

GENERATION 1.5 ASIAN AMERICANS' TRANSITION TO COLLEGE:  
CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSES IN ACADEMIC LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

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*To my parents who gave up much to give me a better life.*

감사합니다!

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## ABSTRACT

This exploratory case study with quantitative and qualitative data aimed to more fully understand the experiences, challenges, and successes of Generation 1.5 Asian American students in Hawaii's public high schools and colleges. Data analysis was conducted through three main theoretical lenses: 1) writing as a mode of learning, 2) social justice education, and 3) language socialization theories of English language learners.

Social justice education includes principles of equity, activism, and social literacy (Ayers, Quinn, and Stovall, 2009). In the realm of composition, teaching for social justice, ideally, would mean teaching students that writing can be a tool to overcome injustices to empower themselves. However, Generation 1.5 students are "shut out" from socially and academically interacting with higher achieving native English speakers (Frodesen, 2009; Murie & Fitzpatrick, 2009). Even in colleges, Generation 1.5 language socialization issues in composition studies have been largely ignored (Matsuda & Matsuda, 2009). This is a problem since in order to gain academic literacy, students need formal and informal interaction (Gee, 1987) and exposure to models in natural, meaningful settings in indirect and direct teaching-learning situations (Van Schalkwyk, Bitzer, & Van der Walt, 2009).

Surveys of 261 public high school graduates taking first year composition courses at two community colleges and one four-year university were used to identify 30 Generation 1.5 Asian American students for potential interviews. Nine students and eight faculty members from the three campuses were interviewed for this study.

Findings indicated a lack of access to rigorous college preparatory courses for Generation 1.5 students that make their transition to college and their academic literacy development a challenge. The study showed that more writing to learn, in addition to learning to write, and increased integration of the writing process in high schools are needed to help Generation 1.5 students better transition to college. In colleges, instruction and expectations at community and four year colleges were varied, and instructors sometimes had limited awareness of Generation 1.5 academic literacy development. More articulation between colleges and high schools is recommended to better serve the needs of Generation 1.5 Asian American students in Hawaii's public schools.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### Prologue

*An 18 year Hawaii public high school graduate felt prepared for college because she had taken and received above average grades all throughout her schooling. As a Chinese American immigrant who began US schooling at age ten, she always lacked confidence in her English language abilities, especially after the school decided to place her back a grade for remediation of her English language skills when she first arrived in Hawaii.*

*After taking many college preparatory classes, including Advanced Placement in high school, which she had to “fight” her way into through her teachers, she felt ready for college. Unfortunately, when she entered her first college class that required critical thinking and writing skills, she had considerable obstacles and received a letter grade of D on her first writing assignment. When she asked her professor about her grade, he told her that her argumentative essay was written simplistically in a basic five-paragraph essay format, and she had not considered the rhetoric and language adaptation expected in writing for an academic audience.*

*Being unfamiliar with college-level writing created difficulties for her and no one in her family could help; they had never attended a US college. Beyond these issues in college-level writing, other hurdles she continued to struggle with were her introverted personality and lack of confidence in socializing and speaking with her native English-speaking peers.*

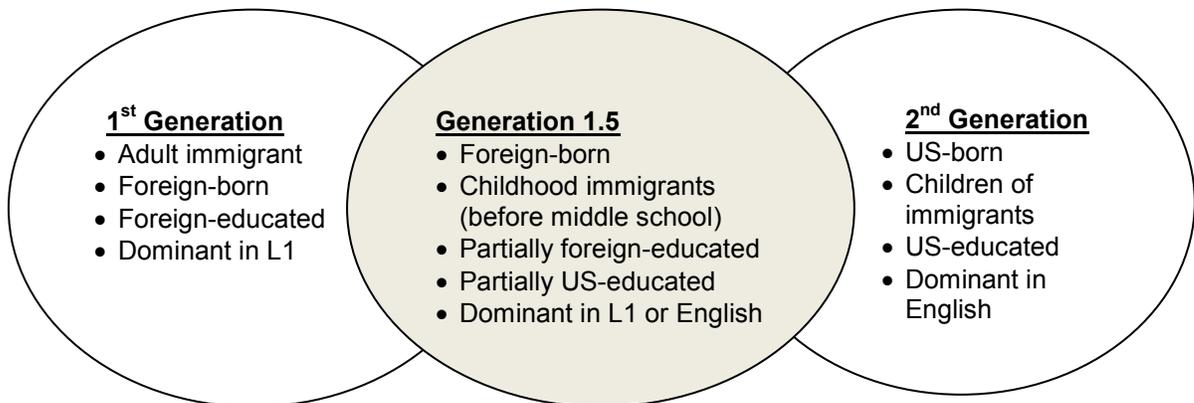
The high school student in the narrative above could be a typical Hawaii public school graduate aspiring to pursue a postsecondary education at one of the University of Hawaii's two or four year college campuses (hereafter UH). Besides not being prepared to think critically and being introverted, she had yet another obstacle. She did not feel able to advocate for herself or her needs which might have been due to a lack of opportunities to socialize into US academic environment. She felt obligated to follow the rules and systems of the schools even when they did not meet her needs. Even though she had received English Language Learner (ELL) services for several years, once she had exited from the program, she received no further assistance from the school.

The Generation 1.5 Asian American student above had challenges acculturating into US schools. Her challenges include learning in a schooling system that did not adequately meet her academic or socialization needs. She often had difficulties defining her language and cultural identity and faced family tensions connected to high parental expectations. These challenges are further complicated by the stereotypes of educators about the "model minority" Asian student that often cause schools and teachers to fail to support students like her in terms of policies, programs, and resources (Kumashiro, 2006).

Longing to belong is a trite but true socialization issue many adolescents encounter, and immigrant students' experiences in adapting socially to a new environment are even more problematic because they create challenges to academic success. The Generation 1.5 (G 1.5), the immigrant group focused upon in this study, has unique and distinct characteristics. It is a group that has often been misidentified or overlooked (Forrest, 2006). Some define G 1.5 as foreign-born US residents who have more experience in American schooling than first generation residents and share some of

the characteristics of US born residents in terms of knowing the colloquial language, slang, and behaviors (Asher & Case, 2008; Louie, 2009; Miele, 2003). Others define this group of immigrants specifically in terms of age as foreign-born residents who came to the US between the ages of six and twelve (Lee, 2001; Louie, 2009; Rumbaut, 2004). Roberge, Siegal, and Harklau (2009) have defined G 1.5ers as English Language Learners, who arrived in the US during childhood years, have been educated extensively in the US, and have entered college education with patterns of language literacy that deviate from traditional formal English. More specifically, Mark Roberge (2003) differentiates G 1.5 as foreign-born children of immigrants who are partially foreign-educated and partially US-educated, and whose language abilities could be more dominant in their heritage language or English. Please see Figure 1 for a comparison of first generation, Generation 1.5, and second generation immigrants.

*Figure 1.* Comparison of three immigrant groups.<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Adapted from “Generation 1.5 Immigrant Students: What Special Experiences, Characteristics, and Educational Needs do They Bring to Our English Classes?” by M. Roberge, 2003, Presented at the 37<sup>th</sup> Annual TESOL Convention, Baltimore, MD.

For the purpose of this study, because of the unique nature of bilingualism in Hawaii, the Generation 1.5 students are US residents who are bilingual, bicultural, and oftentimes struggle socially and academically as they negotiate between their three cultural identities: heritage culture, current culture, and mixed cultures. If students are from an Asian culture, then they need to negotiate between their Asian heritage identity, their American identity, and their Asian American identity. The G 1.5 participants in this study are Asian heritage college students who began their US education before high school and graduated from a Hawaii public high school. Because of the varied levels of English language learner (ELL) experiences in schools, it is possible that some G 1.5 participants arrived in the US before their teenage years. Some have taken advanced college preparatory classes such as Advanced Placement (AP), but others did not have access to this option as ELLs in high schools.

As the student described in the prologue, G 1.5 students who have immigrated to the US often have to “fight” their way into an AP class because of some teachers’ perceptions of capability due to their ELL status; therefore, many do not receive equitable access to more rigorous college-preparatory coursework in high schools (Murie & Fitzpatrick, 2009). Some do not receive adequate support in regular classrooms because teachers often do not know how to help ELLs (Yoon, 2008). Roberge (2003) suggests that G 1.5 AA students are not receiving equitable educational experiences since they are often tracked into non-college preparatory classes.

This study explored whether and how equitable access to appropriate learning situations in high schools through opportunities for rigorous college-preparatory courses and social interaction with highly motivated peers may promote greater access to the

level of academic literacy development needed for success in college. In other words, the study explored whether G 1.5 students have the opportunity to take AP courses in high school, can gain access to more rigorous curriculum, and interact with scholarly native English speaking peers who can help them acculturate into academic environments.

Complicating the G 1.5 struggles in the transition from high school to college is the fact that many encounter particular challenges learning to write successfully in academic environments in the US (Murie & Fitzpatrick, 2009). Successful writing in this study refers to being able to meet the demands of college-level discourse and to adapt their writing to a particular audience effectively and persuasively (Emig, 1977; Odell, 1980; Paul & Elder, 2005). Generation 1.5 writers struggle with developing a particular persona for each of the different audiences they are addressing in the various writing tasks across subject areas in college. Many also struggle with connecting reading and writing and knowing how to use the written work to express what they have learned (Emig, 1977; Odell, 1980; Paul & Elder, 2005).

The reading, writing, and oral discourse used in schools can also be called academic literacy; in the case of English language learners (ELL), it is often known as the cognitive academic language proficiency, or CALP (Cummins, 1999), students need for success in school. Students acquire academic literacy through knowledge of multiple genres of texts and understanding their purposes. Personal, social, and cultural experiences influence academic literacy (Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007). Therefore, academic literacy socialization is the personal, social, and cultural experiences necessary to gain literacy skills to succeed in school settings. This study will explore ways in which G 1.5 experience the development of their academic literacy in their transition to college.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Existing literature suggests general differences between high school and college expectations for writing that make transitioning from high school to college writing classes difficult for all students (Brilliant, 2005; Fitzgerald, 2004; Van Schalkwyk, Bitzer, & Van der Walt, 2009). This difficulty is especially apparent in the Generation 1.5 Asian American (G 1.5) students who might be placed at risk. Their high risk may be connected to their treatment in school by teachers because of what has become known as the “model minority” myth. In a school context, the “model minority” myth derives from the perception that Asians will be successful academically. They value family, self-sufficiency, hard work, and they convey a strong drive for success that makes Asian Americans pursue goals to excel in schools and to advance their socioeconomic standing beyond the middle class (Brydolf, 2009; Kumashiro, 2006; Lowery, 2007; Wing, 2007). In the context of this study, the model minority myth may be related to equitable instructional practices in helping G 1.5 students develop socialization opportunities to develop academic literacy and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP).

Opportunities to develop academic literacy in schools are a social justice issue common in education today. Ayers, Quinn, and Stovall (2009) define social justice education as comprising principles of equity, activism, and social literacy. Equity is the principle of fairness and equal access to educational experiences and learning (Ayers, Quinn, & Stovall, 2009; Kose, 2006; Maiztegui-Oñate & Santibáñez-Gruber, 2008; Stovall, 2006). Activism is the principle of full participation of students to see and understand unfair situations surrounding their world (Ayers et al., 2009; Klenowski, 2009; Kose, 2006). Social literacy refers to understanding one’s own identities in relation

to others and resisting all forms of social injustices (Ayers et al., 2009). Social literacy involves being knowledgeable of economic, historical, and cultural surroundings that are negotiated in our lives as we become more socially responsible for our world (Ayers et al., 2009; Wolk, 2009). In sum, in a socially just education, all students are taught to become more aware of who they are in relation to everyone else, and they become active in creating a more just and fair experience for themselves and others while resisting injustice and ensuring everyone's emotional perceptions and well-being (Turner, 1999; Comstock, Hammer, Strentzsch, Cannon, Parsons, & Salazar II, 2008).

In this study, I adopted a social justice perspective to address G 1.5 students' opportunities to learn. I also examined issues such as teacher attitudes in granting equitable access to appropriate writing instruction in public high schools and colleges, especially access to AP English courses in high schools. Previous studies have shown that students who took AP courses in high school had higher opportunities to do well in college (Mattern, Shaw & Xiong, 2009; Murphy & Dodd, 2009).

Educators in America today face the challenge to address the needs of a continually changing student population (Clarke & Drudy, 2006; Kumashiro, 2006). The AA population currently makes up 4% of the US population and is growing at a fast rate (Kumashiro, 2006; Zhou & Qiu, 2009). ELL enrollment grew 57% nationwide between 1999 and 2009, and about 23% of them have one US born and one immigrant parent (Flannery, 2009) which implies that ELLs are not necessarily born outside of the US. Demographics become more daunting in Hawaii. In Hawaii, according to a study released by Quality Counts 2009, of the 17,000 ELL learners around the state, 40% are not making adequate progress towards achieving English proficiency (Moreno, 2009).

There were over 178,000 students enrolled in public schools across Hawaii in 2008. The 2008 Superintendent's Annual Report has reported that about 34% are of Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, and Korean descent, 31% are of Hawaiian and Samoan descent, 15% are Caucasians, and 14% are others. Of the 17,000 ELL learners in Hawaii (Moreno, 2009), only 8% were receiving ELL services such as parallel texts for Shakespearean literature, additional English instruction, or access to ELL specific courses. As a high school English teacher, I see many more students who need ELL or pre-high school level beginning English literacy services in my mainstream classroom, but once exited from ELL services, students do not qualify for such support unless they are failing their core content area classes.

The term Asian American (AA) can refer to a diverse group of people who have ethnic origins from the Far East to Southeast Asia; this group can include Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Taiwan, and Vietnam. Each culture has its own unique language and history, which means that lumping them into one category such as Asian American can lead to stereotypes, the myth of the model minority, and negative implications in schools. Many AA students feel they have been pressured to do well by their families, and some perceive that Asian minority groups are pitted against each other (Brydolf, 2009; Wing, 2007).

ELL students have certain language and cultural barriers that prevent them from achieving their full potential, especially in terms of literacy and writing abilities. In Hawaii, this is further complicated by the wide-spread use of Hawaii Creole English (HCE), more commonly known as Pidgin, outside of the classroom with its full lexicon and grammatical rules that differ from the Standard English taught in the English

classroom. Pidgin is almost an additional and often considered to be a second language (Siegel, 2005). ELL students hear Pidgin inside and outside of the school rather than Standard English, and they often return home to speak their heritage language with their families.

Writing has become less of a focus than reading instruction in many high schools across the nation because of the current No Child Left Behind (NCLB) mandates and assessments, and ELLs struggle even more with writing because of the NCLB expectations (Aguirre-Munoz & Boscardin, 2008). However, researchers continue to assert the importance of connecting reading and writing for developing in either skill area and for using writing to express what was learned (Emig, 1977; Odell, 1980; Hull & Bartholomae, 1986; Fulwiler & Young, 2000; Paul & Elder, 2005; Smith, Rook & Smith, 2007).

### **Purpose of the Study**

Existing literature suggests general differences in high school and college curricula and expectations in writing that may make transitioning from high school to college more difficult for students, especially for Generation 1.5 Asian American (G 1.5 hereafter) college-bound seniors. The purpose of this exploratory case study was to more fully understand the experiences, challenges, and needs of the G 1.5 students in achieving academic literacy needed for college writing. The study investigated two-year and four-year college composition professors' perceptions of experiences, challenges, and needs in writing of G 1.5 students. Then the college faculty's perceptions were compared to perceptions of G 1.5 students. Results of this study can contribute to a better understanding of G 1.5 students and establish better communication.

As with many postsecondary institutions, the UH campuses, both two-year and four-year, require a first-year composition course as part of their core curriculum to introduce “students to the rhetorical, conceptual, and stylistic demands of writing at the college level; courses give instruction in composing processes, search strategies, and composing from sources” (UHM, 2008a). This study took a step forward to identify how this course shapes college instruction and how writing instruction in public schools compares to writing instruction in colleges. Findings can make it possible to define and communicate writing skills and writing curriculum public school’s G 1.5ers need to learn and demonstrate learning in college. The findings can also promote equitable opportunities for G 1.5ers by raising the awareness of educators about the role of ELL students’ access to college-preparatory classes and to socializing in a more academically literate peer group in their preparation for college. My hope is to contribute to G 1.5 access to appropriate opportunities to learn and to understand more about the dynamics of G 1.5 students’ self-activism on their own behalf, or its absence, and about their demonstration of their academic and social literacy.

### **Theoretical Framework**

A social justice perspective provided a theoretical lens to address various ways the current status of public education in Hawaii might help or hinder Generation 1.5 Asian American students in receiving equitable opportunities for academic writing instruction suited to their needs in public high schools and colleges. Social justice is a widely used term in the field of education, but it is often under-theorized (Cochran-Smith, 2008; North, 2006). This study focused particularly on a three-part definition proposed by Ayers, Quinn, and Stovall (2009).

Equity can be created in many ways in the classroom, and students benefit when they have a sense of fair treatment. Fairness is reflected not only in an instructor's grading and teaching practices, but it is also evident in curriculum decisions as when teachers and administrators choose texts that do or do not reflect the student population. John Rawl, a twentieth century liberal American philosopher, wrote that a fair society has social institutions that are fair to all members regardless of race, gender, class of origin, and religion (Johnston, 2005).

An influential education theorist in the early twentieth century, George S. Counts (1932) encouraged teachers to make the most of their situation in the classroom to “bridge the gap between school and society” (p. 46), and like John Dewey (1944), he wanted schools to create an environment by educating students about inequalities and urged them to work against injustices – those they experienced and those experienced by others. To put it more plainly, for some early progressive educators, social justice education meant educating students to recognize inequalities in society and work toward alleviating these injustices. Likewise, Ayers, Quinn, and Stovall (2009) advocated for an educational system that opens doors and pathways “away from ignorance and prejudice, fear and backwardness, entanglement and confinement” (p. xiii).

The job of educators is to help students have positive learning experiences that build from past experiences that lead to the next higher level of experiences (Dewey, 1938/1998). Allowing all students equitable access and experience to rigorous college preparatory coursework could create just educational experiences for all. When students read literature, for example, experiencing a variety of texts from various contemporary local and national authors from diverse backgrounds who write about common adolescent

experiences may hold teenagers' interests and may promote more student engagement in the classroom. In today's age of standardized testing, many students feel disconnected and lose motivation in classes that read only canonical texts unrelated to their experiences or lessons that center on the privileged, mainstream population (Hersch, 1998) and do not support a culturally and linguistically diverse student population (Chieh & Vazquez-Nuttall, 2009).

Aguirre-Munoz and Boscardin (2008) found that the literacy analysis that is usually assigned after reading class texts is more difficult for ELLs than for NES because ELLs need to have a strong foundation of how to write a literary analysis, especially the knowledge of specific patterns of written discourse that is needed to communicate interpretations of the text. This type of writing practice is often missing in ELL instruction so immigrant students such as G 1.5 need adjustments and additional guidance from their teachers (Aguirre-Munoz & Boscardin, 2008).

Apple (2004) and Asher (2008) argued that a lack of connection to students' lives is the reason why students are increasingly feeling detached from school, and they do not want to learn in an educational system that fosters monocultural learning. When G 1.5ers cannot relate to the texts taught in class, the message is that their identity does not matter. It may well be that they will have even more difficulties writing assignments disconnected from the diverse meaningful worlds they inhabit.

### **Study Interests**

Teachers are not only responsible for educating students to be literate across various canonical genres of classical literature, writing, and other subject areas, but they are also responsible for helping students become critical thinkers and participants in a

democratic and just society. In socially just schools, students will have opportunities to advocate for themselves and contest unfair treatment of themselves or others. Teachers who teach for social justice, or specifically who aim to understand and address the complex needs of Asian American (AA) students, teach students to identify obstacles that hinder equality and encourage students to work against those obstacles (Ayers, 1998). In the realm of composition, teaching for social justice would mean teaching students that writing can be a tool to overcome injustices to empower themselves.

As a student with immigrant parents finding my way through the US public school system, I remember having to overcome linguistic, cultural, and social obstacles before I was able to focus fully on becoming academically literate. With assistance from friends and teachers, I was able to reach a level of academic literacy that led me to be relatively successful in high school and college classes; however, I had many struggles and barriers to overcome during my first few years in a college system where there was little support for G 1.5 students. The services that were provided were largely directed to English Language Learners (ELL) who were learning English as first generation immigrants. I was born and educated in Korean schools for kindergarten and first grade but spent the rest of my schooling in US schools. My parents could not help much with my US schooling, and I had difficulties making friends because of cultural and language barriers. I remember feeling low self-esteem and having an introverted persona in public. It was even more difficult when I got to college. I was not ready for the rigor of the academic literacy that college professors expected. I was not able to flourish in academia until I defined and came to terms with my multiple identities as a Korean, Korean American, and American.

I conducted this research study while teaching high school composition in a Hawaii public school full-time. My primary objective was to further understand the challenges and needs of the Generation 1.5 students in achieving the academic literacy necessary to succeed in college writing. Even though this was not centrally defined as an action research, by conducting this study, I also hoped to use the findings to more equitably prepare my own students for postsecondary school. On a broader scale, my objective was to add to the knowledge base regarding conditions that promote socially just, relevant, and rigorous writing instruction in high schools for G 1.5 students, conditions which I believe will also help NES students.

### **Research Questions**

This case study explored the transition of Generation 1.5 Asian American (G 1.5) students from public high school to college writing instruction and curricula with attention to students' opportunities to learn and their access to college preparatory writing experiences. A central step was to explore perceptions of purposefully selected University of Hawaii system (UH) composition faculty at two-year and four-year institutions to find out their views of what G 1.5 students need for college-level writing success. It explored both what students' needs are and what educational institutions can do to support students encountering challenges. As its central focus, this research examined G 1.5 students' access to academic literacy support services in high schools and colleges.

This study also inquired into college faculty's perceptions on how to successfully implement secondary writing curricula for G 1.5 students planning to attend college and particularly UH. Composition instructors' perceptions of needs and curricula were compared to perceptions of G 1.5 college students who have graduated from various

public high schools in Hawaii. Furthermore, this study also explored themes such as why it is important for G 1.5 students to develop their writing skills in preparation for attendance at UH and how secondary public schools in Hawaii are meeting the demands of this task. Two main aspects of curriculum were examined: 1) ways of teaching and 2) hidden curriculum.

Literature in the fields of composition and language socialization was examined to generate the research questions that framed this study. As a pragmatist, whose research beliefs lie on the foundation of mixing qualitative and quantitative data to find the answers to the research questions, the research questions drove the methods of my research (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). While there have been a few studies conducted in Hawaii about academic literacy, such as the whole language approach to literacy in a bilingual program (Au, Scheu, Kawakami, & Herman, 1990), the need for culturally sensitive educational policies (Young, 2002), and reading achievement of the G 1.5 (Skarin, 2005), research on G 1.5 students' transition from high school to college-level academic literacy in Hawaii is almost nonexistent. In order to fill that gap, I collected narrative and numerical data to answer the following research questions about instructor and student perceptions of academic writing and institutional support for G 1.5 Asian American (G 1.5) students.

1. In what ways are the teaching and learning of writing similar or different in high schools, community colleges, and four-year colleges?
2. What socio-cultural experiences and curriculum conditions in education impact Generation 1.5 Asian American students in their transition from high school to college writing success?

3. How does taking an Advanced Placement English course in high school correlate to placement in beginner composition courses in college for Generation 1.5 Asian American students and native English speaking students?
4. In what ways do high school, community college, and four year college writing curriculum and instruction influence the development of Generation 1.5 Asian American students' academic literacy?
5. What do college and high school instructors know about the unique academic and social needs of Generation 1.5 Asian American students? What instructional adaptations, if any, do college and high school instructors use to help Generation 1.5 Asian American students acquire academic writing skills for college?

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Nationwide trends show many high school students from all backgrounds are not ready to meet college writing expectations, and Generation 1.5 Asian American (G1.5) students are no exception to this trend. This review explores the many issues and factors that may contribute to this problem.

The importance of equitable opportunities for G 1.5 students to develop academic literacy can be best understood in the context of the significant role of writing as an approach to learning. Thus, this review begins with what scholars have discovered and theorized regarding writing to learn rather than learning to write. In addition, the review describes literature regarding learning to write by describing the opportunities and challenges students and teachers have in secondary schools. The review also describes the writing experiences of freshmen in college, with focus on students required to take additional and sometimes non-credit courses in beginner, or developmental, writing courses.

In Hawaii, academic literacy for G 1.5 students at their transition to college becomes even more challenging because of a lack of institutional support in public schools and oftentimes, inequitable curriculum decisions that help higher-tracked college preparatory students and harm lower-tracked students, including English Language Learners (ELL) and G1.5 students who end up with fewer opportunities for college preparatory courses. Because of the limited literature on Hawaii public high school students' college preparedness, especially on the G 1.5 students' transition to college, this review addresses literature about nationwide trends as background.

Various factors affect academic literacy and language socialization of G 1.5. Academic literacy includes practicing academic discourse in educational settings with teachers and peers providing feedback in a rigorous college preparatory curriculum. G 1.5 students' academic literacy issues are heightened by their cultural identity uncertainties and by the schools' focus on second language acquisition skills rather than academic literacy skills. Academic literacy includes reading, writing, and oral communication skills developed in the school environment for multiple subject areas, but second language acquisition skills may only include acquisition of speech for everyday use.

Students' growth of academic literacy involves socialization of students into academic learning communities, and is affected by their teachers' styles and the official curriculum of public high schools, and it is also affected by students' formal and informal interactions with native English speakers. Scholarship and research on these issues are presented in this review.

### **Writing as a Mode of Learning**

Scholars in many fields agree that writing is a key approach to learning and reflecting, making it clear why this is such a central skill in college student success (Alber-Morgan, Hessler, & Konrad, 2007). Janet Emig (1977) said that "Writing serves learning uniquely because writing as process and product possesses a cluster of attributes that correspond uniquely to certain powerful learning strategies" (p. 122). Writing is thought to be one of the most effective ways of showing what has been learned since it involves higher orders of thinking such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

Lee Odell (1980) agreed with Emig when he described writing as a means for students to show their understanding of what they have read, seen, or heard. He further

acknowledged that different writing tasks lead to different processes of discovery. In other words, writing an essay on the meaning of history is different from writing an essay to persuade an audience. This has implications for how writing is taught and suggests diversity is needed in strategies of writing in different subject areas. One way of writing may work for writing an essay on the meaning of history, but it may not work in a persuasive essay. The thought process and method of inquiry will differ depending on the type of writing assignment.

Students need to understand the relationship between writing and learning to begin practicing this skill to acquire knowledge (Paul & Elder, 2005). If students are given the opportunity to regularly practice writing as a tool for critical thinking in various subject fields, they will learn the content at higher cognitive levels through the process of communicating their ideas. Paul and Elder (2005) stated that when core ideas are cognitively supported by developing them on paper, writers can use these ideas productively in life. They endorsed writing as a means of self-teaching because writers must study and understand the content before they can communicate that knowledge through writings to others.

The complexities of teaching all the processes and methods of writing across various disciplines required in colleges become clear. Students entering college come to two realizations: on the positive side, they come to understand the importance of writing for learning the content, and on the “challenge” side, they begin to see the complexity of learning all the nuanced ways to write effectively for different purposes and subject areas. The one thing known for sure is that there must be time for students to actively engage in writing if they are to become sufficiently proficient in academic settings (Hull &

Bartholomae, 1986; Van Schalkwyk et al., 2009). Writing to learn in the classroom is a social phenomenon; it is promoted by sharing experiences between students and their peers and between the students and the teacher (Turvey, 2007).

Toby Fulwiler and Art Young (2000) believed teachers across the disciplines need to concentrate on language skills to help students improve their “learning ability, improve their communication skills, and enhance their cognitive and emotional growth” (p. ix). They considered writing to be a distinct form of understanding that writers can use to figure out their own thoughts and to discover new things; writing can be an instrument for attaining understanding and meaning. In writing, students can engage in discovery of knowledge and create new ideas concurrently while finding their voices and be part of social communities of writers by having their voices heard. Writers can delineate their beliefs and identify themselves, forming values that are “personally and socially significant” in their education (Fulwiler & Young, 2000, p. x).

For G 1.5 students, learning to write effectively means being able to learn effectively across college courses, as the previous discussion conveys. If provided with opportunities to practice writing, G 1.5 students can use writing to show their critical thinking skills and learn the contents of a course at higher cognitive stages (Paul & Elder, 2005). They can also begin to feel more comfortable with their identity since writing to learn practices help students find their voices and engage in discovering their ideas (Fulwiler & Young, 2000).

### ***Multiple viewpoints of writing needs and curriculum***

A report compiled by American College Testing (ACT, 2007, May) showed that 74% of twelfth grade test-takers in 2006 lacked skills needed for postsecondary education,

and 19% needed extensive remediation in English and Math to succeed. This suggests there may be a gap between high school and college instructor expectations of students and their instructional philosophy or methods. It may also highlight, as previously stated, there is greater diversity of student backgrounds in high schools than in colleges (Leki, Cummings, & Silva, 2008).

One of the reasons for the lack of a smoother transition between high school and college curriculum is that many high schools today focus much of their curriculum on the federally mandated high-stakes testing, whereas colleges tend to have greater academic freedom and students are not subject to federal high-stakes testing (McCarthy, 2008). This “teaching to the test” in high school seems to contradict past research that has described effective teaching pedagogy much differently. In fact, many have written that high stakes testing interferes with, rather than promotes, equitable education in our public schools (Darling-Hammond, 2007; Hursh, 2007; Rushton & Juola-Rushton, 2008). In an unpublished pilot study conducted in 2008, it was found that high school teachers had no choice but to prepare students for the NCLB mandated tests with little focus on writing so writing was often put on hold until upper grades (Park, 2008).

Most high school teachers think that state standards prepare students for college, but most college instructors disagree. College instructors much more commonly feel high school students are underprepared for college than their high school teacher counterparts (Beil & Knight, 2007; Sanoff, 2006). The diversity of views has at least one clear cause. Teacher instruction and school curriculum in high schools are guided by state-set standards. The curriculum at the community college and four-year universities is not governed by or subject to the same state standards; this difference in governance creates

inconsistencies in the design of the curriculum in high schools and colleges.

Generally, high schools offer opportunities to take Advanced Placement (AP) courses which can earn college credit. The ACT (2007, May) study showed that students who took upper-level rigorous college-preparatory classes in high school such as AP had a higher chance of succeeding in college. The other measure of student success in high school is meeting content area standards, yet ACT suggests that students who are successful in meeting state-set English language arts standards and benchmarks may not be able to succeed in college. In another disappointing finding, ACT pointed out that during the last two years of high school many students lost momentum toward college-preparedness in their English curriculum.

The National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES, 2003) reported that 28% of students need to take some sort of English or writing remediation courses, usually called beginning or developmental composition, in postsecondary institutions. These beginner courses are usually required if a college conducts assessments that suggest a student is not ready to take the freshman, or the first-year, composition course. Because academic writing is such an important tool for the evaluation of learning in higher education (Lavelle & Guarino, 2003), it has become tradition in many four-year universities to require this course for all incoming freshmen and transfer students (Crowley, 1998). The first year composition course is generally seen as the course that makes the transition smoother for students moving from high school to college writing.

State standardized testing does not always align with the teachers' classroom curriculum. Such is the case in Hawaii. Although there are established instructional benchmarks for grammar and other conventions of the English language, these language

arts skills are not emphasized in the standards. They are not yet part of the high-stakes statewide standardized assessments tenth graders take in high schools. Even more relevant in this study is the status of writing in state assessments. While a writing component proposed for testing has gone through a trial phase, as of the academic year 2010-2011 there is no mandatory writing assessment reported to the public. The situation created a potential gap for students aiming to meet college writing expectations related to English grammar and usage. When Boston University tested incoming freshmen who had perfect writing scores on the SATs, they found that many had only a mediocre grasp of grammar and half did not understand basic grammatical terms and usages (Prince, 2007).

Although many of the cited studies and statistics mentioned above are for NES, it is important to note that G 1.5 students need more equitable access for the development of academic literacy. High school teachers admit to focusing on reading in order to pass NCLB mandated high-stakes tests in the lower grades (Park, 2008), but G 1.5 students need more practice to socialize in academic discourse and to attain the level of oral and written academic discourse that college professors are expecting (Frodesen, 2009). The inequitable educational practices encouraged by NCLB mandates (Darling-Hammond, 2007; Hursh, 2007; Rushton & Juola-Rushton, 2008) may be hurting G 1.5 students' chances for developing academic literacy.

### ***Challenges to academic literacy in high schools***

It is important to note that the Hawaii State Assessment (HSA), as other federally mandated state assessments, is administered in the tenth grade only in the high school. Moreover, it is important to realize that writing is not a part of the HSA. This situation encourages schools and teachers to focus on and to allocate their funds to reading (which

is tested) instead of writing instruction in the ninth and tenth grades to increase scores. The constructed response writing section on the HSA does not require any more than a paragraph, and a student may succeed without using complete sentences as long as the test prompt is answered. Because of the NCLB mandates, studies have shown that many teachers focus on “teaching to the test” (McCarthy, 2008). Students in the eleventh and twelfth grades are not tested, so their achievement becomes more “low stakes.” In the era of NCLB, a problem has been that students and subjects not tested are often neglected.

Sarah J. McCarthy (2008) conducted a study showing the impact NCLB has on writing instruction in schools. She found that time spent preparing students for NCLB negatively affects teacher morale and the nature and amount of writing instruction teachers are able to offer. She also found that teachers in high-income neighborhood schools were not as impacted as teachers in low-income neighborhood schools. As has been typical in results nationwide, schools serving high income students have not had the same difficulties meeting the standardized testing requirements as students in low income schools. This gave the high-income schools’ teachers more latitude in the writing instruction than those teaching in low-income schools. This also limited the range of learning experience of students and may have negatively affected their writing.

Writing has become less of a focus than reading instruction in numerous high schools across the nation and more economically disadvantaged students are receiving less writing instruction. At the same time, community college faculty in California, and others across the nation, has developed very specific expectations for their incoming freshmen’s writing. Research skills topped the list, but the most ubiquitous desired skills in colleges seemed to be the abilities to evaluate, synthesize, and analyze information in

oral and written discourse (Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, 2002). This suggests that synthesizing readings in written assignments is an essential aspect of college-level work. While studies have shown that high school teachers agree that their students lack these skills (Fitzgerald, 2004; Sanoff, 2006), they often have their hands tied because of difficulties incorporating writing instruction involving critical thinking under NCLB (McCarthy, 2008).

Whether it is in the high school or college classroom, once students have opportunities to learn and practice writing, they can begin to develop academic writing skills needed to become part of the academic discourse community. Patricia Bizzell's (1992) concept of a discourse community is a group of people who share "certain language-using practices" and possibly share geographic, ethnic, and professional similarities (1992, p. 222). If G 1.5 students are not provided with opportunities to interact in such discourse communities - either in college preparatory high school classes or in college, their academic writing development and possibly Cognitive Academic Literacy Proficiency (Cummins 1999), can be slowed or stopped.

### ***Hawaii Creole English and its (complex) impact on academic literacy***

Hawaii Creole English (HCE) is a language and culture specific to Hawaii, and it is historically significant, spoken and valued in many homes and social venues, and a defining aspect of being "local." HCE, also known as Pidgin, used to be the language of immigrants who needed a simpler form of communication with various other plantation immigrant workers (Siegel, 2007; Tamura, 1996). Many critics of HCE say that it is inappropriate for the English Language Arts classroom, and there have been attempts to ban Pidgin in the public school classroom (Tamura, 1996), but scholars such as Lee

Tanouchi (2004) assert the value and appropriateness of HCE even in scholarly publications. Cecil K. Dotts and Mildred Sikkema (1994) and Eileen Tamura (1996; 2002) trace public school policies on the banning of HCE in the classroom back to the plantation era when immigrant children who spoke Pidgin were viewed as inferior to those speaking English without an accent.

HCE is like a second language (Siegel, 2005; 2007), and it may (along with other second languages) contribute to a gap in the academic writing skills of students in Hawaii as compared to students on the continental US. The National Center for Educational Statistics showed that Hawaii's students scored below the national writing average; of the 45 states who were tested, Hawaii scored poorer than 41 of those states in 2002 and 2007 (Salahu-Din, Persky, & Miller, 2007). Poor writing skills can lead to lower scores on subject matter assessments because writing is so often the means of demonstrating learning (Emig, 1977; Odell, 1980; Hull & Bartholomae, 1986; Fulwiler & Young, 2000; Paul & Elder, 2005; Smith, K. & Rook & Smith, T., 2007). Knowing how to write well, in the academic sense, promotes opportunities to learn and excel in all subject areas.

Many university professors perceive that incoming freshmen and other students are not ready to use writing to learn and demonstrate learning in college-level academic settings. National researchers for the American Diploma Project (ADP, 2004) found that at least 28% of college students nationally needed and took beginner, non-credit earning English classes. The ADP also indicated that today's high school curriculum is rarely designed to "reflect the real-world demands of postsecondary education and work" (ADP, 2004, p.7). The ACT (2007, April) National Curriculum Survey suggested this discrepancy resulted in part because of differences in college and high school instructors'

perceptions of what writing skills should be taught. They found, for example, that 35% of surveyed college and university instructors felt that the conventions of the English language, which include sentence structure, conventions of usage, and conventions of punctuation, were of considerable importance, whereas only 10% of secondary teachers felt the same way.

This study specifically highlights the writing challenges faced by the G 1.5 Asian Americans who may experience hurdles common to other language and ethnic groups in Hawaii. This study is needed to better understand how problems with academic writing emerge and to suggest effective solutions to support G 1.5 students' opportunities to learn and demonstrate academic literacy and to learn through writing.

### ***Strategies to teach academic literacy and academic discourse***

High school students entering colleges have linguistic, cultural, and social obstacles to overcome before becoming academically literate in college (Bartholomae, 1985; Bizzell, 1992). Academic literacy involves developing an understanding of the relationship between language and learning in higher educational settings (Lea, 2008) and adapting discourse in college to interpret and organize new knowledge with political, social, and cultural awareness of the various academic audiences (Diaz-Rico, 2004; Turner, 1999). The majority of high school students do not get the opportunity to practice the kinds of academic literacy needed for college and to become aware of the varied political, social, and cultural dimensions of the lives of people different from them (Horner & Trimbur, 2002). At the same time, students, and particularly immigrant students, do not want to be considered "immigrants" or "foreigners" in higher education (Horner & Trimbur, 2002).

What does work to develop academic literacy? Writing workshops are quite popular in today's English classrooms because they have been found to be effective instructional strategies (Higgins, Miller, & Wegmann, 2006). Peer collaboration is one form of interaction in a discourse community. Studies have shown that peer reviewing in the classroom is an effective student-centered form of improving writing skills (Gielen, Tops, Dochy, Onghena, & Smeets, 2010; Richards, 2010; Simmons, 2003) and that guided peer review forms with questions students can answer may enhance the value to students of peer reviewing process. Another strategy teachers can use to help students become part of the academic discourse community is to use a type of self-regulation strategy and ask students to evaluate their own writing and to explain reasons for including different statements they make (Helsel & Greenberg, 2007; Muldoon, 2009). Both peer collaboration and self-regulating strategies call for active engagement in peer and self-assessment of writing processes to contribute to an academic discourse community.

Self-regulatory strategies such as "talk-back" essays are ones in which teachers help students cultivate specific habits of mind (Muldoon, 2009). In this strategy, the teacher provides written feedback to students and asks them to reflect on those suggestions, making note of recommendations that helped them and questions they have about the teacher's comments. Muldoon (2009) says that this activity gives students an opportunity to give "authorial/rhetorical choices" by explaining what they did and why they did it. Students, then, have opportunities to reflect on inquiry and meaning-making.

For students who are not used to writing academic essays - a challenge that is prevalent in these times when high school curriculum is focused on test preparation -

adapting to academic discourse in college can be intimidating. In order to perfect something, students need to practice and to have opportunities to mimic or imitate the type of discourse they are required to recreate. Various studies have shown that peer collaboration through writing workshops and self-regulatory strategies will help high school students be better prepared for the demands of college-level discourse.

Judith J. Brilliant (2005) believes that the act of writing has three distinct aspects: cognitive, affective, and interpersonal. The cognitive aspects can be addressed by the six traits of writing often used in elementary and secondary schools (Spandel, 2005).

However, a noncognitive, humanistic view on the affective and interpersonal aspect of academic writing becomes visible through the instructors and their instructional practices (Lavelle & Guarino, 2003). Negative affect regarding writing arises as students are placed into remediation but worsen if students have to repeat the beginner writing course (Brilliant, 2005). Feelings of insufficiency cause students to lose motivation and to feel discouraged or depressed, which inhibits their motivation to produce good writing for fear of ridicule or criticism.

Culturally, it might be unacceptable to fail a beginner course. Asian American students, for example, experience very high expectations in their homes and strive to fulfill them. Interpersonal issues arise when students are unable to communicate their meanings. To ameliorate these concerns Brilliant (2005) and Maloney (2003) make several recommendations to the instructors of beginning writing courses. Brilliant's (2005) pedagogy includes positive, specific feedback with a focus on communicative aspects of writing rather than authoritative. She promotes constructive feedback. To a student, she might say, "I'm not sure I understand you correctly. Can you explain it

differently?” instead of, “This is confusing. You’re not being very clear.” Maloney (2003) recommends instructors choose college-level texts centered on themes and genres that address students’ lives and provide explicit lessons on annotating, questioning, and summarizing skills. Furthermore, like many scholars in the field of composition such as, Bizzell (1992) and more recently Gielen, et al. (2010), Richards (2010), and Simmons (2003), she advocates communities of discursive learners who help each other and exchange feedback on writing assignments.

The newest trend in colleges goes back to Vygotsky’s (1978) and Bizzell’s (1986) theories on social interaction for learning. Writing centers have been in existence for decades, but they are being refined to help students become part of a larger community of writers who share similar discourse (Johnson, Garza, & Ballmer, 2009). When instructors take students to the writing centers for workshops, it gives students and instructors opportunities to share ideas during the writing process. Writing centers have also helped instructors develop better writing assignments that are negotiated for improved clarity for the purpose of an assignment.

Although several studies show the effectiveness of beginner writing courses (Goen-Salter, 2008; Southard & Clay, 2004), some studies such as those conducted by Darabi (2006), Johnson et al. (2009), and Rigolino and Freel (2007) found that learning communities, such as those created through writing centers with tutors, are much more effective in developing academic discourse. This is the strategy that the University of Hawaii system incorporates. Just as each first-year composition courses vary depending on the theoretical framework of the instructor, each college differs in its concept of assisting new students in developing academic discourse skills. This causes the first-year

composition courses across the nation to take notably divergent directions (Glenn & Goldthwaite, 2008) in creating the curriculum for the first year composition courses.

### **Providing a Socially Just Public Education**

It is no secret that public K-12 education was designed to provide free access to schools for all citizens. Unfortunately, there are inequalities in access within public education. In Hawaii, even with ethnic Asians and Pacific Islanders as the majority, public schools still seem to have the remnants of inequitable practices and problems articulated by Apple, (2004), McLaren (2007), Provenza & Renaud (2009), and Slattery (2006). As one example, there was the attitude that Hawaii's students, especially those who were nonwhite, were mere laborers, and that schools needed to develop a curriculum that created better laborers. This attitude stemmed from the 1920s territorial government led by then governor Wallace R. Farrington who tried to maintain the status quo in Hawaii that benefited the affluent land-owners and kept the immigrant population as laborers (Young, 2002).

Unfair practices still seem evident today because of the lack of opportunities that arises for G 1.5 and other ELLs in entering more rigorous college-preparatory courses in high school. National studies show that G 1.5 students are placed into lower-tracked courses that do not have the critical thinking and academic discussion opportunities available in higher-tracked courses (Aguirre-Munoz & Boscardin, 2008; Roberge, 2009). This lack of opportunity to develop their academic literacy skills in high schools often leads to G 1.5 students' placement into beginner composition courses, which are considered to put them more "at-risk" of not graduating from college (Maloney, 2003).

### *Academic literacy development of ELLs in Hawaii*

Anxiety about race in Hawaii dates back to the plantation days during the late 1800s and early 1900s, and the remnants of those beliefs remain in today's education (Young, 2002). Anti-immigration and English language education laws (such as English only education movement) of the 1920s specifically targeted many Asian immigrants (Tolnay & Eichenlaub, 2007; Young, 2002). In fact, children of Asian ancestry were discouraged from attending public schools by Hawaii's plantation owners until the 1950s (Provenza & Renaud, 2009).

The world outside school affects ELLs learning and self-confidence as well. Examples in other states convey a national scope of problems for ELLs. Even though NCLB does not require or recommend ELLs to be tested in English only, California has chosen this route, forcing new immigrant students to be tested in a language they do not know. More recently, the anti-immigration and racial profiling laws passed in Arizona reflect similar hegemonic sentiments that limit the freedom of minorities and restrict their access to equitable schooling experiences. These laws create an environment that tells minority students such as G 1.5 that they are inferior to the majority. They learn that the government can arrest them based on the way they look (the color of the skin) or the way they speak.

Although language studies such as Chinese and Japanese are offered in Hawaii's public high schools, there is little opportunity for Asian minorities such as Korean, Thai, and Vietnamese immigrant students to blend their heritage culture and their American culture. The absence of opportunities for students to embrace their heritage language, which is a symbol of identity and a means to help immigrants hybridize multiple social

roles and identities (Baker, 2006), is a silent and unjust form of sustaining inequitable opportunities and silencing minority cultures in public schools.

Unfair practices are exacerbated through NCLB and other assessments of students and teacher performances (Gorski, 2008). Curriculum has become a one-size-fits-all, especially if students have not met proficiency in standardized tests. Some schools in Hawaii have been handed a national standardized curriculum with little consideration for local culture. Texts that are studied on the East Coast of the continental US may have little relevance to students' lives in Hawaii. Therefore, schools and classrooms can be places where inequality is reproduced (Apple, 2004), especially if the curriculum does not allow for each student to have equal learning opportunities. Au (2007) found that high-stakes testing forced the contents of the curriculum to become more narrow and controlled. She also found that knowledge teachers presented became more fragmented, instructional practices became more teacher-centered, and test-prep instruction became prevalent.

In academic settings, the myth of the model minority is the idea that Asian Americans value family, self-sufficiency, hard work, and convey a strong drive for success that makes Asian Americans pursue goals to excel in schools and to advance their socioeconomic standing beyond the middle class (Brydolf, 2009; Kumashiro, 2006; Lowery, 2007; Wing, 2007). This "myth" leads to the view that Asian Americans achieve great academic success, causing them to feel pressures to conform to or to refute this stereotype (Museus, 2008). The model minority myth also brings forth negative implications because Asian Americans can be seen as outsiders in a nation of the dominant White culture (Kawai, 2005). Chou and Feagin (2008) claim that a desire to

become part of the dominant White culture causes some Asian Americans to internalize racism and adopt anti-Asian practices such as rejecting Asian partners, denying a job to an Asian American, discouraging other Asian Americans from challenging the stereotypical racial status quo, perpetuating Asian American stereotypes, and changing their physical appearances to appear white. Oftentimes, Hawaii residents, who are majority Asian heritage, are seen as non-American, as evidenced by the constant probing of President Barack Obama's citizenship status as a Hawaii-born US president. With evident bias against second generation immigrants, it can be argued that G 1.5 students may have difficulties finding their own voice and identity - and writing in the university classroom.

Other issues in Hawaii suggest why G 1.5 students may have difficulty finding their voice and identity. Although ethnic Asians are the majority in Hawaii (Takagi, 2004), there is still a wide gap between what is read and taught in the English language arts (ELA) curriculum and the students' backgrounds and experiences. This fact is surprising since the State of Hawaii Department of Education's Annual Superintendent's report (2010) shows that public schools of Hawaii have a total of 33.7% of the students identified as ethnically Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, or Korean. There is an additional 27.7% who are of Hawaiian ancestry and 14.5% who are not even categorized. Only 14.4% have been identified as Caucasian, but a vast majority of the texts reflect only the Caucasian European and American cultures.

The Hawaii Content and Performance Standards database (State of Hawaii Department of Education, 2008) contains very few recommended Asian Authors, and there are no Asian American or Pacific Island authors on the eleventh and twelfth grade

reading lists. The discrepancy between demographics and curriculum in public schools suggests a hegemonic system of education unresponsive to the students served (Apple, 2004; Applebee, 1993; Chieh & Vazquez-Nuttall, 2009; Hersch 1998). Even the College Board (2010), that administers the Advanced Placement examinations nationally and advocates diversity in its mission statement, lists only one Asian Author on its recommended reading list of *101 Great Books: Recommended for College Bound Readers*.

Unfair practices in public education from the past that remain today (Provenza & Renaud, 2009; Tolnay & Eichenlaub, 2007; Young, 2002) seem to create fewer opportunities for G 1.5 students' development of academic literacy. The model minority myth may cause Asian American students to receive materials in schools that creates fewer opportunities to blend their heritage identity to the American one (Baker, 2006) and feel pressured to accept the culture of the dominant population (Kawai, 2005).

### ***Opportunities and inequities in developing academic literacy***

Savvy, eloquent writers know how to please and impress their audience; they know how to adapt their discourse and make fluid arguments. Writers must also know that proficiency in writing is an absolutely necessary skill in order to succeed in academics (Alber-Morgan et. al., 2007; Graham & Perin, 2007). Students do need to learn to write, and this will assist them in writing to learn. Unfortunately, academic writing does not come easily to most people, but it is a necessary skill to successfully demonstrate knowledge in high school and colleges. High school graduates find academic writing to be daunting because of discrepancies in high school and college writing instruction, which can lead to challenges for many students who are under-prepared for

college (Brilliant, 2005; Fitzgerald, 2004; Van Schalkwyk et. al., 2009). College students may find academic writing to be daunting because traditionally there are higher expectations in college for them to present and synthesize their ideas (Fitzgerald, 2004) than they experienced in high school.

Students cannot develop academic literacy without substantial instructional assistance and practice inside and outside of the classroom at all levels of education. Here, it appears that G 1.5 students' opportunities to learn are too limited. In some instances, G 1.5 and other immigrant students are placed in lower tracked classes with more teacher-directed lessons and a more passive student role than higher tracked classes (Roberge, 2003). Lower tracked English classes also have a tendency to isolate reading, writing, and speaking activities and teach fewer complex reading and writing skills. Thus, schools with tracked classes and educators' tracking decisions can create inequitable schooling opportunities for G 1.5 who do not get the same opportunity to take rigorous college preparatory courses as native English speakers. The study conducted by Aguirre-Munoz and Boscardin (2008) further showed inequities in high school curriculum for academic literacy development of ELLs.

Composition theories that impact the instruction in community colleges and four-year universities are also considered in high schools, but the high school curriculum is driven by the high-stakes testing mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001. This has a particular impact on lower track English classes serving students who may be in danger of scoring below required levels of proficiency. Focus is on learning the skills needed to meet proficiency, and the curriculum tends to "teach to the test," and a narrow range of basic skills. To the extent that some G 1.5 students are served by lower

track classes, their opportunities to learn in the era of NCLB may be limited (Aguirre-Munoz & Boscardin, 2008).

In this study, there is a focus on the need for and growth of academic literacy, which, according to the Alliance for Excellent Education, includes reading, writing and oral discourse for school; requires knowledge of multiple genres of texts and their purposes; and is influenced by students' lives outside of school, including personal, social, and cultural experiences (Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007). The AEE's definition of academic literacy is a more broad term for the body of research called New Literacy Studies (NLS), which advocates a social and cultural approach to academic writing (Lea, 2008; Street 1984). This explicit notion of academic literacy development as a social process was first prevalent in the university level as shown through the works of Bartholomae (1985) and Bizzell (1992). Their premise is that universities must acculturate freshmen to the college-level discourse and to their new social learning community. Their theory builds on the early work of Lev Vygotsky (1978) and his theory of social learning. He posited that learning occurs when there is social interaction and that the sociocultural context in which learners interact and share experiences with others affects what they learn.

James Paul Gee (1987) has asserted a more meta-level definition of academic literacy. He claims that there are two factors to consider: acquisition and learning. Acquisition is a process with a trial and error period, and it occurs subconsciously without formal instruction. On the other hand, learning is a process in which there is a teacher or a model, who is not always a professional, and occurs consciously with formal instructional explanation and analysis. Therefore, in order to gain academic literacy, students acquire literacy subconsciously in all their interactions and they formally learn

from someone who aims to teach them (Gee, 1987). If literacy is defined as a form of discourse that is acquired subconsciously, as well as learned formally, then it develops with exposure to models in natural, meaningful settings in indirect and direct teaching-learning situations (Van Schalkwyk et al., 2009).

There are numerous factors outside of school that influence development of academic literacy, including the students' primary home discourse and their opportunities to practice outside of school (Garrett & Baquedano-Lopez, 2002; Gee, 1987; Lea, 2008). A major complexity of promoting all students' academic literacy in high schools in the US is that since all students are required to attend secondary schools, there will be local and immigrant students of all socio-economic levels with varied previous educational opportunities and privileges (Leki et. al., 2008). The implication for this study is that G 1.5 students may be learning what is needed in schools, but they may not have opportunities to practice academic literacy at home, which can lead to colleges labeling G 1.5 students as being "remedial" (Johns, 2009) and placing them into beginner, or pre-college composition courses that do not meet degree requirements.

If students are assessed as pre-college, beginner, or developmental, writers at the community colleges of the University of Hawaii system, they are required to take a non-credit beginner writing class prior to taking a credit-earning writing class. Once tested and placed into these non-credit earning writing courses, students are required to pass before taking the required first year composition class for their degrees. The University of Hawaii at Manoa, the four-year college, has requirements for enrollment that students must meet, but they no longer have a beginner writer course in the English department. If a G 1.5 student is deemed to need additional assistance on ELL issues because of low

SAT reading score, they are sent to the English Language Institute for work on pre-college level ELL coursework.

Students who take Advanced Placement (AP) courses in high schools have the tendency to do better in college (Mattern, Shaw, & Xiong, 2009). There is a significant difference between those who took an AP course and did well on the AP exam versus those who did not take an AP course (Murphy & Dodd, 2009). G 1.5 students are not given as many opportunities as their NES peers to take higher tracked courses (Murie & Fitzpatrick, 2009), such as AP, in high schools so an inequality exists in the opportunity for greater academic literacy development for G 1.5 students in high schools. Frodesen (2009) found that G 1.5 students were “shut out” from academically and socially interacting with higher achieving NES. Even in colleges, G 1.5 ELL issues in composition studies have been largely ignored and more attention has gone to international ELL students (Matsuda & Matsuda, 2009).

The beginner composition courses are pre-requisites for the first-year composition classes in colleges. The first year composition classes are required because writers need to learn the language of composition and academic discourse required in college (Bartholomae, 1980). It is not that writers lack maturity or complexity in their thoughts, but rather freshmen college students, and more specifically beginner composition students, often have their own “idiosyncratic dialect,” and Bartholomae has proposed that they may, therefore, lag behind their peers in their control of conventional discourse necessary in college-level writing. This is the reason for labeling students beginners rather than remedial.

An important social justice issue arises here. Mina Shaughnessy (1976) has said that when the language of the students is different from academic discourse, teachers' biases can emerge; thus, teachers need to reflect on their practices and reject the thought that they are superior to their students. Instructors' attitudes, stereotypes, and condescension to students become part of a powerful hidden curriculum that can impede students' learning. This hidden curriculum often shifts away from the intended goals and outcomes of the school or teacher and rather sends messages that the class is intended to benefit more dominant groups and to exclude minority groups (McLaren, 2003).

### ***Beginner composition***

Community colleges in many states have defined a part of their mission as assisting underprepared students in catching up in writing and other skills with their degree-seeking college peers (Southard & Clay, 2004). Starting Fall 2009, the University of Hawaii system has begun to follow this trend. The UH system community colleges have a lengthy mission statement that includes having an open-enrollment policy and educational practices that seek to nurture their students and foster their talents. Because of the open-enrollment policy, the UH community colleges admit many underprepared students, so they offer other pre-college beginner writing courses for students who do not place into English 100.

Like public high schools, community colleges provide students with wide ranges of abilities and cultures access to higher education (Bailey, Calcagno Jenkins, Leinbach, & Kienzl, 2006; Bueschel & Venezia, 2006). High schools view community colleges as "safety-nets" for underprepared students seeking higher education, and community colleges can be stepping stones to four-year colleges for many students. The community

college focus has shifted from helping underprepared students to acculturate into academic discourse to promoting more academic rigor and retention of their student (Bailey et al., 2006; Bueschel & Venezia, 2006).

With increased enrollment and with pressure to retain more students, community colleges are looking towards better development of their beginner courses such as writing (Brilliant, 2005; Maloney, 2003). Colleges need to address the inner experiences of their beginning writers and integrate support services for successful development of students' academic discourse (Brilliant, 2005). The different instructor and student perceptions on writing also need to be addressed (Van Schalkwyk et. al., 2009); students go into college with specific academic abilities and particular ways of learning. While instructors may expect students to take initiative to keep abreast of writing requirements and expectations, this may not be part of students' mindframe. Van Schalkwyk et al. (2009) found that instructors were not giving the feedback that students were expecting, and, meanwhile, students were not seeking assistance on their own when needed as instructors expected.

Maloney (2003) calls students in need of beginner pre-college writing "at-risk" of not completing their coursework for college graduation. Bizzell (1986) says that these students are often unable to use the "Standard English" of the institution. The academic communities, or the higher educational settings, have different conventions of language from the ones beginning writers know. Therefore, when beginning writers enter the academic community, they are being asked, in a way, to learn a new dialect and a new type of discourse. Bizzell (1986) sees beginning writers as students who have not had an opportunity to become a part of the academic discourse community because of contrasting "language-using practices" (1986, p. 296) in their own experience. To help

them become acculturated to the academy, instructors, then, need to become aware of the beginning writers' home discourse and world views. The same can be said about assisting Generation 1.5 students in colleges. Their home discourse and world views are often quite different, their writing in English may have certain flaws, and an instructor with limited sociocultural awareness may mistakenly read into these flaws a lack of potential to learn.

Some view beginner writers as students who are lacking something in their writing. Perhaps their writing contains errors or is missing certain strengths colleges are looking for, such as critical and rhetorical thinking (Rose, 1985). This leads colleges to offer beginning writing courses to train them to speak the language of the university. As David Bartholomae (1985) suggests, they have to “invent the university.” In other words, they must learn to mimic the style needed for academic discourse of colleges. Many freshmen are not accustomed to this type of discourse (Bizzell, 1986) and find it difficult to place themselves in an academic situation; yet, they have to figure out the conventions of the academic community if they want to become successful writers in college.

Bartholomae (1985) recognizes that certain beginning writers have to reproduce “privilege” without having any prior experience with the college-level discourse. They must learn to emulate the style needed for academic discourse. Students do not want to be considered “immigrants” or “foreigners” in the academy of higher education (Horner & Trimbur, 2002). Unfortunately, for immigrant students, it is possible that they have had fewer opportunities in high schools to practice the academic discourse often practiced in honors English classes from which they are often screened, than their native English speaking peers (Murie & Fitzpatrick, 2009; Roberge, 2003).

The freshman composition course holds many challenges for college instructors because the diverseness of the student population in academia today (Zamel, 1998; Lea, 2008). Although the discourse required for college-level writing is quite different between high schools and colleges, many students who pursue degrees do learn to adapt to the academic discourse in colleges. One unfortunate dilemma is that some students are underprepared even to take the freshman composition course and experience a gap between high school and college writing curricula (Maloney, 2003; Fitzgerald, 2004; Van Schalkwyk et al., 2009).

### **The Generation 1.5 Challenges and Language Socialization**

Many controversies and much “baggage” extend from being a Generation 1.5, including discrimination and stereotyping from their classmates (Roberge, 2009). They may be labeled as foreigners by their US-born peers, and occasionally called “F.O.B.” or “fresh off the boat” by others. With these kinds of labeling, they are left to feel alienated from some of their native English speaking (NES) classmates and often choose to socialize with other G 1.5ers (Roberge, 2009). The negative treatment in the overall school community can hinder students from acquiring the necessary skills and knowledge needed to succeed in schools. Socializing with other G 1.5 students, may help them feel more acceptance and tolerance for having multiple untraditional identities.

Not only do G 1.5ers have to adapt into a new culture, but they also have many academic hurdles to overcome. Their parents are often not familiar with the American education system and rely much on the teachers and schools to help their children through their schooling experience. Although studies show parental involvement as being pertinent to children’s success, there are limitations to what immigrant parents can do to

alleviate their children's social and academic challenges. This is especially true if students come from families who do not value academic education, or if they come from immigrant families who are completely unaware of the American educational systems.

### ***Language socialization for ELLs***

Vygotsky's social learning theory and socio-cultural psychology form the foundation for current language socialization theories; hence, research on language socialization draws from "anthropological, (socio)linguistic, sociological, and psychological approaches to human development" (Garrett & Baquedano-Lopez, 2002, pp. 341). Language acquisition can occur outside of school when children interact with older, more experienced people, who can help them develop language skills that lead to a positive schooling experience. This idea has its roots in John Dewey (1938/1998) and Vygotsky (1978). Students in school learn how to think, speak, and behave by interacting with their peers; everyday mundane activities that involve communication with others are all forms of language socialization.

Getting acclimated to an academic world in high school poses numerous challenges for students, and it is even more challenging to students who are trying to adapt to America at the same time because of their newly acquired resident status. The services available to ELLs in high schools are mostly for those learning English as a first generation immigrant who came to America. Once students exit out of the ELL services, and unless they transfer schools, they do not receive any further services from the school's ELL program. Many scholars argue that ELLs are not adequately prepared after their high school education for the rigor of the academic literacy that college professors expect (Lea & Street, 2006; Matsuda, 2003b).

Young children learn to socialize in the early grades, and they learn to adapt to different social situations prior to entering the adult world. They learn to adapt their discourse and practices for different social settings and purposes, and to acquire certain kinds of knowledge. Socialization for ELL and G 1.5 students can be more daunting and challenging than it is for native English speaking (NES) students because they need to adapt to another language and culture at the same time. ELL learning theories highlight socio-cultural and socio-political processes involved in acquiring languages, and build from the concept that students construct linguistic and cultural knowledge by interacting with each other (Garrett & Baquedano-Lopez, 2002; Watson-Gegeo, 2004). Socio-cultural issues connect to social justice concerns regarding equity in life and learning (Comstock et. al., 2008).

Even though ELLs are often unfairly lumped into a single group in public schools, Freeman and Freeman (2009) distinguish ELLs into three categories. The first group is the newly arrived in the US, but they are prepared in the schooling process from their homelands so they may succeed in US schools. Another group comes to the US with limited academic and literacy knowledge of their homeland schools, so they must learn to read and write in English. The last group has been in the US for an extended time so their conversational English is well-developed, but their academic English is not as good. This last category of ELLs is also quite possibly students who were born in the US but did not get the help needed to become proficient in academic English (Freeman & Freeman, 2009). The third category could also include students who speak nonstandard English at home, such as Hawaii Creole English, and even though they are not considered to be ELLs by most, Freeman and Freeman (2009) feel that they also need support with

academic literacy acquisition. Using Roberge's (2003) definition of G 1.5, it is possible that there are G 1.5 students in each of the three categories.

Cummins (1999) makes a distinction between academic and conversational language. He says that basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS), which ELLs need for peer to peer conversational fluency, can be acquired within two years, but cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP), which is academic English, takes anywhere from five to ten years to develop. The implication of Cummins' findings for G 1.5 students is that even though they may have the BICS, it takes much longer to develop their CALP, and, quite possibly, they may never develop enough CALP to succeed in college. Similarly, Carhill, Suárez-Orozco, and Pérez (2008) more recently found that it takes at least four to seven years for academic literacy development. If a school fails to properly distinguish between BICS and CALP, and they mistakenly exit students out of ELL programs and mainstream them, then students may not be properly supported (Cummins, 1999).

Students who have developed BICS but not CALP are not necessarily lacking cognitive development, but they are lacking the academic language skills needed for school (Cummins, 1999; Freeman & Freeman, 2009). This is often true for G 1.5 students who are considered to be at-risk and unprepared to meet the academic literacy demands of college (Crosby, 2009). Although BICS and CALP can be acquired at the same time, Cummins (1999) says that BICS can plateau while CALP continues to develop with schooling experiences.

There has been a lack of attention to writing instruction of ELL learners in the past (Leki et. al., 2008; Matsuda, 2003a). High school ELL courses seem to have two

main focuses on language development (Leki et al., 2008). The first focus is to provide instruction to promote academic skills, and the second focus is to ensure students have the proper everyday language skills needed for social integration. Focus on academic writing has not been a priority, but it is especially important in ensuring access to advanced level work that prepares G 1.5 for college (Frodesen, 2009).

High school is often a time when students' concerns about identity and peer relations issues are at their peak (Harklau, 2007), and it is a time when adolescents begin to look beyond their parents for social and psychological support (Leki et al., 2008). However, high school ELLs often have difficulties finding support from their native English speaking (NES) peers because of language and cultural differences (Frodesen, 2009). ELLs are often ignored or taunted if they are placed into self-contained ESL courses, which have been negatively tagged as "ESL ghetto" (Leki et al., 2008), or exclusive ELL social groups (Frodesen, 2009). These self-contained classes have only ELLs so students have little contact with non-ELL students. Although situations vary across the nation, immigrant students are sometimes either left too long in these types of ESL classes or they are pulled out of them too early (Roberge, 2009). Leaving student too long in the ELL class gives them less contact with NES students, but pulling them out too early could affect their BICS and CALP (Cummins, 1999).

Mainstreaming ELLs also poses a problem for students who are not yet comfortable with the move away from the more personal world to a broader social world in high schools (Leki et al., 2008). Mainstream high school classrooms may require students to be more knowledgeable about the culture of the NES peers. They may be expected to know everyday idioms, cultural allusions, sarcasm, and pop culture which

have, as yet, been unfamiliar to them. It is also possible that very motivated and bright ELLs find themselves tracked into lower-level English classes, which are usually not college-preparatory. Another issue is a changed teacher attitude. Many mainstream teachers do not feel as if it is their job to help ELL students any more than the NES students. In all fairness to mainstream teachers, public schools are often underfunded and teachers lack the skills and resources to help ELL students. Problems with transition into mainstream classes have, in some studies, been shown to result in high dropout rates of ELL students (Jo, 2004; Leki et al., 2008).

### ***Teaching academic literacy to ELLs***

ELLs may also face daunting challenges as they try to adapt to an unfamiliar academic environment (Leki et al., 2008; Matsuda, 2003b; Murie & Fitzpatrick, 2009). A possible ELL challenge could be that they must read four chapters out of a dense textbook, or they are assigned to write a “college-level” essay for those four chapters without any sort of guidance on the writing process (Murie & Fitzpatrick, 2009). Colleges worked to solve these types of issues through pre-college level beginner writing courses.

Writing instruction for native English speaking (NES) students prior to the mid-1960s primarily focused on written response to literary texts (Kroll, 2001). The teaching of writing for ELLs used to focus on grammar, mechanics, and individual sentences (Leki et al., 2008). Matsuda (2003a) calls this “writing as sentence-level structure,” a type of guided composition in which students are provided with a model, a plan, an outline, or a partly written version of a composition to begin their writing. In more recent years, Alber-Morgan et. al., (2007) and Graham and Perin (2007) found that the most effective

way to teach writing to all adolescents is to model the writing assignment and to teach students the writing process: planning, drafting, revising, peer reviewing, and editing.

In the 1970s, there was a shift to teaching writing as a process in the field of composition before teaching writing as a process filtered into ESL studies (Matsuda, 2003a). Teaching students the writing process (Higgins et al., 2006; Kroll, 2001) and collaboration through peer feedback (Gielen et al., 2010; Richards, 2010; Simmons, 2003) are the most common approaches to writing instruction in mainstream and ESL classrooms today (Kroll, 2001; Peregoy & Boyle, 2005). The writing process, popularized by Janet Emig (1977), emphasizes students' responsibility for their own writing and student engagement in an iterative writing cycle rather than a one-time essay writing assignment. The iterative writing process gives Generation 1.5 students additional opportunities for peer interaction and language socialization in the stages where they provide and receive oral and written feedback.

Peregoy and Boyle (2005) illustrate five interrelated phases to process writing, which seem standard among others who discuss process writing (Kroll, 2001; Vacca & Vacca, 2008). The writing process approach incorporates reading, writing, and oral aspects of academic English, and it is an iterative process that may not necessarily be in the following order. The first step is the planning phase. This includes brainstorming and identifying a purpose and audience for the writing. The second step is the drafting phase. This is the first draft, and it can include freewriting or journaling. The next step is revising, and it includes peer and teacher reviewing collaboratively. The fourth step is editing for grammar and mechanics. The last step is publishing and sharing with people outside of the classroom.

The iterative cycle of the writing process and peer feedback are means of social interaction for learning discussed by Lev Vygotsky (1978) who asserted that language develops when individuals communicate with and learn through others. In writing, with social interaction, more advanced writers can help less advanced writers to bring out their inner voice to help them produce more academic writing, which is similar to Vygotsky's (1978) theory on learning through socialization. In today's diverse classrooms, as there are always more advanced readers and less advanced readers, there will also be more advanced and less advanced writers.

In the current dissertation study, results described what learning experiences professors and students have perceived have helped G 1.5 students develop their writing, and it generated new information about the role of the collaborative writing process in G 1.5 students' learning.

### ***Academic literacy challenges of the Generation 1.5***

The largest difference between the ELL and the G 1.5 students is that ELL comprises a broader group that includes all students who are not NES or proficient English speakers. All G 1.5s are ELL, but not all ELLs are Gen 1.5. ELLs, like Gen 1.5 can also be students who have immigrated with their families. They can also be students who were born in the US, but are not proficient in academic English. The G 1.5ers, as stated earlier, are more specifically immigrants who are in high school or have completed high schools in the US. When one refers to ELL students, the group can include international students (as opposed to immigrant students) whose purpose in the US is to complete a college education in the US and return to their home countries (Matsuda, 2003b), but these international students are not considered G 1.5. Many G 1.5ers find

themselves as being in-between ESL and beginning writing courses as they transition from high school to college (Murie & Fitzpatrick, 2009); in other words, they do not need as many ELL services as a new immigrant, but they need additional help to get to the level of academic literacy college professors expect.

G 1.5 students have acquired basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS), but it is possible that they are still working on acquiring proficient levels of cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). di Gennaro (2008) argues that G 1.5 students tend to lack the academic language, or CALP, to succeed in college that international students have developed in their first language. The needs of G 1.5 struggling with cognitive academic language may be unknown or unaddressed. Their placement in college writing courses may be best conducted by collecting writing samples and questionnaire data (di Gennaro, 2008). As with many other scholars, di Gennaro indicated that G 1.5 students do not like to be identified as ELLs, so it is important to view their samples of writing to make accurate placement in college writing courses to assure them the chance to become more successful college writers.

Successful writing, or writing that meets the demands of college-level discourse, includes the ability to write to a particular audience. In other words, the writers must develop a particular persona for each of the different audiences they are addressing in the various writing tasks across subject areas in college. Successful writing also implies that students can make connections between reading and writing and can use writing to express and build on what has been learned (Emig, 1977; Odell, 1980; Paul & Elder, 2005).

Zhou & Qiu (2009) argue that Asian American bilingual students have been ignored in educational research for too long. The problem has been caused in part by the idea of Asian-Americans as the “model minority,” which emerged because of both Asian American students’ well-publicized, above average acceptance rates into top universities and East Asian students international testing achievements (Zhou & Qiu, 2009). However, test scores are only one type of indicator of success. Asian students have fuller dimension and greater diversity than is usually acknowledged. There are other types of indicators of success such as students’ social assimilation and positive schooling experiences that are not taken into consideration when society views Asian American success by their academic achievement. In addition, there are Asian students who struggle academically, as suggested by studies that actually show high rates of dropouts for Asian American ELL students in public schools (Brydolf, 2009; Leki et al., 2008).

Accommodating G 1.5 students in the classroom can become a bit overwhelming for educators since the G 1.5 students have a wide range of academic literacy and educational experiences (Allison, 2009; Forrest, 2006; Matsuda, 2003b; Murie & Fitzpatrick, 2009). For example, a G 1.5 student who immigrated to the US with limited educational background will not be as successful in US schools as those who come to the US with more substantial schooling experiences (Forrest, 2006). Children with immigrant parents with limited oral English abilities may not get schooling assistance from their parents (Carhill et. al., 2008; Louie, 2009). If educators were more aware of the challenges G 1.5ers face in achieving academic literacy, it is likely they could promote a more just and equitable experience for G 1.5ers in high schools and better prepare them for success in college. Knowing G 1.5ers’ schooling experiences prior to coming to the

US may also help in creating a more successful learning experience for the G 1.5 in their social and academic transitions to their new home and school.

Academic literacy of Generation 1.5 students has not been studied sufficiently, and there is limited literature available describing the needs of this particular group of language learners (Allison, 2009). However, by synthesizing findings in the literature on academic literacy acquisition and language socialization of ELLs, one can conclude that it is challenging for G 1.5ers to adapt to more rigorous academic environments without first being able to be more aware of their own multiple identities and to situate themselves in the academic world. Like other beginning writers, G 1.5 students also need more practice with academic writing conventions such as developing thesis statements and taking a stance on a topic, supporting their ideas by synthesizing sources, and developing strategies for editing and revising (Murie & Fitzpatrick, 2009). As Lea (2008), Diaz-Rico (2004), and Turner (1999) explain, all students need to know the political and social identities of their audience and formulate their discourse so that the audience understands the message. With the challenges they face as G 1.5ers, students must feel comfortable with their three core identities (heritage culture, current culture, and mixed cultures) before learning to create different personas for “inventing the university” (Bartholomae, 1987) and becoming part of the academic discourse communities of colleges.

Scott N. Forrest (2006) recommends nine different categories of instructional assistance to help G 1.5ers develop academic literacy. Instructors, he asserts, should be sensitive to and be aware of the impact of the curriculum on student learning, the needs of the learners, and their own influence as educators. The curriculum, he suggests, should

be rigorous, provide a balanced approach to literacy in all content areas, and develop students' critical literacy. As to the needs of the learners, instructors should be sensitive to students' levels of motivation and instruction in the students' language should be provided. Educators can have a more positive influence if they use balanced and holistic assessments, provide flexible pace and approaches, and participate in staff development to learn about English learners' needs. Forrest (2006) justly illustrates the need for more equitable placement decisions for G 1.5 students--with fewer placements in lower-tracked courses and access to rigorous college-prep courses for G 1.5 students. Changes in placement decisions in schools can foster G 1.5 student development as academic writers.

To add to this literature base, the current study will generate information from instructor and student perspectives about what G 1.5 students need from instructors, curriculum, and placement policies to assist them in advancing their academic writing.

### ***The Generation 1.5 as beginner academic writers in college***

Beginning writing courses in many colleges, especially community colleges, offer pre-college level courses prior to credit-earning first year composition classes (Southard & Clay, 2004). With increased enrollment of students with diverse backgrounds, community colleges are looking towards better development of their beginning courses (Brilliant, 2005; Maloney, 2003). Sometimes writing courses for underprepared students are called basic, remedial, or developmental (Matsuda, 2003b). In this study, they are referred to as beginner composition or writing courses.

Discussions of the G 1.5 students in beginner writing courses are "scant" (Matsuda, 2003b) and studies that exist have been largely qualitative (di Gennaro, 2009). Research is scant because of the difficulty in identifying G 1.5ers among the

broader group of ELLs in colleges, yet they have different writing issues (Allison, 2009). Cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) in colleges is necessary across content areas because colleges require students to show their understanding of the different content areas through writing (Allison, 2009; Cummins, 1999; Freeman & Freeman, 2009).

In Harriett Allison's (2009) study on the transition of high school G 1.5 students to college, she found that high schools tend to give students fewer opportunities for creative expression and more instruction that is teacher-directed. She also found that college ESL courses do not "fix" the writing issues G 1.5 students face. She recommends that instructors teach G 1.5ers how to think critically. Students need to know how to retain information from readings and to synthesize the information in writing. Furthermore, she says that G 1.5 students typically enter college with access to fewer than 10,000 known vocabulary words for writing, while NES students have between 10,000 to 100,000 words. By way of comparison, ELLs overall have access to only 2,000 to 7,000 words for writing. The number of words known and used is important since diction, or the choice of words, helps develop meaning and is often a criterion for successful writers (Allison, 2009). Allison (2009) and Matsuda (2003b) concur that the writing experiences of the NES, G 1.5, and ELLs are different so high schools and colleges need to make adjustments in their curriculum to accommodate all types of students in order to help them become more successful academic writers.

Understanding the dynamics of G 1.5 student success in writing is complex, and comparisons to other groups raise questions. For example, international students who graduated from high schools in their home countries prior to a US college education

perform equal to or better than G 1.5 students who have graduated from US schools on college writing entrance exams (di Gennaro, 2009). One question that may arise is whether G 1.5 students are getting the adequate support necessary in US high schools.

Placement decisions for composition classes in colleges with several levels of classes are also complex when it comes to G 1.5 students. Di Gennaro (2008) notes that collecting narrative information on students' linguistic performances and background information prior to placing them in writing classes may be more pertinent than testing or transcript data given if indeed development of academic English occurs largely through social interaction with peers.

G 1.5 students usually initially attend community colleges over four year universities, yet those who enter community colleges aim to transfer into a four year university (Patthey, Thomas-Spiegel, & Dillon, 2009). While at the community college, many begin with pre-college level beginning composition courses (Patthey et. al., 2009). Even though beginner courses do not count towards a degree, research has shown that G 1.5ers have a high likelihood of succeeding in their goals of higher education and more success in beginner composition courses than other students (Patthey et. al., 2009). Although beginner composition courses have been found to be effective (Goen-Salter, 2008; Southard & Clay, 2004), other researchers have found that mainstreamed learning communities with writing centers and tutors are more effective in promoting students' academic discourse (Darabi, 2006; Johnson et al., 2009; Rigolino & Freel, 2007).

Paul Kei Matsuda and Tony Silva (1999) prefer a "cross-cultural composition" course to create a less threatening writing placement option for all students. This includes diverse students - NES, G 1.5, and other ELLs. Not only would this blending have a

financial advantage for colleges, but also there would be an academic advantage for students. In keeping with Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural learning theory, a mediated course that integrates all students will encourage students to socialize and learn from each other (Matsuda & Silva, 1999). Students are learning about college composition, and their cross-cultural awareness is enhanced through collaboration with peers and learning from the instructors (Matsuda & Silva, 1999). A cross-cultural composition approach may promote students' sense of belonging and decrease dropout rates of ELLs in college (Patthey et al., 2009).

Ann M. Johns (2009) encourages instructors to motivate G 1.5ers through process writing, a student-centered approach to writing. She also encourages teachers to have students write essays that incorporate their families and friends or to write about issues they have confronted. She has found that authenticating G 1.5ers' cultural and content knowledge background and life challenges in the classroom can provide an important bridge to academic discourse and writing (Johns, 2009). In addition she points out the value of guiding students to invent as a means to develop rhetorical flexibility. Invention in composition studies can entail students situating themselves within the genre they are writing, or, in other words, adjusting to the social, rhetorical, and linguistic context in which they want to participate. Johns has reported that pedagogical approaches like these that she takes in her beginning composition courses have resulted in positive outcomes and a greater sense of student empowerment.

Jane Addams (1908) long ago advocated identity maintenance of ELLs and G 1.5ers and the need for teachers to take into account their students' previous cultures and languages. As far back as 1908, she called on teachers to assist immigrant students to

maintain their precious cultures and identities even while they adapted to US society and culture. She believed that public schools in a democracy had the responsibility to create an environment in which all children felt the “beginnings of a culture so wide and deep and universal” that they could decipher their “own parents and countrymen by a standard which is worldwide and not provincial” (p. 43). In her writing about public education and the immigrant child, Addams stated that immigrant children enjoy the fullest opportunities to learn in school when “the cultivated teacher...is open to the charm and beauty of ... old-country life” (p. 43) representing their students countries of origin, as well as aware of the present circumstance of their students’ lives as immigrants to the US.

### **Summary of Literature Review**

This chapter reviewed the literature related to writing as an approach to learning and ways Generation 1.5 Asian Americans’ experiences affect their ability to engage successfully in college level academic writing. With an increase in bilingual and G 1.5 students in public schools (Clarke & Drudy, 2006; Flannery, 2009; Kumashiro, 2006; Zhou & Qiu, 2009), high schools need to examine and explore the challenges and experiences G 1.5 students have in becoming academically literate. For G 1.5 students, basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) are usually acquired within two years of immigration, but cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) can take five to ten years to develop (Cummins, 1999). CALP is a challenge to acquire since G1.5ers face numerous challenges in adapting to academic environments (Leki et al., 2008; Matsuda, 2003b; Murie & Fitzpatrick, 2009). This study explored how public high school and college curriculum and instruction have created environments that helped or harmed the development of G 1.5 students’ academic literacy.

The existing literature suggested that high school and college educators pursue a wider path to promote academic literacy of immigrant ELL and G 1.5 AA students. Various scholars indicated that these students need more opportunities to socialize and to learn the academic discourse appropriate for college-level coursework and peer interaction if they are to enjoy a more just education in public schools. Perhaps, some theorists contend, the first step is to assist students in identifying their place in US society and to help them to recognize and come to terms with their three cultural identities (Diaz-Rico, 2004; Gee, 1987; Lea, 2008; Turner, 1999). There is theoretical support that this can be accomplished by helping G1.5 students interact with not only their peers but also, as Dewey (1998), Meier (1995), and Vygotsky (1978) suggest, with older, more experienced people.

With a curriculum that meets the needs of the G 1.5, Forrest (2006) found that students improved their academic literacy skills. Others suggested that another step to help G 1.5 AA students develop academic literacy was to ensure that English classes study literature that reflects the lives of G 1.5 students. Such readings can help students integrate their linguistic and cultural knowledge (Watson-Gegeo, 2004) and alleviate the challenges they experience in identity development (Roberge, 2009).

This study built on this review of existing literature by focusing on one special needs group of immigrant students who have been often found lacking in the skills required for college writing. The aim of the study was to provide detailed and rich information about instructor and student perception of G 1.5 students' transition to college and the challenges they face in meeting college writing expectations and the inequitable access to rigorous coursework in high schools. Findings may help college and

high school writing instructors develop better articulation with each other and better success supporting G 1.5 students' language socialization and writing growth. In a larger sense, findings may assure G 1.5 students have a greater opportunity to learn and a more just schooling experience.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODS

This chapter charts methodological choices used to address the following research questions:

1. In what ways are the teaching and learning of writing similar or different in high schools, community colleges, and four-year colleges?
2. What socio-cultural experiences and curriculum conditions in education impact Generation 1.5 Asian American students in their transition from high school to college writing success?
3. How does taking an Advanced Placement English course in high school correlate to placement in beginner composition courses in college for Generation 1.5 Asian American students and native English speaking students?
4. In what ways do the high school, community college, and four year college writing curriculum and instruction influence the development of Generation 1.5 Asian American students' academic literacy?
5. What do college and high school instructors know about the unique academic and social needs of Generation 1.5 Asian American students? What instructional adaptations, if any, do college and high school instructors use to help Generation 1.5 Asian American students acquire academic writing skills for college?

The first section provides the rationale for using an exploratory case study method with multiple sources of data. The second section discusses the context and setting of the study. Then I describe the data collection and analysis approaches. Finally, the last section discusses my credibility as a researcher in carrying out this case study.

### Why a Case Study Method?

Gillham (2000) and Yin (2009, 2003) have defined a single *case* as an individual, a group, an institution, or a community. A *case study* is a study that looks into one or more of these cases in order to answer the research questions. The researcher collects whatever evidence can lead to the best possible answers to the research questions (Gillham, 2000; Heck, 2006; Merriam, 1988; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2009; Yin 2003). Case studies provide opportunities to see real people in real situations, and they provide opportunities to see unique and dynamic human relationships, which cannot always be explained using solely quantitative methods (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2003). In this sense, as Hitchcock and Hughes (1995) explain, case studies research is not so much about the methods the researcher uses, but more about the participants or the topic of research. They further explain that case study research incorporates the following characteristics (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995, p. 317):

- It is concerned with rich and vivid description of events pertinent to the case.
- It provides chronological narrative of events pertinent to the case.
- It combines the description of events with the analysis of them.
- It focuses on the actor(s) of the study and seeks to understand their perceptions of the events.
- It highlights the relevant events of the case.
- The researcher is an integral part of the case.
- The written report captures the richness of the events.

This dissertation study utilized the exploratory case study design, one in which the aim was to understand a real life phenomenon in the context of particular situations in

order to develop a hypothesis, model, or theory (Scholz & Tietje, 2002; Yin, 2009).

Although this study was exploratory, it also incorporated the traditional social sciences aspect of interpretation (Cohen et al., 2003; Heck, 2006).

In this study, I made interpretations on the basis of bounded data collection and analysis. The case was bounded by subject (Generation 1.5's academic literacy development), time (three months of data collection), participants (public high school graduates and public college faculty), location (Hawaii), and data (surveys, interviews, and literacy narratives). I applied the developing conceptual themes from my data inductively in order to investigate initial assumptions (Merriam, 1988). Inductive reasoning is a type of narrative data analysis that is bottom up (Stake, 1995). I began with surveys and interviews that led to hypothesis and theory.

According to Yin (2009) there are four main concerns expressed about case studies research: 1) case studies lack rigor; 2) case studies cannot be generalized; 3) case studies take too long; and 4) case studies have no randomized selection of participants so they cannot be categorized as experimental. Oftentimes these concerns arise because of misunderstandings about what case studies entail. These concerns can be alleviated if the researcher is careful in the bounding of the case and in the data collection, analysis, and triangulation (Creswell, 2007; Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995; Yin, 2009, 2003).

Yin (2009) notes that the purpose of case studies research is not to generalize to populations or universes; rather, its purpose is to expand and to make analytic generalizations about a bounded case. The researcher bounds a case by assigning the parameters of the study so that there are no questions about what variables are being studied. In this study, I have chosen to bound the study by participant selection, time of

the study, the location of the study, and the topic of the study. The case study explored in this study is described in the following section on contextual setting.

### **Contextual Setting**

There are over 178,000 students enrolled in public schools in Hawaii with 65% of the students from Asian or Pacific Island heritage. The Asian ancestors to Hawaii were plantation workers who had to “learn” Hawaii Creole English (HCE), or Pidgin, as a means of communicating (Dotts & Sikkema, 1994). It is sometimes considered to be a second language (Siegel, 2005; 2007), but there were attempts to ban the use of HCE in public schools in the past with the English-only movement (Dotts & Sikkema, 1994; Tamura, 1996; Tamura 2002). The English-only movement in the past and No Child Left Behind (NCLB) mandates in the present have left English language learners (ELL) at a disadvantage in Hawaii’s public schools. NCLB mandates have led to teachers “teaching to the test” and providing less instruction on academic writing (McCarthy, 2008).

Existing literature about writing and education of the Generation 1.5 Asian American (G 1.5) students that guided this study included concepts of writing to learn (Emig, 1977; Odell, 1980; Fulwiler & Young, 2000); equitable access to educational experiences and learning (Ayers, Quinn, & Stovall, 2009; Kose, 2006; Maiztegui-Oñate & Santibáñez-Gruber, 2008; Stovall, 2006); and G 1.5 and ELL development of academic literacy and language socialization (Cummins, 1999; Murie & Fitzpatrick, 2009; Roberge, 2009).

This case study with multiple sources of data explored the academic and socio-cultural needs of the G 1.5 students in composition classes in high schools and colleges. As a pragmatist, my focus was primarily on how the research method chosen can most

effectively help answer my research questions (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). This study explored the similarities and differences between high school and college writing instruction of G 1.5 students and what opportunities or missed opportunities exist for the G 1.5 students' development of academic writing skills in public high schools and colleges. The study also aimed to ascertain college instructor and G 1.5 student perceptions of services institutions need to provide for G 1.5 students' successful transition between high school and college-level discourse.

There were five primary data sources: 1) four semi-structured interviews with tenured community college composition instructors; 2) four semi-structured interviews with tenured four-year college composition instructors; 3) 261 surveys of public high school graduates attending college and taking first-year composition courses; 4) nine semi-structured interviews with G 1.5 students; and 5) literacy narratives of five of the interviewed students.

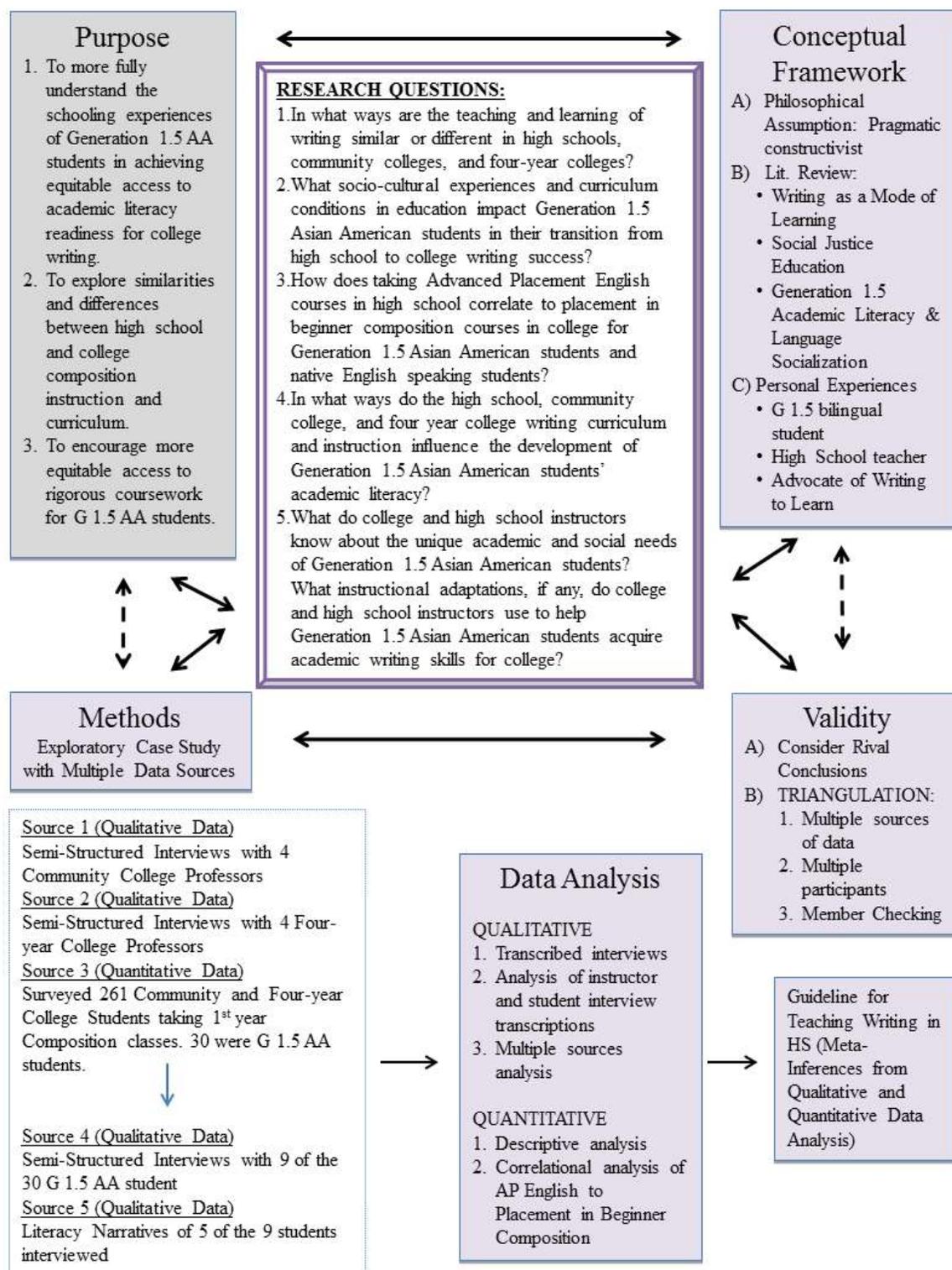
The sites for data collection included West Community College (WCC), South Community College (SCC), and Hawaii State University (HSU). I created these pseudonyms to protect the privacy of the participants in this study. The instructors were asked in one-on-one interviews to articulate their perceptions of the social and academic readiness of all college freshmen, including G 1.5 AA students, from public schools. The surveys included 30 G 1.5 students, 133 from community colleges, and 98 from four-year colleges.

From the completed surveys, I purposefully selected all identifiable G 1.5 students to ask for volunteers for more in-depth personal interviews. With both qualitative (sources 1, 2, 4, and 5) and quantitative (source 3) data, this study generated

new understandings about factors affecting G 1.5 students' transition to college and their socialization into college composition classes with new demands for academic literacy. Findings can inform educational institutions, especially in the Hawaii context, in decision-making to ease the transition of Generation 1.5 students to college and to promote their academic writing proficiency.

A visual representation of the methods and procedures for this study are modeled after Maxwell's (2005) recommendations for designing a research study (Figure 2). The bolded arrows represent strong and direct relationships between each part of the study design and the dotted arrows represent strong but indirect relationships. Many parts of the research design are mutually exclusive and cannot be separated from answering the research questions. For example, the formulation of the purpose, conceptual framework, methods, and data analysis depended on each other for the creation and answering of the research questions.

Figure 2. Visual representation of methods and procedures



### *Participant selection*

Participant selection is not random in case studies as it often is in quantitative methods (Trochim, 2006), but rather it is purposeful as it is in qualitative methods (Creswell, 2007). This purposeful selection is a reason why many scholars see case studies as a type of qualitative research that emphasizes systematic and rigorous data collection (Cohen et al., 2003; Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995; Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2009). The priority in case study research is to have a balance and variety in participant selection (Yin, 2009). The participants in this study represented four groups. They included 1) tenured community college composition professors, 2) tenured four-year college composition professors, 3) college students in first-year composition courses, and 4) Generation 1.5 Asian American students in first-year composition classes. The students were all graduates of public high schools in Hawaii.

Instructor participants were purposefully selected for their knowledge of skills in teaching composition and for their informed perspectives about skills students need to be prepared for success in college-level writing within the Hawaii public university system. All instructor participants were asked to comment on the Hawaii Content and Performance Standards III (HCPS III) because it represents learning outcomes that the Department of Education targets for their students and uses a guide for writing instruction at public high schools in Hawaii.

There were also two groups of student participants. The first group consisted of 98 college students who were taking or had taken the first year composition class at HSU and the second group consisted of 133 community college students who were taking first-year composition classes during Fall of 2010. After participating college students

completed the survey, 30 G 1.5 students were identified. Twenty were from community colleges and ten were from HSU. Nine G 1.5 students agreed to participate in the semi-structured interviews. Four of the nine students were from community colleges.

### ***Site selection***

The sites, University of Hawaii (UH) college campuses, were selected for a number of reasons. UH is the only state university system in Hawaii and HSU, which is one of the six campuses on Oahu, has the greatest number of students. The two community colleges in this study represent the diverse demographics on the island of Oahu. One is located on the western part of Oahu and the other is located on the southern part of Oahu. It was important to represent HSU and the community colleges in this study because they have different approaches to teaching first year composition courses. For example, HSU has eliminated beginner, or developmental, writing courses and has mainstreamed all first year composition students. They provide assistance to these students through tutors or mentors or their writing centers outside of class. The community colleges still offer what they refer to as beginner reading and writing courses that do not earn credit towards a degree but are pre-requisites to first year composition courses.

HSU was a suitable site for this study of writing in Hawaii because 70% of its incoming freshmen are residents of Hawaii and 66.8% of those freshmen are graduates Hawaii public schools (Institutional Research Office, 2009). WCC and SCC were chosen to represent the seven University of Hawaii (UH) system community colleges because of the convenience of access to the campuses and to composition instructors for interviews. Importantly for this study, over 45% of the students who were enrolled at the state

university systems were of Asian American descent. The G 1.5 college students were purposefully selected because they are an important minority immigrant population whose needs have not been adequately assessed, partly because of the difficulties in identifying them.

### ***Qualitative data collection***

Seventeen semi-structured interviews with composition instructors and students were held during the summer, fall, and winter of 2010. The interview questions for instructors focused on the teaching of writing in college and on G 1.5 students' skills and experiences as writers in college (see Appendix A). The interview questions for Generation 1.5 students focused on their skills and experiences as writers in high school and college (see Appendix B). The nine G 1.5 students were identified in surveys given to the 412 college students (see Appendix C), of which only 261 were graduates of Hawaii public schools. Each interviewee was given the interview questions one week prior to the interview, and the interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed for analysis. Each interviewee had the opportunity to review the transcript and a summary of their interview in order to provide corrections or additions. As suggested by Maxwell (2005) and Patton (1999), this form of member check increases validity and credibility of the findings and conclusions.

The nine G 1.5 AA students chosen for interviews were asked to provide a literacy narrative. Of those, five submitted narratives. Literacy narratives are autobiographical details of a person's relation to literacy, race, and culture (Young, 2004). Morris Young (2004) has claimed that literacy narratives show ways America's sociocultural practices reflect the dominant class and the experiences individuals have in

their society. In other words, literacy narratives that Young (2004) has his students write may possibly show remnants of the instruction and curriculum that is considered to be part of the hidden curriculum McLaren (2003) posited. The literacy narrative prompt I provided was adapted from one Young (2004) has given his first-year composition students:

*Please provide a 400-word written composition about a meaningful literacy event from your life. You can talk about your first visit to the library, learning how to write in high school, hating an English class, a text you had to read and/or write about in an English class, or anything else related to a reading and/or a writing experience in high school or college. Don't just describe, but paint a picture of your experience and why this event was so meaningful to you.*

Prior to and during the instructor interviews, UH instructors looked at writing standards determined by the State of Hawaii Department of Education (DOE, 2008) in the Hawaii Content and Performance Standards (HCPS) III. In interviews, they were asked to comment on these standards and benchmarks (see Appendix F) to ascertain their perception of Hawaii DOE's expectations for developing successful writers.

Each interview participant was provided with a copy of the Agreement to Participate (Appendix D and E). Student participants were compensated with a \$10 gift card incentive for the interviews and literacy narratives. All were informed that participation was voluntary and that confidentiality was assured.

### ***Quantitative data collection***

The quantitative data collection had a non-experimental design; that is, there was no true random selection of subjects who were assigned to treatment and control groups.

The participants surveyed were, however, divided into groups (Trochim, 2006). In other words, there were two groups of students who were not randomly assigned, but rather they were surveyed and then assigned to groups of native English speaking (NES) and G 1.5 groups based on their description of themselves. I also further divided up the NES group as HSU students and community college students. In order for a study to be experimental, the participants must first be randomly assigned to a treatment and a control group, and then a treatment is implemented and its impact observed (Teddlie & Tashekkori, 2009). The design of the quantitative part of this study is non-experimental because the participants were selected to approximate the two different populations (NES and G 1.5) and then subdivided into groups (community college and HSU students) for comparison purposes. Hence, no treatment was implemented.

The most prominent themes found in my literature review regarding G 1.5 students and academic writing in educational institutions, academic language socialization, and socio-cultural aspects of high school education provided the basis for items on the quantitative survey instrument (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). The survey contained closed-ended questionnaire items with predetermined responses. This survey questionnaire was designed and conducted to learn what schooling experiences and writing instruction college students received in high schools and colleges and to draw correlations between students' perceptions of writing successes and frustrations in college with self-reports of coursework in high school. The survey was piloted to five English 100 classes during the spring of 2010 at WCC prior to this dissertation study to ensure the survey would answer my research questions.

In the dissertation study, 412 surveys were distributed to college students who were taking composition courses at HSU and the two community colleges. Those who reported being international students, graduates from high school on the continental US, G 1.5ers who were not Asian American, and late immigrants were excluded from the data analysis. The survey data were analyzed based on the 261 students who graduated from high schools in Hawaii. After initial quantitative analysis, the NES and G 1.5 respondents' survey questionnaires were identified and sorted into two different categories. The purpose was to compare G 1.5 students to nonimmigrant, native English speaking (NES) students, to ascertain whether there were any observed differences in their perceptions of experiences and writing preparation in high school. Those who did not fit into either group were omitted in this level of analysis. The closed-ended quantitative items in the surveys consisted of dichotomous questions and five-point Likert response scales. The survey is shown in Appendix C.

### ***Qualitative data analysis***

While gathering and analyzing the quantitative data, I concurrently conducted semi-structured interviews with college professors. After collecting and analyzing the quantitative data, I interviewed the G 1.5 college students. Following the collection of data from all interviews, the data relevant to each of the three interview sources were summarized and analyzed separately. Following the results of the three sources, I conducted a multiple source analysis. First, similarities and differences between two-year and four-year college professors' perceptions of G 1.5 students' writing skills and learning needs were identified. Second, similarities and differences in G 1.5 students' experiences in writing transition from high school to college were analyzed. Then,

instructor and student cases were analyzed and data from all three cases were merged through a multiple-source analysis.

To analyze the qualitative data, I used the qualitative analysis program Atlas.ti and relied on a reiterative process of developing initial codes as suggested by Charmaz (2006), reading and re-reading all the interview transcripts making memos regarding categories emerging and my thoughts. Using Creswell's (2003) coding instructions, I transcribed and read all transcripts while taking notes, and selected one transcript to begin the coding process as a pilot to assure the usefulness of the codes. Then I carefully read each transcript and wrote notes and thoughts in the column, and the same process was repeated for all interview transcripts. I further grouped similar codes and decided on the final codes, using them to create categories, or prominent themes. The most emergent categories in all transcripts were then grouped together and analyzed. After abbreviating the categories, they were typed next to the appropriate portions of the interview transcripts before being prioritized. I took note of anomalies in my analysis since these anomalies can suggest an alternate analysis of the data.

The data in each coded theme were gathered and code reports were created as a way to better understand the perspectives of all the participants. One type of code report categorized quotes from participants based on themes and another report showed the amount of time each theme appeared in the transcripts. These code reports were used to summarize the results. Themes that surfaced directly from these data were then used to create a description of perceptions raised related to the research question. Main categories were established by the most prevalent codes in each of the 17 interviews and less prevalent codes were established as minor categories, sub-categories, or anomalies. These

interview data were stored in four secured places: a voice recorder, hard copy transcripts, electronic files on my computer's hard drive, and on a portable flash drive.

More explicitly, to code for a social justice issue, I first read through Hana's interview transcript and began taking notes in the margins about possible themes related to the three theoretical frameworks of this study. One topic that kept appearing was her experiences in AP English courses. I then repeated this process for all other student interview transcripts, and found that several students mentioned AP as well, so I created a theme called AP. In my next reading of the transcripts, I noticed that several students had issues with getting into an AP English course in high schools, so I coded those issues as "access to AP." After reading all student transcripts, I re-read the transcripts and grouped similar codes, and found that there seemed to be an issue of equitable access to more rigorous coursework such as AP English in public high schools that the student participants had attended. This theme became an important social justice education topic in this study.

### ***Quantitative data analysis***

After I conducted student surveys, I completed a created a codebook, assigning numeric values to student responses on the survey. Next, I examined variable frequencies and descriptive statistics analysis using the computerized program IBM SPSS. This descriptive analysis was incorporated to describe participants' responses in terms of their response levels to particular questions (e.g., mean) and their variability (standard deviation) in responses. I calculated the means for each Likert survey question related to writing experiences in high schools and colleges and grouped the upper and lower scores, which is called visual binning in SPSS, to find out what percentage of students had more

positive perceptions of high school and college writing experiences. The binned grouping of each of the questions regarding high school and college writing experiences helped convey a clearer view of the barriers to and advantages of G 1.5 students' experiences with language socialization and academic writing.

After the means were calculated in IBM SPSS, the second part of the quantitative analysis focused on possible correlations between the types of courses students took in high school (AP English) and their placement in college English courses. A categorical analysis of NES and G 1.5 was conducted to find if there were any statistically significant differences between taking AP English in high school and English remediation in colleges. The survey findings helped focus the semi-structured interviews.

### ***Researcher credibility***

Speaking from the perspective of a pragmatic social constructivist researcher, I value the opinions of my participants and I rely on their views (Patton, 2002). When interviews were held, the questions were semi-structured and open enough for participants to construct their own meaning, so I focused on the process of interaction (Creswell, 2007). I understand that my personal background and experiences, as a G 1.5 former student and a current high school teacher of composition in a Hawaii public high school, can alter my research data. I kept in mind that the design of the research was interactive (Maxwell, 2005) and each level of design had direct or indirect effect on my decisions in another level of the design. In other words, there was no definite structure in the research design, and there was interconnectivity between and flexibility within each stage of the design, including goals, theories, research questions, methods, and conclusions (Maxwell, 2005).

Conducting qualitative research and allowing participants to voice their opinions may not be sufficient to understand G 1.5 students' transition to college writing. There can also be personal biases in my interpretation of qualitative data, so combining quantitative and qualitative research designs most likely maximized my credibility as a researcher and increased the credibility of my findings.

Although some might categorize my research as a mixed methods design (e.g., Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009) with the philosophy of “what works” best in collecting and analyzing the data, my design actually is a case study. It is a case study rather than a mixed-method design because the focus of this study was primarily on the “case” as the unit of analysis and the multiple sources of data about the participants within that bounded structure. My focus is on answering my research questions and on the outcomes of the case study not on the types of data collected; therefore, I used multiple sources of data to find the best answers to the research questions (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p.23).

Because the purpose of this exploratory case study was to examine the perceptions of community and four-year college professors, and the perceptions of G 1.5 students about the process of becoming a successful academic writer within the context of Hawaii's public schools, the case study method that would draw conclusions based on multiple sources seemed appropriate. I was most interested in how G 1.5 students experience college preparation in high schools and how that prepared or did not prepare them for more rigorous college academic writing. I was also interested in how colleges help G 1.5 students adapt to higher educational environments.

There are two aspects of the emic (Creswell, 2007; Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009) that give me the point of view as an insider to this study. The first is that I am an English teacher in an ethnically diverse public school. I feel that it is my responsibility to help all students aim for higher education and to become more fluent in academic discourse. It is my job to help them make connections in the classroom and to help them use writing to learn and demonstrate their learning in the classroom. The second is that I am a Generation 1.5 Korean American with immigrant parents who had to negotiate my way through the US public school system. I began my US schooling in the second grade. My initial schooling experiences began in Korea, in schools with a very authoritarian and strong disciplinary approach to education that includes corporal punishment. Adapting to the cultural differences in US classrooms was a key part of my educational experience. The similarity of my background to that of G 1.5 participants helped me to build rapport as I requested participation and interview from the students. On the other hand, my background as a Korean G 1.5 former student might also have prevented me from capturing aspects of experiences and cultures other than my own.

The credibility of this research was enhanced by incorporating triangulation. Varied instruments were developed to lead to more meaningful results (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). Multiple sources of data (five primary sources and secondary source documents) were linked and analyzed to draw conclusions of the study. Two-year college professors, four-year college professors, and college students were selected as participants to promote trustworthiness, verify consistency and inconsistencies, and prevent or diminish the researcher's bias (Patton, 1999). Analysis of these multiple sources created a more trustworthy view of participant and institutional (Hawaii's public

high school and college) views of various dimensions of successful academic writing preparation and sociocultural experiences of G 1.5 students in high schools and colleges.

The accuracy of the study's qualitative findings was ascertained through member checks (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009; Maxwell, 2005; Patton, 1999; Yin, 2003) when the generated results from the qualitative analysis were finalized. The participants were given opportunities to provide feedback by reviewing a summary and results of the transcribed interviews. In this way, the researcher was able to "reduce the potential bias that comes from a single person doing all the data collection," and provide "means to assess more directly the reliability and validity of the data obtained" (Patton, 1999). In addition, I analyzed likenesses and differences between the findings in this study and those in the existing literature (Creswell, 2003).

Yin (2009) has described three tests that establish the quality of exploratory case studies research. The first is construct validity, which was established in this study when I incorporated multiple sources of data, clarified the phenomenon to be studied, and determined how to collect data to represent the phenomenon. This study on G 1.5 merged three primary sources of data that directly answered the research questions: interviews, surveys, and literacy narratives. The second test is external validity, which was established by inquiring into the analytic generalizability of the bounded cases; in qualitative studies, multiple sources of data, multiple participants, and member checking are all a part of validating the data (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). My use of theories of language socialization for immigrant students (Cummins, 1999; Murie & Fitzpatrick, 2009; Roberge, 2009) and writing to learn (Emig, 1977; Odell, 1980; Fulwiler & Young, 2000), and social justice education (Ayers, Quinn, & Stovall, 2009; Kose, 2006;

Maiztegui-Oñate & Santibáñez-Gruber, 2008; Stovall, 2006) helps in establishing external validity. The last test is credibility of the researcher.

As Patton (1999) states, the credibility of a researcher can be shown through his or her experience, training, and status. My current position as a public high school English teacher for the past five years, and as a middle school through college writing teacher for four years prior to that, adds to my credibility as a teacher and researcher of composition. I have been teaching writing for the past nine years to students of a range of abilities and ages, and I have been teaching English language arts in Hawaii's public schools since July 2006. Prior to teaching in Hawaii, I researched, wrote about, and incorporated various writing strategies and techniques in classrooms in previous positions. This study explored issues raised as I transitioned into public schools in Hawaii where I encountered both time and curriculum constraints that interfered with my goal as a teacher to improve student writing skills.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **THE PARTICIPANT STORIES**

In this chapter, I introduce stories of the participants I interviewed. While I was transcribing and coding the interviews for the results chapter (Chapter 5), I noticed that although many shared similar experiences, some had very unique experiences, and I wanted to have their voices heard by introducing them in a separate chapter. The stories of the four Hawaii State University (HSU) students are followed by the stories of the one student from WCC and three students from SCC. I asked for literacy narratives describing a meaningful literacy event from their life such as visiting a library, writing in high school, a text they had to read, etc. Only five of the nine participants submitted their narratives. Those who did not submit either did not reply to my e-mail and phone call reminders or felt that they had said as much as they could in the interviews. After the students are introduced, I narrate the stories of the college composition instructors: four from HSU, two from WCC, and two from SCC.

#### **The Students**

Four Chinese Americans, one Filipino American, three Korean Americans, and one Vietnamese American student volunteered for the interviews in this case study. One student was referred to me by a faculty member in the Second Language Studies department at HSU. All others were identified through the survey I conducted in the first-year composition classes in Fall 2010. Participants were compensated with a \$10 gift card for their time.

Seven of the participants reported having at least one parent who could afford nannies or housekeepers for them in their native countries. The ages they immigrated

ranged from six to fifteen. All attended public high schools in Hawaii. Three from HSU had taken an Advanced Placement (AP) English course in high school; none of the other participants had taken AP English.

Some interviewees referred to senior projects. These were self-selected projects in high school that involved a research paper and a defense of their papers in order to earn credit for graduating with honors from Hawaii's Board of Education. The senior project also included requirements to serve as community volunteer and to receive mentoring from a member of the community who was an expert on their topic.

Each participant was given a pseudonym, which was created in line with their heritage or western names. For example, if a student kept her Korean name, I gave her a Korean name as her pseudonym, and if a student went by a Western name, I created a Western pseudonym. Table 1 shows more detailed information for each student participant. There were five female and four male students.

Table 1

*Characteristics of the generation 1.5 student interview participants*

Name	Ethnicity	Campus	Age	Grade	Major	Course	Literacy narrative
Hana	Korean	HSU	10	5	Korean	ENG 100	Yes
Angela	Chinese	HSU	14	9	Business	ENG 100	No
Mike	Filipino	HSU	7	2	Psychology	ENG 100	Yes
NamJoo	Korean	HSU	12	6	Biology	ENG 100	No
Bingwen	Chinese	HSU	13	8	Computer Science	ELI 100	Yes
Lisa	Korean	WCC	15	9	Japanese Education	ENG 100E	No
Harry	Chinese	SCC	9	3	MIS	ENG 100	No
Cao	Vietnamese	SCC	6	1	Marketing	ENG 100	Yes
Sara	Chinese	SCC	12	7	Business	ESL 100	Yes

*Note.* Interviewed participants were assigned pseudonyms to protect their privacy. The age and grade are when they entered a Hawaii public school. HSU = Hawaii State University. WCC = West Community College. SCC = South Community College. These college names are also pseudonyms. MIS = Management Information System. ENG 100 is the regular first-year composition course, ELI 100, ENG 100E, and ESL 100 are the second language learner equivalent to ENG 100. Lisa and Harry were non-traditional college students in that Lisa was in her 40s and Harry was in his 30s at the time of the interview. All others had just graduated from high school.

***Hana***

Hana, an energetic 19-year old Korean American female student at HSU, had a childhood that involved several moves from California to Korea before moving to Hawaii at the age of ten. She attended Korean schools for pre-school, kindergarten, and for grades three to five before entering the Hawaii public school system in the fifth grade. The most difficult transition she had to make was that school days in Korea had been longer and she had to attend school six days out of the week. The days and weeks of

school in Hawaii were much shorter than that. She also mentioned that in elementary school, there would be a different teacher in Korea for each subject, but there was one teacher for all subjects in the US.

When I initially met with Hana, she had no accent and said that she had been in an English language learner (ELL) class for only one year in elementary school. She loved to read fantasy and mystery books in middle and high school, but reading and writing nonfiction pieces were challenging because she felt her vocabulary and literary analysis skills were not up to par with her native English speaking (NES) peers, especially in her AP English class, which she spoke about extensively. Some aspects of AP she really enjoyed were having collaborative opportunities with her teacher and peers and the willingness of the teacher to help her with her academic writing.

Even though she was the only student in this study with an immediate family member, her step-mother, who had graduated from a university in the US, she never felt confident in her ability to write essays for school. Nevertheless, her step-mother was able to support her morally and give her academic advice throughout her schooling in Hawaii. Hana was also one of the three interviewed participants who had taken AP English in high school. She thought that taking AP English boosted her reading scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), but she also articulated the fact that her English seems to be declining due to the amount of Korean she has been learning and speaking in her college level Korean classes.

Since the completion of her senior project, she has wanted to become a translator. With her parents' support, she entered the Korean flagship program in the Korean studies department at HSU and was taking four Korean language and literature courses when I

interviewed her. She found that she was getting more in touch with her native language and found her Korean skills to be improving since prior to entering the program she felt little confidence in both her Korean and English language skills.

Besides writing, the added challenge she had in accommodating to the academic rigor of HSU was the fact that she had begun working. Her parents did not allow her to work in high school because they wanted her to focus on her academics. Three months after our initial interview, she called to tell me that she had to drop out of her English 100 class because she could not handle the workload and the types of assignments that her instructor required. Even though the class was not designated as an online class, many assignments, quizzes, and peer interaction had to be completed online, which was not something she was used to.

In the survey, she stated that she enjoyed writing in high school more than in college, but said that she does not really enjoy writing because she is not good at it. She also said that she had more opportunities to have writing conferences with her high school teachers than with her college instructors. At HSU, however, she noted that she had more opportunities for extra help with tutors and help at writing centers.

### *Angela*

As a student who was born and attended pre-school in Hawaii, her mother gave her an American name. Her mother decided to return to Hong Kong so she attended primary and middle schools; unfortunately, Angela encountered many obstacles to get to where she is now. She had gotten into trouble with the law in Hong Kong and was almost arrested so her mother decided to send her back to Hawaii to live with an aunt, her mother's sister. In the meantime, her mother had remarried and moved to Hawaii, but

they did not live together. Instead, Angela lived with her aunt a few years before moving out briefly after high school.

When Angela got older, she had to advocate for herself to gain access to classes with the same type of rigor as many of her NES peers were experiencing. For example, she was supposed to take a placement test to get entry into an AP English class at her school, but she knew she would not be able to pass the screening exam. She spoke to her English teacher and convinced her to sign the papers for entry without the placement test. She found the class to be challenging but felt she was just as “smart” as her NES peers.

When she initially entered HSU, her age of immigration and ELL status placed her into lower-level ELL courses in the English Language Institute (ELI) instead of regular English, but she met with several different department heads and instructors to get into English 100. She admitted being aggressive when it came to advocating for herself in schools. When I asked her why that was, she said that her aunt encouraged her to be more aggressive in pursuing what she wants.

Because she entered Hawaii’s public schools in the ninth grade, she had a heavy accent and was placed into ELL classes for her ninth and tenth grade years. When she transferred high schools after her sophomore year, she had to re-take the ELL test and was initially placed into an ELL class. After having a conference with the ELL teacher and going over the test results, she was allowed to take regular English classes. She really did not like her ELL classes so she was eager to get out. She felt like she was “smart” and should not have a different curriculum from NES peers. The only negative factor to being in the regular English classes was that there was no explicit grammar instruction, and she reported that the NES peers had “bad” grammar.

In a conference with her English 100 instructor, Angela spoke about how many grammatical errors he had found which surprised her. She admitted to not having a strong foundation in grammar because she was not focused on doing well in schools in Hong Kong and her AP English class did not help her with the type of grammar taught in ELL classes in high school.

Even though she was independent and usually advocated for herself, her aunt often gave her advice on acculturating into US schools. Her aunt, who had a Master's degree from HSU, helped her to make decisions on academic and personal life. Even though writing in college was harder than in high school, she felt that with her aunt's help and from the help of her English class mentor and instructor at HSU, she was doing okay in her English 100 class.

### *Mike*

A quiet and calm young man, Mike immigrated with his family to Hawaii from the Philippines when he was seven years old and entered the second grade. Learning another language and culture was challenging for him, but he stated he learned how to read, write, and speak English at the same time through observing NES around him and looking at models of written work. Although in the Philippines some textbook learning was in English, the majority of learning materials were in Ilocano.

Mike said that he did not meet the SAT requirements for HSU, but he reported that his Grade Point Average (GPA) was very good. As with many other G 1.5 students in this study, he articulated the significance of his parents' support throughout his high school years. They gave him constant reminders about completing his school work and told him the consequences of academic failures. They wanted him to do well because his

mother was an elementary school teacher and his father was an electrician, and they gave up their careers to give him a better chance at life. His mother is now a nurse in Hawaii.

When asked about his experiences in ELL classes in Hawaii public schools, he replied that he felt segregated from his NES peers. He did not know what he was doing so he did what he was told. He believed that this compliance in elementary school led him to socialize with less academically motivated friends, and his grades suffered. In high school, he wanted to take AP English and had signed up for it but realized he did not get the class when he saw his schedule. Instead of seeing someone about the error, he said that he did not pursue it with anyone at the school.

In college courses, he has felt like the minority or the “underdog” because of his low vocabulary and writing skills. He found that the reading assignments and the vocabulary in those assignments were challenging. It took him much longer to complete homework assignments in college than in high school. There was also less focus on grammar in college because instructors expected students to know grammatical rules prior to coming into their classes.

Even though he considered his writing experiences in college to be more positive than his experiences in high school on the written survey, during the interview, he said that there seemed to be fewer opportunities for him to meet with his English instructor in college than in high school. He also felt uncomfortable sharing his ideas in his classes in college because the discussions moved too quickly. I asked him what he did when he needed additional assistance, and he said he was unaware of a tutor, mentor, or a writing center.

### *NamJoo*

At the age of twelve, NamJoo immigrated to Hawaii with her family for better educational opportunities. She remembered being in elementary school and being on the computer and playing games with her younger sister and father in Korea. Then, one day when she was in the sixth grade, her father told her that they were moving to Hawaii and that she had to get serious about her studies. Now as a 19 year old, she realized how important academics were and the amount of sacrifice her father encountered when they moved to the US. Although her father was not able to support her academically, she said that he had a great impact on her focusing on school work. She earned scholarships and took out a student loan to attend HSU so she did not have to burden her father. However, her father did not allow her to get a part-time job because he wanted her to focus on her schoolwork.

In the eighth grade, when she wanted to exit the ELL program after two years, her teacher was initially against her taking the exit test thinking she was not ready. Still, NamJoo passed and was able to enter regular NES English classes. The largest difference between her ELL and NES English classes was that there was much more focus on grammar and vocabulary in the ELL class. Because she felt she needed more help with grammar and vocabulary, she did a lot of self-studying through Internet-based English language programs and through the grammar books her father bought her as additional resources.

She indicated that her ambition to become a pharmacist will probably take her to graduate school on the mainland US, but she did not see herself living in Korea again even though she felt more attached to her Korean culture than her US one, especially in

terms of clothes, entertainment, and language. She emphasized that she still does not understand many of the nuances of US culture such as jokes and mainstream cultural icons of today such as Justin Bieber. Similarly, her NES friends do not know the popular Korean musical artists.

While her father was very supportive of her academics, he did not support any extra-curricular activities that were not directly related to academics. For example, she wanted to play tennis in high school, but her father did not permit her to play. She was allowed, however, to join the Korean club (a cultural club), the French club (a cultural club), and the Leo club (a service-learning club).

On the survey, she reported having more positive writing experiences in college than in high school on all questions except for having conferences with the instructor and studying Asian American authors. For example, she rarely had peer review opportunities and conferences with her teachers and never had any tutors available for her. Even though it was rare, she had had conferences with her high school teachers, but as of November 2010, she had not had any conferences with her English instructor at HSU. She noted that she studied Asian American authors in high school, but there were no Asian American authors incorporated into her composition class at HSU.

### ***Bingwen***

Bingwen immigrated to Hawaii with his family when he was 13 years old for better educational opportunities. He entered the eighth grade in Honolulu and found that class sizes in the US were significantly smaller; his school in China had 60-something students in each class, but his class in Hawaii had only 20-something. At the private school he attended in China, he received English instruction from a NES teacher so he

took pride in having better English pronunciation than other Chinese students who immigrated to the US at his age.

When asked if he would consider going back to China to live, he immediately replied that Hawaii was a much nicer place to live, but he considers himself to be more Chinese than American in terms of language and culture. He has some American friends, but most of his friends are Chinese immigrants. He sometimes has a hard time relating to NES socially outside of class. Sometimes when he speaks to NES, he does not understand what they are saying, but he does not have that problem with his Chinese immigrant friends.

Bingwen's parents' were not able to help him academically, but he admirably spoke about how they supported him by checking up on his grades and caring about his schooling. He was frank about how his parents were unable to just call up a school or a teacher with questions. As a matter of fact, because of their inability to communicate in English, they did not even attend informational open house sessions at his high school. However, this did not prevent him from excelling in school where he mostly received As or Bs. He did not take any AP English classes, but he took AP calculus because he felt very confident about math in high school.

For English, he was first placed into ELL classes in the eighth grade, but exited in the eleventh grade and was put into a lower-level mainstream English class. He attempted the senior project, but had difficulties finding a mentor. He described his feeling of powerlessness in getting help when needed and felt this epitomized his high school experience. He felt like he received little assistance from his high school English teachers and many just lectured instead of helping him learn or fit in. The most important

aspect of writing that helped him, and he repeatedly emphasized this fact, was peer collaboration and feedback. He felt that his high school created an environment in which students got bored sitting in an English class. In college, his entire perception of English has changed. As evidenced in his survey answers, he has had many more opportunities in college for collaboration and specific feedback from his peers, tutors, and instructor than in high school.

### *Lisa*

Lisa, a nontraditional student in her early forties with a teenage daughter, first attended WCC for her Associate's degree, but she recently transferred to HSU in August 2010. She immigrated to Hawaii from Korea at 15 and entered the ninth grade. Although she is older than the other participants in this case study, I felt I needed to include her voice because of the unique insights into experiences at WCC and HSU. I was introduced to her as a potential participant in the study through a faculty member in the Second Language Studies department.

She described her future ambition to become a Japanese language teacher in high school, and she was worried that her English was not good enough even though she had taught English to children in Japan for a while. She worried about the testing requirements for entry into the College of Education at HSU. She felt more confident in her Japanese abilities than her English abilities.

Many times throughout the interview Lisa brought up her concern with the difficulty of textbooks at HSU. She had often resorted to getting help from friends at WCC, but because her close friends are not at HSU, she has been struggling a bit more than usual. Moreover, the assignments at WCC were easier than HSU; HSU's work is

much more academically demanding, and it takes Sara longer to complete the assignments because of the high level of vocabulary in textbooks and in instructors' speeches.

The trials and errors of Lisa's life challenged her in many ways. For instance, her mother died when she was six, and she was separated from her father, who remarried, for seven years before coming to Hawaii with her father and step-mother. After coming to Hawaii, she remembered how busy her parents were when she was in high school and how little time they had together as a family. She talked about how the lack of guidance from an adult caused her to lose focus on academics.

When asked about the differences between the schools in Korea and Hawaii, she said that the school libraries in Korea were open a great deal longer than schools in Hawaii. She also had to take ten different subjects at once in Korea, but they had a study hall she could attend after school hours with no teacher supervision. She would have liked a similar opportunity to go to the school library or to a quiet place for help on homework assignments in Hawaii.

As the oldest child and as a child whose parents who did not attend school in the US, she said she had no one to turn to for help and she dreaded asking her Korean friends for help for fear of annoying them. She felt significantly ill-prepared for college. However, now, as a more mature student, she has sought out additional assistance. She recently realized that she needed to get additional help on her writing, so she went to the Second Language Studies department and met with the director of the English Language Institute (ELI).

She had not known about the ELI courses until a friend told her about them. The ELI director told her that she had been exempt from any ELI courses because she had received her Associates in Arts degree from WCC and already met the first year composition requirement at HSU. She said that she will try to enroll in other ELI courses even though they do not count for credit towards her education degree.

In another attempt to seek help, she went to the writing center that was open to all students at HSU; unfortunately, she did not find the tutor helpful, and she was uncomfortable working with him. However, she did go back to the writing center because she recognized her need for help and did not know where else she could go for help.

From what she could recall from her experiences in the late 1980s, her high school writing experiences were almost none. She was assigned little academic writing and classes put more focus on grammar. Also, there were only Koreans in her ELL classes, so her English did not improve much. Ideally, she suggested that high schools should have teacher assistants who can help immigrant students with translation in the first year of schooling in the US to ease their transition into US schools. She realized that this might not be very cost-effective, but it would certainly have eased her distressed transition to US schools.

### ***Harry***

Harry was another nontraditional 34 year old student from China at a community college, SCC. This was his second chance at higher education after dropping out of HSU 16 years ago to become a retail store manager. He had an epiphany several years ago and decided to leave the retail business to pursue a career in management information systems and to fulfill his desire to work in international business. He claimed that he

dropped out of HSU because of peer pressure, and he did not feel the need to pursue a college degree at that time. He did not adhere to the advice of his parents and relatives and only acted on the immediate advantages of earning money in his early twenties.

When he immigrated to the US at the age of nine, he found it difficult to dually adapt to US culture and to keep his Chinese culture. His parents and relatives were busy working and did not encourage him to keep up with their heritage culture, so he grew up studying the Japanese culture and language. He had mixed feelings about his bicultural self. He knew his heritage was Chinese and related to the culture, but he also felt American because of his Westernized thoughts. He now regrets not keeping up with his Chinese language and culture because of the significant international presence of the Chinese today. Hence, he plans to pursue Chinese as a minor when he transfers to HSU.

According to Harry, having a father who was a college professor in China might have set a stronger academic foundation for him than for his other peers who had immigrated to the US. He graduated from high school with honors. However, the journey to graduating with honors was an arduous experience for Harry. He was placed into second grade, which was a grade below peers his age, when he first came to Hawaii because of his lack of English speaking skills. After completing the third grade and two years of ELL classes, his school allowed him to skip the fourth grade and go straight into fifth. He also had to attend summer ELL classes to improve his English speaking and reading abilities.

From what he remembered about high school curriculum, there was no explicit grammar instruction. He did not have positive experiences in his English classes and did not take the initiative to seek help from his teachers. At the time of the interview, however,

he had actively sought help for his writing. He also stated that in high school he went to classes because he had to, but now he was more motivated by the fact that he is choosing to be where he is and using his own money and time to pursue an education.

One of the writing strategies that seemed to work for him in college was peer reviewing. He did not remember doing that in high school. He said that reading what others wrote and seeing their flaws helped him to see his own writing flaws. Peer reviewing had also helped him to see new ways of writing. The feedback he received in college was also much more helpful than what he received in high school.

### *Cao*

As an immigrant who came to Hawaii from Vietnam at the age of six, Cao's knowledge of his schooling experiences from his parents' country was not extensive, but he still remembered adaptation and discriminatory issues. As the only participant in this study from a neighbor island, he came to Hawaii with his older brother and sister because his mother married an American.

He reflected on how difficult it was adjusting to life here for the first few years because of communication problems with teachers and peers. There were also cultural clashes he experienced between mainstream America and his mom's culture. For instance, his decision to get tattoos did not bide well with his traditional Vietnamese mother. Also, he often had to translate for his mother and had to help her with reading a book, watching TV, or buying a car. Her status had changed from a well-off business owner in Vietnam who used to hire nannies for her children to someone who had to depend on her children for simple everyday things.

His introduction to US public schools was not a positive one. He remembered sitting in a regular kindergarten class and suddenly being taken out and escorted by an adult to a special class with other ELL students. At first he thought he was in trouble but soon realized that the other students in that room also could not speak much English. There was a moment when he thought it might have been a special education class and hoped he had not been placed into a special education class.

When I asked him about his biculturalism, he said that he felt more Vietnamese. At his US citizenship interview, he was asked three times about changing his name. He adamantly responded that he would stick to the name his mother gave him because it symbolizes who he is. However, he said that he would never go back to live in Vietnam because of its Communist status. If he did go back, he said he would feel like an immigrant all over again, and after having such a difficult time adapting to US schools and culture he wanted to live in the US. He did share painful memories, however. When he was young, he got into fights with NES peers because of the way his mother dressed him and because of his Vietnamese name. He did not want to experience that again.

Throughout the interview, he kept emphasizing his love of writing. He also provided the lengthiest literacy narrative of the five I received, writing more than what I had asked for. His favorite high school teacher in Maui encouraged more writing than reading. An English teacher whom he had known since middle school encouraged him to write down his thoughts on paper and provided constructive feedback. He talked about how she made writing and the topics he was writing about more interesting. This particular teacher also incorporated poetry writing in the classroom and gave students a chance to express themselves.

Writing was not just academic for Cao, but it was also a necessity in life. Cao thought of it as a form of communication, and people have to do it well in both formal and informal settings. He has often helped his friends with their writing assignments. He was so confident in his writing abilities that he has not had to see any of his college instructors with questions about the writing assignments because he has not had any problems with completing them.

### *Sara*

Sara was the only G 1.5 participant who desired to return to China to permanently live there. When she was 12, her father had been an interior designer in China and came to Hawaii for more job opportunities and more freedom from the Communist regime. Despite the fact that she had been here since the seventh grade, she felt more Chinese than American. At home she only spoke Chinese, watched Chinese television, read Chinese newspapers, and ate Chinese food.

Going to college was a decision she made because she thought it necessary to find a job. Currently enrolled at a community college, she wanted to transfer to HSU soon to pursue a business degree. Her twin brother chose to work instead of going to college. She perceived a degree in the US to be more prestigious and thought it would afford her with more chances to find work. Thus, she wanted to move back to China when her degree was completed.

In terms of schooling, she thought that it was stricter in China than in Hawaii. Sara commented on how easy it was to get away with not completing homework assignments in Hawaii's public schools. In China, the consequences ranged from parents being called to teachers visiting the student's home. She mentioned that some students

were punished by standing on a very small rectangular area for two hours for not completing homework assignments. To further show the contrast in schools, she said that students in China have the same peers in their class from first to sixth grade. The teachers would rotate, but the students stayed in the same classroom for six years.

Sara's parents were very strict with her the first five years of their life in Hawaii. In China, her parents had very good rapport with their children's teachers and were able to keep current on their progress in school. In Hawaii, partly due to her parents' inability to communicate with teachers, her parents had a difficult time figuring out the American education system. Her mom refused to attend parent conferences because her English language skills prevented her from communicating well. As a matter of fact, her mother could not even read Angela's report cards.

In middle and high school she had many Chinese students in her classes, and she has only Chinese friends today. Unless you identified with the Chinese culture, you were not welcomed into their group. Since they often speak Chinese, a non-Chinese person may feel uncomfortable.

Once she entered high school, her counselor put her into a regular English class. She felt that a year of ELL class had not been enough for her, but she didn't ask her counselor to put her back into ELL because she claimed that Chinese focus more on math and not English so it didn't matter to her or to her parents. She wanted to return to ELL classes because she had received more help on grammar, and the regular English class teachers were not as helpful as her ELL teacher. The class with NESs focused more on the reading and much less on the writing aspects of English. When I asked her if she had taken any AP courses in math, she replied that not many Chinese can qualify for AP and

would not get recommendations from their teachers because of their low English language skills. She indicated that this was hearsay between her Chinese friends and not necessarily what teachers have said.

At SCC, she had to take English as a Second Language (ESL) 92 and 94, beginner ELL courses that do not offer college credit or meet the requirement for the first year composition class. She had a White and an Asian teacher for these classes and felt more connected to the Asian teacher because she knew what kind of help and what types of feedback students needed to write better. Sara thought the reason for this was because “Westerners” tend to focus on “free choice and self-decision” so the minute details of writing seem irrelevant to them. She had received a lot of grammar instruction in her ESL 92 class, but none of it was reinforced in her ESL 94 class because the instructors changed. She declared that she will never choose a Westerner as an English teacher again because the Asian instructor was much better at knowing what she needed to learn.

Sara also reported having unpleasant experiences in her English courses in high school. She remembered completing many worksheets and writing essays that were not returned. She also said that teachers in high school had to spend much more time trying to get students to settle down, and they had students working on needless projects. Instead of wasting time on useless lectures and projects, she would have liked more instruction on writing essays, grammar, and vocabulary for second language learners. She felt that ELLs learn writing and English differently from NES in that ELLs have to memorize vocabulary words and strict rules of grammar, but regular English teachers do not teach vocabulary and grammar that way. The most memorable English teacher was a teacher in China who knew how she needed to learn English and approached it in a way

that helped her to improve her English. Of the two ELL teachers she had in Hawaii's high school, the bilingual teacher seemed to relate to the students more because she had shared experiences learning English.

### **The Faculty**

Another important data source in this study was the faculty members whose profiles follow. I interviewed eight tenured faculty members from three college campuses: four from HSU, two from WCC, and two from SCC. Three faculty members at HSU were either teaching first year composition or taught it within the past two years. I purposefully chose tenured faculty to ensure their expertise regarding the teaching of first year composition and their familiarity with G 1.5 writing issues. One faculty member had more of an administrative role in his department, but his expertise in the ELL programs offered at HSU was pertinent to this study. All faculty members have PhDs in their respective fields except for the two faculty members whose primary role is that of administration. However, both administrators also teach reading and writing courses in their departments. Table 2 gives a broad overview of each faculty's years at their respective campuses, their current job, and their specialization.

Table 2

*Characteristics of college professor interview participants*

Professors	Campus	Years at Campus	Job Title	Specialization & Degree
Jason	HSU	10	Associate Professor of English with leadership roles	Rhetoric and Composition, PhD
Chris	HSU	15	ELI Administrator with instructional duties	English as a Second or Other Languages, MA
Carl	HSU	24	Professor of English with leadership roles	Rhetoric and Composition, PhD
Anna	HSU	16	Associate Professor of English with leadership roles in the past	Literatures of Hawaii, PhD
Erica	WCC	10	Assistant Professor of English	College Reading and Composition, PhD
Tina	WCC	20	Administrator with instructional duties	English as a Second Language, MA
Cathy	SCC	17	Assistant Professor of English	Composition, PhD
Roger	SCC	N/A	Associate Professor with leadership roles	English as a Second of Other Language, PhD

*Note.* Professor participants were assigned pseudonyms to protect their privacy. HSU = Hawaii State University. WCC = West Community College. SCC = South Community College. ELI = English Language Institute. These college names are also pseudonyms. Professor Roger did not reply to my e-mails about his tenure at SCC.

***Professor Jason***

Professor Jason has been teaching composition as a graduate assistant and college professor for 18 years. Of the 18 years, ten have been at HSU where he is currently an Associate Professor of English. He has taught on the continental US in the past and felt that there were no major differences in the writing skills of the students there and in Hawaii. However, there is a more “mainland” model for first year composition and a more cultural model that integrates local culture in the HSU composition curriculum. As long as instructors meet the Student Learning Outcome (See Appendix G) requirement, and since there is no set required English 100 curriculum, instructors can make their own decisions on the types of readings and writings required in their class; however, teachers are required to include the teaching of citations and a research component.

According to Professor Jason, everyone acquires academic literacy differently depending on their background, but successful students have to be flexible in their writing and adapt their writing style to different audiences; with much practice and training, anyone can have “rhetorical flexibility” (word choice and sentence structure) and “discursive adaptability” (adapting to the type of audience). It is not as important for his students to enter his English 100 class knowing how to create a works cited page, but it is more important that they have the willingness to adapt their diction, syntax, and style for various audiences. He would like high school students to be given more opportunities to read and study various genres of writing and discourse so they have the ability to switch from one type of writing or discourse to another or be willing to learn how to incorporate new types of writing in their college assignments.

The “rhetorical flexibility” and “discursive adaptability” can only occur with practice; however, from what Professor Jason has seen, socially acceptable discourse is very different from “academic literacy where it can take 20 years of social conditioning.” It is a type of training that G 1.5 students often seem less experienced in, but that is within the types of “intuitive repertoire” that NES bring to colleges. In other words, he thinks that G 1.5 students have to think more about syntax, grammar, and organizational structure than NES who can almost write without having to be conscious of these things. When Professor Jason sees G 1.5ers in his classroom, he gives specific written feedback and have directed to online grammar and essay structure exercises.

***Professor Chris***

Professor Chris, the English Language Institute department head, is an advocate of English Language Learners (ELLs), and he feels that the ELL population is treated as second-class citizens in colleges because they are a minority group and funding tends to be limited for ELL programs. Because of low funding, the English Language Institute (ELI) is staffed by graduate students, which means that there tends to be high turnover in the instructors for ELI 100 courses, the first year composition course for international and local ELLs. There used to be ELI courses that specifically targeted Generation 1.5, but because of lack of funding and staffing, such courses have not been offered for seven to eight years. Furthermore, he feels that whenever discussions of first year composition come up, ELI 100 courses tend to be ignored, and he has to remind those in charge that ELI 100 is part of the first year composition requirement though it is located in a different university department. For instance, he noted that when flyers were created announcing the first year writing center, he did not see ELI 100 listed so he had to revise the flyers so

that the writing center staff would also welcome students from ELI 100 to the writing center.

As an instructor of writing and the current director of ELI, he feels that good writers are created through much reading, practice, and feedback. The process approach to writing, which involves peer and instructor feedback and revising, helps students get more ideas on paper, generate questions that students can seek answers to, and search out sources for those answers. The most important aspect of the process approach to writing for Chris is the feedback from the instructor. The feedback should not just be red marking about grammar and mechanical issues, but it should be focused more on questioning the writers' ideas. Rather than nitpick every grammatical error, he gets his students to edit their own grammatical mistakes and only marks them if they interfere with his understanding of the ideas. Because he has started to see English as more of a "global" language, it is more important to look at the ideas rather than minor grammatical errors.

***Professor Carl***

Professor Carl has been at HSU for 24 years where he is currently Professor of English and a specialist in rhetoric and composition. Now with a leadership role, he sees that good writers develop their skills through reading from a variety of texts and through practicing their reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills; oral communication is just as important as written. He stated that private school students tend to be more verbal as speakers and writers than public school graduates. He did not mean to say that public school graduates are not good writers, but they are less confident in their written and oral discourse because private school students have had more "degrees of experience" than public school students.

Acknowledging his lack of specific knowledge about the G 1.5 students, Professor Carl thought that all of them would be in the first year composition class with the ELI department, and if they needed extra help, they would seek help from a tutor, a mentor, or the writing center. On the other hand, he noted that instructors, mentors, and tutors are most likely not prepared to address particular concerns for dealing with G 1.5 students other than what they are already trained to do in a diverse English 100 classroom. He sees students with second language issues in the English 100 class as not quite having English “under the skin like a first language.” If G 1.5ers want to write well in conventional academic prose, then they might have to work a little harder at it as part of their “academic acculturation” and virtual acculturation, and may benefit by using social networking sites to help them become more academically literate. Professor Carl feels that there are only so many services a university can provide, and if the doors are openly welcoming students to the academy, then students have to build their own motivation to do what is necessary to go through it.

***Professor Anna***

In Professor Anna’s 16 year teaching tenure at HSU, where she is currently Associate Professor, she has focused on persuasive and argumentative writing in her classes. She incorporates culture and place-based writing assignments. She indicated that the English 100 competencies, or the Student Learning Outcomes in Appendix G, ask students “to be prepared to be good citizens,” so becoming a good writer at HSU does not just mean knowing how to put an essay together, but it involves students knowing how to bridge their college life and their personal life outside of the university. However, when asked about how students acquire academic literacy, she said that there has to be a lot of

reading and modeling by the professor who guides them in thinking through what they have read.

Although she said she did not know a great deal about the Generation 1.5 writing issues, she had attempted to find out more prior to our interview, but did not have time. During the interview, Professor Anna mentioned a variety of instructional practices she incorporates in her classroom that could help G 1.5 students, but the one she spent a lengthy time explaining was a multi-part research paper. As a diagnostic essay, she has students write about a place that is important to them. Then they have to “map the place” that involves three different stories about that place. There is a historical aspect that could include researching a Hawaiian legend connected to that place; there is the American aspect that shows the importance of the place in American history; and there is the oral history of the place that could include interviewing a family member related to that particular place. This type of assignment illustrates how Professor Anna is able to bring local and heritage culture into her English 100 classes.

***Professor Erica***

Professor Erica from WCC teaches college reading and composition and believes that private school students generally have stronger writing skills than public school students. She also has a background in teaching English to ELLs. She feels that public school students need more instruction on grammar and research skills before going to college. Since feedback is such a pertinent part of helping students develop as academic writers, Professor Erica said that students need feedback often, but public school graduates had often told her that they did not get much feedback in their high schools. She alluded to public school students not being taught the process approach to writing.

She said that they do not know that writing is a process necessary to use in developing their research writing skills. Many public school students have had difficulties understanding the minute details of research such as citing sources, and for immigrant students she felt this had been harder to grasp. She also found that G 1.5 students in her classes tended to use informal conversation in their essays more frequently than NES students did.

Professor Erica believes that reading and gaining ideas for writing are two important features of becoming a good writer. Many students come into her class without having much practice in either reading or developing ideas for writing. Some of her students talked about watching a movie in high school and doing a freewrite about it with no feedback about their writing. Professor Erica confessed near the end of the interview that she only heard through students about their high school experience and did not know directly what happens in public schools and what sorts of requirements teachers in public schools have.

In terms of the G 1.5 population, Professor Erica was aware of the resistance some G 1.5 students feel to being placed into ELL courses. Nevertheless, she felt that even if they had elementary schooling in the US, many still had ELL issues and needed to be placed into ELL courses in college. Some G 1.5 students “think that having [their] ideas instead of ideas from expert sources is a strange and confusing thing so they tend to think that [they’re] supposed to copy from sources because they know more,” so the concept of plagiarism is harder to get across to some immigrant students. The identity and sense of belonging hurdles that G 1.5 students have seemed quite noticeable in the writings they submitted to her in the past. Encouraging them to take ELL classes, she

believed, can help them develop a better sense of belonging in a culture that is similar to theirs; they might feel less intimidated with other ELLs. She noticed that some G 1.5 students she had were very quiet and did not speak up in freshmen composition classes because of their slight accents, which NES do not have.

***Professor Tina***

With 20 years of experience at WCC, Professor Tina, the department head of Language Arts, has taught beginner reading and writing courses at WCC, but her specialization is English as a Second Language. She said that many ELLs do well in the designated ELL courses. Historically, students in ELL courses have much higher passing rates (81%) than NES students in regular English (56%) courses at WCC, she said, because the instructor knows the needs of second language learners and is able to differentiate the curriculum to meet those needs. ELL courses also have higher retention rates (95%) at WCC than regular English courses. She indicated that this is because ELL courses teach more integrated skills not just specific reading in one class and writing in another which was her understanding of what the beginner non-ELL English courses do. The readings completed in one course carry into the writing course because the beginner ELL courses are taken concurrently. Because the ELL students are taking courses with each other, WCC helps build a community, or a cadre, of learners who share similar experiences.

She was frank in saying that many students are “not getting everything they need in high schools” so WCC makes it a priority to provide the type of instruction that helps students be successful in college. Some of the students she had encountered were “practically illiterate.” With limited funding for beginner courses, it makes her job to

push for more successful pass rates for first year composition courses difficult because when students have to repeat beginner courses, the rate of their successful matriculation to English 100 decreases.

Professor Tina thinks that a good writer has to be a good reader, and she took pride in the fact that WCC was the only college in the public university system that required a beginner reading course to get into English 100. In order to become a good writer and to struggle less with their writing, students have to get the “feel of words.” However, reading and picking out main ideas is only one aspect of writing. Many of her students revealed lack of writing opportunities and few grammar lessons in high school English classes, but she believed that explicit grammar lessons are a much needed curriculum requirement in public high schools.

Professor Tina felt that G 1.5 students did not want to go into ELL courses in college because they had experienced negative stigmas attached to being immigrant students in the past. At WCC, G 1.5 students have been found to succeed more in ELL courses because the instructors and classmates become their friends, so they see the classes as a social place. G 1.5 experiences at home are very different from the experiences at home of their NES peers. Being in classes with other G 1.5ers gives the G 1.5 student a sense of community and belonging that regular English classes cannot provide. Unfortunately, she declared that WCC does not have as much funding for dealing with G 1.5 issues as SCC and thus, they are treated as minorities on their campus. Because there tends to be more funding for instructor professional development and G 1.5 services at SCC, G 1.5 students receive more attention there than at WCC.

*Professor Cathy*

Professor Cathy invited me to her house for the interview. First and foremost, in order for students to become good writers, she said, they have to have something to write about, and she would prefer high schools focusing on getting students to talk about their ideas rather than teaching them how to write academic essays. In her classroom, she makes sure everyone participates in discussions because she believes that saying thoughts out loud gives students an opportunity to share their thoughts and perhaps develop them before writing them down on paper. She also believed that students have to read a lot to build those oral and written skills.

In her definition, good writers do not necessarily produce “A” papers, but they can participate in giving and receiving critical, yet constructive feedback with peers and teachers. Students should have the opportunity to discuss and write in a non-threatening non-high-stakes environment where they can take risks and try new styles of writing. In reference to David Bartholomae’s idea on acculturating students into academic environment, she believed that students needed to be given chances to “invent the university” by having time to read, summarize, share, and communicate about things that spark their interests. This is the foundation to creating good writing and critical thinking skills that encourages “writing to learn.” If students can come into her class knowing how to have discussions and showing critical thinking skills, Professor Cathy does not care if they do not know how to cite sources or write thesis statements because that is more easily teachable in one semester. As a matter of fact, she believes that developmentally, teenagers are probably not ready to care about the world outside of their own so she would like high schools to focus more on cultivating “curiosity, engagement, reflective

writing, who am I, and where am I” types of place-based writing practices. She would also like to see more habit-building in the use of the writing process so students are accustomed to doing revisions even if it means “messy freewrites and jotting things down on post-its.”

Professor Cathy claimed that the entire faculty at SCC is aware of the G 1.5 immigrant population. Unlike the previous professors discussed in this study, she felt that many G 1.5 students were in beginner courses and perhaps did not successfully transition into English 100 courses. She remembered female students who had clashes and control issues with their parents over dating, make-up, and fashion. In terms of academics, she had encountered G 1.5 students who had difficulties with the course reading materials because they just could not relate to readings or sometimes they would feel completely uncomfortable with the topic. As an example she mentioned abortion and how in some cultures it was readily acceptable, but in other cultures it was not a topic discussed.

***Professor Roger***

Studying about the G 1.5 students for many years has made Professor Roger one of the most knowledgeable professors on that topic in the state university system. He made it very clear that in the ESL profession, the term “Generation 1.5” is used more for immigrant students who are considered to be at-risk; they are considered to be semi-literate in English and their native language. He did not see many Filipino American G 1.5 students represented in the UH system and definitely saw them to be an under-represented group if looking at the demographics of the state of Hawaii. Unfortunately, there is little support for G 1.5 students in the college application process, either at home or at schools. It is possible that G 1.5ers are viewed as NES by teachers, but the lack of

support causes many G 1.5 students to get lost in the transition from high school to college.

When I asked him about what G 1.5 students need academically, he emphasized oral and written feedback. He also felt that grammar should be taught through content that includes reading, writing, and oral communication skills. If G 1.5 students immigrate between grades four through seven, the most critical years in terms of literacy development, they are immediately asked to read to learn instead of learning to read English. Since it takes about three years to “decipher information in a language,” fifth, sixth, and seventh graders could possibly learn very little new knowledge because they have to learn a new language in “sheltered ESL” classes. It is almost better if they come later because, especially if they come from countries with strong educational foundations, studies have shown they score better on exams and know how to take tests. There have been studies that show that later immigrants (later high school years) outperform middle immigrants (middle school years).

SCC at one point tried to incorporate courses specifically for G 1.5 students, but they ran into problems identifying students. Their conversational skills are almost like NES’s. He cited research that showed that G 1.5 students’ native language skills held them back from developing their English; those who were not allowed to speak their native language at home developed their English more than those who communicated at home in the native language and had to act as translators for their parents. In this particular interview, he was describing G 1.5 students who do not speak their native language at home to help them developing their Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency, or the academic literacy, much more quickly.

He also found that many G 1.5ers were not given enough feedback about pronunciation and speaking. They needed more feedback because their pronunciation improved dramatically in the first six months of US schooling, but it plateaued in the next six months. When students' pronunciation in English was weak, he attributed the problem to the fact that students were not given timely feedback on pronunciation. Since they cannot get feedback on pronunciation at home, it needed to happen in schools.

### **Closing Thoughts on the Interviews**

The profiles of narrative accounts of the experiences and views of G 1.5 students involved in this study showed that their experiences in high school and college instructional and curriculum experiences vary. Some unfair practices in high school such as limited access to AP courses and lower tracking of G 1.5 students surfaced, but not everyone had negative experiences in high school English classes. In college, most reported more positive experiences, especially in terms of opportunities for collaboration with peers and instructors.

The HSU faculty accounts showed instructional practices that may help G 1.5 and willingness to work with G 1.5 students, but many were not very aware of their specific needs. On the other hand the community college faculty was more aware of this immigrant population and attempted to create programs that specifically targeted G 1.5ers.

This chapter narrated student experiences in developing academic literacy and instructor perceptions of G 1.5 student needs. The next chapter reports the results of the qualitative and quantitative findings.

## CHAPTER 5

### RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to explore the academic literacy experiences of public high school Generation 1.5 Asian American (G 1.5) graduates in their transition to college, more specifically to college composition courses. The surveys and interviews conducted in the Fall of 2010 addressed the social, cultural, and personal experiences that influenced G 1.5 students' growth of academic literacy (Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007) and their transition to college. This study also addressed issues of equitable access to college-preparatory curriculum in high school and the impact of English Language Learner (ELL) experiences in G 1.5 students' socialization into Hawaii public schools.

I administered the surveys through first year composition courses at three state college campuses: Hawaii State University (HSU), West Community College (WCC), and South Community College (SCC). HSU, WCC, and SCC are pseudonyms. I initially sent out e-mails to 60 instructors who were teaching first-year composition courses for Native English Speakers (NES) and English Language Learners (ELL) at the three campuses asking them to grant me access to their students. Twenty-two instructors replied to my e-mails. Thirteen of 30 instructors at HSU, four of 22 instructors at WCC, and five of eight instructors at SCC allowed me to survey their students.

I surveyed 16 classes at HSU, eight classes at WCC, and nine classes at SCC. Two of the HSU classes were for ELLs and three of the classes at SCC were for ELLs. None of the instructors at WCC who taught ELL specific composition courses volunteered to have their students participate in the survey. There were a total of 33 first-year composition classes that participated, and 412 surveys completed. However, of the

412 surveys, only 261 students had graduated from a public high school in Hawaii.

International students, students from another state, private school graduates, and students who immigrated to Hawaii in their later high school years were not included in this case study.

The survey (Appendix C) had questions identifying students as immigrants, asking for the age they immigrated, reporting the types of courses they took in high school, and identifying Hawaii public high school graduates. The survey also asked students their writing experiences in high schools and colleges. Their answer choices ranged from 1 as never having experienced it to 5 as always having experienced it. The survey answers were analyzed using the IBM SPSS statistical analysis tool. The survey also contained a question that asked students about the types of composition course they took in college to determine whether they had been placed in beginner writing courses prior to their first year composition course. First year composition courses included English 100, English 100E, English Language Institute (ELI) 100, and English as a Second Language 100. Beginner, or pre-college level composition courses are those courses students were required to take as a pre-requisite to the first year composition courses. I administered the surveys from early October to mid-November of 2010 to students in first year composition classes at the three college campuses. The courses included English 100 and ELI 100. All courses met the first year composition course requirement for degree-seeking candidates at all state university system campuses.

This chapter reviews both quantitative and qualitative data. It begins with the results of the survey of 261 Hawaii public high school graduates who were enrolled in college in fall 2010. The chapter also reviews the semi-structured interviews of eight

tenured college faculty and nine G 1.5 college students designed to address the five research questions. I used the computerized program Atlas.ti to transcribe and code all 17 interviews, which added up to almost 21 hours of transcripts, for common themes. The faculty and students were grouped separately during the coding process. Then, the summaries and transcripts were e-mailed to the interviewed participants to provide them opportunities for feedback and to check for the accuracy of my analysis and transcription. I also asked interviewed student participants to provide updated information about the grade they received for their composition class in January 2011.

The interviewed faculty members were all tenured and had been teaching first-year composition for more than ten years in Hawaii, with the exception of one faculty member who taught a summer international ELL program, but he was the director of the ELL program at HSU. Four faculty members were from HSU, two were from WCC, and two were from SCC. One faculty member from HSU and one from SCC were considered to be experts in the field of second language studies based on their peer-reviewed publications, professional associations, teaching experiences with second language learners, and/or knowledge of and contact with Generation 1.5 college students.

To address research question #1, I first examined the data collected through the survey as a quantitative measure of schooling experiences at the three levels of public education in Hawaii: High school, community college, and four-year college. I looked at the descriptive statistics (frequency distribution and percentages) to compare writing instructional experiences of the G 1.5, NES community college, and NES four-year college students. Then I added the qualitative data sets (interview transcripts and literacy narratives) to the quantitative data to compare teaching and learning at the three levels.

To address research questions #2 on socio-cultural and curriculum conditions in education for G 1.5 students, I examined the percentages of Generation 1.5 students who took AP English in high school and the percentage of G 1.5 students who were placed into beginner English or beginner ELL courses to see if there was equitable access for G 1.5 students. Then I explored the transcripts of the student interviews to determine what types of socio-cultural experiences and curricula conditions impacted their transition to college.

To address research question #3, I ran a correlation analysis of the relationship between AP English coursework in high school and students' placement in pre-college, or beginner composition classes in college. Literature in G 1.5 academic literacy development showed that there is oftentimes inequality in G 1.5 students' access to more rigorous coursework (Frodesen, 2009; Muriel & Fitzpatrick, 2009) and courses such as AP English provide better opportunities to succeed in college (Mattern, Shaw & Xiong, 2009; Murphy & Dodd, 2009). I looked at the correlation for two groups: G 1.5 and NES.

To address research questions #4 and 5, I analyzed the transcripts from the eight faculty interviews, the nine G 1.5 student interviews, and the literacy narratives from the G 1.5 students. Of the 9 students, 5 submitted their literacy narratives.

I conducted the data analysis through three main theoretical lenses: 1) writing as a mode of learning, 2) social justice education, and 3) language socialization theories of English language learners.

### **Research Question 1: Teaching and Learning of Writing**

In what ways are the teaching and learning of writing similar or different in high schools, community colleges, and four-year colleges?

The analysis of this question was performed using binned descriptive statistics of the survey and the transcriptions of the interviews. In IBM SPSS, binned items are results that are grouped together for statistical analysis. I decided to group the answers “usually” and “always” into one category in order to find a percentage of participants who gave positive answers to the survey questions.

In order to answer research question 1, I categorized the survey participants into three different categories: Generation 1.5 Asian American students (G 1.5 AA), Native English Speaker (NES) at two-year colleges (WCC and SCC), and NES at a four-year college (HSU). All reported survey data are from public high school graduates in Hawaii who attend college in the state’s public university system. Students’ perceptions of high school and college writing experiences were then analyzed for each of the survey constructs related to writing experiences in high school and college. I ran separate descriptive frequency tests with IBM SPSS for each of the three groups reported in this chapter. Then, I included qualitative data of the G 1.5 interviews as supplements to the results. Table 3 shows the percentages of positive experiences and the standard deviation (SD) for each item reported on the surveys. The larger the SD, the more variability there was in the answers.

### ***Generation 1.5 students’ writing experiences***

*Quantitative results.* Four surveyed participants, or 13.3%, of the 30 G 1.5 students reported that they “usually” or “always” enjoyed writing assignments in high school, and their enjoyment of writing assignment in colleges remained unchanged. G 1.5 had less positive writing experiences in high school than their NES peers at CC and HSU. In the survey, a larger percentage of G 1.5 students, 56.7, said that they “sometimes”

enjoyed writing assignments in high school, while 46.7 “sometimes” enjoyed their writing assignments in college. Only 56.7% of the G 1.5 students reported that they “usually” or “always” received grammar instruction in high school, but 86.7% of them said they “usually or “always” received grammar instruction in colleges.

G 1.5 students had fewer opportunities for collaborative writing opportunities in high school such as peer reviewing (50%) and conferences with their teachers (23.3%) than their NES peers. G 1.5 students’ opportunities for collaboration increased to 73.3% for peer reviewing and 33.3% for conferences with teachers in colleges. There were also more tutors (73.3%) and writing centers (80%) available in colleges than in high schools. G 1.5 students reported studying Asian American authors more in colleges than in high schools. More often than their native speaking peers, G 1.5ers took the initiative to seek help from their teachers for their writing assignments in both high schools (26.7%) and colleges (33.3%).

Table 3.

*Percentage of positive perceptions towards writing experiences*

		Enjoy Writing		Grammar Instruction		Peer Review		Writing Conferences		Writing Tutors/Mentor		Writing Centers		Asian American Authors		Took Initiative	
		Positive Answer (%)	SD	Positive Answer (%)	SD	Positive Answer (%)	SD	Positive Answer (%)	SD	Positive Answer (%)	SD						
G 1.5 (n=30)	HS	13.3	.94	56.7	1.19	50	1.13	23.3	1.22	3.3	1.19	6.7	1.18	20	1.33	26.7	1.25
	C	13.3	1.16	86.7	.88	73.3	1.02	33.3	1.18	73.3	.97	80	.95	26.7	1.49	33.3	1.14
2 year College (n=133)	HS	31.6	.97	51.9	1.06	55.6	1.25	23.3	1.12	13.5	1.37	15.8	1.16	11.3	1.07	10.5	1.14
	C	12.8	2.76	82.7	.99	89.5	.73	65.4	1.31	91	.78	85.7	.99	25.6	1.31	28.6	1.17
4-year College (n=98)	HS	31.6	.95	46.9	1.03	69.4	.88	27.6	1.1	4.1	1.16	6.1	1.05	11.2	1.02	8.2	1.05
	C	4.1	1.06	64.3	.97	81.6	.92	53.1	1.3	87.8	.85	78.6	.96	13.3	1.15	19.4	1.04

*Note. The positive perceptions were calculated by adding the percentages of answers to “usually” and “always” choices on the survey. These “binned” percentages gave an outlook on students’ positive perceptions rather than looking at the averages for each answer. SD = standard deviation or variability in responses. HS = high school. C = college.*

*Qualitative results.* The majority of the G 1.5 students did not have very positive writing experiences in high school. They reported having mostly informal writing that was for credit or no credit. Angela stated that “the topic is related to your life” and usually required no longer than a page. Very little peer and teacher feedback was provided; as Bingwen criticized, “it was just if you did, you did it.” When they got to college, instructors focused much more on collaborative skills such as peer reviewing and conferencing with tutors or instructors. There was much more specific time set aside for peer reviewing in their writing classes. Bingwen also talked about how his writing instructor allowed students to be responsible for selecting the freewrite topics for the day.

Another criticism G 1.5 students shared was that their regular English classes in high school focused more on reading. Sara claimed that once she exited the ELL program and was placed into regular English classes, all they did was read the class text. The English class was busy trying “to finish the whole book” in class because students could not take the books home. Hana, who took AP English, talked about not understanding Shakespearean language and having to depend on outside sources such as Sparknotes’ parallel texts online to get her through her English classes.

Mike and Cao had more positive writing experiences in high school because they had one teacher with whom they had good rapport to ask for additional assistance in an informal way. Mike had an art teacher who would show him how to create outlines and tables to organize his thoughts. Cao had an English teacher in middle school who also ended up being his high school English teacher. This particular teacher taught him how to utilize words to express his thoughts on paper. Both of these male students immigrated to Hawaii before the third grade, and they immigrated the earliest of the nine participants.

Writing instruction at both community and four-year colleges seemed significantly different from high school writing instruction for most of the participants, especially when it came to feedback and grammar. Even though writing assignments were much longer in college, the instructors provided better, more effective verbal and written feedback; however, the students at HSU said that they would like more specific feedback on grammar from their instructors. Everyone who had something to say about peer reviewing had only positive experiences with this in college. For example, Harry thought that “by reading other’s way of writing, we also see different flaws in our own writing and [this] exposes us to new ways of writing, and [the instructor] corrects them and gives you idea of what she expects.”

#### ***Community college students’ high school writing experiences***

Students at the two community colleges (CC), WCC and SCC enjoyed their high school writing assignments more than their college writing assignments. Over 31% of the 133 CC students reported that they “usually” or “always” liked their high school writing assignments, but in college, their positive answers were only 12.8%. However, the standard deviation (SD) for the responses regarding their enjoyment of writing assignments in college was 2.76, which showed a large variability in the answers that ranged from one to five. All other responses for each question had much higher positive experiences in college than in high schools. Students at CC reported having more opportunities for peer reviewing (89.5%), access to tutors or mentors (91%), and access to writing centers (85.7%) than the other two groups.

#### ***Four-year college students’ high school writing experiences***

Similar to CC students, the students at HSU reported enjoying their writing

assignments more in high schools than in colleges. Over 31% of students at HSU said that they “usually” or “always” enjoyed writing assignments in high school, but a significantly lower, 4.1 % of students reported enjoying their writing assignments in college. The students at HSU also reported less grammar instruction in high schools and colleges than their G 1.5 and CC peers; however, grammar instruction was more prevalent in college (64.3%) than high schools (46.9%).

Other factors that were reported to be less positive for HSU students than the G 1.5 and CC groups were their access to writing centers (78.6%) and the study of Asian American authors (13.3%). Students reported reading fewer Asian American authors in their college English classes. In addition, HSU students had the lowest percentages in high schools (8.2%) and in college (19.4%) of seeking help formally for their writing than compared to G 1.5 and CC students.

### ***Summary of results for research question #1***

The results of the survey showed that G 1.5 students generally do not enjoy writing in high school or colleges while their NES peers enjoyed writing in high schools much more than writing in college. There was more grammar instruction in college than in high schools, and more grammar instruction in the two-year colleges and in the courses G 1.5 students were enrolled in than at HSU. All other questions related to writing experiences such as opportunities to collaborate and access to outside assistance at colleges showed more positive responses than the experiences in high school from all surveyed groups.

The narrative data, which includes interviews and literacy narratives, supported the survey results that G 1.5 students did not have positive writing experiences in high

schools. There was very little collaboration time and some teachers simply gave worksheets for students to complete after a 15-minute lecture. Non-ELL English courses focused more on reading and very little on grammar and writing skills. G 1.5 students who had more positive experiences had specific teachers they could go to for assistance outside of class.

The NES at the two-year and four-year colleges also reported having more positive experiences in opportunities for peer reviewing in class and conferencing with their composition instructors. However, they took less initiative to seek out additional help for their writing than the G 1.5 participants reported. The NES also did not enjoy their college writing assignments which was most evident at HSU with only 4.1% saying that they usually or always enjoyed their writing assignments in college.

### **Research Question 2: Socio-cultural Experiences and Curriculum Conditions**

What socio-cultural experiences and curriculum conditions in education impact Generation 1.5 Asian American students in their transition from high school to college writing success?

I used both quantitative and qualitative analysis for this research question. I simultaneously looked at a cross-tab table on the number of G 1.5 students who took AP English courses and placement in composition courses in college and the answers they gave in the interviews. In the UH system, students with scores of four or five receive credit for AP English Language and Composition (first year composition English 100) and AP English Literature and Composition (one of the 200-level literature courses). None of the G 1.5 students in this study received credit for English at HSU. Table 4 shows the cross-tab chart created through IBM SPSS.

Table 4.

*Generation 1.5 college composition course placement*

Placement	Took AP English (n=6)		No AP (n=24)	
	Total	Percentage within G 1.5	Total	Percentage within G 1.5
Beginner ESL	0	0%	6	20%
Beginner ENG	0	0%	7	23.3%
ESL/ELI 100	1	3.3%	6	20%
ENG 100	5	16.7%	5	16.7%

*Note.* Beginner courses are pre-college level courses that students cannot use towards their degrees, but they are pre-requisites to first year composition courses. First year composition courses are labeled as ESL/ELI 100 for English language learners and ENG 100 for native English speakers. The percentages were calculated based on the total number of G 1.5 students (n=30) who completed the survey.

After comparing student completion of AP English courses and their placement in a composition class in college, I looked more deeply at narrative support for G 1.5 students' experiences in their English language learner (ELL) courses in high school, their heritage and its impact on their schooling, and the type of instruction that hindered their transition to college.

***Perception of preparedness and AP English in high school***

*Quantitative results.* Of the 30 students identified as G 1.5 AA, ten were from HSU, five were from WCC, and 15 were from SCC. Of the 133 students from the two-year campuses, 64.7% were from WCC and 35.3% were from SCC. From here on, the data from the 2 two-year colleges will be combined and referred to as Community Colleges (CC). Only 53.3% of G 1.5 students believed their high schools prepared them for college, but of the NES, 64.1% of CC and 67% of HSU felt prepared for college. Twenty percent of G 1.5 students took an Advanced Placement (AP) English class in high school, 12% of CC students took AP in high school, and 36.7% of HSU students took AP in high school.

The G1.5 students who took AP English included two from SCC and four from HSU, and no G 1.5 student who took AP English in high school was placed into beginner English or beginner ELL courses. Over forty percent of G 1.5 students who did not take an AP English course were placed into beginner ELL or English courses in colleges. Five of the students who took AP English reported feeling prepared for college, but one G 1.5 was undecided.

*Qualitative results.* Three of the G 1.5 participants, Hana, NamJoo, and Angela had taken AP English their senior year of high school. Bingwen and Harry took other AP courses in other subject areas. Hana, an earlier immigrant had no problems getting into the AP English course, but NamJoo and Angela had to convince their teachers to allow them to take the class. NamJoo claimed that her eleventh grade English teacher was an easygoing man who practically signed off on anyone who wanted to enter the AP class and gave her high marks. Angela, on the other hand, was supposed to take a placement test, but she was able to convince her teacher to sign her up for the class. Angela struggled considerably, and she felt that her essay writing was not very strong. All three girls talked about getting additional help from their AP teacher and their friends in the class. They also stated that their high schools prepared them for college.

Other students who did not take AP English in high school alleged that friends told them that immigrant students cannot get into AP English because their English was not up to par with NES. Many also described a “gatekeeper” who either gave them access or denied them access to the AP English class; however, in Sara’s case, she had only heard rumors that “not too many immigrants can apply for the AP class because of their English level,” and did not actually try to take the course. Contrarily, Mike wanted to take

the class and had signed up for it, but did not get in. He made no attempts to follow up on the reason for his non-admission to the class. Three G 1.5 students who had not taken AP English in high school felt unprepared for college; they were also placed into either beginner English or ELL courses.

### ***Generation 1.5 student perception of ELL courses***

G 1.5 students' perception on ELL courses was generally mixed; some thought ELL courses really helped them, but others thought they did not help them much in high school. All students from HSU had generally positive experiences being in ELL courses in high schools and thought that it really helped them improve their grammar. However, Angela was eager to get out of ELL courses in high school and college because she felt that she had "the same brain" and that she could do the same type of work NES are able to do. Mike, who started US schools in the second grade, remembered feeling separated from his peers when he was pulled out of his regular classes and taken to ELL classes.

Students from CC had mostly negative stories to tell about their ELL courses. The biggest complaint was that they would often be in classes with students who spoke the same language so their English did not improve. For instance, at Lisa's high school, there were a total of 25 other Koreans in her ELL class and no other ethnic groups, and Sara also had many Chinese-speaking peers in her ELL class. Cao remembered just doing what he was told in his ELL classes because he could not communicate with anyone. Bingwen, a student at HSU, had a similar experience when trying to test out of ELL. He said that he failed to test out of the ELL class by one point, so I asked him if he asked to re-take or to have the test re-scored, and he did not know he was allowed ask. He did not advocate for himself because he did not know he could.

Sara had the most negative experience at her high school. She did not remember any negative experiences in middle school, but her high school ELL teacher required mostly worksheets that seemed “worthless” and no real help on grammar or vocabulary. The teacher, a bilingual Chinese American, yelled at the students often and “made a collection of papers” without handing them back to the students. In college, her experiences in ELL courses were more positive since she could choose her own instructors. She said that the ELL instructors in college were more willing to help students with grammar and writing. She also preferred Asian American ELL teachers over non-Asian American ELL teachers because they are “much, much more better” at relating to her and are better able to address her needs.

G 1.5 students’ negative perceptions of ELL courses from high schools seemed to carry over into colleges. Three instructors said that many G 1.5 students resist taking any form of ELL courses even it is the equivalent to the first year composition class in the English department. For example, Professors Chris and Tina, who are responsible for ELL student placement at HSU and WCC, have had many G 1.5 students arguing to get placed out of the ELL composition courses because they do not identify themselves as needing ELL services. However, Professors Chris and Tina saw a need for G 1.5 students to take ELL composition courses because they still have second language learner writing issues in areas like grammar and vocabulary that may not be addressed in regular English 100 courses. According to Professor Tina, G 1.5 students have much higher success rates in the ELL composition classes than in the regular English 100 classes.

### ***Heritage culture and its impact on US schooling***

All G 1.5 students in this study speak their parents’ native language at home with

their family. Bingwen's parents "could not communicate with the teachers" at his high school. Cao often had to translate for his mother. NamJoo's father could speak Japanese fluently, but his English was not very good.

Even though some of the G 1.5 students had relatives who gave them advice about school and course selection in colleges, few had parents who could provide direct academic support by speaking to their high school teachers or helping their children with homework assignments. The four Asian groups represented in this study, Chinese, Filipino, Korean, and Vietnamese, are known to provide strong moral family support. The Chinese and Korean heritage students especially emphasized how important it was for their parents to see them get a college degree. The three Chinese heritage students, Bingwen, Sara, and Hank, spoke about their parents' perception of the importance of math over English courses. The three Korean heritage students, Hana, NamJoo, and Lisa spoke about not being allowed to work when they were in high school, so that they could focus on their studies. As a matter of fact two of them were not working at the time of the interviews because their parents wanted them to focus on college classes. Cao, a Vietnamese American, and Mike, a Filipino American, did not remember much of their early elementary school years.

Even though many of the G 1.5 students' reported that their parents never got directly involved with their school work or made efforts to actively contact their high school teachers, their parents gave them encouragement and pushed them for academic success. For example, NamJoo's father used to buy her vocabulary and grammar reference books to help her improve her English, and Mike and Bingwen's parents would check to make sure they were maintaining good Grade Point Averages (GPA).

The Chinese and Korean students insisted that the type of school work was much easier in US public schools. Sara remembered that teachers in China would make physical visits to parents, and that students would have to stand in a little square for two hours if their homework was not completed. Harry remembered knowing the multiplication tables before entering first grade. Hana, NamJoo, and Lisa remembered having ten subjects at a time and going to school six days a week with longer school days and longer library hours than Hawaii's public schools.

***Inconsistency in instructional practices***

As mentioned above, teaching methods in high schools were different from colleges, and the mixed instructional practices in high schools and colleges seemed to make the transition to college more difficult for G 1.5 students. For example, NamJoo claimed, "Sometimes what my high school teacher told me not to do, college teacher would tell me to do it." One specific instance was that in high school, her teacher told her never to use the words, "in conclusion" in her essay, but her biology lab report in college requires her to use those words in her write up.

Another instructional practice that differed was that high school teachers seemed more like lecturers and did not utilize class time to its full extent. According to Sara, high school teachers would spend 15 minutes lecturing and have students work on a worksheet for the rest of the class period whereas at SCC, her writing instructor utilized every minute for teaching and interacting with the students. Likewise, Bingwen, who was at HSU, similarly stated that his college writing teacher tried harder to establish rapport with his students inside and outside of class time, but his high school teachers would just teach class and go home.

Although most students talked about specific writing issues such as needing help on grammar and vocabulary, Mike was surprised with the amount of reading he had to complete for one college class. He said that it took him four to five hours to read a 50 page assignment because the vocabulary was difficult. He also had difficulties with class discussions in his English 100 class. He noticed that students who graduated from private schools “seemed really smart” when they “knew the answer right away” during one particular class discussion, but he “was thinking about [an answer] and didn’t understand” until after the discussion had moved on to something else. Even in high school, he “felt like a minority or something...the underdog” at a school that had a large population of Filipino heritage students.

### ***Summary of results for research question #2***

Literature review showed that immigrant students have less educational resources and fewer opportunities to learn than NES (Kieffer & Leraux, 2010; Murie & Fitzpatrick, 2009). The survey showed that the G 1.5 students who were placed into beginner composition courses were less likely to have taken an AP English course in high school. On the other hand, those who took AP English were less likely to take a beginner English course in college. The age of immigration showed little correlation in students’ writing course placement.

The socio-cultural factor that seemed to affect the G 1.5 students the most was the amount of opportunity they had in utilizing their writing skills. In ELL classes, many G 1.5ers were placed with students who shared the same heritage language, but in regular English classes, they got little writing instruction because the focus was more on reading. Many also did not advocate for themselves and did not question why they were being

required to go to a certain class. One student did not ask for a re-scoring of an ELL exit exam; however, some said they did take the initiative to get help on their assignments when needed, and they attributed their progress to their ability to seek out the help they needed.

Transitioning to college did not seem easy for most participants. One participant had issues with participating in discussions in college because he was not able to quickly process the questions his professor asked as quickly as his NES peers in English 100. Another factor that made transitioning to college difficult was that G 1.5ers' parents did not know much English and could not talk to their teachers, and they did not know what they needed to do to help their children transition to college. Some Asian heritage parents discouraged extra-curricular activities and part-time jobs.

### **Research Question 3: Academic Literacy Development of NES and G 1.5**

How does taking an Advanced Placement English course in high school correlate to placement in beginner composition courses in college for Generation 1.5 Asian American students and native English speaking students?

The literature review in this study provided support for the concept that opportunities to socialize into an academic community are important to the academic literacy development of all students. Students have such opportunities when they take challenging high school courses that create strong learning communities. This concept of learning through experiencing and interacting has its roots in Dewey (1938/1998) and Vygotsky (1978). Because Advanced Placement (AP) test makers advocate equitable access to rigorous coursework in high school, and because there were strong correlations between taking AP courses and succeeding in college coursework, I wanted to know

about G 1.5 experiences taking AP English. In this study, I analyzed the correlation between having taken AP English and students' placement in beginner English classes in college. I grouped the public high school graduates into two groups (G 1.5 and NES) to see if there were any differences between the two groups' experiences.

Using the IBM SPSS statistical analysis program, I performed a correlation analysis to determine if there was any positive or negative relationship between AP English coursework in high school and students' placement in beginner composition course in college. Alpha was set at .05, or 95% confidence level. See Table 5 for descriptive statistics of G 1.5 and NES groups.

Table 5

*Descriptive statistics for AP English & beginner course placement*

	Variable	Mean	SD	Skewness
G 1.5 (n=30)	AP English	1.8	.41	-1.6
	Beginner Course	2.7	1.1	-.24
NES (n=229)	AP English	1.8	.42	-1.3
	Beginner Course	3.7	.77	-1.7

*Note:* There were 231 Native English Speakers in this study, but two did not report what types of composition courses they took.

***Results for Generation 1.5 students***

The mean level of having taken AP English in high school was 1.8. The mean level enrollment in beginner composition was 2.7. The standard deviations were .41 for AP English and 1.1 for beginner course. The skewness values were -1.6 for AP English and -.24 for beginner course, which shows that the mean values are smaller than the

median and mode for both variables, and the values are skewed to the left, which means that there were more G 1.5 students who did not take AP and more who were placed into first year composition courses. See Appendix H for the histogram for both variables.

Pearson's correlation showed moderately negative correlation between AP English and beginner composition courses,  $r(30) = -.50, p < .01$ , two-tailed. Those who took AP English in high schools tended not to be placed into beginner English composition classes in college. The square of the correlation coefficient ( $r^2$ ), or the coefficient of determination is .25. Thus we can conclude that 25% of the variance in AP English can be associated with the variance in beginner composition courses. This further shows a moderate correlation between taking AP English courses and placement in beginner composition courses for the G 1.5 sample population in this study. In other words, those who took AP English were less likely to be placed into beginner writing courses.

### ***Results for native English speaking students***

The mean level of having taken AP English in high school was 1.8 for NES students. The mean level of being enrolled in beginner composition was 3.7. The standard deviations were .42 for AP English and .77 for the beginner course. The skewness values were -1.3 for AP English and -1.7 for beginner course, which shows that the two variables were not evenly distributed, but they were skewed to the left.

Pearson's correlation showed a slight negative correlation between AP English and beginner composition courses,  $r(231) = -.22, p < .01$ , two-tailed. There is little, if any, correlation between those who took AP English in high schools and their placement in beginner English composition classes in college for NES students. The square of the

correlation coefficient ( $r^2$ ), or the coefficient of determination is .05. Thus we can conclude that 5% of the variance in AP English can be associated with the variance in the beginner composition course. This further shows a very small correlation between taking AP English courses and placement in beginner composition courses for the sample population of NES in this study.

### ***Summary of results for research question #3***

The results of the correlation analysis for the two sample populations showed that there was a moderately negative relationship between taking AP English in high school and placement in beginner English composition courses for G 1.5 students, but there was a very small negative relationship for these variables for the NES students in this study.

The implications of these correlations will be developed in Chapter 6, where I will discuss the findings alongside the findings for research question #2.

In the answer to research question #2, the G 1.5 students who took AP English in high school indicated that they had to persuade their way into the AP course. Angela did not take the required placement test, and NamJoo was able to convince her teacher to sign the appropriate forms. The other participants heard rumors that they would not qualify because of their ELL status so did not even try to sign up for the class so they missed out on the opportunity to take AP English in high school.

G 1.5ers have more difficulties than native English speakers since English is not their first language, and they do not have the opportunity to practice academic skills and knowledge learned at schools in their homes with their parents because their parents have a different culture and language.

#### **Research Question 4: Curriculum Impact on G 1.5 Students**

In what ways do the high school, community college, and four year college writing curriculum and instruction influence the development of Generation 1.5 Asian American students' academic literacy?

For Generation 1.5 students, the development of academic literacy mainly involved practicing reading, writing, grammar, and vocabulary, which was similar to college faculty's ideas on developing academic literacy in this study. However, instructors also discussed the development of academic literacy as including the practice of verbal communication skills and instructors providing feedback. According to the student participants, opportunities for peer and instructor feedback on writing were slim in high school and greater in college. Community college students more often than four-year college students reported that they had more opportunities to get acclimated to a college environment. Four year college students more often reported higher initial expectations for incoming freshmen than community college students.

#### ***Generation 1.5 student perception on becoming a good writer***

Reading from a variety of sources such as books and newspapers is what makes a good writer and helps writers build more interesting writing styles. Hana had always enjoyed reading so she did not hesitate in selecting books that she did not normally read. Bingwen, Harry, Cao, Mike, and Sara also agreed. They believed that good writers read from a variety of sources and were able to incorporate ideas that inform the readers.

Besides grammar, another big difficulty some of the students discussed was having a boring writing style, while the ideal writer has a more gripping and inviting style. In her literacy narrative, Hana said that her essays were "boring and too detailed" so the

reader is left with no chances “to think on their own which makes [her essays] unappealing to the audience.” Harry realized that in order for him to change his “boring” writing style, he needed to be “exposed to new ideas and new ways of writing, and the only way to do that was by reading different styles.” Bingwen had figured out a strategy to avoid boring essays; he aimed to incorporate humor in his essays.

### ***Instructor perceptions of developing academic literacy***

Instructor perceptions of becoming a good academic writer included reading from a variety of sources and being able to adapt to particular audiences. All instructors talked about the reading and writing connection because reading gave students “vocabulary, syntax, and a certain familiarity with all kinds of stylistic devices” (Professor Carl) writers can use. Professor Jason saw the development of academic literacy as experiential. Student can become good college writers if they can “find out what forms and styles of discourse” they need to adapt to in order to “get stuff done and then have the ability to go research those forms and styles and emulate them.” Professor Carl agreed with Professor Jason, but also thought that most people “know what it’s like reading and writing at the college level” because of the amount of schooling that happens prior to college.

Another common theme that emerged in instructors’ descriptions of developing academic literacy was the ability to hold verbal discussions on a topic prior to asking students to write down their thoughts. Professor Cathy from SCC was very adamant about treating students “as if they’re part of the conversation” by including them in academic conversations because they do not yet know what is required of them in colleges. Good writers can effectively communicate a specific message to an intended

audience, and in today's fast-paced society, Professor Cathy and Professor Carl at HSU believed that good writers must now know how to use technology to find information and relevant sources to support their ideas.

### ***The writing curriculum and instruction in high schools***

As previously stated and shown in Table 3, though students had stated they enjoyed writing assignments in high school more than in college, students usually had more positive experiences writing in college than in high schools, especially when it came to social collaboration with peers and instructors. However, more NES students enjoyed their writing assignments in high school than in colleges. For G 1.5 level of enjoyment was the same for high school and college. In the five G 1.5 narratives about their high school writing experiences, students wrote about writing assignments that asked about more personal experiences and that did not have any high-stakes assessment involved. In other words, they would often write personal narratives often scored based on a credit/no credit system.

Several G 1.5 interviewees complained that high school writing curriculum and instruction did little to help them achieve academic literacy. For instance, Bingwen, who was the most critical, often had to memorize in high school, and that caused him to hate English. He knew that it took a lot of practice to become a good writer, but his high school English courses focused little on writing and much more on reading. Sara also had similar complaints saying that there was only time to "sit down and read the book because students couldn't take it home."

High schools that the G 1.5 students attended also had very limited peer and teacher collaboration opportunities. As a matter of fact, four of the nine participants, who

were very recent high school graduates, could not recall completing any peer reviewing or editing in their high school English classes. Three participants remembered doing peer review and editing in their AP English classes, and two participants did not mention peer reviewing.

### ***The writing curriculum and instruction in community colleges***

When students first enter WCC or SCC, they are required to take the Computer-Adaptive Placement Assessment and Support System (COMPASS) test, which was created by American College Testing, Inc. The students are tested on their reading and writing skills, but the writing skills test is a multiple choice test on grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and word usage. The COMPASS test does not ask students to write an essay, but the results are used to place students in writing courses. The CCs initially identify ELL students through their entrance applications and the CCs place the ELLs in an ELL composition course; however, many instructors felt that G 1.5 students do not want to be placed into ELL courses. Professor Erica has had many G 1.5 Korean American students request placement into the regular English 100 track rather than the ELL track. Even though this happened at WCC, Professors Roger and Cathy at SCC felt that there was enough support for G 1.5 students at SCC in many first year composition courses that served both NES and ELLs.

Both professors at SCC supported the Opportunities to Learn (OTL) model that the ELL program was based on. Even though there were various adaptations of the original OTL from the 1970s, in this model, teachers provide students with access and contact with the subject or content they will later be assessed on (Boscardin, Aguirre-Munoz, Stoker, Kim, Mikyung, & Lee, 2005). Professor Roger described it as a program

at SCC in which it is the teacher's responsibility "for providing opportunities and the student's responsibility to pick up the opportunities." Because training is provided for all SCC instructors, both professors at this campus felt that OTL was one model that worked and helped G 1.5 students. Even with system-wide training on implementing the OTL model, unfortunately, Professor Cathy admitted to the variability in what gets taught in composition courses, and the college cannot "really guarantee what can be taught."

Similar to the variability in the curriculum and instructional practices at SCC, Professor Tina at WCC stated that depending on the instructor, G 1.5 students might just be identified as another "local kid with pidgin problems and [the instructor cannot] see that it's really a second language issue" so students do not get the type of support they need in a regular English 100 class. That is why WCC encourages any student who speaks another language at home to take the English 100E, or the ELL specific first year composition course. The students who are in the 100E courses have a much higher success rate, 81%, whereas student passing rate in regular English 100 is 56% at WCC. Her description of the English 100E courses was similar to SCC's OTL program, one in which students were given opportunities to integrate reading, writing, oral, vocabulary, and grammar skills in the composition courses. The only difference was that there was no mention of teaching students to pick up on opportunities in the classroom.

### ***The writing curriculum and instruction in four-year colleges***

Hawaii State University (HSU) does not have a system-wide teaching model like the OTL model the community colleges use. Instead, they focus their instruction and curriculum on the Student Learning Outcomes (Appendix G) that have been agreed upon by the English Language Institute (ELI) department and the English department. This

factor is important since both departments offer courses that meet the first year composition requirement. Professors Carl, Jason, and Chris reported that as long as the instructors teach in accordance with the SLOs, incorporate a research component, and meet the minimum number of pages of writing, they can formulate the course curriculum using whatever textbooks and assignments they choose.

Because there are over 50 sections of English 100 and only about three to four ELI 100 courses, they formed a committee that helped instructors maintain a certain amount of consistency in what was being taught. According to Professor Chris, instructors were asked to submit anonymous student papers to the committee so they can determine if students have met the SLO benchmarks. Professor Anna criticized this process saying that instructors were required to make copies of anonymous student papers and submit them to the committee for review. She did not know how the written pieces were assessed, but she did say that her students sometimes did not do well in the committee assessment.

The English department at HSU prided itself in the fact that tenured faculty teaches a first year composition course every fourth semester. Professor Jason acknowledged that many “outdated lit guard,” or those who were more literature-based with seniority in the department, have to get their hands “dirty by composition writing” and intervening with students’ writing in the earlier stages of the writing process. Professor Chris, who is the only instructor from another department, also saw this as a positive policy and disclosed that in his department, Graduate Assistants (GA) teach the first year composition course so there is a large turnover and inconsistency in instruction and curriculum.

In the past, Professor Chris's department had offered first year composition courses that were specifically geared towards G 1.5 students, but they have not offered it for at least 7 years. One problem was the turnover of GAs. Some were familiar with G 1.5 issues, but many only taught ELI 100 for a semester. Another was that half of the G 1.5 students preferred an afternoon class, but only morning classes were offered. ELI 100 courses that are specifically for G 1.5 are no longer offered because of shortage of funding. Professor Chris envied the English department in that they had tenured faculty teach the first year composition courses, but in the 15 years he has been at HSU, there had never been a tenured professor teaching first year composition course in the ELI department.

***Summary of results for research question #4***

Generation 1.5 students in this study generally knew that reading from a variety of sources helped improve their writing. Some admitted to not having an engaging writing style that successful writers have and felt that their writing did not appeal to college audiences. The professors at community colleges reported specific strategies their colleges incorporate to help G 1.5, but the professors at the four-year college had specific expectations they wanted their students to come into their classes with and to exit with. One important expectation mentioned by six of the professors was adapting written and oral work to various types of audiences.

The G 1.5 students had mixed experiences in high schools, but most reported positive experiences in colleges even with the varied curriculum and instructional practices that the professors had. In high school they had teachers who gave very little writing instruction while in college writing instruction meant more opportunities for peer

reviewing time and meeting with tutors, mentors, or instructors. The community colleges emphasized an integrated approach to writing, one that includes providing opportunities for G 1.5 students to participate in academic discourse in oral and written forms and opportunities to have more explicit grammar and vocabulary instruction.

### **Research Question 5: Instructor Knowledge and Instructional Adaptations**

What do college and high school instructors know about the unique academic and social needs of Generation 1.5 Asian American students? What instructional adaptations, if any, do college and high school instructors use to help Generation 1.5 Asian American students acquire academic writing skills for college?

In order to answer these research questions, I analyzed interview transcripts from students and college instructors. High school teachers were not interviewed for this study. The G 1.5 participants provided perspectives of high school teachers' knowledge of G 1.5 students and their instructional practices. Most students were not content with the high school writing curriculum. A few reported having positive writing experiences because of particular teachers. Overall, they said that high school teachers' knowledge of their needs was about the same as college instructors' knowledge. Four participants felt that college instructors were much more aware of their needs and adapted their instructional practices to meet their needs better than high school teachers.

#### ***Knowledge of the Generation 1.5 needs in high schools***

Angela, Bingwen, Harry, and Sara, the four G 1.5 Chinese American students in this study, had negative views of high school teachers and curriculum. Angela candidly said that some of her high school teachers "did not really care" about helping her when she needed it; however, her high school writing experiences were not entirely negative.

She remembered having a non-English teacher having her write journals that helped her express what was on her mind, and it seemed like therapy sessions. Bingwen said that “they did nothing” to try to find out more about who he was, but there was an English teacher who had a good sense of humor and could laugh with him about certain things. The Vietnamese American participant, Cao, assumed that in high school, his teachers “pretty much knew if you’re a smart kid or not” and “didn’t go in depth” as to why students behaved a certain way. On the other hand, his college English instructor talked to students in order to delve into their background and to get to know her students.

Some of the participants acknowledged the fact that high school teachers have to work with limited resources. According to Sara, high school teachers’ inability to help did not stem from their unwillingness, but it stemmed from their lack of time and resources to help the G 1.5 students. Similarly, Harry remembered having 30 other students in his English classes and did not blame his teachers for not knowing his needs. However, his high school counselor seemed to know and understand his academic and social needs. The more mature participant, Lisa, confessed to not being as conscious as she should have been of her own learning in high school and blamed herself for not learning as much English as possible.

Other participants’ views on high school teachers’ knowledge and understanding of their needs was about the same as their perception of college instruction. Hana felt that because this is Hawaii and teachers are also from multi-ethnic backgrounds, she “never felt like the teachers said anything insensitive” to students’ culture. However, they did not provide any additional assistance in her AP classes and the expectations for her to do the same type of work as her NES peers remained. Mike had an art teacher who helped him

more than anyone else. NamJoo, who also took AP English in high school, said that she had wanted to take AP calculus her senior year, but she was not able to because nobody informed her about taking Algebra before ninth grade. Many of her other friends on the AP track had taken it the summer before their ninth grade year because their middle school had not offered it, and it was a pre-requisite for more advanced math courses. She made sure that her younger sister took Algebra before her ninth grade year.

### ***Knowledge of G 1.5 and instructional adaptations in colleges***

As stated above, the interviewed participants felt that college instructors' knowledge of the G 1.5 students were similar to or better than high school teachers' knowledge. Of the four students who thought that college instructors were better at adapting their curriculum to meet their needs, three were community college students. The community college instructors, Professors Erica, Tina, Roger, and Cathy described how their English Language Learner (ELL) specific first year composition classes really supported the G 1.5 students on their campuses. The four-year college instructors, Professors Jason, Anna, Carl, and Chris focused more on including culture and aligning their curriculum to the Student Learner Outcomes (SLO) central to the English department's composition instruction approach.

*Community colleges.* Instructors at WCC and SCC encouraged G 1.5 students to go to ELL specific courses, especially since, according to Professor Tina, it “takes at least seven years for them to become like native speakers” in terms of academic literacy. When Professor Erica recognized G 1.5 students in her class she would “speak a little more slowly” or “write things down” for them. She also provided models of academic discourse for students to look at; she believed that students needed to practice using

academic discourse. Professor Roger at SCC provided a lot of grammar instruction in his ELL specific first year composition courses, and Professor Tina also said that the ELL courses on her campus had much explicit grammar instruction. Another type of instruction that seemed pertinent for Professor Cathy was getting all students to get used to talking and conversing about various topics before writing about them. She found that good writers needed to have “dialogue with themselves, their professors, and with their peers and with what they’re reading.”

The instructors at SCC, Professors Cathy and Roger, were very knowledgeable about the academic and social needs of the G 1.5 students on their campus. Professor Cathy knew that their parents had limited experiences with college in the US so students had almost no help getting acculturated to college in the US; furthermore, she was aware that “They didn’t want to stay in the ESL course.” She also knew that some reading materials may challenge the G 1.5 in ways that NES are not challenged, especially if the reading “material is really out there and they don’t know why they’re reading it.” Even though she knew that students may have felt uncomfortable, she brought controversial topics into the class because it gave the class something to talk about.

Professor Roger, having participated in many professional conferences informed me that the ELL community generally looked at the G 1.5 group as being at-risk, and they are generally not interested in immigrants who are successful because those who are successful do not need help. Most people in his field now see it as “a group whose language development for both languages never got completed and they’re semi-literate in both languages.” With the term defined, he also said that the G 1.5 students have typically immigrated to the US between grades four through seven when “they begin

reading to learn” the content and not learning to read. Because they never fully develop their understanding of the content or subject area, sometimes they get placed into “remedial math and English” classes in college. Citing research from the 1970s, Professor Roger said that later immigrant students “from those countries with strong educational systems” are more successful in US colleges.

The recommendation for improving G 1.5 students’ cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) that Professor Roger emphasized was providing them consistent written and oral feedback. In a recent study of G 1.5 nursing students who had been dismissed from the program at SCC, he worked with students who had been kicked out of the program and learned that the doctors who were working with them were not confident in their knowledge. He discovered the following about students dismissed:

They were considered fluent speakers of English, but when I recorded them, it was just riddled with grammar errors. They had developed strategies to sound fluent to escape the lack of vocabulary. They would say things like “You know. I did it like that, you know.” So that’s what they told the doctor and they would say things like “You know the tube I connected the tube you know.” So they didn’t have the academic vocabulary or the sentence structure to express themselves clearly.

He believed that this could have been avoided if these students were given more oral feedback on their pronunciation and academic speech in all of their classes, even in physical education or art classes.

Professor Roger helped formulate the Opportunities to Learn (OTL) model that is currently used at SCC. Students are also trained in his classes to recognize opportunities

and to pick up on them. In the past, instructors “couldn’t talk to” the G 1.5 students and convince them to use the OTL model so he developed a way for instructors to present the opportunities to students and see how many they picked up on before counseling them. Even though the G 1.5 is a group that has helped ELL professionals, Professor Roger believed that the professionals “still haven’t been able to do much for them.” He alluded to wanting a class that was specifically geared towards the G 1.5, but said that it was a group that was hard to identify.

*Four-year college.* The professors in the four year college explained that they were not experts on the G 1.5 immigrant population. Professor Jason thought this was because ELI 100 is usually offered to G 1.5 students and that they do not take English 100. However, of the five students from HSU, four of them, or 80%, were found in English 100 classes. Professor Carl had “heard of them before, but [he was] not too familiar” with them. Professor Anna wanted to read up on them before our interview, but did not have time. When Professor Carl brought up the mentoring and tutoring his department offers, I asked him if the mentors and tutors were trained to handle G 1.5 writing issues; he believed that there was no formal instruction for composition instructors regarding working with G 1.5 students. Even though the three professors indicated that they did not know much about this population, Professor Jason postulated that “it can take 20 years of social conditioning” and that “they’re way under-experienced so they haven’t developed the same repertoire” as NES.

The concepts of experience and writing as a social collaborative process were more emphasized by the HSU faculty than WCC or SCC faculty. According to Professor Jason, successful writers “understand that it’s this social process and it’s dependent upon

readers and writers.” Professor Anna has her students do a lot of “peer editing so students make arguments and they’re conscious of their audience.” Professor Chris has noticed that giving students opportunities to look at other writings gets them to see what good writing is and what it is not. Professor Carl has his students complete a “higher level discourse” and a “sentence level” discourse. He has students peer edit based on viewing the essay as an entire argument and then looking at the essay line by line for errors.

All four of the four year college professors referenced culturally responsive instructional strategies when they spoke of their beliefs about “language politics,” considered “Englishes around the world,” saw peers “teach in cultural perspectives,” and incorporated “place-based” essay assignments. The English department’s cognizance of Pidgin “extends to other second or third languages,” and according to Professor Jason, the department sees it as a “viable language on its own” that should not “beat it out from students.” Likewise, Professor Chris’s department has begun to view how Englishes can vary internationally; instead of viewing non-native English as a native vs. non-native English, professors in the Second Language Department are beginning to see it as a means to carrying out good business deals instead of acquiring native-like English. In aligning with diverse student backgrounds, Professor Carl and his colleagues incorporate assignments in which students can “write with some expertise about their home cultures or their parents’ cultures so that they have authority in those areas.” Bringing in more local perspective, Professor Anna’s assignments involve reading and writing about important places in students’ lives.

#### ***Summary of results for research question #5***

The G 1.5 Chinese American students had the most negative experiences with

high school English teachers and the English curriculum and some perceived that teachers did little to adjust their instruction to meet the needs of the G 1.5 students. However, other participants recognized the fact that high school teachers did not have the time or the resources to help them more. They reported that most college instructors had the same amount of knowledge of G 1.5 Asian Americans as high school teachers in Hawaii.

The college instructors' knowledge of G 1.5 and their curriculum adaptations to meet G 1.5 student needs were more detailed in the community college faculty interviews. They were more aware of the needs of the students and created specific system-wide program such as OTL models for instructors to use in their composition courses. The four-year college faculty was not as specifically knowledgeable of the G 1.5 student population, and they were not being specifically trained in dealing with their issues. Still, they valued students' language diversity in general, and they incorporated culturally responsive assignments to help G 1.5 and other students experience academic discourse in the classroom.

### **Summary of the Results**

The purpose of this exploratory case study was to more fully understand the development of the academic literacy of G 1.5 students as they transition into college. I used quantitative and qualitative data to find the best possible answers to the research questions.

The survey conducted in first year composition courses showed more positive overall results in college writing experiences for G 1.5 and NES students, but NES students enjoyed writing assignments more in high school than in colleges. The

interviews showed reasons for this result describing G 1.5 experiences in writing; most had negative writing experiences in high school and wished there was more time for collaborations with other students and teacher instruction on writing. Part of their negative experiences stemmed from the high school teacher's instructional practices. The G 1.5 students who did not have positive writing experiences in high school said that teachers did not teach them how to write for college. In Chapter 6, I will further discuss the possibility that this was exacerbated by the fact that many G 1.5 students are placed into lower tracked, non-college preparatory classes (Aguirre & Boscardin, 2008; Roberge, 2003).

College faculty differed in their instructional practices. Community college professors reported having more skills-based instruction such as providing specific feedback and grammar instruction while the faculty at the four-year college discussed culture-based instruction such as place-based curriculum. Although community college instructors seemed more in tune with G 1.5 students' academic and social needs, four-year university instructors reported more valuing of students' language and culture and incorporated culturally responsive assignments.

In the next chapter, I will discuss the importance of the results and the implications of my findings. I will also show how the use of mixed methodology for a case study enhanced my conclusions.

## CHAPTER 6

### DISCUSSION

Chapter 6 begins with a summary of this exploratory case study in relation to the problem and purpose. Using qualitative and quantitative data, I present each research question with my interpretations taking into consideration similarities and differences between findings and previous research. To address the research questions of this study, I framed my discussion using the three theoretical frameworks of this study: 1) writing as a mode of learning, 2) social justice education, and 3) language socialization theories of G 1.5 students. Finally, I discuss the implications of the study for policy and practice for teaching Generation 1.5 Asian American (G 1.5) students and make recommendations for future research. This study addressed five research questions:

1. In what ways are the teaching and learning of writing similar or different in high schools, community colleges, and four-year colleges?
2. What socio-cultural experiences and curriculum conditions in education impact Generation 1.5 Asian American students in their transition from high school to college writing success?
3. How does taking an Advanced Placement English course in high school correlate to placement in beginner composition courses in college for Generation 1.5 Asian American students and native English speaking students?
4. In what ways do the high school, community college, and four year college writing curriculum and instruction influence the development of Generation 1.5 Asian American students' academic literacy?

5. What do college and high school instructors know about the unique academic and social needs of Generation 1.5 Asian American students? What instructional adaptations, if any, do college and high school instructors use to help Generation 1.5 Asian American students acquire academic writing skills for college?

### **Summary of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences, challenges, and needs of the G 1.5 Asian American (G 1.5) students' academic literacy development in high schools and in their transition to college-level writing. I also examined possible correlations between taking Advanced Placement English, rigorous college preparatory coursework in high school and students' placement in non-credit earning courses in college. The G 1.5 is a unique group of immigrant students because they come to the US with some educational experiences from their native country (Roberge, 2009). However, because of their immigrant status, their academic literacy is sometimes not fully addressed in high schools; they are often placed in lower-tracked English classes and discouraged from entering higher-tracked classes such as Advanced Placement (Murie & Fitzpatrick, 2009; Roberge, 2003).

Social justice education, one of the theoretical frameworks for this study, incorporates concepts of equity, activism, and social literacy (Ayers, Quinn, & Stovall, 2009). Equity issues came up in this study because some of the student participants had to convince teachers to allow them to take AP English courses or take alternate routes for access to more rigorous coursework; access to AP for G 1.5 is often limited in high schools (Murie & Fitzpatrick, 2009). Activism issues, or a need for some G 1.5 students to take more activist approaches, came up when several students did not know how to

have their voices heard so they did not contest what was decided for them by their teachers and schools. Fortunately, even with discouragement from their teachers, some G 1.5 students were very active in getting the courses they needed for college preparation, and they benefited from those courses. Social literacy, which is related to activism, includes recognizing one's own identity in relation to others and knowing other people's social identities as well. The G 1.5 students usually seemed to know and be comfortable with who they were and what they needed; yet, there were some who felt like the "underdog" or only had friends who were of their own heritage.

Due to increasing ELL population in the US, teachers are struggling with how to address the needs of immigrant students (Clarke & Drudy, 2006; Kumashiro, 2006). According to this study's participants, some high school teachers did very little to prepare them for college level writing. A major factor noted was that teachers focused more on reading than writing. Not only were teachers focused on teaching to get students ready for the No Child Left Behind mandated assessments (McCarthy, 2008), but they were also selecting texts that did not support students who were culturally and linguistically diverse (Chieh & Vazquez-Nuttall, 2009). NCLB mandates were creating an environment that made it difficult for G 1.5 students to develop their academic literacy (Darling-Hammond, 2007; Hursh, 2007; Rushton & Juola-Rushton, 2008). The dislike of English classes that students claim may be attributed to the lack of connection the selected texts have with students' lives (Apple, 1998; Asher, 2008).

### **Research Question 1**

In what ways are the teaching and learning of writing similar or different in high schools, community colleges, and four-year colleges?

Although the results describing G 1.5 and NES students' experiences in Hawaii public high schools were different, students reported having more positive experiences in Hawaii public colleges than in high school, especially experiences related to collaboration with peers, instructors, and tutors. Findings support previous literature that has shown that collaboration as part of the writing process contributes to student-centered academic literacy development (Gielen, Tops, Dochy, Onghena, & Smeets, 2010; Richards, 2010; Simmons, 2003).

Writing as a mode of learning is defined differently in high schools and colleges. Previous research had suggested that students were not learning much about how to write in high school (McCarthy, 2008). The interview participants seemed to confirm this view. Students said that in college, English/ELI/ESL 100 courses required research and synthesis of information, but in high schools, they wrote simple personal narratives or low-stakes writing assignments such as freewrites in their English classes. Although some attempted completing a senior project, which includes a research paper, only two successfully completed it. Writings in high school also seemed less important to teachers. For example, Sara reported not having her writings returned to her from her high school English teacher.

In terms of *enjoying* writing assignments, NES students tended to like the ones they did in high school more than college. Only 4.1% of students at Hawaii State University (HSU) reported enjoying their writing assignments in college. Community college students also preferred the writing assignments they had in high school. The G 1.5 students reported no change in their level of enjoyment of writing assignments from high school to college. Even though they reported having more positive writing

experiences in college, they generally did not state that they enjoyed their writing assignments. This may be due to the types of writing they have to complete in colleges, which are often more research-based and less personal than in high schools. There are a lot more detailed and careful revisions that need to be made in college writing because they now have to cite their sources of information and have to synthesize various sources into one paper to show what they learned from the different information they gathered in their research. Other possible reasons are that there are higher expectations in colleges and students have added stress that they did not have in high school. For example, three of the students I interviewed did not have to hold jobs when they were in high school, but they were juggling college and work at the same time at the time of the interview, so more time-consuming writings such as research papers may not have been perceived as being as enjoyable as less time intensive personal narratives that involved no research.

Perhaps because over 44% had taken beginner writing courses in college which incorporate more grammar instruction, 86.7% of students surveyed had received grammar instruction in the four year college. This percentage was similar for CC students. However, only 64.3% of the students at HSU said that they “usually” or “always” received grammar instruction. Grammar came up in all student interviews; students felt they needed most help with grammar and vocabulary. The amount of grammar instruction students felt they needed in college to be successful writers, and the amount taught by instructors, varied considerably. One faculty member at HSU said she has a grammar review one day in the semester. Perhaps more grammar instruction would be helpful to meet students’ needs at HSU, especially to provide equitable opportunities to learn to write for the 40% of G 1.5 students I surveyed at HSU who were in English 100 classes.

Previous literature has also supported a need for grammar instruction in colleges (Prince, 2007), and it appears that the need is greater for G 1.5 students.

Public high school teachers instruct students with such a wide range of abilities and backgrounds that it is possible they are perplexed about knowing what they need to do to assist G 1.5 students socialize and adapt to US schools (Allison, 2009; Forrest, 2006; Matsuda, 2003b; Murie & Fitzpatrick, 2009). Student participants in this study provided specific ideas of what might have helped them in high school, and their responses can provide a useful guide for changes. One recommendation was to incorporate more grammar instruction and another recommendation was to have more peer reviewing opportunities. Yet, even within this study, the G 1.5 participants' needs varied widely. The age of immigration ranged from 6 years old to 15 years old, which seemed to affect the kinds of needs students had. The two nontraditional students who were older than the recent high school graduates were more aware of their needs, but their experiences did not vary much from other participants in this study.

With various amounts of education from their heritage countries, each participant came to the US with different needs and strengths. Some had more opportunities to build content knowledge while others did not have as much content knowledge and had to start by learning how to read and write in English before they could read to learn content. For example, NamJoo, a Korean American who immigrated to Hawaii at the age of 12, remembered having to learn cursive writing in her middle school ELL class, but cursive was part of the elementary school curriculum for NES students. Harry was actually placed a grade below his peers to "catch-up" with them when he first arrived in the third grade. The elementary school pulled him out of his third grade class and put him with

second graders. Although he was placed with his peers a year later, this experience may have contributed to discouragement and delayed development in writing (Brilliant, 2005).

One of the most surprising results in this study was the percentage of students who said they “usually” or “always” sought help when they needed it. There were many more G 1.5 students (33.3%) who took initiative to get help when they needed to. Of the NES at HSU, only 19.4% said the same. This suggests some level of activism on the part of G 1.5 students to get their needs met. One of the participants who immigrated at an early age said that he used to seek help in high school, but he does not seek out much help now. He explained this by saying he felt more confident about his writing now. It is possible that NES students sought help less frequently. Perhaps they felt the same as this G 1.5 student who began US schooling in the first grade. They felt confident in English and did not seek help because they did not perceive they needed it.

The results of research question 1 supported previous literature that indicated students did not have opportunities to use academic writing in high schools and that this created a problem because students were expected to use academic writing to show what they learned in college courses (Alber-Morgan et. al., 2007). Unfortunately, in order for students to understand the importance of writing to learn, they need to practice this skill to obtain knowledge (Paul & Elder, 2005).

HSU professors spoke most about the process approach to writing which probably is very helpful for G 1.5 students. This involves collaborative feedback from peers and teachers and student revisions of their writings (Johns, 2009). The current study suggested that the process approach helped G 1.5 students who were lucky enough to experience it in high school, and they were most likely students who took Advanced

Placement (AP) English. Other G 1.5 students reported having mostly lectures and worksheets to complete in their English classes.

Educators in public high schools, community colleges, and four year colleges had good intentions in educating students and preparing them for what was ahead. To help students enjoy writing, high schools incorporated low-stakes assignments such as freewrites and personal narratives. However, to be successful in college, the results suggest that high schools might consider some changes. College-bound students may need more focus on writing in high school, yet students reported that high schools focused more on reading instruction. By providing greater and more equitable access to rigorous college-preparatory courses such as AP English to build students' critical thinking and writing skills, Hawaii high schools will help college-bound students, especially G 1.5 college-bound students, develop academic literacy

### **Research Question 2**

What socio-cultural experiences and curriculum conditions in education impact Generation 1.5 Asian American students in their transition from high school to college writing success?

In order to answer this research question, I looked at G 1.5 students' opportunities to take AP English, their experiences in taking ELL courses and the impact of their heritage on their US schooling. I found that there were several factors that seemed to function as hurdles to G 1.5 students. Of the 30 G 1.5 students surveyed, 43.3% had to take beginner ESL or English classes when they entered college. None of these students had taken AP English in high school. A lower percentage of G 1.5 students (53.3%) than NES (64.1% at community colleges and 67% at HSU) said they were

prepared for college. These figures, showing G 1.5 students at a disadvantage as they enter college, suggested a need for better support for G 1.5 in academic literacy development in high school, as well as for greater opportunities to achieve college readiness. It would appear useful, for example, to get G 1.5 students started on a pre-AP track in middle and early high school. Taking AP courses, in this study, appeared to have a positive influence on students. AP courses have been designed to provide more rigorous college-preparatory experiences than regular high school classes. The current study showed that the G 1.5 students who took AP in high school did not have to take pre-college beginner courses. Furthermore, five of the six G 1.5 students who took AP felt ready for college. It is likely that they developed a sense of confidence in their ability to do well in college through the skills taught and opportunities to socialize into an academic community.

For many reasons, G 1.5 students did not have positive feelings about ELL classes as venues for developing academic literacy skills. Though it was clear that ELL classes provided comforting communities of people with similar experiences and needs, students were more concerned about falling behind academically. None of the participants mentioned learning how to write essays in their high school ELL classes. This finding supported literature that said there was a lack of attention to writing in ELL classes (Leki, et. al., 2008; Matsuda, 2003a). In Angela's case, it was a point of pride for her not to need ELL classes, so she may have avoided them because of a "stigma" attached to enrolling in them (Leki et. al., 2008). Even though not everyone in this study had negative experiences in their ELL courses in elementary and secondary schools, the G 1.5 students who spoke about their negative experiences seemed to carry a negative

view of them into college. Many G 1.5 students did not want to take ELL-specific composition courses in college because of the negative experiences they had had in high school. For example, Sara reported she had teachers who gave a lot of “worthless” worksheets, and Lisa wanted to avoid ELL classes that had mostly students from the same home country. Lisa felt that because they would speak their heritage language with each other, their English did not improve.

ELLs face many challenges when adapting to unfamiliar academic environments according to professional literature (Leki et al., 2008; Matsuda, 2003b; Murie & Fitzpatrick, 2009), so, as Professor Roger said, all classes should be considered as English learning opportunities for G 1.5 students. Taking G 1.5 students out of regular English and putting them in self-contained ELL courses can be a disadvantage. ELL classes cannot help students with their cognitive academic literacy proficiency (CALP) because they need to practice and develop their basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) by communicating with NES. There are other advantages of G 1.5 students intermingling in classes with NES peers: they can develop their political and social identities and become part of the discourse community, as Lea (2008), Diaz-Rico (2004), and Turner (1999) explained.

Culturally, the Asian American students in this study had parents or close relatives who helped them through high school and in their transition into college. The support was usually non-academic and more focused on students’ emotional, mental, and financial needs. The students’ parents could not speak English and some even refused to meet their children’s teacher because of their low English skills. Many parents had higher socio-economic status in their home countries; seven of the nine G 1.5 students talked

about having housekeepers or nannies and some had parents who had professionally established jobs before moving to Hawaii. In other words, their parents were highly paid and could afford extra help around the house. It seemed like the G 1.5 students who talked about moral, emotional, and financial support issues knew what their parents gave up to give them better opportunities in the US. They wanted to succeed academically to please their parents, yet they experienced difficulties in developing academic literacy. Still, participants described the supportiveness of their families. The G 1.5 Chinese Americans' parents had high academic expectations; the Korean Americans' parents bought supplemental texts to support their children; the Filipino American's parents kept pushing their son to try harder in school; and the Vietnamese mother worked hard to financially support her son while he attended school.

Even with parental support, transitioning to college was not easy for the participants because of the differences between high school and college instructional practices and the curriculum. Some of the G 1.5 students clearly were unhappy with their high school's curriculum. NamJoo was taught a specific way to write in high school, but some of her college instructors taught her a different way to write. Bingwen did not like being treated as just another student in high school and stated that his ELI 100 teacher tried much harder than his high school English teachers. Whether this is an anomaly or not, the college instructor apparently took extra steps to help Bingwen and ensured a more positive writing experience for Bingwen.

The curriculum in high schools did not prepare some of the G 1.5 participants for a successful transition to college writing. There was an apparent lack of opportunities for improving academic literacy at some high schools, especially when a "gatekeeper"

blocked G 1.5 students' admittance to more rigorous coursework such as AP. Often times, G 1.5 students were in-between ELL and NES curriculum. When placed in ELL, they had worksheets and grammar to learn, but in NES English classes, reading was at the core of the curriculum and few grammar lessons were provided. As a consequence, many felt ill-prepared to write in college. The lectures Bingwen referred to and the worksheets Sara referred to point to high school curriculum being more teacher-directed and providing fewer opportunities for creative expression, perceptions supported by previous scholarship (Allison, 2009). Results in this study of Hawaii's public school graduates suggest current models are not meeting students' needs, and further study in this area is needed.

Broader opportunities for more rigorous coursework such as AP English would have prepared G 1.5 students better (Frodesen, 2009; Murie & Fitzpatrick, 2009). Those placed in regular English 100 classes were more likely to say they were not happy with their high school English classes. For instance, Mike, who wanted to take AP English but did not get admittance, felt like the "underdog" in his college English class. He did not know how to reply to professors and, even if he wanted to, he felt like the other students had already said what he could have said. He would benefit from what Professor Roger spoke of - opportunities for G 1.5 students to practice BICS and CALP in all classes and not just English classes (Allison, 2009; Cummins, 1999; Freeman & Freeman, 2009). Perhaps if Mike had been given access to AP English, he would have built a stronger foundation for advocating for himself and developed stronger academic language skills needed for college-level discourse.

G 1.5 Asian American students were impacted by socio-cultural experiences in high school and in colleges because they were different from mainstream NES students. They felt, or actually were, separated from NES peers, and they experienced pressure to succeed from home. Though they had very limited academic assistance, they had emotional and financial support from their families. They had very limited opportunities for academic assistance, yet they sometimes found mentors who helped. They were affected by curriculum conditions as well - either positively or negatively. Some lacked opportunities to take AP English; others had negative experiences in taking ELL courses; and all seemed to have arrived in college at a disadvantage due to the widely different instructional practices of high schools and colleges.

### **Research Question 3**

How does taking an Advanced Placement English course in high school correlate to placement in beginner composition courses in college for Generation 1.5 Asian American students and native English speaking students?

In keeping with Dewey (1938/1998) and Vygotsky's (1978) experience and socialization theories, experiencing college preparation coursework through interacting with higher-achieving college-bound peers in high school might have helped the G 1.5 students in this study to be better prepared for college. As addressed in the discussion of the previous research question, students who took AP English in this study did not take beginner ELL or beginner English courses in college. In order to further understand this phenomenon, I performed a correlation analysis of taking AP English in high school to students' placement in beginner courses to see if there was a relationship between the two variables.

The results showed a moderately negative correlation between the two variables, which means that students who took AP English were *less likely* to be placed into beginner writing courses. This does not necessarily mean that not taking AP English is the cause for placement in beginner composition courses, but it means that there is a correlation between these two variables. I considered the fact that the students who took AP had more CALP developed than other G 1.5 students, but this was not necessarily the case because Angela's interview transcript was riddled with grammar errors and I had to repeat or re-word the questions to her numerous times. What I can conclude is that the students who had to take beginner courses in this study were generally those who immigrated between the ages of 12-15 which means that they were later G 1.5 immigrant students. Their experiences with the English language were more limited than those who arrived sooner. The participants in this study who came to the US in elementary school did not take beginner composition courses in college. This finding suggests that later G 1.5 immigrants may need additional assistance on grammar or vocabulary to help them develop their BICS and CALP. Considered from the frame of Fulwiler and Young (2000), perhaps the best support would involve participation of teachers across all content areas, not just English classes or ELL English classes (Allison, 2009, Cummins, 1999; Freeman & Freeman, 2009).

There were no significant correlations found for NES students for taking AP English and their placement in beginner courses. It is possible that having access to more rigorous coursework has less impact on a successful transition to college writing for NES than it has for G 1.5. I took into consideration the fact that HSU did not offer beginner composition courses as pre-requisites for English 100 and performed a separate

correlation for NES community college students using the same variables, but findings were similar. Mattern, Shaw, and Xiong (2009) and Murphy and Dodd's (2009) study showed strong correlation between taking AP and doing better in college. Further studies are needed to explore this phenomenon further. It seems safe to conclude that G 1.5 students benefit from college preparation coursework, and in high school, that access to that coursework has been limited.

#### **Research Question 4**

In what ways do the high school, community college, and four year college writing curriculum and instruction influence the development of Generation 1.5 Asian American students' academic literacy?

Using writing as a mode of learning is less emphasized in high schools than in colleges. In this study, there was a noticeable inequity of opportunities for G 1.5 students to develop academic literacy in high schools. The most important theme that came up in the surveys of all students from public high schools was that high school instruction and curriculum do not provide students opportunities to engage in student-centered writing lessons, an instructional approach that has been shown to be effective in developing students' academic literacy in a number of studies (Gielen, Tops, Dochy, Onghena, & Smeets, 2010; Richards, 2010; Simmons, 2003).

In colleges, there was less evidence of inequity between opportunities of G 1.5 and NES students. At the community college, in particular, G 1.5 students described opportunities to acculturate into an academic environment that they perceived also promoted academic literacy. For example, Harry said that peer reviewing really helped him with his writing because he could see other students' flaw which helped him see his

errors. Peer reviewing also helped him to see different ways of writing ideas. By collaborating with his peers in English 100, he was better able to discuss and learn his instructor's expectations in academic discourse.

High schools tended to offer fewer opportunities for creative expression and more instruction on teacher-directed writing activities (Allison, 2009). This was true for Bingwen, for example, who was very unhappy with writing instruction in his high school. He wanted more social interaction during writing lessons and felt that high school teachers did not prepare him for college-level writing. What worked better for him was the instruction he described in his ELI 100 college writing course. ELI 100 was more student-centered, and his instructor used a more social process approach. This approach, notably, was more in keeping with recommendations in previous research regarding college writing by Johns (2009) and Matsuda and Silva (1999).

In terms of G 1.5 students' experiences in college curriculum, the community college environment was perceived to be more conducive in helping G 1.5 students develop their academic literacy. For instance, South Community College (SCC) had encouraged all first year composition courses to adapt a model that teaches students to take the initiative to look for and take advantage of opportunities to learn in the classroom. This opportunity to learn (OTL) program was modeled to help G 1.5 students and provide them access to content that would later be assessed either on exams or papers (Boscardin et al, 2005).

The findings for community colleges also had specific curricular and system-wide instructional programs that helped G 1.5 students develop academic literacy; they provided open access to services that helped G 1.5 students achieve their academic goals.

For all the community college G 1.5 students in this study, their aim was to matriculate to HSU for a four-year degree.

Although the four-year college faculty also offered special services and instructional models to help G 1.5 students, G 1.5 and NES students in this study reported on the survey that they did not enjoy the writing assignments in college. This does not mean that they did not have positive writing experiences, but merely that they did not enjoy the writing assignments. In defense of the curriculum at HSU, one G 1.5 student said that she generally did not like to write so she does not enjoy writing, and she emphasized this fact when she sent me an e-mail update in January 2011. She liked the peer collaboration and the opportunities HSU provided for discourse. However, the writing assignments presented challenges, and four-year college faculty had higher expectations for their students to complete research and to synthesize their ideas than high schools (Fitzgerald, 2004).

Completing a research paper was an exit requirement for students in HSU's first year composition class. HSU faculty described their support to G 1.5 students in terms of the approach to writing instruction they used. They incorporated research-based instructional strategies such as peer reviewing (Gielen et. al., 2010; Richards, 2010; Simmons, 2003) and tutoring opportunities (Darabi, 2006; Johnson et al., 2009; Rigolino & Freel, 2007) previously shown to assist in the development of college students' writing. The four year college focus was not as much on creating a welcoming environment as the community college. Faculty expected students to know what college-level work looked like when they entered college, which for G 1.5 students in particular was not the case. Gaps in G 1.5ers' preparation in high school left some of them unready to cope with

college. While HSU faculty was philosophically committed to honoring and serving the needs of language diversity, instructors had limited knowledge of the particular needs of G 1.5 writers. Still, four year colleges were incorporating strategies like peer reviewing that were in fact in sync with G 1.5 needs and supported by G 1.5 research (Allison, 2009; Forrest, 2006; Johns, 2009) as effective in acclimating students to academic discourse.

Academic literacy development in the three levels of education -- high schools, community colleges, and the four-year college -- was just as diverse as the G 1.5 students' experiences. Results of this study suggest a number of strengths, but also some areas that could be improved to better serve G 1.5 students. In high schools, teachers may be able to serve G 1.5 students better if they more comprehensively incorporated the writing process as a model of writing instruction and provided students with time for social interaction through peer reviews. Offering more specific feedback on students' papers would also assist, a strategy that many college instructors used and suggested was needed in high school.

Although some G 1.5 students were very critical of high school teaching, others recognized the fact that teachers did not have time to help them develop their academic literacy. Larger, systemic reform may thus be needed, to re-focus on and prioritize writing at all grade levels and across content areas, much more than it has been in the period of No Child Left Behind. Students had more positive responses to their college composition instructors' teaching, but findings suggested that G 1.5 students had even greater challenges than their NES peers, and yet, they had more limited exposure in high school to academic experiences that would teach them what academic discourse entailed.

In the final research question, I will discuss more specifically what instructors in this study knew about the needs of G 1.5 students and whether adaptations were being made to help G 1.5 students develop their writing skills for college.

### **Research Question 5**

What do college and high school instructors know about the unique academic and social needs of Generation 1.5 Asian American students? What instructional adaptations, if any, do college and high school instructors use to help Generation 1.5 Asian American students acquire academic writing skills for college?

About half of the G 1.5 students interviewed thought that high school teachers did not understand their academic and social needs. G 1.5 students who were earlier immigrants were able to find teacher mentors who gave them tools to succeed, and they believed that teachers did not have the time and resources to give them more. Students who took AP courses, who were also earlier immigrants, had more positive perceptions of their high school teachers and felt better prepared for academic discourse in college. These findings support the Cummins's finding (1999), that it takes time and practice to develop CALP. Students who felt their community college instructors knew their needs better than their high school teachers said that they had opportunities in college to receive grammar instruction and practice using academic discourse in their classes. One student at the four year college had extremely positive experiences with his ELI 100 instructor and felt that peer reviewing and conferencing with his instructor met his academic needs.

G 1.5 students spoke of being placed into lower-tracked high school classes, which they felt showed their potential and needs were not understood, a problem that has been previously noted by Frodesen (2009) and Murie and Fitzpatrick (2009). The

participants reported having mostly teacher-led activities such as lectures and worksheets that did not offer opportunities for communication, and therefore, did not help them as they felt their later college student-led, social activities such as peer reviewing did. The hidden curriculum (McLaren, 2003) appeared to be teaching G 1.5 students that they lacked the ability and the skills for student-centered activities, abilities and skills expected of students in AP English courses.

G 1.5 students who felt frustrated by lower-tracked classes and low teacher expectations, especially in light of their parents high expectations for them, had fewer opportunities to practice typical critical thinking skills training that their peers in higher-tracked classes more regularly experienced (Aguire-Munoz & Boscardin, 2008; Roberge, 2009). The lost opportunities clearly delayed their growth in the skills of academic discourse; inequitable opportunities to learn due to questionable placement decisions suggest insensitivity to the needs of G 1.5 students and a socially unjust educational experience. Since most G 1.5 students in this study came from countries such as China and Korea, with very rigorous educational traditions, the low expectations of the school were in painful contrast to students' self-expectations and to their families' hopes.

In this study, some G 1.5 AA students in high school learned to advocate for their own needs, yet others were shut out from rigorous college-preparatory coursework by school placement policies, or by their own reluctance to question the way things were. Without school opportunities to enter challenging academic learning communities, and without opportunities to practice academic literacy at home, G 1.5 students in this study found themselves needing beginner writing courses in college (Johns, 2009), courses that did not earn them credit towards a degree.

Four students who had more positive experiences in colleges than high schools were students at community colleges. The instructors at community colleges, who generally served a greater number of G 1.5 students, were more aware of this immigrant population than the four-year college instructors. Even though only 10 of the 30 G 1.5 students in the survey were students at HSU, the interviewed participants from community colleges all wanted to transfer to HSU. Thus, it could be argued that HSU instructors will be better able to reach their aim of meeting their diverse students by becoming more particularly aware of the G 1.5 Asian American population. Lisa, the transfer student at HSU from WCC, for example, felt she needed more assistance in the transition from a community college to a four-year college. She noted the need for advising regarding the types of courses she should select, saying that with such advice, she would not have had such difficulties adjusting to HSU. Her need may be partly explained by the fact that G 1.5 students, in general, did not have parents who knew the educational system in the US, so their children often had a daunting task of learning the system by experiencing it (Leki et al., 2008; Matsuda, 2003b; Murie & Fitzpatrick, 2009).

While community college faculty were aware of G 1.5 students' academic and social needs, HSU faculty were not very aware of this population. One professor did not realize that there were G 1.5 students in English 100 classes and thought that all G 1.5 students were taking freshman writing through the ELI department. A misunderstanding like this can disadvantage G 1.5 students. While the pedagogical practices at HSU that all the interviewed professors described are well supported by G 1.5 writing experts (Kroll, 2001; Peregoy & Boyle, 2005) and composition experts (Alber-Morgan, Hessler, & Konrad, 2007; Graham & Perin, 2007), it seems reasonable to suggest that professors can

better meet G 1.5 student needs if they learn more about their specific academic and social needs and strengths.

### **Implications and Recommendations**

In this exploratory case study, multiple sources of data were used to explore Generation 1.5 Asian American (G 1.5 hereafter) students' transition from high school to college. In particular, the study examined their experiences in developing academic literacy in three different public education settings: high school, community college, and four year college. Surveys and interviews were conducted to examine educational experiences and equitable or inequitable opportunities to learn for G 1.5 students in high schools, community colleges, and a four-year college. In this section, the implications for policy and practice for high schools and colleges and suggestions for future research are presented.

#### ***Implications and recommendations for high schools***

High schools are often blamed for not preparing students for college. It has been previously argued that not all high school curriculum has helped immigrant students and that NCLB mandates most likely hurt G 1.5 students' development of academic literacy (Aguirre-Munoz & Boscardin, 2008). This study, focused on Hawaii public schools, supported those arguments. However, high schools vary. While tracking has shown negative impacts on G 1.5 students, some high schools do not track students. While blocking access to AP has shown negative impacts on G 1.5 students, some schools invite all students whether ELL or NES to take AP English courses as long as students themselves feel ready for the challenge. As this study has shown, providing access to AP English classes for G 1.5 students can help them with language socialization with higher-

achieving peers and benefit their development of cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). Therefore, access to AP courses for all students should be open, and screening, testing, or tracking for AP enrollment in high schools should be abandoned to establish more equitable educational experiences for G 1.5 students.

While the need for formal avenues of support for G 1.5 students is clear, some high schools have developed strong cultures of support. Just as faculty make a variety of curriculum and instructional choices at the college level, many tenured high school English teachers feel free to, and obliged to, make their own instructional choices for the good of the children they teach - in addition to adhering to the school's academic and financial plan and to the state's set standards. However, it is also possible that teacher attitudes towards ELLs may not be the same as it is for native English speaking students, and Forrest (2006) pointed out that G 1.5ers have often been placed into remedial courses without any regard to their educational needs. A problem for Hawaii teachers, as well as teachers nationally, has arisen because of a lack of funding, resources, and knowledge (Yoon, 2008) about how to assist ELL students in schools. Without proper training and resources such as time and materials, teachers are operating under severe constraints. Sometimes the restraints prevent them from providing the types of instruction that might best foster academic literacy for G 1.5 students. Teachers in high schools appear to need "opportunities to teach" just as students need "opportunities to learn." They need the support to get to know G 1.5 students' academic and social needs so that they can better differentiate their instruction, promote academic literacy across the curriculum, and incorporate more process writing - and more writing, for that matter - to ease the difficulties G 1.5 students face in public schools.

This study showed a need for high schools to incorporate a writing to learn policy and practice to encourage using writing to show and generate knowledge in all content areas not just in English classes. In this study, as in previous research, ELL students, and G 1.5 Asian American students among them, needed more opportunities to learn how to write. Grammar and vocabulary may be a stepping stone to learning English, but writing skills are a necessity in developing academic literacy. Regular English classroom teachers have a lot to deal with, including not only helping their students meet NCLB mandates and state standards, but also providing more opportunities for G 1.5 students in their classrooms to develop academic literacy necessary to succeed in college.

Even though some students acknowledged the fact that high school teachers have much to worry about, G 1.5 students in this study recounted that not many high school teachers knew much about their backgrounds or cared to find out. Without knowing the unique needs of this hard to identify immigrant population, high school teachers will not know how to adjust their curriculum to assist G 1.5 students. Teachers need more training and knowledge of G 1.5 students to create more equal and positive learning and language socialization experiences for G 1.5ers in public schools. With increased knowledge of G 1.5 students' needs, high school teachers will understand the importance of incorporating grammar and vocabulary instruction. Because so many G 1.5 students reported their weaknesses in grammar and vocabulary, this study identifies a need for more explicit instruction in these areas in high schools.

Even though teachers can take an activist stance in order to help create a more just educational experience for immigrant students such as G 1.5, there is a deeper structural issue within public schools that can lead to hidden inequalities. Although

schools mean well, cultural celebrations to emphasize diversity and ignoring the actual diversity of their students may cause unfair practices. More specifically, instead of merely acknowledging and celebrating various cultures during particular times of the year, school districts that have foreign language requirements can waive the requirements or give credit to students, especially G 1.5ers, who are already proficient in another language even if the school does not offer courses in that language. It would be much more meaningful for immigrant students if schools acknowledged the skills they bring with them and show them the importance of their previous language and culture rather than giving them a day to celebrate their heritage.

The more obvious curriculum decision that encourages multiculturalism and a more just curriculum for immigrant students in high schools, especially in the English language arts (ELA) classroom, is to choose texts that are written by immigrant US residents or by multicultural authors. These texts can be read and studied not as ethnic literature but as any other classical literature that is studied in the ELA classroom so students do not view these texts as inferior to classical novels written by more well-known authors in our culture. If texts written by immigrant authors are studied merely as multicultural texts, then students will not see it as equal to texts written by non-immigrant authors.

In sum, the G 1.5 students in this study had a variety of educational experiences and backgrounds prior to their arrival in Hawaii from their parents' native countries. Similarly, they had different educational experiences in the US, which was typical of G 1.5 students nationally as previously reported by Roberge (2009). G 1.5 students who immigrated to Hawaii when they were younger said that they knew the challenges

Hawaii's public high school teachers had to deal with in carrying out their instruction. Later immigrants complained more about the lack of care or knowledge high school teachers had about their needs. This suggested that later immigrants had more difficulties adjusting to US public schools and had more difficulties finding mentors to help get them through high schools. All of the G 1.5 students attended high schools that are typically known as having a concentrated immigrant population. Therefore, ideally, mentoring programs should be created in these high schools that match up a newer immigrant with an older immigrant student, or even a college student, to help the newer G 1.5 student adapt better to high school life.

### ***Implications and recommendations for colleges***

Grammar instruction is a must for G 1.5 students, and the findings suggest G 1.5 students would benefit if it were taught in college classes at community colleges and four year colleges. G 1.5 students are oftentimes still trying to develop their cognitive academic literacy proficiency (CALP) and need the additional structure and support of grammar and vocabulary lessons to fully achieve CALP (Cummins, 1999), as well as to achieve success in the academic environment.

Some of the student participants reported that they did not receive enough individual help in college, or that they did not know how to seek the help they needed to succeed in writing classes. Even with the tutoring and mentoring programs some students did not get the assistance they needed to succeed in the first year composition class. This may be due to students either not paying attention or understanding instructors' announcements about writing centers and tutors, or it may be due to instructors not fully articulating services students have access to on college campuses. Therefore, more clear

communication of available academic services is needed. Also, more college-wide programs such as SCC's Opportunity to Learn program are needed. These would benefit all students, not just G 1.5 students. Colleges need to foster an environment that helps G 1.5 students have more positive personal, social, and cultural experiences to develop the CALP needed for success in using writing to learn in college.

The college departments that oversee the first year composition courses in this study do not dictate how their instructors teach as long as they teach to the Student Learner Outcomes. Although there may be benefits to allowing instructors choose their curriculum, this may be problematic for G 1.5 students because there is little consistency in what they are learning. Some instructors may incorporate short non-fiction readers, some may incorporate longer novels, and some may incorporate poetry. This variability in the writing curriculum may be one reason for students reporting that they dislike their writing assignments. Students need to be provided specifically with opportunities to learn the types of writing their majors will require of them. It is less important for a science major to know how to write a literary analysis, just as it is less important for an English major to know how to write a lab report.

Even though some of the college instructors in this study were aware of G 1.5 students' academic and social needs, many were not aware of specific issues related to the G 1.5 backgrounds and academic needs. This study shows that diversity in colleges is growing just like high schools, and college teachers need to know more about the various paths G 1.5 students took to get to college. This can be done through speaking to students or through professional workshops aimed to educate college professors about how best to address the needs of these immigrant students who are often hard to identify.

In sum, curriculum and instruction in first year composition classes seem quite varied, and depending on the instructor, G 1.5 students may get more assistance in developing academic literacy in one class than in another. Perhaps, first year writing courses could have designations to specific majors with focus on types of reading and writing assignments needed for those specific types of majors. This would ensure skills students need for success in their majors. At the four-year university in this study, students take the first year composition course through the English department, staffed by professors and graduate assistants in the English department, so the curriculum established by the instructors may not necessarily cohere to the needs of a science major or a math major whose writing requirements are quite different from students in the humanities departments.

### ***Recommendations for future research***

Future research is needed to identify strong models for fostering academic literacy development in immigrant students in public high schools in different states and contexts nationally. While this study in Hawaii found that high schools do not always provide G 1.5 Asian American students equitable access to higher-tracked classes that are college preparatory, the results are particular to this case. Other case studies in other contexts can provide broader insight into the dynamics of G 1.5 students' writing growth and their access to college preparatory curriculum in high school. Also, this case study did not include any current high school student or teacher perspectives, so future studies may focus on or add these groups of participants to enhance the findings from this study.

There are many additional questions that need to be answered to explore factors involved in G 1.5 students' academic literacy development. Additional research may be

able to answer these questions: 1) what kinds of programs can high schools create to help G 1.5 students transition better to college; 2) what efforts are high schools making to create a more equitable educational experience for G 1.5 students; 3) what can high school and college writing instructors do to help G 1.5 students develop the CALP needed for success in the classroom; and 4) how can colleges contribute to a more equitable support for G 1.5 students in their writing classes?

### **Conclusion**

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) policies challenge teachers and schools directly to raise reading scores, so writing is often not a focus (McCarthy, 2008). However, based on the findings of this research, students, especially Generation 1.5, need more opportunities to show their learning through writing, and they need more peer and teacher collaboration time to help them build their academic literacy skills. This unique group of immigrant students is different from first and second generation of immigrant students in that they are socially and academically in-between the two groups, and they have often been misidentified or overlooked (Forrest, 2006). They are sometimes seen as needing remediation in colleges, especially in the first year composition courses. However, this study identified, at least, a partial solution. If given the time and opportunity to take higher-tracked native English speaking (NES) high school courses such as Advanced Placement (AP) English, G 1.5 students can develop academic literacy skills expected in college.

The challenges G 1.5 students faced in high schools and colleges posed hurdles in the path of their preparation for academic discourse. Some hurdles included denial of access to AP courses, scarcity of writing in high school English classes, and lack of

knowledge of their needs in high schools and colleges. The students in *this* case study might be considered “successful” G 1.5 students by some language professional standards since most matriculated into and out of English 100 or ESL 100 classes. However, the challenges they faced could have been more easily met with structures in place in schools to provide equal access to challenging and appropriate learning experiences and with improved curriculum decisions by teachers, professors, and schools.

This study also showed that there is very little articulation between colleges and high schools. During the interviews, several college instructors mentioned how I was the first high school teacher they had spoken to and that they knew very little about what was happening with writing instruction in high schools. On the other hand, high school teachers also need to become more aware of what colleges are requiring and doing. With greater knowledge they can better prepare their students for college-level writing and move away from focusing so much of their teaching on NCLB reading assessments. In order for that to happen, school decision-makers need to provide time and incentives for articulation between high school and college.

More professional development to develop awareness of the G 1.5 population and to develop strategies to teach them in public schools and colleges seems to be needed. A long-time problem has been that G 1.5 students can be mistaken for native English speakers because some do not have accents when they speak English. While these G 1.5ers have developed their basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS), it is often the case that they have not yet developed their cognitive academic literacy proficiency (CALP). Thus, educators at all levels of education need to become more aware of G 1.5 students’ needs and provide more suitable educational experiences for them.

Awareness of G 1.5 academic needs may not be enough to create a more equitable schooling experience. The ways students are processed through high schools today may have negative implications for their preparedness for college. In other words, the NCLB mandated assessments and curriculum focus on reading does not align well with college expectations of using writing as a mode of student learning. The types of informal writing students reported completing in high schools do not prepare them for the rigorous research and collaboration expected in the college classrooms. Even students who completed rigorous coursework in high schools complained of the challenges they had in college composition classes because in high schools, they were told how to format their essays and layout their ideas. However, in college, the expectation was for them to critically think about how to present their ideas and arguments to a particular audience in the most effective way. This discontinuity in writing expectations from high school to college created an unnecessary challenge for many G 1.5 students in this study.

The G 1.5ers in this study could be considered “successful” immigrant students because they are pursuing their goal of a college degree. Unfortunately, there is the possibility that many other G 1.5 students from public schools do not even make it to college because of various hurdles. These have less to do with writing than with understanding the structures and requirements for college entry. Perhaps there was no one outside of school who could help them with the college application and financial aid process. Although this was not brought up by any of the student participants, Professor Roger indicated that when he worked with G 1.5 high school students, many were considered to be “at-risk” of not going to college because they found the application process too confusing and course selections too frustrating. It is possible that there are

many other factors that are preventing G 1.5 students from attending college. Still, the application process has proved a hurdle and reflects a need for structural changes that should be addressed if policymakers want to see more diverse, and often first generation, college students applying to colleges in the US.

Ultimately, what is at stake in educating G 1.5 students is that some are not receiving the socially just education that Ayers, Quinn, and Stovall (2009) advocate and see as comprising of equity, activism, and social literacy. As I have already stated, some of the G 1.5 students in this study had limited and inequitable access to higher-tracked rigorous course work in high schools. Even though some students were able to actively seek help and to speak up against unfair practices in schools, most were trained in high schools to comply with school structures as they were, and were discouraged from taking more active stances in pursuing the education they wanted. Part of G 1.5 students' limited access to appropriate education resulted from teacher-driven curriculum decisions and a hidden curriculum (McLaren, 2003) that did not teach students to take active roles in their education. Normal day-to-day school practices sent the message to G 1.5ers that they do not have the judgment or the skills to be self-directed. If students are not given opportunities to be active participants in the classroom in more student-driven learning experiences, they will struggle with noticing and knowing unfair practices in schools. Perhaps, because this study was conducted in Hawaii, which has a diverse immigrant population, student participants were more aware of their own multiple cultural and historical identities that are necessary for social literacy. However, participants needed outside support from mentors to know how to best resist forms of social injustices from name-calling by peers to placement in lower-tracked classes by teachers in high schools.

Problems of inequity like these are more likely to be overlooked, it appears, in high schools today because of schools' central and often singular focus on meeting NCLB mandates. There seems to be less focus on creating a socially just educational experience for students, especially for G 1.5 students.

This case study focused on academic literacy development of Generation 1.5 Asian American students in Hawaii's public schools. Social justice education, writing to learn theories, and language socialization of ELLs were discussed in relation to the results and discussions of this study. The findings of this study illustrated that equitable access to opportunities for academic literacy development are sometimes limited for G 1.5 students. The lesson learned from this study is that even when there are no policies or institutional practices that help G 1.5 students transition into college-level discourse, at the very least, teachers can help G 1.5 students advocate for their own needs. Students who were successful in first year composition courses were those who found their voice and knew how to actively pursue and sometimes demand their needs in high schools and colleges.

## APPENDIX A

### Interview Questions for Instructors

1. In your opinion, how are good writers made? How do people acquire academic literacy?
2. Why do you think there is a large emphasis of writing intensive courses at universities?
3. What characteristics do successful writers in college courses have? What are their strengths?
4. What are some weaknesses of unsuccessful writers?
5. What can teachers do to help students become successful writers in college?
6. Do you think students from Hawaii are successful writers? Why or why not?
7. How have you addressed this issue in your classroom?
8. Why do you think ENG 100 is required in colleges?
9. Take a look at the grade 12 writing standards for HCPS III. What is your perception of these standards?
10. What are some challenges you are familiar with regarding G 1.5 AA students socializing into US communities? Into an academic environment?
11. What can you tell me about your Generation 1.5 Asian American students' academic needs on your campus?
12. What services are currently available at your school for students who need additional writing assistance outside of class?
13. What services do you think are needed to help G 1.5 AA students transition better to college-level writing?
14. What instructional/teaching strategies does your college encourage that you think helps G 1.5 AA students?
15. What instructional/teaching strategies do you employ in your classroom that helps G 1.5 AA students?

## APPENDIX B

### Interview Questions for Generation 1.5 College Students

1. What is your major?
2. What made you want to pursue a college degree?
3. Can you tell me a little bit about your cultural background?
4. Can you think of ways your parents helped you get through high school?
5. How did your friends help or hinder your schooling experience?
6. Were you ever placed into an English Language Learner class? How did you feel about this?
7. How much explicit grammar instruction did you have in high school?
8. How was writing taught in your high school?
9. What is the most memorable writing lesson you had in high school?
10. What do you currently do to help you write better in college?
11. In your opinion, how are good writers made?
12. Why do you think there is a large emphasis on writing intensive courses in college?
13. What suggestions do you have for high school teachers to help students prepare for college writing?
14. How is writing in college different from high school?
15. What are some differences between your high school English classes and college English classes?
16. What writing strategies do you use before submitting a paper to your professor?  
(What writing process do you use before writing your first draft of an essay?)
17. Why do you think ENG 100 is required?
18. What kinds of hurdles do you face as an immigrant (G 1.5) Asian American student in your schooling experience? Were there any stereotypes you faced as an immigrant in high school? In college?
19. What kinds of hurdles do you have as a writer?
20. How well do you feel your high school teachers understand your background and learning needs?
21. How well do you feel your college instructors understand your background and learning needs?

**APPENDIX C**  
**Survey Questions for College Students**

1. Are your parents immigrants?      No (Go to question 3)      Yes (Answer items in the box)

**Skip all items in number 2 if your parents are not immigrants**

2. If you answered yes to number 1, where are they from? \_\_\_\_\_

A. What language(s) other than English do your parents speak?

\_\_\_\_\_

B. How old were you when you came to the USA with your parents? \_\_\_\_\_

C. Did you attend elementary school in your parents' native country?    No                  Yes

D. Do you speak your parents' native language with them?                  No          Yes

E. Do you speak your parents' native language with others?                  No          Yes

F. Are you bilingual in English and your parents' language?                  No          Yes

G. Can you read and write in your parents' language?                  No          Yes

**Please circle only ONE answer.**

**1 = Never**  
**2 = Rarely**  
**3 = Sometimes**  
**4 = Usually**  
**5 = Always**

3. My high school prepared me for college-level writing.  
Strongly Disagree      Disagree                  Undecided                  Agree                  Strongly Agree
4. Did you take the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)?  
No                  Yes, my **WRITING** score was  
less than 450      451-500      501-550      551-600      600+
5. Which of the following English classes in college have you taken or are currently taking?  
(circle all that apply)  
ESL 100                  ELI 100                  ENG 21/ 22                  ENG 100                  ENG 200 or higher  
Other composition courses (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
6. Did you attend a private or public high school?                  Private      Public      Both
7. Did you graduate from high school in Hawaii?                  No      Yes
8. Did you take a writing course (i.e. expository writing) in high school?                  No      Yes

9. Did you take an Advanced Placement English course in high school?            No        Yes
10. Are you bilingual in English and another language?        No        Yes, I speak \_\_\_\_\_

**Please circle only ONE answer.**

- 1 = Never  
2 = Rarely  
3 = Sometimes  
4 = Usually  
5 = Always

**HIGH SCHOOL English writing experience**

- |  |       |   |   |   |   |
|--|-------|---|---|---|---|
| 11. I enjoyed writing assignments in high school.                      | 1     | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. I received grammar instruction.                                    | 1     | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. I had peer review opportunities in high school.                    | 1     | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. I had writing conferences with my English teachers.                | 1     | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. My high school had writing tutors/mentors available for me.        | 1     | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16. My high school had writing centers available for me.               | 1     | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17. We studied Asian American authors in my English classes.           | 1     | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18. I took the initiative to seek help for my writing                  | 1     | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19. What other class(es) required academic essays in your high school? | _____ |   |   |   |   |

**COLLEGE English writing experience**

- |  |       |   |   |   |   |
|--|-------|---|---|---|---|
| 20. I enjoyed writing assignments in college.                | 1     | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 21. I received grammar instruction.                          | 1     | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 22. I had peer review opportunities in college.              | 1     | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 23. I had writing conferences with my English instructors.   | 1     | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 24. My college has writing tutors/mentors available for me.  | 1     | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 25. My college has writing centers available for me.         | 1     | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 26. We studied Asian American authors in my English classes. | 1     | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27. I take the initiative to seek help for my writing        | 1     | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 28. What other class(es) require academic essays in college? | _____ |   |   |   |   |
| 29. What ethnic group(s) do you identify yourself to be?     | _____ |   |   |   |   |

## APPENDIX D

### Instructor Participant Agreement Form

#### Generation 1.5 Asian Americans' Transition to College: Challenges and Successes in Academic Literacy Development

Soo W. Park  
Primary Investigator  
xxx-xxxx

This research project is being conducted as a component of a dissertation for a doctoral degree. The purpose of this exploratory multiple case study is to determine the skills college composition instructors at two-year and four-year colleges think Generation 1.5 Asian American (G 1.5 AA) students from public schools need to obtain before entering college and to determine how instructors' perceptions of composition needs differ from G 1.5 AA college students' perception. Furthermore, this study will explore the obstacles G 1.5 AA college students encountered in composition classes in high school and college. You are being asked to participate because you are an experienced professional in the field of composition studies in the postsecondary level.

Participation in the project will consist of a short interview with the investigator. Interview questions will focus on your perceptions of successful writing and how they are developed in G 1.5 AA students. Data from the interview will be summarized into broad categories. No personal identifying information will be included with the research results. Each interview will last no longer than an hour. Approximately eight composition instructors and twenty G 1.5 AA students will be selected for interviews. Interviews will be digitally recorded for the purpose of transcription.

The quantitative part of this study includes approximately 300 college students who will be surveyed about high school and college writing experiences and socialization.

The investigator believes there is little or no risk to participate in this research project. However, there may be a small risk that you will reflect on your own practices in developing skilled writers and in assisting G 1.5 AA students.

Participating in this research may be of no direct benefit to you. However, the results from this project will be forwarded to you so you may view the similarities and differences in the perceptions of other professionals in composition studies and G 1.5 AA college students.

Research data will be confidential to the extent allowed by law. Agencies with research oversight, such as the UH Committee on Human Studies, have the authority to review research data. All research records will be stored in a locked file in the primary investigators home for the duration of the research project. Audio recordings will be destroyed immediately following transcription. All other research records will be

destroyed upon completion of the project.

Participation in this research project is completely voluntary. You are free to withdraw from participation at any time during the duration of the project with no penalty or loss of benefit to which you would otherwise be entitled.

If you have any questions regarding this research project, please contact the researcher, Soo W. Park, at xxx-xxxx, or her advisor Marilyn Taylor, EdD at 956-xxxx.

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact the UH Committee on Human Studies at (808) 956-5007.

**Participant:**

I have read and understood the above information, and agree to participate in this research project. By initialing this box, I give permission to record the interview:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (printed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

cc: Participant

## APPENDIX E

### Student Participant Agreement Form

#### Generation 1.5 Asian Americans' Transition to College: Challenges and Successes in Academic Literacy Development

Soo W. Park  
Primary Investigator  
xxx-xxxx

This research project is being conducted as a component of a dissertation for a doctoral degree. The purpose of this exploratory multiple case study is to determine the skills college composition instructors at two-year and four-year colleges think Generation 1.5 Asian American (G 1.5 AA) students from public schools need to obtain before entering college and to determine how instructors' perceptions of composition needs differ from G 1.5 AA college students' perception. Furthermore, this study will explore the obstacles G 1.5 AA college students encountered in composition classes in high school and college. You are being asked to participate because you have experienced high school and college writing instruction and are in the process of transitioning into becoming more academically literate through your current English 100 class.

Participation in the project will consist of a Likert survey that may possibly lead to a short interview with the investigator. Survey and interview questions will consist of questions related to your high school and college writing experiences. If your parents have immigrated to the USA, you may be asked questions related to your parents' culture and language. Data from the interviews will be summarized into broad categories. No personal identifying information will be included with the research results. Each interview will last no longer than an hour. Approximately eight college instructors and twenty G 1.5 AA students will be selected for interviews. With your permission, the interview will be digitally recorded for the purpose of transcription.

The survey part of this study will include approximately 300 college students who will be surveyed about high school and college writing experiences and academic literacy socialization. Data from the surveys will be summarized into broad categories.

The investigator believes there is little or no risk to participate in this research project. However, there may be a small risk that you will reflect on your experiences as a student in high school and college. You will also be reflecting on your writing experiences

Participating in this research may be of no direct benefit to you. However, the results from this project will be forwarded to you so you may view the perceptions of college writing instructors and other college students.

Research data will be confidential to the extent allowed by law. Agencies with research oversight, such as the UH Committee on Human Studies, have the authority to review

research data. All research records will be stored in a locked file in the primary investigators office for the duration of the research project. Audio tapes will be destroyed immediately following transcription. All other research records will be destroyed upon completion of the project.

Participation in this research project is completely voluntary. You are free to withdraw from participation at any time during the duration of the project with no penalty or loss of benefit to which you would otherwise be entitled.

If you have any questions regarding this research project, please contact the researcher, Soo W. Park, at xxx-xxxx, or her advisor Marilyn Taylor, EdD at 956-xxxx.

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact the UH Committee on Human Studies at (808) 956-5007.

**Participant:**

I have read and understood the above information, and agree to participate in this research project. By initialing this box, I give permission to record the interview:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (printed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Thank you very much for your time. The results of this survey will be released anonymously through my dissertation and possibly published in peer-reviewed journals. If you are willing to participate further in this study, please write your phone number and/or e-mail address below. If selected, you will be provided with a \$10 gift card to either Yogurtland or Starbucks for your participation. Participation in this study will have no effect on the grade in your current class. **Only those who have thoroughly completed and answered all questions on this survey will be selected for interviews.**

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate which gift card you would prefer by circling one of the following:

Yogurtland

Starbucks Coffee

cc: Participant

APPENDIX F<sup>2</sup>

## Hawaii Content and Performance Standards III – Writing Grade 12

Strand	Writing
Standard 4: Writing: CONVENTIONS AND SKILLS: Use the writing process and conventions of language and research to construct meaning and communicate effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences using a range of forms	
Topic	Range of Writing
Benchmark LA.12.4.1	Write in a variety of grade-appropriate formats for a variety of purposes and audiences, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• narratives or scripts with a theme and details that contribute to a mood or tone</li> <li>• poems using a range of poetic techniques and figurative language in a variety of forms</li> <li>• literary, persuasive, and personal essays that demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the topic</li> <li>• research papers that include two or more relevant perspectives and take into consideration the validity and reliability of sources</li> <li>• functional writing including college and job applications</li> <li>• reflections that draw comparisons between specific incidents and broader themes</li> </ul>
Topic	Grammar and Mechanics
Benchmark LA.12.4.2	Use knowledge of sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling to produce grade-appropriate writing in standard English
Topic	Citing Sources
Benchmark LA.12.4.3	Synthesize and cite information from multiple sources (e.g., works of art, works cited within other works, a work appearing in an anthology, an unpublished manuscript) while maintaining the flow of ideas
Topic	Citing Sources
Benchmark LA.12.4.4	Use grade-appropriate conventions for documentation in text, notes, and bibliographies
Standard 5: Writing: RHETORIC: Use rhetorical devices to craft writing appropriate to audience and purpose	
Topic	Meaning
Benchmark LA.12.5.1	Develop ideas and details in writing to enlarge the effect or scope of the piece while addressing a specific purpose and audience
Topic	Clarity
Benchmark LA.12.5.2	Use a variety of sentence structures and grade-appropriate vocabulary to achieve intended message

<sup>2</sup> Taken from <http://standardstoolkit.k12.hi.us/index.html>.

## APPENDIX G

### Student Learning Outcomes of the Hawaii State University<sup>3</sup>

At the end of English 100 or ELI 100 course, students can:

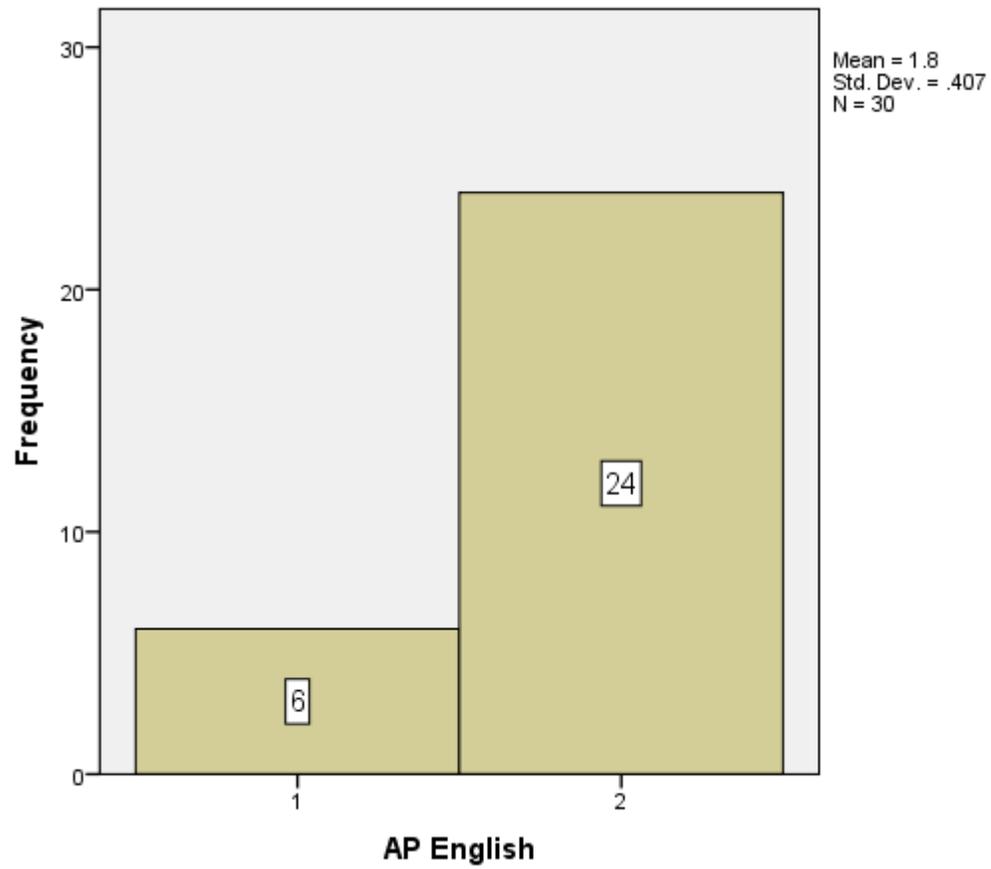
1. compose college-level writing, including but not limited to, academic discourse, that achieves a specific purpose and responds adeptly to an identifiable audience.
2. provide evidence of effective strategies for generating, revising, editing, and proofreading a text in order to produce finished prose.
3. compose an argument that makes use of source material that is relevant and credible and that is integrated in accordance with an appropriate style guide.

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<sup>3</sup> Hawaii State University is a pseudonym for the four year college in this study.

## APPENDIX H

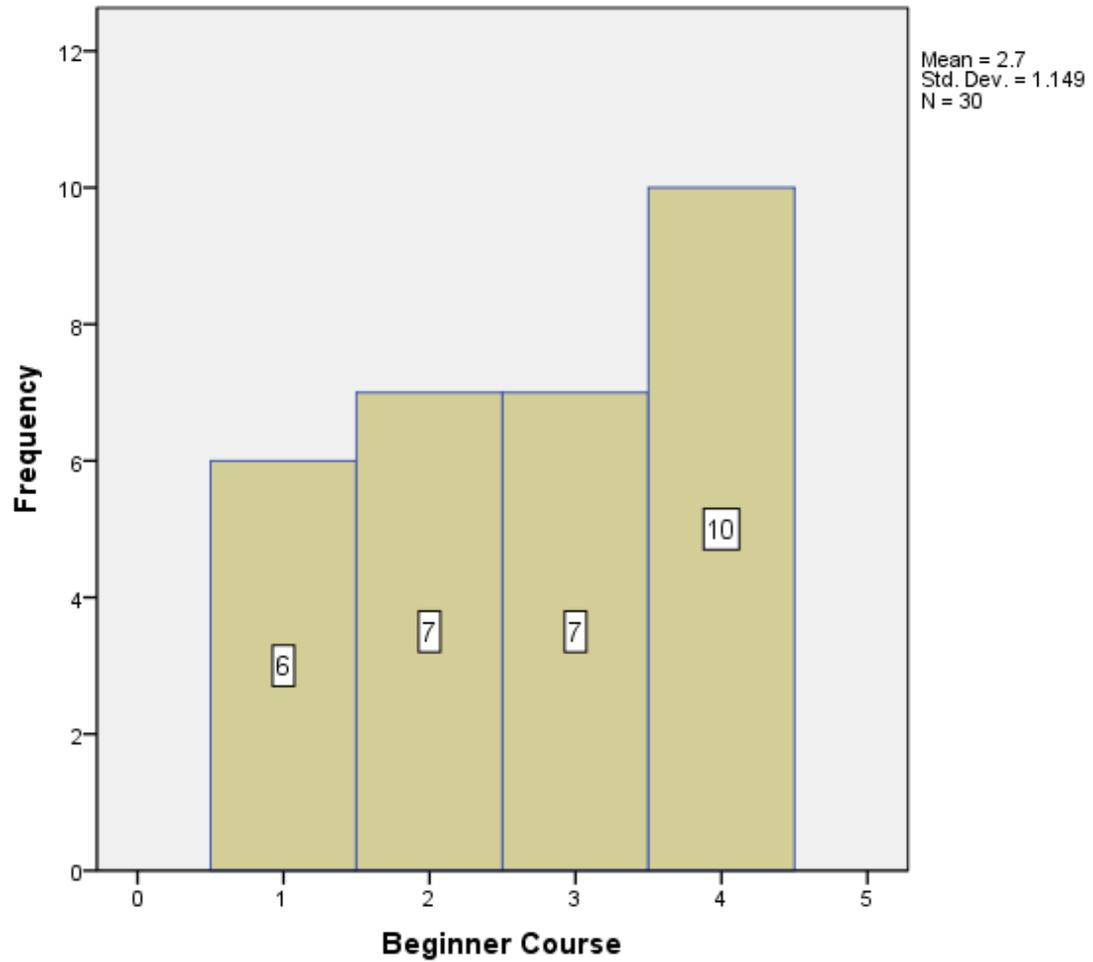
## Histogram of AP English for Generation 1.5



*Note.* 1 = Took AP English, 2 = Did not take AP English.

## APPENDIX I

Histogram of beginner coursework for Generation 1.5



*Note.* 1 = Beginner ESL, 2 = Beginner English, 3 = ELI/ESL 100, 4 = English 100. Beginner courses are pre-college level courses that do not earn credit towards a degree.

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