

Dialogue Journals and Homework Assignments Compared :

An Interpretive Research Study

Peter E. McDonough

INTRODUCTION

To help in the evaluation process, to give classwork a meaningful 'coda', to give students time to revise and reformulate topics or grammatical content or vocabulary covered in class, teachers assign homework-the end result is usually some written document that is to be handed in for evaluation. In assigning such written homework, the teacher's implicit desire is to stimulate in students a rich, sustained response. In this, most teachers find themselves sorely disappointed. Results are often perfunctory, repetitive and impoverished of imagination. Homework is often lacking in a sense of engagement that one suspects is not just a result of low proficiency in the second language (L2).

Logically one would ask: What is it we, as teachers, can do to stimulate students to approach written assignments with more enthusiasm, with more of a sense of responsibility for and to both 'authorship' and 'audience'.

DIALOGUE JOURNAL WRITING

In first language (L1) writing pedagogy a philosophical debate has been going on for almost two decades over a 'product' or 'process' view of writing.¹

This study does not concern itself with the issue of product vs. process-oriented writing instruction. However it is informed by the major theoretical and pedagogical issues that the product/process discussion has brought to the forefront.

In the literature on process-oriented writing pedagogy in L1 a sub-genre on a teaching technique known as dialogue journal (DJ) writing—which had been used with limited English proficiency students (LEPs) in the classroom of one Los Angeles elementary school teacher—began to appear in the late 1970s and early 1980s.² Many of these studies were massive, United States government funded studies and were disseminated by the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) and the United States Department of Education, National Institute of Education, Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC).

It was through an article by Spack and Sadow (1983), that I became acquainted with this teaching tool. I had started to teach a writing class for the first time and found student writing to be sterile and purposeless. I introduced DJ writing with a number of goals in mind: (1) as a means of engaging the students in a dialogue, (2) as a vehicle by which students would be writing to a known and responsive audience, (3) to provide a forum in which students would be free to write on any topic they chose, (4) as a medium through which teacher response would be to the content not to the form of student writing, and (5) as a vehicle for providing a non-hierarchical environment where student and teacher would be equals in building a dialog.

My first year's experience with DJs was quite interesting. I became intrigued with the issue of topic control through readings in the extensive literature on questions and turn-taking in the second

language acquisition (SLA) literature. A persistent theme in the research on DJs in both L1 and L2 was the oral nature of DJs and how they contained many aspects common to conversation.³ The conclusions drawn from classroom observation studies and research on display questions in the SLA literature led me to posit a hypothesis that perhaps the same dynamic was at work in my writing classes' homework-namely, that teacher-fronted, initiate-respond-feedback and display question classwork in some sense was similar to homework assignments whose topics were pre-selected by the teacher. It is by this circuitous route that I came to posit my initial research question: Do students write differently when (a) they are free to select topic and (b) when the topic is pre-selected for them? As I began to look at the student corpus that comprised my data base, the initial research question seemed to change. It was difficult to compare the two types of writing assignments-topic-free and topic-controlled-it was more profitable to look at the data in terms of the quality of writing; although many of the topic-controlled assignments were pre-selected, the majority were in fact quite "free" in the sense of what the student wished to write about.

An interpretive approach to research often finds the researcher reevaluating initial hypotheses and shaping subsequent hypotheses as new interpretations come to light. After a number of reevaluations of my data I decided to seek an answer to the question of whether there were any qualitative differences in the writing that results from guided textbook writing tasks and DJ writing tasks.

SETTING AND SUBJECTS

In 1993 I taught three, first-year English conversation classes in

the Faculty of Language and Literature at a medium-sized Tokyo-area university. All the students in these classes were American Literature majors. Classes were held once a week for ninety minutes (about 24 sessions in one school year).

Enrollment for each class averaged 17 students (52 students in all). These three classes were held on the same day and the same materials and classroom procedures were used in each class. Two textbooks were used—one was an information-gap text, the other was a 'jig-saw' reading text. Students worked in groups to solve the problems/tasks for each lesson. Teacher input set the stage for the activity and once the activity began, the role of the teacher became a consultative one. Seventeen homework assignments were given.⁴

On top of homework assignments, students could choose to rewrite assignments in which their work was evaluated using a code that only showed where and what kind of problem existed⁵—nine students consistently took advantage of this rewriting exercise. It was explained that this rewriting exercise was only for the individual student's benefit and those who chose not to rewrite would in no way be judged less proficient or less serious than those who chose to rewrite. Students were also required to write a DJ once a week—there was a great deal of individual variation as to the total number of DJs handed in over the 21 sessions that were selected for the data base.⁶

DATA BASE

Since there was great individual variation in the number of homework and DJ assignments handed in, it was necessary for me to set a minimum limit for both types of assignments. I arbitrarily decided that for each individual chosen, a minimum of 13 homework

assignments and nine DJ assignment had to have been handed in-these numbers would then allow me to randomly select five homework and five DJ assignments.⁷ Out of 52 students, 15 students (5, 6 and 4 each, respectively from the three classes-all females) were selected. I was not particularly interested in matching up homework and DJ assignment handed in during the same time frame. I wished to have a randomly selected corpus of ten assignments (five homework/five DJ) from each of the 15 students. Luckily all DJs had been dated by the students so I was able to arrange them chronologically-the order of homework assignments was recorded in my teacher's book. It is necessary to make one caveat here-the students that handed in the required number of homework and DJ assignments in order to be included in this study were not necessarily the higher proficiency level students as judged by their in-class performance-i.e., their English conversational ability. This is one reason that I feel DJs are such a valuable pedagogical tool. In many cases I was quite surprised at the contrast between those who were practically silent or infrequent classroom participants yet talkative, intimate, inquisitive and imaginative out-of-class participants in the homework and especially in the DJ assignments. I think this is an important issue for student evaluation because too often teachers (especially Western teachers) are apt to stress active participation in their judgements of students and this may not always be a wise choice (especially with Asian students). A number of studies have shown that it is often the students who are quiet and observant who end up being the 'better' students in the long run.⁸

PROCEDURES

The DJs and homework assignments were arranged in their chronological order and then each assignment was read holistically, with no set or pre-determined evaluative categories. I wanted to see how each piece of writing stood up as a 'piece of writing' in and of itself. I used only my native-speaker intuitions in this first evaluation. (This is one of two areas in this study where it would have been better to have had independent raters.)

I wrote down my general impressions of each assignment using such phrases in my notes as: "coherent", "cohesive", "logical progression", "grammatically 'bumpy'", "well-elaborated", "lots of complex sentences", "repetitive", "boring", "ambitious", "imaginative", etc.⁹ After this first impressionistic/evaluative reading, a count of the number of words in each assignment was made to see if one type of assignment was generally longer than the other type of assignment.¹⁰

Next, a task analysis of the homework assignments was made to see to what extent the textbook lesson controlled the content of the student writing-especially for topic and vocabulary. The communicative context affects aspects of the language produced.¹¹

As a fourth step, a tabulation of the number of topics and the type of topics in the DJs was made. There was such a wide variety of topics that students chose to write about, it was felt that a pattern could have emerged if the entire student corpus was analyzed by topic alone. DJ researchers have claimed that topic type changes over a period of time as students get used to DJ writing-claims have been made especially about Japanese L2 writers-that these writers start out with depersonalized topics, and that as their confidence in both their writing and their trust in the teacher grows their topics become more personalized.¹²

Next, patterns of vocabulary use were examined. I was particularly interested in phrasal verbs, since Sinclair (1991) has claimed that non-native speakers (NNSs) avoid them. It had been my impression from earlier preliminary research that this was not true—at least in cases where students had time to plan and think about their writing. I was also interested in any vocabulary that, through my experience of teaching students of similar proficiency and maturity for many years, I knew to be unusual or infrequent or humorously used or particularly appropriate, colloquially. Focused on vocabulary, I became aware of individual words or phrases that I have chosen to categorize as “emotion-laden” (“very surprised”, “felt great”, “very fond of”, “wonderful”, “has a good time”)- this type of vocabulary is, most naturally, more prevalent in the DJs, but not absent in the homework assignments. It seems likely that when a student chooses to show a strong preference or opinion, that student is personally engaged in her writing. While focused on a search for emotion-laden vocabulary I decided to create a similar category that displayed, not so much an engagement with the topic as an engagement with the audience. The DJs were reread for examples of what I called “direct address” (“Please watch the movie [teacher’s name].”, “I’ll see you again.”, “Happy Birthday [teacher’s name].”—some word or phrase that showed a sense that both the reader and the writer had shared the same specific experience or that the student-writer was consciously aware of her audience. This led naturally to the next category—questions that were directed at the reader (“Do you like movies,[teacher’s name]?”), “How have you ever thought?”). There is a great deal of writing on the importance of questions in the SLA literature. The DJ literature is also well-represented by research on

questions.¹³

One reason that researchers feel DJs are so useful is that students, on the whole, initiate more questions in DJs than in classroom situations.

As I was rereading the DJ and homework assignments I started to sense that pragmatically, there was a qualitative difference between the two types of writing, but could not easily categorize this aspect of the discourse. Fortunately I came across the research of Roger Shuy who has done a lot of work on the writing of DJs by L1 and L2 English language students. He has developed a taxonomy that I used to examine the language functions of each sentence in both types of writing.¹⁴

When rereading the assignments, especially the DJs, I began to notice words and phrases that I eventually called "oral expressions/metacomments"-such terms as "by the way" or "Oh, my God!"-they seemed to signal that the student was writing as if she were speaking.¹⁵ Naturally, these were only present in the DJ assignments. I borrowed the word "metacomments" from Gutstein (1986) who defines these as comments made on the writing process-I used the term to mean any comment made about writing, classwork, or my personal interaction with the individual student.¹⁶

Finally, the assignments were all reread a last time to see if the categories listed above made sense and to help in regaining a holistic picture of the individual writing assignments.

INTERPRETATION OF DATA AND CONCLUSION

When the DJ and homework assignments were first read

holistically, I felt that, the DJs stood up as better pieces of writing. At first I was not able to see why this feeling continued with each reading, but gradually it seemed that where the text provided all the information needed to do the homework assignments, students assumed that the reader-audience shared the same background information, so their writing tended to be unelaborated. Assignments stemming from text-controlled topics and data were the most poorly written pieces of writing. Where the homework assignment allowed complete freedom as to how the topic was to be dealt with, the writing was holistically much more cohesive. Those assignments that were rather parsimonious as to freedom of content were written with very repetitive and formulaic sentences. In contrast, DJ assignments were often complete, elaborated pieces of writing. The topic was generally one unfamiliar to the reader-audience and this was taken into account by the student-writer through use of background information, explanation of Japanese terms and cohesive devices such as anaphora and pronouns. Narratives and descriptions were easy to follow, as many sentence connectors were used-more than in those homework assignments that provided most of the background information.

The quantitative word-count unexpectedly showed that students wrote, on the whole, a little more in homework assignments than in DJ assignments. I had expected students to approach homework assignments with a "get-it-over-with"-attitude. Granted, the mean number of words for all homework assignments was 111.31 and for DJ assignments 107.11-not such a great difference. It is also true that eight (53%) of the students wrote more in their homework assignments-only a 5% difference from the seven who wrote more in their DJ assignments. I did not use any statistical tests to see whether

the difference between the length of DJ and homework assignments was significant-using a word-processor word-count function, the differences do not seem to be so. It would appear that the students were willing to invest the time and effort in both type of assignments.

As mentioned above, those homework assignments that provided most of the data for the individual assignment were repetitive and lacking in coherence. There was little attempt to link sentences-in many cases paragraphs were written as if they were collections of lists. In those homework assignments that gave free reign to topic development, homework assignments resembled DJ assignments. Homework assignments were not evaluated in the sense that letter or number grades were given-errors were noted using an editing code known to the students. I would also often make comments such as: "watch out for tense confusion", "use a greater variety of sentence connectors", etc. I feel that I gave the students the impression that homework assignments were really a summing up of the activities in the information-gap tasks done in class-so were not meant so much as evaluative documents but as logical codas to group activities. Perhaps this is why so many homework assignments seem less coherent than DJs-because the link to the classroom activity provided the coherence. Also, it could be assumed that because I was a part of that classroom activity students wrote to me as a familiar audience that shared all the necessary background knowledge. In any case, many of the homework assignments could not have stood alone as pieces of writing.

Students were given the chance to rewrite their homework assignments if they wished-no extra credit was given for this. Seven students chose to do a rewrite at least once, and two students wrote

four and five rewrites, respectively. I am not sure what this indicates-the students who did rewrites were generally the better writers-perhaps they were also perfectionists.

The topics that the students chose to write about were quite varied. Naturally the major themes were concerned with university life, meeting new friends, and living alone for the first time (there was, disappointingly, very little comment on the academic part of their university life).¹⁷ There was greater detachment in the early DJs that became less detached and more personal as the year went on-but from the very first DJs, many students wrote about personal things. No comparison can be made with the homework assignments as far as topic is concerned.

Vocabulary use seems to have been slightly more varied and more ambitious in the DJs, but this may be just a reflection of the wider variety of topics. Topic-controlled homework assignments more or less controlled what vocabulary could be used. I did not find students avoiding phrasal verbs-in many cases a phrasal verb was chosen over a non-phrasal verb.¹⁸ There was a noticeable trend in homework assignments that particular phrasal verbs were used more than once in the same piece of writing more often than in the DJs, but this again may reflect the fact that homework assignments forced the students to write in a more repetitive manner. As for emotion-laden words, they certainly appeared more often in DJ assignments than in homework assignments: out of 75 DJs, 73 had at least one emotion-laden word or phrase. 53 out of 75 homework assignments had at least one emotion-laden word or phrase.¹⁹ In any case, as mentioned above, it was expected that DJs would show a greater variety and frequency of emotion-laden words, and this was born out

by the analysis. The problem, however, is how to interpret this—was this in fact a useful or meaningful category? It was for DJs, I am not so sure it was for homework assignments.

As mentioned above, direct address was a phenomenon found only in the DJ assignments. I was a little disappointed that there were so few of them. The same holds true for questions. I had hoped to make the DJs a truly two-way communicative device. I asked a lot of questions dealing with the content of the students writing and made many direct address statements to the students in response to their writing. I did not get back in return the same amount of commitment as evidenced by direct address/questions or recycling—one student asked at least one question in every DJ, and two students asked questions in four DJs. I was interested in direct address because I felt that it would be through direct address that students could display use of a wider range of speech act realizations than they could have in the classroom. I felt the same way about questions—the DJs were the perfect place for students to ask questions that they were reluctant to ask in class.²⁰

Another category—oral expressions/metacomments—was only found in DJ assignments. They were not common. Four students in particular were responsible for more than half of the 28 examples found in this category. As mentioned earlier, Gutstein (1986) feels that these types of expressions serve as indications of the “orality” of DJ writing.²¹ I agree that there are many areas in which DJs resemble oral interaction—I wish somehow to reinforce this “oral” nature and have my students enter into more of a dialogue—to have students write DJs that are less like monologues. Perhaps the sample size of only five DJs has given me a distorted picture of the nature of the

engagement.²²

It was in the analysis of language functions that interesting observations were made. DJ and homework assignments that allowed a great deal of freedom, or that let the student place herself in the mind of the speaker, gave scope to a wide-range of language function use. For both types of assignments the most common type of language function was Reporting Personal Facts (whether as first person or as a speaker representing another speaker). Beyond this particular language function, the patterns are completely different for both kinds of writing. Language functions appearing more than 1% of the time made up about 98% of the DJ corpus and were spread out over nine language functions. The language functions in the homework assignments that appeared more than 1% of the time made up about 97% of the homework corpus and represented only five language functions. Reporting Personal Facts and Reporting Opinions made up 76% of the DJ corpus-this seems natural, since students were writing about subjects that concerned them personally and in which they held strong opinions. 69% of the homework corpus was made up of Reporting (as a speaker other than first person) Personal Facts and Reporting General Facts, which would be consistent with assignments that gave background data shared with all others who had done the particular lesson (this shared data is what defined 'general facts').

Assuming that the production of a large variety of language functions is a sign of more opportunities for practicing writing in English, and thus a chance for students to be able to express in English, and thus a chance for students to express a fuller range of English facility, it may be that assigning DJ writing in almost any

type of L2 English class would be beneficial.

In comparing the two types of writing, it seemed that when the writing context was depersonalized and directly communicative, most of the students had some difficulty-grammar broke down and sentences were simple and repetitious.

As Blanton (1989) has written, the real value of DJ writing is that it provides a situation for students to write to a specific reader who is interested in the communicative force of the writing. DJs help to free NNSs to experiment with conversational roles that are usually impossible to experience in the quick give-and-take of oral conversation.

Kreeft-Peyton, Staton, Richardson and Wolfram(1990)

“...when given the opportunity to write for authentic purposes, for a familiar or known audience who responds with interest and involvement, ESL [EFL] students tend to express themselves in more creative and sophisticated ways than they do in more restricted environments.”(pg.143)

They write further that some researchers wonder how DJs can call upon the higher processes supposedly involved in expert writing-these researchers see DJ (or as Kreeft-Peyton, Staton, Richardson and Wolfram(1988) call it ‘expressive writing’) as a preliminary or bridge to other (i.e. academic) writing.

I found that DJ writing and homework assignments that let students have full reign in using their imagination proved to exhibit richer and more satisfying pieces of writing. Homework assignments that set out a topic and provided background data seemed to elicit written language that was less successful.

I do not conclude that any attempt at teaching academic writing

should be discarded, however it should be taken into account in any language course, whether it be a general conversation class or a class on writing, that this 'expressive' dimension is very important and may be an excellent medium in which students can experiment with vocabulary, language functions and differing speech act realizations.

As to further research, as stated above, I was disappointed with the infrequency with which students asked me questions or followed up on comments I had made in their DJs. I would like to find out what teacher strategies work best in creating a truly interactive environment in which the student asks more questions, answers more questions, refers to previous DJ topics, and continuously recycles and elaborates on subjects of mutual interest to the interlocutors. A second area of research that might be of some interest is to see how a selected group of speech acts-such as complaining or advising, developed over a year-long DJ writing period.

NOTES

1. In the United States the 'process' approach has apparently become the new orthodoxy. L2 writing pedagogy has also seen a great deal of discussion on this issue-Zamel (1982), (1983) and (1987), and Raimes (1983) and (1985) and have written often cited articles on the process-oriented approach to writing in L2. Not all L2 researchers have been converted to the process approach-some, such as Swales (1990), Horowitz (1986) and Shih (1986) have argued that EFL students need to learn the discourse of academic writing and that the process-oriented approach has not helped L2 English writers to become writers of acceptable academic English.

2. McClure (1978); Staton, Shuy, Kreeft and Reed (1982); Shuy (1982); Staton, Kreeft and Hamilton (1982); and Kreeft, Shuy, Staton, Reed and Morroy (1984).
3. See Dolly (1989) and (1990); Gutstein (1983) and (1986).
4. The least number of homework assignments handed in was zero-four students, and the most handed in was seventeen-three students. (Mean number of homework assignments handed in was 9.37).
5. i.e., "No." equaled a problem with singular or plural noun/verb use.
6. The least being no DJs (two students) and the most being 25 (also two students). (Mean number of DJs handed in-9.37).
7. The greater minimum number required for homework assignments reflected the fact that there was a wider range of task-types in the homework assignments, while, generally speaking, DJs remained stable in task-type over the 21 weeks.
8. See especially Day (1984) and Slimani (1989) and (1991), both touch on this issue.
9. Others were: "well-written", "didn't really fulfill assignment", "copies text format", "overly-simplistic vocabulary", "really outdid herself", "appropriate ending", "obvious dictionary mining", "seems too detached", "over-simplistic grammar", "disjointed", "too short", "formulaic", "hard to understand".
10. In all of the studies on DJs this seemed to be an accepted procedure-some researchers have claimed that quantity, though not equated with quality, does indicate a willingness to write-Peyton and Staton et al, (1988); Gutstein (1983).
11. Writing is highly context bound as Kreeft-Peyton, Staton,

Dialogue Journals and Homework Assignments Compared :

Richardson et.al(1988) write, and factors that particularly influence writing outcomes are teacher assumptions and expectations about the writing, the purpose of the writing, the topic and genre, the relationship of the writer to the audience, the type of talk surrounding the writing and the nature of the response to the writing (Kreeft-Peyton, Staton, Richardson et.al(1990, pp. 143-144)). They use a schematic in their article (of the multi-level range of factors found in any piece of writing) that I found helpful in this task analysis (pg.146):

DJs	PURPOSE	HOMEWORK
to communicate	TOPIC CHOICE	to be evaluated
self-selected	STUDENT	other-selected
extensive	KNOWLEDGE	limited
	ABOUT THE TOPIC	
familiar	AUDIENCE	unspecified
genuine message	RESPONSE	grade/correction

12. See Gutstein (1983) and (1986); Meloni (1983); Staton, Kreeft and Hamilton (1982).
13. Schatzberg-Smith (1989) and (1990).
14. Language functions as adapted from Shuy (1982),(1984) and (1993), and Gutstein (1983) and (1986).
 1. Reporting Personal Facts = RPF
 - *(1a. Reporting (as speaker other than first person = (sp)) Personal Facts) = RspRF
 2. Reporting General Facts = RspGF
 - *(2a. Reporting (sp) General Facts) = RspGF
 3. Reporting Opinions = RO
 - *(3a. Reporting (sp) Opinions) = RspO
 4. Requesting Personal Information = RqPI
 - [5. Requesting Academic Information-this category did not appear

in the data.]

6. Requesting General Information = RqGI

7. Requesting Opinions = RqO

*(7a. Requesting (sp) Opinions) = RqspO

[8. Requesting Clarification-this category did not appear in the data.]

9. Thanking = T

*(9a. Thanking (sp)) = Tsp

10. Evaluating = E

*(10a. Evaluating (sp)) = Esp

11. Predicting = P

*(11a. Predicting (sp)) = Psp

12. Complaining = C

13. Apologizing = A

14. Giving Directives = GD

** (15. Greetings/Salutations) = G

*** (16. Rhetorical Questions) = RhQ

* = categories that were added to the original Shuy/Gutstein taxonomy, and which appeared only in Homework assignments

** = appeared only in DJs

*** = appeared twice in DJs and once in Homework assignments

Examples of language functions:

RPF = I forget my mother's birthday!

RspPF =* He was hard up for the money.

RGF =* There are much tulips in Holland.

RspGF =* He must to vaccinate all the smallpox people.

RO = I hate June!

Dialogue Journals and Homework Assignments Compared :

RspO =* I am the Housing Committee lady and I think you had better not take this apartment.

RqPI =* How do you think so about this problem, Mr. McConough?

RqGI =* Is Japanese Christmas as same as American one?

RqO =* Do you think I am a crazy?

RqspO =* His boss asked him: "Why do you feel such?"

T =* I appreciate your trouble for teaching us.

Tsp =* Paul's wife was grateful for his hard work.

E =* Everybody happy to have no class today.

Esp = The second apartment is too small for a big family.

P = I am going to go abroad without fail next year!

Psp =* His wife will stop work the baby is born.

C = The weather is rainy. I cannot dry my clothes. I hate June!

A = I was happy to have no class-I am sorry.

GD = Mr. McDonough please see this movie.

G = Hello! How are you? Better?

RhQ =* I study English for six years. I cannot speak it. Why?

15. Oral Expressions/Metacomments

By the way

Bye-Bye (!!)

Hello!!

(This time) I would like to talk about X

*During the class

As to this

*in [to] tell you the truth

*As [In] the evidence

this is only an example

Oh, wonderful!

Oh, my God!!

I don't mean to talk about X

But, to my regret

(It takes about 20 minutes. [This was an aside specifically addressed to the audience.]

I was shocked. Why?...Because

I hear

A Happy New Year!!

"Happy Birthday Peter!"

*This was the only occurrence of a metacomment-a direct reference to the act of writing or to some procedural event in the classroom.

16. In this area Gutstein also suggests that one look for what she calls "loudness" (the absence of normal writing conventions or the use of capitalization, underlining, exclamation) and "gesture" (drawing pictures) (Gutstein, 1986, pp.22-25). I decided not to bother with these last two categories, but feel that they would be of interest in a study with a much larger corpus.
17. Many of these students were putting a lot of energy into their club activities-these are very important socializing institutions in Japanese university life. On the surface they might seem frivolous and shallow, but to these first-year students they are very important because they are the deciding factors in who they will be intimately associated with in their coming school years.
18. This was an intuitive conclusion-I had no way of knowing if students were selecting phrasal verbs over single verbs, however, I had stressed quite a number of times that they should buy the *Cobuild English Language Dictionary* and consult it for frequency use. Yet at the same time I was sending, I think, confusing messages

because I asked students to try and write their (DJs especially) assignments with the English that they had in their heads and to try and consult dictionaries as seldom as possible.

19. There seems to be general consensus in the literature on writing pedagogy that the less emotion-laden, and more detached the writing, the more acceptable it is to academic gatekeepers. However, the homework assignments I gave were not for a course in academic writing and therefore my expectations were that there was to be more engagement on the part of students in all their writing-I never explicitly stated this and perhaps I am at fault for not making my conceptualization of these homework assignments clear to the students from the start of the course.
20. This is an area in which I wish to carry out further research, especially on student questions (and topic recycling).
21. An important concept for most of the researchers on DJ writing because this presumed oral nature of DJ writing allows these researchers to use the theories, categories and taxonomies developed for conversational analysis, classroom oral interaction research, pragmatics and speech act theory, and a host of other related fields in SLA and linguistics.
22. Many of the students selected for this study wrote more than 15 DJs over the school year. In a follow-up study it may be fruitful to select two of the best DJ writers and two of the least successful DJ writers from this study and look at their whole-year output, and also to see if over time, they exhibit any developmental changes in their understanding of the dialogic nature of the DJs.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Anderson, J. and Beretta, A. (Eds.)(1991). *Evaluations of language programs*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press.
- Blanton, L. (1987). Reshaping ESL students' perceptions of writing. *ELT Journal* 42/2, 112-118.
- Dolly, M. (1989). Conversation management in the dialogue journals of adult ESL students. Technical Report ERIC No. ED 311 711.
- (1990). Adult ESL students' management of dialogue journal interaction. *TESOL Quarterly* 24/2, 317-320.
- Gutstein, S. (1983). Using language functions to measure fluency. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of TESOL, Toronto, Ont, Can., March, 1983, 41 pp, ERIC No. ED 240 871.
- (1986). *Toward the assessment of communicative competence in writing: An analysis of dialogue journal writing of Japanese adult ESL students*. Unpublished dissertation, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., U.S. (235 pp.).
- Horowitz, D. (1986). What professors actually require: Academic tasks for the ESL classroom. *TESOL Quarterly* 20, 445-462.
- Kreeft, J, Shuy, R., Staton, J., Reed, L. and Morroy, R. (1984). *Dialogue writing: Analysis of student-teacher interactive writing in the learning of English as a second language*. Final report to the National Institute of Education, Washington, D.C., U.S.: Center for Applied Linguistics (435 pages) ERIC No. ED 252 097.
- McClure, P. Jones (1978). Knowing opportunities: Some possible benefits and limitations of dialogue journals in adult second language instruction. Unpublished Masters thesis, School for International Training, Brattleboro, VR, U.S. ERIC No. ED 324 907.

- Meloni, C. (1983). What do university EFL students write about in dialogue journals? Revised version of a paper presented at the Annual Convention of the Washington Area TESOL, 4th, Washington, D.C., U.S., 8pp, ERIC No. ED 240 885.
- Peyton, J. Kreeft, Staton, J. (Eds.)(1991). *Writing our lives: Reflections on dialogue journal writing with adults learning English*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J., U.S.: CAL/Prentice Hall Regents
- Peyton, J. Kreeft, Staton, J. (Eds.)(1993). *Dialogue journals in the multilingual classroom: Building language fluency and writing skills through written interaction*. Norwood, N.J., U.S.: Ablex.
- Peyton, J. Kreeft, Staton, J., Richardson, G., Wolfram, W. (1988). Beyond writing assignments: The influence of writing task on ESL students' written production. Paper Presented at the 22nd Annual TESOL Convention, March 8-13, 1988, Chicago, IL, U.S., 60 pp, ERIC No.ED 295 496.
- Peyton, J. Kreeft, Staton, J. Richardson, G. and Wolfram, W.(1990). The influence of writing task on ESL students' written production. Research in the Teaching of English, 24(2): 142-171.
- Raimes, A. (1983). Anguish as a second language? Remedies for composition teachers. In Friedman, A., Pringle, I. and Yalden, J. (Eds.), *Learning to write: First language/second language*, pp.258-272. London, U.K.: Longman.
- (1985). What unskilled writers do as they write: A classroom study. *TESOL Quarterly* 19, 229-258.
- Schazberg-Smith, K. (1989). Dialogue journal writing and the initial college experience of academically underprepared students. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, CA, U.S.,

- March, 27-31, 1989, 42pp. ERIC No. ED 308 737.
- Shih, M. (1986). Content-based approaches to teaching academic writing. *TESOL Quarterly* 20, 617-648.
- Shuy, R. (1982). Analysis of language functions in dialogue journal writing. In, Staton, J. and Shuy, R. (Eds.), pg.83-168.
- (1984). The functions of language functions in the dialogue journal interactions of nonnative English speakers and their teacher. In, Kreeft, J. and Shuy, R. (Eds.)(1984), pg.204-245.
- (1993). Using language functions to discover a teacher's implicit theory of communicating with students. In Peyton, J. and Staton, J. (Eds.)(1993), pg.127-154.
- Sinclair, J. (1991). *Corpus, concordance, collocation*. Oxford, U.K.: Oxford University Press
- Slimani, A. (1989). The role of topicalization in classroom language learning. *System* 17/2, 223-234.
- (1991). Evaluation of classroom interaction. In, Anderson, J. and Beretta, A. (Eds.)(1991), 197-221.
- Spack, R. and Sadow, C. (1983). Student-teacher working journals in ESL freshman composition. *TESOL Quarterly* 17/4, 575-593.
- Staton, J., Kreeft, J. and Hamilton, S. (1982). Topics: What do they write about? In, Staton J. and Shuy, R. et al (Eds.), pg.31-71.
- Staton, J., Shuy, R., Kreeft, J. Reed, L. (1982). *Analysis of dialogue journal writing as a communicative event*. Vol 1 and Vol 2. Final report to the National Institute of Education, Washington, D.C., U.S.: Center for Applied Linguistics (737 pages) ERIC No. ED 214 196 and ED 214 197.
- Swales, J. (1990). *Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings*. Cambridge University Press.

Dialogue Journals and Homework Assignments Compared :

Zamel, V. (1982) Writing: The process of discovering meaning.

TESOL Quarterly 16, 195-209.

----- (1983). The composing processes of advanced ESL students:

Six case studies. *TESOL Quarterly* 17, 165-187.

----- (1987). Resent research on writing pedagogy.

TESOL Quarterly 21, 697-715.