speech Accommodation Theory holds, like Gardner and Lambert's before it, that empathy for and positive feeling towards the target language and target language group are essential to achieving high levels of proficiency in a second-language. Extending the reach of Gardner and Lambert, whose research has focussed on SLA within educational domains, Giles and Bryne apply their version of integrative motivation to members of subordinate language groups seeking recognition and status in multilingual environments.[i]

Taking one step even further away from SLA in the academic milieu, Schumann's Acculturation Model (1975, 1978a, 1978b) asserts that learners will achieve SLA success only to the degree that they are willing to become members of the second language community that surrounds them. Schumann's famous subject Alberto exhibited what Schumann referred to as *social* and *psychological distance* from the surrounding cultural environment, a fact Schumann holds as responsible for the emergence of Alberto's pidginized English. Additional research into the Acculturation Model has resulted in Schumann (1986) indicating that his original model may have been overstated. In particular, and here I am reminded of Gardner's most recent comments on the socioeducational model, Schumann notes that affective variables are not only difficult to define, but quite possibly also individual in their manifestation.

Finally, Krashen's (1981, 1982, 1985) Monitor Model of SLA holds that motivation is one of a number of variables subsumed under the heading *affect*. Language learners, according to Krashen, possess an "affective filter" that (if low) may encourage or (if high) may impede the flow of "comprehensible input" to the as yet not located language acquisition device in the brain (Krashen, 1982, p. 31).

From the perspective of this researcher, the most striking weakness in the instrumental-integrative dichotomy is the degree to which the paradigm remains abstract from actual classroom practice. As noted above, Gardner and Lambert's research is intended to provide a model for the place of motivation and attitudes in students' preconceived notions about language learning and classroom-based study; Gardner (1988) notes that his model is focussed on the resonance of students' attitudes and motivations as they *approach*[ii] the classroom-based language learning environments revealing: "Exposure to the language learning situation, however, tends to make these attitudes more salient" (p. 149). Unfortunately, none of Gardner's studies actually takes us into the classroom environment. Crookes and Schmidt (1991) make this same observation, indicating that teachers' definitions of the term motivation are more likely to focus on whether or not their students appear self-directed and engaged in classroom tasks and assignments rather than with the more ethereal notion of affect (p. 480).

In this vein, Crookes and Schmidt present an overview of approaches to motivation outside the realm of SLA research. Theirs marks an attempt to find models that prove to be a better match with teacher perceptions of the day to day manifestations of student motivations and attitudes in the classroom. In broadening the scope of their study by including a discussion of how motivation is defined by theorists in other fields, Crookes and Schmidt conclude that SL research needs to establish a "research agenda" for the assessment of the role of motivation in SLA (p. 496). The agenda they propose is divided into three categories: (1) "description" in which the SLA concept of motivation is redrawn so as to reflect more contemporary and classroom-based understandings of the term; (2) "analysis" of the concept and the means by which data ostensibly reflecting student motivations is collected and; (3) "experimentation" where classroom-based research is conducted to determine the saliency of our understanding of the role of motivation in SLA (p. 496). Crookes and Schmidt indicate that studies such as theirs have already begun to satisfy the first category—the redefining of the concept motivation—and indicate the need for studies that fit the second & third categories. Of the former, they note:

> The second section of the above list (Measure and Analyze) sets out questions that are both matters that each investigator will need to decide before beginning work, and are topics that will need perennial surveying as research proceeds in this area. One may expect periodic reviews of the concept, and particularly of its operationalization, and a cycling back and forth between these two areas of enquiry. At the same time, a researcher currently embarking on an investigation in this field might do well to restrict his/her study to a comparative exploration of methods of measuring SL motivation in, say, a classroom context. Because we have so little work in this area, merely developing measuring instruments is a demanding enough task (p. 500).

Of the third, the authors warn that unless future inquiry is based in a thorough understanding of the previous studies the results of these new efforts may lack validity.

The purpose of this section has been to illuminate and problematize the theoretical bases of motivation in SLA. This, I believe, satisfies the demands of Crookes and Schmidt's first stage. The following section will present an overview of recent research methods in this area in an effort to address their second category and, in effect, take up the challenge Crookes and Schmidt pose as regards the development of suitable instruments through which motivation may be assessed. The third category will be addressed in the methodology chapter.

Approaches to the Study of Motivation & Attitude

As the number of studies of student attitudes and motivation has grown over the last two decades, changes have also occurred in the means by which these data have been collected. What follows is an overview of these shifting approaches with an eye to providing a rationale for the methods employed in gathering data for this study.

The studies presented below were chosen on the basis of being early representations of their particular approaches to the collection of data reflective of student responses to curricular efforts derived from the communicative approach. In addition, these articles have, as it were, withstood the test of time and continue to be cited in more recent studies which, by and large, continue to incorporate some combination of the data collection techniques introduced below. Following this review of previous studies, I will present further information as to the various methodologies used over the course of my research efforts and then move to an explanation of why this study fits the moniker 'case study.'

An early foray into the role of motivation in CLT, Hutchinson & Klepac's (1982) case study opens with the assertion that the information gap represents a fundamental component of most communicative approaches to language learning. Information gaps are designed with the contention that bridging them simulates authentic transfers of information amongst language users. While the authors had found such tasks suitable for low level learners, their experiences with their Yugoslavian students indicated that attempts to foster the exchange of information, and by extension communication, broke down among those students who had achieved greater fluency and, as a matter of course, had been charged with higher order demands:

> Once we move to larger, more complex tasks, the impetus to transfer information fades, because students on both sides of the information gap approach the tasks in an egocentric way: as givers of information they take little or no account of the needs and background knowledge of the audience; as receivers they hear but do not listen (p. 135).

In an attempt to determine why their higher level students demonstrated such apathy in the face of communicative approach-based lessons, Hutchinson & Klepac used interviews to elicit the responses from two upper level EFL conversation classes regarding a complex, week-long information gap lesson. The lesson, a component of a larger and longer theme considering popular technology broke into three sections:

> A teacher-led investigation of how a TV works and how the modern appliance developed; Language work; Group work, in which each group was given information on a particular invention. Their task was to read and discuss these data, then teach the rest of the class how their device worked, adding any background information they thought important
> (p. 136).

This lesson plan clearly represents both an information-gap exercise as well as larger tenets of the communicative approach to language learning and, indeed, is not unlike the activities that lead up to presentations in the Simulation curriculum presently used for English 1033.

The authors hypothesized that one of two challenges were likely responsible for their students' resistance to this activity: (1) given that the students had not been exposed to communicative approach lessons earlier in their schooling, they had never learned "how to process and present data effectively," and thus, "were not able to bring to bear on the task the communicative strategies of selection and organization" suitable to the assignment; or (2) the students simply had no incentive (other than the fact that they had been given an assignment) to worry about the actual communication of the information they had acquired (p. 136).

Hutchinson & Klepac found that despite having spent considerable time with their two classes demonstrating data selection and organization strategies, neither section produced what the authors felt were successful presentations. "What the students did, in effect, was to summarise the data they had been given and read out the summaries" (p. 139). During the interviews the authors encouraged their students to identify the trouble spots they had encountered in preparing for the presentations. A few noted that they found the topic uninteresting, while others indicated that they were, indeed, puzzled by having to amass and organize such large quantities of information for later distribution. The most oft-reported and discouraging comments, however, revealed an unwillingness on the part of the students to take responsibility for the task at hand as well as the lack of motivation they felt to actually do so. Concerning the former, the authors asserted, "In group-based project work the responsibility for defining goals and for achieving these goals lies with the students themselves. The extra burden this imposes may well be—and in our case seemed to be—a hindrance, even a deterrent, to effective work" (p. 141). Compounded with this is the notion that the students, while confident with the *how* of collecting and organizing data for their presentations (they did, after all, have teacher-presented models to follow), nevertheless repeatedly questioned the *why,* a clear indication of waning motivation. Neither conclusion bodes particularly well for situations such as those witnessed here at Oklahoma State, for the majority of our International Composition students come from EFL environments in which traditional (that is to say, non-communicative) teaching methods still hold sway; while at the same time we face a student population generally not thrilled with the prospect of having to take English composition in the first place. We might, thus, expect to find our students exerting similar resistance to such communicative approach-based tasks.

Hutchinson & Klepac hold "There is little to be gained from considering communicative strategies, if the students do not see the work as a communicative task in the first place" (p. 141). They conclude that communicative language teaching, in counterpoint to traditional methods in which students simply perform those functions demanded by the teacher, must go beyond curriculum design and classroom activities and strive to foster an environment in which students are encouraged to understand not only the rationale behind the learning process in which they are engaged, but also their place and responsibilities in it (p. 142).

Nunan (1986) agrees with Hutchinson & Klepac's assertions, but demonstrates that before educators can hope to convince students of the rationale behind communicative approaches to language learning, they must first come to terms with the rather significant differences of opinion held by their students as to just what classroom activities and tasks are best suited to language learning. Furthermore, Nunan encourages teachers to provide opportunities for students to take on the role of informed decision makers in their own education. He cites a series of small-scale, questionnaire studies (Alcorso & Kalantzis, 1985; Brindley, 1984; Eltis & Low, 1985) each indicating that such disparities in teacher and student expectations are sprung from students' experiences in traditional language learning environments. Of these studies Nunan, reflecting Brindley (1984), contends that students and teachers have often been shown to hold "two mutually incompatible sets of beliefs about the nature of language and language learning"

(p. 12). For Nunan, closing this gap in expectations is the responsibility of educators, who heretofore have benefited from the broad array of alternatives the communicative approach offers in terms of class planning and activities. Changes in student attitudes, he concludes, will only occur when educators are sensitive to their students' previous learning experiences and are willing to engage students in on-going considerations of curricular goals and related classroom activities (p. 18). Unfortunately, Nunan does not offer models for just how such negotiations are to take place.

Yorio's (1985) large scale, questionnaire-based study echoes the calls of Nunan, Hutchinson & Klepac, in indicating that communicative learning techniques cannot be complete without the input of those at whom it is aimed. Yorio couches his argument in terms of students as consumers of the theories and materials produced by applied linguists and teachers: "Both as producers and pedagogues, it is time we turned to the learners, the consumers of our product and asked them, point blank, what they think and what they want, what they like and what they don't like" (p. 671). Yorio does just this, thus taking up the challenge where Nunan left off.

Previous to this study, Yorio had conducted two pilot surveys of language learners at his Canadian university (in 1979 and 1981). He recounts having being struck by the respondents' positive reactions to having been contacted in the first place: "Many students actually wrote expressing their surprise and satisfaction with the fact that the University was interested in what they thought" (p. 672). This study differs from his earlier work in that it was conducted over a three-year period, was large in terms of sample size, and had four goals (derived from his analysis of the earlier, smaller studies):

(1) To find out what students thought of the techniques commonly used in the classroom. This was the short-range classroom oriented goal.

(2) To examine the relationship between certain variables and students' opinions: age, native language, and L2 proficiency level.
(3) To see whether or not there were opinion trends which remained consistent over a number of years. This was the long-range, program planning objective, somewhat similar to marketing surveys or government-sponsored public opinion polls.
(4) To learn about student surveys: how to do them and how to use them. (p. 672).

Yorio subjected the responses he received to frequency analyses and reports that, taken as a whole, the students' opinions were remarkably stable. Variation appeared, however, when variables such as age, native language and proficiency level are taken into account; for each of these factors the author indicates that intriguing preference and attitude trends are revealed. Taking these variations into account, Yorio asserts that "a methodological approach which offered no alternatives or had no flexibility would clearly be inadequate" (p. 682). Furthermore—and this supports Yorio's previously anecdotal sense of students' strong opinions regarding the educational endeavors in which they are involved—of over 17,000 questions posed to more than 700 subjects, the response alternative "I don't know" was selected less than 2% of the time. Yorio concludes that such a willingness to respond is evidence enough that further research into student attitudes and opinions is warranted. Nevertheless, and like the studies profiled by Nunan, Yorio's attitudes assessment instrument of choice was the questionnaire, a fact that other researchers were beginning to contest.

In an intentional departure from the attitude studies that came before them, Christison & Krahnke (1986) conducted interviews with a total of 80 international students engaged in both undergraduate and graduate study here in the U.S. who had previously attended one of a dozen different American intensive English programs. In their review of literature the authors became convinced that surveys and questionnaires, while perhaps the easiest way to collect large quantities of statistical data, are nevertheless bedeviled by the fact that any questionnaire's response categories are necessarily predetermined by those who prepare the instrument. Accordingly, Christison & Krahnke contend that given the ascendancy of questionnaires as the most common means of data collection on student attitudes, "previous studies of student belief and language use suffer from problems of objectivity, sampling, and student bias" (p. 63). The researchers thus eschewed the use of questionnaires in their study relying instead on individual interviews. Given the authors' strong criticisms of earlier studies, I think it appropriate to quote them at length as to how they claim their study differed from those that came before:

> The objectivity problem was addressed by gathering data in a uniform way (using a standard interview schedule); by allowing students to respond to broad questions with their own terms and categories, which were clarified, when necessary, in follow-up discussion; by including a full range of views in the interview schedule; by interviewing students who had not had the interviewers as teachers; and by using two independent interviewers. The study addressed the sampling problem by interviewing a large number of students selected randomly from a variety of instructional programs. The validity problem was addressed by interviewing only students who had completed their language study and had been enrolled in full-time academic work for from one to four terms (p. 65).

In moving beyond data collection via the use of questionnaires Christison & Krahnke's study signals a sea change in large-scale research into student attitudes. In a sense it is surprising, given the very title *communicative approach*, that it had not been noted earlier that traditional data collection techniques might also be brought into question as issues of authenticity gained prominence. To be sure, small-scale qualitative case studies (of which Hutchinson & Klepac is an example) were utilized well before the communicative approach emerged; Krahnke & Knowles (1984, cited in Christison & Krahnke [1986]) show, however, that such studies do have weaknesses in that instructors may have difficulty avoiding the interpretation of student comments and other feedback through the lens of their own teaching philosophies and practices. As indicated above, Christison &

Krahnke strove to avoid this through the use of independent interviewers. Unfortunately, the authors go no further in their description of their interviewers or said interviewers' approaches to their roles.

In terms of results, this study once again revealed the fact that ESL students are both gratified and willing to offer critiques of materials and instruction when afforded the opportunity. As with the studies of Nunan and Yorio, the students provided rankings of tasks and procedures. Given the interview format, however, the researchers were able to encourage interviewees to broaden their comments. Perhaps most heartening, in terms of the Simulation curriculum in place in English 1033 is the fact that interviewees responded positively to non-traditional approaches to instruction, Christison & Krahnke concluded: "The overwhelming majority of subjects preferred an active, interactional approach to language learning, at least as a central or major component of the overall program" (p. 73).

The primary difference between Hutchinson & Klepac's and Christison & Krahnke's use of interviews is a matter of the scale and the breadth of their respective samples. While Hutchinson & Klepac's students numbered twenty per section (for a total of forty interviewees), Christison & Krahnke's sample doubled this number. The studies are further distinguished by the diversity of the sampled pool: Hutchinson & Klepac's represents an EFL situation within a single Yugoslavian high school. On the other hand, and as indicated above, Christison & Krahnke sampled students with experiences at a dozen American IEPs. Both studies, nevertheless, remain the earliest examples of their particular approach. As my study incorporates attributes of the case study, I will now move to a discussion of the challenges posed by this approach.

In Defense of the Case Study

The reader will remember that early-on I labeled this project a 'case study.' This title is a consequence of the relatively small size of my sample as well as the restricted focus of this study. This section will show that the appellation fits well when we consider Cline and Sinnott's (1981) argument that assessments of organizational change face a number of practical and methodological problems. Nevertheless, Cline and Sinnott suggest that these encumbrances may be overcome provided those carrying out the assessment follow a thoughtfully chosen and well-planned experimental methodology in the process of collecting and analyzing their data (pp.1-2). To these ends, the authors provide an overview of four methodologies for organizational assessments, offering descriptions and critiques of each.

The first assessment method profiled is what Cline and Sinnott refer to as the *quasiexperiment*,[iii] typified by:

> (1) application of treatments or stimuli to an experimental group with attendant control groups that do not receive the stimulus; (2) random assignments of a large number of subjects or units of analysis to the experimental control groups; and (3) collection of measurements, usually pre- and post-experiment, to determine differences in outcomes (p.2).

The authors are correct when they note that the second of these attributes–the notion that a large number of subjects is required for this type of procedure–is the selfsame quality that makes quasiexperiments untenable for *organizational* studies. Identifying and recruiting two or three comparable organizations to submit to such scrutiny is no mean task, to say nothing of the travails one would face in extending such efforts to the requisite number of subjects (the authors suggest 30 subjects per organization)!

Questionnaires and simulations comprise the next two approaches detailed by the authors. With both, they suggest, potential difficulties arise as concerns the investigator's knowledge of the target organization's structure and functions (p. 2). As will be demonstrated in the Methodology chapter, the construction of such questionnaires requires a keen understanding of many of the target programs' attributes. Those who lack familiarity with an organization simply do not possess the necessary insight to construct valid questionnaires. Simulations suffer the same weakness. While Cline and Sinnott do not suggest that questionnaires and simulations are too time consuming or resource intensive to be valuable altogether, they do contend that a more efficient means to experimental design exists.

For Cline and Sinnott, comparative case studies satisfy the challenges presented by efforts to assess, compare and analyze organizations. Comparative case studies, they argue, are notable in their "intensive study of selected examples," that prove "particularly fruitful for stimulating insights, suggesting hypotheses for future research, and identifying major consequences of planned change" (p. 3). Hence, they contend that such studies–by definition, and in opposition to quasiexperiments–are particularly well-suited for attempts to compare small numbers of subject organizations.

This, however, is not to suggest that comparative case studies do not have their own faults. Cline and Sinnott detail a number of these, including: (1) the relative expense of case studies in terms of time and resource allocation they demand; (2) convincing subjects (be they organizations or individuals) to submit to lengthy and highly introspective scrutiny; (3) the challenges presented by the need to collect bias-free retrospective information regarding the subject organizations or individuals; (4) and finally, limitations on the generalizability of case study findings and/or results (pp. 3-4). Each of these reservations will be taken up in the methodology chapter, below.

Cline and Sinnott's efforts to delimit research methodologies is helpful but not without weaknesses. The first of these is their blurring of the distinctions within methodologies. While the numerical demands of the quasiexperiment will clearly not be met in this study, requirements (1) and (3) are applicable: that two sections of English 1033 are receiving distinct treatments (one following our "Traditional," text-based curriculum, the other using a locally-adapted Simulation curriculum) follows the control vs. experimental groups paradigm indicated (requirement 1); furthermore, and as will be detailed below, a number of data collection and measurement techniques will be employed over the course of this study so as to define pre- and post-treatment differences in attitudes (requirement 3). In so much as this study is comparing only two groups and hence cannot be said to satisfy attribute (2) of Cline and Sinnott's quasiexperimentation, "random assignments of *a large number of subjects or units* of analysis to the experimental control groups," it does meet the other constructs of their definition (p. 2).[iv] Thus quasiexperiments and case studies may not be as discrete as the authors would lead us to believe. A similar blurring occurs when the authors elevate questionnaires and simulations to the same taxonomic level, methodologies, as experimentation and case studies. Such instruments might more correctly be described as two of a broad array of potential research techniques, any combination of which may be utilized in eliciting and in reporting data regardless of whether one is conducting a case study or large-scale experiment. Nevertheless, these authors provide a thorough overview of the process of preparing, conducting, and analyzing comparative case studies, which will be further addressed in the methodologies chapter of this essay.

Those interested in the increasing use of case studies in ELT and ESL research would do well to consider the forthcoming series *Case Studies in TESOL* edited by Leki to be published by TESOL later this year. In the meantime, the recent work of Leki (1997 and 1995) as well as Leki & Carson (1994) are excellent examples. See Goetz & LeCompte (1984) for details as to the theories behind, and practice of, the case study approach.

Chapter Summary

In that it sets the background for a discussion of my own research methodologies, this chapter marks a transition. Its purpose was to set the stage, as it were, for the reportage of our students' responses to the two English 1033 curricula. Without such a review, this study would have lacked a context in terms of the theories of, and approaches to, student motivation and attitudes that have emerged over the last half century of SLA research. This review shows that much effort has been spent in defining and identifying the place of motivation and attitudes in the second language learning environments. Nevertheless many questions remain. Despite their differences regarding means and outcomes, every researcher cited herein has called for additional studies incorporating new methods of assessment. The data collection techniques used in this study were designed as potential answers to those summons—and will be discussed next.

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[i] See also Beebe (1988) for an elucidation of Speech Accommodation Theory.

[ii] Italics mine.

[iii] Italics mine, I presume their distinction – and the prefix *quasi* – here indicates the institutionally localized nature of the research they are suggesting; were the findings to be made available to a larger audience, through publication for example, such efforts might then achieve the unmediated title *experimentation*.

[iv] Italics mine.

CHAPTER THREE—

Assessing Student Attitudes: Instruments & Approaches

Chapter Overview

This chapter has two goals. The first is to profile the assessment instruments used in tapping our students' responses to both the Traditional and Simulation curricula. The second, an offshoot of the first, is to describe the methods employed in conducting these assessments and collecting the resultant data. In short, this is a chapter on methodology. Nonetheless, the unique attributes of this study dictate a somewhat unconventional approach to the satisfaction of these goals.

First, and as will be detailed at greater length below, the assessment instruments utilized in this study are adaptations of instruments designed by other researchers. Put bluntly, although many have called for new approaches to the study of student attitudes, only a few, highly specialized (that is to say, specifically focussed or localized) instruments have emerged. Though I have my suspicions as to why this is the case, for now I ask the reader's patience in this vein—with the proviso that I will return to this topic later. Suffice to say, others have also noted the paucity of assessment instruments in this area; the short-term consequences are that we can expect any number of additional amalgams to materialize in the on-going design of such instruments until a set of mutually agreeable standards of practice and expectations emerge. Thus, one of the atypical attributes of this chapter on methodology comprises its introduction of the source instruments and the rationale for the adaptations made to said instruments for the purposes of this study.

Another critical step in this study is to be addressed in this chapter. Back in this study's introduction I set the course for an unconventional two-tiered inquiry. The first tier, made manifest in Chapters One and Two, was to offer a critique of English 1033's Traditional curriculum and provide a theory-based explanation for the revisions that resulted in the Simulation curriculum now in use. The second tier of the study focuses on an issue of assessment: how did English 1033 students respond to the two curricula and why? Given the aforementioned limits on the variety of instruments available to carry out this assessment, the remainder of this study will be as much about the means by which the included assessments were realized as it will be about the results they yielded.

Over the duration of the semester, a series of assessment instruments were administered in hopes of ascertaining in-stream information about student motivation and attitudes towards writing in English and English 1033's curriculum. Table 3.1 enumerates these instruments and provides information as to their administration:

Instrument	Comments
Writing Attitudes Questionnaire	Completed during the second day of class
Essay Topic Questionnaire #1 (Diagnostic Essay)	Completed outside of class following submission of second draft
Essay Topic Questionnaire #2 (Documented Essay)	Completed outside of class following submission of second draft
Usefulness & Enjoyableness Questionnaire #1 (Documented Essay)	Completed outside of class following submission of third draft
Essay Topic Questionnaire #3 (Library Research Essay)	Completed outside of class following submission of second draft
Usefulness & Enjoyableness Questionnaire #2 (Library Research Essay)	Completed outside of class following submission of third draft
Writing Attitudes Questionnaire	Re-administered on the last regular day of class
Essay Topic Questionnaire #5 (Final Exam Essay)	Completed outside of class during exam week, submitted with completed final exams
Usefulness & Enjoyable Questionnaire #4 (Final Exam Essay)	Completed outside of class during exam week, submitted with completed final exams

Table 3.1 Assessment instruments and administration information

Over the course of this chapter each of the instruments listed in table 3.1 will be described. A copy of each instrument may be found in the Appendices. Student participation in the assessments was completely voluntary. As a means of protecting participant privacy, the Director of the International Composition Program assigned each student a personal identification number (PIN) to be used in lieu of names on the assessment instruments. Neither this researcher nor the other English 1033 instructor had access to the PIN key until after the close of the semester.

Writing Attitudes Questionnaire[i]

The original Writing Attitude Questionnaire (henceforth WAQ) appeared in Richardson (1992) and was used to assess education students' attitudes toward writing. Richardson's subjects (N=23) completed the WAQ twice, once before beginning coursework in a class called *Writing for Thinking*, and an additional time at the end of that course. Richardson then compared pre- and post-course responses to determine whether the writing course had led to changes in her subjects' attitudes toward writing.

Richardson's WAQ contained a mix of seventy positive and negative statements about writing and writing instruction. Subjects were asked to mark their agreement or disagreement with the statements on a Likert scale of one through five, where one equaled "Strongly Agree" and five equaled "Strongly Disagree." Intervening scores were labeled (the result being an ordinal scale) "Agree," "Undecided," and "Disagree" and assigned scores of two, three and four, respectively. Richardson reports internal consistency via the use of the Cronbach alpha (.6931) and a standardized item alpha (.7353), noting that each demonstrated internal consistency. In analyzing her data, Richardson utilized a one-way analysis of variance to compare the pre- and post-course administrations of the instrument. Twenty of the seventy items showed statistically significant (.05) variance.

While these results show the utility of this instrument, a number of modifications were made in order to facilitate the use of the WAQ in this study. Along with my advisor, I conducted a review of the instrument's items in order to assess their linguistic content for clarity and comprehensibility. Our goal was to ensure that non-native speakers would be able to comprehend the instrument's items. The result of this review was some rewording for the sake of clarity. These changes were mutually agreed upon by my advisor and me as not causing changes to the essential meaning of the items in question. Additionally, one item from the original questionnaire was dropped from the version used in English 1033. This item concerned the teaching of writing in primary schools in the United States. We agreed that our students, given their backgrounds, would have little to no basis in experience to answer this item. The ordinal Likert scale was left intact, as were the response categories: Strongly Agree; Agree; Undecided; Disagree; and Strongly Disagree.

Following these modifications, the WAQ was adopted for this study. It was posited that this instrument would provide a global measure of any changes in attitude towards writing as well as self-assessments of writing skills & practices. In other words, the WAQ was designed to reveal any gross changes in writing attitudes on a pre- and post-course basis. To these ends, the revised WAQ was administered twice over the course of the semester. The early administration took place on the second day of class. Unlike the Essay Topic Questionnaires and the Usefulness and Enjoyableness Questionnaires, completion of this instrument was compulsory. This was the first instrument in which students made use of the PINs provided by the Director of the International Composition Program. The second administration was conducted on the last day of regular class, before the students began writing the Final Exam Essays. Care was taken during both administrations to ensure that students had sufficient amounts of time to complete the WAQs; completion rates were as follows:

Writing Attitude Questionnaire	Completion Rates: Expressed as Raw Numbers & Percentages
Writing Attitude Questionnaire #1 (week one)	20/20 100%
Writing Attitude Questionnaire #2 (final exam week)	20/20 100%

Table 3. 2 Writing attitude questionnaires #1 & #2: completion rates

Results and comments will be presented in Chapter Four.

Essay Topic Questionnaires #1-#4[ii]

The Essay Topic Questionnaires (henceforth ETQs) provided an opportunity for students to comment on the major assignments' topics. In addition, each ETQ posed a series of questions designed to elicit data as to the respondents' approaches to and difficulties with the composition of their essays. Students were also asked to provide feedback as to the clarity of the assignments' writing prompts as well as the instructors' explanations of said assignments. In contrast to the "global" purview of the WAQ, the ETQs focused on discrete assignments in an attempt to elicit more detailed or "localized," assignment-level commentary over the duration of the course. While each version the instrument did encompass ten items, only two of those ten will be analyzed for the purposes of this project. The balance of the instrument's items delved into essay-specific questions as a means of improving discrete simulation components. The two items related to this study are ETQ Questions #1 and #2. ETQ Question #1 is the Likert Scale item which queries the respondents' overall impressions of the essay topic in question by asking "What did you think of the topic *(insert topic)* of this essay?" while ETQ

Question #2 asks for an explanation of the students' responses to ETQ Question #1, "Please explain your response to question #1."

As suggested by the content of ETQ Questions #1 and #2, a unique feature of this instrument is its two-tiered approach to data collection. The ETQs collect both qualitative and quantitative data.[iii] The students are first asked to provide their evaluations of the queried assignment's topic via a Likert Scale. They are then asked to provide written responses to series of *open* but *directed* questions—questions which nominate restricted topics for unrestricted prose commentary. Unlike the WAQ, the ETQs were of in-house design. Completion rates were as follows:

Essay Topic Questionnaire	Completion Rates: Expressed as Raw Numbers & Percentages
Essay Topic Questionnaire #1 (Diagnostic Essay)	20/20 100%
Essay Topic Questionnaire #2 (Documented Essay)	19/20 95%
Essay Topic Questionnaire #3 (Library Research Essay)	19/20 95%
Essay Topic Questionnaire #5 (Final Exam Essay)	15/20 75%

Table 3.3 Essay topic questionnaires #1-#5: completion rates

The reader is reminded that completion of this instrument was voluntary. The precipitous drop in responses for Essay Topic Questionnaire #5 is (most likely) attributable to the fact that respondents needed to complete and deliver this version of the instrument after the close of the semester. The reader will also note that data from the fourth administration of the ETQ was dropped from this study. This was a result of the fact that the Questionnaire Essay was completed only by students in the Traditional section (the Simulation section's students completed multiple journal entries in lieu of this essay assignment) and no comparison between sections was therefore possible with the Questionnaire Essay. Results and comments will be presented below.

Usefulness & Enjoyableness Questionnaires #1-#4[iv]

The Usefulness & Enjoyableness Questionnaires (henceforth U&EQs) provided a second opportunity for students to provide focussed critiques of the major assignments and said assignments' topics. The U&EQs were adapted from Peacock (1998)[v]

Peacock's (1998) study measured the correspondence of his Korean students' self-reports as to the usefulness and the enjoyableness of the course and the class materials. The author defined "usefulness" as "relevance to the goals of the learners in the target classes, effectiveness for language learning, and appropriacy" (A-4). "Enjoyableness," on the other hand, was defined as "that learner interest, enjoyment and enthusiasm that is generated by the materials in use" (A-4). Peacock suggests, but does not state outright, that he attempted to make these distinctions as clear as possible for his respondents.

To elicit his usefulness and enjoyableness data Peacock adapted a questionnaire which first appeared in Gliksman, Gardner & Smythe (1982). The ten-item instrument consisted of statements in opposition: interesting/boring; relevant to my goals/not relevant to my goals; unenjoyable/enjoyable; meaningless/meaningful; appropriate for me/not appropriate for me; dull/exciting; satisfying/unsatisfying; useful for me/useless for me; unappealing/appealing; absorbing/monotonous. According to Peacock, "relevant, meaningful, appropriate, and useful…together constituted the usefulness factor," while, "interesting, enjoyable, exciting, satisfying, appealing, and absorbing" constituted the enjoyableness factor (A-3).[vi] A seven-point semantic scale was used in the grading of each item. Peacock's respondents were asked to mark an "X" on the single, linear scale which corresponded to their evaluations of the course materials, "for example, an 'X' next to 'boring' scored one on that item; an 'X' next to 'interesting' scored seven; and an 'X' halfway between the two poles scored four" (3).

What Peacock calls a "high" correlation was shown to exist between learners' reports of usefulness and enjoyableness, where $r = .7040$ ($p < .001$, $N = 391$).[vii] He thus concludes, like Green before him, that usefulness and enjoyableness are "mutually reinforcing" (A-5). Peacock's suggestions for additional research note the need for qualitative studies-in the form of periodic learner questionnaires, diary studies and such approaches to data collection—to further elucidate learners' perceptions of the relationship between the usefulness and enjoyableness of a given curriculum.

My administration of the U&EQ marked an attempt to answer Peacock's call for a more broadly informed instrument. Given the quantitative/qualitative format of the ETQs, the U&EQs were to elicit additional quantitative data for the purposes of comparing the two instruments' results.

Table 3.4 indicates the sequencing and completion rates of the four U&EQs administered over the course of the semester:

Usefulness & Enjoyableness Questionnaire	Completion Rates: Expressed as Raw Numbers & Percentages
U & E Questionnaire #1	19/20
(Documented Essay)	95%
U & E Questionnaire #2	19/20
(Library Research Essay)	95%
U & E Questionnaire #3	10/10[viii]
(Questionnaire Essay)	100%
U & E Questionnaire #4	15/20
(Final Exam Essay)	75%

Table 3.4 Usefulness & enjoyableness questionnaires #1-#4: completion rates

As regards these completion rates, the same situation faced with the final ETQ also held true for U&EQ Questionnaire #4, those students who responded to and returned this version of the item did so on their own 'vacation' time. The results of the U&EQs, along with additional commentary, will be presented in Chapter Four.

Yes, But Why These Instruments?

Three factors went into the selection of the WAQs and U&EQs for use in this study. The first of these factors was accessibility. A quick scan of my literature review shows that Crookes & Schmidt (1991) is the most recent SLA-based article on motivation to appear in print in any of the field's major journals. While the authors called upon others to take up the mantle of research in this area, few have responded. New assessment instruments in this area are even more difficult to identify. Left with few choices, the WAQs and U&EQs appearing promising for their (relative) appropriateness and the demonstrated reliability of their results.

Richardson's research showed that her WAQ had succeeded in revealing what I'll refer to as "gross" attitudinal changes in a number (but not all) of the areas it queried. In adopting and adapting the WAQ for this study it was my intention to document whether or not our respondents would show changes in their attitudes toward writing and writing instruction as a result of having participated in either of the two versions of English 1033. The underlying goal was to identify whether or not the students in the Simulation section would express as positive a response to the simulation coursework as the teachers/materials designers had hoped they would. If it could be demonstrated that students in the Simulation section had a more positive reaction to the curriculum (or writing as a result of having studied through the Simulation curriculum) than did those students in the Traditional section, then we might be justified in claiming a degree of success in adopting the simulations-based approach in the first place.

Just as the WAQs were charged with identifying gross changes in student attitudes, the U&EQs were charged with documenting finer, assignment-level attitudinal variation in both sections. Here, again, the goal was to attempt to elicit additional data as to the respective sections' responses to the curriculum they were partaking of. That Peacock's U&EQ was designed for use with EFL students made it all the more appropriate (no need for the adaptations as were necessary with the WAQs). In addition, Peacock's statistical analyses showed that usefulness and enjoyableness reinforced one another in his (EFL) environment and he had used this information to promote and cull various lessons and approaches from his teaching repertoire. We teachers/curriculum designers believed that we had, with the simulation materials, hit upon an approach and a set of lessons potentially more useful and enjoyable than that which had come before. The U&EQ could prove or disprove that assumption.

Where the U&EQs and WAQs were quantitative instruments, the ETQ took a two-pronged approach to data collection; and it is this bifurcation in means that points to the importance of collecting both qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative assessments (if you'll pardon the turn of phrase) dare to go where quantitative assessments fear to tread. This equation is also true in the converse. Pairing the two forms of inquiry—while undoubtedly adding some difficulty in terms of reporting and drawing—has the potential to reveal much more richly detailed and balanced outcomes than either of the two approaches taken alone. With this in mind, the ETQ was designed to tap an even finer level of detail than the U&EQs. Quite simply, the instrument asked for feedback only on the topics covered in the class. One of the principles behind the adoption of the Simulation curriculum was to seize the reins from outsourced textbooks and localize English 1033's topics. The question here was whether or not the approach taken in developing these localized topics would prove more compelling to (or be better received by) the students.

Chapter Summary

This chapter introduced the assessment instruments used over the course of this study. I have profiled the instrument developed 'in-house' as well as those which represented adaptations of other researchers' efforts. Finally, Tables 3.2-3.4 noted the sequencing and completion rates of the four instruments used. Chapter Four will present additional commentary as to the instruments as well as the data resultant from their administration. Following the presentation of these data, I will provide additional analysis and commentary.

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[i] See appendix 3.1 for a copy of this instrument.

[ii] See appendices 3.2a-d for copies of each version of this instrument.

[iii] This two-tiered approach is described in greater detail in Chapter Four.

[iv] Please see appendix 3.3 for a copy of this instrument.

[v] Peacock notes that his study is an attempt to replicate Green (1993). See Peacock (1998) A-1 for details.

[vi] Peacock reports that the appropriacy of these groupings was checked through the use of discrete factor analyses of each grouping (he used the alpha reliability test). For usefulness, r=.8038 (p = .0161, N=391); for enjoyableness, r=.9295 (p < .001, N=391). Both results, Peacock claims, indicate high levels of internal consistency within the factors (A-4).

[vii] This correlation accounts for only 49% of the variance in each variable. This means that the constructs "usefulness" and "enjoyableness" are related, yet distinct.

[viii] Recall that the Questionnaire Essay was completed only by students in the Traditional curriculum section, hence the smaller sample size for that version of the U&EQ.

CHAPTER FOUR–

Assessing Student Attitudes: Data Analysis

Chapter Overview

This chapter will present additional details about the assessment instruments detailed in Chapter Three as well as provide an analysis of the data elicited by them. As both qualitative and quantitative data were collected, these presentations will take a number of forms. Instrument-specific commentary as to both the data collection and results will be included on an instrument-by-instrument basis. The results of Essay Topic Questionnaires and the Usefulness & Enjoyableness Questionnaires will precede the results of the Writing Attitude Questionnaires. This is because the ETQs and U&EQs were, as indicated in Chapter Three, conceptualized as discrete, "local" measures of student responses to individual assignments. By virtue of their narrow(er) scope, these instruments may prove valuable in tracking any attitudinal shifts within and between the Traditional and Simulation sections on an assignment by assignment basis. In contrast, the Writing Attitude Questionnaire sought to track attitudinal shifts over the entirety of the course. Like the ETQs and U&EQs, results from the WAQs were also analyzed within and between sections, but the nature of this instrument—as discussed in Chapter Three—affords analysis only at the "global" level.

The Essay Topic Questionnaires: challenges & revelations

Data from the Essay Topic Questionnaires will be presented both in tabular form as well as in excerpts from the respondents' comments. This approach is mandated by the dualistic nature of the instrument—for it contains both qualitative and quantitative items. ETQ Question #1 is qualitative in that it uses a Likert Scale to query the respondents' general opinions of the essay topic at hand. The balance of the instrument's questions are qualitative in nature, asking what I've previously referred to as *open* but *directed* questions. While the data from ETQ Question #1 are best represented by and compared through tables, the comments that follow in the ETQs' second item are not suited to quantitative analyses—hence their presentations below as excerpts.

Before the presentation of these data, a few caveats are in order. First, given that five versions[i] of the ETQ were administered over the duration of the course the quantity of data collected was, in a word, overwhelming. Indeed, the combined completion rate for this instrument—and remember that the students completed these questionnaires voluntarily—was a remarkable 91.2%[ii]. Secondly, that the items on this instrument were—in the main—open questions resulted in a broad range of responses.

Taking up the latter—the breadth of responses elicited by the ETQs—for a few moments, such results simultaneously represent both the great promise and the elemental weaknesses of such qualitative approaches to data collection. On one hand, providing a forum in which respondents were *relatively* free to make what comments they saw fit may be considered beneficial in a number of respects. First, the respondents were afforded a degree of respect as to their abilities to construct coherent responses on their own; they were not trapped by the regimented a-b-c-d-e question & answer bubbles of the 'scantron' realm. Thus, and in clear counterpoint to quantitative instruments, the balance[iii] of the ETQ questions offered the freedom not only to answer, but also to give explanations for said answers. These are two strengths of qualitative approaches to data collection.

Such qualitative data, however, also have a number of weaknesses. First is the issue of how one is to approach the organization of qualitative responses into some coherent statement of results. Simply put, qualitative data do not behave themselves. In terms of the ETQ responses, I attempted to identify explanations for the numerical trends exhibited in the responses to ETQ Question #1. It was my hope that these explanations—in the form of excerpts taken directly from the respondents' comments—would help to illuminate the more sterile data of ETQ Question #1.

An additional challenge posed by qualitative data is that of subjectivity. Using the aforementioned broad range of responses elicited by the ETQs as an example, the means by which any researcher proposes to report such data[iv] are debatable to a degree that statistically-derived data are not. In other words, with quantitative data the selection of an analysis formula is relatively cut-and-dried: one uses a particular approach to data collection and, as a consequence, one uses the appropriate equation (or set of equations) to tease out the results. Qualitative data and the analyses thereof, in contrast, are decidedly more subjective: one must therefore be explicit in stating the rationale brought to bear on the data analysis and be willing to have this methodology questioned at every step. This is not to say that qualitative data are objective *per se*. But manipulations of quantitative data are necessarily more overt than those of qualitative data given the decidedly more proscribed nature of what is deemed acceptable and appropriate in statistical analyses.

The following procedures were used in attempt to identify localized (or assignment-level) attitudinal trends via the ETQs:

1. Student responses to question #1 were analyzed by assignment. Frequencies of responses as well as medians & ranges were calculated by section and then compared between sections so as to determine whether there were statistical differences in either section's responses to the assignment in question. The results of these calculations are reported in Tables 4.1-4.8 and the explanatory comments that accompany each of these tables.

2. Student responses to question #2 reviewed with the goal of explaining responses to question #1. Presented below are these responses[v] as well as my efforts to delineate trends in these responses. These trends I refer to as *comment clusters* (at times simply *clusters*).

As shown below, the comment clusters comprise three broad themes that ran through the students' responses. The first of these themes has to do with student commentary on the *tasks* at hand. Presented here are comments that praise, merely comment upon, or criticize components of the assignments. Examples of responses in this category include complaints about the amount of work required to complete an assignment, praise as to the materials or activities that contributed to a respondent's understanding of an assignment, as well as commentary on the difficulties of understanding an assignment. A second theme that threads through the commentary is that which I've labeled ***interesting or informative***. Here are those comments in which the students actually use the words 'interesting' or 'informative' to describe the assignment and/or topic, or where other expressions indicate some degree of engagement (or, indeed, disengagement) with the concepts in consideration. Finally, a few respondents questioned what I will refer to as the *relevance* of the assignments or their allied tasks.

While numbering but a few lines in a blizzard of commentary, these comments were pointed enough to warrant a category of their own. It should come as no surprise that the comments in this third cluster fell into the middling response category "so-so" as well as the negative categories. These data & applicable commentaries will be presented on an assignment-by-assignment basis, beginning with the Diagnostic Essay and proceeding through the remaining assignments[vi] in order of their completion.

Essay Topic Questionnaire #1: Diagnostic Essay

Table 4.1 indicates no difference between the sections' median response to the Diagnostic Essay's ETQ Question #1, "*What did you think of the topic of this essay?*" Additionally, there was no difference in the ranges of either sections' responses to this question.[vii]

Diagnostic Essay ETQ Question #1	*Median Response*	*Range*
Traditional Section n=11	4	1
Simulation Section n=9	4	1

Table 4.1 Median responses & ranges, Diagnostic Essay ETQ Question #1 by section.

The distributions and frequencies of responses to ETQ Question #1 are shown, by section, in Table 4.2.

Diagnostic Essay	*Loved it*	*Liked it*	*So-so*	*Disliked it*	*Hated it*
Traditional Section n=11	0	6	5	0	0
Simulation Section n=9	0	7	2	0	0

Table 4.2 Response frequencies, Diagnostic Essay ETQ Question #1 by section.

A comparison of the data in Tables 4.1 and 4.2 show that while the median response to the assignment in both sections was 4 ("I liked it"), a greater proportion of the Traditional section students (5:11 or 45% in the Traditional section vs. 2:9 or 22% in the Simulation section) chose the less positive response "So-so." On the whole, then, the Simulation section's response to this assignment was more positive than that of the Traditional section.

Taken alone, the medians of the sections' responses to ETQ Question #1 lead one to conclude that there was no difference between the sections in terms of their responses to this item. This conclusion is, of course, brought into some question when one considers the wider (and more neutral) distribution of the students' responses in the Traditional section as compared to those of the Simulation section. These numerical data, however, only go so far in explaining the less positive responses of the former section. To stop our inquiry here, to report only these quantitative data, would leave the attitudinal differences essentially unaccounted for. Here, then, is a situation in which the qualitative responses to ETQ Question #2 might prove telling—and possibly yield insights not to be ascertained through analysis of the quantitative data alone.

To these ends, excerpts taken from student responses to the Diagnostic Essay's ETQ Question #2, "*Please explain your response to question #1*" are presented below. The comments of those students who rated the assignment "So-so," (numerical equivalency 3) will appear first and be discussed for their content. The comments of those respondents who rated the assignment "I like it," (numerical equivalency 4) will follow, along with a comparative discussion of the comments from both levels.

As indicated in Table 4.2, five respondents from the Traditional section and two respondents from the Simulation judged the Diagnostic Essay's topic as "So-so":

Student 104 (Traditional section):
"The topic was interesting, but it was too hard for me to choose. Most of them [the choices] presented good opportunities for developing Muir Valley in the

future."

Student 105 (Traditional section):
"I prefer to respond to social problems, like divorce."

Student 129 (Traditional section):
"I did not get the point of what the teachers wanted us to write...I was confused by the relationship between the government commission and the three companies."

Student 130 (Traditional section):
"Well, I liked this more than talking about culture like we did in English 1013."

Student 157 (Traditional section):
"It wasn't very hard."

Student 218 (Simulation section):
Since I'm not a creative person it was slightly difficult for me to draw an image of the town before I actually got started. However, the handouts were very helpful (both the prompt and the company information) in helping me to think and start writing.

Student 289 (Simulation section):
Because we were supposed to play a role in a government commission, trying to convince the future residents of Muir Valley. I would have preferred playing the role of one of the three companies' representatives to playing a member of a government commission.

Excerpts 4.1 Diagnostic Essay ETQ Question #2 Responses – Respondents who rated the essay topic "so-so."

These middling responses fall into two clusters: the first indicating a frustration, if you will, with the requirements or tasks of the assignment; the second indicating a lack of interest in the topic itself. . Those whose responses who fall into the former category are respondents #104, #129, #157, #218, and #289, while respondents #105 and #130 fall into the latter. Consider, for instance, the responses of students #104 and student #218: both of whom indicate their having had some trouble dealing with the creative component of the topic at hand; but not criticizing the topic *per se*. A further contrast is established in with students #129 & #289, who claimed to have encountered some difficulty in interpreting the task (in particular, the roles) at hand. Respondent #157, in contrast, would appear to have been pleased by the 'ease' of the assignment, though providing no further commentary. In any event, all but two of the middling comments respond to the task. The remaining responses, those of students #105 and 130, indicate displeasure with the topic itself.

As indicated in the excerpts below, of the 13 students who responded to ETQ Question #1 by choosing "I liked it," an array of responses were revealed.

Student 106 (Traditional section)
"It was quite a challenge explaining why and how I made my choice. The most interesting part was to cover all angles, including the counter-arguments."

Student 110 (Traditional section)
"We could easily express our feelings on each of the companies. We could make our decision or choice on which [qualities] we liked. But, if we had been given more time to write this essay, it certainly would have been better."

Student 119 (Traditional section)
"Instead of just using real facts to construct the essay, I could use my own imagination to make it more interesting. Besides that, it allowed me to share my opinions regarding social, economic, and environmental issues."

Student 150 (Traditional section)
"There were many advantages and disadvantages for each of these corporations. Therefore, anyone with different viewpoints could write this essay."

Student 151 (Traditional section)
"The topic given was interesting and encouraged me to think wisely when deciding on the best industry for Muir Valley."

Student 160 (Traditional section)
"Because, basically, we were given all the material...what we had to do was to re-organize it again and make it sound nice."

Student 239 (Simulation section)
"It was a reasonably good topic. It was interesting and quite closely related to real-life. This made [the topic] easier to tackle."

Student 250 (Simulation section)
"It was interesting as it was different from [the types of topics] we did [in previous composition courses]."

Student 255 (Simulation section)
"It is new and fun to do, but I think that the other two companies (SkiFuture and Peak Steel) need to have more advantageous points and fewer negative points so that they will be more challenging options."

Student 268 (Simulation section)
"The essay made me analyze 3 different companies which had equal opportunities to relocate to Muir Valley. I think this was really good, because when I face the real world I will also have to analyze things & in most cases (problems) have no exact answers and I will have to make decisions based on what I think is the best solution to solve the problem."

Student 270 (Simulation section)
"The articles covered the economic, social, and environmental impacts of each industry. This made it easier to decide which industry should develop in Muir Valley."
Student 278 (Simulation section)
"I think it provided me with more than enough materials and reasons to write about."

Student 299 (Simulation section)
"Writing essays is one of my favorite areas in English, so I liked writing this essay in class with the instructors there so that even if I had a problem all I had to do was ask them."

Excerpts 4.2 Diagnostic Essay ETQ Question #2 Responses – Respondents who rated the essay topic "I liked it."

These comments do, however, also form around notions of the task at hand as well as interest level in the assignment, the impressions here positive. Responses #106, #110, and #150 laud the number of choices available in composing the essay. #119 praises the creative nature of the assignment. Respondent #268 places his emphasis on the perceived realism (or authenticity, if you please) of the task. Students #160, #255, and #299 noted the ease of the assignment, while #270 & #278 had positive comments for the background materials which informed the assignment proper. Those remarked that they found the topic interesting included respondents #151, #239 and #250. Student #250 going so far as to differentiate the level of interest he felt in this essay from his previous composition coursework.

I remarked above that qualitative data do not behave themselves. Unlike quantitative data—which, as the name implies, quickly fits into neat columns and rows—the stuff of qualitative research is revealed in broad strokes. Despite the array of response categories represented here, one quickly notes that these respondents took pains to weigh their impressions of the Diagnostic Essay topic, at times presenting those impressions with more than a little creativity. Furthermore, the critiques—be they positive or neutral—reveal the authors to be informed consumers of information, poised to bring both insight and cleverness to bear in their commentary. Unfortunately (and as the data below reveal) the ETQ ratings of the Diagnostic Essay were the high water mark in terms of positive responses to the topics assigned in either section.

Essay Topic Questionnaire #2: Documented Essay

Documented Essay ETQ Question #1	*Median Response*	*Range*
Traditional Section n=11	3	1
Simulation Section n=9	3.5	1

Table 4.3 Median responses & ranges, Documented Essay ETQ Question #1 by section.

Table 4.3 shows the median response by section to Question #1 of the Documented Essay's ETQ, "*What did you think of the topic of this essay?*" Table 4.4 shows the frequencies of the responses to ETQ Question #1 by section:

Documented Essay	*Loved it*	*Liked it*	*So-so*	*Disliked it*	*Hated it*
Traditional Section n=11	0	5	5	1	0
Simulation Section n=8	0	4	3	1	0

Table 4.4 Response frequencies, Documented Essay ETQ Question #1 by section.

Note the broader range of the responses exhibited in Table 4.4 as compared to Table 4.2. Here, for the first time, we have respondents moving into negative evaluations on the Likert Scale. In terms of the proportional distribution of the respondents, the relationships are these: 5:11 (or 45%) of the Traditional section respondents marked "I liked it" as compared with 4:8 (or 50%) of those from the Simulation section; 5:11 (45%) of the Traditional section chose the response "So-so" as compared to 3:8 (or 38%) of those from the Simulation section; finally, 1:11 (or 9%) of the Traditional section chose "I disliked it" as compared with 1:8 (or 13%) from the Simulation section. As revealed by the medians reported in Table 4.3, respondents from the Simulation section had (overall) a slightly more positive reaction to this assignment than did the Traditional section respondents. As indicated in Table 4.4, nine of the 19 respondents chose "I liked it" in response to the Documented Essay's ETQ Question #1. Of the remaining 10 respondents, eight chose "So-so," while 2 chose "I disliked it." The last of these response groups marks the first overtly negative rating in an ETQ's first question; and represent a substantive degradation in student responses to the English 1033's essay topics. As with the Diagnostic Essay's qualitative responses, excerpts from the Documented Essay ETQ comments will be presented below. The range of these responses is broader in terms of their content beginning with those who responded with "I liked it":

> Student 104 (Traditional section)
> "I liked this essay because the topic gave me a chance to expand my ideas about town planning."
>
> Student 105 (Traditional section)
> "This time the essay totally reflected our own ideas."
>
> Student 106 (Traditional section)
> "The topic was quite unusual. It allowed a little creativity to come into play."
>
> Student 130 (Traditional section)
> "Because we were supposed to use our imagination to plan the town and at the same time use the sources and their information as our guides."
>
> Student 151 (Traditional section)
> "The topic was interesting. I liked the part of arranging the structure of the town."
>
> Student 239 (Simulation section)
> "We all live in a town/city, and these days all towns and cities are planned. It is quite interesting to see open, barren land turn into a city as time goes by."
>
> Student 268 (Simulation section)
> "To be honest, this essay made me realize that I've chosen the wrong major. I took finance as my major, but designing things is my hobby. But I realize that I am not really interested in economics as much as I am in designing things."
>
> Student 270 (Simulation section)
> "The topic of town planning was quite interesting to me. In fact, it was [a lot of] fun to plan Muir Valley. Mapping all of its natural features also gave us a challenge in making our ideal town. Besides, as my major is architecture, I think this topic –town planning—could be useful in my major in the future."
>
> Student 299 (Simulation section)
> "I liked it because it was a new experience. Even though I've had so much

planning to do in my life, this was the first time I've had to plan a city! A lot of thinking was involved in this. I tried to come up with the best possible plan for the city but sometimes there were other alternatives, too. Once I discussed my plan with the rest of the class, I was surprised to find out that some of [my classmates] had totally different plans."

Excerpts 4.5 Documented Essay ETQ Question #2 Responses – Respondents who rated the essay topic "I liked it."

Next are those who ranked the topic "So-so":

Student 110 (Traditional section)
"We had so little time to finish this essay. When our group members gathered to discuss it, we found that the essay was big, involved a lot of material, and the problem was difficult to solve. We should have been given more time because we came up with many different ideas which were hard to settle."

Student 119 (Traditional section)
"I know that I was required to plan Muir Valley. But I got confused: whether I had to respond in detail or just in general [as to] how or what Muir Valley should look like."

Student 129 (Traditional section)
"When I write papers in other classes I tend to have some ideas or opinions while I am reading articles or thinking about topics, but I have not experienced this in this class yet. I don't know why."

Student 150 (Traditional section)
"I think we should have learned more about descriptive essays. We had to describe our plan and give our opinion in this essay."

Student 160 (Traditional section)
"I never felt [very] excited about any essay, but then this was not a very long essay, so that's not too bad."

Student 250 (Simulation section)
"It was interesting in a way, but because the subject was one that I could not get very excited about I didn't find it much fun."

Student 255 (Simulation section)
"It is not relevant to my studies, but knowing it is good for my general knowledge."

Student 289 (Simulation section)
"First of all, I prefer using numbers to drawing maps. While drawing a map, I prefer using different colors to define different functions. Generally speaking, I lack imagination. It would have been easier and more interesting for me to tear down a town than to develop a new one."

Excerpts 4.6 Documented Essay ETQ Question #2 Responses – Respondents who rated the essay topic "so-so."

Finally, the comments of those who answered "I disliked it":

Student 157 (Traditional section)
"Maybe the topic was a little too close to my major."

Student 218 (Simulation section)
"I think that this topic [required us to] use our imaginations. I am not a creative person and did not have [any] good ideas about this topic."

Excerpts 4.7 Documented Essay ETQ Question #2 Responses – Respondents who rated the essay topic "I disliked it."

Four clusters are present in these data. Of these, two include the positive evaluations ("I liked it") while two constitute the middling and negative evaluations ("So-so" or "I disliked it). The first of the positive clusters praised the topic as interesting and/or informative and include the comments of respondents #104, #239, #268, #270, and #299. The second cluster of positive responses centers around the creative nature of the topic and its required tasks. Included in this cluster are the comments of students #105, #106, #130, and #151. Of the middling or negative evaluations, the first cluster comprises comments about the assignment's demands; included in this group are the responses of students #110, #119, #150, #218 and #289. The members of the second middling and negative cluster, students #129, #157, #160, #250, and #255, responded that they were not interested in or inspired by this essay's topic.

As with the student comments on the Diagnostic Essay, a review of these comments demonstrates the elemental promise of qualitative data, for the excerpts allow us to identify those attributes held to be important by those for whom our efforts as teachers and curriculum designers are targeted. Be the comments positive, neutral or negative, the pairing of statistically derived data (Tables 4.3 & 4.4) with the excerpts gives us a fuller picture of the attitudes of these students toward this assignment as well as a broader understanding of what qualities students desire in assignment in general. Consider, for example, the comments of student #218 in response to ETQ Question #2 on both the Diagnostic and Documented Essays. This student's remarks are quite clear in indicating the difficulties the student experienced, the respondent naming twice the same perceived shortfall, his perception that he a lacked creativity. While it would appear that this disconnect between the task requirements and the student's self-perception were ignored once in responding to an assignment (in the ETQ Question #1 response on the Diagnostic Essay), the student responded more critically to the creative challenge in the second assignment. A response such as this can, in effect, be taken as a warning flag for the teachers and curriculum designers—indicating that a student is feeling lost for a reason we may not have anticipated. Thus, one benefit of administering a localized instrument like the ETQ is that instructors have frequent feedback as to their efforts—perhaps providing them the chance to make timely adjustments so as to better meet student concerns or needs.

Essay Topic Questionnaire #3: Library Research Essay

Library Research Essay ETQ Question #1	*Median Response*	*Range*
Traditional Section n=10	3.5	2
Simulation Section n=9	3	1

Table 4.5 Median responses & ranges, Library Research Essay ETQ Question #1 by section.

The reader will recall from Chapter One that the Library Research Essay is the capstone paper of the course, for students were required to conduct individual library research to complete this essay. While table 4.5 shows the median response by section to ETQ Question #1, "*What did you think of the topic of this essay,*" table 4.6 shows the frequencies of these responses by section:

Library Research Essay	*Loved it*	*Liked it*	*So-so*	*Disliked it*	*Hated it*
Traditional Section n=10	0	5	3	1	1
Simulation Section n=9	0	3	5	1	0

Table 4.6 Response frequencies, Library Research Essay ETQ Question #1 by section.

In contrast to the evaluations of the Documented Essay, where the Simulation section's median rating was lower than the Traditional section's median response, these data indicate that the Traditional section had a more positive response to this assignment than did the members of the Simulation section. This is true in spite of the fact that one member of the Traditional section chose the most negative response category "I hated it" when asked to indicate his or her evaluation of the topic. Of the Traditional section respondents, 5:10 (50%) chose "I liked it," 3:10 (30%) chose "So-so," 1:10 (10%) chose "I disliked it," while 1:10 (10%) indicated that they "hated" the topic. The proportional breakdown of the Simulation section's responses is as follows: 3:9 (33%) responded with "I liked it"; 5:9 (55%) indicated their impression of the topic was "So-so"; and 1:9 (12%) indicated that they "disliked" the Library Research topic.

Excerpts from the Library Research Essay's ETQ Question #2 responses span a greater range of response values than those of the previous ETQ Question #2 responses. Again, their presentation will open with the most positive responses in the first text box, the subsequent text boxes moving down the scale towards the negative pole. To wit, the responses of those who indicated that they "liked" the Library Research Essays' topic:

> Student 104 (Traditional section)
> "It helped me learn about ordinances in the United States."
>
> Student 119 (Traditional section)
> "It gave me information on my rights...what I can do and what I can't do."

Student 129 (Traditional section)
"I think it is important as a citizen to comprehend city ordinances. You are unable to react when something happens without knowing about them."

Student 130 (Traditional section)
"I liked it because we were supposed to make an argument on [ideas] we accept and [ideas] we reject."

Student 160 (Traditional section)
"Because we had the freedom to choose our own ordinances."

Student 239 (Simulation section)
"It was an interesting topic."

Student 278 (Simulation section)
"I never knew about ordinances before. Now I understand [their] importance."

Student 289 (Simulation section)
"Well, I was not crazy for this topic, but I think that from the different city ordinances we found for this project we could learn from others' experiences. Perhaps one day we can really make them for our own town. Some of the city ordinances I found were interesting. I'd never thought about them before. It opened my mind in some ways."

Excerpts 4.8 Library Research Essay ETQ Question #2 Responses – Respondents who rated the essay topic "I liked it."

Next are the comments of those students who responded by indicating that their impressions of the topic were "So-so":

Student 105 (Traditional section)
"I would have preferred creating my own city codes for Muir Valley. I couldn't find what I liked in other city's codes."

Student 106 (Traditional section)
"This topic is not really relevant to me. I don't plan to stay in the U.S."

Student 157 (Traditional section)
"I learned something related to my field."

Student 250 (Simulation section)
"It wasn't exactly of great interest to me."

Student 255 (Simulation section)
"It wasn't my favorite topic, but it certainly gave me more knowledge about town planning."

Student 268 (Simulation section)
"The topic broadened my knowledge about city ordinances, but I wasn't excited by the topic."

Student 270 (Simulation section)
"City ordinances are an interesting topic. But since I feel bored with the community topic, I didn't find this project interesting anymore."

Student 299 (Simulation section)
"I found it difficult to find ordinances to reject. I had to do a lot of research in order to come up with a good essay."

Excerpts 4.9 Library Research Essay ETQ Question #2 Responses – Respondents who rated the essay topic "so-so."

Those students who selected "I disliked it" had the following to say about the topic:

Student 150 (Traditional section)
"I have no clear ideas about city ordinances."

Student 218 (Simulation section)
"I enjoyed reading and researching existing city codes, but it was very difficult for me to make an argument out of this topic."

Excerpts 4.10 Library Research Essay ETQ Question #2 Responses – Respondents who rated the essay topic "I disliked it."

While the most visceral response to the Library Research Essay topic came from the student who indicated she "hated it":

Student 110 (Traditional section)
"It was a lot of hard research and very time consuming. I was interested in the topic, but not being able to get into detail about the topic finally made me fed up with this topic—as well as Muir Valley!"

Excerpts 4.11 Library Research Essay ETQ Question #2 Responses – Respondents who rated the essay topic "I hated it."

These responses constitute four clusters, two positive and two negative. The first positive cluster (encompassing the comments of respondents #104, #119, #129, #239, #255, #268, #278 and #289) praised the topic as informative. While the largest cluster of the four identified, some of the responses in this category mark a shift in respondents' evaluations as compared to those of the previous essay assignments, here—for the first time—is a positive category that includes the comments of those who chose the middling ETQ Question #1 response "So-so." Of the three middling position respondents, two noted that while the Library Research Essay's topic was not particularly interesting to them, they did take something away from the exercise—knowledge about city ordinances. The other positive cluster, respondents #130 and #160 inclusive, noted an appreciation for the task itself on two levels: first, the autonomy to conduct independent research (as opposed to working under the strict controls exerted by both the Diagnostic and Documented Essays, where source materials were provided); and, second, the opportunity to make a case for an independently formed opinion rather than having to follow one of a number of limited resolutions available to the students in previous assignments.

Those students whose responses to ETQ Question #1 fell into the middling category "so-so" fell into three clusters. Students #105 and #299 indicated some frustration with the difficulties presented by the task. Meanwhile, respondents #250, #255, #268, and #270 commented as to having little to no interest in the topic as well as waning interest in town planning. Finally, the middling responses from students #106 and #157 questioned the relevance of the task.

The negative response clusters rejected the topic on two planes. The first group (students #110 and #218) indicated having struggled with the assignment's required tasks. Recall that completion of this essay necessitated not a little time-consuming library research. The Library Research Essay is the only project (following the course revisions) that required students to engage in such research efforts; readings and other supporting documents were provided for every other writing project that occurred over the duration of the course. These comments indicate varying degrees of frustration with the elemental component of this assignment—the library research itself. The second negative cluster (student #150 inclusive) indicates a fundamental lack of understanding of the topic. Here again, this information would prove incredibly valuable to a teacher interested in making certain all of his or her students were meaningfully engaged in the task at hand. This type of feedback is one promise of a localized, frequently-administered instrument like the ETQ.

Essay Topic Questionnaire #4: Final Exam Essay

The Final Exam Essay marked the last major assignment of the semester, and for those in the Simulation section it represented the most involved Simulation. These students spent the final three weeks of the semester working *in role* to produce not only a series of position papers on Oklahoma's corporate hog farm controversy, but also in preparation for a town hall meeting in which they were to debate the hog farm issue from their respective roles' points of view. Meanwhile, students enrolled in the Traditional section followed a more independent route to understanding the topic at hand and preparing for the final. Regardless of their enrollment section, the students were afforded the opportunity to use the same resource materials in preparation for their final essays. For both sections this projects' activities culminated in oral presentations: those in the Traditional section reported the results of the Questionnaire Essays while those in the Simulation curriculum presented a debate on corporate hog farms under the guise of the aforementioned town hall meeting. The instructors felt that this sharing of information and results between sections was the only way to ensure that every student had an equal footing going into the final exam.

Much to our disappointment, student responses to the Final Exam Essay ETQ question #1 ranked this assignment the lowest of all. A review of Tables 4.1 through 4.8 indicates that positive evaluations of essay topics presented in both variants of English 1033 waned over the duration of the semester. Indeed, by this, the final assignment of the semester, the Simulation section's median response to ETQ Question #1, 2.5, fell between "So-so," and "I disliked it." Unlike earlier administrations of this instrument, it was necessary for those students who actually wished to complete the instrument to return it after the close of the semester. In other words, and remember that all version of this instrument were completed on a voluntary basis, the 15 ETQs returned for this assignment were hand carried to either Gloria Pierce or me after the students were officially finished with the course. While I would have been happy to have had a greater number of returns, the 75% return rate is no mean feat when one considers the additional effort demanded by the administration of this instrument. The students' responsiveness would appear to indicate that they, too, had placed a value on this instrument and seized the opportunity to provide feedback, and went far beyond the 'call of duty' to do so.

Final Exam Essay ETQ Question #1	*Median Response*	*Range*
Traditional Section n=9	3	2
Simulation Section n=6	2.5	3

Table 4.7 Median responses & ranges, Final Exam Essay ETQ Question #1 by section.

Table 4.7 shows the median response by section to ETQ Question #1 while Table 4.8 shows the frequencies of the responses to ETQ Question #1 by section:

Final Exam Essay	*Loved it*	*Liked it*	*So-so*	*Disliked it*	*Hated it*
Traditional Section n=9	0	1	7	1	0
Simulation Section n=6	0	2	2	1	1

Table 4.8 Response frequencies, Final Exam Essay ETQ Question #1 by section.

Regardless of which of these two tables one reviews, it is immediately clear that the Final Exam Essay matched (with the Traditional section's median of 3) or bested (the Simulation section's median of 2.5) the lowest response values of the semester. Of the nine Traditional section respondents, only one (11%) noted a decidedly positive response while seven (78%) chose the middling response, and one (11%) indicated that they "disliked" the topic. The Simulation section's responses crossed a broader range of values with two of the six respondents (33%) choosing the positive response, two (33%) choosing the middling response, one (17%) indicating their "dislike" for the topic, and one (17%) choosing the most extreme negative response category in indicating their "hate" for the topic.

As with the previous ETQ Question #2 responses, excerpts from each response category appear below, beginning at the positive end of the scale and moving to the negative values. Discussion of the clustering of these comments will follow the excerpts. Here, then, is the first set of responses—those of the three students who indicated they "liked" the Final Exam Essay's topic:

> Student 160 (Traditional section)
> "Because we went out and collected the data & met people. [Later], we used their opinions in the essay."
>
> Student 218 (Simulation section)
> "[The visit to the hog farm] helped me to visualize what a hog farm looks like. This made it easy for me to start writing."
>
> Student 289 (Simulation section)
> "The topic of our final exam was specific. This made it easier for me to write the essay."

Excerpts 4.12 Final Exam Essay ETQ Question #2 Responses – Respondents who rated the essay topic "I liked it."

The largest number of this instrument's respondents chose the middling response "So-so.":

> Student 105 (Traditional section)
> "We've already written enough about hog farms."
>
> Student 106 (Traditional section)
> "[This topic was] not really relevant to my future plans [nor] to my personal interests."
>
> Student 110 (Traditional section)
> "[There was] a lot of compulsory citation and paraphrasing to do! The essay was already so difficult [without these requirements]. [There was] too little time for us to write [this] the most important essay."
>
> Student 119 (Traditional section)
> "I like the concept behind essays where the term 'controversy' builds the desire to seek the answers behind the topic [at hand], but hog farms as [the subject] really decreased my interest."

Student 129 (Traditional section)
"I did not expect to have to write more than one paper about the hog business. I am not [criticizing] the hog business itself, but I think there are many [other] issues to write about—so that people who did not write well on [this topic] are more likely to be interested in other topics."

Student 130 (Traditional section)
"Well, I wasn't too fond of it."

Student 151 (Traditional section)
"A lot of work!"

Student 255 (Simulation section)
"It was not relevant to my interests...it was good to learn about, though."

Student 299 (Simulation section)
"Hog farms [themselves] are a topic I dislike."

Excerpts 4.13 Final Exam Essay ETQ Question #2 Responses – Respondents who rated the essay topic "so-so."

Those who chose "I disliked it" offered the following remarks:

Student 157 (Traditional section)
"It was [hard to respond] because I am not a local resident."

Student 268 (Simulation section)
"[Hog farming] stinks even though we can make good money from it."

Excerpts 4.14 Final Exam Essay ETQ Question #2 Responses – Respondents who rated the essay topic "I disliked it."

While the respondent who indicated that he "hated" the Final Exam Essay's topic came to the following conclusion:

Student 239 (Simulation section)
"I do not like such topics—especially pigs!"

Excerpt 4.15 Final Exam Essay ETQ Question #2 Response – Respondent who rated the essay topic "I hated it."

The singular positive cluster (#160, #218 and #289 inclusive) praised the task: the first and second respondents indicating their enjoyment of this assignment's community contact opportunities; the third praising the Final Exam Essay's prompt.

The middling comment clusters were three. Respondents #110, #151, and #299 indicated that the task played a role in their responses. Meanwhile, respondents #105, #119, #129 and #130 indicated a lack of interest in the topic. The comments of students #105 and 129 have a particular cachet here and are in need of explanation. The reader will recall that students in the Traditional section wrote five essays over the course of the semester. Though excluded from consideration in this study (as it was not paired to an assignment in the Simulation section), the Questionnaire Essay was the extra essay in Traditional section's coursework. In completing this essay, the Traditional section students conducted a questionnaire-based survey of Stillwater residents; asking, in particular, whether or not the residents of OSU's hometown would be willing to see a corporate hog farm locate nearby. Students in the Traditional section, then, actually wrote two essays related to corporate hog farming. This not only explains the comments of students #105 and #129, but might also partially account for the lower rating—overall—of this assignment in comparison to the other essays.

The negative clusters center around perceptions of the assignment's relevance and remarks as to the respondents' lack of interest in the hog farming topic. Respondent #157 questioned the topic's relevance. Those who indicated a lack of interest in the topic (#239 and #268) constitute the final negative comment cluster.

It is both intriguing and disappointing that the respondents made no comments regarding their respective section's approach to the collection of background information & preparations for the writing of the final exam. The responses of those in the Simulation section (where such comments were anticipated) made no mention—neither positive nor negative—of the Simulation-based approach so tantamount to this essay assignment.

<u>The Essay Topic Questionnaires: Summing Up</u>

That responses to ETQ Question #1 became increasingly negative over the semester is disappointing. In presenting the entirety of the students' responses to ETQ Question #2 across all versions of the instrument, I have sought to offer direct insight into the respondents' waning attitudes toward the essay topics. Additionally, I have attempted to demonstrate the explanatory promise of combining approaches to data collection—that is to say, including both qualitative & quantitative data in such efforts. Before moving to a consideration of the Usefulness & Enjoyableness data, it is important to delve a bit further into the comment clusters that emerged in the ETQ Question #2 data.

Table 4.9 summarizes positive responses to the essay in question (as indicated by choice of ETQ Question #1 descriptor) along with the comment clusters these respondents' responses to ETQ Question #2 fell into:

Assignment	Task (positive assessment)	Interesting/Informative
Diagnostic Essay n=13 (/20)	106, 110, 119, 150, 160, 255, 268, 270, 278, 299	151, 239, 250
Documented Essay n=9 (/20)	**105**, 106, **130**, 151	**104**, 239, 268, 270, 299
Library Research Essay n=8 (/19)	130, **160**, **289**	104, **119**, **129**, 239, **278**
Final Exam Essay n=3 (/15)	**160**, **218**, 289	

Table 4.9 Positive comment clusters by assignment by participant.

Table 4.10 summarizes neutral responses to the essay in question (as indicated by choice of ETQ Question #1 descriptor) along with the comment clusters of these responses to ETQ Question #2:

Assignment	Task	Interesting or Informative	Relevance
Diagnostic Essay n=7 (/20)	104, 129, 130, 157, 218, 289	105	n/a
Documented Essay n=9 (/20)	**110**, **119**, 289	129, **150**, **160**, **250**, **255**	n/a

Library Research Essay n=8 (/19)	**105, 299**	250, 255, **268, 270**	106, 157
Final Exam Essay n=9 (/15)	105, **110, 119, 151**, 299	**129, 130**	106, 255

Table 4.10 Neutral comment clusters by assignment by participant.

Table 4.11 summarizes negative responses to the essay in question (as indicated by choice of ETQ Question #1 descriptor) along with the comment clusters these respondents' responses to ETQ Question #2 fell into:

Assignment	Task (negative assessment)	Neither Interesting nor Informative	Relevance
Diagnostic Essay n=0 (/20)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Documented Essay n=2 (/20)	**218**	**157**	n/a
Library Research Essay n=3 (/19)	**110, 150**, 218	n/a	n/a
Final Exam Essay n=3 (/15)	n/a	**239, 268**	**157**

Table 4.11 Negative comment clusters by assignment by participant.

In Tables 4.9, 4.10, and 4.11 those students whose responses to ETQ Question #1 changed response categories (positive, neutral, negative) between adjacent assignments are identified in bold text. This means of representing the data reveals a number of interesting results. First, this approach makes it possible to track individuals' responses to the various essay topics. We see, for example, that student #110 indicated a positive response to the first and last essays of the semester (the Diagnostic and Final Exam Essays, respectively) while finding fault with, and consequently judging negatively, the

Documented and Library Research Essays. Second, these data reveal the waxing and waning of individuals' responses over the duration of the semester. Not a single student's responses stayed in either category—positive or negative—across the measured assignments. In other words, responses crossing all three categories (positive, neutral and negative) were logged for each student in each section over the duration of the semester. That student attitudes proved changeable across assignments may be taken as a sign of the participants' trust in the confidentiality of the information they were providing; for, as the data indicate, none of the students responded to the ETQs with arbitrarily positive (or negative) responses. I would like to expand the first of these observations so as to demonstrate the value of this instrument's dual qualitative/quantitative approach.

As indicated earlier, the responses of student #110 showed great variation over the course of the semester. Her ETQ Question #1 evaluations, by assignment, were:

Essay Assignment	ETQ Question #1 Response & Value
Diagnostic Essay	"I liked it" (4)
Documented Essay	"so-so" (3)
Library Research Essay	"I hated it" (1)
Final Exam Essay	"so-so" (3)

Table 4.12: Individual student responses to ETQ Question #1 by assignment, student #110

A review of this student's responses to ETQ Question #2 show both consistencies and contradictions. For example, with the Diagnostic Essay, there is complaint about the amount of time given for the assignment to be completed. Despite this concern, however, the student seems to have been pleased with the difficulty level of the task. In commenting on the Documented Essay, criticisms as to the demanding nature of the assignment make the student's overall response somewhat ambiguous—we again have the complaint about the lack of time, but little in the way of explanation as to why the choice here was "so-so." The Library Research response is where the student's continued frustration with the English 1033's assignments reaches its peak. It should be noted that the student indicates interest in the topic, but anger with not having had what she felt was sufficient time to complete the assignment. It is in the closing words of this comment that the contradictions in her reaction appear: "not being able to get into detail about the topic finally made me fed up with this topic—as well as Muir Valley!" Though interested, she is frustrated with having had to rein that interest in for the necessities of time. Student #110's response to the Final Exam Essay once again evidences frustration with the task at hand, for here she identifies the assignment's "compulsory citation and paraphrasing", along with time restrictions, as the cause for her response. Here, however, we can see that the topic must have piqued her interest—indeed, a balance must have been struck—for her overall assessment of the instrument ("so-so") marks a radical departure from the "I hated it" ranking of the previous assignment while her prose complaints remain essentially the same across these assignments.

The comments of student #268 also show both trends and contradictions, and here the bottom falls out (if you will) in the responses over the course of the semester. A review of #268's response to ETQ Question #2 for the Diagnostic Essay quickly reveals why this researcher was eager to get this respondent's comments on the following ETQs.

Essay Assignment	ETQ Question #1 Response & Value
Diagnostic Essay	"I liked it" (4)
Documented Essay	"I liked it" (4)

Library Research Essay	"so-so" (3)
Final Exam Essay	"I disliked it" (2)

Table 4.13: Individual student responses to ETQ Question #1 by assignment, student #268

Here was a student who appeared to have identified with and truly appreciated the revised curriculum materials. Indeed, this response went so far as to demonstrate the respondent's pleasure in the task's authenticity (though the term is not present, the notion is certainly there)! The student's response to the Documented Essay was even more stunning. Here the Simulation materials had actually gone so far as to bring about an epiphany in the student's mind as to their educational goals. While middling in its judgement, the student's response to the Library Research Essay was certainly understandable, though perhaps suspect as concerns his earlier remarks about the value of authentic tasks. His final response, where he indicates having "disliked" the topic is decidedly blunt. While this is disappointing from the perspective of this student's earlier comments, it also demonstrates a valuable lesson: as the interest level fell so, too, did interest in providing feedback.

In contrast to students #110 and #268, student #289 warmed to the essay topics over the course of the semester:

Essay Assignment	ETQ Question #1 Response & Value
Diagnostic Essay	"so-so" (3)
Documented Essay	"so-so" (3)
Library Research Essay	"I liked it" (4)
Final Exam Essay	"I liked it" (4)

Table 4.14: Individual student responses to ETQ Question #1 by assignment, student #289

In responding to the Diagnostic Essay, this student chose the middling response "so-so" while questioning the task at hand...and suggesting an alternative approach. With the

Library Research Essay, the student once again chose the middling response and offering a statement as to how this assignment might have been adjusted to better fit her preferences. Student #289's response to the Library Research Essay indicates a positive response as well as her reason for it: here the task (especially the sharing of information that constituted the Simulation approach to this assignment was enjoyed. At last, her response to the Final Exam Essay once again demonstrates her reason for choosing a positive response category. It would appear that the events and activities that led to the completion of this essay proved helpful to this student. As the Simulation portion of the curriculum revision came into greater play, this student's responses did become increasingly positive.

Nevertheless, tables 4.9 through 4.11 clearly reinforce the fact that positive responses to the curriculum were not maintained over the length of the semester. At the surface level this might be taken as a failure in terms of the goals behind the curriculum development effort that fueled this study in the first place. This interpretation would be rash. First, and here I return to the difficulties implicit in qualitative data, these results were drawn from a small sample of individuals—each with their own expectations and prejudices regarding writing, teaching, and the multitude of other variables that combine to form that curious admixture we refer to as *attitudes*. While the comment clusters attempt to provide some accounting for the attitudes that lead to the responses collected herein, these are decidedly broad strokes in a tableaux of minutiae. Put differently, these *trends* are deep wells only just tapped. Second, while it would be nice to think that we materials designers née teachers could consistently please our consumers[viii], this expectation—and here we again return to the difficulties presented by the construct *attitude*—is folly. Perhaps it is best that we console ourselves with the knowledge that at no point do more than two out of ten students express overtly negative responses to the topics in question. Indeed, it is the middling, neutral responses which (as numerous excerpts above indicate), while constituting the median responses, mix both praise and criticism—but balance such commentary by the selection of the neutral response category. It becomes clear that neither we, nor our students, know *all* the answers; if we (or they) did, the days of educational experimentation would have come to an end and education itself would be nothing more than using the most efficient machinations to input data (but only that data judged appropriate!) into our students' minds. The joy of learning—be it the learning of the teacher or the student—would be lost. Instruments like the ETQ continue the promise of education—inquiry leading to new understanding while learning's horizon continues to expand.

The ETQs did prove valuable in another respect. The reader will recollect that I referred to both the ETQs and the U&EQs as "local" instruments. As both were administered immediately after the completion of a major assignment, we teachers had frequent, running feedback as to the students' responses to the class and the coursework. The ETQs proved especially timely. Recall that the instrument typically contained six to eight additional questions (beyond ETQ Questions #1 and #2). These questions sought more focused responses to various features of the assignments (questions about supplemental materials, ideas for improvement, etc.). While the responses to these questions were not included in this study, they did aid both the instructors and the students. On a number of occasions, for instance, these responses led us to realize that some of our students had not fully grasped parts of the tasks or the assignments. We were thus able to fine-tune our later teaching to reflect and redress these gaps. Given that this commentary appeared only on the questionnaires (in other words the students did not raise theses issues in conversation or office hours despite ample opportunity to do so), we might have been less successful in answering our students' needs without the frequent feedback opportunities the ETQs provided. In opening another channel with our students, we were able to go further in responding to their needs—increasing our level of accountability while expanding the students' chances to learn the material.

The U & E Questionnaires: More Divergences

As noted in Chapter Three, the Usefulness & Enjoyableness Questionnaires marked additional attempts to elicit student responses to essay topics. Student responses as to the enjoyableness and the usefulness of a given assignment were compared between sections on an assignment by assignment basis using the Mann-Whitney non-parametric test. The results of these comparisons are shown in the summative Tables 4.11 and 4.12, where *n.s.* indicates no significant difference between each group's responses:

Assignment	Enjoyment: Simulation (median response)	Enjoyment: Traditional (median response)	Mann-Whitney
Documented	**4**	**4**	**n.s.**
Library Research	**5**	**5**	**n.s.**
Final Exam	**5**	**4**	**p<.05**

Table 4.15: Reported enjoyableness by section & essay assignment.

Assignment	Usefulness: Simulation (median response)	Usefulness: Traditional (median response)	Mann-Whitney
Documented	5	4.5	n.s.
Library Research	5	5	n.s.
Final Exam	5	3.5	p<.05

Table 4.16: Reported usefulness by section & essay assignment.

For purposes of detailed comparison, Tables 4.13-4.15 show the enjoyableness response frequencies by assignment by section, while Tables 4.16-4.18 detail the usefulness response frequencies by assignment by section:

Enjoyableness Frequencies: Documented Essay	enjoyable 7	(6)	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	unenjoyable 1
Traditional Section n=58	1	6	16	24	8	3	0
Simulation Section n=48	2	3	16	17	7	3	0

Table 4.17: Enjoyableness response frequencies by assignment by section, Documented Essay.

Enjoyableness Frequencies: Library Research Essay	enjoyable 7	(6)	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	unenjoyable 1
Traditional Section n=60	9	14	11	16	4	0	6
Simulation Section n=53	6	11	13	9	6	8	0

Table 4.18: Enjoyableness response frequencies by assignment by section, Library Research Essay.

Enjoyableness Frequencies: Final Exam Essay	enjoyable 7	(6)	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	unenjoyable 1
Traditional Section n=54	0	4	12	23	10	5	0
Simulation Section n=36	7	8	10	6	5	0	0

Table 4.19: Enjoyableness response frequencies by assignment by section, Final Exam Essay.

Usefulness Frequencies: Documented Essay	useful 7	(6)	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	useless 1
Traditional Section n=44	1	8	13	9	7	5	1
Simulation Section n=32	3	1	14	6	2	4	2

Table 4.20: Usefulness response frequencies by assignment by section, Documented Essay.

Usefulness Frequencies: Library Research Essay	useful 7	(6)	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	useless 1
Traditional Section n=40	3	13	5	7	4	4	4
Simulation Section n=36	1	8	11	10	4	2	0

Table 4.21: Usefulness response frequencies by assignment by section, Library Research Essay.

Usefulness Frequencies: Final Exam Essay	useful 7	(6)	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	useless 1
Traditional Section n=36	0	1	4	13	8	8	2
Simulation Section n=23	4	4	6	6	2	0	1

Table 4.22: Usefulness response frequencies by assignment by section, Final Exam Essay.

It is interesting to note that, like the qualitative data elicited by the ETQs, the students' responses to the assignments diverge the most where the curricular approaches are the most discrete. Furthermore, whether we are discussing student perceptions of the assignments' usefulness or enjoyableness[ix], those in the Simulation section rated the most divergent assignment (the Final Exam Essay) more positively than did the students enrolled in the Traditional section. That these results are statistically significant is remarkable considering the sample size (a sample size made even smaller by the fact that the Final Exam U&EQs were subject to the same timing difficulties as the Final Exam Essay ETQ).

Taken at face value, the usefulness & enjoyableness data appear to contradict the results of the ETQs. Where students in the Simulation section noted a negative attitude towards the Final Exam Essay on their ETQs, their Final Exam Essay U&EQs show a more positive response, overall, than do those of the Traditional section.

One possible explanation for this may lie in what I'll refer to as the "vegetables are good for you" paradox. Allow me to explain. Recall that ETQ question #1 asked respondents to provide only their *overall* reaction to the essay topic in question. In the responses to question #1, then, we are privy to unmediated reactions. As described above, respondents did have the opportunity to provide additional details in ETQ Question #2. A trend emerges in the ETQ Question #2 responses—as the curriculum diverges so, too, do the reactions. Where do vegetables fit in here? It is commonplace for children to reject vegetables outright (and without tasting them) based on the fact that a parent has indicated that said vegetables are "good for you." Only later, and probably much to the frustration of the well-intentioned parent, does the child actually try the vegetable and find that he or she actually likes it, perhaps even demanding the newfound delicacy with exasperating frequency. While I will be the first to admit that this is merely hopeful speculation, it could be that the simulation-based approach to data collection and prewriting helped to create an environment in which the Simulation students became more invested in the topic than those students who followed the more Traditional, non-Simulation approach to the prewriting activities. Thus the vegetables—the Simulation activities—despite their *topics* (against which the students railed as evidenced in responses to the Final Exam ETQ's Questions #1 and #2) may have proved helpful, and in the end inspirational, despite the students' protestations. This increase in the level of the Simulation students' sense of investment with the tasks and topics at the point of the greatest divergence of the two curriculum approaches *might* explain the increasing usefulness & enjoyableness values in the face of decreasing engagement (as indicated in the ETQ data) with said assignments' topics.

This "vegetables are good for you" comparison concludes that a relationship between evaluations of an essay's topic (as quantified by responses to ETQ Question #1) and evaluations of enjoyableness and usefulness (as measured by the U&EQs) need not exist. Indeed, there is no reason a positive evaluation of a *topic* should have any relationship with measures of usefulness and enjoyableness. Indeed, if the instruments were measuring the same thing the rationale for doing *both* would be suspect. Therefore, I am left to conclude that declining assessments of the essay topics (the ETQ results) are related neither to student assessments of the usefulness nor of the enjoyableness of the self-same essay assignments. This conclusion reveals the multi-faceted nature of the construct *attitude*; demonstrating the importance not only of allowing the data to speak for themselves (as it were), but also allowing them to do so through a variety of instruments.

That statistically significant results as to the sections' disparate responses to the Final Exam Essay were revealed borders on the remarkable when we consider the small size of the queried sample. On both accounts, usefulness & enjoyableness, the Simulation section expressed a preference for the Final Exam Essay as compared to the Traditional section. The implications of these results on the evaluation of these data are both local and global. On the local level, that this instrument revealed a difference between the sections' responses to the curricula is a sign of the value of conducting on-going, intensive research into student reactions to instructional efforts. Here the Simulation section told us that our efforts in revising the curriculum were not wasted. On a larger scale, if indeed it could be shown that increases in students' perceptions of an assignment's usefulness and enjoyableness correlated to effort put into said coursework, or output in terms of quality, then we could thank instruments like the U&EQs for leading us closer to success in our instructional efforts. What's more, such results would also indicate that less-conventional approaches like the use of Simulations in the writing classroom were worthy of continued, broader development.

Writing Attitude Questionnaires

Unlike the ETQs and UE&Qs, the Writing Attitude Questionnaires were administered in an attempt to identify global changes in student attitudes. Students completed two duplicate versions of the instrument: the first on the second day of class (to serve as the benchmark to measure any changes in attitude); the second on the final day of regular classes (that is to say, before the students began drafting the Final Exam Essay). The results of the WAQ were tested in two ways. In an effort to identify any *intra-section* changes in attitudes, each sections' pre- and post-course scores were analyzed through the use of the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Confidence Interval (Snedecor & Cochran, 1967, p. 128). In the Traditional section (n=11) while (n=9) in the Simulation section for both administrations of this instrument. Tables 4.22 & 4.23 present the results of these question-by-question analyses:

Question #	pre-course median response	post-course median response	difference index (post – pre)	**significance (Wilcoxon Signed Rank)**
1	2	2	0	n.s.
2	4	4	0	n.s.
3	2	2	0	n.s.
4	4	4	0	n.s.
5	2	2	0	n.s.
6	2	2	0	n.s.
7	2	2	0	n.s.
8	2	2	0	n.s.
9	2	2	0	n.s.
10	4	4	0	n.s.
11	3	3	0	n.s.
12	3	3	0	n.s.
13	3	3	0	n.s.
14	4	4	0	n.s.
15	2	2	0	n.s.
16	3	2	-1	n.s.
17	4	4	0	n.s.
18	3	3	0	n.s.
19	2	2	0	n.s.
20	2	2	0	n.s.
21	2	2	0	n.s.
22	2	3	1	n.s.
23	2	2	0	n.s.
24	3	2	-1	n.s.
25	3	3	0	n.s.
26	3	4	1	n.s.
27	4	4	0	n.s.
28	4	4	0	n.s.
29	3	3	0	n.s.
30	3	3	0	n.s.
31	3	3	0	n.s.
32	3	4	1	n.s.
33	2	2	0	n.s.
34	2	2	0	n.s.
35	2	2	0	n.s.
36	4	4	0	n.s.

37	2	2	0	n.s.
38	3	3	0	n.s.
39	2	2	0	n.s.
40	2	2	0	n.s.
41	2	2	0	n.s.
42	1	2	1	n.s.
43	2	2	0	n.s.
44	4	3	-1	n.s.
45	1	1	0	n.s.
46	2	2	0	n.s.
47	2	2	0	n.s.
48	3	2	-1	n.s.
49	4	4	0	n.s.
50	4	4	0	n.s.
51	3	2	-1	n.s.
52	2	2	0	n.s.
53	2	2	0	n.s.
54	3	3	0	n.s.
55	4	4	0	n.s.
56	2	2	0	n.s.
57	3	3	0	n.s.
58	2	2	0	n.s.
59	3	3	0	n.s.
60	3	4	1	n.s.
61	4	3	-1	n.s.
62	2	3	1	n.s.
63	2	2	0	n.s.
64	4	4	0	n.s.
65	4	4	0	n.s.
66	3	3	0	n.s.
67	2	2	0	n.s.
68	2	2	0	n.s.
69	2	2	0	n.s.

Table 4.23: Intra-sectional WAQ difference indices: Traditional section (questions 1-69)

WAQ Question #	pre-course median response	post-course median response	difference index (post – pre)	**significance (Wilcoxon Signed Rank)**
1	2	2	0	n.s.
2	2	3	1	n.s.
3	2	2	0	n.s.
4	4	4	0	n.s.
5	2	2	0	n.s.
6	1	1	0	n.s.
7	2	1	-1	n.s.
8	2	2	0	n.s.
9	2	2	0	n.s.

10	4	4	0	n.s.
11	2	2	0	n.s.
12	2	3	1	n.s.
13	2	2	0	n.s.
14	4	4	0	n.s.
15	2	2	0	n.s.
16	2	2	0	n.s.
17	4	4	0	n.s.
18	3	3	0	n.s.
19	2	2	0	n.s.
20	2	2	0	n.s.
21	2	2	0	n.s.
22	2	2	0	n.s.
23	2	2	0	n.s.
24	2	2	0	n.s.
25	3	2	-1	n.s.
26	4	4	0	n.s.
27	4	4	0	n.s.
28	3	4	1	n.s.
29	3	3	0	n.s.
30	2	3	1	n.s.
31	2	2	0	n.s.
32	2	3	1	n.s.
33	2	2	0	n.s.
34	2	2	0	n.s.
35	2	1	-1	n.s.
36	3	4	1	n.s.
37	3	2	-1	n.s.
38	4	4	0	n.s.
39	2	2	0	n.s.
40	2	2	0	n.s.
41	2	3	1	n.s.
42	1	2	1	n.s.
43	3	3	0	n.s.
44	4	4	0	n.s.
45	2	2	0	n.s.
46	2	2	0	n.s.
47	2	2	0	n.s.
48	2	2	0	n.s.
49	4	4	0	n.s.
50	4	4	0	n.s.
51	2	2	0	n.s.
52	1	2	1	n.s.
53	2	2	0	n.s.
54	3	3	0	n.s.
55	4	4	0	n.s.

56	1	2	1	n.s.
57	3	2	-1	n.s.
58	2	2	0	n.s.
59	2	2	0	n.s.
60	4	4	0	n.s.
61	4	4	0	n.s.
62	3	3	0	n.s.
63	2	2	0	n.s.
64	4	4	0	n.s.
65	3	3	0	n.s.
66	2	3	1	n.s.
67	2	2	0	n.s.
68	2	2	0	n.s.
69	2	2	0	n.s.

Table 4.24: Intra-sectional WAQ difference indices: Simulation section (questions 1-69)

The reader will doubtlessly note that none of the questions in either section returned significant differences between the median pre- and post-course responses. Thus, no statistically significant change in student attitudes between administrations and within sections was revealed by this instrument.

As the difference indices show, however, there was some variation in responses within sections. Whether we consider the responses of the Traditional or the Simulation sections, these differences do not appear to pattern in any meaningful way. Consider, for example, those responses from the Traditional section which demonstrated changes across the pre- and post-course administrations:[x]

Item #	Item Text	Median Response (pre-course)	Median Response (post-course)
16	"Writing takes talent"	Undecided (3)	Agree (2)
24	"I know what makes a good writer"	Undecided (3)	Agree (2)
32	"I like to write essays in my native language"	Undecided (3)	Disagree (4)
42	"Writing requires thinking"	Strongly agree (1)	Agree (2)

44	"I can recognize subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent errors in my own writing"	Disagree (4)	Undecided (3)
48	"I write and re-write papers until they are perfect"	Undecided (3)	Agree (2)
51	"A writing program can begin at any grade level"	Undecided (3)	Agree (2)
60	"I hate writing in English"	Undecided (3)	Disagree (4)
61	"I hate writing in my native language"	Disagree (4)	Undecided (3)
62	"I have difficulties finding and using the correct words when I write"	Agree (2)	Undecided (3)

Table 4.25: WAQ items returning differences across administrations, Traditional section.

While some of these responses may be interpreted as showing what an instructor would consider to be positive changes in the students' awarenesses of writing (#24, #44, #60, and #62), others show decidedly negative responses (again, negative from the perspective of the writing instructor) including items #16, #32, #48, and #61. The change in item #24, for instance, might be interpreted as a positive outcome of the course: the students have gained an awareness of and an appreciation for the craft of writing. Item #44 would appear to show that the students were moving towards an awareness of two of the stickiest grammar points language learners face. I say "moving towards an awareness" here because the ambiguous response 'undecided' does not lead me to the conclusion that the students are entirely confident in their abilities to ferret-out the grammar errors in question. The change in response to item #60 would appear to show that the respondents' attitudes towards writing in English became less ambiguous and more positive over the duration of the course; this is also the case with the change in responses to item #62, where it would appear that student responses are moving toward the positive end of the scale.

In contrast, the responses to questions #16, #48 and #61 run counter to what a teaching instructor might hope would result from their efforts. Question #16 is a bit fatalist. Here students who were uncertain at the outset decided that yes, indeed, writing takes talent. Such a conclusion does not bode well for instructional efforts, given that talents are traits, not skills. Responses to question #48 are also not entirely appealing from an instructional standpoint; here we have post-course responses seemingly indicating that the students might be willing to allow themselves to be so caught up with the notion of achieving perfection that they might never actually complete a writing project. One of the imperatives of the multiple-draft/multiple-revisions theory of writing instruction is that progress occurs in stages and that frequent feedback is essential. If unwilling to submit their work frequently students are, in effect, opting out of the instructional paradigm and therefore short-circuiting our instructional efforts at their roots. Finally, if a positive correlation could be shown to exist between attitudes towards writing in one's native language and one's second language (a notion that is intuitively appealing *albeit unproved*), then the responses to questions #32 and #61 would again bode poorly as to these students' attitudes towards writing.

The changes in the responses to questions #42 and #51 are inscrutable. We would, of course, hope that our students could agree with the notion that writing requires thinking (as expressed in question #42). The change here is within positive response categories (from "strongly agree" to "agree") and of no particular concern other than the fact that its meaning is decidedly unclear. The same might be said about question #51, though the change here might indicate that students placed some value on writing instruction. Again, as with all of the commentary in this section, these *suggestions* are just that—speculative and subject to wholly different (and essentially unlimited) interpretation. This, of course, is a weakness of quantitative data in decoding qualitative notions like affect.

Submitted to the same scrutiny, the difference indices of the Simulation section's responses also fail to pattern in any large sense. One comes to the conclusion that these items are discrete (as they were designed to be), and that little should be read into their results. To wit:

Item #	Item Text	Median Response (pre-course)	Median Response (post-course)
2	"Great writers are born, not taught"	Agree (2)	Undecided (3)
7	"A writer must like to write"	Agree (2)	Undecided (3)
12	"I often read (in my native language) for pleasure"	Undecided (3)	Agree (2)
25	"I am confident when asked to read and evaluate another person's writing"	Undecided (3)	Agree (2)
30	"I like to write short stories in my native language"	Agree (2)	Undecided (3)
32	"I like to write essays in my native language"	Agree (2)	Undecided (3)
35	"Writing helps me to explore my own opinions"	Agree (2)	Strongly agree (1)
37	"Research writing is not my strongest point"	Undecided (3)	Agree (2)
41	"There should be a stronger emphasis on writing essay answers to examinations"	Agree (2)	Undecided (3)
42	"Writing requires thinking"	Strongly Agree (1)	Agree (2)

52	"No two writers are alike"	Strongly Agree (1)	Agree (2)
56	"I need to develop professional writing skills"	Strongly Agree (1)	Agree (2)
57	"The writers I've read are role models for me"	Strongly Agree (1)	Agree (2)
68	"I can encourage my classmates to write better"	Agree (2)	Undecided (3)

Table 4.26: WAQ items returning differences across administrations, Simulation section.

Considering these responses one-by-one, the changing results of question #2 might give an instructor hope that here the students were willing to give some credit to the relevance of writing instruction. The change in responses to item #7, however, would seem to place an additional burden on anyone looking ahead to a writing task. The changes in item #12 could be interpreted as possibly positive if it could be demonstrated that those who enjoy reading in their first language also enjoy reading in their second language, for it has been shown that active readers tend also to be good writers—my interpretation, however, requires a series of steps (perhaps 'leaps of faith' is a better moniker here) not revealed by these data sets. Such leaps are also necessary in discussing respondents' reactions to questions #30 and #32. Here again, if we could demonstrate a connection between first language use preferences we might be on to something. Unfortunately, this conclusion might lead us in the negative direction, for on both #30 and #32, the students' responses move out of the positive range and into the middling category. Taken at face value, the shift in responses to question #25 would suggest that we may have succeeded in helping these students develop a degree of confidence in their abilities to critique the writing of others. Unfortunately, the change in responses to #68 presents an immediate challenge this conclusion. That the students showed a positive shift in their interpretations of question #35 is interesting, and may reflect the fact that students in English 1033 do much in terms of identifying and justifying their own opinions. These efforts are—by definition—given particular emphasis in the Simulation curriculum, so perhaps our curriculum revisions struck a chord here. This chord goes flat in the next response that showed a pre- and post-course difference: item #37. If, indeed, the Simulation students had perceived gains in their abilities they might have answered this item differently. Just as with the Traditional section data, the responses to question #42 here are nothing short of a mystery. The same may be said about responses to #52. Question #56 shows a reaction we might interpret as negative for, if nothing else, because lack of agreement with such assertions puts us—as purveyors of writing instruction—at risk. Item #57 is intriguing, perhaps showing that the students were more amenable to the suggestion that they consider the published works as models for their own writing efforts. In sum, we have very little in the way of consistent commentary here. What's more, my interpretations of these data are only meant to suggest possible trends, and may be nothing more than sometimes hopeful, sometimes sorrowful, conjecture.

In order to test for differences in attitudes on an inter-sectional basis, pre- and post-course WAQ responses were compared across sections via the Mann-Whitney test (Snedecor & Cochran, p. 130). Again, no change in attitudes was found in either section. Furthermore, neither section's attitude towards writing showed any change as compared to the other section's responses. Based upon these results, no clear preference (as expressed in more positive responses to writing on the part of a given section) was demonstrated as to either of the curricular approaches to English 1033. While the small size of the queried sample does not make these results completely surprising, the results (or lack thereof) are disappointing. Nevertheless, a number of lessons can be derived from this experience.

Summing the Analyses: Promises and Pitfalls

Despite all the difficulties that come with interpreting them, qualitative data such as the ETQ responses are promising in the details such instruments elicit. A review of the last few pages of this chapter will quickly reveal that a curriculum cannot be fully captured through raw statistics. Students and teachers work together to negotiate meanings, set goals, and perhaps even to provide inspiration (and, at times, exasperation) for one another. These exchanges are not wholly quantifiable. While lacking the cut-and-dried nature of quantitative analyses, instruments like the ETQs capture vital aspects of the learning environment that might otherwise go untapped. No, the data do not behave themselves and, yes, their interpretations are decidedly subjective and situational. Nonetheless, and as demonstrated above, we can learn from them. Analysis of the ETQ data shows, for instance, that we instructors might have given further consideration to the notion of theme fatigue. While we had anticipated some challenge in maintaining student interest in Muir Valley as an overarching theme, the ETQs show that a loss of enthusiasm over time was present despite our efforts to differentiate the assignments' relationships within the larger construct. While only one student voices a direct attack on Muir Valley as a theme, others (in the Traditional section, where the topic was covered twice) mention mounting frustration as hog farming appears on not one, but two major assignments. It was also surprising to note that at just the point where the curriculum (be it the Traditional or the Simulation approach) allowed the students the freedom they had previously clamored for,[xi] student attitudes became decidedly more negative (as measured by the ETQ). A number of responses to both the Diagnostic and Documented Essays reveal that some students felt frustrated having to write within the strict confines of those assignments. The Library Research Essay loosened those confines and consequently placed an extra burden on the students in that they are responsible for generating their own source materials. The result, in a nutshell, was more work for the students. Many of the Library Research Essay's ETQ demonstrated this contradiction...as well as the waning evaluations of the assignment that followed. While the WAQs could, conceivably, have reflected these shifts, they did not. Without localized, qualitative instruments like the ETQs, such findings would have been missed.

An additional benefit of instruments like the ETQs lies in the timeliness of their results. As our students became more comfortable with the notion of critiquing the assignments with versions of this instrument, the length and detail of comments increased. As indicated earlier, we instructors found the ETQ responses helpful in identifying lessons and concepts that were not yet clear to the students. Thus, we were able to tailor our teaching efforts to reflect—and resolve—student misapprehensions. If we agree with the contention that teachers need to be reflective in their approaches to teaching, the value of such instruments becomes clear.

The results of the Usefulness & Enjoyableness Questionnaires, as indicated above, offer a counterpoint to the results of the Essay Topic Questionnaires. Recall that the ETQs focused their queries as to the respondents' reactions to the topics they were asked to consider. The U&EQs did not go into such fine detail. They queried the students' overall reactions to the individual assignments. These reactions, doubtlessly, incorporated more than just the students' responses to the topics in question.

Unfortunately, the instrument does not ask respondents to explain their responses. As a consequence we are left with overall impressions, but little in the way of explanation. Nevertheless, the U&EQs did show that statistically significant differences in the ratings of usefulness and enjoyableness existed between sections. Those students enrolled in the Simulation section signaled greater engagement with the curriculum at the point where a full-scale simulation came into play. This marks a success in our efforts to revise the curriculum, a success that needs to be followed up with additional studies to delve further into student responses to the simulations-based approach.

In conclusion, a few words about the Writing Attitude Questionnaires and what they fail to reveal. I had expected to find that attitudes toward writing would show a positive change among both groups, but at a more pronounced rate for the Simulation section. The results show no such increases. Indeed, no attitudinal change was reflected in the responses to any of the instrument's 69 questions within or between sections. Like the Usefulness & Enjoyableness Questionnaires, the Writing Attitude Questionnaires demanded simple, scaled responses. Again, we have nothing in the way of explanation from the students as to their responses. Perhaps if they were informed by something in the way of commentary the results from this instrument (or, indeed, the lack of results) would be less disappointing. In any event, this experiment with its dual approach to the collection of data, through both qualitative and quantitative means, has shown the weaknesses of both. Here lie the pitfalls.

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[i] Recall that the Questionnaire Essay's ETQ was excluded for lack of said data from both sections.
[ii] Note, however, that 'completion' was here defined as returning an ETQ with each question answered. The length/depth of answers varied widely.
[iii] ETQ Question #1 being the sole quantitative item on the instrument.
[iv] My plans to "identify trends," for example.
[v] In their entirety albeit edited so as to remove grammatical errors. Edited portions are identified by brackets [ ].

[vi] Excluding the Questionnaire Essay, which was completed by members of the Traditional section only.

[vii] For all versions of the ETQ, question #1 responses were assigned numerical equivalents. "Loved it" scored 5, "Liked it" scored 4, "So-so" scored 3, "Disliked it" scored 2, and "Hated it" scored 1. Medians were calculated using these numerical equivalents.

[viii] To say nothing of helping them all to learn with the same degrees of success.

[ix] And recall that these attributes were shown to be related but statistically discrete in Chapter Three.

[x] The reader is reminded that these differences were not statistically significant. In addition, given the format of the instrument, any interpretations I offer are speculative in nature.

[xi] The Library Research Essay, where students not only defined their arguments individually, but also conducted their own research.

CONCLUSION

At the outset of this report I indicated that the study upon which it is based had two objectives. The first was to provide a theory-based exploration of and explanation for the curriculum revisions recently applied to Oklahoma State University's second semester international composition course, English 1033. These curriculum revisions were enacted with an eye to encouraging student investment in the course's essay topics as well as increasing the authenticity of the writing tasks English 1033 students were (and are) being asked to complete. Chapter One not only provides background as to the emergence of the communicative language teaching movement within ESL, but also demonstrates that the current, simulation-based English 1033 is more successful in meeting CLT's tenets than previous incarnations of the course. Chapter One closes with a detailed comparison of two approaches to the teaching of English 1033 in an effort to delimit, on an assignment by assignment basis, how the Simulation curriculum reflects current principles of communicative language teaching.

Chapter Two broaches the second objective of this study. Here we find a discussion of the controversy surrounding the import of students' motivations and attitudes in the language learning process. Currently the dominant paradigm in second language instruction, CLT, mandates that teachers not only assess but also reflect student-defined needs in planning curricula. The resultant curriculum, responsive to and representative of the students' quotidian needs (be they academic or otherwise), is said to be *authentic*. CLT's mandate that we shape curricula with an eye to this authenticity makes student feedback integral to our instructional efforts. Part and parcel of this feedback are student motivations and attitudes. As Chapter Two demonstrates, efforts to delimit these have met with continued debate—nearly every commentator has called for additional research in this area. This study has been one small, localized attempt at responding to these calls.

Chapter Three marks the transition away from section one of this study and theory gives way to assessment. Here this study's research imperative is detailed: first with a background discussion of the central players, ideas, and approaches to attitude assessment over the last four decades; second, via introductions to the three instruments used in the course of the study.

Chapter Four yields and discusses the results of the attitude assessment efforts. While these were mixed, it is my conclusion that the "localized" instruments—the Usefulness and Enjoyableness Questionnaires and the Essay Topic Questionnaires—both demonstrated their worth in providing insight into student attitudes regarding the two variations of English 1033. The Essay Topic Questionnaires were successful in demonstrating that students, when asked, are eager to become active contributors to the design and execution of instructional efforts. On a number of occasions, the ETQs enabled access to student reactions and misapprehensions that might otherwise have passed by unnoticed. This result is particularly important for the teacher-researcher who might have both questions and trepidation about just what can be learned through the use of what I've previously referred to as 'home-grown' and 'localized' instruments. The particular strength of the ETQ is that the immediacy of its feedback aided us (the instructors) to identify problem areas and provide extra assistance and clarification where necessary. While I would have been more than pleased to have reported that the ETQs had also shown that students in the Simulation section had indicated a greater degree of engagement with the essay topics (as measured by ETQ Question #1, the Likert scale item), this was not the case. The quantitative data elicited by this instrument were ambiguous at best.

The results of the Usefulness and Enjoyableness Questionnaires, however, were not ambiguous. Here, where the curricula diverge the most—in the Final Exam Essay—a statistically significant difference is shown to exist between the two sections' responses to their respective curriculum where those in the Simulation section showed a more positive response to the curriculum than did those in the traditional section. I therefore conclude that our efforts to construct and implement the simulations-based approach to writing instruction were well-received and effective in encouraging student engagement in our instructional efforts; consequently, additional work in the development, implementation and interpretation of simulations-based approaches to writing instruction is warranted.

Methodological Weaknesses

It obviously brings no joy to discuss the shortfalls in one's research efforts. Nevertheless, this is an important component to studies such as this. I would like to discuss three significant methodological weaknesses that I have identified in the course of reviewing this study. It should be noted that the following comments are speculative in nature; while I believe attempts to resolve these issues may have led to more complete results, there is no way to prove this given the current data. A replication study, therefore, would be the only way to assess the value of these comments. This discussion of weaknesses will move from the specific—problems with one of the key instruments used in the course of data collection—to the general.

The first methodological weakness comes as a result of my having failed to anticipate the breadth of responses possible on the Essay Topic Questionnaires. In my description of this instrument in Chapter Three, I noted that the majority of the instrument's questions were *open* questions. This being the case, they were subject to any number of interpretations by the respondents. Furthermore, the range of the responses ran from a few words or a short phrase to any number of paragraphs. Put simply, I was not prepared for the messiness of the data compounded, as it was, by the multiple versions of the instrument. While this was not a problem in the short run—indeed, as I have mentioned above, the immediacy and range of the comments provided valuable insights that did, in fact, help my fellow teacher and me to be better teachers. In collecting these data, however, I had hoped to be able to show more clearly discernable, long-term trends. In retrospect, this expectation may have been misguided, for it is an inescapable truth that as qualitative data expand in volume their distinguishing features begin to fade. No qualitative studies I have found—and as the troublesome nature of the ETQ results grew ever more clear, my search for a means to interpret these data grew wider and more frantic—provide an adequate resolution to this difficulty. As identified in Chapter Two, the case study approach is generally how such data are reined in. Whereas I chose to set the parameters of my case study at the section level (thus comparing the Simulation and the Traditional sections), it may have been better to conduct the analyses at the level of individual students.

That the boundaries of this case study might well have been set at a different level brings me to the second weakness of this effort. Had I sought to conduct my research on a select subset of students, it would have been appropriate to use other means to elicit additional commentary as to the students' responses to their respective curriculum. Had this been the case, alternative instruments—interviews, diary studies and think-aloud protocols would have been viable options—may have helped to increase the detail of the responses as well as allowing for a more focused delimiting of those responses. Considering the quantity of the data elicited by the ETQs alone, I do not offer these alternatives without some trepidation. Nevertheless, had I the study to do again and known what I have learned to this point, I would reshuffle the boundaries of study so as to focus on individual students' responses while utilizing additional means to elicit more focused data. An immediate problem emerges with this suggestion. Earlier I claimed that the respondents' trust in their anonymity may have contributed to the broad range of responses to the instruments (and the ETQs in particular). Narrowing the inquiry to the level of the individual and using qualitative instruments such as those mentioned above would remove the anonymity these students enjoyed. Realities such as these leave me unable to escape the conclusion that research is very often a matter of two steps forward and one back.

Finally, with the exception of the Essay Topic Questionnaires, the instruments in this study were adaptations of instruments used in previous studies. There are both benefits and disadvantages to this approach to research design. To its benefit, the replication and adaptation of instruments allows a researcher the opportunity to support or challenge earlier findings. At a time when there is a veritable chorus of researchers calling for increased inquiry into second language learners' motivations and attitudes, the need for replication studies is obvious.

Adapting extant instruments, however, is also hazardous. First, one must be certain that the instrument in question is well-suited to the needs of the new study. I believe that the instruments I selected, the Writing Attitudes Questionnaire and the Usefulness and Enjoyableness Questionnaire, did meet this criterion. Second, any changes made to others' instruments must be made with extreme caution, so not as to weaken the instrument's integrity. Only one of the outside instruments was changed—the WAQ—and this was done under the strict tutelage of my advisor, who signed off on the results. These two challenges were thus satisfied.

Despite every effort to the contrary, however, there can be little doubt that adapting instruments creates challenges not present in those custom-designed for a particular study. Consider, for example, the issue of making changes to the content of such instruments. I noted in Chapter Four that explaining the results of the Usefulness and Enjoyableness Questionnaires was made difficult by the lack of explanation elicited by the instrument itself. Unlike the Essay Topic Questionnaires, the U&EQ does not combine the quantitative with the qualitative: respondents are therefore not asked to explain the rationale behind their evaluations. Indeed, Peacock himself notes this shortfall in the instrument, indicating that it "did not include the collection of further back-up [qualitative] data which might have illuminated and helped to explain the findings" (A-5). For the sake of the instrument's integrity, however, I did not think it appropriate to expand its scope to include such qualitative items. Perhaps failing to do so was a mistake, but doing so risked upsetting the content of the instrument more than I dared. As anyone who has completed a course in assessment will agree, the notion of authoring discrete assessment instruments for every new study is a daunting one. The "turn around time" on such efforts—given the necessary validity & consistency checks—is problematic. This may explain the popularity of replication studies. Given my goals, the design and implementation of an in-house assessment instrument—particularly an expansion of Peacock's Usefulness and Enjoyableness Questionnaire—may have yielded more of the explanatory data I sought.

Suggestions for Future Research

While my commentary as to the methodological weaknesses of this study already identifies a number of areas worthy of future consideration, I would also like to suggest that those intrigued by the issue of student motivations and attitude give additional attention to two areas: first, the scope of the variation in the quality and quantity of individuals' responses to the assessment instruments; second, some effort to identify students' reactions to having been asked to give their impressions in the first place.

I will begin with the latter, an analysis of students' reactions to having been asked to comment. While this study included no attempt to measure this variable, a variety of different reactions emerged from the students who participated in this study. Recall that over the course of the semester, nearly every student completed five ETQs, four U&EQs, and two WAQs. These instruments were conducted after the Director of International Composition visited both sections in an effort to impress upon the students the importance of their participation in this study. In all likelihood this was the first time these students had had so many opportunities and avenues to critique—on an on-going basis—the instruction they were receiving and the assignments they were completing. Many demanded explanations; others complained that their job was to learn, not to teach, still others seemed pleased with the notion of their instructors' concern for the quality of the coursework. In any event, additional analysis of these responses would be intriguing. At the outset of this paper I indicated the gravity of student involvement in the quest for educational accountability. Communicative Language Teaching also goes to great lengths to impress upon its practitioners the importance of this student involvement. Further study needs to be conducted as to student responses to having been asked to participate in these procedures.

Great variation was noted in the responsiveness of individual students to the English 1033 curriculum assessment project. Designers of future studies may want to attempt to explain such differences. As their identities were protected by personal identification numbers, these students were accountable only to themselves in terms of the quantity and detail of the responses they provided. Nevertheless, it did not take long for this researcher to identify those students who were willing to participate meaningfully in the assessment project. A core group of students emerged (these are the respondents whose comments appear again and again as the most lengthy in the ETQ excerpts in Chapter Four) as both engaged in the process and particularly vocal and detailed in their responses. I did not make an attempt to correlate the quantity or quality of the students' responses to class participation or quality of class work. Such an effort might prove valuable. One would expect to find that those students who provided the most commentary would also be the better students, grade-wise, in the class. But, given the freedom of anonymity, this might or might not have been the case.

What is more, and with an eye to the fact the sections' responses to the ETQs became increasingly negative over the duration of the course, it would also have been interesting to attempt to correlate such responses with student performance. In other words, what was fueling student disappointment with the course and was there any relationship between students' impressions of the topics/course and their academic performance therein? Queries such as these would no doubt prove telling in our on-going efforts to assess student motivations and attitudes.

In Closing

While I wish that the results of the assessments had provided more suggestions as to the content and practices employed in the teaching of English 1033, I am nevertheless pleased to have had the opportunity to have participated not only in the design of the course, but also the execution of this study. This study's results reassert the importance of continuing in the effort to identify our student's motivations and attitudes so that we as instructors can work in concert with our students to help them to identify and achieve their learning goals.

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OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW

Date: March 10, 1998 **IRB #: AS-98-051**

Proposal Title: ESL STUDENT RESPONSES TO SIMULATION CURRICULUM IN THE WRITING CLASSROOM

Principal Investigator(s): Carol Moder, Brad Van Den Elzen

Reviewed and Processed as: Exempt

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

ALL APPROVALS MAY BE SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY FULL INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD AT NEXT MEETING, AS WELL AS ARE SUBJECT TO MONITORING AT ANY TIME DURING THE APPROVAL PERIOD.
APPROVAL STATUS PERIOD VALID FOR DATA COLLECTION FOR A ONE CALENDAR YEAR PERIOD AFTER WHICH A CONTINUATION OR RENEWAL REQUEST IS REQUIRED TO BE SUBMITTED FOR BOARD APPROVAL.
ANY MODIFICATIONS TO APPROVED PROJECT MUST ALSO BE SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL.

Comments, Modifications/Conditions for Approval or Disapproval are as follows:

Signature: John H. Wycoff

Chair of Institutional Review Board

Date: March 24, 1998

cc: Brad Van Den Elzen

Appendix 2.1 – 1033 Course Calendar (Traditional Curriculum)

DAY/DATE	CLASS ACTIVITY	HOMEWORK TO COMPLETE BEFORE CLASS	NOTES
M June 8	Introduction		Welcome!
T June 9	Introduction & diagnostic preparations	Purchase English 1033 Coursebook and complete Personal Information Sheet	
W June 10	Diagnostic A		Last day to add courses
R June 11	Diagnostic A		
F June 12	Diagnostic A	Diagnostic A due at end of the class period	Last day to drop courses
M June 15	Review	To be announced	
T June 16	Diagnostic B		
W June 17	Diagnostic B	Diagnostic B due at the end of the class period	
R June 18	Review	To be announced	
F June 19	Review		In-class grading workshop
M June 22	Documentation Essay Introduction	To be announced	
T June 23	Plagiary Simulation	To be announced	
W June 24	Plagiary Simulation	To be announced	
R June 25	Documentation	To be announced	
F June 26		Documented Essay A-draft Due	
M June 29	Interview/Questionnaire Overview		
T June 30	I/Q set-up		
W July 1	I/Q set-up		
R July 2		Documented Essay B-draft Due	
M July 6	Library Research Overview	To be announced	
T July 7	L/R set-up		
W July 8	L/R set-up		
R July 9	Library Visit		
F July 10		I/Q A-draft Due	
M July 13		L/R A-draft Due	
T July 14			
W July 15			
R July 16			
F July 17		I/Q B-draft Due	
M July 20		Library B-draft Due	
T July 21			
W July 22		I/Q Oral Reports	
R July 23		I/Q Oral Reports	
F July 24			
M July 27	Exam Preparations		
T July 28	Final Exam		
W July 29	Final Exam		
R July 30	Final Exam		
F July 31	Final Exam		

DAY/DATE	CLASS ACTIVITY	HOMEWORK TO COMPLETE BEFORE CLASS	NOTES
M June 8	Introduction		Welcome!
T June 9	Introduction & diagnostic preparations	Purchase English 1033 Coursebook and complete Personal Information Sheet	
W June 10	Diagnostic A		Last day to add courses
R June 11	Diagnostic A		
F June 12	Diagnostic A	Diagnostic A due at end of the class period	Last day to drop courses
M June 15	Review	To be announced	
T June 16	Diagnostic B		
W June 17	Diagnostic B	Diagnostic B due at the end of the class period	
R June 18	Review	To be announced	
F June 19	Review		In-class grading workshop
M June 22	Documentation Essay Introduction	To be announced	
T June 23	Plagiary Simulation	To be announced	
W June 24	Plagiary Simulation	To be announced	
R June 25	Documentation	To be announced	
F June 26		Documented Essay A-draft Due	
M June 29	Summaries		
T June 30		Documented Essay Presentations	
W July 1		Documented Essay Presentations	
R July 2		Documented Essay B-draft Due	
M July 6	Library Research Overview	To be announced	
T July 7	L/R set-up		
W July 8	L/R set-up		
R July 9	Library Visit		
F July 10	Hog Farm Introduction	L/R A-draft Due	
M July 13		HF response #1 due (position paper)	
T July 14			
W July 15		HF response #2 due (role response A)	
R July 16	Hog Farm Visit		
F July 17		HF response #3 due (HF visit)	
M July 20		HF response #4 due (role response B)	
T July 21			
W July 22		Town Council Meeting	
R July 23		Town Council Meeting	
F July 24			
M July 27	Exam Preparations		
T July 28	Final Exam		
W July 29	Final Exam		
R July 30	Final Exam		
F July 31	Final Exam		

DMC Decision Maker Consultants
Suite 902
27 Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL
66232

re: Stillwater, OK & Consolidated Steel Corp.

An overview of Consolidated Steel's history:
Consolidated Steel has operated 7 steel production plants inside the United States continuously since the 1850s. During the 1970s, this company was threatened by rising labor costs and increasingly stringent environmental standards in the United States and made significant investments in steel production concerns abroad. Recent fluctuations in the international currency markets have reduced the previously record-setting profits of Consolidated's overseas operations and the company is now looking to expand its domestic production facilities. Consolidated Steel has had a history of battling labor unions here in the U.S. and as a consequence is attracted to states like Oklahoma where "right to work" laws minimize union organizing and participation.

Consolidated Steel's proposal:
Provided the Stillwater Town Council offers the license and other requests (detailed below), Consolidated intends to erect a medium-sized steel mill within Stillwater city limits. Construction of this facility will take nearly three years. Consolidated uses a contracting firm when building new factories and, as the construction of a steel mill is a highly specialized task, most of the necessary laborers will be temporarily relocated to Stillwater from other parts of the United States. Once the mill is "on line" for production, Consolidated will employ nearly 2500 workers (250 "white collar" jobs and 2250 "blue collar" positions) and operate in three shifts around the clock. Most management and technical personnel will be relocated to Stillwater from other Consolidated production facilities. Up to 1000 skilled laborers from other Consolidated facilities will also be relocated to Stillwater. The balance of the new factories employees (up to 1250) will be recruited both locally and in a national campaign by Consolidated's human resources department.

Consolidated Steel requests that, as an incentive to locate its facility in Stillwater, it be exempted from all local taxes, levies and utility fees for the duration of their facility's construction plus the first 10 years of operation.

Economic impact:
There can be no question that the addition of 2500 workers and their families to Stillwater (a net gain of up to 12,500 additional residents) will have a significant impact on the area's economy. The needs of these families will create incentives for additional health, retail, food, and recreational businesses to open in Stillwater and surrounding communities.

While the average hourly wage in Stillwater is now approximately $9, the average hourly wage at Consolidated will near $10, with a minimum of $7.50/hr. to start and a cap of $14/hr. In the short-term this may lead to labor shortages among lower-paying employers in the area.

Demands on Stillwater's present infrastructure will be high. New roads and utilities will be necessitated not only by the production facility but the expected increases in housing demanded by the number of new residents hired by Consolidated. This community-wide increase in construction and population will lead to significant traffic congestion for the next 2 decades - until streets and highways can be expanded to handle the influx of vehicles. The community-owned airport will also need to be expanded to allow for commercial carriers to begin service to this facility. Freight rail links - presently unused in Stillwater - will be reestablished to allow for receiving of raw materials and transshipment of finished products.

An expansion of emergency services, including the construction of a new fire/rescue station near the facility as well as an expansion of the community-funded Stillwater Medical Center, will also be necessitated. Additional police and other public safety personnel will be necessitated not only by increases in traffic, but also the expansion of the community's population and businesses.

Social Impact
Consolidated Steel's arrival in Stillwater will bring a significant population influx. The vast majority of these people will be skilled laborers and their families, most likely from the former steel towns of the Northeast. While most of these people will be well-trained in their skill areas, few will have had university experience. Conflicts between long-time Stillwater residents and these new arrivals may arise given ethnic, religious and attitudinal differences.

Stillwater's schools will need to prepare for an influx of students. Additional staff will be necessary. Again, we might expect that the children of natives and new-comers may come into conflict in the schools. Stillwater will cease to be considered a "college town" and will need to adjust its educational institutions to provide for additional training in the skilled trades.

Consolidated Steel has a history of supporting technical/trades education in their home communities with educational grants, scholarships, and internships.

Environmental Impact
As mentioned earlier, Consolidated sought refuge overseas from the increasingly stringent enactment and enforcement of the environmental protection laws of the 1970s. The company has a history of frequent violations of federal and state laws in this area and fights such charges with its own in-house legal service. Since 1980, the company has paid $250 million in fines and presently has another $25 million in judgments against it. Consolidated has recently committed itself - through a nation-wide advertising campaign

to "cleaning up its image." It remains to be seen what actual changes will be made in this vein.

Residents who live near other Consolidated facilities have long complained of heavy smoke and severe water pollution. Incidences of cancer within a 10 mile radius of such facilities stand 25% above the national average on a per capita basis. Noise pollution has also been cited as common to these facilities and the surrounding areas.

Consolidated's employees have - on average - a 10% higher rate of cancer than workers in other fields. Respiratory illnesses occur in Consolidated employees twice as often as in those not engaged in the steel production industries.

Consolidated has closed and abandoned three aged production facilities - each has been declared an environmental hazard area by the federal government's Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Consolidated is still fighting federal lawsuits demanding it clean up the sites of these former plants.

Consolidated's international production facilities have been labeled "environmental disaster areas" by the World Health Organization in their 1997 *State of the World's Health* report.

DMC Decision Maker Consultants
Suite 902
27 Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL
66232

re: Stillwater, OK & Integritel Systems

An overview of Integritel's history:
Integritel, a telemarketing firm, was established in 1965. It operates on behalf of retailers on a contractual basis, responding to customers who call toll-free numbers to place catalogue orders. As catalogue sales have increased over the decades so, too, has the size of Integritel. The company has six Phone Response Centers around the Midwest. Sales have increased at a rapid rate over the last decade, and Integritel is the recognized leader in this field. Integritel has a long history of employing only part-time workers who usually work under 30 hours per week and receive no benefits and earn little more than minimum wage (currently $5.25/hr.). Each of Integritel's Phone Response Centers is located near a large, public university so as to be able to seek staff from the student bodies of these institutions.

Integritel's proposal:
Due to increasing demands for their services, Integritel is seeking to expand their facilities. The proposed Stillwater Phone Response Center will employ up to 400 part-time employees in three shifts around the clock. Integritel will recruit the majority of these employees in a local campaign, focusing primarily on OSU students, retirees and homemakers who might not have time for a full-time job but who may be interested, instead, in part-time work. In addition, administrative, tech-support and managerial staff numbering up to 40 employees will be recruited from the Stillwater area. Integritel has indicated that if all goes well, an additional 200 part-time jobs will be added to the Stillwater facility after the first year of operation.

Integritel typically locates its Phone Response Centers in large warehouse type buildings. Many such buildings are presently available for occupancy in Stillwater. No new construction would be necessitated by Integritel's entry into the community.

As an incentive to locate its new Phone Response Center in Stillwater, Integritel is asking for the city government to provide buses and pay the first year's expenses for a bus service from the OSU campus to their facility. These buses will be scheduled to coincide with the changing of shifts at the facility. After the first year of operation, Integritel employees will be charged a nominal fee ($.25) for transport to and from the campus to the Integritel facility and Integritel will reimburse the city for the original cost of the buses but <u>not</u> the first year's operation expenses.

Economic impact:
The addition of up to 600 new part-time jobs to Stillwater will have a moderate effect on some parts of the local economy. It is important to note the relative youth of Integritel's

employees. Your community can expect to see growth in the retail, recreational and entertainment sectors should Integritel receive the business license. Given their status as students, the majority of Integritel employees will simply replace money received from other sources of support (financial aid or familial support) with their Integritel earnings. Slight increases in discretionary income among this group are quite often quickly spent. In recapture the business of those students who leave Stillwater for Oklahoma City or Tulsa to do their shopping, additional, targeted retail outlets and restaurants need to be established here. If this is not done, Integritel's impact on the local economy will be minimal.

While the average hourly wage in Stillwater is now approximately $9, the average hourly wage at Integritel will peak at $8 (this figure does not include the earnings of the administrative and managerial staffs, whose earnings will always be at least even with the local average and perhaps slightly higher).

New infrastructure demands as a result of Integritel will be low. Should the community fail to offer public transportation assistance to Integritel employees, traffic will see a slight increase during shift changes.

Other employers who utilize minimum wage employees may experience a temporary shortage of workers as Integritel may offer higher starting wages so as to attract new employees once their operations are up and running.

Social Impact:
Minimal. Few to no relocations to Stillwater will occur as a result of Integritel's arrival.

Environmental Impact:
Minimal. Traffic congestion will increase at peak times. As Integritel's ordering systems are fully computerized, their offices are essentially paperless.

DMC Decision Maker Consultants
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27 Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL
66232

re: Stillwater, OK & PrairieSoft Systems

An overview of PrairieSoft's history:

PrairieSoft is an upstart software company. Launched two years ago in Lincoln, Nebraska, PrairieSoft produces custom configured software for business use. Its products have received positive reviews in the industry press and sales have grown from $10 million in the first year of business to nearly $30 million today. Industry rumors suggest that PrairieSoft may soon be launching its own Internet browser in an attempt to steal market share from both Microsoft and Netscape. Industry experts have labeled this a peculiar step and suggested that it is an unnecessarily risky move for such a young company to make.

PrairieSoft began as a partnership between two college friends and has grown to include 200 employees at its Lincoln facility. PrairieSoft follows a recruitment strategy common in this sector: hiring recent college graduates for average to high wages and including stock options to sweeten the deal. Employees who've been with PrairieSoft since the beginning have seen the value of their stock options triple in three years. Some "early hires" (who are now, on average, age 27) have earned nearly $1 million in stocks as a result of this recruitment package.

PrairieSoft's proposal:

Due to increasing demands for their products, PrairieSoft is seeking to expand their facilities. The proposed Stillwater facility will employ up to 100 highly trained software writers and others in the computer sciences. PrairieSoft will recruit the majority of these employees in a national campaign, though the company has committed itself to putting a special emphasis on hiring OSU graduates who meet their criteria. In addition, a marketing group numbering up to 50 employees (including administrative staff) will be relocated from Lincoln to Stillwater.

PrairieSoft's founder, Jon Lee, is committed to the revitalization of small towns. Instead of setting up a new building on the outskirts of town, he hopes to find sufficient office space in central Stillwater.

As an incentive to locate its new "campus" in Stillwater, PrairieSoft asks for exemption from local taxes, levies and utilities for a period of three years.

Economic impact:

The addition of 150 new high paying jobs to Stillwater will have a strong effect on some parts of the local economy. It is important to note the relative youth of PrairieSoft's employees. Your community can expect to see growth in the health, retail, food, recreational and entertainment sectors should PrairieSoft receive the business license. Given their average age, most PrairieSoft employees are just now beginning to have families of their own; indeed, one reason PrairieSoft is so interested in Stillwater as a new location is its small-town, family-friendly atmosphere.

While the average hourly wage in Stillwater is now approximately $9, the average hourly wage at PrairieSoft will approach $19, with a minimum of $8 for office staff and up to $40 for computer science professionals. Such wages are designed to lure good employees from other businesses and have met with success in the past.

Infrastructure demands as a result of PrairieSoft will be low. Since its inception, PrairieSoft has pioneered employee commuting and alternative transportation programs in Lincoln. Employees who leave their cars at home and walk or bicycle are given a 10% salary bonus monthly. The company has been successful in convincing Lincoln officials to establish bicycling lanes on primary city streets and will most likely petition for the same consideration in Stillwater. The community-owned airport will need to be expanded to allow for commercial carriers to begin service to this facility.

Social Impact

PrairieSoft's arrival in Stillwater will bring a small population increase. The biggest potential controversy lies in the fact that Stillwater, and Payne County in general, have recently been marketing themselves as retirement communities in a bid to attract wealthy retirees. PrairieSoft envisions itself as a youthful company and works hard to ensure that its home communities offer plenty of opportunities for the active lifestyles for its young employees.

Some Lincoln residents have complained about the excessive lifestyles of recently-rich PrairieSoft employees. The cost of Lincoln real estate, in particular, has increased at a rate 15% over the national average in the last two years...some claim this is a result of PrairieSoft employees exercising their stock options and building expensive homes.

Stillwater public schools can expect a mini population boom if PrairieSoft and its youthful employees settle in Stillwater. Again, conflicts are possible here as a result of the potentially wide income gap between the children of PrairieSoft. PrairieSoft founder, Jon Lee, has overseen the establishment of computer laboratories in each of Lincoln's public elementary and high schools. He has promised that Stillwater's public schools would also receive large block grants from the company for their own computer labs. Lee has also promised to provide part-time and internship opportunities for OSU students should PrairieSoft come to Stillwater.

Environmental Impact

PrairieSoft has, since its founding, marketed itself as an "earth-friendly" organization. Its Lincoln office has received numerous awards for achieving, as closely as possible, the notion of the paperless office. PrairieSoft delivers the majority of its clients' software via the Internet thereby reducing the amount of packaging and shipping materials it would otherwise require. PrairieSoft's efforts to encourage employee commuting and alternative transportation have also brought praise. Increases in local traffic due to population growth will result should PrairieSoft enter Stillwater

Diagnostic Essay Prompt
Summer 1998

You are on a government commission in charge of economic development. Muir Valley has been chosen as the site for the development of a new town of 10,000 people. You must decide which industry will support the economy of the new community.

Use the included readings to familiarize yourself with each of the three industries. Based on the information provided along with your personal opinions, write an essay to the future citizens of Muir Valley that explains to which organization you wish to grant the access and why.

In supporting your decision, make certain to identify at least three critical advantages offered by the industry you have chosen and contrast these qualities with those of the industries you have rejected.

Your instructor will ask the following questions in evaluating your essay:

1) Has the author clearly indicated which company he or she chose?
2) Has the author identified the key factors that contributed to his or her decision?
3) How has the author organized his or her essay?
4) Do grammar, word choice, or spelling errors interfere with the reader's ability to understand the essay?
5) Is the author's argument convincing?

Appendix 2.4 – Documented Essay Prompt

Explain your plan for Muir Valley and the rationale (the reasons) behind the planning choices you made. Indicate whether or not your plan for Muir Valley is in accordance with the ideas presented by Kunstler and/or the Ahwahnee Principles and explain why or why not.

Include at least 3 properly formatted & cited quotations from either the Kunstler article, the Ahwahnee Principles article, or both.

Appendix 2.5 – Library Research Essay Prompt

Muir Valley's population has grown at a robust rate over the last few years. Some citizens, however, have begun to voice concerns over the relative absence of local regulations concerning community-wide standards of conduct & property maintenance.

Using the library's research tools, identify three existing zoning ordinances you feel should be adopted for Muir Valley. Explain the rationale behind your choice of these ordinances. In addition, find three zoning ordinances you feel would be inappropriate for Muir Valley. Again, explain your rationale.

For this simulation, you will be a participant in a Town Council meeting for Muir Valley. Recently, a number of factors have contributed to the economy of Muir Valley falling into a slump. The industries that brought most of the jobs to the town have found cheaper labor elsewhere and have closed their factories. The young people have earned college educations elsewhere and have not wanted to come back to Muir Valley. The weather for the last four years has been affected by El Nino. This has led to weak crop yields and lack of feed for livestock. In general, the residents of Muir Valley are concerned about the future of their town.

OWM Corporation has approached the town council of Muir Valley to discuss the possibility of locating a large hog farm in the area just north of town. In the town council meeting you role will be:

A lobbyist for OWM Farms, who speaks for the state Pork Council. You are well-respected by both lawmakers and farmers.

You are the vice-president of the Cattlemen's Association. You work with legislators and group leaders to usher in large farms.

You are the coordinator of the State Family Farm Alliance. You are the small farmers' voice among lobbyists.

You are the owner and CEO of OWM Farms. You have seen your farms breathe life back into numerous communities by revitalizing the economy and giving people back their hope for the future.

You are a small cattle farmer in Muir Valley. You are also a member of the town council.

You are a small businessman in Muir Valley. You own a general store

You own a family farm in Muir Valley. You have been in this valley longer than the town. Your great-grandfather homesteaded you farm, and four generations have been raised there. You are also a member of the town council.

You are the head of the school board in Muir Valley.

You are the mayor of Muir Valley. You own a small dental practice with your son.

You are a small farmer living next door to the proposed site of the new hog farm. You are also a member of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA).

You are a general contractor by trade. You have been approached by OWM Farms to build their Muir Valley farm.

You are a science teacher at Muir Valley high school.

You are Vice-Chair of the State Environmental Organization.

The Oklahoma legislature is presently considering the enactment of a moratorium (a ban) on the construction of any new corporate hog farms here in Oklahoma. Write an essay indicating whether or not you support this moratorium. Explain your position. In your response, make at least five references: three to articles in the reading packet, one to OETA's "Hog Heaven or Hell" video, and one to your visit to the OSU Swine Farm. Make certain your references are cited properly.

Your instructor will ask him or herself the following questions while evaluating your essay:

Has the author clearly indicated which position he or she chose?
Has the author identified the key factors that contributed to his or her decision?
How has the author organized his or her essay?
Do grammar, word choice, or spelling errors interfere with the reader's ability to understand the essay?
Is the author's argument convincing?

Appendix 3.1 – Writing Attitude Questionnaire

1. **I am a capable writer.**

   1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

2. **Great writers are born not taught.**

   1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

3. **All writers follow a specific method which works best for them.**

   1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

4. **No professional writer could teach another person how to write.**

   1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

5. **Writers should learn a method which best suits their personalities.**

   1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

6. **Creativity is necessary for writing.**

   1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

7. **A writer must like to write.**

   1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

8. **Writing helps the writer learn about himself/herself.**

   1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

9. **Writing helps the writer think through certain parts of problems.**

   1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

10. **Writing does not require self-discipline.**

    1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

11. **I often read (in English) for pleasure.**

    1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

12. **I often read (in my native language) for pleasure.**

    1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

13. **Nothing one writes should be thrown-away.**
    1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

14. **A writing assignment usually requires only one good draft.**
    1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

15. **Proofreading of material does not mean changing of the content.**
    1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

16. **Writing takes talent.**
    1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

17. **Teachers need only make assignments and students will write.**
    1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

18. **The teacher should write when the students write.**
    1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

19. **Writing assignments are difficult to grade.**
    1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

20. **Writing poems, short stories, or plays (in any language) is more difficult than writing essays.**
    1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

21. **Writing informally requires little planning.**
    1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

22. **I am unsure about my technical skills (grammar, spelling, format).**
    1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

23. **I feel comfortable with sharing what I write.**
    1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

24. **I know what makes a good writer.**
    1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

25. I am confident when asked to read and evaluate another person's writing.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

26. I believe that writing skills are not necessary to a person's success in most endeavors.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

27. I like to write poetry in English.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

28. I like to write poetry in my native language.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

29. I like to write short stories in English.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

30. I like to write short stories in my native language.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

31. I like to write essays in English.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

32. I like to write essays in my native language.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

33. I am a capable reader in English.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=stongly disagree

34. I am a capable reader in my native language.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

35. Writing helps me to explore my own opinions.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

36. I keep a daybook of interesting things that I encounter that would enhance my writing ideas.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

37. Research writing is not my strongest point.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

38. I can write (in English) about anything I see, feel, or think.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

39. I can write (in my native language) about anything I see, feel, or think.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

40. I like the finished products of my writing.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

41. There should be a stronger emphasis on writing essay answers to examinations.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

42. Writing requires thinking.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

43. I have troubles with punctuation and spelling.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

44. I can recognize subject/verb and pronoun/antecedent errors in my own writing.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

45. Writing is an important skill for both teachers and students.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

46. The future will require more writing skills of students.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

47. The computer is an asset to writing in the classroom.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

48. I write and rewrite papers until they are perfect.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

49. I do not need instruction in writing.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

50. I dislike discussing my opinions with others.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

51. A writing program can begin at any grade level.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

52. No two writers are alike.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

53. The audience for which I am writing has a strong influence on how and what I write.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

54. Mathematics does not lend itself to writing assignments.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

55. Not every student should be required to write.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

56. I need to develop professional writing skills.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

57. The writers I have read are role models for me.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

58. I read often in English.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

59. I read often in my native language.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

60. I hate writing in English.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

61. I hate writing in my native language.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

62. I have difficulties finding and using the correct words when I write.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

63. I usually write long sentences.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

64. I feel that I have nothing to improve in my writing.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

65. I like to publish what I write.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

66. I can encourage my classmates to write better.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

67. I think writing should be fun.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

68. The teacher should correct all my mistakes.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

69. I like to argue about my ideas and opinions.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

Thanks!

PIN Number ________

Responses to Essay Topics Questionnaire

1. What did you think of the topic – choosing Muir Valley's industry – of this essay? Circle one:

   I hated it   I disliked it   So-so   I liked it   I loved it

2. Please explain your response to question #1.

3. What about the task/topic did you find difficult?

4. What about the task/topic did you find easy?

5. What – not including the time restraints/having to write it in class – would you change in order to improve this task/topic?

6. How well did the readings fit the task/topic?

7. Were your instructor's expectations clearly stated in the prompt (the question)?

8. What did you feel was most valuable about this task/topic?

9. What did you feel was least valuable?

10. What advice would you give to a future student who had to complete this assignment?

11. Please add additional comments here

PIN Number ________

Responses to Essay Topics Questionnaire
Essay 2: Documented Essay, Town Planning

1. What did you think of the topic – town planning – of this essay? Circle one:

   I hated it   I disliked it   So-so   I liked it   I loved it

2. Please explain your response to question #1.

Responses to Essay Topics Questionnaire
Essay 3: Library Research Essay, City Ordinances

1. What did you think of the topic – city ordinances – of this essay? Circle one:

   I hated it   I disliked it   So-so   I liked it   I loved it

2. Please explain your response to question #1.

Responses to Essay Topics Questionnaire
Final Exam: Corporate Hog Farms

1. What did you think of the topic – the controversy over corporate hog farms – of this essay? Circle one:

   I hated it   I disliked it   So-so   I liked it   I loved it

2. Please explain your response to question #1.

Mark one "X" on each line below to show your reaction to the materials and activities used in our discussion of (*insert topic*).

interesting	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	boring
relevant to my goals	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	not relevant to my goals
unenjoyable	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	enjoyable
meaningless	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	meaningful
appropriate for me	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	inappropriate for me
dull	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	exciting
satisfying	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	unsatisfying
useful for me	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	useless for me
unappealing	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	appealing
absorbing	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	monotonous

VITA 2

Brad L. Van Den Elzen

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Arts

Thesis: ESL STUDENT RESPONSES TO A SIMULATION CURRICULUM IN THE WRITING CLASSROOM

Major Field: English

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Neenah, Wisconsin, On September 7, 1971, the son of Norbert and Deborah Van Den Elzen.

Education: Graduated from Pulaski High School, Pulaski, Wisconsin in May 1989; received Bachelor of Arts degree in English and a Bachelor of Arts degree in History and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Journalism from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin in December 1993. Received a Master of Arts degree in History from the State University of New York, Stony Brook, New York in May, 1996. Completed the requirements for the Master of Arts degree with a major in English at Oklahoma State University in May, 1999.

Experience: Taught EFL at Central South University of Technology, Changsha, People's Republic of China during the 1994-1995 academic year; employed by Oklahoma State University, Department of English as a graduate teaching assistant, Fall 1996 through Summer 1998; Intern, American Language Program, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, Fall 1998 to present.

Professional Memberships: Ohio Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (OHTESOL), Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL).