WRITER IDENTITY AND USE OF FIRST PERSON PRONOUNS (FPPS) AMONG THREE UNDERGRADUATE CHINESE STUDENTS’ ACADEMIC WRITING

YUANHENG WANG
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Reviewed and approved* by the following:

Mary C. Connerty
Senior Lecturer in English
Thesis Supervisor

Craig A. Warren
Professor of English
Honors Adviser

* Signatures are on file in the Schreyer Honors College.
ABSTRACT

The goal of this study is to explore how specific writing instruction from ESL writing instructors and/or tutors affects three international Chinese students’ use of first person pronouns (FPPs) as they construct and develop their writer identities in the writing process. Findings from current literature show that there is plenty of room for instructors to (re)explore and (re)consider their instruction regarding FPPs and writer identity. Building on these findings, I study three sets of essays from three international Chinese students at Penn State Behrend. By also including interview analyses of the student participants, I explore the types of writer identity the students construct, the specific instruction they received about using FPPs in relation to writer identity, and their reactions in terms of (re)constructing their identities as influenced by the instruction. Implications for future research and potential insights for pedagogy are also discussed.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to explore how specific instruction regarding the use of first person pronouns (FPPs), provided by composition/ESL instructors (and tutors), plays into three international Chinese students constructing their writing identities in academic writing in English. Its secondary goal is to devise pedagogical implications for instructors (re)considering the role of FPPs in relation to writer identity when teaching their students whose first language is not English to become more effective academic writers.

Background

A growing body of literature has explored how FPPs, as a linguistic and rhetorical means of transforming one’s writer identity, influences how second language writers (L2 writers) construct, negotiate, and navigate their writer identities in English writing\(^1\). Researchers and practitioners in Applied Linguistics, Rhetoric and Composition, and Second Language Writing have all argued, from different perspectives, that writer identity, as revealed by FPPs, plays a valuable role in teaching L2 writers. However, few focus on the specific writing instruction the instructors provide to the students regarding using FPPs, such as what the instruction is, how it is presented, and how it is perceived and implemented by the students. In particular, how the instruction influences the students self-identifying themselves in the writing process remains under-addressed.

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\(^1\) Details of relevant literature are discussed in Chapter 2.
In identifying how L2 writers from different language backgrounds use FPPs to create their identities in writing, many scholars choose to examine Chinese students, a large group of L2 writers in the United States. While their findings are instrumental on socio-cultural and comparative rhetoric points of view, these scholars overlook the specific types of writer identity (i.e., individual vs. collective) Chinese students construct. In addition, they do not examine how the Chinese students’ previous learning background in their English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education in China influences these students’ knowledge about FPPs and writer identity in English.

In view of the above, I developed three research questions that navigated this study. These questions are:

1. What kind of writer identities do these students manifest by incorporating FPPs to academic English writing?
2. What specific instruction do the composition/ESL instructors (and tutors) present to the students regarding using FPPs to manifest their writer identities in the writing process?
3. How do the students perceive and implement the instruction in terms of revising or re-appropriating themselves through FPPs in the writing process?

**Thesis Outline**

In Chapter 2, I will review current literature regarding writer identity and FPPs in academic writing, and how they are manifested in first language and second language writing, with a focus on the pedagogical ideas behind; I will also examine research that pertains to the usage of FPPs of Chinese students. In Chapter 3, I will explain how a majority of Chinese students are unaware of using FPPs as related to writer identity in English by exploring China’s Secondary English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Education. Building on the findings from these
two chapters, I will conduct three cases studies comprised of written texts of three international Chinese students at Penn State Behrend, who have graduated high school in China and have taken/are taking ESL 015 classes, coupled with interview data. Thus, Chapter 4 will include the justification of the research methodology, including an illustration of the case studies framework, the rationale of the interview, and the process of data collection and interpretation. Chapters 5 to 7 present the case studies and the analyses. Finally, in Chapter 8, I will synthesize the findings of the case studies and describe relevant implications for future research and teaching practices. The appendices include the IRB exemption approval gained from the Office of Research Protections at the Pennsylvania State University, the survey being distributed to the students, the assignment sheets collected from their ESL instructors, and the essay drafts of the three student participants.
Chapter 2

Writer Identity and First Person Pronouns (FPPs)

In the past two decades, writer identity has received numerous discussions in the fields of Applied Linguistics, Writing Studies, and Teaching Composition. Researchers and instructors have long been enthusiastic about positioning writer identity into writing, and the definitions of writer identity have thus varied. For example, in 1995, composition specialist Darsie Bowden linked writer identity to the metaphorical terminology “voice” in his article, “The Rise of a Metaphor: “Voice” in Composition Pedagogy,” clarifying that voice [writer identity] is “identified variously as style, persona, stance, or ethos” (173). In 1998, linguist Roz Ivanič developed “the aspects of writer identity” to detect how student writers manifest themselves in writing (Writing and Identity 23). Applied linguists Paul Kei Matsuda and Christine M. Tardy contend that writer identity suggests “authorial presence” that “characterize[s] an individual as worthy of membership in academic communities” (35). Other scholars, such as Ken Hyland, view writer identity as a rhetorical strategy (“Authority and Invisibility” 1091). Nevertheless, though writer identity embodies different working definitions, it ultimately points to a writer’s self-representation in discourse.

To an academic writer, self-representation means to draw on a variety of linguistic and rhetorical resources to navigate him or herself in writing and in the writing process, to position him or herself in relation to the text, the readers, and the discourse, and to direct the reader-writer conversation. According to Hyland, these resources include “appraisal,” “evaluation,” and “stance” (“Authority and Invisibility” 1093). The most visible and distinct means of manifesting one’s writer identity is the writer’s use of first person pronouns. In “Humble Servants of the Discipline? Self-mention in Research Articles,” Hyland specifies, “all writings carry information
about the writer and the conventions of personal projection, particularly the use of FPP” (“Humble Servants of the Discipline?” 209). Additionally, in “Options of Identity in Academic Writing,” he indicates that “a writer’s identity is created by, and revealed through, the use or absence of the I pronoun” (“Options of Identity” 352). Apart from Hyland, other researchers, including Roz Ivanič, Ramona Tang, Suganthi John, and others, all argue that FPPs provide writers with a platform of not only revealing themselves to their readers directly, but also developing writer-reader relationships in academic writing. Because academic writing is an act of dialogue, through which writers formulate an argument, address it with evidence, persuade their targeted audiences to embrace their argument, and eventually enter the broader discipline, academic writers must consider how to insert themselves into their writing. FPPs, thus, become the most salient vehicle for them to manifest their identity in the context of academic writing.

Writer Identity in First Language Writing

Experienced academic writers often have profound knowledge and adept writing skills to strategically and effectively position themselves into the texts they create. They often embody great audience awareness, are sensitive with different genres in which their writer identities are presented, and are able to create and adapt their identities according to varying disciplinary and discoursal conventions. However, constructing and maintaining a powerful writer identity through FPPs in academic writing is challenging for student writers. To first language (L1) writers, although most of them are not expected to become competent writers in any specific disciplinary field, they are implicitly expected to learn to create a writer identity that specifically adheres to the academic community. As David Bartholomae recognizes, L1 writers “must speak our [the academy’s] language” (4). Specifically, students must learn to develop the “peculiar ways of knowing, selecting, evaluating, reporting, concluding and arguing that define the
discourse of the community” (Bartholomae 4). Learning to write for academic purposes, then, involves developing a new identity, and by doing so, the students may find “their own experiences to be devalued and their literacy practices to be marginalized and regarded as failed attempts to approximate these dominant forms [conventions of establishing an academic writer identity]” (Hyland “Authority and Invisibility” 1094). In sum, L1 writers often have immense difficulties in manifesting and developing their writer identities in academic writing.

**Writer Identity in Second Language Writing**

As compared to L1 writers, L2 writers encounter greater challenges when constructing writer identity in a second language. In American academic discourse, a prevalent convention is that writers write as authorities and as individuals. However, this convention may contradict the common rhetorical practices of many L2 writers, who are used to developing and negotiating a non-threatening, collective self (Abbuhl 502). According to Hyland, these students may be reluctant to establish an individual self in the institutionally authoritative academic discourses, thus avoiding the use of FPPs in terms of revealing their authorial presence (1093). Other factors, such as a lack of linguistic registers in academic writing, struggle with the textual ownership in the L2 academy, and problematic identity transformation from L1 writing to L2 writing, all prevent L2 writers from creating a convincing and informed identity.

**Second Language Writing Instruction in Writer Identity in Relation to FPPs**

In investigating writer identity in relation to the use of FPPs in L2 writing, many researchers routinely advise that instructors be more cautious when teaching L2 writers to negotiate their identities. Rena Helms-Park and Paul Stapleton question the explicit connection between a well-constructed, individual identity (I) and the overall writing quality of L2 writers’ essays, contending that instructors should pay attention to more critical issues, such as content
development (187). However, others disagree and argue that writer identity plays an important role in L2 students learning academic writing. Roz Ivanič and David Camps suggest that instructors should raise critical awareness when directing L2 writers to reveal their identities because failure to do so would hinder student learning (“I am how I sound” 31). Additionally, because conventions of writer identity have never been explicitly defined, style books and writing manuals frequently give inconsistent advice pertaining to the use of FPPs (Hyland “Options of Identity” 353). This advice, according to researchers Cecilia Guanfang Zhao and Lorena Llosa, has been based on assumptions that were incomprehensible to L2 writers “due to their lack of access to the shared cultural knowledge underlying these assumptions” (156).

Moreover, Hyland also indicates that many instructors often give traditional direction that students should avoid using FPPs in their writing (“Options of Identity” 354). Instruction also is problematic because it over-simplifies academic conventions and overlooks the complicated process behind identity construction in relation to FPPs. Thus, simply instructing L2 writers not to use FPPs as a means of identity manifestation does not benefit the students in becoming effective academic writers.

*Writer Identity of International Chinese Students in Relation to FPPs*

Among researchers who have examined the use of FPPs to construct L2 writers’ writer identities, many have explored that of international Chinese students. In their cross-cultural comparative study, Su-Yueh Wu and Donald Rubin explore the impact of collectivism and individualism on argumentative writing by Chinese students at U.S. colleges and American college students. The two scholars discover that the Chinese students tend to use *we*, the plural form of the FPP *I* frequently because they are influenced by the Confucian principle that writers should use *we* to negotiate a collective self, to manifest virtues that uphold group solidarity, and
to express a sense of collective humaneness (161). Such a tendency of using we might also be attributed to a lot of the Chinese students’ EFL instructors in China using textbooks that have been built on British English discourse (Hu 13). In the British English discourse, writers often prefer to use we to construct a collective self to I that indicates an individual self. These findings, however, do not indicate clearly the relevant challenges Chinese students face in terms of manifesting their identities through FPPs. Leedham discovers that when writing research papers, graduate international Chinese students tend to use we to refer to the researchers themselves, to direct the reader throughout the text, and to explain the research procedure (53-56). Leedham also notes that these students tend to use I in the self-reflection sections of their research papers (56). However, Leedham’s findings may not be fully representative because the student participants in her study have had an advanced level of English language proficiency and years of exposure in academic English writing.

In sum, among a variety of linguistic and rhetorical resources a writer may draw on to construct his or her writer identity, FPPs are the most salient. Many L2 writers face difficulties in inserting their identities through FPPs because many of their instructors and traditional writer handbooks under-address practices of writer identity in relation to FPPs, though a majority of scholarship in L2 writing advocates that FPPs are crucial for successful academic writing. Some researchers attempt to investigate how FPPs play into the writer identities of Chinese students, a large population of L2 writers in the U.S. However, they either generate few explicit insights regarding the direct connection between FPPs and writer identities of these students, or focus their research only on Chinese students with solid discipline knowledge and adept English writing skills, thus producing few generic results. This void is critical because L2 writing is intricately related to identity construction, which is largely established on student writers
incorporating FPPs. Composition instructors and writing tutors must devise whether the students run into challenges in navigating themselves appropriately in their academic writing; they also need to reflect on whether their pedagogies are up-to-date when instructing the students to manifest their identities.

In the next chapters, I will examine how concepts and practices involving FPPs and identities were under-addressed in their EFL classes in China. Building on my findings, I will develop case studies comprised of essays of three first-year international Chinese students at Penn State Behrend, identifying the instruction they have received from their ESL instructors regarding using FPPs, and analyzing the effect the instruction has had on the students revealing their writer identities.
Chapter 3

Writer Identity and FPPs in Secondary EFL Education in China

Research shows that China’s Secondary EFL Education, though having gone through progressive and transformative educational reforms during the past four decades, still does not fully address learning related to using the English language for applied purposes, such as incorporating FPPs appropriately to negotiate identities in English writing. In “Recent Important Developments in Secondary English-language Teaching in the People’s Republic of China,” Guangwei Hu, Associate Professor at the National Institute of Education of Singapore points out that secondary EFL education in China “directly affects a larger number of English learners in the formal educational system than [that] at any level” (31). Thus, in the following sections, I examine how secondary EFL teachers in China overlook practices of FPPs and writer identity in English writing, and how their teaching impacts students’ knowledge about FPPs and writer identity in English.

Institutional and Curricular Perspective

During the past four decades, the P.R.C. government has initiated and implemented broad educational reforms that concentrate on secondary EFL education. These reforms include prioritizing the English curriculum among other secondary subjects, attempting to introduce content-based English instruction, incorporating research and practices of communicative English competency into the development of textbooks, and conducting piolet test reforms to better assess students’ English language learning (Hu “Recent Important Developments” 33-41). However, these nationwide reforms have not all been successful for a variety of reasons. Firstly,
not all the regions and provinces in China are equitable in terms of developing and allocating resources that could devise and implement an effective EFL education. Cities like Shanghai and Beijing are often more resourceful than other cities, such as Kunming and Chengdu in Southwest China. Secondly, though mastering the English language is crucial for Chinese people who wish to develop their academic studies and/or professional careers internationally, there is no sincere need for sustaining a vibrant English education and mastering proficient English language skills within mainland China (Hu “Recent Important Developments” 35). Thus, numerous Chinese students acquire English to pass the exam, and many secondary EFL teachers, in turn, do not teach English for applied purposes.

Assessment Perspective

Moreover, the Matriculation English Test, as part of China’s National College Entrance Exam (NCEE), emphasizes little on the application of the English language. The test, as Hu evaluates, assesses “discrete-point knowledge of English grammar and vocabulary” and is primarily constructed with “multiple-choice [questions] and blank-filling items” (“Recent Important Developments” 41). Therefore, it is logical to infer that most Chinese students, whether or not they choose to advance themselves in an English-speaking country, learn English through memorizing vocabulary and grammar concepts. Furthermore, if the national assessment test does not value the application of English to the real world, a majority of EFL teachers would resist embracing the educational reforms (Hu “Recent Important Developments” 41). Consequently, many of them would choose to teach to the assessment test.

Additionally, the writing prompt of the English test of NCEE, in particular, does not evaluate Chinese students’ English writing abilities. For example, in Chinese Students’ Writing in English: Implications from a corpus-driven study, Leedham characterizes the writing prompt
from the 2005 NCEE in Fujian, China as “argumentative writing” (84). Her examination on and translation of the prompt and the sample essay, however, suggest that what the test takers actually did was to translate into English sentences the Chinese textual clues offered by the prompt’s instruction (84). Prompts with similar instruction are also found in the writing sections of the English tests of NCEE from the past six years. As such, there are neither mechanisms nor contexts that provide Chinese students with ample opportunities to apply the English language, such as reading and writing critically, never mind learning about and understanding writer identity in relation to FPPs in English.

Teacher Education Perspective

The background of secondary EFL teachers is another contributing factor that influences how secondary Chinese students reveal their identities in their English writing. In “English Language Education in China: Policies, Progress, and Problems,” Hu expresses his concern over the quality of both pre-and-in service EFL teacher education in China. Many preservice teacher education programs “suffer from out-dated curriculums and teaching content [such as an overemphasis on prescriptive grammar/syntax], a narrow focus on language proficiency at the expense of educational work, a marginalization of school-based work, an inadequately defined knowledge base for teaching, and a teacher-dominated, textbook-based and transmission-oriented pedagogy that serves language proficiency work from pedagogical preparation” (“English Language Education in China” 19). Consequently, these preservice teachers may not be aware of the concepts of writer identity and how they are reflected in English writing. Similarly, plenty of in-service teachers, including those who have had years of EFL teaching experience, may not be familiar with writer identity in English because of a lack of updated research and instructional support from the professional advancement programs in which they
enroll (Hu “English Language Education in China” 20). In fact, through implementing a three-week writing workshop, scholar Elizabeth Spalding and her co-researchers observed and analyzed how fifty-seven in-service EFL teachers through elementary to twelfth grade in China gained a more mature understanding of writer identity in English writing. The following statements encapsulate their findings: 1) those teachers embodied a lack of second language proficiency in writer identity; 2) they had little experience in teaching how to manifest writer identity in L2 writing; and 3) they often misunderstood the role of FPPs in English writing (43-8). If the teacher education programs do not acquaint teachers with current knowledge and effective instructional support in English writing, and if many of the teachers are unfamiliar with writer identity and its related concepts and practices, it is hardly possible for them to teach their students how to apply it to their English writing.

Student Learning Perspective

Additionally, manifesting writer identities of Chinese students, in China’s high schools, through using FPPs remains an under-explored topic in current literature. In “The Misusage of Pronouns Among Chinese EFL Students: A Corpus-based Analysis,” Huijun Niu, a scholar at the School of Foreign Language at Guangxi Normal University of China, investigates pronoun usage in the English writings of Chinese high school students. She pays particular attention to FPPs, concluding that the Chinese students: 1) are unaware of the rhetoric and stylistic effects FPPs create in English writing; and 2) often overlook the writing contexts in which FPPs are employed\(^2\). However, her conclusions do not address explicitly the connection between the students (mis)using FPPs and comprehending writer identity. Thus, it is unclear how Chinese students learn FPPs in relation to writer identity before they enroll in their U.S. colleges, in

\(^2\) The original article is in Chinese Mandarin and is published on *Foreign Language Teaching & Research in Basic Education*. 
addition to making inferences that their EFL instructors either lack a background in understanding writer identity or have no agency of imparting knowledge of how identity and FPPs are linked in English writing.
Chapter 4
Methodology

Review of Findings from Previous Chapters

In the previous chapters, I explored that Chinese students who graduate from China’s public high schools are unaware of how to construct their writer identities, especially through using FPPs, in their English writing because of a lack of up-dated curricular support in China, insufficient teacher training and teacher awareness, and irrelevant writing assessment. Consequently, when these students enter their freshman ESL composition classes in their U.S. universities, they may encounter difficulties with – among various linguistic and rhetoric choices – using FPPs to navigate their writer identities. However, research in Chapter 2 suggests that many ESL/composition instructors and pedagogical texts often present outdated instruction regarding using FPPs in academic writing; their instruction might be misleading to the students. Additionally, while some researchers have explored extensively the writer identities of graduate Chinese students in academic writing, few examine how first-year international Chinese students use FPPs to reveal their authorial presence.

Research Questions

Building on the above findings, I decided on the following research questions to investigate how writing instruction affects the students self-identifying by FPPs in their writing. These questions include:

1. What kind of writer identities do these students manifest by incorporating FPPs to academic English writing?
2. What specific instruction do the composition/ESL instructors (and tutors) present to the students regarding using FPPs to manifest their writer identities in the writing
process?

3. How do the students perceive and implement the instruction in terms of revising or re-appropriating themselves through FPPs in the writing process?

Research Procedures

An IRB exemption approval from the Office of Research Protections at the Pennsylvania State University allowed me to conduct three qualitative case studies comprised of written texts of three freshman Chinese students at Penn State Behrend. Before I initiated the case studies, I designed a survey and distributed it to 56 Chinese students, investigating their backgrounds and soliciting research variables. During the case studies, I developed interviews with substantial follow-up conversations to gather clarifications from my participants regarding their using FPPs to navigate their writer identities.

In the following sections, I will describe my case studies framework, as compared to other existing theoretical frameworks that examine writer identities, with a focus on FPPs as the most salient feature of identity manifestation. I will also explain the interview and the survey rationale, and the data collection and interpretation.

Case Studies Framework

Many researchers have created different frameworks to recognize, classify, and analyze types of writer identities. In 1999, Ramona Tang and Suganthi John formulated the typology of identities behind FPPs in academic writing. Expanding linguist Roz Ivanič’s idea of a linguistic continuum of the first person pronoun I in the writing and research process, Tang and John came up with six different writer identities associated with I in academic essays, ranked them according to how powerful each identity is in terms of authorial presence, the level of a writer’s authority within the text, and applied the typology to analyze how 27 first-year college students
at the National University of Singapore use FPPs (namely, I and we) to establish their writer identities, as compared to a collection of peer-reviewed articles and books of Linguistics. Other researchers studied above and beyond FPPs in relation to writer identity. In 2001, Ivanič and Camps applied Halliday’s language functions to develop a framework for detailing the types of writer identities. According to the two researchers, writer identity can be classified in terms of the different “positionings” a writer selects in having specific ideas and opinions of the world, varied stances toward content (ideational); manifesting themselves according to different degrees of self-assurance (interpersonal); and in the different ways in which a writer constructs meaning in a text (textual). Writer identity is manifested in the linguistic representations of these three functions. Therefore, the ideational identity is visible when the writer makes lexical choices in noun phrases, syntactic choice, verb types, and generic or specific reference; the interpersonal through modality, personal reference; the textual through noun phrase length, syntactic choices, and linking devices (“I am how I sound” 11). Oriented by a linguistic focus, this framework provides a comprehensive epistemology in analyzing writer identities. Other scholars have taken different approaches. For example, in 2001, Ken Hyland created a corpus-driven study to analyze the use of FPPs in 240 L1 research articles in eight different disciplines, arguing that FPPs embody great values for identity manifestation in academic writing. A year later, he compared the use of personal pronouns in sixty-four Hong Kong undergraduate theses to a corpus of academic articles. By also including interview data from students and the students’ instructors, Hyland explored how self-identity is manifested in L2 academic writing, and argued for the importance of composition instructors reconsidering the role of FPPs in teaching academic writing.
The typology of identities of Tang and John seems to be the most instrumental for my case studies. The two researchers applied their typology to explore the use of FPPs in essays of 27 first-year undergraduates at the National University of Singapore, who had been instructed extensively in English through K-12 grade levels and had more exposure in English as compared to international Chinese students. Therefore, their typology may represent more nature-level use of FPPs. However, the typology represented a thorough and detailed framework that explored writer identity only in relation to FPPs and eliminated other factors and variables that play into one’s writer identity. On the other hand, while the epistemology of Ivanič and Camps is pioneering in that it provides a thorough linguistic investigation on types of writer identities, it exceeds the scope of this study by including factors that go beyond and above FPPs. Likewise, it is ideal to model Hyland’s corpus-driven approach by collecting written texts of a large body of student writers so that quantitative patterns could be generated. However, given the limited time and my limited experience in operating corpus programs, it is challenging to build and analyze my own corpuses.

In particular, Tang and John classified FPPs into six types of writer identity; these types include: 1) the *representative*; 2) the *guide*; 3) the *architect*; 4) the *recounter of the research process*; 5) the *opinion-holder*; and 6) the *originator*. The table below illustrates how each type of writer identity is defined and exemplified.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Writer Identity</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>I as the representative</em></td>
<td>A generic writer identity, often in the collective form <em>we</em>, that is used to make generalizations, to something mutual between the writer and the reader, and to a group of people</td>
<td>1) The English <em>we</em> speak today has various forms; 2) We know that language manifests one’s thoughts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>I as the guide</em></td>
<td>The person who walks the readers through the essay, locates the reader</td>
<td>1) In the above example, <em>we</em> see that the writer has missed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I as the architect</strong></td>
<td>The person who writes, organizes, structures, and outlines the material in the essay</td>
<td>1) In the following section, I will describe how I design the interview; 2) In my essay, I explain the various forms of vernacular Chinese in Canton, China.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I as the recounter of the research process</strong></td>
<td>The person who describes and recounts the various steps of the research process</td>
<td>1) I conducted a case study; 2) I interviewed thirteen students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I as the opinion-holder</strong></td>
<td>The person who expresses explicitly an idea, a point of view, or an attitude regarding known information or established facts</td>
<td>1) I believe that communication skills are extremely important in today’s world; 2) I argue that John’s argument is ineffective because he overlooks audience analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I as the originator</strong></td>
<td>The person who creates ideas or knowledge claims that are original and advanced in the essay</td>
<td>1) When I saw the word “voice,” I thought about passive and active construction in English; 2) I recommend this theoretical framework.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Table 1 An Illustration of Tang and John’s Identity Typology** |

Specifically, in using the *representative I*, often in the plural form *we*, writers make generic reference, claim knowledge between readers and writers, and refer to particular community (S27-S30). The *guide* functions as the “roadmap” of the text, in which students use such verbs as *see*, *observe*, and *tell* to navigate their reader’s attention. Further, the *architect* manifests the structure and the organization of a piece of writing (S28). The *research recounter* is the most visible when a student conducts an experiment, develops a study, and reports to the readers the various steps undertaken during the course of research (S34). Next, the *opinion-holder* refers to “the person who shares an opinion, view or attitude (for example, by expressing agreement, disagreement or interest) with regard to known information or established facts” (S28). Lastly, the *originator*, the
strongest writer identity manifest by FPPs, allows a writer to describe personal experiences, to formulate original ideas, and to present knowledge that seems new or advanced in the text (S29).

The following figure, adapted from Tang and John’s article, illustrates how powerful each type of identity is, with the representative being the weakest and the originator being the strongest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No I</th>
<th>I as the representative</th>
<th>I as the guide</th>
<th>I as the architect</th>
<th>I as the recounter of research process</th>
<th>I as the opinion-holder</th>
<th>I as the originator</th>
</tr>
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</table>

Least powerful writer identity → Most powerful writer identity

Table 2 A Typology of Possible Identities Behind First Person Pronouns in Academic Writing (Tang & John S29).

Survey, Variables, and Participants

To select participants to my case studies, I distributed a survey to 56 international Chinese students who have taken or are taking ESL 015 classes at Penn State Behrend. In designing the survey, I controlled basic demographic variables, such as the students’ citizenship, nationality, and their age and year of standing when taking ESL 015; I also paid particular attention to the length of students learning in L2 (English) because I investigated, in Chapter 3, that the students’ EFL background in China may have interfered with their learning to use FPPs to reveal their identities. Other variables that may interfere with the research outcomes, including the version of the Secondary EFL textbooks used, the length of receiving extra English language tutoring outside high school, and the type of ESL writing assignment to be analyzed for the case studies, were also controlled.
Ultimately, I selected three students as the participants of my study. One female comes from the class of 2019 while the other two males come from the class of 2020. All three of them have taken/were taking their ESL 015 class by the time the case studies started. The table below details the controlled variables.
These names, including the abbreviations of the last names, are pseudonyms and have no implication for and connection with the students’ real names in either Mandarin or English.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Jerry C</th>
<th>Helen H</th>
<th>Vicky Z³</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nationality</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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Table 3. Controlled Variables Among Case Studies Participants

³ These names, including the abbreviations of the last names, are pseudonyms and have no implication for and connection with the students' real names in either Mandarin or English.
There are some uncontrolled variables, however. For example, Helen’s instructor was
different from that of Jerry and Vicky’s, and the reading Helen responded to was not the same as
that of the other two participants. Helen’s instructor chose “Becoming Members of Society:
Learning the Social Meanings of Gender,” written by the Canadian sociologist and gender
studies specialist Holly Devor, while Jerry and Vicky’s instructor selected “Games,” composed
by American author Steven Johnson. However, the type of their writing assignment was the
same, which was to write a critical summary analyzing the writing strategies of the authors of the
chosen articles. Additionally, the three participants represent two genders. While these factors
warrant further in-depth exploration, they exceed the scope of my study and are thus not
explicitly examined.

Interview

To identify how the students felt about incorporating FPPs to construct their identities
and how they perceived the feedback from instructors and tutors regarding using FPPs, I also
developed oral interviews with substantial follow-up conversations with the three participants.
Thus, part of the results was built on self-report data, which might be problematic because the
information the participants recalled and reported might not be completely factual. According to
qualitative researcher Alessandro Portelli, this is an unavoidable phenomenon with oral
interviews. However, oral interviews are valuable for transforming feelings and emotional
reactions that may not be always visible in written texts (66). Canadian-Chinese scholar Alan
Wong also indicates that oral interviews promote “self-reflexivity” (245), an important part of
one’s identity construction. Additionally, as researchers Kathryn Anderson and Dana Jack note,
inviting the interviewees to recall their feelings through oral interviews reduces the interrogative
mode other interview methods may embody, allowing the interviewees (the students in my case)
to fully express themselves (137). Because of the above reasons, I chose oral interviews as a particular method to interact with my participants.

All of the interviews were conducted in English. In analyzing the students’ feedback during the interviews, I understood that there was limited objectivity associated with self-report data. Also, I might bring my own subjective interpretations and thoughts during the interview process. To avoid such subjectivity, I did not attempt to “correct” or “direct” the participants’ use of oral English. However, I paid particular attention to verbs and adjectives that manifested feelings as they were crucial for my research questions.

*Essay Collection and Interpretation*

Rather than only look at the final drafts of the participants, like Tang and John did, I asked my participants to give me all of their drafts for the analytical writing assignment. Thus, the texts included a rough (first) draft, a second draft after receiving in-class peer-review feedback and feedback from ESL/writing tutors, and a final draft after receiving individualized comments from the instructors. Therefore, I had a total number of nine drafts to analyze. Investigating multiple drafts allowed me to figure out how each participant inserted FPPs to manifest their writer identity in the text’s specific context, enabling me to devise the writing strategies they implemented to modify, revise, and/or appropriate their identities through FPPs during the revision process. It also allowed me to examine closely to the written comments (the instruction) their instructors provided.

I tagged and counted the FPPs in all of the drafts manually. The FPPs included both nominative case (*I* and *we*) and objective case (*me* and *us*). In classifying the data, I applied Tang and John’s typology of writer identities suggested by the use of FPPs. By including interview
analyses, I also compared how each type of identity is revised and reconstructed during the revision process, as influenced by the instruction.

Assignment Sheets & Instruction

Because the main purpose of this study is to examine how specific writing instruction affected the three student participants constructing their writer identities through FPPs, I collected from the two ESL instructors the assignment sheets for the analytical writing assignment. My hope was to identify whether or not there was any written instruction that specifically pertained to the use of FPPs. It would be ideal if I could include the in-class instruction in the case studies. However, I was unable to achieve this because conducting in-class observations would require another IRB approval, and applying for a new IRB would exceed this project’s proposed deadline. Thus, it was unclear as to how the instructors gave oral instruction pertaining to the use of FPPs.

On the assignment sheet, the instructor of Jerry and Vicky gave explicit instruction regarding the use of FPPs. This instructor wrote:

You may use the first person “I” if it is appropriate for your purpose. You should not rely on personal experience as your only evidence.

**Inappropriate use of “I”:**

Ex) *I* disagree with Johnson’s claim that video games are “fiendishly, sometimes maddeningly, hard” (p. 201) because *I* always beat every single video game that *I* ever attempt to play, so for me, they are easy.

**Appropriate uses of “I”**

Ex) Johnson successfully uses a metaphor to compare two very different phenomenon: critics of video games and people who have never actually seen a rhinoceros but try to draw one (p. 201). These two types of people may seem to have nothing in common, but Johnson cleverly makes a connection in his readers’ minds by claiming that many people who criticize video games as a waste of time have never actually played them, much like
those who try to draw a rhinoceros based off of someone’s description without actually seeing the animal themselves. The drawing would obviously be ridiculous, just like the criticism of someone who has no video game experience and therefore cannot truly understand the benefits of the practice. This metaphor assists Johnson’s argument that video games have many virtues, including their high level of difficulty, and that those who naysay playing such games most likely are basing their judgements on incomplete research. Rhetorical strategies such as this metaphor are helpful to readers like me who - like the critics of video games that he challenges - have not played many video games, so this kind of comparison helps me (and other non-gamers) to understand his point more clearly.

Jerry’s and Vicky’s instructor clearly explained that the students should not use personal experience (as manifested by I as the opinion-holder or originator per Tang & John’s typology) as their only evidence, or as the primary source that revealed their agreement or disagreement. The use of I could take place when the students were able to contextualize themselves appropriately in ample and thorough textual evidence. Helen’s instructor, however, did not put any instruction pertaining to FPPs on the assignment sheet.
Chapter 5

Case Study A: Jerry’s Essay

In Jerry’s essay, “An analysis of writing skills of Johnson’s Games,” the student evaluates Johnson’s use of evidence. According to Jerry, while Johnson effectively incorporates input from other experts to demonstrate the benefits of playing video games and uses various “voices” to engage with Johnson’s readers, he lacks sufficient evidence to validate his argument. In using FPPs to manifest his writer identity, Jerry used both I and we interchangeably, with we referring to the representative most extensively, and I to the originator in most instances. No instance of I as the research process recounter is found.

The table below illustrates the distributions of Jerry’s use of FPPs in terms of revealing his writer identity in his three drafts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>I as the Representative</th>
<th>I as the Guide</th>
<th>I as the Architect</th>
<th>I as the Recounter of Research Process</th>
<th>I as the Opinion-holer</th>
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<td>2</td>
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</table>

Table 4. Jerry’s use of FPPs for revealing his writer identity

Discussion

- I as the Representative

As described in Chapter 4, I as the representative is the least powerful type of identity in Tang and John’s typology. It often occurs when the student writer uses the plural form we or us.

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4 Jerry used the word “voices” to refer to Johnson’s rhetorical switch between first, second, and third person pronouns.
to refer to general people, to mutually accepted information between the writer and the readers, and to a specific community. Per Tang and John, *I/we* as the representative is the least powerful type of writer identity because it only positions the writers alongside other stronger types of identities, such as the opinion-holder and the originator, which create the content of the text (S32). Therefore, the representative does not lead to a salient authorial presence.

Out of a total of 18 instances of the FPPs used in Jerry’s first draft, 5 fall into the representative type. Jerry made no revisions to this particular type, so the number of *I* as the representative remained the same in his second (5 out of 19) and third draft (5 out of 16). The instances include:

1. “In my school life, especially some group works and basketball match that *we* have to know how to cooperate with your team members” (draft 1-3).

2. “However, when *we* want to prove some points or persuade the reader, not only need some quotation but also some personal experience or various examples such as some famous person’s experience or some instances from life” (draft 1-3).

3. “*We* also can use various voice to express what *we* thought and some personal motion to let readers trust what *we* said in the article” (draft 1-3).

The first instance takes place in the paragraph in which Jerry criticized Johnson’s lack of personal experience operating video games. To validate his claim, Jerry incorporated a variety of his own personal experiences, arguing that he had gained much growth by being exposed to video game. He also used his own experiences to generalize the overall benefits video games embody. Specifically, the student described that the cooperation skills he had learned by playing video games helped him to succeed in his high school’s basketball team. He used *we* to refer to his team, a specific community, assuming that his readers will understand the context of *we*. It is
interesting to note that in the first instance, Jerry used *your teammates* as if the readers themselves were the competitors from his high school’s basketball team. In recalling his purpose of using *we* in the first instance, Jerry said that he did not “put much thought into it.” However, Jerry also explained that it was natural to use *we* as “it was my [his] team players; they [the team] are a group.”

In the second and the third instance, however, Jerry manifested a more visible and more deliberate writer identity. The two instances occur in Jerry’s conclusion paragraph, in which the student attempted to summarize his evaluation on the effectiveness of Johnson’s writing strategies. In both instances, Jerry used *we* to refer to the readers who are writers, suggesting that in order to present a compelling argument, writers can consider embedding evidence from various sources and diversifying the use of first and third pronouns as a writing strategy. Because Jerry’s primary claim concentrated on Johnson’s effective use of evidence and his rhetorical switch between first and third person pronouns (“voices” in Jerry’s word), it is clear that Jerry was using *we* to transform his own argument.

When being asked about the reason for which he chose *we* in his conclusion paragraph, Jerry presented two reasons. Firstly, the student was unsure of whether his evaluation on Johnson’s writing strategies was valid because he, in fact, did not devote too much time and energy in composing the first two drafts. Being aware of his essay’s content being underdeveloped, Jerry used *we* to obtain a sense of security, hoping that his peers and the instructor would accept what he had written. Thus, *we* as a collective form of writer identity became the source of confidence. Secondly, Jerry had not learned from his instructor about effective strategies and appropriate conventions for writing a paragraph. By the time he finished writing
the first two drafts, he had not met the instructor’s requirement on the length of the essay\(^5\). Consequently, he started to use we to deliver suggestions to writers, hoping that it would make up the essay’s content. Therefore, using we became a strategy to compensate for the student’s writing content.

Jerry’s instructor did not provide the student with detailed instruction regarding his taking advantage of we to make up the assignment’s content. In the second draft, the instructor commented on the student’s conclusion paragraph, in which the instructor wrote, “Restate your thesis statement in a different way to summarize the points you made in your body paragraphs.” Because the instructor did not elaborate on the comment, Jerry perceived that the instructor was comfortable with his conclusion. As a result, he did not revise the instances involving we, and only added one extra sentence to restate his ideas, which is, “Although Johnson successfully presents a solid argument by presenting a strong example, incorporating viewpoints of experts and different voices from the article, his argument is not perfectly presenting in that it lacks empirical evidence.”

- *I as the Guide*

According to Tang and John, the guide provides readers with the “roadmap” of an essay, in which students use such verbs as “see” and “observe” to explicitly navigate their reader’s attention (S27). Per their study, students tend to use the guide in the plural form we because they are “reluctant to assert their individuality in their writing” and are trying to distance themselves from the text (S32).

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\(^5\) This is understandable given the analytical summary was the student’s first writing assignment in the ESL 015 class. Therefore, rather than instruct the students to write an effective conclusion, the instructor might have focused more on teaching the students to create an appealing introduction, to craft a logical and persuasive thesis, and to develop the content.
Across Jerry’s drafts, only one instance involved I as the guide, and it remained unrevised because the instructor did not comment on it. In his conclusion paragraph, the student wrote, “We are supposed to see some positive things from games and guide kids how to play them and how to learn some useful skills which will be used in the future life rather than stop them by some strict ways” (draft 1-3). In this sentence, Jerry guided his readers’ attention, leading them to realize the possible benefits of playing video games. Though his tone was relatively strong, as manifested by the modal phrase are supposed to see that suggested a sense of obligation, he chose to soften it by using the collective we. In the interview, Jerry said that he felt “safer” using we in this context. This echoes Tang and John’s analysis that students seek for a “safety in numbers” mentality when using we as the guide.

Though Tang and John characterize we as the guide as “non-threatening” in terms of manifesting a student’s writer identity (S32), Jerry’s case reveals how I/we as the guide serves as an indicator of the level of confidence students embody when providing their readers with directions; it also suggests how distant students – whether consciously or unconsciously – wish to remain from their text.

- I as the Architect

Architect is the third most powerful writer identity on Tang and John’s identity typology; it “foregrounds the person who writes, organizes, structures, and outlines the material in the essay” (S28). In, Jerry’s first two drafts, there is only one instance of architect, in which Jerry wrote:

Therefore I want to summary [the student’s original word choice] and analyze the
advantages and disadvantages from the following three respects [the student’s original word choice]: the structure of the essay, the main viewpoint and the different voices from the article (draft 1&2).

In this sentence, which took place after Jerry’s thesis, Jerry used I to indicate how he planned to construct the essay and what his primary foci were. This is an important feature of good academic writing as it “signpost[s] and provide[s] an overall outline of the essay for the reader” (Tang & John S32). However, in the final draft, Jerry chose to delete his architect sentence because his instructor, after he submitted the second draft for instructor review, highlighted the sentence and asked him to put his “thesis” into a “declarative fact.” In other words, Jerry’s instructor misinterpreted the architect instance as Jerry’s argument. Feeling confused with his instructor’s feedback but unwilling to figure out other alternative strategies, as the student admitted during the interview, Jerry removed this sentence from his final draft and provided no replacement to function as the architect.

- I as the Opinion-holder

As Tang and John categorize, I as the opinion-holder is the second most powerful type of writer identity, through which a writer expresses his or her opinions, ideas, and attitude overtly through I.

There are 2 instances of I as the opinion-holder in Jerry’s first (2 out of 18) and second draft (2 out of 19). He deleted them because of the instructor’s feedback, leaving no I as the opinion-holder in a total of 16 instances in his final draft. Specific instances include:

1. “However Johnson did not use enough and clear evidence to prove his point…Therefore I cannot totally agree with him [Johnson] since lacking evidence to support his point” (draft 1&2).
2. “Therefore, I totally agree with Johnson’s opinions because of my experience” (draft 1&2).

In the first instance, Jerry expressed his attitude explicitly through I with the verb phrase cannot totally agree with, revealing a salient and assertive writer identity. This instance took place after the student attempted to evaluate Johnson’s use of evidence. Therefore, Jerry manifested his individualized writer identity based on critical evidence. While the student admitted that he did not know when to use I in academic writing to indicate agreement or disagreement, he felt confident with implementing I overtly in this instance. He described, “I feel more comfortable and confident here. It’s not like I am saying my own opinions. I had back up. I already analyzed he [Johnson] didn’t have strong evidence to support himself. So, I did the analyzing work. That [the analysis] back me up, so I wrote I.”

A further examination on the context of the first instance leads to another critical discovery. In the paragraph to which this instance belongs, Jerry did not evaluate Johnson’s use of evidence. Instead, the student was paraphrasing the places in which Johnson embeds various sources into his discussion in “Games,” but he assumed that his summary could take the place of the analysis. Therefore, the student used the summary as evidence to support his own argument. The instructor addressed this flaw explicitly in the students’ second draft, in which the instructor commented, “Up until this point, this paragraph has been a summary of the article. This paragraph needs to focus more on this point (analysis of this writing strategy), incorporating the summary into the analysis.”

The reason for which Jerry used I in the second instance is similar to the above, though the context of I is slightly different. In the second instance, Jerry wrote I, again, to manifest his direct attitude with the verb phrase agree with. However, the source of I came from his own
experience instead of the textual analysis. Jerry confirmed in the interview, “This one [the second instance] is the same here [using I overtly]. I had many experiences playing video games. They [Jerry’s experiences] back me up.”

In terms of revising these two instances, Jerry erased them after the instructor review. The instructor commented that Jerry should have composed a substantial analysis instead of a summary. However, rather than revise the content (changing the summary into the analysis) and tailor the instances that display his agreement or disagreement through I, the student deleted the opinion-holders and did not change the content. In describing his feeling, the student admitted that he “felt tired and didn’t want to do much [about the revision].”

The above findings are illuminating for a number of reasons. Firstly, Jerry’s case contradicts the commonly held belief that Chinese students, in general, would use we instead of I due to the impact of the collective culture, as discussed in Chapter 2. Secondly, the findings are different from Tang and John’s analysis. The two researchers note that I, as the opinion-holder, may be “daunting” to the students because it means “explicitly bringing the writer-as-thinker into the writing, exposing their thoughts to the scrutiny of the reader” (S34). Manifesting ideas directly through I is thus an “intimidating process” and makes “students feel insecure about the validity of their claims” (S34). However, at least in Jerry’s case, it seems that as long as the student was able to ground his writer identity into evidence, he would not feel uncomfortable with inserting I to express his agreement or disagreement., whether or not the evidence itself is valid.

- **I as the Originator**

I as the originator is the strongest writer identity. It allows students to formulate original ideas and present knowledge that seems new or advanced in their writing (Tang & John S29). In
other words, through the originator I, students claim authority and ownership over their text and their interaction with their intended readers.

Jerry used I as the originator most frequently throughout his three drafts. In the first draft, 9 out of 18 instances fall into this category. In the second draft, he added one more instance (10 out of 19) and kept all of them in his final draft (10 out of 16). The first 9 instances take place jointly in Jerry’s second body paragraph, in which he indicated Johnson’s lack of authentic experience playing video games. To address this void, Jerry narrated his own experiences becoming an expert video game player. These instances include:

1. “As for me, I have played video games since 8 years old. At the beginning, I played some easy and smart games such as Tetris and Retro Snake to practice my intelligence and reactions” (draft 1-3).

2. “When I was 12 years old, I started to play some FPS games like CS, Call of Duty and Left Dead” (draft 1-3).

3. “From that time, I knew what it is the teamwork and preliminary understood the team spirit” (draft 1-3).

4. “In the high school, I began to some MOBA video games such as League of Legends, DOTA, and Over-watch with my classmates in the weekends and I recognized the importance of team work” (draft 1-3).

5. “These skills, however, I could not got from the book or some reading source but could learn from various games” (draft 1-3).

6. “However, he [Johnson] did not use examples like how I got benefits from playing video games. (kept the opinion-holder” (draft 1-3).
By describing the different types of video games he had been exposed to and evaluating the lessons he had gained through engaging with them, Jerry displayed an overt and powerful sense of writer identity through *I*. He used his original experiences as evidence to support his claim that Johnson may have had little experience in playing video games, making himself the direct and superior owner of his argument. This is further confirmed by the student’s comment in the interview, in which he said, “They [Video games] are my thing. I played a lot with them, like DOTA, so I know how they actually help you” (Jerry). Because of his extensive experiences, Jerry felt that he had both the right and the ability to reveal himself in an original and empowered way.

Despite Jerry’s feeling empowered by his own experiences, he did not relate them to the overall theme of the assignment, which was to evaluate Johnson’s writing strategies. Jerry’s instructor noticed this mistake and articulated it in the second draft. The instructor wrote, “These are interesting details from your own life, but they sound like a list of games you have played and do not connect enough with the overall point of this essay.” However, the instructor also praised Jerry’s application of his own personal experience in the same paragraph, in which the student wrote, “…he [Johnson] did not use examples like how *I* got benefits from playing video games” (Jerry draft 1-3). The instructor commented, “Good point – good way of incorporating your own experience into your analysis.” Feeling confused with whether or not he should keep the personal experiences, as he admitted in the interview, the student made *no revisions* to his originators in his final draft. Instead, he added one sentence, “However Johnson did not use enough and clear evidence and experience to prove his point, therefore, his writing strategy about using clearly evidence and data is not perfect.”
In addition to maintaining all of the 9 instances throughout his revisions, Jerry added one more originator instance to his second and third draft. In summarizing his third body paragraph, in which the student analyzed Johnson’s rhetorical strategy of moving between different personal references, Jerry wrote, “Therefore I really recommend this way [using first and third person pronouns rhetorically] to express writer’s feelings or attitude which could be more specific and convinced” (draft 3). The use of I and its associated verb recommend characterize his recognizing himself as a writing expert. In the interview, Jerry said that he used I here because the instructor had discussed with the students the different rhetorical effects Johnson created by varying personal pronouns in “Games,” so he was transferring his class discussion into his analysis and felt that it was “strong enough” (Jerry). In other words, his confidence with using I as the originator derived from his in-class learning experience, which he called as “real and reliable” in the interview.
Chapter 6

Case Study B: Vicky’s Essay

In Vicky’s essay, “Analysis on Games by Steven Johnson,” the student argues that Johnson presents a persuasive argument by using experts’ ideas to strengthen his claim, by presenting an effective comparison between playing video games and reading books, and by using pathos to appeal to his audiences. In terms of revealing her writer identity, Vicky incorporated FPPs to her drafts less frequently than Jerry did. However, in the interview, she gave more explicit reasons about using FPPs in her writing and during the revision process, and demonstrated a more articulate sense of identity.

The table below illustrates the distributions of Vicky’s use of FPPs in terms of revealing her writer identities in her three drafts. There is neither guide nor recounter of research process.

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>I as the Representative</th>
<th>I as the Guide</th>
<th>I as the Architect</th>
<th>I as the Recounter of Research Process</th>
<th>I as the Opinion-holder</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
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</table>

Table 5. Vicky's use of FPPs for revealing her writer identity
Discussion

- I as the Representative

In the student’s first draft, 2 out of 3 instances fall into I as the representative. This type of writer identity is also the most frequent in her second (4 out of 9) and final draft (6 out of 7). In the first draft, the two instances take place in the paragraph in which Vicky analyzed Johnson’s effective use of pathos. She wrote:

1. “But it’s a totally different story when playing video games. We need to discuss all the time, and share our opinions [when playing video games].”

2. “We make comments about the background music and the story of the games.”

Vicky used we to represent video game players, a specific group of individuals. She made generalizations about the kinds of activities video game players involve, arguing that playing video games was more active than reading books. She said in the interview, “This is common sense. When they [the players] play video games, they talk to each other, like sharing strategies. They also communicate to build teams in the games. They also comment on the games, the music, and other stuff. Everybody knows that, so I used we” (Vicky). Unlike Jerry, who used we to soften his individual identity because he was not confident with I, Vicky used we to establish shared facts and felt comfortable with doing so. This aligns with Tang and John’s discovery, where students use we as representative to indicate shared knowledge between the reader and the writer (S30).

Vicky also added two instances involving we as the representative in her second draft to create a sense of inclusiveness with her readers. One of the new instances derived from her revision to one sentence in her first draft, where she originally wrote, “Book tells stories, and Games leaves the stories to you, and you should find out what is going on” (draft 1). In the
revised version in the second draft, she changed it into the following sentence, “Book tells stories, and Games leaves the stories to us, and we should find out what is going on” (draft 2). Vicky consciously changed the second person you into the gentler and more inclusive we, helping her readers to realize the benefits of playing video games. She articulated her reasons in the interview, saying that, “I am not thinking when I put you in here [the first draft]. I saw it in the revising part and wanted to change it fast. You sound like yelling, like accusing, so I changed it into we. Sound better” (Vicky). Clearly, Vicky was able to recognize the subtle rhetorical effect the second person you could create in a piece of text, and was able to transfer it into we to interact with her readers more engagingly. As compared to Jerry, Vicky had a clear intention of inserting her writer identity strategically into her writing.

To intensify the sense of inclusiveness, in Vicky’s final draft, the student added two more instances of we as the representative. When comparing video games to books, she wrote,

1. “When we play video games, our mind and body are engaged in these stereo world” (draft 3).

2. “We can actively drive our thought” (draft 3).

Despite Vicky’s making some awkward word choices, she used we again to make generalizations about how readers could gain benefits from playing video games. Vicky characterized it as “common sense” in her interview, saying that, “The benefits are obvious. We all know them. I was talking about facts.” This resonates Tang and John’s analysis that students express perceived universal truths through using we (S27). Vicky’s instructor did not offer written feedback to the instances involving we as the representative. Therefore, the student self-developed more instances involving we.
I as the Architect

Vicky incorporated no architect to her first draft. However, she added one architect sentence after her thesis statement in her second draft. She wrote, “I will present Johnson’s quotes first, then I will evaluate their effectiveness,” attempting to signal the outline of her essay (1). As explained by Tang and John, the architect allows the readers to look at the overall structure of an essay before they explore the essay’s content. Vicky said that she added it after looking at some sample academic essays she searched online, and that she realized it would make her essay look “more professional.” This demonstrates an advanced level of self-awareness of one’s writing as the student consciously inserted her identity by self-exploring sample academic texts. Her instructor provided no comment to her architect sentence. However, Vicky erased it from her final draft after a writing tutor told her that the architect is “unnecessary” and “redundant.” Though she disagreed with the tutor’s advice, as she indicated in the interview, she implemented it because the tutor had more “experience.”

Vicky’s case exposes two potential concerns regarding instructing the students to use FPPs to function as the architect in academic writing. First comes with the inconsistent instruction regarding the architect instances found in the drafts of Jerry and Vicky. Specifically, Jerry’s instructor asked the student to change his architect sentence, which is “Therefore I want to summary and analyze the advantages from the following three respects: the structure of the essay, the main viewpoint and the different voices from the article” (Jerry draft 1&2), in to a declarative thesis, showing that the instructor might have misinterpreted the architect sentence. However, the same instructor did not provide Vicky with any feedback regarding the student’s architect instance. Such inconsistency is important to be addressed because it might mislead the students as to whether or not they should inform their readers of the structure of a piece of
writing overtly through I. Secondly, the tutor with whom Vicky worked may have been unaware of how the architect plays into academic writing, thus denying the importance and the relevancy of building the architect. The two concerns revealed here warrant further attention of instructors and tutors because the architect is a critical feature of effective academic writing.

- *I as the Opinion-holder*

Vicky did not put any opinion-holder in her first draft. However, she added two instances with *I* to state her claims. The first instance takes place in her thesis statement, and the second one is at the end of her first body paragraph, in which she evaluated Johnson’s incorporation of expert’s ideas to support his argument. Vicky wrote,

1. “*I* argue that Johnson expertly takes advantage of using others’ quotes, comparing to reading to make his arguments and appealing to pathos to give his thesis statement to make his argument strong.”

2. “*I* think this writing strategy [using experts’ quotes] is very convincing because it makes article credible and persuades reader by logical statement.”

Some may argue that in the first instance, *I argue* sounds more like the architect, through which a writer directly informs the readers of his or her next move in the text. However, after reading through the student’s entire essay, one could tell that this instance was, in fact, the thesis, which displays the student’s core argument. Through this sentence, the student exhibited her evaluation on Johnson’s writing strategies by using an overt *I*; thus, it falls into the opinion-holder’s category. Vicky also used *I think*, in the second instance, to reveal her approval on Johnson’s usage of experts’ ideas, directly revealing her attitude. Even though *I argue* and *I think* may look redundant, they suggest a strong sense of writer identity. Vicky emphasized in her interview, “It was like I must put myself in there. My opinions, you know. I don’t think they are
unnecessary. They tell them [the readers] what I think.” According to her reaction, it is clear that Vicky felt firmly about revealing her identity with *I* as if she needed to see herself being visible in her text.

The instructor did not offer written comments on Vicky’s opinion-holders. However, in the final draft, Vicky revised the opinion-holders after visiting a writing tutor, who crossed *I think* and *I argue* in her draft and wrote “no need” next to the two instances. She deleted *I argue* in the first sentence and tailored the second one by putting Johnson as the subject of the sentence. She wrote, “By using others’ quotes, Johnson strengthens his argument and makes his article more credible, which persuades readers effectively” (draft 2). When being asked how she felt about the revisions, Vicky responded that she chose to respect the tutor’s input. However, she was a bit frustrated with taking herself away from her text, expressing, “It’s strange and made me a little bit unhappy. They are my opinions, my voice. Why delete myself?”

- *I* as the Originator

Vicky incorporated one originator to her essay, and it remained unrevised throughout her three drafts. Similar to Jerry, Vicky also used the originator to introduce her personal experience. Specifically, when discussing the visual advantages video games embody, Vicky wrote, “For example, when *I* read the *Aesop’s Fables* it’s hard to imagine those little elfin as a picture of a fox chasing a chicken. However, it’s easy to picture it if it is on the video games” (draft 1-3).

Using her original experience as evidence, Vicky revealed her identity through *I* and did not feel uncomfortable with doing so. The instructor left no written comments on Vicky’s using her own story as a source of evidence, as the instructor did explicitly in Jerry’s case, so Vicky did not change her originator. Thus, the instruction regarding the appropriate use of personal experiences was inconsistent. It was unclear as to why the instructor required Jerry to revise his
experience but not that of Vicky. However, this inconsistency might be understandable because Jerry’s personal experiences, as examined in the previous chapter, took the place of his analysis. Thus, Jerry’s originators needed to be revised extensively. However, Vicky used her story as supportive evidence to discuss her reaction to Johnson’s argument. Her originator played a minor in her drafts and did not interfere with her analysis, so the instructor might have felt that it was appropriate for Vicky to keep her personal experience in the final draft.
Chapter 7

Case Study C: Helen’s Essay

Helen took her ESL 015 class with a different instructor. The article to which Helen responded for the writing assignment was also different. Helen’s instructor asked the students to write an analytical summary to “Becoming Members of Society: Learning the Social Meanings of Gender,” written by the Canadian sociologist Holly Devor. Specifically, the students were asked to write an essay summarizing Devor’s argument while evaluating her writing strategies, such as use of evidence, organization of ideas, and use of different personal pronouns. Thus, the purpose of Helen’s assignment was the same as that of Jerry and Vicky. Unlike Jerry’s and Vicky’s instructor, who provided explicit instruction on the use of FPPs on the assignment sheet, Helen’s instructor did not put any written direction on hers. It was also unclear as to whether Helen’s instructor explained the use of FPPs in class.

In Helen’s essay, “How does the public identify gender,” the student examined Devor’s organization and use of examples that enriched Devor’s argument. In terms of revealing the student’s writer identity, Helen used FPPs because of her need of a sense of security when expressing her individual claim. She also used the singular form I to introduce her personal experience and to express her argument overtly. There is neither the guide nor the recounter of research process in Helen’s drafts.

The table below illustrates the distributions of Helen’s use of FPPs in terms of revealing her writer identity in her three drafts.
Discussion

- *I as the Architect*

Among the drafts of the three case study participants, Helen’s drafts manifest the most extensive revisions, most noticeably in her use of *we* as the representative. In her first draft, 12 out of 15 instances fall into the representative type. Some of the instances include:

1. “*We* cannot deny that the gender dividing line, at certain degree, is still clear” (draft 1).
2. “Devor’s observations give *us* a new perspective of identifying gender” (draft 1).
3. “…If a woman performs independently and powerfully, *we* will still view her as masculine. When *we* think in this way, *we* have ignored her own special personality” (draft 1).

Similar to what Vicky practiced in her drafts, Helen used *we* to make generalizations about her readers. In addition, she used *we* to create an inclusive relationship, attempting to soften her tone as Jerry did. In the first instance, she claimed that the gender boundary was still universally pervasive. She also used *us* to refer to readers in general in the second example. In the later instance, she incorporated *we* to suggest how people assigned gender stereotypes. When being asked about the specific reasons of using *we*, Helen responded in the interview:
I used *we* on purpose. I was not confident with some [of my] claims. They [My claims] are debatable, but I wanted to make them sound agreeable. That’s why I used *we*. *We* gave me, like, security. It’s like a jacket, you know, to cloak my ideas. They are mine, of course, but I was hiding *me* behind *we*. Also, I used *we* to say what I assume everybody knows.

According to Helen’s response, she had a clear awareness of using *we* as a rhetorical strategy to reveal her identity. In using *we*, the student presented what she assumed to be shared information between her and her readers. When the student did not feel confident with presenting her ideas, she covered her individual identity *I* by using *we* to make them sound acceptable. Thus, *we* reduces her level of uncertainty about her writing and about her manifesting the individual self. This echoes what Jerry practiced in his drafts, in which he used *we* to gain a sense of security and to transform his own opinions.

Though Helen used *we* extensively in her first draft, she deleted all of them in her second and final draft. Per Helen, she made these changes because she realized that she had misunderstood the assignment’s purpose. Initially, she wrote her first draft as a personal reader response, expressing whether she agreed or disagreed with Devor’s argument. Consequently, she overlooked Devor’s writing strategies. Before she submitted the second draft to the instructor review, she re-wrote her entire essay and made comprehensive revisions to both content and organization. Because of such extensive and transformative changes, there are no cases involving *I* or *we* as the representative in her second and final draft.

- *I* as the Architect

Though Helen incorporated no architect to her first draft, she added one architect sentence to her second draft, which is, “I will analyze the strengths of information of gender
identity, e.g., organized ideas, comprehensive examples” (draft 2). Some may argue that the sentence above might function as part of the student’s thesis, which might fall into the opinion-holder’s category. However, by looking at this sentence, readers are unaware of Helen’s overt attitude towards and evaluation for Devor’s writing strategies. Instead, this sentence pictures the overall structure of Helen’s essay, so it belongs to the architect category.

As recalled by Helen, by the time the class finished writing the analytical summary assignment, her instructor had not elaborated on how to inform the readers of the organization of a piece of writing. This was understandable as the instructor may have focused more on some major lessons for the first writing assignment, such as constructing a thesis, initiating a textual analysis, and developing the content. Though Helen did not learn explicitly about using the architect or other conventions, she examined some sample academic essays online, in which she discovered that many experienced writers used the architect overtly through I. Thus, viewing the architect as a “useful tool” an academic essay, Helen modeled the sample texts by adding the above architect sentence to her second draft.

To Helen’s surprise, the instructor asked her to tailor the I in the architect sentence, even though Helen felt that the use of I had been appropriate. Specifically, the instructor highlighted I will analyze in Helen’s second draft and handwrote an alternative phrase this paper will analyze. However, there was no elaborated instruction as to why the instructor recommended the revision. Helen recalled that in a follow-up individual writing conference, the instructor told her that such a change could objectify the meaning of the architect sentence. Thus, in her final draft, Helen wrote, “This paper will analyze the strengths of information of gender identity, e.g., organized ideas, comprehensive examples” (draft 3). Following the instructor’s revision, she used the passive voice construction to make this paper as the subject of the action will analyze. However,
Helen was concerned with this change. She expressed in the interview, “How could a paper do
the analysis? I know it sounded more “scholarly,” but it doesn’t make sense to me.”

- *I* as the Opinion-holder

In the first draft, Helen presented one instance involving *I* as the opinion-holder. When
stating how she thought about Devor’s discussion on gender stereotypes, Helen expressed: “I
agree that the statements made by Devor point out the natural and even stereotypical way people
utilize to identify the gender” (draft 1). In this sentence, Helen revealed her attitude by using an
overt *I*. The student attributed it to her misinterpreting the assignment’s purpose, saying that:

I wrote this in my first draft because I was giving my personal reaction to the
reading. But she [Helen’s instructor] told me my agreement or disagreement about
the content didn’t really matter because she wanted us [the students] to analyze
her [Devor’s] writing. That made sense to me, so I rewrote the entire paper and
erased this [sentence].

Thus, to align the assignment’s objective, Helen removed the opinion-holder and felt that the
revision was reasonable.

Though Helen deleted her original opinion-holder sentence, she added a new one to her
second draft, incorporating it as part of her thesis. She wrote at the end of her introductory
paragraph, “…I will point out that more profound information of flexibility of gender identity
also needs to be provided by applying examples by Devor” (draft 2). Initially, the phrase *I will
point out*, per Tang and John’s analysis, would look more like an architect sentence as it tells the
readers what the writer intends to do. However, the subordinate clause suggests that this is
actually Helen’s argument, which Devor should have incorporated more examples to discuss the
flexibility of gender identity. This is further confirmed by examining the body paragraphs of
Helen’s essay, in which she evaluated Devor’s use of examples, or lack thereof. Therefore, in this particular context, *I will point out* functions as the opinion-holder that manifests the writer’s claim. In the interview, Helen said that using *I* would make her argument sound assertive and direct. She indicated, “This is how I put *myself* in there [her writing],” revealing an overt and individualized writer identity.

Though Helen was confident with inserting *I* into her opinion-holder, the instructor highlighted *I will point* and commented, “Redundant; you don’t need this.” Therefore, the student erased *I will point* in her final draft, making the initial subordinate clause into the main clause. She wrote in her final draft, “More profound information of flexibility of gender identity also needs to be provided by applying examples by Devor” (draft 3).

Unlike Vicky, who followed a tutor’s suggestion but felt that removing herself from her writing was emotionally difficult, Helen reacted more gently towards her instructor’s comment. She expressed no objection with eradicating herself from this context.

- *I* as the Originator

Helen used *I* as the originator twice in her drafts. She wrote at the beginning of her introductory paragraph, “The first time *I* read Devor’s article, “Becoming Members of Society: Learning the Social Meanings of Gender,” *I* felt like gender seems to function as the sorting hat in *Harry Potter*” (draft 1-3). In the above instance, Helen introduced her original experience to start her essay. Unlike Vicky and Jerry, who used personal experience as direct evidence to validate their claims, Helen took advantage of her experience reading *Harry Potter* as a hook to draw her readers’ attention. Therefore, positioning herself into the text through *I* overtly became an intentional rhetorical strategy. According to Helen, her instructor and the tutor displayed no objection with using *I* in this context, so she made no revision to it. In fact, the student indicated
in the interview that introducing her original experience to initiate the essay was a deliberate and conscious move because it would increase her readers’ interest.
Chapter 8

Conclusion

Conclusion of the Case Studies

The case studies were conducted to address and answer the following questions:

1. What kind of writer identities do these students manifest by incorporating FPPs to academic English writing?

2. What specific instruction do the instructors (and tutors) present to the students regarding using FPPs to manifest their writer identities in the writing process?

3. How do the students perceive and implement the instruction in terms of revising or re-appropriating themselves through FPPs in the writing process?

Based on the results of the case studies, I will respond to each of the three questions separately in the following sections.

- What kind of writer identities do these students manifest by incorporating FPPs to academic writing?

The three participants displayed diverse types of writer identity as manifested by their use of FPPs. Potential patterns could be generated. For example, the three student writers used I, often in its collective form we, to negotiate their identities as the representative. Specifically, they used we to refer to generic information, to claim mutually accepted information between themselves and the readers, and to a specific group of individuals. More importantly, we as the representative indicates the level of confidence of the students revealing their authorial presence in their writings. It provides the students with a sense of security and an increased level of confidence when they were hesitant about inserting their individual self, I, to their writings,
allowing them to cloak *I* behind *we*. Jerry, in particular, also used *we* as the guide to direct his readers’ attention because he was not comfortable with manifesting the individual self through *I*. While these findings are not representative due to the limited scope of the case studies, they do contradict the current view in L2 writing, which Chinese students tend to use *we* extensively as a rhetorical habit caused by China’s collective culture.

Though all of the students had not learned about how to inform their readers of the structure of their essays, each student attempted to send clear signals by using *I* overtly as the architect. Each student also felt confident doing so. In particular, both Vicky and Helen self-initiated their learning by exploring sample academic texts online, and concluded that *I* as the architect was an essential part of successful academic writing.

Additionally, all three participants used *I* as the opinion-holder and the originator frequently, and each was able to articulate their reasons. Jerry contextualized his opinion-holders and originators in “evidence” and “back up,” which include a summary of Johnson’s use of evidence and a detailed narration of his own story of playing video games. While the evidence itself was arguably valid in the instructor’s point of view, he still felt confident with exhibiting his individual identity. Vicky used *I* because she wanted to “put herself” in the texts in a visible and explicit manner, which suggest a powerful sense of authorial presence. Her case resonates with that of Helen, who also intended to insert an assertive and direct identity into her argument. Moreover, Helen also viewed *I* as a rhetorical strategy, implementing it intentionally to raise her readers’ attention. This also indicates an advanced level of self-awareness of one manifesting her identity in a piece of writing.

It is also important to note that none of the three participants used *I* as the research process recounter. This is understandable because there was no research component associated
with the analytical writing assignment. Specifically, the students were not expected to conduct an experiment and to detail the various research steps. However, an interesting area of research could be how these students navigate their identities through *I* or *we* when they write research papers; what specific instruction they receive; and what specific strategies they would practice if they are told to re-position themselves in writing research articles.

- *What specific instruction do the instructors (and tutors) present to the students regarding using FPPs to manifest their writer identities in the writing process?*

Though all three students used *I* extensively in their writing and in the writing process, they encountered different instruction from the instructors and tutors on varying levels. The case studies show that some of the written instruction were self-contradictory, inconsistent, or under-explained. Jerry’s instructor provided detailed feedback to Jerry’s inappropriate use of personal experience as evidence through *I* as the originator. However, the instructor praised the student illustrating his personal story in the same paragraph, contradicting the previous feedback. The same instructor did not offer comment on Vicky’s incorporation of her personal experience; thus, the direction was inconsistent. Additionally, the instructor commented that Jerry should transfer his architect sentence into a thesis statement, misinterpreting the function of the architect, but did not write feedback to Vicky’s architect instance. The revision feedback regarding Vicky’s architect sentence came from a writing tutor, who told the student that the architect was unnecessary, resulting in the student feeling uncomfortable with eradicating herself from her writing. In view of the architect, Helen’s instructor, a different one, changed *I will analyze* into *this paper will analyze*, telling the student that the change was more objective. This caused the student to question the logic behind the revision. In terms of using *I* as the opinion-holder, the writing tutor in Vicky’s case asked the student to erase *I* but only offered a brief explanation,
“No need,” which lead to the student feeling immensely frustrated with directly taking herself away from the text. Similar instruction was given by Helen’s instructor, who told the student that the opinion-holder *I argue* was unnecessary.

- *How do the students perceive and implement these instructions in terms of revising or re-appropriating themselves through FPPs in the writing process?*

The three students had different reactions to the instructions involving FPPs. One felt confused with the instructor’s contradictory direction while the other felt difficult about not being visible through *I* in her text due to the tutor’s convoluted feedback. Additionally, another was concerned with the logic behind the instructor’s written feedback.

While the three students encountered some challenges with perceiving the instruction, all of them chose to follow the direction. In implementing the specific feedback from the instructors and tutors, the students all chose removal as their strategy, through which the students directly erase themselves from the specific instances but provide no replacements. This is concerning on different levels. Jerry erased his opinion-holders, hoping that this move would make the corresponding paragraph more effective. However, the problem was related to the content, the student’s personal experiences as evidence to evaluate Johnson’s writing strategies, not the opinion-holders themselves. Simply deleting these instances involving *I* did not lead to constructive changes to his content. Vicky erased *I think* and *I argue*, but the student did not understand why these phrases were redundant. Helen modified her architect instance, making an inanimate object *this paper* the subject of the action *will analyze*. However, she questioned whether such a conventional expression was logical.
Conclusion of the Overall Study

In the early chapters of this study, I identified that the FPPs are the most direct and salient vehicle for revealing one’s writer identity, among various linguistic and rhetorical resources of identity manifestation. While researchers have explored extensively the importance of teaching L2 writers to position themselves through FPPs in English writing, few paid attention to the specific instruction the students receive regarding using FPPs to construct writer identity. In the case of Chinese students, many of the students received little instruction in terms of incorporating FPPs to manifest writer identity in English writing because their EFL instructors’ minimal background in L2 writing and academic writing in English. Additionally, China’s institutional environment, as well as the nation’s EFL assessment, do not address the value of applying the English language, thus leaving the students being unaware of practical strategies in English writing, such as revealing the self through FPPs. Consequently, as these students enter their freshman composition/ESL writing classes in their U.S. universities, they would meet a variety of challenges manifesting themselves with FPPs in English.

To devise the types of identity these students display, the specific instruction they receive regarding using FPPs, and the strategies the students use to implement the instruction, three case studies were conducted. Results show that the students actually constructed an individual self \( I \) frequently in their writing, and that the reason they selected the collective \( we \) is different from what current literature shows. Specifically, \( we \) functions as the indicator of the level of confidence of students attempting to reveal the overt \( I \). \( We \) also provides the students with a platform of transforming the individual \( I \), supporting them to feel safe in their writing. Apart from these findings, the students exhibited a strong desire of positioning \( I \) in their writing and the revision processes, most visibly in circumstances in which they signaled the structure of their
writing, presented their claims and ideas, and embedded their personal experiences to their argument.

Results also reveal that the specific instruction regarding FPPs and writer identity, offered by either the composition/ESL instructors or the writing tutors, lacked consistency and thorough explanations. This resulted in students feeling confused, frustrated, and skeptical with using FPPs in their academic writing, as explained in detail in the above section.

Limitations

The study embodies certain limitations, however. Firstly, the size of the case studies, which only include three participants and drafts of one writing assignment, limited the chance of generating representative patterns that could tell more of the writer identities of the students and the instruction they received. Secondly, due to limited time and resources, the specific perspectives from the instructors regarding teaching students to incorporate FPPs in academic writing were not included and examined. Thirdly, part of the case study analyses were built on self-report data from the three student participants, which might lack accuracy and authenticity.

Implications for Future Research

The study could be a starting point of a longitudinal project that traces and examines how the students’ writer identities, as manifested by their using FPPs, develop and morph throughout the entire semester or their entire undergraduate studies, as David Bartholomae suggests that the construction of writer identity may be an evolutionary process (86). The study could also be expanded into a comprehensive corpus project comprised of written texts from a large body of Chinese students, and be compared with corpora involving texts from other non-native speakers of English and native speakers of English. Through this corpus approach, one can explore how
students with different language backgrounds construct their identities as instructed by their composition/ESL instructors.

**Potential Implications for Future Pedagogy**

The potential goal of this project is to shed light on the areas of instruction and pedagogy in terms of better teaching L2 writers to construct, negotiate, and navigate their writer identities through FPPs. While the results that derive from this project are not representative, they could potentially provide instructors and tutors with an alternative perspective for thinking about FPPs as a source of authorial presence. Instructors might wish to provide more articulate and more thoughtful direction regarding the use of FPPs. They could also make an effort to develop concrete pedagogical strategies of helping the students to understand the role of FPPs in relation to writer identity in academic writing, such as using a highlight to mark the instances involving *I* in the students’ essays and explaining to the students the rhetorical functions these instances create. Additionally, rather than tell the students that FPPs are not congruent in academic writing, instructors (and tutors) could consider (re)examining their knowledge about FPPs in relation to academic writing, such as exploring how FPPs are used in different academic disciplines and in various genres.
Appendix A

IRB Exemption Determination

EXEMPTION DETERMINATION

Date: February 3, 2017
From: Joyel Moeller, IRB Analyst
To: Yuanheng Wang

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Submission:</th>
<th>Initial Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title of Study:</td>
<td>“I am. Therefore, I write”: Use of First Person Pronouns (FPPs) Among Undergraduate Chinese Students’ Academic English Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal Investigator:</td>
<td>Yuanheng Wang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study ID:</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submission ID:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Funding:</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Documents Approved: | • (Updated) Protocol for Human Subject Research.pdf (0.03), Category: IRB Protocol  
• Interview Questions.docx (0.01), Category: Other |

The Office for Research Protections determined that the proposed activity, as described in the above-referenced submission, does not require formal IRB review because the research met the criteria for exempt research according to the policies of this institution and the provisions of applicable federal regulations.

Continuing Progress Reports are not required for exempt research. Record of this research determined to be exempt will be maintained for five years from the date of this notification. If your research will continue beyond five years, please contact the Office for Research Protections closer to the determination end date.

Changes to exempt research only need to be submitted to the Office for Research Protections in limited circumstances described in the below-referenced Investigator Manual. If changes are being considered and there are questions about whether IRB review is needed, please contact the Office for Research Protections.

Penn State researchers are required to follow the requirements listed in the Investigator Manual (HRP-103), which can be found by navigating to the IRB Library within CATS IRB (http://irb.psu.edu).

This correspondence should be maintained with your records.
Appendix B

Penn State Behrend International Chinese Students Survey

This survey will take approximately 15-20 minutes to be completed; please answer all questions as honestly and accurately as possible. You may feel free to stop at any time because participation in this research survey is completely voluntary. The information from this survey will be contributed for an undergraduate senior thesis exploring how Chinese students use first person pronouns (FPPs) in their academic English writing. Any identifying information drawn from this survey will be kept strictly confidential and available only to the student researcher, Yuanheng “Arthur” Wang, and thesis supervisor, Dr. Mary Connerty at the English Language Learners Program of Penn State Behrend. You may feel free to contact Arthur Wang at yzw5283@psu.edu at any time regarding questions about this survey or the research.

Part I: General information
1. Name: __________________
2. Age: ________________
3. Gender: ________________
4. Country of Birth: ________________
5. Native Language(s): ________________
6. Second Language: ________________
7. Additional Language: ________________

Part II: Past Schooling Experience
1. Did you attend high school in Mainland China? 
   Yes____   No____
2. If yes, how many years were you in high school in China? 
   ________________
3. If yes, at what age did you first attend school in China? 
   ________________

Part III: Current Schooling Experience
1. What is your semester standing at Penn State Behrend? (1st semester, 3rd semester, etc.) 
   ________________
2. Have you taken ESL 015 or ENG 015 at Penn State Behrend? 
   Yes_____ No____
3. If yes, please share who your instructor was. 
   ________________
4. If yes, please share the year of standing when you took the 015 class. 
   ________________
5. If yes, please share your age when you started to take the 015 class. 
   ________________

Part IV: Past English Language Learning Experience
(for students who graduated from high school in China)
1. How many years did you study English in China through formal school before coming to Penn State Behrend? 
   ________________
2. How many years did you receive English language tutoring outside school, such as for TOEFL or SAT? 
   ________________
3. What was the version of the English textbook you used in China’s high school? (i.e., 课标、实验) 
   ________________

Part IV: Past Chinese Language Learning Experience
(for students who graduated from high school in China)
How many years did you study Chinese in China through formal school before coming to Penn State Behrend? 
   ________________
Part VI: Follow-up and Contact Information

While you are NOT obligated to further assist me in completing this research project, it would be greatly appreciated if you could provide me with your email address so that I can contact you for follow-up interviews and/or conversations. Your time and patience will be graciously appreciated, though this is completely voluntary.

Your email address: _____________

Thank you for your help with this survey!
Appendix C

Assignment Sheets

• Assignment Sheet from Jerry and Vicky’s Instructor

Essay 1: Analytical Summary (10%)

January 23: Submit draft #1 to turnitin.psu.edu to check your originality report and make edits to the paper according to the need to cite your sources (This part is not graded but highly encouraged).

Tuesday, January 24 by 11:59 p.m.: Upload Assignment #1 to Turnitin.psu.edu: “Assignment 1.” Your first draft should be at least three full pages (see formatting guidelines below).

Thursday, January 26 by 11:59 p.m. (We will work on peer reviews in class). Complete peer reviews for two classmates’ essays via Turnitin.

Sunday, January 29 by 11:59 p.m. Draft #2 of Assignment 1 is due to Turnitin.psu.edu “Assignment 1 Revision 1” (The instructor will give feedback via Turnitin)

Wednesday, February 8 by 11:59 p.m. Final draft of Assignment 1 is due to Turnitin “Assignment 1 Revision 2”

Your Task:
Throughout your academic and professional career you will be asked to summarize and respond to materials you engage with. Your first assignment of the semester asks you to look at Steven Johnson’s article “Games” and write an analytical summary. An analytical summary gives a condensed account of the article in an analytical manner. For this assignment, you will write an essay in which you analyze the strengths and/or weaknesses of Johnson’s argument. Some ideas for what you might analyze could be:

- the credibility of the evidence or sources used to support those points,
- whether or not the evidence is viable and why,
- what points the author may have overlooked,
- whether or not the author gave enough context/explanation of concepts,
- the organization and structure of the essay,
- the author’s language and tone,
- the strengths and/or weaknesses of the author’s rhetorical moves and writing strategies (transition words, presenting the opposing argument before introducing her own argument, etc.),
- etc.

While you should give a short overview of the whole article in your summary, your main focus should be on the way the writer supports his/her points. So the bulk of your paper will not be an overall summary of all the points in the essay but rather will focus on HOW the author writes the article. For instance, what evidence does the author use? Is the evidence viable or believable? Why does it work or not work?
The skills you will acquire by writing this essay are the following: reading comprehension and accurate summary of the author’s main points, paraphrase, moving from description to interpretation, writing an analytical summary that goes beyond mere agreement/disagreement, introduction to revision, and grammar issues.

You may use the first person “I” if it is appropriate for your purpose. You should not rely on personal experience as your only evidence.

Inappropriate use of “I”:

Ex) I disagree with Johnson’s claim that video games are “fiendishly, sometimes maddeningly, hard” (p. 201) because I always beat every single video game that I ever attempt to play, so for me, they are easy.

Appropriate uses of “I”

Ex) Johnson successfully uses a metaphor to compare two very different phenomena: critics of video games and people who have never actually seen a rhinoceros but try to draw one (p. 201). These two types of people may seem to have nothing in common, but Johnson cleverly makes a connection in his readers’ minds by claiming that many people who criticize video games as a waste of time have never actually played them, much like those who try to draw a rhinoceros based off of someone’s description without actually seeing the animal themselves. The drawing would obviously be ridiculous, just like the criticism of someone who has no video game experience and therefore cannot truly understand the benefits of the practice. This metaphor assists Johnson’s argument that video games have many virtues, including their high level of difficulty, and that those who naysay playing such games most likely are basing their judgements on incomplete research. Rhetorical strategies such as this metaphor are helpful to readers like me who - like the critics of video games that he challenges - have not played many video games, so this kind of comparison helps me (and other non-gamers) to understand his point more clearly.

Audience:
Your audience for this assignment will be your instructor and your classmates, but you should pretend as though no one reading your essay has ever read Johnson’s article. Thus, you should thoroughly represent the text’s main ideas and key points and provide accurate textual evidence throughout.

Requirements:
To achieve your purpose with your audience, use the following strategies in your summary:

- Introduce the text and the author at the beginning. This way your readers know which text you are summarizing.
- Focus on the author’s argument (i.e. his thesis). Here you should show your understanding of the author’s purpose and how he supports it.
- It is always good to signal your reader and use reporting verbs such as "Johnson argues/claims/states," "According to Johnson," and "for Johnson, the solution appears to be;" etc.
- Anytime you are summarizing, paraphrasing, or quoting from the article you should note it at the end of the sentence as following: (Johnson 201).
First and second will not be graded but will be figured into the final grade for each essay. First and second drafts are expected to be the full page requirement and adhere to the same requirements as the final draft (without any plagiarism, containing the required elements, etc.).

**Formatting guidelines:** at least 900 words (all drafts must be at least 900 words in order to get credit – this is equivalent to at least three full pages. Drafts exceeding four pages will lose points for lack of concision), Times New Roman, 12 font, standard margins, double spaced, using MLA format.

**Top right corner of all pages:** Your last name and page number

**Top left corner (1st page only):** Your name, professor's name, Class title, date submitted.

Ex: Jane Smith
Instructor Name
ESL 15
September 25, 2015

**Title (1st page only):** Double space again and center the title. Do not underline, italicize, or place your title in quotation marks; write the title in Title Case (standard capitalization), not in all capital letters (Do **not** title your work “Analytical Summary” – Come up with a unique title that reflects your particular essay).

**Works cited page:** The last page of your essay should be a works cited page, which lists the reference for Steven Johnson’s essay. In this class, we use MLA style for citations, so please refer to the following guide to help you determine how to cite your sources:

https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/

- Johnson’s reading is an essay in an anthology called 50 Essays: A Portable Anthology. Thus, you should refer to the “Books” section of the website listed above and then scroll down to “A Work in an Anthology, Reference, or Collection.” Below is the format of the citation that you will need for Johnson’s essay. The medium of publication is “print.”

Last name, First name. "Title of Essay." Title of Collection. Ed. Editor's Name(s). City of Publication: Publisher, Year. Page range of entry. Medium of Publication.

**Tutoring**

Peer tutors who have successfully completed this course can be very beneficial to your learning. If you wish to make an extra effort to improve your skills and enhance your learning, or if you experience difficulties with reading and annotation, grammar or other writing skills, the LEARNING RESOURCE CENTER (LRC) offers free tutoring services in English and other subject areas. The LRC is located on the 2nd floor of the Lilley Library. In addition to the LRC tutors in the library, Michelle Cook, Yuanheng “Arthur” Wang, and Martha Larkin are also LRC tutors located in the English Language Study Center (Carriage House Annex #2).

For this first essay, you are required to schedule, and attend, one 30-minute session with the LRC staff (or the English Language Study Center tutor) while working on this paper. Failure to do this will result in a deduction of 10% of your overall grade for this assignment. Each section is required to have the 30-minute appointment within the following dates.

**9:05 - 9:55 class:** required to visit January 18 - 25
**10:10 - 11:00 class:** required to visit January 26 - February 1
2:30 - 3:20 class: **required to visit February 2 - 8**

You are, of course, welcome to visit the LRC or the English Language Study Center tutor more than once and for longer than 30-minutes if you would like, but in order to receive credit for this required visit, you will need to go during your class's specific scheduled time above.

To make an appointment with a tutor:
1. Visit [https://psbehrend.psu.edu/Academics/academic-services/lrc](https://psbehrend.psu.edu/Academics/academic-services/lrc) and click on “Tutor Trac”
2. Click “Search availability” and choose “ESL” (if an ESL tutor is not available, you can go back and choose “Writing ALL SUBJECTS”)
3. Choose the dates that you would like to visit with a tutor and click “Search”
4. Choose an available time to schedule.

When you go to the meeting with the LRC tutor, please always bring:
- the assignment instructions
- an updated draft of whatever writing assignment you are working on (hard copy printed out),
- feedback from peers and your instructor,
- previous drafts,
- your *They Say, I Say* book, and
- the source text(s). In this case, the text would be Johnson’s article.
- Asking a tutor to tell you everything that is wrong with the essay is not appropriate, so please be prepared for the meeting with two main questions for the tutor.

If you cannot make it to your scheduled appointments with the LRC, please remember to cancel the appointment online, by phone (814-898-6140 - you cannot text this number, as this is a land line), or in person. If you miss two LRC appointments, you are banned from making any more appointments for the rest of the semester, so please remember to cancel!

**Late Work:**
All essay assignments should be handed in prior to or on the due dates. For each day late (starting one minute after the deadline), the essay grade will be reduced by 10%. Therefore, for example, if you submit a first draft one day late, your final draft grade for that essay will be automatically lowered 10%, and you will not be able to receive peer review feedback. If you submit a second draft one day late, your final draft grade for that essay will be automatically lowered another 10%, and you may not be able to receive feedback from me, depending on the circumstances. Screen shots do not suffice as evidence that a paper was completed on time. “On time” means before the deadline, so if the deadline is 11:59 p.m. and you submit a first or second draft of your essay at 12:00 midnight (one minute late), it is considered late and will result in a lowered grade for your essay’s grade.

If you do not submit the full page requirement, you will lose percentage points on the final assignment grade.

You may receive a “0” if you:
- do not submit all required drafts with substantial changes between each draft that show you have taken my feedback and your peers’ feedback into consideration.
- do not submit a first or second draft before the next draft is due
- do not submit a final draft
- do not include in-text citations or mention of specific authors to show where you got certain information, even if you do include a works cited page, since this may be considered plagiarism.
- do not include a Works Cited page
Submitting to Turnitin
Every time you submit an assignment to Turnitin, you must print out or copy down the submission ID number from the digital receipt that will appear on screen after you submit the paper and it has been accepted by the website. This digital receipt may also be sent via email; check your junk, spam and trash email folders for the digital receipt email. If you do not see your submission ID Number, then the paper was not accepted, and you will need to go through the process again. Many students make the mistake of uploading the paper and thinking it’s done. There is a second step, which is to Confirm Submission. If the second step isn't completed, the paper will not be submitted, and there will be no digital receipt. You must record your submission ID number every single time you submit an assignment/draft. Every semester some students tell me that they submitted papers that do not appear in the system after the deadline, but without the submission ID number, the paper is considered late.

If you have problems submitting assignments to Turnitin,, please email them to me before the deadline. Computer/internet problems will not be accepted as excuses for missing/late work; thus, please submit your work well ahead of the deadline in case you encounter problems when you are trying to submit.
• Assignment Sheet from Helen’s Instructor

Analytical Summary (10%)

**Draft 1 Due:** Tuesday, January 26th 2016 by 12pm on turnitin.psu.edu
**Peer Review Due:** Thursday, January 28th 2016 by 12pm on turnitin.psu.edu
**Draft 2 Due:** Thursday, February 4th 2016 by 12pm on turnitin.psu.edu
**Final Draft Due:** Thursday, February 11th 2016 by 12pm on turnitin.psu.edu

**Technicalities and Must-Haves:** 3-4 pages, Times New Roman; 12 font; Standard margins; Double spaced; Last name and page number on top right corner; Title of work (Do **not** title your work “Analytical Summary”); MLA formatting (please reference: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/); Works Cited page.

**Top left corner (1st page only):** Your name, professor’s name, Class title, date submitted.
Ex: Jane Smith
Instructor Name
ESL 15
11 February 2016

**Your Task:**
Throughout your academic and professional career you will be asked to summarize and respond to materials you engage with, much like your Summary Response you do for this class. Your first assignment in this class asks you to look Holly Devor’s article “Becoming Members of Society: Learning the Social Meanings of Gender” and write an analytical summary. An analytical summary gives a condensed account of the article in an analytical manner. For this assignment, you will write an essay in which you analyze the strengths and/or weaknesses of Devor’s argument. Your purpose is to establish and support a position agreeing with, disagreeing with, or taking a mixed position toward an author’s viewpoint. Some ideas for what you might analyze could be:

- The claims the author makes,
- how well the author’s points are made,
- the credibility of the evidence or sources used to support those points,
- whether or not the evidence is viable and why,
- what points the author may have overlooked,
- whether or not the author gave enough context/explanation of concepts,
- the organization and structure of the essay,
- the author’s language and tone,
- the strengths and/or weaknesses of the author’s rhetorical moves and writing strategies (transition words, presenting the opposing argument before introducing her own argument, etc.),
- etc.

While you should give a short overview of the whole article in your summary, your main focus should be on something that the writer says and the way the writer supports that point. So the bulk of your paper will not be an overall summary of all the points in the essay but rather will focus on the one aspect of the article, analyzing what the author is saying in this particular moment or how the author uses a particular writing strategy. For instance, how does the author support a particular point? What evidence does she use? Is the evidence viable or believable? Why does it work or not work?

The skills you will acquire by writing this essay are the following: reading comprehension and accurate summary of the author’s main points, paraphrase, moving from description to interpretation, writing an analytical summary that goes beyond mere agreement/disagreement, introduction to revision, and grammar issues.
Audience:
Your audience for this assignment will be your instructor and your classmates. Even though your readers know the text you writing about, you should still thoroughly represent its main ideas and key points, and provide accurate textual evidence throughout.

Requirements:
Your summary should be about one page. To achieve your purpose with your audience, use the following strategies in your summary:
- Introduce the text and the author at the beginning. This way your readers know which text you are summarizing.
- Focus on the author’s argument (i.e. their thesis). Here you should show your understanding of the author’s purpose and how they support it.
- It is always good to signal your reader and thus phrases such as "Devor says/notes/states," "According to Devor," and "for Devor, the solution appears to be," etc. should be used.
- Remember to not use the author’s first name.

Your response should be a page length and should answer the following questions: Was the author(s) successful at reaching their purpose with their intended audience? Here you should answer this question by including a thesis, reasons for supporting your thesis, and evidence supporting your reasoning. Chose at least one of the following features to focus your response on:
- Purpose
- Audience
- Context
- Thesis
- Organization and evidence
- Language and tone

LRC Requirement:
You are required to schedule, and attend, one session with me or the LRC staff at any point during the writing of this paper. Failure to do this will result in a deduction of 10% of your overall grade for this assignment. To schedule an appointment please follow the following instructions:
1. Visit https://psbehrend.psu.edu/Academics/academic-services/lrc and click on “Tutor Trac”
2. Click “Search availability” and choose “ESL”
3. Choose the dates that you would like to visit with a tutor and click “Search”
4. Choose an available time to schedule.
5. When you go to the meeting, remember to bring an updated draft of the writing assignment, assignment sheet, and specific questions/points you want to focus on. If you have comments from your instructor on a draft you should bring it with you with another clear copy.

Late Work:
Drafts will not be graded but are required. All written assignments must be submitted prior to or on the due dates – NO LATE DRAFTS WILL BE ACCEPTED. Therefore, for example, if you do not submit a first draft on time, your final draft grade for that essay will be automatically lowered 10%, and you will not be able to receive peer review feedback. If you do not submit a second draft on time, your final draft grade for that essay will be automatically lowered another 10%, and you may not be able to receive feedback from me, depending on the circumstances. “On time” means before the deadline, so if the deadline is 12 p.m. and you submit a first or second draft of your essay at 12:01 (one minute late), it is considered late and will result in a lowered grade for your final essay’s grade. Any final papers without previous drafts being evident will NOT be accepted and will thus result in an F for the assignment.
Appendix D

Essays from Jerry, Vicky, and Helen

Note

The original second drafts of all three student participants, the ones that contained the instructors’ (and tutors’) written comments, were PDF documents with a variety of “plugin” tabs embedded within the texts. They were specialized by and downloaded from TurnItIn. Therefore, I was unable to convert these drafts into normal Word documents and include them properly in this Appendix. Additionally, these drafts showed identical information about the students and the instructors, such as their names and their course section numbers. Thus, it was inappropriate to include the original drafts here because of confidentiality. Should anyone have any questions about the original drafts or wish to take a look at them in person, please contact me at yzw5283@psu.edu.
Jerry’s Essay

• Draft 1, Jerry

An analysis of advantage and disadvantage of Johnson’s Games

Steven Jonson who is famous author published a article from his book named Everything Bad Is Good for You which relate and analyze the if ‘Games’ take some advantages to people and provide some new thesis for this essay. The author thinks that the video games do not bring some bad influence to people and believes that the video games will create a positive influence to people. However, there are some insufficient from the article such as lacking some oblivious evidence. Therefore I want to summary and analyze the advantages and disadvantages from following three respects: the structure of the essay, the main viewpoint and the different voices from the article.

First of all, the first paragraph says that most people believe video games would spend a plenty of time and also bring some violent or aggressive information to children(p196) and just a part of them think that games would improve the “eye-hand coordination” in children(p196). However the author suggest people to judge games fairly because it is just practicing some diverse skills. In third paragraph, he uses ‘parallel universe’ (P197) as the example to expound this point. In another universe, children have been play video games for centuries and parents or teachers prejudice against reading book and studying. From this example the author wants to point out that people who live in our world have some limitations about their ways to consider something which means they could not cut through to the merit. They are supposed to judge one thing from the different sides including in positive light and negative influence. And then he use the Michel Jordan (P199) as metaphor to illustrate the view.(Ex: -”games are as good at...the way Michel Jordan...(P199)). However Johnson did not use enough and clear evidence to prove his
point but cite some points of view form some experts directly to develop his main point. Therefore I can not totally agree with him since lacking evidence to support his point. If he provides more evidence or data to argue that playing video games benefits the brain differently compared with reading books, most audience would accept and sustain his view point.

Secondly, it is possible that he never played any video games which could explain why there is no any specific examples or others experience in this article. As for me, I have played video games since 8 years old. At the beginning, I played some easy and smart games such as Tetris and Retro Snake to practice my intelligence and reactions. When I was 12 years old, I started to play some FPS games like CS, Call of Duty and Left Dead. From that time, I knew what is the team work and preliminary understood the team spirit. In the high school, I began to some MOBA video games such as League of Legends, DOTA and Over-watch with my classmates in the weekends and I recognized the importance of team work. In my school life, especially in some group works and basketball match that we have to know how to cooperate with your team members. These skills, however, I could not got from the book or some reading source but could learn from various games. Therefore, I totally agree with Johnson’s opinions because of my experience. However, he did not use examples like how I got benefits from playing video games.

Thirdly, Johnson use different voices to narrate the article: the third person and the first person. When he used the first person to express his point, he conveys a strongly agreement or disagreement which means he clearly illustrate his thought .(It should probably go..., that I don’t agree with this argument (P198)). Because most people think the video games will waste a goodly number of time and bring some violent and aggressive responses to children. But Johnson’s opinions are totally different with them because he considers that the video games can
improve eye-hand coordination and practice team spirit in children. Most people have no idea that the benefits of video games bring to the children, that’s why some parents reject their kids play video games.

All in all, playing video games have a lot of benefits like teaching people how to cooperate with others and communicate with others and so on. Although some parents think that some video games which occupy a small part of games would bring some violent or unhealthy information to their kids. We are supposed to see some positive lights from games and guide kids how to play them and how to learn some useful skills which will be used in the future life rather than stop them by some strict ways. However, when we want to prove some points or persuade the reader, not only need some quotation but also some personal experience or various examples such as some famous person’s experience or some instances from life. We also can use various voices to express what we thought and some personal motion to let readers trust what we said in the article.
An analysis of writing skills of Johnson’s Games

Steven Jonson who is famous author published a article from his book named Everything Bad Is Good for You which relate and analyze the if ‘Games’ have take some advantages to people and provide some new thesis for this essay. The author thinks that the video games do not bring some bad influence to people and believes that the video games will create a positive influence to people. However, there are some insufficient from the article such as lacking some obvious evidence. Therefore I want to summarize and analyze the advantages and disadvantages from following three respects: the structure of the essay, the main viewpoint and the different voices from the article.

First of all, the first paragraph says that most people believe video games would spend a plenty of time and also bring some violent or aggressive information to children(Johnson,p196) and just a part of them think that games would improve the “eye-hand coordination” in children(p196). However the author suggest people to judge games fairly because it is just practicing some diverse skills. In third paragraph, he uses ‘parallel universe’ (P197)as the example to expound this point. In another universe, children have been playing video games for centuries and parents or teachers prejudice against reading book and studying. From this example the author wants to point out that people who live in our world have some limitations about their ways to consider something which means they could not see the truth of something. They are supposed to judge one thing from the different sides including in positive and negative influence. And then he use the Michel Jordan(P199)as metaphor to illustrate the view.(Ex: -“games are as good at...the way Michel Jordan..."(P199)). However Johnson did not use enough and clear evidence to prove his point but cite some points of view form some experts directly to develop
his main point. Therefore I can not totally agree with him since lacking evidence to support his point. If he provides more evidence or data to argue that playing video games benefits the brain differently compared with reading books, most audience would accept and sustain his view point.

Secondly, it is possible that he never played any video games which could explain why there is no any his own experience or other specific data which record them how to play games. That’s why the author could not convince most people to trust him. As for me, I have played video games since 8 years old. At the beginning, I played some easy and smart games such as Tetris and Retro Snake to practice my intelligence and reactions. When I was 12 years old, I started to play some FPS games like CS, Call of Duty and Left Dead. From that time, I knew what is the team work and preliminary understood the team spirit. In the high school, I began to some MOBA video games such as League of Legends, DOTA and Over-watch with my class mates in the weekends and I recognized the importance of team work. In my school life, especially in some group works and basketball match that we have to know how to cooperate with your team members. These skills, however, I could not got from the book or some reading source but could learn from various games. Therefore, I totally agree with Johnson’s opinions. However, he did not use examples like how I got benefits from playing video games. If he could add some data such as from the newspaper, the website or a professional investigation, people would be convinced by his article and opinions.

Thirdly, Johnson use different voices to narrate the article: the third person and the first person. When he used the first person to express his point, he conveys a strongly and personally attitude to judge one opinion which means he clearly illustrate his thought. (It should probably go..., that I don’t agree with this argument (Johnson P198)). Because most people think the video
games will waste a goodly number of time and bring some violent and aggressive responses to children. But Johnson’s opinions are totally different with them because he considers that the video games can improve eye-hand coordination and practice team spirit in children. Most people have no idea that the benefits of video games bring to the children, that’s why some parents reject their kids play video games. Therefore I really recommend this way to express writer’s feelings or attitude which could be more specific.

All in all, playing video games have a lot of benefits like teaching people how to cooperate with others and communicate with others and so on. Although some parents think that some video games which occupy a small part of games would bring some violent or unhealthy information to their kids. We are supposed to see some positive things from games and guide kids how to play them and how to learn some useful skills which will be used in the future life rather than stop them by some strict ways. However, when we want to prove some points or persuade the reader, not only need some quotation but also some personal experience or various examples such as some famous person’s experience or some instances from life. We also can use various voices to express what we thought and some personal motion to let readers trust what we said in the article.

Work Cited

An analysis of writing skills of Johnson’s Games

Steven Jonson who is famous author published a article from his book named Everything Bad Is Good for You which relate and analyze the if ‘Games’ have take some advantages or bring some bad influence to people and reading books helps to develop kids’ cognitive skills which means could keep kids’ attention and practice the critical thinking. The author, Steven Johnson, thinks that the video games do not bring some bad influence to people and believes that the video games will create a positive influence to people. He list some examples and viewpoints from other experts, however, there are some insufficiency from the article such as lacking some obvious evidence and specific data from other resource.

First of all, the first paragraph says that most people believe video games will cost a lot of time and also bring some violent or aggressive information to children(Johnson,p196) and just a part of them think that games would improve the “eye-hand coordination” in children(Johnson,p196). However the author suggest people to judge games fairly because it is just practicing some diverse skills like how cooperate with others and how to communicate with your team members. In addition, in third paragraph, he uses ‘parallel universe’ (Johnson,P197)as the example to expound this point."In this parallel universe,kids have been playing games for centuries--and then these page-bound texts come along and suddenly they're all the rage."(Johnson,P197) In another universe, parents or teachers prejudice against reading book and studying. From this example the author wants to point out that people who live in our world have some limitations about their ways to consider games which means they could not see the truth of it. They are supposed to judge one thing from the different sides including in positive and negative influence. And then he use the Michel Jordan(P199)as metaphor to illustrate the
view.(Ex: -”games are as good at...the way Michel Jordan...(P199)). Additionally, he also cites some experts points to explain that the difference between the acquiring information and exercising which is a good strategy to write:(Ex: In Andrew Solomon’s words:“[Reading] requires effort, concentration, attention. In exchange, it offers the stimulus to and the fruit of thought and felling.” (P199)

However, in addition to state that the games are not bad, Johnson does not use some specific experience from himself or normal people and some data from newspaper or website. It is possible that he never played any video games which could explain why there is no any his own experience. That’s why the author could not convince most people to trust him.

Readers will more trust him if he could use others or own experience to convince audience like this way: As for me, I have played video games since 8 years old. At the beginning, I played some easy and smart games such as Tetris and Retro Snake to practice my intelligence and reactions. When I was 12 years old, I started to play some FPS games like CS, Call of Duty and Left Dead. From that time, I knew what is the team work and preliminary understood the team spirit. In the high school, I began to some MOBA video games such as League of Legends, DOTA and Over-watch with my class mates in the weekends and I recognized the importance of team work. In my school life, especially in some group works and basketball match that we have to know how to cooperate with your team members. These skills, however, I could not got from the book or some reading source but could learn from various games. However, Johnson did not use examples like how I got benefits from playing video games. He did not use enough and clear evidence and experience to prove this point, therefore his writing strategy about using clearly evidence and data is not perfect. If he provides more
evidence or data to argue that playing video games benefits the brain differently compared with reading books, most audience would accept and sustain his viewpoint.

Thirdly, Johnson uses different voices to narrate the article: the third person and the first person. When he used the first person to express his point, he conveys a strongly and personally attitude to judge one opinion which means he clearly illustrate his thought. (It should probably go..., that I don’t agree with this argument (Johnson P198)). He also use the second person to convince readers: (Ex:...the stretching of the imagination triggered by reading words on a page; the shared experience you get when everyone is reading the same story./A comparable sleight of hand is at work anytime you hear someone bemoaning today’s video game obsessions...(P198)) When he use first, second and third vision to prove viewpoint, reader will see it from different angles and then trust his point. Therefore, I really recommend this way to express writer’s feelings or attitude which could be more specific and convinced.

All in all, playing video games have a lot of benefits like teaching people how to cooperate with others and communicate with others and so on. Although some parents think that some video games which occupy a small part of games would bring some violent or unhealthy information to their kids. We are supposed to see some positive things from games and guide kids how to play them and how to learn some useful skills which will be used in the future life rather than stop them by some strict ways.

Although Johnson successfully presents a solid argument by presenting a strong example, incorporating viewpoints of experts and different voices from the article, his argument is not perfectly presenting in that it lacks empirical evidence. When we want to prove some points or persuade the reader, not only need some quotation but also some personal experience or various examples such as some famous person’s experience or some instances from life. We also can use
various voices to express what we thought and some personal motion to let readers trust what we said in the article.

Work Cited

Steven Johnson is an innovative presence on the Internet and has written about science, culture, and computers for popular science magazines and other print and online magazines such as Discover Wired, and Slate. He compares the benefits and disadvantages of playing games and reading in the article. He firstly talk about how others believe that reading is much more beneficial than playing games, and then gives the disadvantages of readings. And he compares the benefits of the games. Using others’ quotes, comparing to reading to make his arguments and appealing to pathos to give his thesis statement make his argument strong.

He uses many others’ quote given by Dr. Spock, McLuhan, Social critic Jane Jacobs and Andrew Solomon and many other professors or organizations. Those quotes tells the benefits of playing video games, or compare reading books to playing games. This can strength the argument and lead to the topic. “People who read for pleasure are many times more likely than those who don't to visit museums and attend musical performances” (Andrew Solomon, Page 197). This tells the disadvantage of reading and later on, he gives the benefit of playing games:” Games have historically suffered from this syndrome, largely because they have been contrasted with the older conventions of reading.” (McLuhan, Page 197) These quotes make his arguments much more creditable, also escalate his statement. Those quotes are authoritative and valuable, and positive. And he also uses a quote to summarize his theme. “People who know well such animated city streets will know how it is. People who do not will always have it a little wrong in their heads -like the old prints of rhinoceroses made from travelers’ descriptions of the
rhinoceroses.” (Jane Jacobs, Page 201) By using this way, he can write his article creditable, and convince reader by logical statement.

He uses part of his article talking about reading to compare he benefits of playing video games. “Imagine an alternate world identical to ours, save one techno-historical change: video games were invented and popularized before books. In this parallel universe, kids have been playing games for centuries - and then these page-bound texts come along and suddenly they're all the rage.” (McLuhan, Page 197) And he gives the benefits of playing video games to start his argument. “Unlike the longstanding tradition of game playing - which engages the child in a vivid, three-dimensional world filled with moving images and musical soundscapes, navigated and controlled with complex muscular movements - books are simply a barren string of words on the page.” (Johnson, Page 197) These quotes contrast the reading and playing video games and show the merits of games. Reading always follow a fixed linear path, this might narrow the ways of thinking. But playing games can improves a person’s imaginary ability and his or her visual intelligence. The contrast made by the author gives a lot of credits that games are much more valuable.

Also when he talk about the disadvantage of reading, it can really makes reader feel pathos. Book only has words, never gives graphic visions. For example, when I read the Aesop’s Fables it’s hard to imagine those little elfin as a picture of a fox chasing a chicken. However, it’s easy to picture it if it is on the video games. Video games will show those information with different ways and improve the eye-hand coordination. Book tells stories, and Games leaves the stories to you, and you should find out what is going on. Books also limits children communicate to others, shut off the interaction with other children. Think about every time a child want to share his or her idea to someone else, but they should be quiet reading the book he is reading. Sometimes that
hurt the communication between people or limit people’s ways of thinking. But it’s a totally different story when playing video games. We need to discuss all the time, and share our opinions. We make comments about the background music and the story of the games. And read book will never improve one’s team working skill. All these above is mentioned in the article or part of the common scene. And this really makes reader feel the sympathy, and evoke reader’s emotion to make his statement strong.

Johnson come up with his argument with many others’ quotes, and use them to compare the benefits of playing games to the disadvantage of reading books, which gains sympathy from readers and strength his statement. He uses all these writing techniques to illustrate how games are good for children learn and amuse. From the discussion given by the author, reader can easily feel the emotion when he write this article. “The first and last thing that should be said about the experience of playing today’s video games, the thing you almost never hear in the mainstream coverage, is, that games are fiendishly, sometimes maddeningly, hard.” (Johnson, Page 201) And that’s the truth which argued by the author to appeal to pathos.
Analysis on the Games by Steven Johnson

Steven Johnson is an innovative presence on the Internet and he has written about science, culture, and computers for popular science magazines and other print and online magazines such as Discover Wired, and Slate. Johnson compares the benefits and disadvantages of playing games and reading in the article “Games”. In his essay, he firstly talk about how others believe that reading is much more beneficial than playing games, and then gives the disadvantages of readings. On the other hand, he supports playing video games have their own benefits. I argue that Johnson expertly takes advantage of using others’ quotes, comparing to reading to make his arguments and appealing to pathos to give his thesis statement to make his argument strong. I will present Johnson’s quotes first, then I will evaluate their effectiveness.

Johnson uses many others’ quotes to make his argument more credible. For example, Johnson use McLuhan, Social critic Jane Jacobs and Andrew Solomon and many other professors or organizations. Those quotes tell the benefits of playing video games, or compare reading books to playing games. Through those quotes can strength the argument and lead to the topic. Johnson use Andrew’s quotation to tell the disadvantage of reading “But perhaps the most dangerous property of these books is the fact that they follow a fixed linear path. You can't control their narratives in any fashion - you simply sit back and have the story dictated to you.” (Andrew 198). And later on, Johnson supports the benefit of playing games by using McLuhan’s quote: “Games have historically suffered from this syndrome, largely because they have been contrasted with the older conventions of reading.” (McLuhan 197) These quotes make his arguments much more creditable, also escalate his statement and those quotes are authoritative and valuable, and positive. And he also uses a quote to summarize his theme. “People who know
well such animated city streets will know how it is. People who do not will always have it a little wrong in their heads -like the old prints of rhinoceroses made from travelers' descriptions of the rhinoceroses.” (Jane 201) I think this writing strategy is very convincing because it makes article creditable and persuades reader by logical statement.

Johnson uses part of his article talking about reading to compare he benefits of playing video games. He use McLuhan’s quote to give an example, “Imagine an alternate world identical to ours, save one techno-historical change: video games were invented and popularized before books. In this parallel universe, kids have been playing games for centuries - and then these page-bound texts come along and suddenly they're all the rage.” (McLuhan 197) And he gives the benefits of playing video games to start his argument. “Unlike the longstanding tradition of game playing - which engages the child in a vivid, three-dimensional world filled with moving images and musical soundscapes, navigated and controlled with complex muscular movements - books are simply a barren string of words on the page.” (Johnson 197) These quotes contrast the reading and playing video games and show the merits of games. Reading always follow a fixed linear path, this might narrow the ways of thinking. But playing games can improves a person’s imaginary ability and his or her visual intelligence. The contrast made by the author gives a lot of credits that games are much more valuable.

If the quotes and comparison are not believable enough, when he talk about the disadvantage of reading, it can really makes reader feel pathos. Books also limits children communicate to others, shut off the interaction with other children. “These new 'libraries" that have arisen in recent years to facilitate reading activities are a frightening sight: dozens of young children, normally so vivacious and socially interactive, sitting alone in cubicles, reading silently, oblivious to their peers.” (Johnson 198) Think about every time a child want to share his
or her idea to someone else, but they should be quiet reading the book he is reading. Sometimes that hurt the communication between people or limit people’s ways of thinking. But it’s a totally different story when playing video games. We need to discuss all the time, and share our opinions. We make comments about the background music and the story of the games. And read book will never improve one’s team working skill. All these above is mentioned in the article or part of the common scene. Book only has words, never gives graphic visions. For example, when I read the *Aesop’s Fables* it’s hard to imagine those little elfin as a picture of a fox chasing a chicken. However, it’s easy to picture it if it is on the video games. Video games will show those information with different ways and improve the eye-hand coordination. Book tells stories, and Games leaves the stories to us, and we should find out what is going on. In this way, Johnson really makes reader feel the sympathy, and evoke reader’s emotion to make his statement strong.

In my analysis, Johnson come up with his argument with many others’ quotes, and use them to compare the benefits of playing games to the disadvantage of reading books, which gains sympathy from readers and strength his statement. He uses all these writing techniques to illustrate how games are good for children learn and amuse. From the discussion given by the author, reader can easily feel the emotion when he write this article. “The first and last thing that should be said about the experience of playing today's video games, the thing you almost never hear in the mainstream coverage, is, that games are fiendishly, sometimes maddeningly, hard.” (Johnson 201) And that’s the truth when Johnson argued by the author to appeal to pathos.

**Works Cited**

Analysis on the Games by Steven Johnson

Steven Johnson is an innovative writer on the Internet, and he has written about science, culture, and computers for popular science magazines and other print and online magazines such as Discover, Wired, and Slate. Johnson compares the benefits and disadvantages of playing games and reading in the article “Games”. In his essay, he firstly discusses how others believe that reading is much more beneficial than playing games, and then gives the disadvantages of readings. On the other hand, he supports that playing video games has their own benefits. Johnson expertly takes advantage of using others’ quotes, comparing reading to playing video games and appealing to pathos to give his thesis statement. By using these ways, Johnson strengthens his argument.

Johnson uses many others’ quotes to make his argument more credible. For example, Johnson refers to works of McLuhan, Social critic Jane Jacobs and Andrew Solomon and many other professors or organizations. Those quotes tell the benefits of playing video games, or compare reading books to playing games. Through those quotes can strength the argument and lead to the topic. Johnson agrees with the disadvantage of reading when Andrew writes, “But perhaps the most dangerous property of these books is the fact that they follow a fixed linear path. You can't control their narratives in any fashion - you simply sit back and have the story dictated to you.” (198). Later on, Johnson praises the benefits of playing games with McLuhan’s observation: “Games have historically suffered from this syndrome, largely because they have been contrasted with the older conventions of reading” (Johnson 197). These quotes make his arguments much more creditable, also escalate his statement and those quotes are authoritative and valuable, and positive. According to Johnson, “People who know well such animated city
streets will know how it is. People who do not will always have it a little wrong in their heads - like the old prints of rhinoceroses made from travelers' descriptions of the rhinoceroses” (201). By using others’ quotes, Johnson strengthens his argument and makes his article more credible, which persuades readers effectively.

Johnson not only uses quotes to empower his argument, but also uses part of his article to talk about reading to compare the benefits of playing video games. He says, “Imagine an alternate world identical to ours, save one techno-historical change: video games were invented and popularized before books. In this parallel universe, kids have been playing games for centuries - and then these page-bound texts come along and suddenly they're all the rage” (Johnson 197). He gives the benefits of playing video games to start his argument, indicating “Unlike the longstanding tradition of game playing - which engages the child in a vivid, three-dimensional world filled with moving images and musical soundscapes, navigated and controlled with complex muscular movements - books are simply a barren string of words on the page” (Johnson 197). These quotes contrast the reading and playing video games and show the merits of games. When we play video games, our mind and body are engaged in these stereo world. We can actively drive our thought. It is positive to play video games. However, reading books are just using fingers to turn pages and using mouth to read. It is negative to read books. Reading always follows a fixed linear path, which might narrow the ways of thinking. However, playing games can improve a person’s imaginary ability and his or her visual intelligence. The contrast made by the author gives a lot of credits that games are much more valuable.

If the quotes and comparison are not believable enough, Johnson’s direct critiques towards reading books can greatly evoke readers’ emotions. Books also limits children in communicating with others, shutting off the interaction with other children. Johnson states his
argument by using this quote: “These new ‘libraries’ that have arisen in recent years to facilitate reading activities are a frightening sight: dozens of young children, normally so vivacious and socially interactive, sitting alone in cubicles, reading silently, oblivious to their peers” (Johnson 198). Think about every time a child wants to share his or her idea to someone else, but he or she is required to read quietly. Sometimes that hurts the communication between people or limits people’s ways of thinking. But it’s a totally different story when playing video games. We need to discuss all the time, and share our opinions. We make comments about the background music and the story of the games. And read book will never improve one’s team working skill. All these above is mentioned in the article or part of the common scene. Book only has words, never gives graphic visions. For example, when I read the Aesop’s Fables it’s hard to imagine those little elfin as a picture of a fox chasing a chicken. However, it’s easy to picture it if it is on the video games, Video games will show those information with different ways and improve the eye-hand coordination. Book tells stories, and games leaves the stories to us, and we should find out what is going on. In this way, Johnson really makes reader feel the sympathy, and evoke reader’s emotion to make his statement strong.

Johnson comes up with his argument with many others’ quotes, and use them to compare the benefits of playing games to the disadvantage of reading books, which gains sympathy from readers and strength his statement. He uses all these writing techniques to illustrate how games are good for children to learn. From the discussion given by Johnson, readers can easily feel the emotion when he writes this article. “The first and last thing that should be said about the experience of playing today's video games, the thing you almost never hear in the mainstream coverage, is, that games are fiendishly, sometimes maddeningly, hard” (Johnson 201). By these ways, he makes his article more creditable and makes readers feel the same with him.
Works Cited

Changes of perceptions of gender

When the first time I read Devor’s article, “Becoming Members of Society: Learning the Social Meanings of Gender”, I thought gender seems to function as the sorting hat in *Harry Potter*. The sorting hat assigns the new Hogwarts students into one of the four School Houses; whereas gender assigns human being into one of two gender groups, masculinity and femininity. In the article, Devor claims that these two gender groups play different roles in family and society. From his perspective, masculinity and femininity are settled. They are distinguished by biological characteristics, social roles, behaviors, and dresses. No doubt, the identity of gender has been lasted generations by generations with just subtle changes, just as what Devor states. However, the world is always changing, as well as the identity of gender. Yet, in a short time, the inequality between masculinity and femininity is difficult to be eliminated.

We cannot deny that the gender dividing line, at certain degree, is still clear. Devor concedes that the ways of people performing, speaking, and talking manifest their gender. Masculinity seems to be aggressive, independent, powerful, and dominant; thus, men’s behaviors, more or less, potentially show their male quality. Yet, femininity seems to be subordinated, passive, dependent, and innocent; therefore, women’s behaviors demonstrate female characters. For example, the masculine body postures, as a way of communication, send the message embracing the achievement of success and declaration of dominance to the surrounding. By contrast, people perceive the message of “no treat” from femininity. Moreover, the ways of femininity walking, standing, or sitting appear to be elegant, polite, and feminine. Otherwise, the ways of talking also reflect people’s gender. If a speaker uses polite expression,
appropriate volume, and asks questions frequently, then this speaker will appear more feminine. Vice versa, if the speaker talks loudly with some inappropriate expression, this speaker will be prone to be masculine. I admit that the statements made by Devor above points out the natural and even stereotypical way we utilize to identify the gender. All these aspects, body posture, speaking, etc., are the traditional perspectives derived from previous generations. We barely doubt these apparent characters of masculinity and femininity. However, Devor’s observations give us a new perspective of identifying gender. He claims his statements with different aspects of evidence, convincing us to think about the present situation. All these pieces of evidence shown in order assemble together, demonstrating the distinguished characters of men and women.

The identity of gender has changed with the development of society. Devor suggests that if people succeed on things thought appropriate for another gender, they will be determined as blurring the gender dividing line. What Devor overlooks is that the gender dividing line is gradually blurred by cultures and change of perspectives. Perhaps in past, women should be well dressed, wearing dresses. Such an innocent image of women displays their dependence and passivity. However, wearing dresses is not women’s patent. In Scotland, men could also wear dresses as conventional costume. Thus, dresses will not be the filter assigning gender groups any more. The converge of cultures and communication between cultures gradually blur the stereotypes of identify of gender. In addition, people’s perspectives have also changed. For example, expressing politely and appropriately will not only be referred to feminine quality, but it also will be referred to people with a decent education and good manner. Even a man does not express aggression or dominance in his speech, he will not be thought as feminine. Reversely, this etiquette shows his respects to listeners. In other words, the intonation and expression
transform from the criteria of gender to the criteria of manner. In addition, not exact as what Devor states in his article, our perception for gender gradually change our attitude toward different gender groups. Since we cannot defy the tendency of converging of cultures, it is unavoidable to accept different perceptions of gender from other cultural groups. Thus, the dressing in black, used to be thought as masculine, is commonly thought as personal preference. Speaking loudly, the stereotypical masculine character, could be considered as unique personality. The identification of gender will not be regulated by such stereotypes.

However, it is not said that masculinity and femininity are equal. The phenomenon of inequality still exists between these two gender groups. In the past, men were automatically thought to own higher social status and family status than women. This is apparent inequality. Though at present, people do not have such awareness, the inequality presents in some other way. For example, if a woman performs independently and powerfully, we will still view her as masculine. When we use the word “masculine” to praised a woman, we have already judged her by stereotypes. Reversely, if a man acts dependently or softly, we will consider him as feminine. Our ways of thinking seem so natural that barely people realize it is actually a kind of inequality. Just because masculinity is always the dominant group, and femininity is the subordinated group, no matter what our real gender is, we are tagged by masculinity and femininity in society. This inequality is hard to eliminated since both men and women have not realized it.

In brief, Devor’s declaration does emphasize the main ideas of identification of gender, and he enlightens us to introspect the phenomenon of inequality between masculinity and femininity. He comprehensively distinguishes the different characters, behaviors, dressing, and social status between masculinity and femininity by engaging with a majority of examples. He also organizes his points in apparent order, making us comprehend his points easily. However,
his cognition of gender does not seem to be updated, keeping the stereotypes of perspectives.

The change of identification of gender has been overlooked. Based on his observation, we could introspect the derivation of inequality. The issue of eliminating the inequality should be concerned.
How does the public identify gender?

The first time I read Devor’s article, “Becoming Members of Society: Learning the Social Meanings of Gender”, I felt like gender seems to function as the sorting hat in *Harry Potter*. The sorting hat assigns the new Hogwarts students into one of the four School Houses; whereas gender assigns human beings into one of two gender groups, male or female. Devor, as a sociological specialist exploring gender field, claims in her article that females and males both play different roles in family and society, and they are settled from societies’ perspectives. Thus, I will analyze the strengths of information of gender identity, e.g. organized ideas, comprehensive examples; however, I will point out that more profound information of flexibility of gender identity also needs to be provided by applying examples by Devor.

Clearly, Devor’s article keeps organized since she displays the stereotypical gender identity through general two aspects, biological characteristics and social behaviors. Specifically, the biological characteristics embrace appearance and physical attributes, and social behaviors encompass body posture, speech, and dress. Devor concedes the gender dividing line is clear from biological characteristic aspect. At the beginning of the article, she demonstrates that people are born with one gender, but they are unable to recognize their gender. Thus, adults become the key instructors to guide babies to identify their own gender. Normally, young kids identify gender by appearance. When they gradually grow up and learn more from adults, they can identify gender not only through appearances, but also through physical attributes. At that time, they finally convince the differences between women and men and concede they permanently belong to their gender groups (Devor 415-6). Identifying gender through appearances and physical attributes is the traditional way for people to distinguish male and
female gender. Over hundreds and hundreds of years, people taught their children to identify gender by appearance and physical attributes, and no one doubt it. To sum up, biological characteristics distinguish male and female gender group. Yet, the biological characteristic is not the only way for people to identify gender.

In addition, social behaviors, such as body posture, speaking, also help people to identify gender. Devor separately elaborates how obviously body posture, ways of talking and dressing of male distinguish from female. In fact, body posture, speech, and dressing of male tend to be aggressive and dominant to manifest their authority in society, while women’s behaviors tend to be feminine and subordinated (Devor, 420-1). In other words, social behaviors, sharing same function as biological characteristics, differentiate male and female gender. On one hand, these points are presented in chronological order, namely, from children to adults. On the other hand, these points are presented from externality to internalization. The orders of structure of article play a crucial role to guide readers to interpret Devor’s points effectively. Thus, readers can follow Devor’s thoughts, and meanwhile, they can introspect the stereotypical social perspectives. The clear order also makes Devor’s article logical; thus, her points are attractive and persuasive to help readers reflect the social situation.

To support Devor’s ideas and make her article convinced, she provides various examples. To indicate how children recognize gender, she applies a study examined that the majority of children identify dolls’ gender by recognizing the appearance, such as the length of hair, or clothes styles (416). As a result, readers can understand children’s perspectives of gender; furthermore, they can interpret the differences between adults’ perspectives and children’s perspectives. This study also concedes children’s perceptions about gender is superficial. Then, when they become adults who own relatively complete perception about the gender, they can
distinguish gender by people’s social behaviors. For example, the masculine body postures, as a way of communication, send the message embracing the achievement of success and declaration of dominance. By contrast, people perceive the message of “no threat” from feminine figures (Devor 419). Otherwise, the ways people speak can also become a method to identify their gender. If a speaker uses polite expression, appropriate volume, and asks questions frequently, then this speaker will appear more feminine. Vice versa, if the speaker talks loudly, accompanying with some inappropriate expression, this speaker will be prone to masculine (Devor 420-1).

Consequently, based on these examples, readers can easily interpret Devor’s idea that from social perspectives, masculinity seems to be aggressive, powerful, and dominant; thus, men’s behaviors, more or less, potentially show their male quality. By contrast, femininity seems to be subordinated, passive, and dependent; therefore, women’s behaviors demonstrate female characteristics, which is what Devor views the social perspectives (Devor 417-8). These examples must be seen everywhere, making Devor’s thoughts credible. Believing in such couple of examples or evidence, people have to realize the fact that these gender identities have already become stereotypical. Therefore, Devor’s main point that the gender identity is flexible and incomplete is convinced. People also start to think if the present methods of gender identity are not complete, which ways of gender identity can be counted for complete ways.

Nevertheless, at the last paragraph, Devor claims “[f]ortunately, our training to gender roles is neither complete nor uniform. As a result, it is possible to point to multitudinous exceptions to, and variations on, these themes”, how gender identity becomes flexible in present still stays mysterious (421). Without any examples, evidences, researches, people rarely notice the flexibility of gender identity. Devor overlooks this mystery and leaves it to the readers, while
actually it is better for her to give some hints in order to explain her ideas. Specifically, she can apply the example like in past, women should be well dressed, such as wearing skirts. Such an innocent image of women displays their dependence and passivity. However, wearing dresses is not women’s patent. In Scotland, men could also wear dresses as conventional costume. Thus, dresses will no more be the filter assigning gender groups. The converge of cultures and communication between cultures gradually blur the stereotypes of identity of gender, convincing that the gender identity is flexible. Otherwise, some cultures also accept the third gender, which also break through the stereotypes of gender identity.

In addition, the social criteria changes. Expressing politely and appropriately will not only be referred to feminine quality, but it also will be referred to people with a decent education and good manner. Despite a man does not express aggression or dominance in his speech, he will not be thought as feminine. Reversely, this etiquette shows his respects to listeners. In other words, the intonation and expression transform from the criteria of gender to the criteria of manner. These evidence completely support the idea that the gender identity become flexible. With these detailed examples, Devor’s thoughts can be expressed much better than without these details.

In brief, Devor’s declaration emphasize the stereotypical social perspective of gender. She displays her points in chronological order and external-internal order, facilitating readers to follow her ideas easily. She also reflects back to previous points she makes as reminding what she is talking about. Otherwise, applying a couple of examples, details and researches enhances the credibility of her perspectives, making the whole article persuasive. However, her own points seem too concise to interpret. It is better for her to provide more examples to support that the gender identity is flexible. Thus, the explanation and extension are required.
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Devor, Holly. “Becoming members of society: Learning the social meanings of gender.”

How does the public identify gender?

The first time I read Devor’s article, “Becoming Members of Society: Learning the Social Meanings of Gender”, I felt like gender seems to function as the sorting hat in Harry Potter. The sorting hat assigns the new Hogwarts students into one of the four School Houses; whereas gender assigns human beings into one of two gender groups, males or females. Devor, as a sociological specialist exploring gender field, claims in her article that females and males both play different roles in family and society, and they are settled from societies’ perspectives. Thus, this paper will analyze the strengths of information of gender identity, e.g. organized ideas, comprehensive examples; however, more profound information of flexibility of gender identity also needs to be provided by applying examples by Devor.

Clearly, Devor’s article is organized since she displays the stereotypical gender identity through two aspects, biological characteristics and social behaviors. Specifically, biological characteristics contain appearances and physical attributes. Devor claims the society considers the gender dividing line as clear from the biological characteristic aspect. At the beginning of the article, she demonstrates that people are born with one gender, but they are unable to recognize their gender. Thus, adults become the key instructors, guiding children to identify their own gender. Normally, young kids identify gender based on appearance (Devor 415). When they learn more from adults, they can identify gender not only through appearances, but also through physical attributes. At that time, they finally confirm the differences between women and men and realize they permanently belong to their gender groups (Devor 415-6). Identifying gender through appearances and physical attributes is the traditional way for people to distinguish male and female gender. Over hundreds and hundreds of years, people taught their children to identify
gender by appearances and physical attributes, and no one doubt it. To sum up, biological characteristics distinguish male and female gender group. Yet, biological characteristics are not the only way for people to identify gender.

In addition, social behaviors, such as body posture, speaking, or dressing, also help people to identify gender, making the article organized. Devor separately elaborates how obviously body posture, ways of talking and dressing of males distinguish from females. In fact, masculine body posture, speech, and dressing tend to be aggressive and dominant to manifest their authority in society, while feminine behaviors tend to be subordinated (Devor, 420-1). In other words, social behaviors, similarly functioning as biological characteristics, differentiate male and female gender. On one hand, these points are presented in chronological order, namely, from children to adults. On the other hand, these points are presented from externality to internalization. The orders of the structure of the article play a crucial role to guide readers to interpret Devor’s points effectively. Thus, readers can follow Devor’s thoughts, and meanwhile, they can introspect stereotypical social perspectives. The clear order also makes Devor’s article logical; thus, her points are attractive and persuasive to help readers reflect the social situation.

To support Devor’s ideas and make her article convincing, she provides various examples. To indicate how children recognize gender, she applies a study examined that the majority of children identify dolls’ gender by recognizing appearances, such as the length of hair, or clothes styles (416). As a result, readers can understand children’s perspectives of gender; furthermore, they can interpret the differences between adults’ perspectives and children’s perspectives. This study also concedes children’s perceptions about gender is superficial. Then, when they become adults who own relatively complete perception, they can distinguish gender by people’s social behaviors. For example, the masculine body postures send the message
embracing the achievement of success and declaration of dominance. By contrast, people perceive the message of “no threat” from feminine figures (Devor 419). Otherwise, the ways people speak can also become a method to identify their gender. If a speaker uses polite expression, appropriate volume, and asks questions frequently, then this speaker will appear more feminine. Vice versa, if the speaker talks loudly, accompanying with some inappropriate expression, this speaker will be prone to be masculine (Devor 420).

Consequently, based on these examples, readers can easily interpret Devor’s idea that from social perspectives, masculinity seems to be aggressive, powerful, and dominant; thus, men’s behaviors, more or less, potentially show their male quality. By contrast, femininity seems to be subordinated, passive, and dependent; therefore, women’s behaviors demonstrate female characteristics, which is what Devor views social perspectives (Devor 417-8). These examples can be seen everywhere, making Devor’s thoughts credible. Believing in such couple of examples or evidence, people have to realize the fact that these gender identities have already become stereotypical. Therefore, Devor’s main point that gender identity is flexible and incomplete is convinced. People also start to think if the present methods of gender identity are not complete, which ways of gender identity can be counted for complete ways.

Nevertheless, in the last paragraph, Devor claims “[f]ortunately, our training to gender roles is neither complete nor uniform. As a result, it is possible to point to multitudinous exceptions to, and variations on, these themes”, how gender identity becomes flexible in present still stays mysterious (421). Without any examples, evidences, researches, people rarely notice the flexibility of gender identity. Devor overlooks this mystery and leaves it to readers, while actually it is better for her to give some hints in order to explain her ideas. Specifically, she can apply the example like in the past, women should be well dressed, such as wearing skirts. Such
an innocent image of women displays their dependence and passivity. However, wearing dresses is not women’s patent. In Scotland, men could also wear kilts as conventional costume. Thus, dresses will no more be the filter assigning gender groups. The convergence of cultures and communication between cultures gradually blur the stereotypes of identity of gender, convincing that gender identity is flexible. Otherwise, some cultures also accept the third gender, which also break through the stereotypes of gender identity.

In addition, Devor does not mention that the social criteria changes. Expressing politely and appropriately will not only be referred to feminine quality, but it also will be referred to people with a decent education and good manner. Despite a man does not express aggression or dominance in his speech, he will not be thought as feminine. Reversely, this etiquette shows his respects to listeners. In other words, the intonation and expression transform from the criteria of gender to the criteria of manner. Such evidence completely supports the idea that gender identity becomes flexible. With these detailed examples, Devor will expresses her thoughts more clearly.

In brief, Devor’s declaration emphasizes the stereotypical social perspective of gender. She displays her points in chronological order and external-internal order, facilitating readers to follow her ideas easily. She also reflects back to previous points as reminding what she is talking about. Otherwise, applying a couple of examples, details and researches enhances the credibility of her perspectives, making the whole article persuasive. However, her own points seem too concise to interpret. It is better for her to provide more examples to support that gender identity is flexible. Thus, the explanation and extension are required.
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Niu’s original article is written in Standard Mandarin, which is: 牛惠君, “中国英语学生的指示语失误现象——基于语料库的分析”, 基础教育外语教学研究, 2007 年第 9 期。


EDUCATION

**Bachelor of Arts in English**, Penn State Behrend (PSB), Erie, PA Expected May 2017
- Thesis: Writer Identity and Use of FPPs
- Thesis Supervisor: Mary C. Connerty
- Honors Adviser: Craig A. Warren
- Faculty Reader from the English Program: Janet Neigh

TEACHING/RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

**ESL Teaching Assistant**
*English Language Study Center, School of Humanities & Social Sciences, PSB, Erie, PA*
- Courses: ESL Composition; English Language and Analysis
- Teach lessons on grammar topics and rhetorical issues
- Assist in supervising in-class workshops, group discussions, and relevant activities
- Tutor 100+ multilingual & international students in academic English skills

**Undergraduate Summer Research**
*School of Humanities & Social Sciences, PSB, Erie, PA*
- Awarded a full fellowship grant to develop a cross-lingual research project in China
- Examined Alan Moore’s use of Chinese language in his comic novel
- Generated literary studies about Moore’s portrayal of Chinese immigrants
- Translated all the Chinese texts in Moore’s work into English and Cantonese

PUBLICATIONS


SELECTED LECTURES, PRESENTATIONS & SPEECHES


SCHOLARSHIPS & GRANT
Penn State Behrend Summer Research Fellowship Grant 03. 2016 – 08. 2016
Penn State Behrend Scholarship & Leadership Scholarship 08. 2015 – Present

UNDERGRADUATE HONORS & AWARDS
W. LaMarr Kopp Undergraduate International Achievement Award 04. 2016
Rose Cologne Keystone Citizen Award 04. 2015 & 16
T. Reed Ferguson Award 04. 2016
Humanities Writing Award 04. 2016
Irvin H. Kochel Award 04. 2015