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## **L1 COMPOSITION AND L2 WRITING VIEWPOINTS: PEDAGOGICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL STANCES DEVELOPED THROUGH THEORY**

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### **Abstract**

This article focuses on the theoretical foundations that need to be explored and understood for a better insight into what is involved in L2 writing. The theories of cognitivism, expressivism, social constructionism, interactivism and culturism that have influenced the viewpoints of instructors and pedagogy in L2 writing are surveyed. These viewpoints vary according to the relative importance placed on the essential composition elements of writer, reader, reality and language. Many of these viewpoints themselves emerged from L1 composition theory and were often demonstrated in the L2 writing setting by research in that context.

Theorists, researchers, teachers and learners have differed greatly in regard to the optimal viewpoint, and a single perspective is difficult to achieve. However, all acknowledge that an understanding of the essential composition elements must be taken into account and any one of them cannot be ignored totally. These viewpoints may have changed due to circumstances and particular historical periods and might even overlap in certain situations. Nevertheless, all the pedagogical and ideological viewpoints surveyed can still be found in the modern L2 writing classroom and it is hoped an examination of them will give a foundation for better understanding of different contexts, attitudes and motivations in L2 writing.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Historically speaking, L1 composition theories developed much earlier than their L2 writing counterparts. Haynes (1978) records that L1 composition theory has a history dating back to the early 1900s. Accordingly research based on these L1 composition theories also began much earlier than L2 writing research. It is then, not at all surprising that both L2 writing theory and research have been influenced and have also extensively borrowed from L1 composition theory and research. Johns (1990) goes as far as to say that at least until the 1990s, L2 writing research was heavily based upon L1 writing theory and no coherent or complete separate L2 writing theory had been developed. Krapels (1990) also notes that L2 writing researchers have often adopted L1 composition research designs, and “more often than not their findings have concurred with those of their L1 counterparts” (p.38). This point is echoed by Zamel (1984) who says “research into second language composing processes seems to corroborate much of what we have learned from research in first language writing” (p.198).

A great deal of L1 composition theory initially developed in the early part of the twentieth century occurred in the context of college level English writing classes in the United States. However, in the late 1950s and early 1960s large numbers of foreign students began to enter higher education in the United States. It was then that many L1 composition teachers began to perceive differences in writing between L1

and L2 students. This brought about an upsurge in interest of writing practices of non-native speakers of English, which in turn developed into a significant sub-field of research into approaches to writing English as a Second Language (ESL). More recently L2 writing in other contexts has been of immense interest to theorists and researchers alike, especially in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), which already has an established history in language studies.

The present article to some extent surveys the main stances taken in L1 composition pedagogical theory, which predate and but still significantly influence L2 writing theory and practice. However the main focus will be on L2 writing pedagogical stances (or teacher viewpoints), which will be reviewed in the light of these L1 composition theories. The view or stances taken by teachers of L2 writing, by and large, can be seen as resonating with the views of teachers of L1 composition, which have in turn been formulated based upon L1 composition theory. That is not to say that the viewpoints are exactly the same, however the scope of this article will focus on the similarities of these viewpoints and these will be discussed in a framework of elements that are inherent in both types of composition, namely the writer, reader, reality and language. Other underlying factors and themes that shape pedagogical viewpoints and are important in L1 composition and L2 writing will also be discussed. These include process versus product, academic discourse community acceptance and initiation versus preparation for life, and power of the established elite versus empowerment of the less privileged.

Despite the acknowledgement of differences existing between L1 composition and L2 writing, the question remains of how teachers of both types of writing view the core component related aspects or essential elements inherent to all types of composition that remain very similar. Berlin (1982) mentions 4 elements that make up the composing process.

- The writer (who is the “knower”).
- The audience (who shall be referred to as the “reader”).
- Reality (or truth).
- Language (that is to say the source of the language in written text).

In the present article these elements will be looked at in turn as components of five major composition viewpoints of researchers and teachers of writing, which are based largely upon L1 composition theory, but also with significant reference to L2 writing stances. These viewpoints are those of cognitivists, expressivists, social constructionists, interactivists and culturists. Johns (1990) classes both the cognitivists, and expressivists as adherents of the process approach. Although both do indeed place emphasis on the writing process and mostly agree on their ideas of reality and language use, the two hold radically different views on how the writer should go about this process as identified by Faigley (1986), and as such will be discussed separately. It should also be noted that the view of interactivists and culturists may be difficult to distinguish for some, and indeed there is undoubtedly some overlap. However, the distinction in the following survey focuses on the pedagogical nature of the interactive viewpoint compared to the ideological stance of the culturists.

## COGNITIVISM

### *Cognitivist Writer*

Cognitivists to a large extent base their beliefs on the cognitive process theory of Flower and Hayes (1981). This theory focuses on the cognitive “universals” in the writing process. That is to say, learning to write is regarded as identifying and internalizing organizational patterns such as planning, drafting and re-

vising. Cognitivists see writing as problem solving. The two key words in cognitivist discussions are “thinking” and “process” (Johns, 1990). Cognitivist teachers require the student writer to plan extensively. This planning includes defining the problem, placing it in context, making it operational, further exploration into its parts, thinking of alternative solutions, and arriving at a well-supported conclusion (Johns, 1990). It is these steps that are considered to comprise the higher order “thinking” skills outlined by Flower (1989). Once the plan is established using these steps, it is then, followed by the writer translating that plan into initial writing drafts, revising and editing. This is the writer’s “process” step of planning that Flower (1989) espouses and Johns (1990) identifies when discussing the cognitivist view.

The cognitivists feel the writer should not focus on the product of composition, but rather on the process of arriving at that product. Flower and Hayes (1981) theory was based on their extensive research using think-aloud protocols and other techniques which revealed that writing was not a linear process with the writer sitting down to write and finishing with a complete product in one linear or formulaic undertaking. Rather, the process was complex, multi-layered and recursive. This, of course, has implications for the writer and how he or she composes. Flower and Hayes are not alone in their belief of the cognitive process of writing. Their model has been confirmed to some extent in research carried out by Spack (1984), Zamel (1983), Raimes (1987), Krapels (1990) and Friedlander (1990). Raimes in particular compared L2 writers’ composing process with those of L1 novice writers and found that both had much in common.

So it can be seen that the mental processes the writers goes through are considered to be of great importance to the cognitivists. Berlin (1988) explains “For cognitive rhetoric, structures of the mind are in perfect harmony with the structures of the material world, the minds of the audience, and the units of language” (p.480).

Durst (2006) notes that discussions of the writing process, and particularly of cognitive views, have dominated writing literature and influenced the modern L2 writing classroom up until recent times. Lauer (1970) remarks that most L2 writing teachers (along with ESL and EFL teachers in general) prepare student writers to write using prewriting activities and invention. Johns (1986) goes on to say that these very teachers require several drafts, individual revision and peer group revision, as well as delaying the student writer’s desire for sentence correction by the teacher until the final stage of editing.

Therefore the cognitivist teacher of writing is not focusing on the products of their student writer. Instead their aim is to produce good writers who “not only have a large repertoire of powerful strategies, but they have sufficient self-awareness of their own process to draw on these alternative techniques as they need them, In other words, they guide their own creative process” (Flower, 1985, p.370).

### *Cognitivist Reader*

The issue of audience or the reader is of major concern to cognitivists. Kroll (1978) explains that even though the primary concern for cognitivists is the writer’s cognitive structures and the processes the writer navigates through to produce text, it is also important to understand how a sense of audience is structured in the writer’s mind. This issue of the reader is therefore complicated. Flower (1979) in her research found the cognitive shift from “writer-based” to “reader-based” a major factor in the failure of many college writers to be successful in their writing classes. She goes to recommend that student writers need to consider and appeal to their readers’ interest and needs, in order to be successful and established writers. Berlin (1987) goes as far as to say the cognitivist view is in fact “transitional” when regarding the reader, and probably more akin to the interactivist view than the expressivist view, both of which are discussed later in this article.

### *Cognitivist Reality*

As can be seen by now the cognitivist view is heavily predisposed upon the writer, and therefore it

should be of no surprise that cognitivists see that “reality and truth reside in the writer’s mind” (Johns, 1990, p.31). Berlin (1982) contends that the cognitivist view of reality mirrors the Platonic view where “truth is not based on sensory experience since the material world is always in flux and thus unreliable. Truth is instead discovered through internal apprehension, a private vision of the world that transcends the physical” (p.771).

This internal truth hypothesis is cause for the many criticisms leveled at the cognitivist view. Bizzell (1982) contends that the cognitivist have a lack of concern for the social environment in the creation of the text. She takes particular umbrage with the fact that cognitivists all too readily believe that “the universal, fundamental structures of thought and language can be taught” (p.216). Durst (2006) believes that the limits of the cognitivist view have already been reached and even Flower (1994) herself has continued to expand on her earlier research by further explaining the social aspects and dimensions of writing. Therefore some of the criticism can be seen to be tempered by the fact that even the most stringent of cognitivists concede that cognition and context must work in some kind of tandem and not be mutually exclusive (Leki, Cumming & Silva, 2006).

### *Cognitivist Language*

As the cognitivist view focuses on the writer, so it would seem to correspond to the views of Miller and Judy (1978) who suggest, “form and language come from content – and are a result of what the reader wants to say” (p.15). In other words, the language of composition is the writer’s own language, based on prior knowledge. The focus of the cognitivist is not so much on the pedagogy of language itself but how that language was chosen and the processes that were carried out.

## **EXPRESSIVISM**

### *Expressivist Writer*

Expressivism, although reaching its peak in the later parts of the mid twentieth century, has its roots much earlier in the beginning of the same century (Johns 1990). Although the expressivist view may pre-date the cognitivist view, it was particularly in the late 1960s and early 1970s when the popular trend in teaching writing began to favour individual expression of honest and personal thought. Berlin (1988) explains that writing was thought to be an art or a creative process in which self-discovery was as important as the self-discovered and expressed product. Murray (1980) developed a five-step “expressivist” process for writing, namely collecting, focusing, ordering, developing and clarifying. Murray suggests these processes be combined with free writing, brainstorming or mapping and applying them to any composing problem. Both Murray’s processes and Flower and Hayes (1981) processes are seen as non-linear, however it can be argued that more relative importance is placed on the recursive nature of the processes in the cognitivist view.

Expressive writing pedagogy is where the teacher avoids directives, instead facilitating students in writing fluency using classroom activities designed to empower the writers over the writing act, and taking control over their own prose. The writer is encouraged to find their personal voice. Activities such as journal writing and personal essays are designed to encourage self-discovery, where students can “first write freely and uncritically” and “can get down as many words as possible” (Elbow, 1981, p.7). Elbow (1973), who is arguably the leading exponent of the expressivist viewpoint, goes on to advocate giving value to the student writer’s individual voice. Indeed it is the expressivists that ought to be credited for their contribution in the widespread use of journals in the modern L1 and L2 writing classroom, especially to produce

topics for essays (Sullivan & Van Becker, 1982; Urzua, 1986).

There are of course many critics of the expressivist view, which may be understandable when supporters such as Elbow (1981) talk about the act of writing as a kind of “magic” that anyone who believes in their “tale” can do (p.369). One of the main criticisms is, as Williams (2003) notes, that writing is also a social tool for an audience and not just a tool for self-actualization. Also as Ramanathan and Atkinson (1999) point out the individual voice of the writer may not be conducive in a culture (such as in Japan) that downplays individual expression and rather places more emphasis on membership of a larger community.

### *Expressivist Reader*

The expressivists counter the criticisms laid on them of over indulging the writer’s individual personalised prose and apparent lack of appreciation of the reader by stating it is the writer themselves who “create an audience that conforms to the writer’s text and purpose” (Nystrand, 1986, p.61). Ede and Lunsford (1984) agree and go on to explain that, “the audience in written discourse is a construction of the writer, a created fiction” (p.160). In terms of pedagogy, teachers who believe in expressivism usually expect their students to write honestly for themselves. As Johns (1990) notes the expressivist teacher, who in the classroom setting is the de-facto primary audience, wants his or her students to write knowing “others may appreciate and critique their writing as long as the central purpose for producing text is to provide an avenue of creativity and individual expression” (p.30). Elbow (1981) sums up the expressivist view by saying “the goal of writing should be to move towards a condition in which we don’t necessarily need an audience to write and speak well” (p.190).

### *Expressivist Reality*

A view of reality is one of the key elements in composition theory and research. The expressivist view of truth and reality follows broadly the view of the cognitivists. That reality resides in the writer’s mind, or what Berlin (1982) calls the internal truth of the expressionist or Neo-Platonists. Miller and Judy (1978) go on to say that for expressivists the nature of all good writing is personal, no matter if it is an essay or a letter. Therefore the very same criticisms leveled at the cognitivists by Bizzell (1982) amongst others, of neglecting “external truth” and social contexts can very well be applied to expressivists.

### *Expressivist Language*

With regards to language, expressivist teachers generally encourage students to break out of pre-existing formats and writing styles with less focus on grammar and rules. This has been criticized for not being practical in application with the added difficulty of harnessing overly emotional or inappropriate writing particularly in the context of cross-cultural writing (Ramanathan & Atkinson, 1999). That being said, the expressivists agree with much of what the cognitivists believe to be true about language. This is understandable as both focus upon the writer and the writing process. Again, and like the cognitivists, the expressivists hold true that the language of composition is the writer’s own language, based on prior knowledge, experience and creativity. Baker (2008) believes this has great implications in not only teaching composition to mixed university classes of students whose L1 is being used for composition and students who are composing in their L2, but even for students whose L1 may be considered non-mainstream.

## SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION

### *Social Constructionist Writer*

The social constructionists believe that the act of writing is a social act (Bruffee, 1986), and can only

take place within a specific context for a specific audience. Whereas, the cognitivists and expressivists see the writer and his or her individual mental process as the originator of text, the social constructionists see this idea of the writer as an “individual” as fictional. They contend that a person only exists as a member of a group, community or society (Santos 1992). Trimbur (1989) goes on to explain that “there is nowhere else the individual can be: consciousness is the extension of social experience inward” (p.604).

Bruffee (1986) defines social construction definitively and succinctly as follows:

Social construction assumes that the matrix of thought is not the individual self but some community of knowledgeable peers and the vernacular knowledge of that community. That is, social construction understands knowledge and authority of knowledge as community generated, community maintaining symbolic artifacts. (p.777)

This group of knowledgeable peers and authority of knowledge the writer is writing for is often called the “discourse community”. A good example would be the academic discourse communities, which have particular standards, rules and practices, which must be followed in order for the writer and his or her text to be accepted. Swales (1990) has outlined a detailed definition of a discourse community. In his definition he mentions the agreement of a set of common goals, mechanisms for participation and intercommunication among its members, a shared genre or genres, specific vocabulary and a threshold of members with expertise. The writer then has to deal with this matrix in order to become an accepted member of the discourse community.

There are those such as Bruffee (1986) who believe this is of major benefit to the L2 writer as they have a standard context and structure to write in, thus reducing cognitive load and errors. While others such as Bizzell (1987) bemoan the fact that novice L2 writers must develop “multiple-literacies” and learn extra cultural and discourse repertoires that their L1 counterparts do not have to learn. Therefore they become as Bizzell coins the phrase, “outsiders”. She goes on to say L2 student writers should not be forced to acquire these extra literacies. Instead it is the discourse communities which must adapt to accept the culture of the students. Many social constructionists may see this as unrealistic and feel the reality is that because discourse communities do not readily change, the writers must change themselves and adapt.

### ***Social Constructionist Reader***

In the eyes of the social constructionists the reader is considered all-powerful (Johns, 1990). The reader is a knowledgeable expert and a member of a discourse community. It is the reader who has the power to accept or reject the writer’s text as coherent, acceptable, and adhering to the conventions of the target community or not. Therefore the writer must have knowledge of the reader’s expectations, beliefs and attitudes (Ede & Lunsford, 1984). An obvious example of this is the teacher who grades the papers, who sets the agenda and expected tone, and furthermore who is usually the one who accepts or rejects the student’s text.

### ***Social Constructionist Reality***

Social constructionists regard as exclusively social that which cognitivists and expressivists regard as individual, therefore in some respects denying the very idea of individuality. Weiner (1986) notes that if this is the case then cognition will also be seen as socially based and knowledge will also have to be socially justified and would be dependant on social relations rather than reflecting reality or specifically the individual writer’s reality. Then as Santos (2001) says, objectivity may be undesirable as it is impossible to achieve due to the naturally subjective nature of anything social.

Swales (1990) notes that this view of social reality can be clarified somewhat by understanding genres of particular discourse communities. Johns (1990) gives the example of academic discourse communities establishing their own realities through their own conventions of writing, for example developing a hypothesis, data collection methods and conventions, and analysis of data.

### *Social Constructionist Language*

For the social constructionists language does not reside in the minds of individuals, instead, "...it should be considered as originating from and constituted in the community" (Santos, 1992, p.162). New-comers must be initiated into the language and particular discourse of the discourse community. This is due to the fact that writing is seen to be a social construct, in which particular form, structure, function, and meta-language are already understood by the community members. Therefore Bizzell's (1987) "outsider" such as the novice writer, may be severely restricted in what language they can use. Johns (1990) complains that L2 writing students then often have difficulties in not fully understanding context for language use, but must still learn to "talk like engineers" for example as a requirement from academic faculty, therefore subverting or compromising their own language and voice for the requirements of the target discourse community.

## INTERACTIVISM

### *Interactivist Writer*

The interactive view of composition sees the writer as an interactant involved in dialogue with the audience (Bakhtin, 1973). As Johns (1990) explains, the text produced is what the individual writer creates through a dialogue with another conversant. In essence this means both the writer and the reader take responsibility for text coherence.

As such the interactive view can be seen as a middle ground between the process orientated cognitivists and expressivists on the one hand, who generally believe composition issues forth from the individual mind of the writer, and on the other hand the social constructionists who believe, as Bruffee (1986) says, that writing is primarily a social act and can only take place in a specific social construct or for a specific discourse community who set the agenda.

The interactivists believe in the individual writer's right to form the text but also do not deny that writing is often placed in a social "context". It should be noted as Santos (1992) points out, "social context" is very different from the idea of "social construct". Understanding social context requires the writer not to adhere to some rigid framework of conventions or meta-linguistics, rather it asks the writer to be responsible towards the reader. Hinds (1987) actually defines English as a "writer-responsible" language and goes on to say "the person primarily responsible for effective communication is the writer" (p.144). However, Hinds further explains that this may not be true for all languages. He gives the example of Japanese, Korean and Chinese, where the communication process requires the reader to understand what the writer intends to say. In effect these language can then be seen to be "reader-responsible".

The interactivist L2 English writing teacher who believes that English is indeed a "writer-responsible" language usually require students to lay out and make clear to the reader their topics, organization, arguments and transitions. Meyer (1977) calls this "pre-revealing" where the writer must pre-reveal the form and content of their text in the first few paragraphs of their text. Connor and Farmer (1990) go on to say that this is not enough, and the writer must also provide generalisations at appropriate points in the discourse and develop and maintain topics in an accessible manner for the reader. Singer (1986) adds that the organisation of the discourse must be in a manner familiar to the reader, appropriately cohesive and infor-

mation should be directly explained and clarified by the writer.

### ***Interactivist Reader***

Johns (1990) contends that audience theory in L1 composing literature has been mostly neglected in L2 writing pedagogy. However the model of reader and text interactivity which is a common feature of reading theory, research and pedagogy in the ESL and EFL context can be “extended to create a middle ground in a theory of audience in writing” (p.30). Carrell (1988) proposes the idea of reader schemata. Readers have both formal and content schemata, which once the reading process begins are activated. These reader schemata along with the content, argument and organisation of the text once matched lead to text comprehension and coherence. This idea of reader schemata is corroborated by research in the L2 writing classroom by Hillman and Kessell (1986). However, Ede and Lunsford (1984) best sum up the model in an ideal situation being a balance of writer creativity resourcefulness and vision with the equally important but different reader creativity, resourcefulness and vision.

### ***Interactivist Reality***

The interactivists believe it is up to the writer and the reader to negotiate and agree upon what is reality, since they hold true that reality and truth reside in both the writer and the reader. Although this may not be as simple as it sounds. The writer may begin by attempting to establish what reality is through their text, then the reader who possesses their own reality, within their own schemata of content and form, either accepts the writer’s argument or story, or modifies it through comprehension. So in this case as Johns (1990) explains the writer tries to convince, or at the very least appeal to the reader, of their version of reality. If the reader accepts this appeal, both writer and reader can agree upon the reality straight away. However if the reader is not convinced then the writer’s version of reality may be rejected and the rapport between writer and reader may be lost. This is of importance, because, as Ewald (1986) suggests, the aim of the writer should be to remove any suspicion by the reader that they have a lack of understanding, and also to increase communication both ways between writer and reader, and to recognise shared goals.

### ***Interactivist Language***

As the name suggests the interactivist view believes both writer and reader schemata interact and form a consensus on what is suitable and appropriate language for the text. It should be noted this differs from the social constructionist view where it is the reader, or specifically the discourse community, that dictates what is appropriate language or not.

The interactivist view espouses negotiation between writer and reader. This naturally entails concessions to be made by both parties. The writer must take into account the reader’s language ability and background. This does not suggest the writer “dumb down” their text in the case of reader language limitations, rather with this knowledge, the writer can initiate a process of reader schemata modification. The writer leads the reader by composing the text in a manner, which gradually revises the reader’s schemata and helps comprehension. One way this may be done is by extensive explanations and operational definitions rather than assuming shared knowledge of meta-language.

## **CULTURISM**

### ***Culturist Writer***

Berlin (2003) calls teachers of English “gatekeepers, influencing decisions about who will succeed to higher levels of education and greater degrees of prosperity” (p.189). He also goes on to say that college



curriculum programmes and by extension those who produce and teach them encourage the development of a certain kind of graduate and therefore a certain kind of person. The English departments where L1 composition theories often evolved were seen as not being politically neutral (Van Dijk, 1985; Hairston, 1992).

In turn, student writers from so called “non-mainstream” backgrounds which include non-native speakers or students of non-standard dialect English (Matsuda, 1999), or “outsiders” as Bizzell (1987) calls them, are often required to follow the dominant culture of the classroom. Also the teacher’s political, ideological or cultural emphasis may be forced upon the student writer (Santos, 2001). The multicultural demographic reality of a writing classroom is often not reflected in the tasks, atmosphere or expectations that the student writer faces (Servino, Guerra, & Butler, 1997).

The culturist viewpoint, or culturally situated learning viewpoint, focuses on the non-mainstream student writer if they are in an L1 dominated composing classroom, or indeed an L2 student writer in an ESL or EFL writing class, and places them in their own cultural situation whether they are non-native speakers, speakers of non-standard dialect or from different socio-economic backgrounds. The emphasis is to give voice to the writer’s own cultural, political and ideological background. This is not too dissimilar to the expressivist view. However, in the case of expressivism the writer is encouraged to express their individual voice and is led to do so pedagogically, whereas in the culturist stance, the writer composes from their own cultural viewpoint and is as such, more of an ideological issue (Williams, 2003). Giddens (1979) notes that learning cannot be understood simply as an internal process in which an individual’s mind acquires and stores knowledge for future use in any context. Rather human learning is situated and is structured by interaction of people dependent also on environment. This view can be seen to extend to the composition process by culturists.

Hairston (1992) goes on to propose a complete de-politicisation of composition. She advocates that the composition teacher is providing a skill-building course not a content course. Therefore, it is not appropriate that the composition classroom be a platform for forcing the political ideology of the teacher or institution upon students. She argues that writing classes should be simply about writing, developing the art of writing, critical thinking, and other elements of composition. Anything other than that being taught in composition classes should be seen as apprehensible.

The culturist viewpoint encourages the writer to compose in a voice that may not have been heard by the dominant culture of the classroom. This is seen as a power equalizer, allowing the inclusion of such voices that have not been heard thus offsets privileging one culture over others. These “other” cultures include diverse religious, social or gender voices (Ramanathan & Atkinson, 1999; Smitherman, 2003; Canagarajah, 2002a).

Santos (1992) notes that to some extent the L1 composition literature that points towards this viewpoint can be seen to have borrowed from linguistics and applied linguistics literature of which L2 writing is a branch. Santos believes that due to the scientific nature of L2 writing research being carried out mostly by linguists or applied linguists whose methodology has “at its foundation an idealized adherence to neutrality and objectivity”; it has managed to stay “aloof from ideology” (p.165). She goes on to agree with Hairston (1992) who finds the political nature of many L1 composition instructors, coming from a humanities background, to be over-baring (indeed in Hairston’s case distasteful) and unaccommodating to differing views. Instead she extols the seemingly impartial view of L2 writing research (which in turn influences L2 writing pedagogy) carried out by linguists and applied linguists who are “unprejudiced by value judgments about the linguistic system, its speakers [or writers] and, by extension, the sociopolitical circumstances attached to the system” (P.166). The view of Santos has been criticised by Benesch (1993, 1994) and Servino (1993) who both believe that even L2 writing instruction is ideologically biased. Both Benesch and Servino have argued that neutrality is in fact a myth, and those like Santos who believe otherwise are pandering to a current political status quo. This, Benesch (1996) goes on to say, has a negative impact on stu-

dents' interests, educationally and materially, in a form of social injustice.

### ***Culturist Reader***

Although social constructionists may argue that they are in fact creating a cultural context, which all writers can operate in on an equal footing, and providing an audience that all writers can compose for, and with who they can achieve coherence, cohesiveness and understanding. The reality is that non-mainstream or L2 writing students may not see themselves as part of that cultural context ideologically or politically. Santos (2001) explains it is this very relationship between self and society that lies at the heart of the matter. The reader in the culturist viewpoint is invited to experience something new, another culture, to sensitize themselves to influences outside of themselves. Stewart (1990) argues that this is something valuable and should be encouraged, rather than the "groupthink" mentality of social constructivism, which Sledd (1987) sees as self-serving for its adherents, without addressing the needs of society.

### ***Culturist Reality***

The culturist view of reality can be contrasted with the reality of the discourse community propounded by the social constructionists. The culturists believe that non-native or non-mainstream student writers should not have to totally conform to the cultural background or reality of an academic disciplinary community of whose creation they were never a part. Ramanathan and Atkinson (1999) have talked much about cross cultural differences, and student anxiety of having to subvert themselves or compromise their L1 personality to be an accepted member of the community. Benech (2001) presents a "rights analysis" which allows students to challenge what is required by the community, and to be part of its ongoing development.

Hairston (1992) believes one of the reasons for many composition classes lacking cultural or ideological sensitivity, is what she calls the "radical left's" influence especially in L1 composition classrooms which are housed in university English departments. This she believes is a "hotbed" where many radicals of academia reside. She fears that students are captive audiences who easily come under the political or ideological sway of their professors. This may be in an effort to please and be accepted by the teacher but may just as likely be to get a better grade.

Hairston also argues reality must first focus on student composition within literature. This, she goes on to say, must be done by writing teachers staying within their expertise of teaching writing and not politics. For this to occur teachers of writing must allow students to write about what they know and care about, and making sure student writers do not feel their reality is not acceptable because of the political viewpoints or desires of the teacher.

Hairston posits that the student composition does not have to be totally expressive and personal, as the expressivists suggest, but rather involve argument, exposition and encourage cross-cultural awareness. Themes for writing should be those, which are a reality to the student. These could include family, community rituals, familial or gender roles, cultural myths and cultural tensions. The reader can then contrast these topics with their own cultural context. Thus, allowing the writer to write something unique that will resonate with their reader, leading to discovery of others and themselves. The teacher does not presume to own the truth, rather the class is student-centered and students bring their own reality and truth. These truths may change with time but Hairston (1992) sums up by saying:

We can create a culturally inclusive curriculum in our writing classes by focusing on the experiences of our students. They are our greatest multicultural resource, one that is authentic, rich, and truly diverse. Every student brings to class a picture of the world in his or her mind that is constructed out of his or her cultural background and unique and complex experience. (p.194)

### *Culturist Language*

The idea of linguistic or language imperialism (Phillipson, 1992) is not new, but the culturists' view of writing highlights its somewhat nefarious impact in composition. "Language diversity", which has been overlooked in the past in the writing classroom, needs to be taken into account according to culturists.

Students writing in L2 are usually forced to write in not only an alien culture, but also the linguistic nuances that accompany that culture (Valdes, 2006). The culturists viewpoint urges instructors of writing to pay extra and due attention to this fact by focusing on trying to alleviate the trauma and anxiety that L2 writers feel about having to cross linguistic and cultural boundaries. This includes how L2 writers see their linguistic ability in relation to L1 writers and the power relationship that is often perceived (Currie, 2001). Belcher and Hirvela (2005) give the example of academics writing in L2 English being forced to play the role of Ginger Rogers to their L1 peers' role of Fred Astaire "doing everything Fred does but in high heels and backwards" (p.201).

Canagarajah (2006) suggests language literacy and practice may depend on factors such as cultural beliefs, genres and styles of communication, which in turn affect the attitudes and processes of composing. This he goes on to say is not to give undue importance to ideas of Kaplan's (1966) contrastive rhetoric, which highlights the cultural differences in composing, but rather in the culturist viewpoint it is the attitudes towards that difference which are important, and again highlighting the ideological stance the culturists take in contrast to the pedagogical interactivists.

Rejecting the "conversion" approach to idiomatic language, structure and use, which supposes a deficiency in L2 writers, the culturist view takes a relativist attitude towards language. L2 writers are not required to distance themselves from their L1 language discourse structures and replace them with perceived superior L1 (in most cases English) based discourses. Instead they are allowed to "shuttle" between L1 and L2 settings. The culturist teacher may feel that this will go somewhat towards alleviating the loss of confidence and alienation that many L2 writers experience (Zamel, 1995). This sense of linguistic alienation in composing is highlighted in the example case of Virginia, a Puerto Rican woman in Casanave's (1992) study who left graduate school because the conflict she felt between her own identity and values, and those of the discourse she was expected to adopt to be accepted in the academic community she one day hoped to work. Another example is the fear and anxiety of a Chinese graduate student (Currie, 2001) of losing his Chinese identity through a continual perceived need to culturally alter his composition discourse personality in an American University.

Valdes (2006), sums up by saying that although multiculturalism and diversity are fashionable words in many professional pedagogical meetings, the discussion rarely goes beyond "celebrating" cultural differences. In order for writing instructors to be effective towards L2 writers they will need extensive knowledge and understanding of the backgrounds of their students. This may require a paradigm shift in not only pedagogy but also ideology.

## CONCLUSION

The viewpoints that many teachers of L1 composition and L2 writing have on the best way to teach writing are varied, but to some extent these variances do corroborate within the prism of writing itself, whether teaching L1 writers or L2 writers. This may be due to the fact that many of these viewpoints emerged from the same root of L1 composition theory and were often attested to in the L2 writing setting by research in that context.

Some instructors favour a focus on the writer and the process of writing itself, such as the cognitivists and the expressivists. The cognitivists promoting the internalisation of organisational process patterns of

writing such as planning, drafting, editing and revising, whereas the expressivists concentration is on allowing student writers to have a free individual voice to tell their individual story.

Others focus on the audience as defining the protocols, language, truths and conventions such as the social constructionists, who view writing aimed at particular discourse communities. Others yet seek a negotiation between writer and reader. This includes the interactivists who encourage a pedagogical stance that is collaborative in nature. Then there are the culturists who reject the stringent unilateral social constructs advocated by the social constructionists on ideological grounds, preferring to let student writers compose in a multicultural setting where anxiety of L2 language and L1 identity loss are hoped to be minimised.

Although the focus of these viewpoints may be varied, all of them acknowledge that an understanding of the essential elements of composition mentioned by Berlin (1982), those of writer, reader, reality and language, must be taken into account, and any one of them cannot be ignored totally. However, because the worldviews of the parties with vested interests, that being theorists, researchers and teachers (dare it be said also the learners!) differ greatly in regards to the essential elements, a single viewpoint that all can agree on is difficult to achieve. Another reality is that viewpoints change due to circumstances and particular historical periods and may even overlap in some certain situations. However, it would be hard to deny that all of the pedagogical and ideological viewpoints mentioned in this survey can still be found in the modern L1 composition and L2 writing classrooms, and the minds of instructors, even today.

TABLE 1. L1 COMPOSITION AND L2 WRITING VIEWPOINTS DEVELOPED THROUGH THEORY:

	WRITER	READER	REALITY	LANGUAGE
<i>Cognitivists</i>	Writer focuses on processes not only the product of composition. Planning, drafting, revising are important.	Sense of audience is structured in the writer's cognitive mind.	Reality resides in the writer's mind.	Language form and content are a result of process patterns, stemming from prior knowledge.
<i>Expressivists</i>	Writer is empowered over the writing act. Writer writes honestly, freely and uncritically.	Reader may appreciate and critique text, however the central purpose is not the reader but rather the writer's avenue for creative individual expression.	Internal truth resides in the writer's mind.	Self-discovery leads to individual voice. Language expressed using less focus on grammar and rules.
<i>Social Constructionists</i>	Writing is a social act therefore the writer is not an individual, but rather a member of group or community.	Reader is all powerful, knowledgeable expert who is a member of a discourse community.	The discourse community sets reality. It decides what is acceptable and what is not.	Rules of language form, structure, function and meta-language are originated and constituted by the discourse community.
<i>Interactivists</i>	Writer is an interactant in a dialogue with the reader.	Reader uses schemata to understand text. This schemata may be modified by interacting with the writer through the text.	Writer appeals to the reader his or her version of reality. Reader either accepts, rejects or may come to accept through the writer's application.	Both writer's and reader's schemata interact to form a consensus on what is suitable and acceptable language.
<i>Culturists</i>	Writers compose in a voice that is culturally acceptable to themselves, without having to distance themselves from their L1 discourse structures.	Reader is invited to experience something new, another culture, to sensitize themselves to influences outside themselves.	Reality emanates from the writer's cultural background. Themes, which are a truth for the writer.	Linguistic and cultural nuances are not enforced but rather variety is acceptable to reduce L2 writer anxiety.

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