

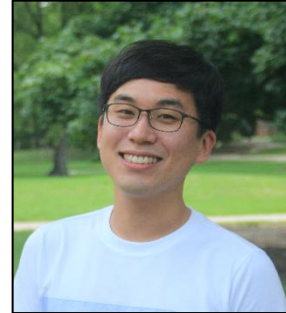


Title of Project:

Investigating the Interactions among Genre, Task Complexity, and Proficiency in L2 Writing: A Comprehensive Text Analysis and Study of Learner Perceptions

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Project Summary:

This study explores the interactions among genre, task complexity, and L2 proficiency in learners' writing task performance. Specifically, identifying the lack of valid operationalizations of genre and task dimensions in L2 writing research, this research examines whether genre can function as a task complexity variable, and how learners' perception and language production interact with their proficiency, suggesting implications for writing assessment. Other objectives of this study are to identify a set of textual characteristics differentiating between narrative and argumentative essays and contributing to the overall writing quality of each genre. To attain these goals, 70 ESL participants at different proficiency levels will compose four independent task essays manipulated in terms of genre (narrative and argumentative) and cognitive complexity (idea support condition) at approximately one-week intervals. Immediately after each timed-writing, participants will complete a subjective self-rating of task features intended to assess how they perceived each writing task. For a comprehensive text analysis and writing quality prediction, this study examines a wide array of textual characteristics at multiple construction levels (i.e., syntactic and lexical complexity, cohesion, and authorial voice strength) using NLP tools. Two trained raters will evaluate essays using a holistic rubric. This study's exploration of task perception and production will shed light on the relationship between genre/task manipulations and valid writing assessment. Particularly, writing instructors and test developers can be informed about the possibility of constructing independent writing tasks with various genres and task complexity levels to achieve an appropriate alignment of task features with target test takers.