INTEGRATION OF COMPOSITION THEORY AND THIRD SPACE
INTO FOREIGN LANGUAGE WRITING SPACES:
EXAMINING SPACE, PLACE, AND ROLES
IN FRENCH TUTORING

A Thesis
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in
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by
Amanda Michelle Abrahams
Spring 2015
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DEDICATION

To my thesis writing group,

for producing what I’ve been trying to figure out this entire time,

a safe space for feedback and workshops.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis is for Karissa Ringel, who always held out a tissue for the many frustrating nights, for Chelsea Sliffe, who endured this pain with me, for Marty Salgado, who always made me laugh, for Jarret Krone, who was always there and reminded me of how smart I was. For my professors, Dr. Chris Fosen, who knew all along that I could do this. His constant encouragement and critical feedback was vital to the completion of this thesis. For Dr. Patricia Black, who has always supported my professional and academic growth, providing opportunities and support throughout my undergraduate and graduate education. For Dr. Kim Jaxon, who although not on my committee, always provided great feedback and empathy; her energy is truly amazing.

This thesis is for the SLC, for being such an awesome third space. For all the TIL and English graduate students who became my family, and for the multilingual struggling writers, who are constantly seeking to understand why they can’t write. For the generous French majors and students who donated their time and patience as I fumbled through this process. Without their amazing contributions, I would have never been able to conceive or finish this thesis. For Casey Lantz, one of my most inspiring students.
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ABSTRACT

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Many students feel as though they cannot learn a language in the classroom, and these feelings stem from the institutional roles that inherently accompany that space. This study seeks to use the framework of third space and distributed cognition in the context of foreign language learning to address the different kinds of ways that an outside but alongside writing studio can aid students in their language learning. I will articulate the findings based on qualitative data from student interviews, focus group meetings, and a questionnaire aimed at understanding the students’ emotional perceptions of their tutoring space. Participants in the study are drawn from an upper division French 302 class: Composition and Conversation, as well as students enrolled in a French class seeking tutoring. I use data to explore characteristics of a Perceived Emotional Space to better understand how the Student Learning Center was helping students with their
language learning and identity, and one student in particular shows interesting findings and implications for a heritage language learner. The students’ participation acted as a way to better understand their affect in a foreign language learning environment.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background

This thesis started as a response to a call I heard in my head about contrastive rhetoric. When studying abroad in Paris in the fall of 2010, I felt like writing papers and responding to literary prompts would not be difficult. After receiving my work back, I struggled to understand why I, a fluent French speaker, was not as fluent in my writing. Forever puzzled by these harsh responses and low scores on my French papers, I resumed my studies at CSU, Chico after my semester in Paris. After taking English 431 with Dr. Chris Fosen in the spring of 2012, I started thinking about writer’s voice, specifically in a second language; does it exist? Can you bring your native writer’s voice forward in a second language? This led to graduate studies and questions about contrastive rhetoric, as I was still puzzled by my French writing experience in France. The more I tried to make this thesis about contrastive rhetoric, the further from that it became. It became increasingly difficult to find ways to address this issue and much less track or test it. In examining the data, with generous help from my committee and thesis writing group, I found that what was happening was this incredible community of language learners, that were dependent on one another to create a beautiful and productive foreign language writing space that was safe enough for them to lower their affective filter.
Statement of the Problem/Significance

This thesis is significant because it integrates and addresses a gap at the intersection of a few different fields: foreign language writing, writing spaces, and heritage language learners. There have been few studies examining the space where foreign language writing happens, and this thesis aims to address the importance of the roles and space in which foreign language writing happens. Further, this thesis also addresses the significance of the role that heritage language learners can have as more capable peers in foreign language writing workshops, or group tutoring spaces. Though the scholarship on writing spaces is growing, there is little to be found on foreign language writing spaces.

The problem is that this continued model of isolated teacher standing in front of the classroom with rows of desks leads less to participation and creates overdetermined roles and expectations from students, causing anxiety and blocking of language learning. This is not to say that there is not a time for instruction and modeling, however, teacher dominated direct instruction has proved to be ineffective for writing courses, specifically in a foreign language. Also, as there is a lack of scholarship on the teaching of foreign language rhetoric in language studies, upper division students of French are nevertheless unfamiliar with French rhetoric and French writing style. This thesis sought to address the larger aspects of writing, and less on the micro-level grammatical building blocks, often used in foreign language writing classes and spaces.
Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to use the framework of third space, distributed cognition and Affective Filter to explore the different kinds of ways that foreign language writing spaces use these learning theories, while also examining how this works with heritage language learners. Since this study seeks to address multiple gaps in the research, it begins with three questions:

1. How did the elements of Distributed Cognition, Communities of Practice, and Affective Filter support or enhance the students’ French language learning and identity?

2. How are elements of Distributed Cognition, Communities of Practice, and Affective Filter present in this Perceived Emotional Space (PES)?

3. What are the implications for a Heritage Language Learner (HLL)?

In the final chapter, I will address the implications from this study for teachers and researchers, as examining the possible answers to these questions are interesting and worthwhile to explore the affordances and constraints of foreign language writing spaces.

Limitations of the Study

As with any research, there are limitations to this study. The greatest limitations of this study were the time constraints, the small number of participants, and the lack of textual analysis done with the written products from the focus group. Since this study evolved from a more complex study, with contrastive rhetoric as it’s main scope, the limitations can be found in that, the pre and post interview questions would have been more fruitful had they asked more direct questions about the writing space, the group, and the distributed cognition in the SLC.
Lastly, the study is limited in that it does not answer the overarching question of did it work? The lack of textual analysis would have answered this question and provided critical insight into possible revision of a foreign language writing curriculum.

Definition of Terms

This study uses many different abbreviations and terms that have different meanings. Most of the terms come from scholarship in English composition studies as well as second language acquisition research.

Affective Filter Hypothesis

Stephen Krashen’s theory about how languages are learned, stating that if the filter is high, it becomes difficult to learn a language. The three main factors influencing the filter are stress, motivation, and self consciousness.

Community of Practice (CoP)

Communities of Practice are groups of people sharing a passion for something that gain a better understanding of that passion through their regular interactions. Lave and Wenger coined the term in 1991 in their seminal work, Situated Learning.

Discourse

A term used by James Gee, defined as the “ways of being in the world; they are forms of life which integrate words, acts, values, beliefs, attitudes, and social identities” (1989, p. 529). James Gee refers to only two versions of this, dominant and non dominant Discourse.

Distributed Cognition

The study or theory that cognition is distributed and does not reside solely in the mind.
Heritage Language

A language that was spoken/used in the home but that is not the dominant language of the speaker’s community, life, world outside the home.

Ideational Resources

A term used by Nasir and Cooks to “refer to the ideas about oneself and one’s relationship to and place in the practice and the world, as well as ideas about what is valued or good” (2009, p. 7).

L1

A person’s first language that they acquired, and able to speak in and understand.

L2

Referring to a person’s second language, usually one they are learning or immersed in. This term has progressed to involve and represent other languages that are being studied.

Legitimate Peripheral Participation (LPP)

First coined by Lave and Wenger, this term represents the “engagement in social practice that entails learning as an integral constituent” (1991, p.35 )

Literacy

In the context of this study, I will be using James Gee’s definition, “the mastery of or fluent control over a secondary Discourse” (1989, p. 529).

Mushfake

James Gee’s term from "Literacy, Discourse, and Linguistics: Introduction and What is Literacy?”. “Mushfake Discourse’ means partial acquisition coupled with meta-knowledge and
strategies to ‘make do’” (1989, p. 533). Gee quoting Mack: to “do with something less when the real thing is not available” (1989, p. 533).

Relational Resources

Another term used by Nasir and Cooks as the “interpersonal connections to others in the setting” (2009, p. 44).

Progression of the Thesis

The first chapter has given the context for the study and explained its purpose. Chapter two situates the historical context and the different theories that influenced this study. It serves as a survey of literature that makes a case for using socio-spatial theory as well as learning and composition theories as a lens for this study. Chapter three explains the design of the study, gives further details about the focus and follow up group populations, as well as describes the collection and analysis process for the data. Chapter four, the findings chapter, has two main parts that address the three research questions designated above. I used the data to illustrate how this study adds to the previous research on foreign language writing and writing spaces, and the impact of this research on heritage language learners. The final chapter, chapter five, summarizes the study and leaves the reader with some possibilities for using studio writing spaces as third spaces for foreign and heritage language learners.
CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The foundational work that has influenced this thesis ranges from theories in language learning, composition studies, distributed cognition, socio-spatial theory, and learning theories. This review provides a specific window of the literature specific to foreign language writing, writing spaces, and heritage language learners. The majority of the research in second language composition has been done with a lens of English as a Second Language (ESL) studies, to a lesser extent considering a different language as that second language, or a heritage language. I will reference ESL and L2 writing interchangeably as both terms are effective and representative of the specific needs of language learners, especially in the context of second or foreign language writing studies.

This review will first address the research on second language writing studies and its place in composition studies. Then, I will set up a conceptual grounding of the theories of space. I will then cover the theories of emotions, examining Krashen’s Affective Filter Hypothesis and the role that desire and motivation play in language learning. After situating socio-spatial theories and the role of affect, I will move into more abstract learning theories of distributed cognition and different theories of literacy. This review will then review relevant second language writing workshops studies as well as the current issues in second-language writing spaces. Finally, I will cover what is left to be determined or asked from future research.
Theories of Learning

Many scholars (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Salomon, 1993; Vygotsky, 1978) argue that it is in the process of creation where we learn, making it worthwhile to examine what happens during the process to understand how students reach their “final” draft. The product is usually far less interesting and informative for students and writing instructors than the writing process itself, as it is indicative of greater issues to investigate.

Distributed Cognition

Distributed cognition is the learning theory that learning does not happen solely in the mind, but is influenced by other factors, and most notably provides an extension and distribution of human cognition, an offloading onto the surround. Salomon’s anthology (1993) lays the groundwork for an understanding of distributed cognition, specifically in education and learning theory. Distributed cognition defines and helps us understand learning spaces. We can assume that there is a codependency between tools and members in a space to reach a particular goal or function, therefore, we should seek to understand the learning space and its constituents because doing so would provide more clarity on our learning and teaching.

When discussing space and the factors - players and institutions - involved, it is important to consider Lev Vygotsky (1978) as he provided the foundation for how our learning spaces and those around us can affect our learning in his pioneering work, Mind in Society. Vygotsky explains his theory of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) as “the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (1978, p. 86, emphasis added). In collaboration with
members of similar interest, we can understand how there exists a codependency and a mutually beneficial relationship as all participants are benefitting from the exchanges. In the context of learning, it is important to understand that Vygotsky’s (1978) concept of tools, including language, play, meaning making through your environment, can be seen as a resource that one can use to further themselves intellectually. Vygotsky (1978) explains that these tools serve as affordances to push our limits to obtain larger forms of growth. Like the function of a more capable peer in the ZPD, tools can help us understand concepts or extend our understanding. Vygotsky’s (1978) explanation and application of tools in learning spaces confirms that learning is not solely in the mind, but that learning occurs in the process of using the tools.

Distributed intelligence is the knowledge that is socially constructed through collaborative efforts towards a shared objective (Pea, 1993, p. 48). The social construction of knowledge can also be brought about by differences in perspectives through conversations, group discussions, or other interactions. Pea suggests that, “teaching [ought to be] for the design of distributed intelligence” (1993, p. 81) because really, it is unlikely that we will be completely alone in any sort of learning capacity. Reinforcing Vygotsky’s (1978) ZPD, Perkins’ (1993) person-plus hypothesis is the idea that we should reconsider our own understanding of the world to extend beyond the person, and include our environment and animate, or inanimate objects in our proximity. Perkins provides the person-plus to address what one cannot achieve in the person-solo. Perkins (1993) argues that to reach this understanding, we must let go of the idea that cognition is solely in the mind. Prior to his argument, the study of language and learning was more prescriptive, and followed the model that one learned a language as a set of independent skills that neatly built on one another. Perkins’ (1993) argument can help us
understand that language learning, like all learning, is vastly distributed, and dependent on other
factors.

Within the learning process, there are bound to be multiple intersections between the
student’s knowledge and the new input she is receiving. There may be connections, or
similarities to something the student may already know. Hutchins’ (2010) builds on this notion
by introducing the phenomenal object of interest. The phenomenal object of interest is the
intersection between students’ native language and foreign language systems. By creating
connections to their reality, students can learn in a real way for a real purpose and build on what
they already know. Hutchins states that the world consists of a system of enacted understandings
when students are given enough time to work on and produce what they study, they are
“unhindered by the immediate need for a definitive solution to the problem” (Fuhrer, 1993, as
cited in Rodby and Fox, 2000, p. 94). Rodby and Fox argue that it is in these moments of work,
uninhibited by assessment where students can learn. The value lies in the process, and the
students are unhindered, given time and freedom to further explore their ideas.

In addition to lowering some barriers that may hinder student learning by making
them uncomfortable, McDermott (1996) argues that having enough time is an important facet of
being able to learn something, and this points to the evidence against the effectiveness of the in-
class writing assignment. He states, “it is in terms of these relations that information necessary
to everyone’s participation gets made available in ways that give people enough time on task to
get good at what they do. If that happens enough, it can be said that learning happens”
(McDermott, 1996, p. 277). Having enough time is important because so much of what students
produce is so "unreal", the students have no legitimate impetus or opportunity to "enact" as
Hutchins (2010) would say. This theoretical foundation and appreciation of the environment and tools as vital to language learning is deeply tied to the more practical examples that we learn about when discussing the following learning theories from Lave and Wenger.

**Situated Learning**

In her earlier work, *Cognition in Practice*, Jean Lave (1988) expands the notion that we learn in the context in which the need for that knowledge arises. Related to distributed cognition in that without the need for something, there would be no learning. She argues that knowledge is particular and dependent on a situation and site, focusing on how people learn in the moment. She expands the prior argument that schooling was formulated in one of two ways: formal or informal education, and that “apprenticeship was assumed to exemplify concrete, situation-specific learning” (Lave, 1988, p. xiii). She calls our attention to the space in which the learning happens and like Pea (1993), Perkins (1993), and Vygotsky (1978), argues that “cognition’ observed in everyday practice is distributed-stretched over, not divided among-mind, body, activity, and culturally organized settings (which include other actors)” (Lave, 1988, p. 1). This understanding of distributed cognition can help us understand Lave’s argument that we cannot expect students to have “out of context” success when their experiences with the materials are heavily dependent on context.

In their seminal work, *Situated Learning*, Lave and Wenger (1991) discuss how people learn in the real world. They argue that, “learning is a process that takes place in a participation framework, not in an individual mind” and that the learning is “mediated by differences of perspective among the coparticipants” (1991, p. 15). Through continuous interactions, the distribution and reinforcement of knowledge becomes more frequent among
participants as the “development of human knowing through participation” is the impetus for learning (Lave and Wenger, 1991, p. 50). Lave and Wenger’s (1991) principal argument is that schooling needs rethinking and redesigning because schools focus on teaching, but teaching does not cause learning, participation causes learning.

Communities play a large role in participation, as each community has designated roles and degrees of participation. According to Lave and Wenger (1991), there can be different degrees of participation: Legitimate Peripheral Participation (LPP) and full participation. For an act to be LPP, it must involve “engagement in social practice that entails learning as an integral constituent” (Lave and Wenger, 1991, p. 35). Within those degrees of participation, there are different roles: oldtimers, experts, and newcomers, novices. The oldtimers, or experts, have participated for a significant amount of time, enough time to have a deeper understanding of the community and its layers (Lave and Wenger, 1991). Newcomers, have just arrived to a new community and might be observing, dipping their toes and trying to make sense of this new community. The participation of both oldtimers and newcomers varies but ideally, a member of a community wishes to engage in LPP, with learning as their principal goal. The process in which a participant moves from newcomer to oldtimer involves opportunities for learning, and identity reconstruction. A participant must identify with this group and engage in the practices of this group. In so doing, they can become mentors to newer participants and engage in the practices of that community.

To better understand these newcomer-oldtimer relationships, Lave and Wenger (1991) present various case studies where learning happens. As learning calls for the reconstruction of identity, Lave and Wenger’s (1991) most pertinent example describes the Alcoholics Anonymous
A.A. gives a practical example of identity construction, as “the main business of A. A. is the reconstruction of identity, through the process of constructing personal life stories, and with them, the meaning of the teller’s past and future actions in the world” (1991, p. 80).

This practical example also helps us understand that “learning takes place through interaction”, interaction at AA being storytelling (Lave and Wenger, 1991, p. 83). This case study reinforces that for learning to happen, there must be change and there needs to be a corresponding element to create that change. It can be a tool or another person acting as a mentor, old timers assisting participants from peripheral participant to full participant. These tools can help us expand our own capabilities, reaching that higher level of growth, helping us learn and bringing us closer to full participation in a COP.

Theories of Space

Having situated L2 writing, we can move forward with this grasp of how L2 and foreign language writing instruction has come to be. This section of the Literature Review will move past the history of L2 writing and examine writing places, because places are constructed by practices (Reynolds, 2007). Traditionally, our understanding of learning spaces has been dominated by the institutions in which the “learning” occurs. Works from Dewey (1900), Reynolds (2005) and Grego and Thompson (2008), help us shift our views towards a more progressive space that challenges the overdetermined norms of learning spaces. Reynolds focuses on the nuances of place, where the work of Lefebvre and later Soja, push forward the importance of space and what the implications are for social interaction.
Defining Space as a Means to Define Spatial Practice

Work in disciplines varying from sociology, cultural geography, education, philosophy, feminism and postmodern applications of concepts in these disciplines, have significantly contributed to our understanding of space and it’s relationship to language and learning (Effinger-Wilson and Fitzgerald, 2012; Grego and Thompson, 2008; Gutiérrez, Baquedano-López, and Tejeda, 1999; Massey, 2005; Reynolds, 2007; Rodby and Fox, 2000).

In defining place, is it useful to consider the intersections of conception, intention, and use of a place. Nedra Reynolds’ Geographies of Writing, states that:

... places, whether textual, material, or imaginary, are constructed and reproduced not simply by boundaries but also by practices, structures of feeling, and sedimented features of habitus. Theories of writing, communication, and literacy, this book argues, should reflect this deeper understanding of place .... places evoke powerful human emotions because they become layered...with histories and stories and memories. (2007, p. 2)

Reynolds works with concepts such as mental mapping, streetwork, and third space to apply a different understanding and “re-imagine the acts of writing through spatial practices of the everyday” (2007, p. 3).

The notion that theorizes space as a social construction comes from LeFebvre’s work with the “science of space”. Henri Lefebvre, French philosopher and sociologist, provided the foundational framework for thinking about these ideas and concepts in terms of human behavior in different spaces. His conceptual triad states that space is used, produced and reproduced in three ways; it is perceived (spatial practice), conceived (representations of space), and lived (representational space) (Reynolds, 30). I will be looking at the first of his conceptual triad, Spatial Practice, to better understand the social relations that happen within a particular space.
Socio-Spatial Relations

The spatial practice is as the “perceived space, which ‘embraces...the particular locations and spatial sets characteristic of each social formation’ (Reynolds, 2007, p. 15). Building on LeFebvre’s work, critical geographer, Edward Soja argues that space and the social formations within that space are not caused by one another, but rather, are in a dialogic relationship. In other words, space acts as both the facilitator and the receiver of the social interactions, and vice versa. Soja states, “it is necessary to begin by making as clear as possible the distinction between space per se, or contextual space, and socially based spatiality, the created space of social organization and production” (1980, p. 209). Also, “space itself may be primordially given, but the organization, use, and meaning of space is a product of social translation, transformation and experience” (1980, p. 210). Soja helps us understand that by looking at the interactions within a space, we can better understand the space and how it in turn influences the activity within that space.

Reynolds argues that “ spatial practices...evolve from movements or placements that we take for granted, or boundaries that seem clear or uncontested, and they develop into the habitual ways we move through the world” (2007, p. 14). Soja cites Lefebvre, explaining that “space has been shaped and molded from historical and natural elements” but bears in mind that “this has been a political process” (1980, p. 210), placing responsibility for these roles on a larger, institutional participant. Soja and Reynolds argue that the roles participants assume within a space must be questioned, as should the apparent boundaries that the participants put in place.
An understanding of third space would require an introduction to the first two.

Edward Soja argues that a space has three dimensions or intersecting planes that influence or determine the actions within that space (Brooke et al., 2005; Reynolds, 2007). Soja’s definition of first space is the “‘real’ social institutions such as the office, the home, the bowling alley, or the sports arena...[where] social interaction is highly scripted and constrained” (Brooke et al., 2005, p. 368). Soja’s second space is the planned space, the intended activities for that space, an imagined, ideal application or view of first space (Brooke et al., 2005). It “determines the way schools are organized in first space” (Brooke et al., 2005, p. 368). Third space, by means of a social agenda, “comes into being through the productive tension between ‘real’ [first] and ‘imagined’[second] space” (Brooke et al., 2005, p. 368). It is the intersection—although this metaphor is complicated because it implies a physical, neat crossing—where the conceived and the perceived are met with resistance and passion.

Third space is born because “first space and second space are endlessly in partial conflict” (Brooke et al., 2005, p. 368), and because “social ‘reality’ is always more complicated than imagination suggests” (Brooke et al., 2005, p. 368), calling for a manifestation of that conflict. For Soja, “thirdspace exists explicitly in the ‘between’ of real and imagined spaces” (Brooke et al., 2005, p. 369). Thirdspace is “real-and-imagined.... a space of resistance and engagement, of motivated and creative alternatives to the current social order” (Brooke et al., 2005, p. 369).

A third space can come to be with looser second space goals. Brooke et al.’s (2005) article, “Finding a Space for Professional Development: Creating third space through after-
school writing groups” describes an example of how a third space within education came to be. The absence of a second space curriculum in their after-school writing circles, paired with the unplanned nature of that space allowed for the fruition of a third space. Furthermore, because the students were not earning a grade or needing to complete an assignment, it was largely student created. The space, although it was the same physical space as their usual classroom, was different because it had different goals from the “secondspace prescribed curriculum because the writing in [that] space is chosen and developed by the [participants] themselves” (Brooke et al., 2005, p. 370). In the context of school, for an authentic third space to work in the same physical space, Brooke et al. argue that intrinsic motivation is a defining characteristic of third space. They argue that to pursue something vastly different, there needs to exist “moments of passion and resistance” (Brook et al., 2005, p. 377). These moments of passion and resistance are what allows the participants to enter the third space (Brooke et al., 2005).

In addition to the passion and resistance that Brooke et al. argue is necessary to enter the third space, Effinger-Wilson and Fitzgerald argue that empathy is also a determining factor in participants entering the third space, in the context of a writing center. Using the language of third space theory, they argue that a writing center should be a “metacognitive, flexible thirdspace-a part of the university but also apart from it...by replacing the top-down, unidirectional communication chain with an interactive, empathetic conversation that include[s] faculty members”, explaining that in applying such changes to the traditional writing center, they “began to chisel at heteronormative and ethnocentric biases” (Effinger-Wilson and Fitzgerald, 2012 p. 11, emphasis added). By creating an environment where empathetic conversations are
possible, students feel more comfortable and safer sharing their ideas and writing (Effinger, Wilson and Fitzgerald, 2012).

Theories of Emotion

This section of the literature review will discuss these specific theories of emotion and the ways in which emotion affects language learning. Emotions are an undervalued and descriptive trait of a language learning space. The Affective Filter Hypothesis put forth by Krashen, the role that motivation plays in language learning, and informed by what we know about distributed cognition and spatial theory, the ways in which our desires are socially constructed. Emotions, in addition to the tools and their surrounding space, become involved in this dialogic relationship of language learning spaces.

Affective Filter Hypothesis

After discussing spaces for language learning, we should look at possible explanations of how the participants are receiving or interpreting the language as language learners. Stephen Krashen states there are five theories of Second Language Acquisition (SLA), those being acquisition-learning distinction, natural order hypothesis, monitor hypothesis, input hypothesis and Affective Filter hypothesis.

I will be examining Krashen’s fifth and last hypothesis, the Affective Filter Hypothesis, which explains “how affective variables relate to success in second language acquisition” (Krashen, 1982, p. 30). The Affective Filter Hypothesis focuses on affect, or emotions, as the dominant variable in language acquisition, where Krashen’s other four hypotheses are specific to different moments in language acquisition. Krashen explains that
most of the affective variables studied by Dulay and Burt (1977) can be categorized into one of these three categories: motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety. Students with high motivation, self-confidence, and low anxiety have a higher tendency for success in second language acquisition.

According to Krashen, the “affective filter hypothesis captures the relationship between affective variables and the process of second language acquisition by positing that acquirers vary with respect to the strength of level of their Affective Filters” (1982, p. 30). He states that a student’s emotional state is directly related to the input she is able to receive. See Figure 1 below for Krashen’s diagram, demonstrating how the Affective Filter prevents input from reaching the language acquisition device.

![Figure 1. Krashen's representation of the “Affective Filter” (1982, p. 31).](image)

Krashen’s hypothesis posits that if a student does not have an optimal attitude, “the input will not reach the part of the brain responsible for language acquisition” (1982, p. 30) versus a student who possesses the optimal attitudinal factors “will not only seek and obtain more input, they will also have a lower or weaker filter. They will be more open to the input, and it will strike “deeper”” (1982, p. 30). The Affective Filter is necessary to better understand the language
learner, their environment, and what changes can be made to improve optimal attitudes for learning.

**Motivation and Self-Confidence as Necessary Tools**

Motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety are all determining features in language learning. Students’ goals may be representative of their motivation levels, as “good language pedagogy recognizes the need for the student to be personally motivated and to achieve increased ability to speak the language” (Respaut, 1986, p. 682). Looking at self confidence, Laine (1987) grants a foundational theoretical framework for affective factors in foreign language learning and teaching. She focuses on the filters that contribute or control the language acquisition. Laine states, “self-esteem is a personal judgment of worthiness that is expressed in the attitudes the individual holds toward himself” (1987, p. 16) furthermore “the real/actual/cognized self represents a person’s notions, beliefs, and cognitions of what he really is like” (1987, p. 17). Self structure is also important when looking internally into the factors that affect learning, “threats to the self structure, the basic ‘anchorage point’ of personality, cause anxiety, even ‘disruption of/a person’s/physiological functioning’” (1987, p. 20). Laine defines inhibitions at the general academic level as “nervousness, fear of making a fool of oneself in the school setting...communication apprehension seems a central component here” (1987, p. 42), as this can be a debilitating factor for a students’ academic success. Should nervousness be present in the classroom, it is likely that student learning will suffer. Anxiety has also proven to have a detrimental effect on a learners’ “willingness to communicate” (Lightbrown and Spada, 2006, p. 62).
As writing is a very personal act, students may feel debilitated if they are unable to perform as they would like. Anxiety can act as writer’s block if the student feels unsafe or unsure of themselves and their writing. Many times, grades can contribute to students’ feelings of self worth, or assessment of their capabilities. As Inoue stated in an article promoting a grade-less writing class, focused on labor, “using grades based on judgements of quality...usually devalues the students’ labor, and therefore devalues students’ writing as an experience” (Inoue, 2014, p. 80). In a study with multilingual learners, Melinda Martin-Beltran (2013) works to identify the best practices for reducing anxiety among language learners. She found that students were less embarrassed and able to perform or produce a task because they felt that their peers were also learning a language, “I don’t feel as embarrassed because we’re all learning” (2013, p. 159). The sense of equality among peers created a level playing field, and created an even learning space for the students.

**Socially Constructed Desires**

When considering emotion in the learning space, we should question what role our desires hold, specifically, “how does your desire for a particular situation shape both your interpretation and use of resources for activity?” (Pea, 1993, p. 54). Desire plays a large role in the interactions as it needs to precede the interactions. Without desire, there is no interaction. Your desire, your wanting to find yourself in a particular situation, should move you in a direction closer to attaining that. The movement you choose to reach this can be shaped by prior influences. In an explicit manner, Pea explains that "[desires] do not simply act in habitual, static ways. The meaning of resources available are shaped by the desires" (1993, p. 55). It is these desires that then shape the acts we choose to make. However, Pea argues that there is an
executive function in learning. The executive function is the decision to make a move, a learner’s decision to do something.

Literacy and Identity

While looking at the writing process can help us understand how students are learning and can give instructors accessibility to help the student “at the time of need”, it is also important to understand that learning is a social act. Vygotsky (1978), and other scholars working with learning theories (Bandura, 1977; Chomsky, 1975; Kucer, 2009; Lave and Wenger, 1991) argue that learning is social, as our “minds are embedded within society” (Kucer, 2009, p. 218). The process is indicative of where students may need further assistance, but by placing students in groups, they learn from each other. As indicated by Perkins’ (1993) person-plus and Vygotsky’ (1978) ZPD, peers function to help students reach a higher level of understanding.

Discourse as Displays of Identity

With the understanding that learning is a social act, it is important to look at the social groups that we are a part of. By understanding more about the social groups and where participants fit in those groups, we can better understand participant learning. Our identities as learners are partly shaped by our discourse and literacy practices. According to Gee, “Discourses are connected with displays of identity” (1989, p. 529), they differ from languages in the fact that you can speak English or French, but not fluently. In Discourse, there are no levels of fluency. Discourses, being indicative of identity, cannot only be partially represented and cannot fossilize in the ways that languages do. Gee explains that “Failing to fully display an identity is tantamount to announcing you don’t have that identity, that at best, you’re a pretender or a
beginner” (1989, p. 529). Discourse is the language, “we first use to make sense of the world and interact with others. [It] constitutes our original and home based sense of identity” (Gee, 1989, p. 527). James Gee argues that, “often dominant groups in society apply ‘tests’ of fluency of the dominant Discourses in which their power is symbolized” (1989, p. 529). These tests have two functions, 1) they help identify who is a “native” or “fluent user” of the Discourse, and 2) they function as gates to exclude non-native.

In addition to these displays of identity, there exists a tool to use when one does not have full access to a discourse. Gee introduces ‘Mushfake Discourse’, the “partial acquisition coupled with meta-knowledge and strategies to ‘make do’” (1989, p. 533). To “mushfake”, a term borrowed from Mack (in press) coming from prison culture, is to make “do with something less when the real thing is not available” (1989, p. 533). An understanding of these Discourses provides an understanding of what it means to be a member in a CoP. It allows for a deeper understanding of the linguistic and social backgrounds students bring with them when they enter a learning space.

Identity Trajectories and Resources

Identity theories in sociology focus on the perspective that identity “develops in relation to key social circumstances, including social roles, cultural institutions, social structure, and everyday interactions with others” (Nasir and Cooks, 2009, p. 42). Sociology informs the ways we perceive social groups and the implications for learning and identity formation. Informed by these theories, Nasir and Cooks (2009) draw on Cote and Levine’s (2002) notion of identity resources. They focus on three types of resources to build identities: material (“physical artifacts in a setting”), relational (“interpersonal connections to others in the setting”), and
ideational resources (“ideas about oneself...what is valued and what is good”) (Nasir and Cooks, 2009, p. 44). These three types of resources are informative as they shape a holistic view of the setting in where students are learning and forming identities.

Wenger (1998) conceptualizes “learning as an aspect of identity and identity as a result of learning” (Nasir and Cooks, 2009, p. 41). Nasir and Cooks build on Wenger’s (1998) theory, to “consider the ways that identities of practice participants are made available in learning settings and the relation between learning and identity in cultural practices” (2009, p. 42). In addition to identity resources, Nasir and Cooks discuss Wenger’s (1998) identity trajectories. The most salient trajectories to their work are the inbound or peripheral learning and identity trajectories (2009, p. 42). Nasir and Cooks (2009) state that an inbound identity trajectory indicates an individual who is penetrating from the peripheral zone or practices, deeper into the CoP. Nasir and Cooks state that identity “has been conceptualized as an aspect of social and cultural practice” (2009, p. 41) and is gained through increased participation. They argue that it is in these opportunities for participation where participant identities can be reified.

Participation involves identities, communities, and relationships. Identity, as defined by Nasir and Cooks (2009), is the conceptualization of the social and cultural practices in which one engages. Nasir and Cooks argue that “identity is constructed as individuals both act with agency in authoring themselves and are acted upon by social others as they are positioned” (2009, p. 41). Two possible contributing factors to a person’s identity is the way in which they choose to act and the ways in which their environment shapes them. Wenger argues that identity is a result of learning, which is a result of participation. Participant identities are important because when members perceive their identities to be related or tied to a community in
which they participate, there is more personal investment and therefore, a sense of value is placed on participant action (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Rodby and Fox, 2000).

Situating Second Language Composition
Paul Kei Matsuda, a leader in second-language writing research, provides a comprehensive history of second-language writing by situating its historical context. Because this is a relatively new field, researchers have assumed the responsibility to build and contribute to a developing pedagogical knowledge in an effort to advance the field (Matsuda, 2003, p. 20). Informed by relevant disciplines and developed from an interdisciplinary perspective, second-language writing stemmed as a result from an inability to address the specific issues that arose in writing classrooms with L2 and ELL students (Matsuda, 2003, p. 20). Matsuda provides an explanation as to why writing has not received as much attention as it merits in language learning spaces. Matsuda (2003) explains, “writing was neglected in the early years of second-language studies possibly because of the dominance of the audiolingual approach in the mid-twentieth century” (p. 21). Unfortunately, the role of writing in a foreign language classroom was, and at many times still is, bundled with other practices and activities and ends up with a subordinate role as it is considered “an adjunct to a more ‘worthy’ goal, mastering grammar” (Greenia, 1992, p. 30).

There has been a historical neglect for second-language writing as it has been overshadowed by other second-language skills, predominantly speaking. This preference for speaking comes from notable European phoneticians from early applied linguistics, Henry Sweet and Paul Passy, arguing that “phonetics should be the basis of both theoretical and practical
studies of language...the spoken form of language should take precedence over the written form” (Matsuda, 2003, p. 21). This neglect of writing stems from the belief that “writing was defined merely as an orthographic representation of speech and because letter writing was considered to be the highest literacy need for most people” (Matsuda, 2003, p. 21).

Despite the large strides that second-language writing has made in education, there is still a need for more professional development. Matsuda, among others, classify this need for resources as “further aggravating the situation [in the] the lack of professional preparation opportunities in the teaching of L2 writing” (2003, p. 27). Cumming calls for research that stretches our understanding of learning, to look “beyond the text and individual composing, to social contexts...to analyze the range of classroom situation and variables that may foster learning to write in a second language” (Cumming, 2001, p. 9). Situated interactions whether they be one-on-one tutoring, written interactions between teacher and student, or in-person interactions with student-teacher conferences, when strategically executed can stimulate different areas of the student’s language production.

Writing Outside the Classroom

This section of the literature review is dedicated to providing a better understanding of the current research trends in writing outside the classroom. I will look at the research in two specific domains: co-curricular writing and foreign language writing tutoring. Co-curricular writing research is predominantly understood through the realm of first year composition, where foreign language writing tutoring is expanding to provide a window into what role French as a foreign language holds in these conversations. Although an ideal understanding would provide
extensive research on co-curricular French writing spaces and workshops, there is limited research on this subject matter.

Co-Curricular Writing

To examine the first domain, co-curricular writing, the influential work put forth by the University of South Carolina worked with graduate students to explore the studio approach to writing. Grego and Thompson emphasize that “any explanation of how to teach must also be a thorough exploration of where- of the geographical complexities that constitute the materiality and the conceptual elements of place” (Mauk, 2003, p. 374-75, as cited in Grego and Thompson, 2008, p. 19). Exploring the where points to the significance in seeking to understand writing spaces, while also demonstrating the many different gains that can happen when the writing is moved outside of the classroom.

The studio approach to writing employs similar design concepts from art studios: users are free to come and go and seek the expertise of a more experienced peer to help work on their craft. The values of a smaller workspace, in particular the lesser amount of participants, and a different space have been borrowed and applied to writing spaces in their Grego and Thompson’s book, *Teaching/Writing in Threethirdspaces: The Studio Approach*. Grego and Thompson’s studio model aims to “promote an analysis and greater awareness of the institutional power relations and influences thereof on student writing and assignments within particular institutional sites” (Grego and Thompson, 2008, p. 20). By being removed enough from the course, the students are able to take ownership of the assignments and of their writing (Grego and Thompson, 2008). As they stated, so succinctly:

We believe that Studio programs, operating *outside but alongside* student writers’ participation in other college courses and making use of interactional inquiry
methodology, take rhetorical advantage of the tension created by just that gap between internally and externally focused pentadic analyses (a tension and gap felt by both students and teachers of writing). (Grego and Thompson, 2008, p. 65, emphasis added)

The power relations within traditional institutions of higher education have been historically dominated by a specific elite group of people, and Grego and Thompson (2008) argue that those in power of a space should aim to surrender or give back some of the control to the participants. Their work aims to debunk and unpack the space in which writing happens, by providing a model in which students can enter an authentic, safe space to address their concerns and confusion about writing and/or writing assignments. Because the writing is happening on campus, with a trusted facilitator, it is given legitimacy. Rodby and Fox explain that the “combination of legitimacy and separation provides the students with a space and time to take on different roles from the ones they play in the larger classroom” (2000, p. 96), giving them freedom to express themselves but also giving their concerns legitimacy and worth. The writing studios “help us realize and negotiate the intersections of (sometimes collisions between) writing assignments and the institutional contexts for that work” (Grego and Thompson, 2008, p. 24).

Rodby and Fox (2000) argue that by providing a space in which students can experience feelings of legitimacy and worth, they can build a productive writing space. The work of a particular space is determined by the efforts put forward by its participants (Rodby and Fox, 2000), challenging the earlier ideas about what is needed in a learning space.

**Foreign Language Writing Tutoring**

Despite the lack of research on foreign language writing workshops, this is even more true of the research on French writing workshops. To better understand the ways that a third space can exist in a foreign language writing environment, this section of the literature review
will discuss studies covering foreign language writing groups facilitated by a tutor, the ways in which writing tutors can help students make better sense of the language, and how a university writing center can transform into a Multicultural Writing Center, fostering language learning opportunities for all language learners.

To better support the needs of their second language writers, the University of Illinois built writing groups for their language learners. In their study, Morley, Bannon, and Kang (2012) worked with undergraduate and graduate second language writers to support their international student population in adapting to the linguistic and rhetorical expectations from their American university. They worked on the premise that “writing is a social practice strengthened by guidance and support, as well as our commitment to encouraging and assisting students in their transition to American academic writing” (2012, p. 17). Morley et al.’s study is notable because they held recurring writing groups in the students’ first language to facilitate the metacognitive aspects of writing, as “talking about writing in their own language allowed the writers to think more fluently about writing in English in the American academic setting. It also helped create a safe zone for the students to share their concerns and anxieties surrounding the writing itself” (2012, p. 18). Although this study worked with English as the target language, the practices can conceivably apply to any language being learned.

In addition to talking in the native language about the writing to create a safe zone for nonnative writers, “talking builds linguistic competence....In writing centers, the dialogue may not only help learners to become better writers, but may facilitate language learning as well” (Williams, 2002, p. 84). Writing centers act as a space to help the students work their way through the cognitive heavy work that may not present itself as easily in the classroom. Further,
“Research on second language writers within a sociocultural framework demonstrates that novice second language writers, working collaboratively within their zone of proximal development, can move beyond their current level of competence by jointly constructing new knowledge in collaboration with peers” (Williams, 2002, p. 84). The ZPD in a second language writing center acts as the language learning tool that Vygotsky was referring to with his concept of more capable peers.

Transforming the writing center into a fruitful grounds for collaboration, the deep learning results as a product of the conversations. Students in Williams’ study found that negotiation played a significant role in the writing center, and supports this evidence in that, “Numerous second language acquisition studies have found that it is not simply the outcome of negotiation, that is, modified and presumably more comprehensible input, but the actual participation in the negotiation, that facilitates acquisition” (2002, p. 82). Williams’ study is one of many that demonstrates how learning is acquired through participation.

What’s more, Williams uses the term negotiation to refer to the types of work that happens in a writing center, where the student is not making verbatim changes to their draft, but rather, negotiating the changes through meaningful conversations with their writing tutor or group. Williams found that “negotiated points in student texts are more likely to be incorporated into final revisions....those students who participated in negotiation during conferences were more likely to make meaningful revisions in their draft....that the interlocutors may begin with different understandings and, through negotiation, arrive at a mutual one” (2002, p. 83). Furthermore, “the specific approach to tutoring had little effect on the participation levels of the second language writers, and that institutional roles overwhelmed any effect it might have
had” (Williams, 2002, p. 84-5). Williams is suggesting that we take a closer look at the overdetermined roles and spaces, and acknowledge the many different ways that a writing or tutoring center can aid students in their language acquisition, and move past the overdetermined roles and spaces.

In this increasingly globalized world, universities have made significant efforts to increase the diversity on their campuses. One way of reaching this diversity target is to develop global citizens, who display cultural empathy and intercultural competence. In addition to the different kinds of ways that universities sustain a diverse and globalized campus, writing centers are expanding their international reach to include the different languages and cultures offered on their campuses, not just for ELLs. Although there are few studies on the issue of foreign language writing centers, more and more are appearing across the country. Research by Noreen Lape from Dickinson College reveals the “existence of several Spanish and even some French and German writing centers, generally located in foreign language departments” (2013, p. 2). Notable examples of foreign language writing centers are located at University of San Francisco, offering tutoring in French among other languages; DePaul University in Chicago, also provides foreign language writing tutoring (Lape, 2013, p. 2).

Lape’s locus of research comes from Dickinson College, where the Norman M. Eberly Writing Center became a Multilingual Writing Center (MWC):

where students writing not only in English but also Arabic, Chinese, Hebrew, Japanese, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish seek the assistance of trained writing tutors who are international students (both visiting and matriculated) and U.S. students who have studied abroad” (Lape, 2013, p. 2).
This MWC is unique in that it has specially trained writing tutors who offer writing tutoring in a language being studied other than English. In the fall of 2010, this writing center expanded to offer writing tutoring to “nonnative writers of languages other than English-from U.S. students tackling a second or even third language to international students learning a third language in their second language” (Lape, 2013, p. 2). This model provided by Lape is one other writing centers can learn from, as the writing center benefits formerly reserved for ELLs expand to reach other language learners.

Although there is much work to be done before many universities can create their own MWC, the current research trends suggest that a MWC may not be too far away from becoming a reality.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This qualitative research study investigates how writing workshops lower the Affective Filter in a second language writing space by: using tutoring spaces and peer mentoring theory as a way to understand the ways students learn to write in a second language; examining the interactions that happened in that community of practice; identifying or pointing to the ways that learning can happen in second language writing spaces; and considering the affordances of discussing writing practices in both native and target languages. Although there have been studies on writing workshops in a second language, most have employed quantitative methods, or aimed at examining the rhetoric and rhetorical moves that students were making in a group setting. Typically, this involved significant textual analysis of written work in both French and in English. However, those studies are centered around contrastive rhetoric. This study uses qualitative as well as quantitative methods, through semi-structured interviews, audio recorded workshops sessions, and surveys to better understand the ways in which students were engaging in that second language writing space.

This study was heavily influenced by a deep desire to pause the clock in the language learning and writing process. The constraints created by 50 minute in-class written texts give little to no opportunity for revision and the students are so rushed that they forget or do not have time to focus on more advanced aspects composing, such as rhetorical strategies. The students’ main concern, their higher order focus, is on getting the information out of their mind and onto the paper.
Reynolds states that there are boundaries we allow and accept from certain spaces. The boundaries of the classroom are often uncontested as the student’s role is clearly defined. Students do not automatically take their seat at the large table in the front of the classroom or stand at the podium; they generally filter into the crowded rows, and assume a seat in a general area that they will continue to occupy for the remainder of the semester. This study explains a different perspective and approach to foreign language writing, paying particular attention the space, the Student Learning Center.

The Student Learning Center

The Student Learning Center (SLC) is a tutoring center at CSU, Chico where students from all academic and class standing come to seek one-on-one or group tutoring. The SLC is free of additional charge as the services are paid for by student fees. The SLC mission is to:

- provide services that will assist CSU, Chico students to become independent learners. The SLC prepares and supports students in their college course work by offering a variety of programs and resources to meet student needs. The SLC facilitates the academic transition and retention of students from high schools and community colleges by providing study strategy information, content subject tutoring, writing assistance, and supplemental instruction. (2012-13 Annual Report of Goals and Measures, SLC, CSU, Chico)

Students can seek tutoring in most academic subjects, ranging from anthropology, music, chemistry, foreign languages, math, and others. Students can choose to drop-in to sessions although it is not ideal, as the default arrangement is an ongoing, standing appointment, once a week for 50 minutes with a tutor. If one-on-one tutoring sessions are not an available option, students will be placed into small group sessions, ranging from two to four students, or if the tutor allows, as many students as can fit around the medium sized tables.
Prior to June 2008, the SLC was housed on the fourth floor of the library. In the 2013-14 academic year, the SLC saw 3,022 students, 56% growth from 1,940 students in 2008. With these numbers, the SLC sees about 20% of all CSU, Chico students, at over 33,000 visits in the 2013-14 academic year (C. Connerly, Personal Communication, March 13, 2015).

The SLC is an inviting space, as one of the larger spaces on the third floor. Entering the SLC, students might be greeted by SLC front desk staff. They’ll direct students to sign in at the row of computers on the right side with their student ID number. After signing in, a student might take a seat at the centrally located, square shaped waiting area, where there is a large couch and chairs, pushed next to each other on both sides of the couch to enclose the small area. There are pens, a magnetic board with an inspiring message and other inviting pictures on a low coffee table.

About a minute or so before a session begins, a tutor will come find her students, introduce herself if it is the first visit, or possibly check in about something the group might have said last week. As there are no assigned tutoring spaces, the tutor might walk students through the narrow passage of cubicles on the left side of the SLC, where the sound all seems to congregate and bounce off of itself. She might walk students past the round table with the newest puzzle, past Derek tutoring Spanish at a very loud volume, past Eduardo explaining statistics to a freshmen student in his Spanish accent, and you might end up next to Joseph, whose soothing voice is a comforting sound. As students get settled next to their classmates, pulling out their class notes, assignment descriptions, or writing utensils, one can hear Joseph tutoring history, spending time on the decision making process for the United States as they entered the second world war.
With various size whiteboards, many different color markers and an enclosed area, the tutoring cubicles are small areas where students can hear themselves think, but also appreciate the background noise, as it might drown out an embarrassing answer, or give them space to think out loud without being disruptive. The whiteboard is typically on the largest side of the cubicle, with a table, a small trashcan, and as many chairs as can comfortably fit around the table. There might be an electrical strip for plugging in laptops or other chargers. Students might have their computers with them as their notes can live digitally, or they might have the electronic version of their textbook. The tutor might stand by the whiteboard if she needs to explain a concept in a visual form, or perhaps write down some necessary or important terms. Often times, it will be unclear who is tutoring and who is being tutored, as students and tutor move freely around the space.

The tutor might ask what is going on in the class that week, she may or may not have a copy of the syllabus. Since all students in that particular session are in the same class, there is one syllabus to work from. During tutoring sessions, students direct the session depending on their needs. They might fill in the tutor on what they did that week in their class, and what they are having trouble with. The tutor will try to allocate each student some time to address their questions or uncertainty in the class with keeping some time at the end of each session to set a goal for the week and for next week’s session. Per SLC policy, tutoring sessions can be one-on-one or in groups of four. The tutor can then decide if she wants to open up the number of people per session. In the French tutoring sessions I led, the number of people ranged from four to eight students.
Design of the Investigation

The study utilized three sources of data in order to gather both qualitative and quantitative information: 1) the weekly audio recordings I conducted during tutoring sessions over the course of the semester, 2) pre and post semi structured interviews, and 3) anonymous surveys given after the pre and post interviews were transcribed. The pre and post interviews were audio recorded to preserve the conversations so I could return to student responses during analysis. I chose to follow Gall et. al.’s guidelines for the focus group interviews, as “the most common form of data collection in qualitative research case studies are individual or focus group interviews...interviews are usually open-ended and informal, similar to natural conversation” (2009, p. 134-35).

The audio recorded tutoring sessions proved to be the largest source of data as it captured the group sessions that ranged from four to eight students. The larger the group, the more fruitful the session. The students seemed to really benefit from having a group to check in with about ideas, comprehension checking, peer response, and just having a community of practice to empathize with and contribute to. These tutoring sessions were held one day per week for fifty minutes, per SLC policy. The advantage of voice recorded tutoring sessions, is that the device really captures the instant exchanges between participants, whereas one on one written responses would not have allowed for such a dynamic exchange of ideas. The technology was easier to use as it was all stored on my cellular phone.

An interview protocol for the pre and post interviews (Appendices B and C) was developed prior to the meetings with the students, but it was used as a loose guide for the conversations as the semi structured interviews used questions that were focused around rhetoric and writing in the university with questions prodding at how students view writing and the
writing process. Gall et al. state that a semi-structured interview “involves asking a series of structured questions and then probing more deeply with open-form questions to obtain additional information” (2003, p. 246). These questions were adapted from a survey created by Dr. Kim Jaxon meant to analyze or study the types of writing that happens in science courses. I found that these survey questions were relevant and applicable to French writing as often times, many students feel that math or science is a different language, a discipline they are not comfortable or accustomed to producing writing in or about. Again, these questions were focused on and supportive of a former research question focusing on rhetorical analysis and comparison between L1 and L2 composition. However, some of the conversations that arose out of those interviews were supportive of a significant shift in identity for the students. I interviewed students at early stages (pre interview) in the data collecting process and again as a post interview in the final week of the semester. The post questions were more about their writing process, the content, and their identity whereas the pre questions were more focused on their backgrounds as writers, their relationship with writing in the university, how they came about French and how they got where they are now. Due to the relatively short duration of the study, I was able to conduct a pre and post interview with only five students.

The last form of data collection was a follow up survey to a range of students who had participated in tutoring at the Student Learning Center at some point or other. This was probably the most essential form of data as it was closer to the updated research purposes and goals. These questions were formed after having listened to the audio recorded tutoring sessions and having transcribed the pre and post interviews. After noticing the initial themes, I saw the need for more information relevant to the community defining aspects of the workshops, a
concept that was briefly addressed in the pre and post interviews and not explicitly addressed in the tutoring session conversations.

Population

The participants were full time students at CSU, Chico, with French as their declared major or minor. CSU, Chico has a relatively small French major, and one of the required classes for the major is French 302: Composition and Conversation. This is the class the focus group participants in this study were from. None of the participants were native French speakers, although one student can be classified as a heritage speaker of French. A heritage language learner is “a language student who is raised in a home where a non-English language is spoken, who speaks or at least understands the language, and who is to some degree bilingual in that language and in English” (Valdés, 2000, as cited in Kelleher, 2010, p. 2). There were two different populations that produced the data: the focus group of students enrolled French 302, and students that used the Student Learning Center at one point or another in the semester for French tutoring. All participants were over the age of eighteen and therefore not classified as minors. All students cited in this study filled out a consent form agreeing that I could use their survey responses, audio recorded workshop sessions, and any observation notes made during workshops as data for the present study (for informed consent form, see Appendix A).

Focus Group Population

In the required upper division course, French 302, the class was given an authentic French text, *Moderato Cantabile* by Marguerite Duras, to read and respond to. The focus group members had all taken the equivalent of French 202, the fourth semester language course, proving their level of proficiency and capacity to produce written texts in French. The focus
group was composed of five different students, one male and four female students. Their experiences with the French language varied from five to thirteen years practicing and studying. See Table 1 below for their pseudonyms, years studying French, age, major, strongest point in French and perceived weakest point.

Table 1

*Focus Group Population*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name in Study</th>
<th>Years studying French</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Strongest Point</th>
<th>Perceived Weakest Point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anne</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Undeclared</td>
<td>speaking</td>
<td>writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avalon (HLL)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>International Relations, French</td>
<td>speaking</td>
<td>writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elijah</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Computer Graphics, French</td>
<td>reading</td>
<td>writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josephine</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>International Economics, French (minor)</td>
<td>reading</td>
<td>writing/speaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mallory</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Music, French</td>
<td>writing</td>
<td>speaking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Initially, I held weekly workshops intended to yield a greater sample population, but those workshops proved to be ineffective as participation was very low. About half way through the semester, I approached students from French 302 that were already signed up for tutoring that semester. A requirement of French 302 was to spend 10 external hours practicing French. This
requirement constitutes 10% of the students’ grades. The students can choose to meet this requirement by enrolling in tutoring, seeing a private tutor, going to French conversation hour, participating in French Club events, etc. Students participated in this study for various reasons, but the majority of the focus group was genuinely interested in spending more time working on their French writing. Although this study did not entail extra work from the students, they did meet with me two times outside of the meetings to reflect on their French writing practices.

The focus group participants that I drew the most data from were Elijah, Anne, and then Avalon in a different light for her HLL needs. Elijah had really interesting responses and I believe that speaking from his classroom experiences might have been easier for him because he was an older student and could speak more about his experiences as a student. Elijah also felt a very personal investment in his French classroom and tutoring experiences as he was studying abroad the following semester in Pau, Southern France. Anne provided a lot of data because she went through a lot of growth. In the semester that I worked with Anne, she went from very shy and unsure of herself, to feeling confident in her ideas and capacity to speak and produce French. Like Anne, Raquel also provided a lot of data. They both experienced a transformation in their French class, they went from being unable to produce and participate, to leading the class with confidence. Raquel, being a graduate student, also knew the kinds of information that would benefit this study and was able to articulate more precisely where she felt the most growth and why.
Survey Population

The other population that contributed to the data were students that used the Student Learning Center at one point or another in the semester for French tutoring. They were all students who had studied French at CSU, Chico and had also participated in French tutoring at the Student Learning Center. The survey was distributed to mostly female students, as the majority of the students seeking tutoring in French were female students. This survey was created in Google Forms and sent out to all students I had tutored in French. Those students had the option to answer anonymously in hopes that participants would be more forthcoming about their responses, although most students responded with their names and later provided pseudonyms. Of the students that answered the follow up survey, Raquel and Kay had very interesting answers and were quoted several times. I will spend some time explaining their background as they, to a lesser extent than the focus group, helped support the claims I was making about foreign language writing spaces.

The additional students, Raquel and Kay, visited the SLC for two consecutive semesters. Raquel, a graduate student, first began visiting the SLC when she was enrolled in French 201. She decided to sign up for tutoring in preparation for her translation exam to fulfill the foreign language requirement in her major. After failing the exam, she felt discouraged but continued to visit the SLC. A different option to fulfill the foreign language requirement was to complete French 202 with a passing grade. With this as her new goal, she continued to visit the SLC for French tutoring for a second consecutive semester. She purchased additional memory aids and occasionally participated in additional French tutoring opportunities at the SLC, such as French Pronunciation Hour, French writing workshops, and French Conversation Hour.
Kay first started going to French conversation hour at a local coffee shop when she was informed about the SLC and the tutoring offered there. Kay’s goal was to study abroad in France during her last year as an undergraduate student and was determined to learn the language. She sought out every opportunity to practice her French. Her first semester at the SLC, she visited for tutoring of her French 101 course, French Pronunciation Hour, and French Conversation Hour. In addition to the three hours per week Kay was at the SLC, she also spent another hour at the French conversation hour that was held at a local coffee shop, the same coffee shop where she first learned of the SLC. Kay hardly missed an appointment at the SLC or a conversation hour at the coffee shop.

In the follow up survey, students were asked open ended questions to reflect on their participation, emotions, level of comfort, and physical differences between the SLC and their classroom, in hopes to provide a better understanding of what the environment looked like from their perspective (see Appendix D for the questions asked). Initially, I had created this survey with a Likert scale, but found that open ended questions would grant the respondents a space and opportunity to use their own words. This survey received 10 responses, 3 of which were focus group participants. See Table 2 on the following page for an overview of the survey population.

Treatment

The data was collected in an ongoing matter, on a weekly basis after the spring break of the spring 2013 semester. The audio recordings resulted in 11 hours of data, coming from 8 weekly tutoring sessions and 3 French writing workshops. In each case, the participants gave verbal or written consent that I could use any information from the recordings in this study.
Table 2

Survey Population Breakdown by French Course and Name

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>French Course</th>
<th>Name in Study</th>
<th>French Course</th>
<th>Name in Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>French 101</td>
<td>Parker</td>
<td>French 202</td>
<td>Noelle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Karl</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pauline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French 102</td>
<td>Kay</td>
<td>French 302</td>
<td>Elijah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cristina</td>
<td></td>
<td>Anne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French 202</td>
<td>Raquel</td>
<td></td>
<td>Avalon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After the semester was over, I went through the recordings and used the Garage Band Application on my MacBook to edit the content. I listened mostly for interesting moments in the weekly tutoring sessions where students may have displayed notable or interesting behavior or comments. No coding system was needed, as this data source was mainly used to gather a general understanding of how students interacted with one another, and to compare this qualitative data with the quantitative data from the interviews and surveys.

The weekly recorded tutoring sessions I led were heavily influenced by my experiences in the English department and readings from English 431: Theory and Practice of Tutoring Writing, and Dr. Kim Jaxon’s article, “One Approach to Guiding Peer Response”. When students were asked to give each other feedback, it was done in Google Docs or on their hard copies. They were asked to write a response when they finished reading their peers’ work, explicitly asked to not comment on grammar, to note any typos or grammar errors but not to comment on them in the written response they wrote. I then asked them to write a healthy end comment in which they gave the writer at least three or four ideas for next steps or revision and some rationale for those ideas. These practices shaped the sorts of comments the participants
were making in the pre and post interviews, as we worked heavily with their writing and focused
our conversations around their writing and the course text.

The focus group interviews were collected two times during the semester. The first
series of interviews occurred in April, shortly after the students agreed to be a part of the focus
group for this study. As I had already established a rapport with the students, working with them
for half a semester, in some cases longer, it was easy to identify who would become a participant
in this study. The interviews were conducted separately with just the interviewee and the
researcher at the SLC. Each interview began with a brief reminder of the focus of the study and
the students’ rights as interviewees. Before proceeding, I asked the student to give a verbal
acknowledgement that they agreed to have their voice recorded for the duration of the interview.
I was careful to do this both times, so that the students were aware of their role in the study and
that they were free to end their contribution at any time. Beginning the interviews this way
allowed for a respectful working relationship. The first interview began with a longer
explanation of the study and the initial research question, focused on contrastive rhetoric. From
there, I loosely followed the interview protocol defined in Appendix B. However, since these
interviews were intended to be more conversational in order to obtain more forthcoming
answers, the exact order and wording of the protocol was not strictly adhered to. At times, I
asked questions that were related but not on the protocol, as they made sense in the context of the
interviewees answers.

When possible, I attempted to meet with all the students in the same week. However,
there were instances when I needed to accommodate the interviewees schedules and met with
them a few weeks after the initial interview.
In order to keep these interviews informal, I chose not to take notes during the conversations. Therefore, transcription of the interviews was needed to analyze the data. As Gall et al. argue, “verbatim transcripts are valuable because they accurately capture what participants say” and “facilitate data analysis” (2009, p. 382). To save time, my questions were numbered in the transcriptions, and I omitted tangential conversations that were not directly related to this study and the abundant filler words students used, such as “like” and “um”. For example, Anne and I often spoke about her previous experiences in France and her future plans to study abroad, although related to this study, most of her comments on that subject were paraphrased. Student answers, for the most part, were transcribed word for word so that there was less room for misinterpreting their perceptions and opinions. I transcribed each participant’s interviews in Google Docs and categorized them by student.

After the transcriptions were completed, the researcher analyzed the interview data, along with a writing group, and looked for answers to these guiding questions:

1. How did the elements of Distributed Cognition, Communities of Practice, and Affective Filter support or enhance the students’ French language learning and identity?

2. How are elements of Distributed Cognition, Communities of Practice, and Affective Filter present in this PES?

3. What are the implications for a Heritage Language Learner?

After sharing the data with my writing group, we were able to identify that there were largely elements of community and identity as well as third space and distributed cognition in the comments made during the transcribed interviews. As I reread the transcriptions with this new lens, notes were made when students mentioned: what was different or difficult for them, if they ever mentioned the physical space bearing some weight in these differences, remarks related to
their perceived abilities, the ways they were feeling in the SLC and how that was different from
the classroom, the different sorts of expectations they had for themselves and their level of
French. I initially tried to make individual claims based on each participant, however, because of
the overlapping and similar themes in the interview data from Anne, Elijah, Mallory and
Josephine, I found that I could make larger claims with data from each participant reinforcing my
claim. I then found that Avalon was entirely different, as her HLL status changed the ways I
viewed her data. After these notes were made, I separated the data into what later became three
larger categories: Perceived Emotional Space (PES), Affective Filter, and Discourse/Identity.
These larger categories allowed me to see the different comments as related under a common
thread.

To pursue the larger thread of Affective Filter, I then distributed the anonymous
survey digitally and found student responses agreeing with my proposed hypothesis of a PES in
the SLC. This survey was pretested (Gall et. al, 2009, p. 133) with graduate students who had
studied a foreign language. After the pretesting, the survey was modified as some questions
were misleading or redundant. I then looked for places in the data that were projective or
indicative of a lowered Affective Filter, increase in participation and shifts in identity, through
the lens of Distributed Cognition and Communities of Practice.

Analysis for Findings

In order to reach the findings in the following chapter, I analyzed the data separately
for answers to each of the major questions in the study:
For the first question, “How did the elements of Distributed Cognition, Communities of Practice, and Affective Filter support or enhance the students’ French language learning and identity”, I used the interview data and follow up survey data, but the weekly tutoring session data was not used. The survey helped support my claim that the SLC was a PES that acted as a third space. I looked specifically at moments in the transcriptions where students talked about the effect other students in the focus group had on their learning or writing. Survey data was then used to support the claim that the participants were dependent on each other to reach greater levels of growth in their French writing. In this section, I relied heavily on the weekly tutoring session data to see the different ways students responded to one another about their writing.

The second question “How are elements of Distributed Cognition, Communities of Practice, and Affective Filter present in this PES?” looked at the interview and survey data with a different lens. I looked for moments when students were talking about emotions they felt in the SLC and emotions they felt in the classroom, and how they attributed that affect to the physical space they were in, the SLC.

The third question, “What are the implications for a Heritage Language Learner?” was entirely answered using interview data. Specifically, this section focused on Avalon’s interviews because she was the only heritage language learner. I used Avalon’s comments to understand the great amounts of identity construction and reconstruction that can happen in a CoP where the practice is a participant’s heritage language, giving her a different skill set, and changing her role in this particular CoP.
CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS 1: RULES AND ROLES

This study sought to answer three specific questions, (1) How did the elements of Distributed Cognition, Communities of Practice, and Affective Filter support or enhance the students’ French language learning and identity? (2) How are elements of Distributed Cognition, Communities of Practice, and Affective Filter present in this PES?, and (3) What are the implications for a Heritage Language Learner? These questions will be addressed in two different chapters, the first question identifying the different ways that Distributed Cognition and Communities of Practice supported or enhanced the student’s French language learning and identities, where the second Findings chapter will address third space, the Affective Filter, and Perceived Emotional Space. The third question will be addressed in both chapters, as Avalon’s case had particular aspects pertaining to both sections, informed by the learning theories and spatial theories. Relevant data pertaining to each question is presented and discussed. In the final chapter, I will review the findings and discuss the implications for teachers and researchers for future studies of second language writing spaces and heritage language learners. Although an obvious question would be if this study had an direct changes or improvement in the students’ writing, it is important to remember that this thesis was not focused on their writing to look for results, but rather, to try and look through their responses as a means to better understand their perceptions of one another and the space.
Distributed cognition is the learning theory that asks us to let go of the idea that cognition happens solely in the mind. This learning theory suggests that the growth and identity formation the students went through could not have been possible without the offloading of their cognition and dependence on one another for it. In order to better understand when students were displaying moments of distributed cognition in the SLC, I was informed by the information from the pre and post interviews as well as the follow up survey data. The interviews, by contrast, provided specific information from students in the focus group about their perception and experience in the SLC. The cognitive off loading that the participants engaged in during their sessions at the SLC resonates as the students made comments about the collaborative nature of their group.

Zone of Proximal Development as a Vital Tool

The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) exists in many learning groups, and this focus group was not an exception. Elijah’s comments seemed to stress the importance of getting access to other honest and similar-level perspectives during his writing process, “yeah in a group so everyone was saying how they interpreted it, so we could see how they saw it from their point of view and add it to ours. I think that was helpful”. Rather than evaluation from the instructor or the text, he searched for the chance to work through things in his ZPD and gain their perspectives on his work. Elijah needed the collaborative nature of the SLC, to allow him to build his language learner identity.
When asked to identify what was most helpful of the sessions at the SLC, Elijah appreciated “when we go over with someone else and read each others papers because it lets you look at the same topic from a different point of view so it’s like, ‘oh I could write about this in my paper’ or ‘it’s like....these paragraphs don’t really flow together’”. Elijah seemed to be saying that he benefitted more out of reading the work of people who shared the same discourse or similar identity trajectories, than from reading the work of experts. He later explained in his post interview, “[when] Josephine was reading my essay, she was like, ‘this is cool but why don’t you talk about this, this, and this’... it was something I never thought to write about even though when she mentioned it, it was very obvious. So just getting other input on what you should write about”. This is a specific example where Elijah referenced the practices done in tutoring as beneficial, and returned to the point that it was better when others were addressing his paper with the perspective of trying to do the same work themselves, as they shared similar identity resources and goals.

Elijah needed his peers to provide that valuable insight, as it led to critical moments of identity construction and growth. Further, “getting peer feedback from someone at your own level is kinda nice because the teacher knows exactly how to do it”, stressing how critical the role his peers played in his own writing. He may have been more willing to receive and use help or insight from this CoP than from a "top-down" rigid classroom structure. He seemed to get less out of the "this is what you did wrong, exactly" process with the teacher than the sort of trading of ideas and opinions that he did with his peers. These examples all point to the different ways that distributed cognition actively shaped the students’ perceptions of their writing. The focus
group’s comments suggest that the offloading and feedback they shared in the SLC were vital practices for their development as writers of French.

Elijah emphasized the importance of community in the drafting/writing process, “going over [the text] with you and other students, you can map out all the different themes and symbols and figure out what you want to write about and just getting more feedback was helpful than just sitting by yourself trying to figure it all out in a different language.” Notice how Elijah described the back and forth, collaboration in the SLC versus him trying to write his paper by himself. He provided a different number of ways in which the focus group enacted his ZPD, where alone, he had little to no avenues for growth and development of his writing.

While the focus group was necessary for Elijah to achieve that advanced level of work, Anne recalled that:

*group discussion takes the pressure away from being ‘right’ or ‘wrong’. And peer feedback is great for me because I love hearing what people have to say to make my french [sic.] better... At first I didn't like it [increase in tutoring participants] because I felt stupid, like in class, but then when we all put our ideas together it was very helpful in the end.*

Anne had tremendous insight into the ways in which her peers helped her co construct meaning. The codependency between Anne and the other participants created moments of growth, and served as learning tools, in a place where she felt comfortable to use them and in a way that was helpful for her specific needs. At first, she felt the SLC turning into the place she was trying to avoid, but through her interactions with the group, Anne developed greater insight into her own writing and ideas, and noticed that the person-plus model worked better than person-solo.

Anne and Avalon found that discussing the text with peers was insightful and productive, “when we jotted those points out...talking with a group was super helpful, especially
with [the text], like talking with everyone and getting all their ideas...and just kinda like getting pieces from everyone”. Anne was referring to the moments where the conversations in tutoring sessions acted as the tools to help her understand the content. As each participant contributed to the discussion, they each contributed to fill in a specific piece of the collective understanding for the French text they were reading. It was clear that the information was distributed among all the participants. By engaging in conversation and sharing their ideas and understanding of the French text, the participants were able to better understand the text. Discussion proved to be one of the most helpful tools for Anne during the tutoring sessions. When prompted about what she would like to see more of in the classroom, Anne was supportive of the SLC practices crossing over into the classroom:

...definitely more group discussion, and like I said jotting out the ideas, the part of group discussion, I really liked that we all have different ideas, you know and then like someone can have an idea they don’t know exactly where they’re going with it and then someone else can be like ‘oh! I think you’re going towards this’ and you know, just like helping everyone out, it’s like more of a connection with the class that way.

Using the word “connection” demonstrated that students were reacting positively to the different kinds of ways in which they perceived their classmates, and the information each classmate brought to the table. They capitalized on the differences in their ideas to build a greater, collective understanding of the text. This can also be seen in Avalon’s comments, “The SLC gave us the chance for smaller group discussion which really helped me figure out themes and get a different perspective that helped me figure out what was going on within the [text].” By referring to the kinds of work done in the SLC as a “chance”, Avalon felt that the SLC provided an outlet for work that she perceived less attainable in the classroom environment. The
juxtaposition of the types of work that each space could provide, gave her a “different perspective” and a greater understanding of the text and of her writing.

In addition to relying on each other in the SLC to reach a greater understanding, students also spoke from their experiences in the classroom that used similar practices from the SLC. Parker noticed that, “During tutoring I have been the only one in my session but when put into group discussions within the class I feel much more comfortable. This is because I am able to interact with a smaller group of people and we are able to help each other with close proximity.” By using the word “proximity”, Parker is aware that the physical location of his peers is contributing to his growth as a language learner. Raquel provided insight into her French 202 class, “in class...I could see that many of us were struggling and it helped to try to work through the readings (for example) together, as opposed to individually.” Raquel, Parker, Anne, Elijah, and Avalon, all in different classes, spoke from practices that further reinforced the ZPD as an integral component to a positive and productive learning experience, in the SLC and in the classroom.

There were distinct elements of distributed cognition present in the focus group as multiple participants mentioned how much better they performed when in a group. The other participants enacted Vygotsky’s ZPD, expanding the realm of comprehension as students relied on each other for understanding. The cognition was happening outside of the individual mind, aided significantly by the participants in the tutoring sessions. A notable trait or outcome of these sessions has been the relationships that were created in this space that remained intact outside of the SLC. The students became friends and established trust with one another and brought that into the classroom.
In terms of identity building for a HLL, Avalon contributed to this group in more ways than one. We can see the progression of Avalon’s identity through her responses over time. An example of Avalon’s earlier responses, “I get a lot more work done in these sessions than I do by myself especially because there [are] other people around you where you could ask questions”. Although she is talking about how the group helps her French and her writing, she is still looking inward and dependent on herself for the learning. A later response from Avalon, as she was surprised when, “we actually were able to find themes that we could talk about in the paper so I think having like the group discussion was really helpful because it’s not that we don’t understand the words, we just don’t understand the style of writing.” Avalon’s answer from the post interview displayed her perception of herself in the group, as she repeatedly used “we” to define a common struggle that the group felt, where her earlier answers were mostly “I” statements. Here, we can see the clear differences in how she perceived the group, and her own needs and identity as a HLL. By using “we”, she realized that the learning was an outcome of the group’s collective efforts.

When asked to reflect about her comprehension and ability to do the task alone versus in a group, Avalon stated, “I liked the group dynamic..because...they all come up with their own ideas, and ... I never would have thought of that...especially like working with the other girl who is my age, we work closely together in class too.” Here we can see Avalon taking those relationships from the tutoring center back into the classroom. She recognized how helpful the other participants were in identifying her own ideas, so much so that she “never would have thought of that” on her own.
Avalon’s status as a heritage language learner helped her and the other students because she had more insight into what she and others were able to do, she was readily available at the time of need, as she could more easily illustrate the difficulties of a foreign language writer. Avalon acted as a more capable peer as she had more insight and understanding of the French language. As a student, her insight into the classroom was invaluable as she, in large part, cultivated the grounds for the deep learning of her peers.

Communities of Practice in Foreign Language Writing Spaces

CoPs are a deep way of thinking about how we offload our cognition to the surround. As much as I would have liked to go back in time and ask follow up questions of the students, I found that at first, their words were susceptible to surface level interpretation of community and collaborative work in the SLC. However, the work the students did was much deeper and very much dependent on the participants in the space to produce this unique CoP.

My understanding of CoPs informed the ways I viewed the participants as a productive CoP that was not fully shaped by the physical constraints of the SLC. Raquel discussed how the positive effects of tutoring were transferring into her classroom practices:

I realized my confidence had increased significantly because of my tutoring experience in the SLC. [My tutor] always encouraged me, along with all of my fellow students in our tutoring sessions, to speak, write, read aloud all things French. This was vital to succeeding in my language class. Without this kind of participation I would have fallen so far behind that I would not have passed the class.

By referring to these language practices as “vital” to her success, she recognized that without these practices, she could not advance in her French and would not pass the course. Raquel felt
as though her success in the language and classroom could not have been possible without those practices in the SLC. By being able to practice in a safe place, she understood that if she failed, she could always try again. Having that understanding follow her into the classroom was a big win for her and motivated her to keep going.

In addition to Raquel, Avalon stated, “I am fairly confident sharing my ideas because I've learned to express them better through tutoring within small group discussion with my peers who are working on the same topic” and again here, “Also having smaller groups helps a lot because we can have more in depth conversations on topics and get each other's ideas out there. Collaborating with the other students was really helpful when trying to write papers because they find themes you hadn't thought of”. In their comments, Avalon and Raquel were making explicit connections to the practices from the SLC. These students were identifying that their new found confidence or increase in participation was a result of their experiences in the SLC. Because of their practice in the SLC, they were able to feel confident enough to bring that into the classroom with them.

Cristina stated, “by becoming more confident in the SLC (tutoring) and then became more confident in the classroom. Even though I still don't feel as comfortable participating in the classroom then [sic] I do in the SLC it has gotten a lot easier for me to participate”. Cristina, in agreement with Avalon and Raquel’s comments, found that being able to practice with her safe CoP in the SLC cultivated essential practices for success in language learning. Raquel echoes this sentiment with, “exchanging my ideas in the classroom became much more comfortable after tutoring.... In short, I didn't feel so dumb anymore”. To foster ZPDs in CoPs, small groups that are not confined to the physical constraints of where they were created are necessary.
When asked to measure their confidence in explaining a concept or giving feedback, Kay felt that, “Even with people more or less at my level I never feel fully confident that I actually understood everything well enough to explain it.” This student (in lower division French) is incorrectly measuring her ability to produce the language by comparing herself to her classmates’ abilities. Kay was a newcomer and often found herself surrounded by oldtimers. Situating her French capacity in the large spectrum that is available in a beginning French class can be frustrating and lead to a steep decline in confidence. Further, Kay felt uncomfortable assuming roles that are conventionally not for students, and thus greatly affected her participation. If she did not have enough confidence to give her peers feedback, how was she making meaning of the content on her own?

**Intersection of Communities of Practice and Affective Filter**

Students felt less anxiety when they felt like they were in a CoP, when they were able to engage in discussion and share their ideas without judgement. Raquel answers how the SLC gave her a different way of participating or being, “At the SLC I never felt critically judged as a failure with learning language. It actually felt really safe at the SLC -- safe, in that I could answer incorrectly or pronounce and interpret incorrectly without heavy judgement.” Anne echoes the sentiment of being in a space free of judgement, “tutoring, is very easy to exchange my ideas, because...[my tutor] is very thoughtful, and wouldn't judge anyone. She is very open, and supportive.” Although Anne did not explicitly mention where the judgement was coming from, she felt that in the SLC, she did not need to maintain the overdetermined role that was expected of her in the classroom and could express her ideas freely and without judgement. Kay agreed that:
The SLC's great because there's only so many times I can feel comfortable raising my hand in class before I start feeling like the class idiot, but tutoring doesn't have that problem. [My tutor] always made me feel okay to ask anything about whatever, and that's really helpful if I'm embarrassed about not understanding something I feel like I should understand.

I met Kay when she knew little to nothing in French, she sought out any medium of French possible, going to conversation hours and just listening, occasionally fumbling a few coherent words. For Kay to feel like she should know anything at such early language stages can block up or create an immense amount of anxiety for any future language learning. The SLC allowed students to recast certain behavior as participatory that they would otherwise see as incompetent. The feeling of self-acceptance that Kay gained from her risk free and safe practice in the SLC helped break down the walls that were growing with her anxiety about French speaking or writing.

Another commonality among the students was this sentiment that they “should” know what they were feeling so unsure about, and agreeing that the SLC provided them a space in which to feel okay asking questions about the material or for clarification. Pauline said, ‘When I ask a question in class, I am sometimes nervous to because no one else has the same question so I feel like I am the only one that's clueless.” Using the word “clueless” and “only one” indicated that Pauline felt she should know the material, and if/when she didn’t, she felt alone in her confusion and judged by her peers or by the space.

As students felt comfortable enough to participate and exchange their ideas, it was more likely that they could remember the content and by engaging with the language, they were learning more. Karl said he would “worry about slowing the class down, or having other students become annoyed with me for not understanding something I might be stuck on.” Karl,
like Pauline, felt embarrassed or ashamed and they worried they were a disruption to the class if they had a question or if there was a misunderstanding. Students also felt that their peers, in addition to the instructor, were in a position to judge them. Kay said, “The fact that it wasn't totally structured and was small (sometimes just me) and completely without pressure was ridiculously helpful.” The key words from this student here are “completely without pressure”. Similarly to the other students, Kay felt comfortable and confident with her group when having to talk or write in French, indicators of a nurturing CoP. The students’ comments described a place where these feelings were lessened to a point where they were not an obstruction to their learning.

Most students felt that everyone was better at the language than them, lowering their self confidence and giving them higher levels of anxiety, Noelle said, “The one-on-one aspect of tutoring and the SLC makes me feel more comfortable than being in a classroom because there are less people (not as many people stare at you when you talk).” These feelings of anxiety students felt when being stared at further decreased their affinity to want to speak. When prompted about how comfortable the students felt about sharing their ideas in the classroom, Anne shared, “I just know my argument will come out wrong and everyone will be even more confused by me”, and Kay as well, “when I was in tutoring I felt really good about it (because [my tutor] set up a really accommodating/non-intimidating atmosphere).” Here is a clear example of a student’s anxiety directly interfering with her participation. Like Noelle, Kay and Anne were worried of the reaction of others to their French, and it acted as an impediment to their progress.
Students made comparisons between the SLC and the classroom. As they noticed that their participation was a key factor in the shaping of that space, Noelle commented, “the SLC made me feel more comfortable asking questions and participating. I don't usually participate or ask questions in class, so tutoring gave me a place where I could do that.” This is a great example of a student’s participation and emotions shaping this space. The tutoring sessions gave her an outlet to participate where she may have felt she did not in the classroom.

As we can see in the comments above, the SLC was a space in which the CoP could grow and create a safe space for the students to practice their French. The SLC helped the students maintain their CoP, wherein there was no judgement. This safe, judgement free zone was vital to their success, as without it, the students would not have participated as much as they did, and they would not have made the progress they did.

Communities of Participation

The CoPs were created as a response to the class, and existed because there was a need for the students to participate in a safe space. This CoP’s most defining trait was that students felt very comfortable participating in front of one another in this particular space.

Anne said, “Honestly, I do not like participating in class because I feel like my language skills are not good enough. People in the class are very nice and supportive for the most part, but I feel like I will end up making a fool out of myself.” The overdetermined role that Anne felt she had to maintain in the upper division French classroom deterred her from participating, and her anxiety about that produced a block in what would have been her language acquisition through participation. Cristina, a student in French 102 said:
The only reason why I participate in class is because I have to, but I don't like to because I feel like I am always wrong. During my tutoring sessions I am less afraid of being wrong for many reasons. First of all there are only two other people at the most during my tutoring sessions. Another reason is because I don't feel judged if I am wrong.

This anxiety that Cristina felt from her anticipated judgement from her peers stemmed from this overdetermined role that came with the institutional classroom space. As she did not feel judged in the SLC, Cristina was able to feel less anxiety and thus participate more.

Noelle, a student in Raquel’s French 202 class said, “I participate in French class only when I am called on. During tutoring, I am constantly participating because I feel more comfortable in tutoring, the group is smaller.” Noelle was touching on various issues in her statement. Similar to Cristina, she felt less intrinsic motivation to participate in her class, whereas in the SLC, she attributed her increase in participation to the number of people in her group. For learning to happen, the students had to feel like they were in a safe space, where they could openly practice French, without the pressure that comes with the expectations of a planned second space.
CHAPTER V

FINDINGS 2: SPACES, EMOTIONS, AND LEARNING

This chapter, Findings 2, will answer the second and third research questions. The second question, “How are elements of Distributed Cognition, Communities of Practice, and Affective Filter present in this PES?” will be addressed using interview data from focus group participants, and follow up survey data from other students at the SLC. The third question, “What are the implications for a Heritage Language Learner?” will use Avalon’s answers in a very specific light to understand how these theories may apply to HLLs.

Third Space

The SLC acted as a Third Space, created by the emotions the students felt and shaped by their participation. There were other aspects of the practices and nature of the SLC that helped the students with their French writing. Below, I will describe two of the main factors outside of this scope of analysis that helped the students. The intersection of passion and resistance, a defining trait of a third space, and time. These two sections define recurring comments in the data, as the connections between their projective identities and how the other students along with the SLC helped them get closer to that, and students’ recurring appreciation for this extra time they had at the SLC to practice their French.

The Intersection of Passion and Resistance

These practices in the SLC fostered grounds for productive resistance, reinforcing a third space. Mallory referenced the use of language in tutoring versus in the classroom and felt
as though “we [a]re actually using [vocabulary words] in conversation”, where the classroom might have provided less opportunities for such practice. Mallory discussed the evolution of her practice, “in a workshop, you can kinda let ideas flow and not be so, ‘we have to do this, this, and this’... things come up more naturally so I think it’s a good supplement [to the writing classroom]”. Mallory, like other students, highlighted the benefits from having a supplementary space in which to write and recalled how it became easier for her to let the ideas flow in a space outside of the classroom. With language like “naturally” and “flow”, we can infer that those were feelings not commonly felt in the classroom.

This outside space further displayed characteristics of a third space, free of a prescribed second space curriculum that allowed for ideas to naturally flow. Raquel said:

I realized the teacher-center at the front of the class probably felt more *alienating* than the round table type discussion that we had in tutoring at the SLC. One of the major differences from classroom to the SLC was that in class we rarely, if ever, got out of our seats and wrote on the board. In tutoring at the SLC, we usually always were asked to write on the whiteboard. I think this makes a significant impact on collaboration and participation -- and therefore, *learning*. (emphasis added)

The roles the students felt they needed to maintain affected their participation. Since there were no determined roles in the SLC, there was less pressure and the students were active members in the shaping and determining of the space.

When asked if the physical differences between the spaces (SLC and classroom) affected students’ collaboration or participation, most students answered yes. They were affected in that the smaller group was more welcoming and they could not “hide” from being called on. Most students claimed that they were able to participate more because of the tools in the SLC (whiteboards, small tables). The physical differences affected their participation in that the
“classroom is more formal and structured” or less conducive to participation and that the SLC is more relaxed, allowing for increased opportunities for participation.

The most distinguishing difference between their participatory habits in the SLC and in the classroom was the amount and quality of questions the students were asking. The students were not rewarded in any way to grant them gains in their French course by doing so, therefore the questions that students asked arose out of a true curiosity and genuine interest in the subject matter, a genuine interest to better themselves in French. When describing their experiences in the classroom, students recall their feelings of pressure, stress, anxiety; where the SLC elicited feelings or actions of participation, collaboration and agency in their learning. The content in the SLC was student generated and sometimes unrelated to the course material, this seemed to help Elijah, as “knowing just one or two more things about a specific subject can make participating in the classroom easier”. The at times tangential conversations from the SLC gave students insider knowledge about French that helped them feel more confident participating. The students valued this outside but alongside studio space to workshop their French.

**Pausing the Clock**

Pausing the clock was a necessary feature of this PES. The nature of the work in the SLC was vastly different than the work from the classroom, time being a distinguishing feature. Parker stated the, “SLC gives me a way to address my specific questions and helps me go at a comfortable pace”. The SLC gave the students enough time to get good at what they did. Elijah recalled, “in the classroom we have just like 10 minutes to write about a reading that we did the night before, and in tutoring it’s usually revising something that we already did so we already have a basis of like what we want to talk about and then we can improve it in tutoring and get
help for it, just like revising what we already did.” We can see here that he appreciated the structure of the smaller community in the SLC, allowing for more in depth work to be done, while it sounds like the structure of class work, and perhaps that is due to the number of people, forced the students to stay at a very surface-level process. Anne also spoke about time affecting her ability to produce or participate, “it’s really hard to just try to put something together in that amount of time and try to get a good grade on it like the other classes you’d have like a couple days, come back, and then you can work on it at home”, here she was referring to the differences in expectations from her French classes to those of her other academic writing courses. Among other students, Anne felt that having to write an in-class essay in French was above her threshold and ability, and gave her additional stress.

Elijah spoke of the time spent on the writing done in the classroom, “some of them [writing assignments] went pretty well. I think overall for the time given, they go well.” His qualification indicated that the setting or the methods of that space were limiting his engagement with the practice, telling us that they in fact, did not go well. Answering the follow up survey question, “How comfortable did you feel exchanging your ideas in the classroom? In tutoring?”, Elijah answered, “If I had enough time to formalize my response before answer, I was comfortable. Spur of the moment responses are still slightly difficult mostly because I can not think of the necessary french words fast enough.” Again, we can see here that Elijah needed more time, as language learners are generally slower to produce what they want to say in the target language, than in their native language.

In response to the question, “How did the SLC give you a different way of participating, Karl answered, “It gives me more one on one time with an instructor, which is
essential to a complete learning experience. It means that if I need special help I can ask for it without having to worry about slowing the class down, or having other students become annoyed with me for not understanding something I might be stuck on.” Karl appreciated the weight off of his shoulders that came with not worrying about slowing the class down. His positive perception of his participation in the SLC only further increased his affinity to want to be there.

The SLC provided a space where students were able to take 50 minutes to focus specifically on one aspect or issue they were experiencing. This tutoring center acted as a space where the participants could take a snapshot from their classroom and dissect it, stretch it, play with it, and most importantly, they could take their time in small groups with an issue, uninhibited by the need to follow or keep up with a syllabus or schedule.

Perceived Emotional Space

I will use this section of this chapter to articulate the significance of and pointing to moments where a PES has taken shape, points in the data where students perceive the physical differences in spaces as being the reason for their increase in participation and comfort. This section seeks to answer the second research question, “How do those elements contribute to or shape a Perceived Emotional Space?” Although there were small allusions to tangible items found in the SLC such as whiteboards and round tables, what the students discussed was their perception of an emotional space, aided in part by the tools or items present in the SLC that in turn allowed them to enter the Third Space. After reading about how the students are feeling in this emotional space, it would be natural to discuss the most pertinent emotions that affect their way of being and learning in the SLC, their Affective Filter. By delving into moments where
students discuss how comfortable they felt, when they referred to their minimal amount of stress and higher confidence present in the SLC, we can see clear connections to the Affective Filter Hypothesis.

There were small things about the SLC that helped the students create this perception of an emotional space, where they felt safe to create their identities, and establish norms where their Affective Filters could be lowered. As discussed earlier in the Literature Review, spaces are significant in that they, to a certain extent, shape or create the interactions happening within them. This PES became a safe area for students to practice their language skills, uninhibited by the constraints of an academic course. Referring back to Lefebvre’s definition of spatial practice as the “perceived space, which embraces...the particular locations and spatial sets characteristic of each social formation”, the spatial sets characteristic of this social formation were directly affecting the student’s experience with French in a positive, productive way. Figure 2 on the following page is a graphic representation of the three major components at play.

Perceived Emotional Space facilitating
Identity Construction

As stated earlier, the pre and post interview questions were geared towards gaining a deeper understanding of French language learners’ writing process. While sorting the data, I found that their pre and post interview answers also had elements of identity, discourse, and literacy. Because the lowered Affective Filter was a product of the PES, the students were able to build their identity, discourse and literacy in French. Without the other two components, the students would not have the language to discuss this integral part of language learning. Identity is shaped by the fact that people are driven by their common passions. This becomes clear in moments where students reify their projective identity. This happens in moments where they
envision their end goals with French, or where they see an end to their studies and an acquisition of fluency, a common goal for language learners.

When I asked Elijah if he thought that learning a new language was like learning a new identity, he responded with “I think I’m still me, I’m just a better me” and Anne seemed to feel the same way, “when I’m speaking in French, it’s like my alter ego, it’s a different me.” They were circling the idea of a new identity without quite landing on it and it is interesting that they both related second language learning to personal improvement or development.

Attempting to describe the differences between a language speaker and a language learner, Elijah defined his projective future identity when he stated, “I want to be fluent… a language speaker is a native language… a language learner is something that you learn on top of that.” Here, Elijah started with the end goal and then defined his understanding of how to reach that goal. He continued to define his future self and how that relates to his literacy skills, “for me, yeah, I would like to work in maybe a different country, a French speaking country, so being able to put

Figure 2

Perceived Emotional Space.
down thoughts and ideas in written form would be very useful.” Elijah valued literacy skills in French and included that skill in his projective identity. Josephine’s projective identity was also in hopes of fluency, “but I like how challenging it [studying French] is and that’s why I continue to take it and in the hopes of one day actually like gaining that fluency.” The fact that they have already envisioned their projected identity can positively push them in the right direction to reach those goals, a manifestation of their motivation, influenced by the emotional spaces they create.

At various moments in the data, students were making allusions to their literacy and literacy values. Josephine refers to her French literacy, and situates her literacy values in the French classroom, “writing in class in a lot of ways is a lot better, ‘cause it really shows that you actually do know something, which I appreciate.” Qualifying her knowledge of the subject matter, Josephine believed that her literacy in French would be valued if she could produce written proof of her skills in a short amount of time. The students had an underlying assumption that language learning implied more listening than participation where language acquisition involves more doing.

Raquel’s comments about the ways the SLC pushed her, “In tutoring I always had the feeling that I was going to be pushed to speak French in the way that I would if I were visiting or living in France or any other francophone country.” She was constructing her norms for participation in the tutoring space by imagining a projected future wherein she uses French. Raquel was using the SLC as an identity building resource.
Affective Filter in the Perceived Emotional Space

This section of this Findings chapter will address the Affective Filter in the Perceived Emotional Space. We should notice the students’ comfort level, but more importantly, we should look to understand how they arrived there. This section is mostly informed by survey data and partially by interview data. Because the students felt more comfortable participating in the SLC, they felt free to make mistakes, or engage in moments where they could learn from the experience of failure or making a mistake.

The Affective Filter Hypothesis acted as a lens that helped identify where there were moments in which students incorporate what they are learning in the space to their existing identities as language learners. Because of this heightened insight into their perception of the roles in both spaces, I found that the overdetermined roles from the classroom may turn it into a space that can sometimes produce more anxiety than help foster learning.

Overdetermined Roles

Besides the roles that students expect of themselves, they also anticipate certain behavior from their peers and instructors. Kay commented about the expectations of her professor’s role: “the thing of it is that the amount of people in the room can really not matter if the professor makes me feel okay for speaking even though my improv abilities/vocabulary are so poor.” Here Kay was addressing the assumed role of the professor, and how she expected to feel encouraged and safe to participate, despite being surrounded by her peers who she felt had a stronger grasp of French than she did. She was relying on the professor to help lower her Affective Filter and break down the overdetermined roles that can cause anxiety to perform in a foreign language. Similar to other students, Anne stated in her follow up survey data:
In the classroom...I have a harder time commenting or asking questions because I feel like I am not good enough, and there are so many levels in my french class, I sort of feel like the "runt" of the class. I think I feel this way because I am ashamed of being in a FREN 303 class, and my french is still not all put together. So many people ask me, "oh so you're in french 303, you're fluent now right?" I mean, I'm sure if you put me in a Francophone country, and around people speaking the language I am sure I would be able to adapt to the situation. Although in class, it is hard for me to switch from english all day, to french so [sic] two hours. I feel sort of silly, and stupid.

In answer to the second question of the follow up survey, “How comfortable did you feel making a comment or asking a question in the classroom?” Anne’s response strikes many different aspects. She defines the expectations from her in her French 303 class, and how she is ashamed of being in an upper division language course, where she feels she should be fluently producing the language. If Anne felt silly and stupid, it is clear her Affective Filter was raised and no progress or language learning happened. This is an example of how important it is for the student to feel safe, and like they are in a CoP, where they can make mistakes without fear of shame or embarrassment.

Pauline noted that, “when you're in a small group, you notice that one person that isn't talking, so they’re in a sense more likely to speak because they can't ‘hide’”. The word “hide” is telling of her feelings about the participation levels expected of her, and if called on, she might have felt as though she could hide in the classroom and fade into the background, creating distance between herself, the class, and the subject matter.

The ZPD, CoP, and Affective Filter acted as multiple lenses to provide a clearer understanding of how the students were working together and dependent on one another for that much needed practice and growth in the SLC. Informed by the data, this general understanding of what the students were gaining from the SLC helped to associate that the students were accrediting their progress to the physical space, the SLC. Although many students claimed that
the physical space allowed them to make the progress they did in their French writing, the
students created a PES, wherein the emotions they felt in the particular space were shaping the
practices and attitudes towards the space. All of these factors combined created a participatory
space where the students felt more comfortable practicing French. The PES fostered
participation, an integral component for a productive CoP.

Confidence as a Language Learning Tool

Consistently throughout the data, confidence appeared to be a significant language
learning tool. Among others, Raquel affirmed, “with enough persistence and enthusiasm, it was
always possible to learn something that seemed unfamiliar and uncomfortable. Having this
feeling gave me an immense amount of confidence when engaging in group discussion”. Raquel
correlated her confidence to the practices from her tutoring experience. She claimed that her
increase in confidence to use French was directly a result from her tutoring experience with her
tutor and her peers. This participation was the outcome of her involvement in the group
discussions in tutoring.

It was not the physical space, the shape of the chairs, the color of the walls; it was the
students’ perceptions of the physical space that generated these emotions of safety and comfort
and allowed for more participation. Parker’s comments demonstrate that the, “Physical
differences in the spaces contrasting from the classroom and Student Learning Center certainly
have different affects on participation and collaboration. Being in small groups in a smaller area
brings about proficient learning. Everyone is able to understand each other more clear, comfort
ability rises, and the person who is tutoring is able to connect with each individual.” Anne
concurs with, “The SLC was nice because it was more secluded and personable than the
classroom. I could see everyone’s expression and truly understand what they were trying to say”. Anne disliked the setup of the classroom as “not being able to see everyone faces” presented feelings of angst. Her inability to gauge her contributions as valid or useful was dissatisfying and draining. Two things here to notice, 1) like others, Anne equated seclusion with personable and comfort, creating grounds to contribute and participate more frequently in the tutoring sessions and 2) being able to see other participants’ faces was also important for this student as she translated seeing everyone’s expression to being able to understand what they were saying. For Anne, engaging in a dialogue and contributing or participating, were valued feelings in a learning space.

Pauline responded, “I really like the way the SLC is set up and how the cubicles make small rooms. It's a very inviting space but also maintains the feel of a working environment.” Notice here how even though she is explicitly referring to the physical space, she notes that despite the SLC being so inviting, she is able to work. It is as if a space cannot be simultaneously fun or conducive to work, presenting this as an after thought. Pauline places a certain amount of tension between a space being inviting and work getting done, implying that one cannot be working while one is having fun.

Anne reflected on the practices of the classroom and how they differed from the SLC, “in our class, it’s not like much interaction… [our professor] wants us to talk but we don’t talk that much… I feel like [when] we were in a circle, it was just like way easier to talk, I don't know why, but it just felt more comfortable, it didn’t seem like teacher-students. it was just more of like a group talking.” Anne was saying that opportunities to participate were not as present in the classroom, or perhaps the SLC provided a space that felt more comfortable for her to
participate. She could not articulate why she felt this shift in desire to participate outside of the classroom, so much so that these participatory structures from the SLC had become invisible.

Reconstructing a Heritage Language Learner’s Identity

This last section of the findings chapter takes a closer look at Avalon as a HLL. First, I will define what a HLL is and give some background to the scholarship in that field. I will then address the overdetermined roles and spaces that HLL often find themselves in, or create. Following this, I will address James Gee’s term, “Mushfaking” borrowed from Mack and prison culture to define what often happens when HLL are pushed to the border of their threshold with their language. Finally, I will discuss the identity trajectory for a HLL in a CoP where the practice is her heritage language.

Heritage Language: Definition and Background

First used in the Canadian context, the term heritage language (HL) was used to refer to a language other than English and French (Cummins, 1991), specifically geared towards describing the linguistic backgrounds of indigenous people or immigrants (King and Ennser-Kananen, 2013). Definitions of what is and what is not a heritage language often depend on the political climate or population diversity in a place. The definition then evolved to mean any “language of personal relevance other than English” (cited in Van Deusen-Scholl, 2003). The word “heritage” itself brings about complex issues, as “‘heritage’ suggests a trait or asset gained through birth, such as property or DNA, when language is not fixed but rather the product of interaction” (King and Ensser-Kananen, 2013). A heritage language learner is “a language
student who is raised in a home where a non-English language is spoken, who speaks or at least understands the language, and who is to some degree bilingual in that language and in English” (Valdés, 2000, as cited in Kelleher, 2010).

Heritage language learners are typically placed in foreign language courses, where there are different learning objectives and outcomes than for a heritage or native speaker language course. Foreign language curriculum builds statically, with a heavy grammar base and working it’s way up to more reading and speaking, where heritage language learners come with a sufficient background in speaking and reading but lack the formal training in grammar (Kagan and Dillon, 2008). According to Kagan and Dillon, the pedagogical needs of non-heritage learners vary greatly from heritage learners, especially in grammar, reading and writing (2008, p. 150). The linguistic background that heritage learners bring with them to the classroom is typically expansive and complex, but requires a macro-approach from the instructor, a “top-down approach that builds on learners’ initial abilities in speaking and listening” (Kagan and Dillon, 2008, p. 149). With this in mind, I came to understand Avalon’s strengths and areas for growth in French, from a slightly more informed perspective.

Further, HLLs rely heavily on their “grammar 1”, or Hartwell described as the grammar that is in our heads, "the set of formal patterns in which the words of a language are arranged in order to convey larger meanings” (1985, p. 109).

Heritage Language Learners’ Roles and Spaces

During the course of the study, I came to view Avalon’s identity as complex and multifaceted. Perhaps because no one in the community was aware of or fully understood Avalon’s heritage speaker status or that facet of her identity as a language learner, they might
have assumed she was just really good at French. Avalon’s identity was created in this space as she felt that her identity as a language learner of French was as engrained as her identity of a language learner of English.

The semester following the study, her writing was selected one day as a model for the French composition class. She felt embarrassed as she knew that her peers could not reproduce work of the same caliber as she did. She had high expectations for herself, and felt confused when she received red marks on her in class written assignments, “I should not have this many mistakes on an A level paper and that [has] been… the concentration for this paper…I’m doing extra online grammar practice”. She believed that weaknesses in her writing could be attributed to her lack of grammar instruction and practice or could be remedied with extra online grammar practice. Avalon was constantly making excuses for the errors in her writing, she apologized incessantly and felt the need to justify her less than perfect work. A common trait among heritage speakers, the sentiment that they have been “faking it” this entire time. At many times during our interviews, Avalon referred to prescriptive practices as really learning the language. She understood that one of her greatest weaknesses was in grammar; as heritage speakers’ main form of language acquisition is in the oral production of the language and listening, with little to no attention granted to writing or prescriptive grammar practices.

When prompted about the discussions in English and if it was useful, Avalon stated “this is all of our second language it’s helpful because by getting the ideas in English, we can then translate those ideas into French but, our thinking is always English, like no matter how hard we try, we’re always going think in English first.” I was fascinated here because Avalon boasted about her experience and knowledge of French in the pre interview but then in the post
interview, she took a giant step back and tried to include herself in the CoP of language learners, despite her vastly different needs than those of her peers. Avalon defines her ZPD when she spoke about her ability to complete a task in a given amount of time in comparison to her peers:

> I think because I have had like more of a vocabulary than most of my peers … I don’t have to spend that much time thinking about the words I want to use, so that gave me a little bit more time to think about structure, it wasn’t a lot, it was *a little bit more*, so like I was very consciously aware of because I have spent *a lot of time* with French language. (emphasis added)

By using words like “a little bit more” to refer to the extra, precious moments that Avalon had during the in-class writing assignments, she created boundaries for herself and at many moments during our interviews, Avalon referenced her extensive exposure to the language.

Avalon commented, “I’m kind of enjoying it [writing in French] because of what I do eventually want to do, I know that this is kind of something I have to be doing, so I like the challenge and just the learning of it.” Here, she was shaping her desired identity as she was linking the practices in the SLC to who she wanted to become.

**Mushfaking vs. Heritage Language Learning**

Because she didn't have the support she needed, Avalon frequently downplayed her abilities in French. Avalon was building her identity kit by clearly identifying her limitations. Conversely, she was frequently proving herself by providing insight into French culture and norms. At various moments during the group sessions, Avalon interjected when another student had a question, she felt as though her role was overdetermined, as though her peers, instructor, and I expected her to constantly act as a more capable peer in lieu of focusing on her own growth as a language learner. Avalon’s participation was indicative of and affected her identity. She
wanted to be fluent enough to be able to participate legitimately and be taken seriously by other members of that community.

Avalon demonstrated her literacy acquisition as a means of social capital or used her literacy for cultural means, “And I do not believe that you truly know a language, until you know how to write it.” Similar to Josephine’s comment, she valued and legitimized the language if it was written. She also includes herself in this ideal, elite group of Francophones, responding to how her former classmates described the way French sounds, “that’s not the way French people talk”. Here she was owning and accepting French language and discourse, but I believe she was mushfaking because she has been expected to since she left her French immersion classroom in eighth grade. She struggles with this imposed identity and at few moments during the tutoring sessions, she seemed to step back and allow herself to also be a student.

As stated in the Methods Chapter, Avalon’s perceived weakest point in French was writing, and yet she excelled in that particular aspect. Many students, including Avalon, believed that writing skills are limited to the superficial, grammatical building blocks of language. Concepts and practices such as conjugation, verb agreement, topics that are introduced in introductory level French courses and somewhat abandoned in upper division but are still expected from students.

Identity Trajectory for a Heritage Language Learner

Avalon, in a sense, jumped back and forth between rejection and acceptance of her heritage language. She rejected French because she felt that French rejected her, as she was constantly seeking to understand why she was not getting the grades she used to when she first started studying French. By frequently dominating the conversations, she was demonstrating her
legitimacy in that community. She found numerous opportunities to present personal information that reinforced her status as a legitimate Francophone, “I learned how to write in French before I learned how to write in English”, “my family is from Alsace”, “I’ve written in French before”; the last comment is particularly interesting as I don’t doubt that this was the first opportunity to write in French for other students. So then, why did she feel the need to constantly remind the group of her status and experience? Avalon considered her insider knowledge valuable. Her insight regarding how other participated, or didn’t, in this community of French speakers arose out of questions about her perspective on her own level of French, “technically everyone who is in a high school language class is a language learner and I feel like 80% of them are taking it because they have to. They don’t really care about it.” She valued how much one does or does not care as an indicator of commitment but more specifically, as an indicator of one’s legitimacy is the CoP.

When I asked her to distinguish the difference between a language speaker and a language learner, she answered, “if you’re someone who was like learning Spanish in high school, for the first time, well then everybody learns Spanish or French”. Here, she reminded me that French and Spanish language classes are easily accessible in California, and that she didn’t qualify high school students studying French as language speakers. In a social capital moment she identified where she lied on the spectrum between language learner and language speaker, “I definitely see myself as more of a language speaker because I’m very serious about it, I want to be able to communicate with other people as like, not so much as an equal cuz [sic] I know I might not ever be able to get to that point, but as someone who like, can be taken seriously”. This was another literacy moment. She was classifying her participation as mushfaking,
although she constantly spoke of her high expectations, she still denigrated herself and
subscribed to a discourse of a language learner when her identity and discourse was so much
deeper and more complex than that.

In Avalon’s case, what I saw happen was a lot of identity construction and
reconstruction. Where the other focus group participants had a PES that allowed them to
participate and in turn transfer those practices to the classroom, Avalon mostly had this
transformation of identity in the SLC, where she was able to learn the beginning language
concepts that she missed out on and constantly felt inexpert for not knowing. Because everyone
else felt comfortable asking for clarification on concepts they felt they “should” know, it was as
if the very space allowed for a lowered anxiety and the students could just focus on the language,
not on the maintenance of an identity or role they were assuming in the classroom. Avalon was
able to just be a student, a role that she was not accustomed to having in the context of French.
This safe space was beneficial and necessary for Avalon as a heritage speaker of French.
CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

This thesis has looked to explore students’ perceptions of space and emotion in a foreign language writing space, emphasizing the dependence and distribution of knowledge in a foreign language and heritage language context. This study is located at the intersection of few different fields: foreign language writing, writing spaces, and heritage language learners, in an attempt to understand the ways in which a tutor, emphasizing the model of more capable peer, can better support the needs of foreign and heritage language learners. This final chapter is separated in three sections. The first section provides a summary of the study, including it’s purpose and methodology. The second section provides the implications of this study in regards to spatial and emotional awareness of identity formation of foreign and heritage language learners. The third and final section suggests practical strategies for instructors wanting to provide similar models of writing instruction.

Summary

This study began as an exploration of an alternative tutoring approach in pursuit of more effective ways to support students of French in their writing, specifically addressing the rhetorical features that accompany French written texts. As the study progressed, the focus moved from directly supporting their writing, to supporting a space that could support their writing. By using a model of writing that depends on the distribution of knowledge among the participants, and heavily relies on the construction of the emotional space to produce language, I
hoped to support students of French in their language acquisition and writing. Through a model-based approach, students received a clearer understanding of what was expected of them in their writing. Students’ perceptions of their writing and learning spaces were explored through recorded weekly tutoring sessions with a focus group, interviews with the focus group, follow up survey data distributed to a larger student group, and researcher field notes. Few studies have investigated foreign language tutoring spaces as grounds for writing development and even fewer have investigated the students’ emotional perceptions within those spaces. For this reason, this study looked to understand the experience of students of French by answering these three guiding questions:

1. How did the elements of Distributed Cognition, Communities of Practice, and Affective Filter support or enhance the students’ French language learning and identity?

2. How are elements of Distributed Cognition, Communities of Practice, and Affective Filter present in this PES?

3. What are the implications for a Heritage Language Learner?

This chapter will rely on my findings to challenge what we knew before, and extend the conversation about writing spaces to address foreign and heritage language writers. This thesis promotes different types of research that can inform future research in these fields. The student created space allowed the participants to lower their Affective Filter, which allowed them to create and further contribute to their identities as French students because they were not trying to project overdetermined roles and identities that inherently come with the language classroom. Through my work as a French tutor at the Student Learning Center, I have observed the creation of Communities of Practice, evolving from the rough outlines of anxious students into this supportive group of friends who grew to care for and love one another. This bond was created
through their common interest in the French language and the pursuit to better themselves in French. As Kay said about her experiences with French this past year:

Language learning requires building a different sort of self-confidence than the normal everyday kind because it's like being a child again and you have to constantly admit to yourself/everyone your incompetency in order to improve. Somehow that broke me out of the crushing grief-depression-guilt-hate spiral because it's impossible to learn anything if I'm not participating in it. I mean, it was horrible at first because I felt retarded but after I started realizing I was improving it ended up making me feel like a person again and I'd be practicing French stuff at home and realize ‘Hey, you know what I'm not doing? Crying on my couch again. This is awesome.’ (boldface added)

Implications for Researchers

Using Peers in a French Writing Group to Extend the Zone of Proximal Development

Findings from the study concur with previous research that an outside but alongside studio model is beneficial for students’ writing. The findings extend the argument that this third space can also exist in a foreign language writing space. The amount of participation put forth by the students in the SLC was it’s most distinguishing factor from a classroom. Lave and Wenger’s Situated Learning (1991) helped me recognize the formation of a CoP at the SLC, but what was different about this CoP, as they exist everywhere, is that this CoP helped the students lower their Affective Filters. Stephen Krashen’s (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis states that when one is feeling anxious, self conscious, or unmotivated, the Affective Filter is high or raised. Think of said filter like a dam, as it’s raised status will keep the water from flowing, if we lower the dam, the water will rush out. The learning can be compared to the water here, by lowering the Affective Filter, we can allow for learning to rush in.
The CoPs lowered the students’ Affective Filter as they felt more comfortable with one another, they felt little to no anxiety, and felt motivated by their peers. These moments add new insight to the Affective Filter Hypothesis as Krashen could not have predicted how non-linear the language acquisition was when he said that those with optimal attitudes “will not only seek and obtain more input, they will also have a lower or weaker filter. They will be more open to the input, and it will strike ‘deeper’” (1982, p. 30). As these students had optimal attitudes, their language acquisition was not solely dependent on that, as the PES and CoP did not lower their Affective Filters in a uniform, and consistent way. There were of course moments when the students felt anxiety about the course, language and material, but yet at the same time, they felt comfortable participating, they felt motivated to keep going, and they felt confident while practicing French in the SLC. This is not to say that while they were in this PES that they were completely without worry, anxiety, or stress. Krashen failed to identify significant issues relevant to CoPs and Distributed Cognition when he stated that a student’s emotional state is directly related to the input she is able to receive. By overlooking issues specific to these learning theories, Krashen might not have been able to account for the changes in students’ emotional states, and how these emotional shifts affected their language input.

This study also demonstrated elements of Discourse, defined by James Gee as the forms of life that integrate words and social identities. The Discourse the students used with one another was indicative of their literacy skills and what they valued as literacy capital. Although the questions in the pre and post interviews were about rhetoric, writing strategies, the students’ abilities to do the assigned writing, there were strong elements of Discourse in their answers, defined by their values of what the French language and language learning should look like.
As the students’ language evolved into what Gee would refer to as Discourse, I recognized the formation of a site specific CoP. This site became central to their learning. Their language was one of the defining characteristics of their membership in the CoP, and the language in each group changed as the semester progressed. Further, there was the formation of more than one CoP within the focus group, as different participants had different trajectories for their identities and different means for participation. Full participation had varying degrees, as some participants were focused on speaking more, while others were looking towards establishing a more concrete identity as a college student.

The positive changes in students’ perceptions of their writing abilities that occurred in French tutoring sessions directly contributed to strengthening their writing, because of their confidence in themselves. This confidence grew out of the CoP and each student became more willing to participate as their identification with that CoP became stronger. Students who felt more confident in their French writing abilities, encouraged those who were less enthusiastic to push past their inhibitions. In interviews and focus groups, I probed what the results suggested and found that students who spent time at the SLC created these relationships and built CoPs in that space that would not have happened in the classroom.

Heritage Language Learners in Communities of Practice

To understand Avalon’s critical role in the CoP, we need to examine her identity trajectory and role throughout the data collection. Avalon felt as though she should have had a different role in the CoP because of her different skill set. She saw herself as closer to a more capable peer than an equal participant in the CoP because she excelled at the skill that the other members of the community were pushing to grasp.
Avalon’s inbound identity trajectory suggested that she was penetrating from the peripheral zone or practices, deeper into the CoP. Clearly she was still in the process of moving inward in the CoP of academic French. The reason I made that distinction is because she can speak fluidly and for the most part receives good grades, but was convinced that she needed more vocabulary and basic training, structures she associated with academic French. Academic French acquisition was the inbound identity trajectory that Avalon chose for herself.

As a peripheral participant of the academic French community, Avalon appeared to be “mushfaking” as she relied heavily on her “grammar 1”. She had been able to rely on that grammar to help her pass, and to an extent excel, in her prior French classes. However, as this was her first experience applying academic writing practices to her heritage language, she could no longer capitalize on that skill set. What Gee did not address, were the ways in which HLLs consistently mushfake their way through their language classes and are abruptly halted in their language learning when they can no longer mushfake. When language learning classes reach the point of recalling earlier forms and structures required for composition, HLLs suffer as they generally have had little to no instruction in those grammar dependent areas.

Avalon was frequently proving herself by providing insight into French culture and norms. At various moments during the group sessions, Avalon interjected when another student had a question. As the participants were mostly working to increase their language production and the speed of their ability to write, two skills in which Avalon did not need extensive practice, she was missing out on the full advantages or benefits that came with being a member in this CoP. Because she was often dominating the conversations, Avalon felt as though her role was overdetermined in the SLC; as though her peers, instructor, and I expected her to constantly act
as a more capable peer in lieu of focusing on her own growth as a language learner. Avalon’s case adds complexity to Vygotsky’s more capable peers, as she was alone in her needs as an HLL but also surrounded by language learners in this CoP, that needed her to be the expert. At times, it seemed as though the relationship between Avalon and the others was one directional. Avalon later realized and accepted that the focus group participants were fundamental to her own understanding as well.

**Third Space Values**

The SLC shares some of the powerful defining traits of a third space. The transformative behavior wherein the student has shown growth and where elements of what Soja would define as second space intersect with students desires and resistance to prescribed language learning, transformed the SLC into a third space. The types of change I witnessed in the SLC were instances of understanding, where the students reached a level of comprehension and they were confident in the tools they were using. The students demonstrated a change in their identities, assessed by observing and comparing their earlier, self conscious comments with comments made later, displaying confidence and motivation. From my initial observation and work with the students, I have seen them come in with questions and little to no knowledge about how to find the answer, and weeks later, the same students have access to those resources, understanding how to reach and attain those answers, and using them in a way that is helpful and comprehensible to them.

The SLC valued the students’ work, language, and writing, and was safe enough to lower those Affective Filters because of the strong group identity and close interpersonal relationships, as demonstrated by the interactions between students: by acting as more capable
peers, they were helping each other out with assignment clarification, information about the exams, how to find external resources for French. The students helped one another with the creation of deeper, more meaningful connections, enhancing the community ties but also guiding the learning. The focus group was using any means available to help each other better their French or reach their desired goals.

In addition to the varying kinds of work that happened in the SLC, the differing amount of participants from the classroom directly affected the students and their participation. This adds to the theories put forth by Lave and Wenger, that learning happens by doing. By putting people in rooms, in significantly smaller groups, it is evident that their participation would greatly increase, and their experience would be affected accordingly. Students felt more exposed in smaller groups, however this exposure was not necessarily more conducive to comfort. As students discussed the progression of their feelings towards the group meetings in the SLC, some at first felt annoyed and uncomfortable when our sessions expanded to include more students from their class. They felt contempt towards their classmates, as they were trying to escape the pressures they felt in the classroom by coming to the SLC. They soon understood that if they continued to miss these opportunities for participation, they would not improve in their French writing. This shows us and reasserts that second language acquisition is not a smooth process, the learning is as much about identity as it is about anything else. These reflections were key moments for the students’ continuing participation.

Linking to Reynolds (2007) work, that asks us to consider writing as situated in time and space, the SLC proved to be a fruitful writing space, in how recursive it was that they were lowering their Affective Filters not all at once, but over the course of time, as they learned to
integrate their participation into the group structure. All of these nuances add new insight into Reynolds (2007) work with writing spaces, to expand and include the work done in second or foreign language writing.

The students often spoke about how the friendships they built in the tutoring center helped them feel more comfortable to participate. This increase in participation would lead them to be more receptive to learning the language as they were participating more. This institutional space, or Soja’s second (planned) space by curriculum developers, inherently imposed expectations and regulations on what the students could produce. The SLC gave the students an outlet to practice French, free of imposed roles. The SLC was a third space because it had Soja’s notable traits of a space that was the result of productive tension between first and second space; where the conceived and the perceived were met with both passion and resistance.

Identities Mediated by Space

How we develop in terms of our identities as language learners is mediated by the spaces in which these kinds of things happen. The findings informed how HLLs give us new ways to understand more capable peers. The PES, defined by it’s participants, extended the current research on Distributed Cognition and theories of space. PES is a new way to think about ways in which students learn in particular places.

What has my research shown, is a window into the different ways in which a space operates differently for L2 writing than it does for L1 writing. Further, it contributes to the ways in which we understand the different ways that a heritage language learner can perceive her identity in a third space.
Students felt valued in the SLC because everyone’s contributions were seen as helpful. With an understanding of one's discourse and literacy practices, we can begin to understand why students of French change their identities as language learners, or change their identities from students of French to French speakers and writers. They change their identity because of this strong bond in the CoP at the SLC. They strongly identify with the other participants in this third space, so much so, that they feel safe, safe enough to drop their Affective Filter, and allow themselves to engage in the different practices that come with being a French speaker and writer. A large part of their embarrassment is gone and it stays gone, even after they have left the SLC. This feeling of being safe, goes with them outside of the physical space. They feel safe to maintain their identities as French speakers and writers in the classroom as well, because of this external connection they have created. Their experiences outside the classroom were vital for their identity reconstruction.

More research is needed in the scope of HLLs as more capable peers as it would contribute to the conversation that HLLs need a macro-approach to language learning. Being a more capable peer can allow HLLs to become aware of their own linguistic knowledge and needs in the target language. The findings seemed to suggest that further research should evaluate their language learning mitigated by their role in an outside but alongside writing group, in more detail and in different types of spaces.

Implications for Teachers

This thesis informed the ways we could set up curriculum for HLL and L2 writers. The positive effects of a lowered Affective Filter may transfer from the SLC to the classroom.
By helping students feel confident, comfortable and motivated, these emotions can transfer and students can view the classroom as a safer place as they contribute to and shape their own PES.

If practices that are more seen in tutoring are applied to the classroom, this might help learning. Classrooms can be, by their institutional nature, prescriptive and aggressive. So much so, that the students feel like they cannot bring the participatory practices from tutoring into the classroom. However, this thesis has informed that the students can bring in specific aspects of tutoring, such as their relationships which in turn affect the classroom. Therefore, it is important for instructors to provide outlets for the creation of a third space, where students can cultivate relationships of trust and motivation, and then bring those practices and feelings of safety with them into the classroom.

**Supplemental Instruction is Vital to Success in Language Learning**

My hope is that teachers or instructors of French will see this data and information and understand a bit more why students need supplemental instruction in French. The value that comes from having an outside but alongside studio model for French, is a valuable outlet for students to make meaning with this very new material. Many subjects require additional tutoring (Supplemental Instruction) for specific courses in: CMST, Anthropology, Biology, Chemistry and even Japanese. I think educators and curriculum designers are becoming increasingly aware of the values that lie in supplemental instruction.

We don’t know if this necessarily pertains to other languages in the same way, but there are issues related to learning French that distinguish it as a difficult language to learn for native speakers of English. The difficulties that come with learning a new language can be minimized if there is a space where students can feel safe, emotionally, to participate. If they are
given an outlet with a trusted facilitator that represents the university, but is not their instructor (does not grade them), they feel less nervous because there is no overarching assessment component. The goals are pure and simple: to become a better student/speaker/writer of French. They can also break down and reconstruct barriers for their identities as language learners because by having this outlet, and reduced anxiety, increased confidence, they can feel like French speakers. A big part of being something or someone, is seeing yourself as that. Projective identity, as we have seen, plays a large role in learning. At the SLC, there is a smaller group, there is less pressure, and there is a more pure goal of speaking/learning French.

Create a Writing Studio

This thesis has demonstrated the necessity to have an outside but alongside studio space for foreign language writing. The creation of a space where students are able to fulfill the needs of having a peer give feedback on their work as well as learn a real skill for their near future, such as practicing the conventions of writing a formal email in French or looking at the language used in apartment ads on French housing websites, can potentially reduce the anxiety produced by the overdetermined spaces and roles that exist in education.

Analogous to the A.A. case study in Lave and Wenger’s (1991) Situated Learning, this CoP came into existence from a need. This CoP only came into existence because of the class, the students needed the CoP to succeed. This CoP helped the students feel more comfortable participating and provided them a space where they needed to offload their cognition onto the surround to be able to make gains in their language learning. Situationally, the Affective Filter was lowered in terms of using French in that particular space and with that particular group and these emotions and acceptance may transfer into their work in the class.
Grego and Thompson’s (2008) basis for examining space when they said, “any explanation of how to teach must also be a thorough exploration of where- of the geographical complexities that constitute the materiality and the conceptual elements of place”, failed to include the variables that accompany language learning spaces. The varying levels of French in a that foreign language tutoring space, traditionally not used for the tutoring of writing, and with HLLs as more capable peers, add complexity to the conceptual elements of that place.

For the writing studio third space model to work in a foreign language, it is necessary to have it outside the classroom. Unfortunately, the classroom is overloaded with overdetermined characteristics that are too overpowering to foster a third space. Although a PES can happen anywhere, it is the result of a third space, that exists outside the classroom. The PES can then be brought back in the classroom, only after having established those relationships outside the classroom.

Foreign language composition courses would highly benefit from adopting this model of writing groups outside of the classroom. The students would have time to work together and develop these relationship that are beneficial not only for their writing but for other aspects of their language production. This is not to say that all groups will magically turn into these productive CoPs, this is to say that it may happen, and that these lowered AFs may transfer into the classroom, and that the PES may also be able to live in the classroom.
Supporting Heritage Language Learners

Identity Resources as Reconstructive Tools

Over the course of the interviews with Avalon, I was able to gain a better understanding of her identity as a heritage language learner. Avalon was able to behave like a student towards an academic text because she was surrounded by her peers doing just that. She was no longer expected to provide the answer. Although her peers looked to her as a more capable peer, their perceptions of her abilities had changed through the course of the semester. This shift in perception was liberating for Avalon as she was able to engage in more student practices. It was because of her immersion in this positive learning community that she was able to acquire this practice and Discourse of a language learner, moving away from her former Discourse of tutor/teacher to student.

Avalon’s identity resources (material, relational, and ideational) were present in the SLC as they contributed to a holistic view of the setting where she was learning and forming her identity as a heritage language learner. Her material resources were the round table, where everyone could see each other, the large whiteboard where she could demonstrate in a different way her understanding or questions, the small whiteboards that allowed her to brainstorm and make quick modifications. Her relational resources were the interactions she had with Anne, Elijah, and the other students in her class and focus group. These relationships carried over into the classroom and contributed to the feelings of safety when producing language learning. Her ideational resources were her goals, her motivation to better her French skills, her aspiration to become a French tutor or work using French professionally.
As stated in Chapter 1, second language writing is a relatively new field and researchers have found it necessary to fill in the much needed gaps in research. However, issues with measurement and the isolation of specific variables have made it difficult to identify which practices may be more beneficial than others. The Affective Filter Hypothesis gives instructors something to watch for, and specific factors to be aware of when designing foreign language composition courses. It is important to consider the space as well as the participants when designing a language learning course. Although this concept deserves future research to be truly valuable to other educators outside the language learning sphere, it seems clear that increasing avenues to create a Perceived Emotional Space will be beneficial for both students and instructors in various academic fields.
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REFERENCES


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APPENDICES
Informed Consent Form

French Composition Workshops
Student Learning Center
Spring 2014
CSU, Chico

In the spring 2014 semester, Amanda Abrahams, a graduate student at California State University, Chico, is conducting a research study in which she hopes to learn about the ways that undergraduate students of French learn to write in the target language. This study is a qualitative project in which she will be studying the ways students of French transfer their first language rhetoric into their second language written works.

During the course of the project, Amanda Abrahams will be facilitating and recording semi-structured interviews and focus groups to analyze the specific needs for composition tutoring in French for non-native speakers. She may be observing FREN 302 classes, and may interview Dr. Patricia Black relevant the student’s written work and assignments. She will be conducting writing workshops at the Student Learning Center where she will help introduce French Composition strategies, discerning the principal differences between French and American English form, style, and structure. Any questions about these procedures can be addressed to the researcher or Thesis Chair, Dr. Chris Fosen:

Dr. Chris Fosen
Siskiyou 125
530-898-5269
cfosen@csuchico.edu

Amanda Abrahams
351 E. 6th Ave #C
Chico, CA 95926
Cell (530) 965-0715
amandabrahams@gmail.com

__________________________________________ hereby states and agrees as follows:

1. I have been asked to participate as a subject in this study, and I have read and understand the above statement.

2. I understand that Amanda Abrahams has no control or influence over any part of the grade I receive in FREN 302, or other FREN courses at CSU, Chico during the spring 2014 semester.

3. I understand that this project has no risks or physical discomforts associated with it. I also understand that this project has no material benefits, royalties, or any other form of compensation except that I am free to call upon Amanda Abrahams as a resource in the study of French composition.
4. I understand that I am free to withdraw from participating in this study at any time for any reason.

5. I understand that the results of this research study may be published but my name or identity will not be revealed. All names in this study will be coded and the master list will be destroyed in order to maintain the confidentiality of my records.

Signature:

_____________________________________________________________________

Name (print):

_____________________________________________________________________

Address:

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

Date signed: ________________________________

Contact email: ________________________________
APPENDIX B
Tentative Workshop Schedule

**Spring 2014**

CSU Chico

**Student Learning Center**

What is a writing workshop?
A writing workshop is a safe space for students of French to come and learn in a low-stakes environment. We will go over some common themes in French writing that will serve to better help you formulate your writing in French.

What do students in French classes at Chico State need to know how to write?
All of the upper division French classes require writing in some form. Many written assignments are self directed and ask for students to analyze something or make connections to a certain text.

What is rhetoric?
Read two of the many different definitions of rhetoric below:

- Perelman: “All language is the language of a community, be this a community bound by biological ties or by the practice of a common discipline or technique. The terms used, their meaning, their definition, can only be understood in the context of the habits, ways of thought, methods, external circumstances, and traditions known to the users of those terms”

- Kaplan: Given acts and objects appear different in different languages and cultures.

**February**
02/28/14
11:00-11:50am
Topic: General Composition: *Le sujet de commentaire*. Looking at the French argumentative style, an introduction to French rhetoric.

**March**
03/14/14
11:00-11:50am
Topic: Drop In writing assistance

03/28/14
11:00-11:50am
Topic: Creative Writing: focusing closer on poetry, looking at *le sujet d’invention*

**April**
04/18/14
11:00-11:50am
Topic: Drop-In writing workshop

04/25/14
11:00-11:50am
Topics: How to write formal letters/emails

May
05/09/14
11:00-11:50am
Topic: Drop-In writing workshop
APPENDIX C
Pre Process Interview Questions

French Writing Workshops - Examining rhetoric and composition in second language tutoring spaces
Student Interview Protocol
(30 minutes)

Interview Length—30 minutes

The goal of this project are to evaluate specific needs for composition tutoring in French for non-native speakers. These workshops will help to introduce French composition strategies and to discern the principal differences between French and American English form, style, and structure. I would like to spend about 30 minutes talking with you about your experiences related to writing in French courses, particularly the writing you’ve experienced in the tutoring space. This interview will be kept confidential. Your name will not be used in any report or dissemination of the data.

Background:

Talk to me a little about your academic background and the path that lead you to take this course, FREN 302.

Questions:

1. What are your experiences with writing in the university overall? What kinds of writing have you been asked to do? What are your strengths and challenges when it comes to writing in college?
2. How would you say writing in your French classes has been different than the writing you do in other classes?
3. What do you think are the goals or purposes of writing in a French class?
4. There is/was a lot of writing required for the FREN 302 course. How do/did you feel about your ability to do the writing in the course?
5. What has been most helpful for you in our sessions at the SLC?
6. How is this space [SLC] different than the classroom?
APPENDIX D
Post Process Interview Questions

French Writing Workshops - Examining rhetoric and composition in second language tutoring spaces
Student Interview Protocol
(30 minutes)

Interview Length—30 minutes

The goal of this project are to evaluate specific needs for composition tutoring in French for non-native speakers. These workshops will help to introduce French composition strategies and to discern the principal differences between French and American English form, style, and structure. I would like to spend about 30 minutes talking with you about your experiences related to writing in French courses, particularly the writing you’ve experienced in the tutoring space. This interview will be kept confidential. Your name will not be used in any report or dissemination of the data.

1. Do you think that it has been more advantageous to work in groups or by yourself as far as writing?
2. What are some strategies in the SLC that you’d like to see more in the classroom?
3. Do you think that brainstorming and talking about these strategies in English was helpful for you?
4. Describe some of the writing assignments you were asked to do in FREN 302? What was challenging about these assignments? What did you think you did well in relation to these assignments? (Talk from student’s writing)
5. Has your attitude about writing in a language classroom changed in this course? Why or why not? Probe: If yes, what structures, activities, conversations, or assignments supported this change?
6. What structures do you think supported the writing assignments? What would you add or change to the writing done in FREN 302? What are some things you’d like to see supplement the writing classroom in French?

Identity
1. Do you think that learning a new language is like learning a new identity?
2. What is the difference between a language learner and a language speaker
3. Do you consider yourself to be a speaker of this/these language(s)? If so, when did you make the shift from identifying as a learner to identifying as a speaker? If you haven't, what do you think is the reason?
APPENDIX E
Follow Up Survey Questions

Let’s talk about French!
This survey is about your feelings towards learning a language in a tutoring scenario. There are 7 short answer questions that should take you less than 15 minutes to answer. I am interested in finding out more about the different factors that come into play when you are learning a language. Please take a moment to tell me more about how your emotions and practices affected your experience learning French.

1. Tell me about the last time you participated in your foreign language class? Or during a tutoring session in a foreign language? How were you feeling and how did your participation come about?
   Participation could be raising your hand, helping someone out, asking a question, making a comment or contributing in any way to the class

2. How comfortable did you feel making a comment or asking a question in the classroom? Why do you think you felt this way? What were some of the factors involved?

3. How comfortable did you feel engaging in group discussion? Giving peers feedback in the classroom? Helping someone out during tutoring?

4. How comfortable did you feel exchanging your ideas in the classroom? In tutoring?

5. Did the physical differences in the spaces (classroom or Student Learning Center) affect your collaboration or participation? How? Why?

6. How did the SLC give you a different way of participating or being?

If you participated in my study and would like to disclose your identity, please do so but you are not required to.

First Name
Last Name
Email address
APPENDIX F