



Reformulation of Written German from the Second Language Learner's Perspective

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I would like to dedicate this thesis to the memory of my mother.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

In this thesis I will be describing a two-faceted diary study investigating my own learning experience with reformulation, a second language writing technique in which a nonnative's writing is reformulated (rewritten) by a native speaker in order to look more native-like. The first facet of the study will explore what sorts of insights into native-like writing I actually gained from this technique at the low-intermediate level and will discuss issues relating directly to the procedure, such as native-speaker reformulators. The second facet will take advantage of the introspective nature of diary studies to examine the affective and motivational factors that influenced the learning process throughout the study; in other words, the reformulation work will be considered in the larger "real world" context in which it occurred.

A New Direction in SL Writing: Statement of the Problem and Literature Review

The need for an alternative to traditional—and unsatisfactory—forms of feedback has long been recognized in the field of L2 composition. Indeed, the search for effective forms of feedback has led to "wild swings of the pendulum" as first one extreme pedagogical practice has been embraced and then another (Erickson 1996, citing Prater 1964). The overt error correction of the 1950's and 60's, which often overwhelmed students with feedback, gave way to a hands-off approach in which teacher comments were minimal and grammatical correction almost non-existent. Neither extreme has answered the need; while teachers have generally come to view the former as largely ineffectual, students often complain that the latter does not provide enough feedback. The fact that there is a "misfit" between what teachers give and what students want (Cohen, 1991, p. 149) should not surprise us, as teachers and researchers themselves cannot even agree on what the *focus* of feedback should be: form or content (Fathman & Whalley, 1990, p. 178). (For a more in-depth review of the history of error prevention and error correction in foreign language teaching, see Hendrickson, 1987.)

The process approach, which focuses attention away from "product" by emphasizing prewriting and the revision of several drafts, currently holds sway in the field and in many ways draws on the best of both extremes, at least theoretically: students receive feedback (from teachers and sometimes from peers) focusing on content and organization in earlier drafts, and then receive grammatical feedback of one form another in preparation for a final draft. But what

is the nature of the actual feedback teachers give? At least one study of the responding behaviors of 15 ESL composition teachers provided damning evidence that:

ESL writing teachers misread student texts, are inconsistent in their reactions, make arbitrary corrections, write contradictory comments, provide vague prescriptions, impose abstract rules and standards, respond to texts as fixed and final products, and rarely make content-specific comments or offer specific strategies for revising the text. (Zamel 1985, p. 86)

Teachers attend to surface-level problems almost exclusively, Zamel contended, and fail to treat student texts holistically¹.

Levenston had protested against much the same problem several years earlier, and in response to the inadequacy of mere error correction was the first to propose *reformulation* as an alternative (1978). Reformulation does not fall so much on the continuum of feedback methodologies described above as off to one side, on its own; it represents feedback on a completely different plane because it offers something no traditional form of feedback does: a native-like version of the nonnative student's writing. In his demonstration of reformulation, Levenston took a nonnative student's essay and first reconstructed it based on Corder's concept of *plausible reconstruction* (1974); that is, he corrected the grammar so that the essay would reflect what he thought the student had meant to say. (Corder had actually recommended *authoritative reconstruction* first, in which the learner is consulted as to his or her precise meaning, but acknowledged that that is not always feasible.) Traditional feedback often ends at this point, but in reformulation this reconstructed version is then given to a native speaker to be reformulated, i.e. rewritten, so that the original ideas are still preserved as much as possible but clothed in more native-like language; this may involve changes ranging from the simple matter of word choice to a complete reorganization of ideas. This reformulation is then given back to the nonnative, who compares it to their own (reconstructed) version in an attempt to discover how it fell short of native-like writing. The experience is intended to help the nonnative form generalizations about writing in the target language and move in a more native-like direction in his or her writing².

Cohen was the first to rigorously examine this new technique (1983c). Intrigued by reformulation's potential to reveal serious deviations from nativeness in the writing of nonnative

¹Knowing what L2 teachers do is only half the battle, of course; a number of studies have focused on the matter of what L2 *students* do. See "The Composing Processes of Advanced ESL Students: Six Case Studies" (Zamel 1983), "What Unskilled ESL Students Do as They Write: A Classroom Study of Composing" (Raimes 1985), "Language Proficiency, Writing Ability, and Composing Strategies: A Study of ESL College Student Writers" (Raimes 1987), and "Writing Expertise and Second-Language Proficiency" (Cumming 1988), to name just a few.

²As pointed out to me by Ray Wakefield (Personal Communication, January 30, 1996), the reconstruction step could arguably be left out of the reformulation process or attended to *after* reformulation. The advantages and disadvantages of this will be considered further in Chapter 7.

students—thus preventing the nonnative from fossilizing at an intermediate level (p. 2)—Cohen carried out a case study in which his own advanced L2 Hebrew essay was reformulated by three colleagues. He found that the reformulated versions reflected many more changes in the areas of syntax, cohesion, and rhetorical functions than did the reconstruction, which he felt demonstrated the inadequacy of traditional feedback focusing on grammar since the reconstructors obviously tolerated a great many more nonnative choices than the reformulators did. (At the same time, of course, one might question whether more feedback is always better, an issue that arises in Chapter 6, “Motivation and the Learner: An Analysis of Diary Entries: Reformulation Factors.”) Cohen also found that the three reformulators, while sometimes differing in the ways in which they changed his work, did tend to change the same things and to make a similar number of changes. This assured him that the process did target nonnative problems in his writing. But most intriguingly, Cohen reported experiencing “breakthroughs” in his understanding of how to write in a more native-like way, particularly regarding cohesive devices—this, even at his advanced level. The study convinced Cohen that reformulation had the potential to push a nonnative’s writing towards nativeness in a way that no other form of feedback had.

In the same paper, Cohen reported on a small-scale study in which seven advanced nonnative English speakers and six advanced nonnative Hebrew speakers received reformulations of an informal composition (1983c). Again, he found that the reformulations contained many more changes than the reconstructions—almost five times as many. Student reaction to the procedure was generally favorable; Cohen reported that “One even regretted not having used a system like this from the start of her studies” (p. 15).

Sanaoui, working with beginning French as a Second Language students, found reformulation to be very effective at the lower level as well (something Cohen had questioned) and attributed this effectiveness to several things (Sanaoui 1984). First, she felt that reformulation was highly motivating because students were reading texts based on their own experience. Cohen too had lauded this aspect of reformulation as uniquely motivating:

An important reason for having natives reformulate what the non-natives wrote rather than writing about their own ideas was that in this way the non-natives would be able to feel that the essay was still theirs, even though it was reformulated. (1983c, p. 4)

Second, the procedure went well beyond error correction and gave students choices pertaining to style, appropriateness, and rhetorical functions, aspects of writing often overlooked in other practices. Third, students realized through studying the reformulations that their writing did not always express all the meaning they had intended; in other words, they could not help but

see how and where they fell short in communicating their ideas. Finally, the technique helped students diagnose those aspects of their writing needing improvement and assess their proficiency against real native fluency (p. 145). She concluded that:

. . . all students have benefited from the use of the reformulation approach. . . the results obtained over a short period of time surpass results I have achieved with other students through any type of explicit or direct instruction. (p. 145)

In spite of such promising results from both this study and the two mentioned above, Cohen does not recommend the use of reformulation in place of other forms of feedback but considers it a “refinement” (1991, p. 122); in fact, he has questioned whether reformulation, however inherently interesting, is really for everyone (1983b). In another of his studies, fifty-three advanced college-level Hebrew L2 learners were divided into a Reformulation group and a Correction group. Both groups wrote three compositions over two months. At the end of the summer, “. . . the mean gain score from the first to the third composition was significantly higher for the Correction group. . .” (p. 1). Cohen attributed this in part to the fact that the Reformulation students were overwhelmed by the extra work expected of them and lost motivation, putting less effort into their third compositions as a consequence. Some of the students also had trouble carrying out the comparisons of their versions with the reformulations; the minimal help provided in biweekly sessions with a research assistant was not enough. Cohen concluded that reformulation should perhaps be reserved for those students who would welcome the challenge of the reformulation procedure; monitor users, for example, might be motivated enough to take on the rigorous work that reformulation analysis required.

It was in fact due to the challenges of reformulation work that Levenston had stopped short of recommending it for L2 classroom use—but Levenston’s concern was for the instructor, not the students: “. . . what second-language teacher has time for such detailed treatment, much of which should be handled in the first language classroom?” (1978, p. 11). R.L. Allwright and J.M. Allwright, however, developed a strategy for the use of reformulation in the classroom that made the procedure more feasible for both teachers and students (1984). (This strategy will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 8, “Implications for Teaching.”) By putting the emphasis on classroom discussions of one reformulation, neither teachers nor students were expected to engage in an overwhelming amount of work, and students were given extensive help in comparing the two versions and understanding the changes made. Allwright, Woodley, and Allwright asserted that students were usually enthusiastic about this process and seemed to reap benefits in their writing (Allwright et al 1988, p. 236). At the same time, they reported positive results in two case studies in which certain text measures were applied to student writing. It was found that 79.2% of the changes made by the two students engaged in reformulation work were

in the direction of actual native versions, while 69.8% of the changes were in the direction of the reformulations (p. 250). In other words, the reformulation procedure did appear to be moving students in the direction of real native writing and not merely in the direction of reformulated writing. This is important when one remembers that reformulations are merely native-like, and not truly native. They also found that having the students study their own reformulated work rather than reformulations of each other's work appeared to make a positive difference, thus echoing Sanaoui's and Cohen's statements about this highly motivating aspect of the technique while at the same time warning that the strategy developed by Allwright et al for in-class use may be less motivating for all but the one lucky student whose work is being reformulated.

The above studies, while few in number, offer some very encouraging initial findings about the potential of reformulation as a means of moving students toward more native-like writing. What is more, students seem to *like* the technique (Cohen, 1983c, 1983b; Sanaoui, 1984; Allwright et al, 1988). Even when the students in one of Cohen's studies (1983b) found their reformulation tasks overwhelming, half indicated that they would continue to use the technique after the close of the study.

Background to the Study

I was first drawn to the idea of reformulation while teaching one of my first ESL composition classes, a low-intermediate group. I found it easy at first to tolerate a great deal of nonnativeness in my students' writing, not just because I was wisely discerning that they could only handle a certain amount of feedback but because I was focusing on patching up grammatical problems here and there and on helping students develop and communicate ideas clearly. The issue of nativeness was brought to the fore by one student who brought me his essay in which I had changed "many money" to "much money." The student said that an American friend had told him that that sounded odd in a positive context; a native speaker would have said "I have a lot of money," using "much money" in a negative context only ("I don't have much money"). (This example is admittedly a grammatical issue as well as a stylistic one.) Of course he was right, and because of the way in which the American friend had phrased his comment I began to think in terms of what a native speaker would say, and why. What could be better, I finally thought, than simply rewriting a nonnative's work in a native-like way and then allowing him or her to study the differences, saying in effect, "This is what you *meant* to say, as a native speaker would say it"?

Upon discovering that this brilliant idea already existed and had been investigated in the studies above, I became very curious to experience reformulation myself as a low-intermediate learner of German. What aspects of my writing would seem nonnative-like to a German, and what would he or she change to make it look more native-like? In other words, what insights

specifically would I as a lower-level learner gain from reformulation? These questions were similar to those addressed in Cohen's self-study, but it was clear that one self-study in the field was woefully insufficient and that more studies, representing diverse levels and languages, were needed before the nature of reformulation could be revealed with more certainty.

Another issue that I was eager to explore, and one that seems critically important to our understanding of the *potential* of reformulation, was that of motivation. As mentioned above, there is something inherently motivating about seeing one's own ideas expressed in a native-like way in the target language; yet the rigorous analysis that reformulation seems to demand from students may serve to cancel out this motivation, at least for some students some of the time. As a highly motivated student, I wanted to see what my own reaction would be to the reformulation procedure as I engaged in it repeatedly, over time; exactly what factors would emerge as motivating or unmotivating about the procedure?

A diary study seemed to provide the best vantage point from which to explore these questions. For one thing, diary studies have been traditionally regarded as a springboard for further research, a way to generate hypotheses to be tested in more experimental studies, and with an area so little-researched as reformulation, diary studies could be extremely useful at this point in informing further research. (Bailey has pointed out that ". . . the diary studies have apparently not born fruit in terms of early claims about their potential usefulness as hypothesis-generating tools. . . ." (1991, p. 82). I believe that the fault may lie not with the diary study per se, but with researchers failing to take advantage of diary studies.)

At the same time, I believed that a diary study could offer insights valuable in and of themselves, insights that in fact could not be yielded by an experimental design study. It is of course important to bear in mind the limitations of a diary study; diary studies do not yield causal statements or generalizable results (Bailey 1991) and are idiosyncratic and difficult to verify as well (Schmidt and Frota 1986). Schmidt and Frota also reminded us that:

. . . the fact that we cannot observe what goes on in another person's mind should not automatically lead us to assume that we necessarily do know what goes on in our own (Armando Baltra, personal communication). (1986, p. 238)

This seems especially important for diarists to bear in mind. It may be, however, that these limitations are less to the point than researchers have traditionally held. The more we learn about the actual learning process, the more evident it seems that some of the most important factors influencing learning—affect and other personal variables—may not be generalizable at all. As neurolinguist John Schumann asserts, the biological machine may be universal, but the schematic emotional state is unique to each individual, and as a consequence, "We have nothing *but* individuals" (Schumann 1996). This new way of looking at SLA research resonates with the

perspective held by Lantolf (1996), who lamented that SLA theorists suffer from “physics envy” (p. 7). According to Lantolf:

SLA is not situated in processes but in people embedded in activity and if these people change the conditions of our experiments, so be it. What we need to ‘worry’ about is the ways in which people alter our experiments. . . (p. 7)

Perhaps the average language learner, that elusive target of so many experimental studies, does not actually exist. It may therefore be more revealing to focus on the context in which a learning experience occurs than on trying to form generalizations, and diary studies can provide that context³.

Furthermore,

Diary studies allow us to see factors identified by the learners which we, as researchers and teachers, may not consider to be variables worth studying. (Bailey 1991, p. 87)

This seems especially advantageous when one is looking at an issue such as motivation, where a real-world experience may well yield unpredictable or even surprising factors. An excellent example of this is provided in F.M. Schumann and J.H. Schumann’s study, “Diary of a Language Learner: An Introspective Study of Second Language Learning” (1977), which reported on diaries kept by the two learners/researchers during three language learning experiences. Schumann and Schumann identified personal variables, such as nesting and transition anxiety, that either promoted or hindered their language learning; these variables “had not been specifically identified as important in previous studies of the social-psychology of SLL” (p. 243). (See also F.M. Schumann’s “Diary of a Language Learner: A Further Analysis” (1980)).

These considerations, then, prompted the diary study which the rest of this paper will describe. It is hoped that both insights aiding the immediate use and understanding of reformulation and specific questions worthy of further research will be clarified.

³For a thorough discussion of diary studies and the standards to which they should be held, see “A Methodological Review of the Diary Studies: Windmill Tilting or Social Science?” (Bailey, 1983). See also Altman (1996) for a rationale for the use of intuitive methods and a description of his own six-year self-study, “The Oral Production of Vocabulary: A Case Study.”

CHAPTER TWO: DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY

As Bailey has noted, “One strength of the diary studies to date is that they reflect the ‘real-world’ conditions under which the data were collected. . . .” (1991, p. 87). The real-world conditions in which this particular diary study took place necessitated several changes in the study’s design, which I will note here briefly. I had intended the study to take place entirely in Germany. The plan was to write an essay, have it reconstructed by a native speaker, submit a clean copy incorporating those corrections to a reformulator, and analyze the reformulation, recording the experience in a diary throughout the process. This same pattern was to be repeated in two-week cycles with the same reformulator for a total of four or five months, yielding eight to ten sets of reconstructions + reformulations.

After the first cycle had been completed and I had received but not yet analyzed the reformulation of the second essay, my mother died very unexpectedly and I returned immediately to the U.S. I spent most of the next six months at home with family, returning to Germany for just two weeks. The GSL research that had begun in München, Germany, was therefore continued as GFL research in my hometown of Brookings, South Dakota, and finished in Minneapolis, Minnesota. I abandoned the idea of sticking to two-week cycles with the same reformulator (no longer a feasible plan) and decided instead to have three different reformulators all reformulate the same four pieces of writing.

Due to the nature of my circumstances, I also decided to write personal letters for reformulation, rather than just essays⁴

Definition of terms

A “reconstructed” piece of writing is one that has been corrected for grammar problems; a “reformulated” piece of writing is one that has been rewritten by a native speaker to look native-like.

The “insights” into native-like writing in this study refer to four areas of writing: vocabulary (appropriateness of word and phrasing choices); syntax (choice and ordering of sentences/clauses); cohesive devices (i.e., the use of conjunctions, transitions, pronouns, etc.); and discourse functions (for example, stating an opinion, giving an example, concluding).

⁴ The significance of this change in genre as a motivational factor will be discussed in Chapter Five, “Motivation and the Learner: An Analysis of Diary Entries: Personal Factors.”

Research questions

I investigated the following research questions:

1. What can an analysis of diary entries reveal about the insights a low-intermediate learner experiences through studying reformulations?
2. To what extent do different reformulators agree on what to change and how? (In other words, are some reformulators more tolerant of non-nativeness? Do some tend to focus on a particular aspect of writing more than others?)
3. What can an analysis of diary entries reveal regarding factors affecting the motivation of the learner to engage in reformulation work throughout the study?

Design of the Study

Sample

I studied myself as a second- and foreign-language learner of German. As a false beginner with two years of high school German, I took one academic year of college-level beginning German, starting approximately one year before the onset of the research. During the start of the research in Germany, I was also taking an intensive GFL class (Deutschkurs für Ausländer) at the low-intermediate level at the university in München. German is the only second/foreign language I have studied, except for brief, informal “lessons” in Mandarin from Chinese friends.

I teach ESL as a graduate student and am a monitor user and a highly-motivated student. As well as being a strong academic writer in English, my native language, I am a creative writer who writes short stories, two of which have been accepted for publication in literary journals⁵. I therefore brought a strong personal identity as a writer to this study.

Instrumentation

I studied two reconstructed essays along with three reformulated versions of each and two reconstructed letters along with three reformulated versions of each.

All three of the reformulators were native speakers of German. The first reformulator, Paula, was living in München and had been a university student but had opted not to finish her degree. I communicated in both German and English with Paula, who was competent in English, but usually in English when discussing the reformulations.

The second reformulator, Margot, was a university student in my hometown and had lived in the U.S. for six years before working with me; consequently, she was extremely fluent in English, which was the language we usually spoke together.

⁵L1 composing competence has been shown to have a significant impact on L2 composing. For a discussion of this, see Krapels’ review of the research (1990).

The third reformulator, Annette, was a university student in München and my roommate while I was there; she became a reformulator for me only after I had returned to the U.S. Annette was studying American literature and had a very strong command of the language, and we had slipped into the habit of speaking English while becoming friends since it was easier. Therefore our communications occurred almost exclusively in English.

I also studied a diary that was kept in response to the reformulation experience.

Data Collection Procedures

I wrote two essays and two letters in German and then received help in correcting the grammar (i.e., reconstructing them). Normally I tried to have someone other than the reformulator help me with the corrections, but the first time I gave Margot a piece to reformulate, I had not yet gotten help from anyone else. (See Chapter Five, p. 72.) My reconstructors included at various times Annette (then a roommate but not a reformulator); a German instructor in Germany; Margot; an American friend getting his Ph.D. in German; and my grandfather, who is bilingual (English and low German).

I then submitted the reconstructed essays and letters to the three native speakers for reformulation, resulting in the twelve reformulations shown below:

Table One: Twelve Reformulation Sets

	Essay 1	Essay 2	Letter 1	Letter 2
Paula	Essay.1P	Essay.2P	Letter.1P	Letter.2P
Margot	Essay.1M	Essay.2M	Letter.1M	Letter.2M
Annette	Essay.1A	Essay.2A	Letter.1A	Letter.2A

(See Appendix A for a sample of a complete set, from my original to the reconstruction to the reformulation.)

After receiving the reformulated versions back, I compared each one with the reconstructed version. (What follows is a description of the comparison that I engaged in as a learner using reformulation; this was the learning experience itself and should not be confused with the analysis of the study, which will be described in the following section, “Data Analysis.”) The system that I used for this comparison evolved somewhat throughout the study. I began by setting the first reconstruction and reformulation (Essay.1P) side by side and marking all the changes in vocabulary with an orange highlighter and numbering the changes; then I commented on the changes in the diary. I followed the same procedure *using the same copies* for syntax, cohesion, and discourse functions, using green, blue, and yellow respectively. After the

comparison, I met with Paula and asked questions, entering her comments and responses in the margins of the diary as necessary.

When I compared the next reformulation with its reconstruction, I continued to use the color-coding and numbering system, but instead of commenting immediately and comprehensively on changes in the diary, I listed the vocabulary changes on one sheet, syntax changes on another, and so on, writing comments to one side and looking for patterns. It was far easier to refer back to changes—and to spot trends and patterns—in this way. After meeting with Margot to discuss what I had found, I discussed noteworthy or interesting items in the diary. This included specific points I had learned and generalizations I was forming.

Later I added one final improvement to my system of comparison:

I enter both my reconstruction and the reformulation into the computer in parallel column format and can then study (color-code, number) them closely side by side. 10.18.95

I reanalyzed Essay.1P and Letter.1M in this format so that all of the comparisons would have been carried out in the same way. (See Appendix B for a sample of an entire comparison with worksheets.) Later, I was not usually able to discuss my questions immediately with the reformulator, so we corresponded by mail and occasionally over the telephone.

A word must be added regarding the way in which I decided whether a change was a vocabulary issue, a syntax issue, a cohesion issue, or a discourse function issue. When a SL learner studies a reformulation of his or her writing, he or she should try to notice the changes and understand why they result in a more native-like text. The precise labeling of each individual change as belonging to a particular category (vocabulary, syntax, cohesion, discourse functions) is not important; the forming of generalizations is. For example, it is not important whether the learner considers it a matter of syntax or cohesion that the reformulator changed a dash to a comma; it is important for the learner to recognize that the reformulator removed all of the dashes and used commas liberally, because it is very German to do so.

However, for the purposes of this study I had to be more systematic than that in my labeling of changes. Many of the changes were easily classified as belonging to one and only one of the four categories mentioned above; unfortunately, many other changes were not. Gray areas abounded.

I adhered, however, as closely as possible to the following guidelines:

1) A change was listed under *vocabulary* when a word or phrase was clearly being changed, added, or deleted in order to become more idiomatic, accurate, or appropriate as regards tone or register. Changes in word choice that occurred incidentally as a clear result of other changes were not listed.

Ex:	1. <u>viele neue Dinge</u>	→	<u>viel Neues</u>
	2. <u>anderen</u>	→	<u>weiteren</u>
	3. <u>dankbar sein</u>	→	<u>schätzen</u>

These changes are fairly straightforward examples of vocabulary choices that in and of themselves result in a more native-like text. viele neue Dinge (many new things), for example, was changed by the reformulator because it was a translation from English that did not sound German.

2) A change was listed under *syntax* when it occurred for the sake of grammatical choices. Changes in syntax that occurred incidentally as a clear result of other changes were not listed. (For example, sentence structures were often radically altered merely as a by-product of changes in discourse functions.)

Ex:	. . . <u>sind viele andere Geschäfte länger geöffnet</u>	→	
	. . . <u>gibt es doch viele Geschäfte mit längeren Öffnungszeiten</u>		

Here at least two changes in syntax can be seen: using gibt es (roughly, there is) rather than sind (are), and using a prepositional phrase (mit längeren Öffnungszeiten) rather than an adjective phrase (länger geöffnet). This example also serves to illustrate how changes in vocabulary and syntax often occur at the same time, as the example contains changes in vocabulary as well:

1. 0	→	<u>doch</u>
2. <u>andere</u>	→	0

3) A change will be listed under *cohesion* when the change involves the way in which the relationship or connection between ideas is expressed. Again, changes in cohesion that resulted incidentally from other changes were not listed.

Ex:	1. . . . <u>kann man immer später gehen—selbst am Sonntag.</u>	→	
	. . . <u>kann man später, oder sogar am Sonntag einkaufen.</u>		
	2. <u>Obwohl</u>	→	<u>auch wenn</u>

In the first example, the reformulator chose to connect the ideas with a comma and oder (or) rather than a hyphen. Again, a vocabulary change can be noted simultaneously, as selbst was changed to sogar (even). In the second example, the transition word Obwohl was changed

to auch wenn and placement of the transition was changed as well from the beginning to the middle of the sentence.

4) A change will be listed under *discourse functions* when there is a major reorganization of text or difference in approach that changes how the writer's purposes are realized.

Ex: Muß man deshalb Einkaufspläne machen? Nein. —————>
 In Amerika muß man das Einkaufen nicht planen.

This change may at first seem to be a change in syntax, since a question/answer is being rewritten in statement form. However, the question/answer is clearly a rhetorical device, and one that the reformulator felt was far too dramatic for this particular point. Thus, she chose to accomplish the same purpose by simply stating the information. Many changes in discourse functions are not so neatly labeled and dispatched of, as they frequently involve rewriting whole paragraphs, or shifting information from one paragraph to another. It is then that it can admittedly be difficult to distinguish between a change in discourse function and a change in syntax or cohesion.

In the diary, I recorded comments on the comparisons, my responses to different aspects of the reformulation procedure, and factors that influenced my level of motivation. Many of the diary entries were written immediately after noting the changes in one aspect of a reformulation (for example, vocabulary changes), in order to record my observations and insights; sometimes I wrote entries in the middle of noting changes as well, when I did not want to forget something that particularly struck me. At other times I wrote diary entries just to organize my thoughts and plans about what and how to work on next. The very first diary entry, in which I described my plans and my state of mind as I prepared to begin the study, was lost due to a damaged computer disk. That is the only missing diary entry, and it contained no information on any comparisons, having been written before anything was reformulated.

Finally, I also wrote in the diary when I wanted to reflect on how I was feeling about different aspects of the reformulation work: writing in German, the comparison process, the reformulators themselves, etc. While many of these entries were written the same day that I was noting the feelings, some entries reflected several months back and relied more on memory. This was due to the emotional stress of dealing with the death of my mother; for several months I did not always have the energy to make long or regular entries in the diary.

By the end of the study, the diary and the analyses of the twelve reformulations were available for study.

Data Analysis Procedures

The diary was examined to see what insights or breakthroughs I experienced as a low-intermediate level learner of German. I also referred to the analyses as necessary during this step.

The three reformulated versions of one section of one essay were compared to see how closely the three reformulators agreed on what changes to make in the area of cohesive devices, and how. Also, the number of vocabulary changes appearing in each of the 12 reformulation/reconstruction sets was tallied and considered in relation to the length of the reconstructed version (for example, 10 changes per 100 words). The same was done with changes in syntax, cohesion, and discourse functions. The *total* number of changes made in each reformulation/reconstruction set was tallied as well. Frequencies were then compared across categories without running tests of statistical significance. All of the tallies for each essay and letter were compared across reformulators (for example, one reformulator may have made 10 vocabulary changes per 100 words in a particular essay, while another may have made 12 vocabulary changes per 100 words, etc.), in order to determine if any general patterns emerged—i.e., whether a particular reformulator made more or fewer changes in a particular aspect of writing, or in general, than the others.

The diary was also examined for evidence of factors affecting my level of motivation.

CHAPTER THREE

WRITING LIKE A NATIVE: WHAT THE LEARNER FOUND

Those who have promoted reformulation (Levenston 1978, Cohen 1983b, Allwright et al 1988) have clearly done so because they believe that reformulation can offer insights into native-like writing that other forms of feedback cannot. Supposedly the learner will recognize ways in which his or her writing falls short of nativeness and will experience the insights necessary to move in a more native-like direction. My desire to see just what insights I myself could experience in German was at the crux of this study, and in this chapter I will explore the answer to the first research question:

Question One:

What can an analysis of diary entries reveal about the insights or breakthroughs a low-intermediate learner experiences through studying reformulations?

A careful analysis of the diary revealed three qualitatively different kinds of insights. The first kind of insight was exactly that which I had hoped and expected to encounter: actual observations of more native-like choices in the areas of vocabulary, syntax, cohesion, and discourse functions. A second breakthrough, which took me more by surprise, was a heightened sensitivity toward different writing styles among the three German reformulators. And finally, I gained insights into the nature of some of my habits and choices as a low-intermediate writer of German.

Observations of Native-like Choices

To observe more native-like choices was the direct purpose of every analysis I performed, and it frequently led to generalizations—correct or incorrect—about writing in German⁶. These observations fell into the categories of vocabulary, syntax, cohesion, and discourse functions, since my system of comparison or analysis dictated that I label each change as belonging to one of these categories. While this system often led to frustration as I grappled with overlap between categories, it is likely that at least some of the insights I had into more native-like writing would not have been identified within a freer system of analysis:

As I analyze Ess.2P, it's occurred to me that it really is useful to at least try to be somewhat systematic and consistent in labeling changes, because it gets me to thinking more about why something was changed, which of

⁶Unless otherwise noted, it can be assumed that the observations discussed here apply to native-like German writing in general. Cases in which an insight seemed to apply only to letter-writing or essays have been duly noted.

course eventually leads to generalizations. Sometimes, when I'm struggling over whether a change was due to syntax or cohesion or both, I find myself thinking, "Okay, what was probably wrong with my version? Is she combining sentences again because mine tend to be shorter and more simplistic? Do I lack sentence variety? Was that transition awkward?" While it's definitely not helpful to spend too much time on deciding on a label (burnout!), it does get me to think more deeply about reasons for change than just noting the change would. 10.21.95

There were even fairly obvious patterns that went completely unnoticed until I had refined the system:

I think that in listing the changes it's sometimes easier to spot patterns, too. One thing I realized this time around that I missed before was that Paula uses es gibt four times when I don't. 10.18.95

This heightened awareness on the meta-linguistic level that my system of analysis encouraged has implications for my long-term storage of the new information as well; in other words, I not only noticed more, but I may *remember* what I noticed long-term. As Richard Schmidt observed in his own language learning diary, "I can't believe that what I notice isn't crucial for what I can do" (Schmidt & Frota, 1986, p. 281). He asserted that L2 learners may need to be consciously aware of the gap between the nontarget forms they produce and the target forms found in input, in order for them to learn. I will therefore discuss my findings according to the four categories that were so useful in promoting my own conscious awareness of features of German.

Vocabulary

My observations regarding changes in vocabulary yielded several generalizations about how my writing fell short of native-like writing. However, the most striking benefit of the vocabulary analysis—and one of the most exciting aspects of my entire reformulation experience—was by far the constant exposure I had to new words, phrases, and idioms *in context*. Several examples include:

kostspielig (expensive)

Gutachten (expert opinion)

wir sind uns im klaren (we are in agreement/we agree)

kurz gesagt (in short)

As every teacher of a second or foreign language knows, few things are more comic or disastrous to the tone of a piece of writing than a dictionary-dependent student who plucks

impressive words from the dictionary and inserts them into a completely inappropriate context. Throughout the study, I knew that I often did that myself but felt I had no choice when I did not know the German word for something I wanted to say. It was therefore exciting to learn what words *were* appropriate for the context.

Furthermore, encountering new words in a context that I myself had created and on which I was therefore the “expert” meant that I sometimes came to an immediate understanding of what the new word or phrase meant:

. . . Margot is using words I’ve never seen before, and in most cases I know just what they mean because after all, I said it first. I look them up just to make sure but often I have a better understanding from the context than the dictionary gives me. Often words aren’t listed in the exact form she uses anyway. 4.16.95

For example, in Letter.1M, Margot changed my verb wechseln (to change) to verschwinden (to disappear) in a sentence about grief lessening only slowly. I immediately understood the word and even used it in Letter.2 when I wrote, “You asked me if my grief is disappearing.” In that case, interestingly, both Paula and Margot changed it to vergehen (to pass, fade) and Annette, in a syntax change, asked if I was overcoming my grief (überwinde). Vergehen I easily understood to be similar in meaning to verschwinden, and überwinde was also easily understood from the context⁷.

Double-checking with the dictionary did sometimes clarify meaning:

. . . both Margot and Paula changed sogar nicht zu laut lachen [to not even laugh too loud] to nicht einmal laut lachen. I pretty much knew what that meant, but in looking up einmal just for the heck of it I learned that nicht einmal goes together and can mean “not even.” 10.24.95

But the number of new words per reformulation set for which I did need a dictionary was never overwhelming:

. . . I found maybe only ten words or phrases that Paula used that I didn’t know (or wasn’t sure of) and had to use the dictionary for. I’m rather pleased about that; ten words in context seems like a reasonable number to be able to learn and remember. 12.15.94

This suggests that for the low-intermediate level learner, reformulation can provide a custom-tailored, contextualized vocabulary lesson at an appropriate level.

⁷This is not to say that words can always be guessed from the context. For more discussion on this, see Haynes’ “Patterns and Perils of Guessing in Second Language Reading” (1993) and Huckin and Bloch’s “Strategies for Inferring Word Meaning in Context: A Cognitive Model” (1993).

Furthermore, if one engages in reformulation analysis over time, the potential for “review sessions” is strong. I found that I frequently encountered words and phrases that I had originally learned in earlier reformulation sets. For example:

It’s still exciting when I run across a word that I only know from another reformulation. In this case, Hinsicht, [respect or way] which I now know and always will; it cropped up first in Paula’s version. . . I really think these new words and expressions are sinking in. 11.6.95

In this case, the word was simply high-frequency enough that it appeared in more than one reformulation, though not in the same context. At other times, of course, all three reformulators replaced one of my words or phrases with what was evidently the standard, accepted choice. For example, in a sentence about a car starting in winter, all three replaced gehen (to go) with anspringen (to start). However, some of the new words seemed strongly associated with the general topic of the letter or essay; it seemed that these words needed to appear somewhere, anywhere, in the writing, as if having something special to contribute to the tone:

. . . not only do I seem to learn new vocabulary in context, but I think I learn vocabulary that is esp. appropriate for the particular topic at hand. For example, both Margot and Paula used Netz (system) in the Auto/U-Bahn essay, in different places; they both used empfinden (to feel) in the grief essay. . . 10.24.95

This exposure to new words in context was the single most consistent observation noted throughout the diary and would therefore seem to be one of the greatest benefits that reformulation can offer to the low-intermediate level learner. By the end of my study, I had a self-made vocabulary list containing items I had encountered in context and wanted to remember (see Appendix C).

While I was constantly exposed to new words, I was also occasionally made aware of words that I thought I knew but was actually using inaccurately. One example of this was when I observed that Paula was changing my use of andere, replacing neue (new) with andere and andere with weiteren (further). I asked a passing roommate for help and wrote in the diary:

Oh—my roommate Annette was just in, and she observed that I was using andere when I wanted to say “other” or “another,” whereas it really means “different.” 12.15.94

This was a fine point beyond the explanation of my dictionary, and something that none of my German classes had made clear either. These inaccurate vocabulary choices had even been tolerated by my reconstructors.

Most of this sort of fine-tuning occurred with words that were in fact common, low-content words for which context determined shades of meaning: andere, gerade, noch, schon. It must be noted that my grasp of the appropriate use of these words was by no means always perfected through the reformulation procedure; noch in particular was mentioned over and over. As one diary entry noted:

**It's good for me to see noch used here and there; I feel like I'm getting a slightly better sense of it but often wouldn't have thought of using it myself.
11.01.95**

And later:

**Noch continues to be my nemesis. I remember my German TA here saying that it is very hard to explain noch and it just has to be gotten used to. . . So one would think that reformulation would be the perfect place to experience noch and get it into my system. . . I think I would need to get a clean copy and study just the noch usage. That would probably be really helpful. Right now, however, I have only the certainty that I don't yet understand it fully. .
. 11.13.95**

There were occasional small triumphs, however:

I'm in the middle of syntax, and I wanted to note that I wrote noch nicht angeschaut and Paula didn't change it—one of the few times I used noch correctly! 10.30.95

Reformulation, then, provided familiar contexts in which I could at least begin to understand such subtleties on an intuitive level.

In other cases, I was not incorrect about meaning but had chosen the wrong word for the context. For example, I said that prices were besser (better) when I should have used höher (higher), and billiger (cheaper) when I should have used niedriger (lower). In that same essay, Paula also replaced other words with items that were not different in meaning but in degree, thus exposing me to the relative strength of wohl vs. wahrscheinlich, oft vs. öfters or häufiger.

There were a number of instances in which my vocabulary choices were replaced not for reasons of accuracy but for reasons of style. A repeated observation here did form itself into a strong generalization; I was definitely overusing simple words, particularly verbs:

The overwhelming reason for change is pretty clearly that my vocab. is too simple—I rely heavily on simple verbs like fahren and gehen and haben, and use general nouns like etwas. 10.21.95

This observation was borne out strongly throughout the study and noted particularly in the analyses of essays.

Another insight into style was that some of my word choices were too unusual, informal, formal, or melodramatic. These cases were too idiosyncratic to lead to generalizations, but were nonetheless as useful as the other insights into vocabulary were. Perhaps the best example is my use of komisch (strange). Komisch is apparently just not used very often and was usually replaced by seltsam or merkwürdig. Again, I had not learned that from either my dictionary or my German classes in the U.S. or Germany.

A number of times, words were added or deleted altogether, and from these observations I formed two generalizations. First, I used sehr (very) far too frequently for the taste of my reformulators, who would often delete it. Secondly, I vastly *underused* filler words, or Füllworte as Paula called them: low-content words such as aber, auch, mal, and schon which served to add fluency and variety. (Such words are sometimes referred to as “flavoring particles” in English.) My experience with these words struck me as very similar to my experience with noch and convinced me that mere explanations or definitions were insufficient; only through constant exposure could one develop the sophistication required to use the words well.

Studying the reformulators’ choices of words and phrases, then, was for me a rich experience that resulted in several generalizations and considerably strengthened my vocabulary.

Syntax

A number of generalizations about more native-like sentence structures were revealed in the diary. For one thing, I gained the impression throughout the study that I was underusing certain structures, such as passives:

Paula and Margot don’t use passives often, but they do on occasion, which is more than I do. Paula uses a nice one where I’m talking about being asked how I’m doing all the time; I found it easier to say “everyone asks me,” but of course “everyone” is not the important thing here. . . 10.24.95

Another instance where the passive was used also struck me as especially appropriate:

[Margot] used a passive (es ist ihr nur erlaubt) where I hadn’t for a very interesting reason: the content involved a widow having grieving forced

upon her; since the widow was behaving passively, having things sort of thrust on her, it seemed to feel right to use a passive. 4.27.95

On the other hand, I was definitely using certain simple structures far more frequently than my reformulators, particularly es ist (it is); in many cases my reformulators would choose to use the sentence's topic as the grammatical subject instead. I also tended to start sentences with ich (I) too frequently, as will be discussed further under my discussion of my habits as a nonnative writer. One entry noted several of these examples at once:

Okay, regarding syntax in Let.1P: more overuse of es ist, I think. The more I do this whole analysis, the more I feel aware of that. . . and of my tendency to use simple structures, like sentences beginning with ich. . . in which I put some more abstract thing in a prepositional phrase, whereas Paula might put it in subject position. Do I overuse prepositional phrases, in fact, in blundering around trying to say something complex? . . .10.24.95

I also noted in Essay.1P that I was underusing es gibt (roughly, "there is"), although in Essay.2P I appeared to be overusing the same form. This served to remind me to be wary of jumping to generalizations or explanations too quickly. At any rate, both underusing certain complex forms such as passives and overusing simple forms such as es ist show that I lacked the sentence variety found in the reformulations. The exposure to a variety of sentence structures was extremely important to me throughout the study:

Several times [Paula] combines several simple clauses of mine into a longer, more elegant sentence. . . I feel like I'm seeing some nice sentence variety here. 10.21.95

And later:

. . . I'm seeing some nice sentence variety and so on, seeing ways of putting things that I wouldn't have thought of or didn't know were possible. 10.30.95

And again:

Some of [Annette's] constructions are lovely and are complex or different enough that I would never have been able to come up with them. . . Definitely more sentence variety. 11.06.95

This exposure to a greater variety of sentence structures is similar in nature to the exposure to new words and phrases discussed earlier.

Another insight about syntax I had was the realization that I was repeating words that did not need to be repeated, due to parallel structure or familiarity:

The main thing that struck me was how many times—maybe five—[Annette] omitted a word because it was already understood, particularly nouns following andere as in andere Leute. Omitting it seems more elegant or sophisticated somehow. More confident. A low-level learner can be so careful! 11.06.95

And in another entry:

. . . one main pattern that emerges is that Annette often takes advantage of parallel structure to omit nouns or verbs that have already been used once and are now understood. This seems to result in a more graceful, sophisticated style. I'd like to incorporate this into my own writing more. 11.07.95

Another syntactic change made by the reformulators in several cases was to state things in the positive, rather than the negative, form. When questioned, Paula said that it was more graceful to use the positive form.

Word order was also an issue that arose frequently. For one thing, I would often tack adjectives or adverbs on at the end or near-end of a sentence, and the reformulators would move them up. Nicht, bald, and auch are all examples of words that would be moved. I also learned that a relative clause does not have to immediately follow the noun it modifies, if it is too long to be placed there gracefully, and can instead be placed after the verb.

Furthermore, I noted at one point that Margot had rearranged a sentence in order to start with a time clause for emphasis, which reinforced a notion I had had that Germans frequently started sentences with time clauses. However, if I was tempted to overgeneralize on the basis of too little data, Paula brought me up short:

I also wonder why she's putting the subject first so much, when I tend to start with a time clause which I thought was typically German. I know I need to talk to a native speaker about some of this. 10.30.95

I formed another generalization about writing generalizations: Germans prefer to use a singular noun plus the indefinite article (rather than a plural or a singular noun plus the definite article). Annette explained: "I changed the expression der Amerikaner [the American] into ein Amerikaner [an American] because otherwise it sounds like you were talking about some rare species. You could also use the plural. . . this sounds less elegant though ('compositionally,' I mean)."

Finally, I felt confident throughout the study in a growing conviction that Germans tend to prefer more toned-down punctuation. (Punctuation issues will be discussed further under cohesion.) Exclamations points were much less common in the reformulated versions than in my own (although there was some variation between reformulators); colons, semi-colons, and dashes were also frequently removed.

While most of these changes were matters of style, occasionally something appeared that seemed to be an actual grammar correction. As I noted at one point:

Reformulation is a good way to be alerted to things. . . that sort of border on grammar problems. A lot of prepositions are changed that didn't get changed in the reconstruction stage. . . 11.01.95

And later in the same entry:

Inevitably, little grammar issues creep in. 11.01.95

And later:

. . . a few of the changes do deal with grammatical issues, I think, that escaped the reconstructors, or that the reconstructors didn't choose to comment on. My guess is that there are no grammar problems in reformulations! 11.04.95

Cohesion

As I analyzed the use of cohesive devices, the first and strongest insight I had was that it is more German to embed transitional words and phrases farther into the sentence, rather than to lead off with the transition. For example, only rarely did the reformulators leave untouched a sentence that I had begun with aber (but). I was constantly exposed to this pattern of embedding transitions throughout the study and from every reformulator:

—don't use aber at the beginning! embed it—Paula says show the two ideas first, *then* use a transition word—never put the contrasting word at the beginning. . . 12.18.94

. . . [Annette] embeds transitions a lot, which confirms what I learned from the first from Paula. 11.06.95

Regarding cohesion, [Margot] seems to have used a much wider variety of transitions than I did as well as embedding things much more. This confirms my original idea about that, long ago when Paula did the same thing with the same essay. Margot avoids starting sentences with aber. 11.13.95

Similarly, two of the reformulators, Paula and Margot, would never allow me to start a sentence with und (and). I noted this change in the analysis of Essay.2M five times, and four times at least in Essay.2P. Only Annette ever allowed this:

I have again noticed that Annette really feels comfortable starting sentences with und—whereas I believe Margot and Paula had never let me get away with it! Here, Annette even does it once when I don't. 11.10.95

The use of und to begin sentences struck me therefore as a marked style choice, if not actually a nonnative-like one.

I was also exposed to a variety of transitional words and phrases that were new to me, or were combined in new ways:

beispielweise (for example)
dementsprechend (correspondingly, accordingly)
, und vor allem (and above all)
inzwischen übrigens (meanwhile by the way)
, . . . nämlich (namely, that is)

Again, as with vocabulary, I was seeing these transition words in context and shown how they are punctuated correctly. Sometimes these transition words were indistinguishable to me from the “filler words” mentioned above:

[Annette] has a nice variety of transitional words/phrases, and she uses words like dann in such a way as to give it a nice flow. 11.05.95

Changes in punctuation itself were most interesting to observe throughout the study. As mentioned above, the reformulators tended to remove dashes, colons, and semi-colons:

I think I can count seven dashes in my Aufsatz that disappeared in the reformulation (note that they got by the reconstructor). . . I'm getting the distinct impression, punctuation-wise, that American English uses many more varieties of punctuation, whereas German uses tons and tons of commas. 12.18.94

Paula, when questioned, confirmed the idea that the preferred German way to connect independent clauses was with a comma. She said not to use dashes if it was possible to connect

with und or a nebensatz (subordinate clause), and not to overuse colons because they are rather abrupt. In a later entry, I wrote:

**. . . wonder if I shouldn't use a comma and und [and] together so much.
Paula seems to be removing the commas in those cases. 10.24.95**

Even after just the very first analysis, Paula's use of commas made such a deep impression on me that I found myself actually correcting and "Germanizing" my next reformulator's use of them:

**Regarding punctuation: when I questioned [Margot] about her removal of so many commas, she laughed and said freely that she has been over influenced by American punctuation, and that I was right about most of them!
4.27.95**

This came up several times later in the diary:

. . . like I've said before, Margot's punctuation is so Americanized. 10.23.95

**About four times she takes out commas that Paula left in. I still think Margot's punctuation is Americanized. (She thought so too, when I asked.)
11.01.95**

This raised the issue of reformulator reliability, which will be discussed further in Chapter Four. But in spite of this apparent American influence on Margot's commas, she too usually removed my more marked forms of punctuation, including exclamation points, dashes, semi-colons, and parentheses. For example:

[Margot] takes out many of my hyphens [dashes] and parentheses, all that exotic American punctuation! 11.13.95

When the reformulators removed parentheses, they would work the parenthetical information into the rest of the sentence, or put it in a separate sentence altogether. (This will be discussed further under changes in discourse functions.)

Even Annette, who struck me as the most tolerant of variety in punctuation, tended to tone things down:

**Just did syntax. She changed three ! to ., but let me keep a few, too. . .
Cohesion:. . . She takes out a couple—but lets me keep a few, too. 11.06.95**

I did notice that more leeway was given to unusual punctuation in the letters than in the essays; this was one of the only clear-cut differences between the two genres that I was able to discern:

[Paula] uses a ! twice (syntax issue, maybe), one of which I'd missed. . . wow, seems unusual. Maybe because it's a letter? She also lets me keep my two sets of (). . . 10.24.95

Paragraphing was another issue raised a number of times throughout the study. (I usually categorized changes in paragraphing under cohesion, although occasionally it struck me as belonging under discourse functions.) At any rate, my attempts to generalize about German paragraphing were fraught with frustration, as explained in the following entry:

[Paula's] paragraphing mystifies me. . . Germans don't indent, of course, so it's hard to tell sometimes if they are starting a new paragraph or not, depending on how far to the end of the line the previous line went. Anyway, she seems to have lots of little paragraphs because she starts on a new line a lot. But then she skips lines in between bigger groupings of related ideas, and sometimes (I should double-check this) skips more lines than at other times. 10.30.95

At one point I lost patience completely:

Germans just plain ought to learn to indent! Yeah, I know that doesn't sound very tolerant, but I swear, it is so hard sometimes to know if they are starting a new paragraph or not. . . 11.01.95

Because Margot sometimes did indent (being somewhat Americanized) and Annette typed, I was able to conclude tentatively that the reformulators started new paragraphs more frequently than I did, at a slighter shift in topic. Finally I wrote:

Hmm. I would've thought it would be more German to write longer paragraphs, but maybe I'd have to expand the depth of each topic much more to warrant longer paragraphs. . . 11.05.95

Clearly this was an issue that was raised but not resolved through my analysis of reformulation, due to the problems of analysis.

A final trend that I noticed under cohesion issues was that I tended to repeat nouns and proper nouns, whereas a reformulator would go to a pronoun:

Oh—and [Annette] uses pronouns more than I do. Only once does she use a name where I used a pronoun; four times she uses a pronoun where I used a name. 11.05.95

The next time I noted this, however, I also began to question why I was writing in this way:

I think I don't go to pronouns often enough; I seem to repeat nouns a lot. I wouldn't in English. Once again, I think I write differently just because I'm trying to be clear. 11.07.95

This will be addressed in greater detail in the final section of this chapter, when I discuss insights into the *why* behind certain patterns in my German writing.

Discourse Functions

Throughout the study, discourse functions proved to be in some ways the most challenging aspect of writing to try to analyze. While changes in discourse functions definitely occurred, actual patterns that deviated clearly from my own and were supported across the board by the reformulators were hard to find. As I noted during one analysis:

. . . there really didn't seem to be any [discourse] changes. I questioned Margot fairly closely about the way my letter "felt"—the way I opened it, changed topics, etc., and she said that all felt pretty German. I'm guessing maybe German and English letter-writing styles are pretty similar. . . . Maybe. . . German and English do accomplish functions in fairly similar ways. It's not like they're so completely unrelated, like English and Chinese. 4.27.95

In fact, many of the changes I did notice seemed to be an issue of personal taste and didn't seem to particularly divide German from non-German ways of realizing functions. This can be illustrated most dramatically by comparing the vast difference between the number of changes in discourse functions in Margot's and Annette's versions of the same letter (Letter.2). When analyzing Margot's reformulation, I wrote:

Nothing stunning along the discourse lines. . . 11.01.95

I listed in the analysis only two changes, wrote "maybe not a disc. issue?" when listing the first one, and put question marks in both entries, indicating the weakness of my assertions. Annette, on the other hand, made so many changes in discourse functions in her version of the same letter that I wrote:

Okay, I've made an executive decision here. My heart quails at the thought of trying to list the changes in discourse functions, so instead I'm printing out a clean copy and I'm going to mark it up in yellow and number the

changes and discuss them right there, on the copy. In other words, a whole copy just for discourse issues. . .26, count 'em, 26 changes in discourse functions. YOW. 11.05.95

Clearly there was a certain amount of poetic license occurring here; in fact, this reformulation (Letter.2A) inspired me to begin using the term “poetic license” in some of the comparisons I carried out (this will be discussed in Chapter Four). Strong patterns that clearly denoted “Germanness” and not just poetic license were somewhat rare in discourse functions.

I also frequently felt uncertain that what I was observing was actually a change in discourse function at all. For example:

It's always hardest to know if I'm dealing with a discourse issue or something less holistic. For example, is repetition of a word for effect (den gleichen Gedanken, den gleichen Erinnerungen, den gleichen Schmerzen) [the same thoughts, the same memories, the same pain] a discourse issue? Both Margot and Paula changed it. 10.24.95

Then too, I came to believe that many of the changes in discourse functions revealed strategies I was resorting to as a lower-level writer of German, as opposed to differences between German and American English ways of accomplishing functions. In other words, I did things in German that I would not have done in English simply because it seemed easier. (This will be explored in greater depth below when I discuss revelations I had about myself as a writer of German.)

In spite of the fact that these explanations accounted for many of the changes I noted, the diary does reveal that I had several interesting insights about more German ways to achieve certain functions. In Letter.2, two of the reformulators removed the apology Es tut mir leid in the section where I was explaining to Annette that I had not yet seen the movie she had recommended. (The one reformulator who did not change this was Margot, who in general made fewer changes in discourse functions than the other two. The possibility that this is a function of her having lived in the U.S. for six years and become “Americanized” will be discussed in Chapter Four.) As I noted in one diary entry:

**I'm not too surprised that [Paula] took out my “apology” for not having seen the movie Annette recommended; I sometimes felt in Germany that I used the “I'm sorry” form when it wasn't German to do so, i.e. when it wasn't time for a true apology and I was just expressing sympathy or something.
10.31.95**

Related to this issue of apologizing is the matter of qualifying one's statements. In one diary entry I ask:

When is it appropriate to say things like “I think” or “I believe” as a sort of introduction to a statement? I had a ich meine that everyone removed. . . When is it German to state that something is one's opinion or belief? Does it sound too apologetic, soft, too much like I'm qualifying things? 11.10.95

This question was not definitively settled by this study but was raised as an issue worthy of further consideration.

Another insight was that rhetorical questions should be used only with content worthy of such “high style” (as Paula termed it). This came up in my study of Essay.1, where I ask “Does one therefore have to make a lot of plans? No.” Again, Paula and Annette both changed this. When questioned, Paula said that the content was too banal to warrant the use of a rhetorical question. She also indicated that rhetorical questions were more likely to come at the beginning of an essay as a way of introducing an issue, not in the middle.

Another pattern that emerged fairly strongly with the same reformulator was that she tended to replace my concrete examples with more abstract explanations:

My overwhelming impression regarding discourse functions is what I mentioned above: I try to show something by example, because it's harder to be abstract, whereas she rephrases things completely so it's more of an explanation (often shorter but not necessarily). This happens about five times.

Do I do this because I'm always telling my students to back up their assertions with examples? Is this a feature of American arguments? 10.21.95

This happened to a lesser degree with another reformulator, Annette, in the same essay.

I also noted that I felt the need to mark minor digressions as such by enclosing them in parentheses, whereas the reformulators seemed more comfortable with removing the parentheses:

. . . Maybe Germans, who are known for digressing (I think!), don't feel the need to rope digressions off from the rest of the herd, as it were. 10.23.95

This observation should not be overstated, however, as I later note that I was allowed to keep two sets of parentheses in a letter.

Another question raised involved the use of sarcasm in Essay.1. I was trying to stress the fact that large supermarkets in Germany are harder to find than in the U.S. by saying in effect, “...and that's all very convenient if you happen to live next to a supermarket!” All three

reformulators removed the sarcasm completely and rephrased the idea matter-of-factly, which made me wonder if sarcasm was a less acceptable way to drive home one's point in German than in American English.

Beyond Literal Meaning: Awareness of Style

The above observations were exactly the sorts of insights that I had hoped and expected to gain from this study: choices and patterns that distinguished native from non-native writers. My system of analysis or comparison had been developed to ensure that if there were such insights to be had, I would find at least a good number of them.

However, I experienced a breakthrough of a different sort after having been immersed in the reformulations for some time. I had finished comparing two of Paula's reformulations (Essay.1P and Essay.2P) and two of Margot's (Essay.2M and Letter.1M) and was in the middle of Letter.1P when I suddenly realized I was growing more sensitive to stylistic differences *between* the two native writers. (I had of course noted differences earlier on, as when I found that Margot's use of commas was quite different from Paula's; but such observations did not strike with the force of a breakthrough until this point.) I had known from the start, of course, that differences were bound to exist, that my reformulators would not always change things in exactly the same way. As Cohen reported in his self-study:

. . . [the reformulators] did not usually produce the exact same reformulations. They differed somewhat in vocabulary, syntactic structures, and sometimes in the interpretation of the text—usually where the text was ambiguous (1983c, p. 9).

But while I had not been surprised to note Paula choosing this word and Margot choosing that one, I was surprised to find that I was gaining a feel for the broader sense of personal style that each reformulator naturally brought to their reformulations:

[Paula] changed some of the same things Margot did, “solving” things in a different way though. I’m beginning to feel I could pick up a piece of writing and know if it was Margot or Paula who wrote it. I could be wrong; hmm. . . My sense is that Paula uses more complex sentences (changes more things wholesale), perhaps uses more subtle “particles” and other things for the flow of it; I think she’s more of a writer by nature. Margot seems to tone down what I’m saying more, although Paula sort of does that too. . .
10.24.95

I was immediately struck by the qualitative difference between this sort of observation and those noted above:

What would it say to me as a learner if I were able to distinguish between two writers because of their style? I would find that very encouraging! Like I was learning to get the sense of something, the tone of a piece, and not just the literal words. 10.24.95

It was, in effect, the stuff of literature classes, not grammar; it was the beginning of the grasp of tone, beyond mere literal meaning. It was the glimpse of a deeper level of understanding than what I as a lower-level learner of German had hoped for.

Style variation between natives was certainly not something that had been addressed in any of my German classes; in fact, as a teacher of English as a second language, I myself tend to assume that such “higher” considerations are beyond the capabilities of lower-level learners and reserve them for the advanced levels. Once I suspected that I could tell the difference between Margot and Paula’s styles, I “tested” myself informally to see if I was right:

Okay—I just had Terri read two excerpts from Margot and Paula’s reformulations of Let.2, which I haven’t read at all yet. And yes, I could pretty easily tell who was who. Not a very scientific test, mind you; and the excerpt she was reading was a fairly straightforward anecdote about Zoe, my kitten. Still, it was fun to be able to tell the difference, and to feel that they each had a slightly different style! One could presumably make the choice to imitate the native speaker of his/her choice. 10.24.95

I was then particularly keen to get a sense for Annette’s style, whose reformulations I had not yet analyzed. I was curious to see what if anything would mark her style, particularly as I knew she had a distinctive, lively style of both speaking and writing in English. After analyzing some of her reformulations, I did find once again that a personal style emerged, distinct from Paula’s and Margot’s. It was perhaps the natural next step to begin reacting to the reformulations on this level:

[Annette] writes with a lot of style—she ought to, she took tons of poetic license! . . . I like the style with which she writes—lots of personality, very expressive. 11.03.95

I love Annette’s style; it seems somehow the most personal or warmest. . . She uses the most *natürlich*s and !!s. I suspect she has the most sentence variety as well but it’s just a hunch. 11.04.95

I really do like [Annette’s] writing style—full of personality and, surprisingly, exclamation points. . . I think Annette may play around more with sentence variety. 11.05.95

This belief that I was gaining a heightened awareness of my reformulators' personal styles will be discussed further as a reformulator consideration (Chapter Four) and again as a highly motivating element in the study (Chapter Six).

Trying to Cope: Learner Strategies

The third insight or breakthrough that I experienced from reformulation was that some of the nonnative-like choices in my German writing were clearly the result of trying to cope with low-level skills—not the result of my American English orientation. In other words, I would sometimes make choices in German not *because of* the way I would write something in English, but *in spite of* it. The following entry was written when I was just starting to realize this:

. . . I tend to express my meaning by giving concrete examples of what I mean. . . while Paula expresses the same idea by stating it more in the abstract, and more briefly listing examples. I suppose this is because I'm unsure of how clearly I'm communicating, and I figure if I give actual examples of something, it's clear; also, actual examples are often easier to know how to write. I bet I don't do this in English, where I have a sophisticated grasp of language and therefore no need to be simplistic to know I'm being clear. 10.21.95

I was too cautious at this point, however, to conclude anything firmly:

Do I do this also because I'm always telling my students to back up their assertions with examples? Is this a feature of American arguments? 10.21.95

The idea that I was indeed behaving differently in German than I do in English did not hit with the force of a revelation until the following entry:

It just occurred to me, as I began to work on syntax, that sometimes I write something that I *know* sounds awkward—I mean, I know I would never even say it in English even though the meaning would be clear, because it's just plain clunky and awkward, but I don't know how else to say it. So in those cases I'm clearly not just translating; I'm settling for what I can do. The example that brought this to mind is, . . . oder hast Du nur Frustration? I would never say “or do you only have frustration?” in

English; it sounds foreign, in fact! For all I know it sounds foreign in every language. But I knew the meaning would be clear. . . 10.30.95

This realization that I was “settling for what I can do” seems extremely obvious to me from a safe distance—i.e., from my vantage point as an ESL teacher or a researcher of second language

acquisition. But as a learner, I was almost shocked to realize that sometimes my choices were just as foreign to me as to my German reformulators.

A similar example of this phenomenon was recorded in the same diary entry:

It occurs to me (see Syntax, 25.) that I don't think as logically in German as I do in English because I'm just trying to stay afloat. 10.30.95

This last entry refers to a change in the order in which information is given. I originally wrote in Letter.2 that it was healthy for me to visit different people and see a different city; Paula said instead that it did me good to come to different surroundings and visit (different) people. It was a small change and perhaps only struck me because Annette had done the same thing, mentioning place first and then people. But the logic of it gave me pause: if I were writing in English, would I not be more likely in this context to write things in that order? After all, one must travel to a new place before one can visit the people there; and this option sounded better to my ear in English when I tried it out.

I noted this altered use of logic again when I studied changes in discourse functions in the same letter:

There was one major reorganization of info. in the beginning of Let.2P, which really does look more logical and read better than my version; and again, I wonder if my preoccupation with phrasing things interfered with my sense of the larger order of things. I mean, in English I bet I'd have ordered things more in the way Paula did. 10.31.95

Finally, another example of this tendency to write differently in German because of my level was noted when I was discussing cohesion changes in Essay.2A:

I think I don't go to pronouns often enough; I seem to repeat nouns a lot. I wouldn't in English. Once again, I think I write differently just because I'm trying to be clear. I feel like I'm writing on a more childish level, when I see what the reformulators do. 11.07.95

Some of my good instincts as a native writer of English—instincts that could have stood me in good stead in German—were therefore being ignored or forgotten in my attempts to simply be understood. I had previously assumed that most of my nonnativeness in German was the result of trying to transfer American English habits; now I saw that I was at least occasionally “dumbing down” my writing in a way that was anything but indicative of my usual writing style. This resonates with the findings of both Kobayashi (1992) and Brooks (1993),

whose studies show that writing in the L1 first, then translating, produces more finely-tuned essays than writing directly in the foreign language, at least at the lower levels.

Summary

The reformulation process, then, was highly rewarding in terms of the insights and breakthroughs I experienced. First and foremost I was able to make a number of observations about German writing in the areas of vocabulary, syntax, cohesion, and discourse functions. Vocabulary was particularly rewarding because of the new words and idioms I was exposed to in context; these items were often reinforced in other reformulations. In addition, comparing the reformulators' vocabulary choices with my own revealed that I sometimes:

- used certain words incorrectly
- chose the wrong word for the context
- overused simple words, particularly verbs
- chose words that were stylistically inappropriate
- overused the intensifier “very” but underused “filler” words

Studying syntax differences revealed several nonnative-like patterns as well. The strongest of these were:

- the underuse of passives
- the overuse of certain simple structures
- the repetition of words that could be eliminated due to parallel structure
- the tendency to state things in the negative rather than the positive form
- awkward word order choices

Looking at syntax also frequently exposed me to sophisticated sentence variety, and occasionally the reformulators would correct grammatical problems that had slipped through the reconstruction process.

The study of differences in cohesion exposed me to new transitional words and phrases and also yielded several strong generalizations, namely that I tended to:

- start independent clauses with a transitional word or phrase much too frequently
- choose other forms of punctuation when it would be more German to use a comma or period
- repeat nouns when it would be appropriate to shift to a pronoun

The issue of paragraphing was also raised while studying differences in cohesion, but no strong conclusions could be reached without more data.

Finally, I became aware that I was handling several discourse functions inappropriately, including the use of:

- direct apology
- rhetorical questions
- concrete examples

I also tended to set off minor digressions with parentheses, which my reformulators usually removed. The matter of the appropriate use of sarcasm was also raised.

But the insights I gained in doing reformulation work went beyond these sorts of observations that I had targeted. Reformulation also heightened my sensitivity to stylistic differences *between* my native speaker reformulators. Finally, I experienced a breakthrough in recognizing that some of my choices and habits in German were a result of my low level rather than my American English style. These last two “gains” from reformulation enriched my reading and writing of German in ways that were wholly unexpected. Together with the generalizations I was able to form, they offer a compelling reason for a nonnative writer to engage in reformulation.

CHAPTER FOUR: REFORMULATOR CONSIDERATIONS

As noted in the last chapter, closely analyzing the reformulations of three different native speakers eventually enabled me to develop a sense of their personal styles. But the awareness of their different styles also highlighted the problem of inter-reformulator agreement, which relates directly to my second research question:

Question Two:

To what extent do different reformulators agree on what to change and how?

Cohen had asked a similar question in his case study of himself (1983c) and had found that his three reformulators largely agreed on those aspects of his writing that needed to change, although they frequently changed things in different ways. This suggested that the reformulations, while different from each other, did all point in the direction of nativeness. If these findings could be replicated in more such studies, perhaps using a variety of target languages, the position would be greatly strengthened. I would like to begin such a replication here by first considering the number of changes noted in each reformulation set in my study to see whether any strong trends emerge suggesting reformulator agreement or disagreement. I will then focus on the issue of cohesion in one writing excerpt as a basis for discussing inter-reformulator agreement on a much more specific level, leaving a comprehensive and rigorous analysis of the twelve reformulation sets for future research. I will conclude by discussing factors that possibly account for variation among the reformulators and describing briefly my own response to this variation during the study.

Number of Changes Found in the Reformulations

The following chart allows us to begin comparing reformulators by noting the number of changes found per 100 words in each aspect of language studied in each reformulation⁸:

⁸Note that these are changes I as the learner noted, not the actual number of changes made. While I did as thorough and consistent a job as I could in my analyses, there are almost certainly changes I missed or which could arguably have been labelled differently.

Number of Changes Identified Per 100 Words

Essay.1	Vocabulary	Syntax	Cohesion	Discourse Functions	Total
Paula	10	4	4	1	19
Margot	13	6	8	2	29
Annette	13	6	8	1	28

Essay.2	Vocabulary	Syntax	Cohesion	Discourse Functions	Total
Paula	10	6	6	2	24
Margot	9	6	7	0	22
Annette	9	7	6	1	23

Letter.1	Vocabulary	Syntax	Cohesion	Discourse Functions	Total
Paula	12	6	3	2	23
Margot	9	5	8	1	23
Annette	10	8	4	3	25

Letter.2	Vocabulary	Syntax	Cohesion	Discourse Functions	Total
Paula	10	7	4	1	22
Margot	9	8	3	0	20
Annette	13	9	7	4	33

In both Essay.2 and Letter.1, the number of total changes noted in each reformulator's version is very close. Furthermore, across all the reformulations there is a strong consistency in the number of changes noted each time in a particular area of writing, i.e. the highest number of changes were always noted in vocabulary (9-13 changes per 100 words), then syntax and cohesion (4-9 and 3-8, respectively), with the fewest changes noted in discourse functions (0-4). This suggests some basic level of agreement between reformulators, or at least suggests that they did not have vastly different ideas about how many changes were needed. In both Essay.1 and Letter.2, there is a greater spread between two of the reformulators and the third: I noted a lower number of changes in Paula's version of Essay.1 and a higher number of changes in Annette's version of Letter.2.

One trend that might prove significant upon further analysis is the fact that I tended to note fewer changes in Margot's work (with the exception of Essay.1), particularly in the area of discourse functions where I twice found no changes. These findings could have been

influenced by the fact that I generally *expected* fewer changes from Margot, since I perceived her as Americanized and as more tolerant of my nonnativeness—or it could mean that she was more tolerant of my style, due to being Americanized or other reasons. Even in Margot’s case, however, the total number of changes found does not differ greatly from the others.

I wish to note briefly that when one compares genres according to the chart instead of reformulators, it is evident that no clear trend exists regarding the number of changes noted in letters versus the number of changes noted in essays; the two genres seem to have elicited similar degrees of changes. I also did not note significant qualitative differences in this study in the kinds of changes made in letters versus those made in essays. I believe this is due to my relatively low level as a writer in German; as a more sophisticated level of writing is approached, I think it would be more likely that strong genre differences could be perceived. The exception in this study was punctuation; my reformulators were somewhat more lenient with my “exotic” punctuation (i.e., anything besides commas and periods) in letters than in essays. A more rigorous comparison of genres will be an important focus of future research.

Reformulator Agreement in Cohesion in Essay.1

As indicated in the last chapter, one of the first and strongest generalizations I formed through reformulation was that it is more native-like to embed transitional words and phrases than to place them at the beginning of a sentence. This insight first occurred to me during the analysis of my first reformulation set, Essay.1P. When questioned, Paula agreed that it was more native-like to embed transitional words or phrases such as aber (but) a little farther into the sentence; state the ideas first, she advised, and *then* indicate their relationship. Here is an example from that essay, with the transitional words/phrases appearing in bold:

Original: **Aber** in Deutschland bekommt der Amerikaner einen Shock. (But in Germany the American receives a shock.)

Ess.1P: Deutschland bedeutet für den Amerikaner **in dieser Hinsicht** einen Schock.
(Germany means a shock for the American in this regard.)

I immediately became conscious of trying to incorporate this German way of handling transitions into my writing in subsequent writings, and later, when I had added Margot and Annette to the study, was especially interested in comparing the three reformulators’ treatment of cohesive devices. Let us therefore compare the changes the reformulators made in the area of cohesion in the final paragraph of Essay.1. My version and the three reformulations follow. Changes in cohesion appear underlined and in boldface and numbered (NC = no change).

Original: **Leider** (1) kann der Amerikaner vorerst nicht für diese Dinge dankbar sein; (2) er will alles bequem haben, **auch wenn** (3) die Qualität nicht so gut ist. **Aber** (4) **wenn** (5) er sich an die deutschen Einkaufsgewohnheiten gewöhnt, **dann** (5) gefallen die kleinen Geschäfte ihm—**obwohl** (6) **man** (7) wahrscheinlich nie völlig die amerikanische Bewohnheit der Bequemlichkeit loslassen kann⁹.

Ess.1P: Leider (1, NC) kann der Amerikaner die Vorteile der kleinen Läden vorerst nicht schätzen, **wenn** (2) er die großen Supermärkte mit den günstigen Öffnungszeiten und den niedrigen Preisen gewöhnt ist. Er ist, wenn man so sagen kann, ein "Bequemlichkeits-Fanatiker" und nimmt dafür Qualitätseinbußen in Kauf. Ist er **aber** (4) **einmal** (5) an die deutschen Einkaufsgewohnheiten gewöhnt, dann (5, NC) gefallen ihm auch die kleinen Geschäfte. (6) **Er** (7) wird **aber** (6) wohl nie ganz von seinem bequemeren Lebensstil loslassen können.

Ess.1M: Der Amerikaner nimmt **leider** (1) all die Gegebenheiten als selbstverständlich hin. (2) Er fordert Bequemlichkeit **trotz** (3) der geringeren Qualität die dafür geboten wird. **Sobald** (5) er sich **aber** (4) an die deutsche Einkaufsgewohnheit gewöhnt hat, werden die kleinen Geschäfte ihm gefallen. (6) **Ein Amerikaner** (7) wird **aber** (6) wahrscheinlich immer die gewohnte Bequemlichkeit vermissen.

Ess.1A: Ein Amerikaner in Deutschland ist für diese Dinge **allerdings** (1) vorerst gar nicht dankbar; **Er** (2) möchte es eben so bequem wie möglich, **und** (3) sei es **auch** (3) zu Lasten der Qualität. Aber (4, NC) wenn (5, NC) er sich erst mal an die deutschen Einkaufsgewohnheiten gewöhnt hat, dann (5, NC) wird er die kleinen Geschäfte mögen—**selbst wenn** (6) **er** (7) nie ganz von seiner amerikanischen Bequemlichkeit loskommen wird.

In change (1), Margot and Annette both chose to embed the transition word, which upheld the generalization I had formed during the analysis of Ess.1P. (Annette also chose to change the transition word from "unfortunately" to "admittedly.") Interestingly, Paula herself chose not to embed in this case, which underscores the fact that it is a general principle rather than a strict rule. This same sort of embedding occurs in (3) in Annette's and Margot's versions (Paula's larger reorganization resulted in the disappearance of auch wenn in her version), in (4) in Paula's and Margot's versions, and in (6), also in Paula's and Margot's versions. In other words, Margot changed my fronting of the transition word 100% of the time, Paula 75%, and Annette 50%. Their agreement that my transitions need to be embedded more frequently seems strong.

Also worth noting is the fact that all three changed my choice of the transition word obwohl (although). I found in other reformulation sets as well that obwohl was almost never preferred at the beginning of an independent clause. While Annette kept my use of a dash in

⁹"Unfortunately the American cannot be thankful for these things; he wants to have everything comfortable, even when the quality is not so good. But when he has gotten used to German shopping habits, then he will like the little shops—although probably one can never completely let go of the American obsession with convenience."

this case, Paula's and Margot's decision to use a period was typical of my findings throughout the study that "exotic" punctuation was not preferred. Another punctuation change was made in (2) by all three, although again, Annette's choice to use a colon was somewhat unusual. Annette was in fact the most tolerant of the three of my "exotic" punctuation throughout the study, but she too tended to tone things down and use more commas and periods in place of colons, semicolons, dashes, and exclamation points.

Finally, all three changed my choice of man (similar to the impersonal third person pronoun "one"), two choosing to change it to er (he) and one to ein Amerikaner (an American).

In the above example, then, we observe a fairly strong agreement among the reformulators regarding what cohesive factors in my writing were non-nativelike. While the way in which something was changed frequently varied, and while sometimes specific items were changed by only two of the three, trends have still been clearly identified. It seems likely, too, that I would have formed the generalization about embedding transitional words and phrases even if I had only been working with any one of the three reformulators.

Factors Accounting for Variation: Several Possibilities

As discussed above, the fact that the three reformulators varied somewhat in what they changed and how did not necessarily hinder the formation of generalizations. At times it even provided an important check on the temptation to overgeneralize based on too little data, especially in cases where I was unable to debrief with a reformulator after analysis. For example, two reformulators changed buchstabiert (spelled) to geschrieben (written) in the following sentence from Letter.2:

Endlich habe ich Deinen Namen richtig buchstabiert. . . (Finally I have spelled your name right. . .)

Just when I was convinced that my word choice had been nonnative-like, the third reformulator, Paula, left it completely alone. This kind of cross-reformulator check was especially important since during many of my analyses I was not able to question my reformulators in person about their choices.

Nonetheless, the variation found between different reformulations of the same piece of writing could be unsettling. In the above example, for instance, the question remains as to why Annette and Margot *did* change buchstabiert to geschrieben and Paula did not. It seems evident that sometimes a particular change reflects a choice that is truly more German, and sometimes it simply reflects the reformulator's personal preference within the range of acceptable German, a preference that may exist for some idiosyncratic reason. What, then, are the reasons *beyond*

nativeness that might account for a reformulator's decision? At least three factors presented themselves as possible influences on the reformulators in this study: the desire to take poetic license; the effect of a second language on a reformulator's own "nativeness;" and their individual writing styles and abilities.

The Problem of Poetic License, or, The Natives Are Restless

I believe that many of the differences found between reformulators—and even between the reformulation of one piece and another, both done by the same reformulator—was simply due to “poetic license,” which I define as *those changes prompted by a reformulator's personal style or preference rather than by nonnativeness and which may be exercised more or less on a whim*. I first began thinking in terms of poetic license when comparing Letter.2A to my reconstructed version. Annette had made more changes in every category than Paula and Margot had, including several on the discourse level, and many of the changes were pretty clearly a matter of her personal preference. Overwhelmed with the number of changes, I started to write “pl” (poetic license) on my analyses rather than trying to fish for reasons why those choices might be more native-like.

A reformulator might decide to take poetic license for a number of reasons. For one thing, one might simply be in the mood to make more changes on one day than on the next; it is unlikely, after all, that the same person reformulating the same piece of writing twice would produce exactly the same reformulation. Another factor responsible for poetic license is what the native speaker perceives the reformulation task to be, based on the directions given. Explaining reformulation to a native speaker for the first time is difficult; one wants to elicit a native-like text that is more than an edit but does not contain many extraneous changes. In explaining reformulation to my reformulators, I always said that they should feel free to do whatever was necessary to make the text look native-like and should allow their personal styles to come through, but should not change something that was acceptable just for the sake of changing it. This often requires the reformulator to make a tough call, because some writing may look perfectly native-like in and of itself but may need to be changed in order to fit in with other, more necessary changes surrounding it.

Several times I suspected that my directions were directly responsible for the amount of poetic license appearing in a reformulation. For example, when Margot reformulated Essay.2 for me, she originally made the changes right on the reconstructed version I had given her, probably both because she was very busy and because, as she told me, she felt that it needed fewer changes. (I always asked reformulators to write out or type their reformulations on a separate piece of paper, whether or not they felt they were making many changes; otherwise, a mere edit may result and important global changes be avoided.) Concerned that this version

was more of an edit than a true reformulation, I later gave it back to her and asked if she would mind doing it again, writing her version out separately. The reformulation that resulted did indeed contain many more changes, and I wondered whether she were overcompensating in an attempt to follow my directions.

Interestingly, though, the total number of changes noted in each reformulation of Essay.2 was very close (24, 22, 23), which would suggest that Margot was perceiving the same degree of nonnativeness in my essay that Paula and Annette perceived, and that my directions did not result in an over-indulgence of poetic license.

One more factor that might have affected a reformulator's use of poetic license arose in the case of Annette, who was not only a reformulator but the person to whom the two letters were written. In both of the letters, I noted a higher number of total changes in Annette's version than in the other two versions; in the essays, I noted a higher number of changes in Margot's version (Essay.1) and in Paula's version (Essay.2) than in Annette's. It seems possible that the fact that the letter had a personal significance to her may have inspired her to make more changes, i.e. to put more of herself into something in which she had a vested interest. Again, I am only surmising at this point, but the effects of having one's letter reformulated by the very person to whom the letter is written would be a fascinating subject for later study.

The "Americanized" Reformulator

Another influence on the choices native speakers make as they reformulate may be their current "nativeness" in the target language. This was raised as an issue with Margot, the reformulator who had been in the U.S. for six years before working with me. Margot was not only extremely fluent in English, like Annette, but was used to thinking in English every day; she was finishing an undergraduate engineering degree and clearly had a superb command of English. She even told me once that when she went home to Germany in the summers, her family teased her about having a slight American accent—which even I could detect when we spoke German together.

For the most part, Margot seemed able to slip immediately into German and to recognize nonnativeness in my writing, although occasionally she had trouble recalling a German word. But on one issue, punctuation, she had clearly been influenced by the American writing style. I questioned her about the removal of many of my commas in Letter.1M which I was confident were "German," and she immediately put most of them back in and said that she was "Americanized" in her punctuation. This alerted me to the possibility that she might be more tolerant of other nonGerman elements in my writing simply because they probably did not seem so foreign to her anymore. I did nearly always find fewer global changes in her reformulations than in the others'. An interesting task for further research would be to

determine the extent to which Margot's reformulations really were "Americanized" and the extent to which I was simply noticing fewer changes because I was expecting fewer changes. At any rate, the relative nativeness of a native speaker should be borne in mind whenever reformulation work is not taking place in the target country, particularly for those reformulators who have lived in another country for a number of years.

The Reformulators' Writing Styles/Abilities

Finally, the three native speakers were clearly bringing three separate identities as writers to their reformulation tasks. Paula had studied German literature in the university, although she later decided not to continue, which may help explain her elegant, complex style. Margot, an engineering student, had a much more direct, straightforward style. Finally, Annette had just finished her university degree in German as a Foreign Language and had done most of her work in American literature; she had had a lot of practice writing literary criticism, a highly sophisticated writing task. Given these differences, it may be that Margot needed to make fewer changes in my writing in order to reflect her style.

It should be noted that my comments on the reformulators' styles are based primarily on my perceptions of their styles but also on the informal comments of another native speaker. Curious about the accuracy of my perceptions, I once removed the labels from the four versions of Letter.1 (mine and the three reformulations) and gave them to a native German friend, telling him only that they were different versions of the same thing and asking him to comment briefly on any stylistic differences he found. He felt that the versions belonged in two groups: mine and Margot's, which were marked by more simplicity, and Annette's and Paula's, which were more complex and sophisticated. While he found other stylistic differences as well, and readily chose mine when I asked which version was the least native-like, this was his strongest impression.

I have raised several questions here regarding inter-reformulator agreement and answered none conclusively. The nature and extent of these various possible influences on reformulators is far from being understood, and it would be best to bear them in mind respectfully when using or researching reformulation further.

Responding to Reformulator Variation

Let me finally comment briefly on the way I dealt with the differences between reformulations during my experience as the learner. I instinctively tended to give more weight to a change if it was made by at least two of the three reformulators than if only one made the change; for example, it seemed to me that probably geschrieben was preferred over buchstabieren (see above example) but not absolutely necessary. When on the other hand all three changed the same aspect of my writing, or even—though this was rare—changed it in almost exactly the same way, I was very confident of having discovered an insight that was “German” regardless of personal style. For example, in Letter.2, I wanted to say that whenever I must decide something, I am always afraid I will “have regrets:”

. . . habe ich immer Angst, daß ich Bedauern haben werde.

All three reformulators changed this in such a way as to enable them to use the verb bereuen (to rue or regret), which was a new word to me:

Paula: . . . habe ich immer Angst, daß ich die falsche Wahl treffen und es später bereuen könnte. (I always have fear that I will make the wrong choice and could later regret it.)

Margot: . . . habe ich immer Angst, daß ich es nachher bereuen werde. (I always have fear that I will regret it afterwards.)

Annette: . . . habe ich Angst, ich könnte sie später bereuen. (I have fear I could later regret it.)

Clearly the use of bereuen is a nativelike choice in this context.

I also tended to give credence to changes that I found consistently in one reformulator’s work, even if it appeared less reliably in the others. While the patterns I thus noted probably reflected that reformulator’s style and not merely nativeness, I was happy to be influenced by such stylistic patterns. After all, all three personal styles are subsets contained in the larger set of native-like writing, and if I picked up this or that person’s style here or there, I could be sure of moving in a native-like direction. While some might argue that I might then fail to develop my own voice, or might end up with an odd hybrid combination of others’ styles, I think that this is an unlikely danger. One needs to be very advanced in a language, as well as a highly accomplished and consistent writer, before one can imitate another voice closely enough for the imitation to be evident.

Summary

The variation found between two or more reformulations of the same piece can be both bewildering and useful: bewildering, because it may be unclear as to why differences exist and how important they are, yet useful because differences can prevent one from overgeneralizing based on too little data. Yet more important than the differences I found between my reformulators are the similarities. A comparison of the number of changes noted in each area of writing in each of the reformulation sets suggests that the reformulators were changing my work to a similar degree, although one reformulator tended to make slightly fewer changes overall than the other two. Furthermore, a close comparison of the reformulators' treatments of my cohesive devices in one excerpt supports this claim. The reformulators all chose to:

- embed some or all of my transitional words/phrases
- change obwohl (although) to a different transitional word/phrase
- change one or two punctuation choices
- change my use of man (third person pronoun)

Based on this cursory glance, I am confident that in spite of poetic license and other reasons for variance, each reformulator did identify and change the nonnative-like aspects of my writing.

CHAPTER FIVE

MOTIVATION AND THE LEARNER: AN ANALYSIS OF DIARY ENTRIES: PERSONAL FACTORS

Proponents of reformulation hold that the technique is inherently motivating for the language learner, because through it the learner has the chance to see how his or her *own ideas* can be expressed in a native-like way (Cohen 1983b, Sanaoui 1984)—an opportunity rarely offered through more traditional forms of feedback or study. (I refer, of course, to learners who are interested in becoming native-like in a target language; certainly there are learners who want to communicate well in a target language but do not want or need to sound native-like. Reformulation is not for them.) A student may feel a sense of ownership for a reformulated piece of writing that could never be felt with other native writings given to the student as examples for study, and this “personalizing” of feedback may increase the student’s desire to pay attention. Certainly my own desire to see my ideas expressed in native-like German and to learn thereafter to write in a more native-like way was in great part what motivated me to begin this study.

Engaging in reformulation analysis can be a fairly rigorous task, however, and if students find this daunting, the benefits may be largely lost. In Cohen’s study of advanced learners of Hebrew, for example, the extra effort required of the Reformulation Group seemed to demotivate the students, whose essays improved less than the students who received traditional feedback only (Cohen 1983b; see Chapter 1, p. 6). Considering that many students already balk at the amount of work expected of them in the course of a normal composition assignment, these results are not surprising. Cohen concluded that:

. . . it is probably best to allow [reformulation] as one alternate approach for those students who want to take on the challenge—that is, of confronting another version of their writing which is more than correction or even thorough editing.
(p. 18)

How, then, would a given learner find reformulation: motivating or demoralizing? And what other factors might affect one’s motivational level while engaging in reformulation? The answers undoubtedly depend on the individual. What one student finds intriguing another may find discouraging, and the results may determine their success as language learners. Individual learners bring unique emotional schemata to any language learning situation, and neurolinguists are just beginning to glimpse the impact that this has on actual learning. According to Schumann, “Each cognitive step in SLA. . . is influenced by the stimulus evaluation system in

the brain” (1995, p. 8). More specifically, the affective content of a second language situation is appraised by the amygdaloid complex (a nucleus in the limbic system) according to that individual’s emotional schemata, which in turn were formed by the individual’s past experience; if the affective content is interpreted as positive or at least relevant to the individual, attention toward the stimulus is actually increased and learning is enhanced. If, on the other hand, the situation is interpreted as negative or irrelevant, the reverse occurs and learning is inhibited.

When I embarked on the learning experience described in this diary study, I was curious about what factors would increase or decrease my own individual level of motivation throughout the study; in other words, how would I, typically a highly motivated learner, react in an SLA learning situation involving reformulation? This leads to my third research question:

Question Three:

What can an analysis of diary entries reveal regarding factors affecting the motivation of the learner to engage in reformulation work throughout a study?

I predicted that several factors would be highly motivating: seeing my ideas expressed in native-like language; asking my reformulator questions and gaining insights from his or her explanations; my own desire to succeed. At the same time, I suspected that I would find the rigorous analysis process daunting and wondered whether the amount of work involved would offset the excitement of gaining insights. I also wondered what effects culture shock might have on my level of motivation.

In this chapter and the next I will present my actual findings regarding motivational factors. This chapter will discuss “personal” factors that were not contingent on the reformulation work itself. It could be argued that this reflects more of a “meta-study,” since these factors do not bear on reformulation specifically but on the learning context as a whole. However, given what we do know about the highly individual nature of motivation, and what we do *not* know about how myriad factors interact, I believe it would be telling less than the whole truth to divorce these factors from the rest of the learning situation. Factors relating in more obvious ways to reformulation analysis itself will be presented in the next chapter.

Personal factors will be presented in the following order: Grief and Related Factors (Grief, Genre and Content, Attitude of the Reformulator, Shared Religious Beliefs, Concern about Others’ Perceptions of Me), and Other Attitudes and Feelings (Desire to Excel, Perception of Success, Desire to Be More Native-Like, Desire to “Pay Back” the Reformulators).

Grief and Related Factors

Grief

Shortly after I began my reformulation work in Germany, my mother died unexpectedly in the U.S.¹⁰ I had certainly not prepared for such an event when planning my research, but perhaps as Vygotsky said, the experiment begins when things break down (Lantolf 1995). I returned home immediately for the funeral and remained there with family for six months. I went back to Germany only briefly after seven weeks and finally continued my research after the first three months at home. During this time my motivational level was primarily under the influence of intense grief. The following excerpts, entered in my personal journal during my brief return to Germany, reflect this affective state:

This is hard.

Surprise, surprise.

Everything here is too much like it was before Mom died. The last time I was here, these things surrounded me as part of my familiar life—now the rug has been yanked from under my feet, but, inappropriately, all my things are here, arranged just as I left them.

And I can't call Mom. . .

I can't tell Mom how I woke up at 10:00 to the sunniest day in the world: a bitter reminder that the weather doesn't care.

Now I have packages to open. They've been here since after I left for Christmas. Time to get this over with. (Feb. 21, 1995)

Yesterday was full of a horrible *foreignness*—not the foreignness of a country not my own, but the foreignness of a world without my mom. When I walked to Stachus (Karlsplatz) yesterday in search of a certain toy store, the air was full of slants of light that made me feel like a stranger, an alien; the world—the common little things around me—was lit with this strange light; this whole unfamiliar walk through this particular section of München was like a strangely lit stage I had wandered onto, and I didn't know the props, wasn't familiar with the lighting plans, had apparently missed the rehearsal where movements for the actresses and actors were blocked. And the stage wasn't just Stachus, it was my whole life: and I stumbled through it awkwardly, always awkward and homesick, everything alien because I miss her.

I'm going to stop for awhile so I don't cry. (Feb. 23, 1995)

¹⁰I had completed the analysis of Essay.1P and had received Petra's reformulation of Essay.2 but had not yet begun the analysis.

In March, I made plans to continue my reformulation work with Margot, a native speaker who was studying at the university in my hometown. On March 26 I gave Margot her first piece to reformulate:

. . . [Margot] returned and I gave her a letter to Annette. . . and explained again what I needed her to do. . . I wrote the letter the night before she came, having found it exhausting to face concentrating again. . . Now I need to do the analysis of the first set. . . Unfortunately I haven't started it sooner, having [had] a very stressful week, so I'm not sure I can get it analyzed and also write another piece in German before she comes. . . it's hard to be motivated to do anything since Mom died. (I still can't believe she's gone.) It's good to write about Mom because nothing else seems important anyway. . . I will try to begin the analysis today. I hope I find it absorbing. Everything is so hard and painful these days. Nothing has much meaning. . . .

4.14.95

My original plan to work in two-week cycles with just one reformulator was never reinstated, and the study was adapted to my circumstances:

I was going to be so methodical and rigorous and consistent about diary entries, back when it was a longitudinal study with a two-week cycle, and instead I find myself always catching up. That's what this whole year is about, just hanging on. . . when I'm thinking about Mom I couldn't care less how often I do or do not write in this diary. . . I have of course redesigned the study and sent out work to my reformulators. More specifically, I'm now getting Paula, Margot, and Annette to reformulate the same two essays. . . and the same two letters. . .

10.14.95

By November, eleven months after my mother's death, I was deep in the analysis of my reformulators' work but still contending with grief daily:

I'm glad I'm not teaching while doing all this analysis. I have a lot of days where I'm on the verge of tears a lot, and I know I wouldn't have the energy to concentrate so much on more than one thing, especially if I had a rigorous schedule to follow. 11.01.95

Sometimes I'm not motivated to work, not because it's hard work, but because missing Mom never goes away. Day in and day out I live with a huge hole in my life, I live with constant "homesickness" for someone I won't see again on this earth, and so often I just couldn't care less about anything else. I feel like I have to be careful who I say this to. I feel like serious researchers would think I should get my act together, that one must keep one's personal life separate from work. And I *am* working. I'm trying. But there's no separating out a loss like this. The best I can do is try not to think about it on the surface sometimes. I do fairly well at this, but it's exhausting, all this emotional effort. . . It's exhausting to grieve. . . , it's exhausting to exercise

the discipline to set it aside and concentrate on German. . .

It's not about pushing, when you're going through grief. It's about somehow keeping going, just keeping your head above water, while you learn to live with your loss.

Didn't mean to get so personal tonight. But this is always with me. I think I'll finish the syntax stuff and get to bed. 11.04.95

Grief, then, had an enormously negative impact on my level of motivation for the duration of my reformulation study. And yet I clearly did continue my work in reformulation; there was sufficient motivation from other factors to enable me to do so. Several of these other factors had not even existed earlier (or if so, only negligibly) but were now having a most important effect on my motivational level.

Genre and Content

In my first meeting with advisors¹¹ after my mother's death, they suggested that I be flexible in my research design and write about my mother in any genre that felt comfortable, such as personal letters. The emotional advantage to working in this genre was of course that I could write about anything that was on my mind, and I could write it to someone who cared. This perhaps more than any other factor enabled me to begin reformulation work again. As I wrote in the first diary entry after reinitiating the study:

. . . it's hard to be motivated to do anything since Mom died. . . I can honestly say, though, that when I'm writing in German I am very absorbed in the process. It's good to write about Mom because nothing else seems important anyway. 4.14.95

I reflected on this at greater length some months later:

Was I at all motivated to [begin] the study [again] for the study's sake, because reformulation is just so darn fascinating? (Sarcasm there, but I really have always been fascinated by it, under normal circumstances.) I don't think so. But it really helped that Elaine and Andrew told me that it was perfectly appropriate, perhaps even desirable, to write about Mom, and to do so in any genre I chose. This was such a relief. First, it validated my grief, and really warmed me towards them and towards my research, rather than building resentment, which would have been emotionally exhausting to fight. Second, it was probably all I was capable of writing about—when I looked back over my essays written in Germany, which I'd been so involved in there, I thought, “Who cares?” I couldn't even imagine carrying out the analysis on “Auto oder U-Bahn?” It was completely irrelevant. Third, when I

¹¹The advisors referred to throughout the paper are Professor Andrew Cohen and Professor Elaine Tarone, both of the University of Minnesota.

actually had Margot lined up a few weeks later, and was ready to write something, I absolutely couldn't think what to write, had no desire to write, until it occurred to me to write a letter auf deutsch to Annette. *And then for the first time I cared.* I would write her a letter and tell her how I was, what I was going through, what my thoughts on grief were—everything that was so all-absorbing. And I knew it would be a real communication, something she would really read and respond to. . . It was the only genre that mattered.
10.16.95

As it happened, letter-writing was also the only genre that was personal and relevant enough without being too painful. I learned that it was possible to cross this line when I decided to write a narrative describing that morning in Germany when I learned my mother had died. I intended to write it in two parts and gave the first part to Margot, analyzed her reformulation of it, and tried to treat it as I had treated all the other reformulation sets. But the material was too painful, and I was never able to bring myself to write the second part, nor did I submit the first part for reformulation to the other two reformulators. Although I was writing very directly about my mother's death in a personal journal throughout the study, it was simply too difficult to write that same sort of material in German knowing that I would have to scrutinize it for linguistic purposes. Instead, I returned to letter-writing with a sense of relief:

. . . I again felt most motivated to write to Annette. . . It's a good-sized letter and very authentic; I really was writing to Annette. 6.15.95

The letter was in fact "good-sized," which perhaps reflects my high level of motivation to write it:

. . . This letter is longer than anything else I've written by about 180 words, which is something, considering we're talking about short pieces of writing. Ess.1 was 520 words, Ess.2 was 470 words, Let.1 was 373 words (that was all I could manage in the spring), and Let.2 jumped up to almost 700! Wow. I think for one thing, I was able to do more work by then than in spring, but for another, I'm more motivated to write more when it's a letter. I mean, I had all sorts of things I wanted to tell Annette, and it's fun knowing she would read it and answer. . . Letters are less intimidating and more fun in any language, I suppose. 10.25.95

My motivation level was further increased by this genre in an unexpected way once I was analyzing Annette's reformulation of the letter:

The other revelation is that a number of changes Annette made are really influenced by the fact that I was writing the letter to her, and she and I have this history. . . She made certain changes that no one else could have made based on what she knew about the topic, about past conversations we've had! This seems really valuable to me: you get a reformulator who not only

rewrites so your ideas seem more nativelylike, but who can also rewrite so your ideas seem more nativelylike and more true to who you are as a person. This is exciting! I love the letter-writing reformulation assignment idea! 11.05.95

This particular arrangement, having one's authentic letters reformulated by the very person to whom they are written, has an obvious disadvantage: the reformulator is not right there to be questioned during the analysis stage, and any clarification or explanation is subject to delay as letters pass back and forth (unless one is willing and able to pay a hefty international phone bill). Even with this inconvenience, my enthusiasm for letter-writing as a medium for reformulation only increased throughout the study:

It's a problem to have such a time-lag; I don't see any way around it. . . On the other hand, I still think the idea of a reformulator pen-pal is a powerful one with its own special motivation. 11.12.95

While I was drawn to this genre because it was highly motivating to communicate meaningfully with a friend, the *content* of those letters continued to have an impact on my affective state (and hence my motivation level) during the analysis of those particular reformulation sets:

One other thing that I've noticed: this letter talks about my grief at one point, and mentions dreams about Mom I'd been having. As I analyze it, it sometimes affects my mood. I know that in another section, where I discuss a friend, I get sort of depressed, because it just happens that I've been upset with that friend since I wrote the letter. At least I'm involved with the content! I have a feeling this may be a good thing, although one doesn't normally think of feeling down as a good thing. I mean, the content of this letter is still full of meaning for me, and I'm glad, even if it brings me down; in another section of the letter, where I discuss an incident with my kitten, I always feel more lighthearted. I suppose it isn't academic to consider whether I'm emotionally involved with the text¹²; but my instinct tells me it holds my attention. 10.30.95

My experience resonates strongly with Schumann's assertion (1995) that a learner's perception of the affective content of a learning situation as positive or negative, relevant or irrelevant will affect his or her attention level (which in turn affects actual learning). In my case, the reformulated letters I was analyzing were highly relevant to me individually and thus

¹²On perusing the diary later, I found it curious that I would write this in the middle of a study exploring motivational factors. It demonstrates that I as a learner felt the need to apologize for having emotions that might interfere with my learning experience. I suspect that many learners, teachers, and researchers are apt to treat emotions as something that should be studiously ignored so that they do not interfere with the "intellectual" business of learning.

commanded my attention very strongly. One might ask of course whether the negative quality of the content caused me to limit my attention, however highly relevant it was. Certainly when the content was *too* painful, as in the case of the narrative I wrote, I consciously chose to avoid working with such content again. When questioned as to which of these factors, relevance or negativity, would have the dominant influence on a learner, Schumann said that it would depend on the strength of each (Personal Communication, March 1996). In the letters I wrote, the relevance of the content carried the most importance.

Therefore, working in the letter-writing genre with content I perceived as highly relevant motivated me to write in German again and engage in reformulation analysis.

Attitude of the Reformulator

Another factor that became critical to my motivational level due to grief was the attitude of the reformulators I was working with, particularly just when I was beginning the reformulation work again. My new reformulator, Margot, was busy with a 19-credit course load in engineering, yet she was consistently willing to reformulate for me throughout the duration of the study. As the following entry indicates, it was not merely the fact that she agreed to reformulate that was important to me, but the way in which she did it:

It helped too, of course, that Margot is just as nice about it. . . She even said she doesn't consider the reformulating to be work; rather, she enjoys it and welcomes the practice that it gives her, writing in German. I think she means it. She may have just said that to be nice, on some level. You know, I'm not sure it matters which is true; it was so clear that she was being genuinely nice about it, and that was what I needed. I personally hate imposing on people under the best of circumstances, and no circumstances have been ideal this year. Even more importantly, I think I have been really affected since Mom's death by any and all kindnesses shown to me. The fact that Margot and Paula have both been so kind (and yet not in a pitying way at all), and Annette as well of course. . . has touched me deeply. Does this help me write in German, or analyze more effectively? I don't know. All I know is, it is so important to my emotional well-being, and it is one less barrier I would have to overcome. If they were at all not nice about it—reluctant, say, or less understanding about my grief—I would have to spend all sorts of energy telling myself that it is still legitimate using them as reformulators, that I'm not putting a gun to their heads, etc., etc. Yuck. Of course, all the people involved here—Paula, Margot, and Annette—are really terribly nice people by nature. . . 10.14.95

There was in fact one German student whom I approached at the same time that I was asking Margot to reformulate; I was hoping that he could do the reconstruction for me. (I usually tried to have the grammar errors cleaned up by someone other than the reformulator, in

hopes that it would help the reformulator to attend only to the meaning and style. The possibility of eliminating this step altogether will be discussed further in Chapter 7.) This student was busy as well and somewhat brusque, and I responded to this by completely dropping him and going against my usual procedure:

I also, against my better judgment, had [Margot] go briefly through the letter for grammar corrections; while I normally try to have a different native speaker help with that, in this case I hadn't been able to get anyone in time. 4.14.95

This was not strictly true, as I had chosen not to press him for help. A later entry gives a more complete explanation:

. . . the only other person I knew of who might have been able to help with the project was X., a nice enough grad student who goes to my church in Brookings; but he was very busy and sort of businesslike about it. . . he was hard to reach. . . Anyway, he indicated that he could do the reconstruction for me between Sunday School and church, because he was so busy. But even though he was willing to do it, I decided I definitely didn't want to get his help because it felt like an imposition, and even though I needed a reconstructor for my project, it was too painful given my circumstances to hand something over to someone who wasn't warmer about the whole thing. I think it esp. bothered me because the letters, etc., I wrote that Margot reformulated were about Mom, and it was just too personal. . . So it was really reassuring to me to know that Margot was so warm and willing, albeit just as busy as X., and I was able to go ahead and write something to be reformulated. 10.16.95

Even after many months had passed, I was encouraged by my reformulators' attitudes and drew motivation from them. Shortly after calling Paula in Germany and asking if she could reformulate more, I wrote:

I found it very encouraging, by the way, how nice [Paula] was about it all. . . It made it so much easier to send her things this way, instead of feeling like I'd twisted her arm into it. 10.14.95

In the same entry, I discussed the motivating influence not just of the reformulators' attitudes but of the friendships we were developing:

[Margot and I] did start to become friends, which continues now. I think it was so important that I could really trust her on a personal level at that time, that I felt "safe"; otherwise, it would have been a tremendous effort to go on with the research in a meaningful way. At the same time, I should note that Annette and Paula are both very warm and kind and compassionate people.

With Paula. . . I really lucked out. . . she turned out to be a lovely person. . . And Annette of course, who has become a friend, is very caring—she'd called me from Germany when she learned about Mom and cried with me on the phone. (I left straight from Muenster when Mom died.) And when she offered to reformulate if necessary, I knew she meant it. . . So I've ended up with three very warm people as reformulators. . .10.16.95

These relationships motivated me not just to do my reformulation work but to someday immerse myself again in the whole German experience:

Paula was awfully nice about it all and it was so exciting to talk to her again, auf Deutsch! It made me homesick for Munich and my experiences there, which were so rudely interrupted; it made me eager to look at how she would reformulate things. . . and made me eager to someday go back to Germany and become more fluent. . . I do want to go back to Munich someday, perhaps. . . to live for awhile. 10.14.95

And again:

I do wish I'd gotten to know [Paula] better! I'll have to go back. 10.16.95

Of course, many learners may not be so strongly motivated by personal relationships, and certainly the importance of these factors in my experience needs to be considered in light of my personality as well as my circumstances:

Just for the record, I remember being encouraged by Paula's being so nice and willing even before Mom died; I mean, I'd hate to work with a reluctant reformulator. 10.14.95

At any rate, it was clearly critical in my case that I found warm, personable reformulators with whom to work.

Shared Religious Beliefs

Another factor that motivated me positively in the case of Margot was that I knew I had religious beliefs in common with her. Again, this was related to the vulnerability I felt as one who was grieving:

The other thing that I remember being very reassuring was the fact that I knew Margot shared my religious beliefs. While this sort of common bond was completely unimportant to me in my research in Germany, and was furthermore completely coincidental (I certainly didn't set out looking for someone with similar religious beliefs, I just wanted a German!), I ended up

feeling really grateful about it because I knew that whatever references I made in my writing to God, grief, etc., she would not pass judgment on me. It was hard enough being so personal and open about my grief auf deutsch—but necessary, since nothing else mattered—and knowing that she believed the same thing about Mom being with God really helped. This was true even though we never discussed the content of the writing during the analysis, beyond making sure it was clear to her. 10.16.95

This factor, along with the attitude of the reformulators, had a positive influence on my reformulation experience because it created a feeling of “safety,” of acceptance, during a time when I was especially vulnerable. I believe that had these factors not existed in a positive way, I would have been much more defensive and anxious—not the ideal emotional state for any language learner.

Concern about Others’ Perceptions of Me

The above factors—Genre and Content, Attitude of the Reformulator, and Religious Beliefs—were positive influences on my level of motivation because they offered positive things that could sustain me through grief, such as relevance, warmth, and security. But another factor was motivating precisely because of the threat it seemed to pose:

. . . concern about what others would think. . . is probably also one thing that motivated me. . . I’d had a talk with Z. when I got back from Germany the second time, and he mentioned that maybe if I’d had more to do, I wouldn’t have been so struck by grief while there. That absolutely infuriated me. . . I was incensed with Z. that he thought I was perhaps making things worse for myself, when going back to Germany was literally. . . excruciating, and wasn’t about doing my study there again but about closure, facing my grief there and saying goodbye to people and packing up. I worried that others in my life would think as Z. did. And maybe that prompted me to get the study going again just enough to stave off those folks. 10.16.95

I was cautious about overstating the influence of this factor, however, and immediately qualified my statement:

However, before I even talked to Z., I distinctly remember thinking, “I’m going to have to just start the study again, like it or not, and not wait to feel motivated, because I’m not going to feel motivated for a long long time.” Yes, I had made that decision first and had started trying to contact Margot, who I’d heard was a possibility. So there are complex motivational factors at play here, and it’s impossible to say in what proportions they operated. 10.16.95

It would indeed be foolish—not to mention impossible—to pull apart the various influences on my motivation throughout the study and try to treat them as independently-operating factors. However, the above factors did spring directly from or were heavily influenced by the fact that I was dealing with the death of my mother. In the case of the other personal factors that I shall now discuss, grief did not play such a primary role, but my personal characteristics did.

Other Attitudes and Feelings

Desire to Excel

Without a strong motivation to excel I probably would not have entered graduate school, let alone designed a study in reformulation. This desire is so second-nature to me that I might not have noticed it if it were not for the backdrop of grief:

. . . when I'm thinking about Mom I couldn't care less how often I do or do not write in this diary; but then the part of me that has always cared so much how well I do (the part of me Mom was always trying to get to relax!) is incredibly frustrated by what has happened. 10.14.95

This desire to excel was considerably dampened for some time and probably played a less central role in motivating me than it would have had my mother not died. However, by summer it was asserting itself at least somewhat. While I was not doing much reformulating or analysis during the summer (focusing instead on teaching again), I had sent some work to Germany:

I also felt like I was accomplishing something. . . because I was waiting for much of the summer for two reformulations to come back from Germany. I think it was really important that I had this feeling of something being in progress, even though it wasn't on my end. . . while I know that it's okay for me not to try to take on too much, one little perfectionistic part of me needed to be satisfied that something somewhere was happening to forward my reformulation study, and so waiting for reformulations fulfilled that need! 10.14.95

Perception of Success

Related to the desire to excel or succeed was the highly motivating perception that I was succeeding:

I talked to Margot last night. . . She said it was sort of hard sometimes. . . to know what to change [during a reformulation], because my German is really good. I don't feel like my German is really good; on the other hand, I know Margot doesn't say things she doesn't mean. Anyway it was fun to hear that. 11.10.95

This would seem to be a most beneficial cycle for a learner: the desire to succeed presumably prompts one to act in a successful way and eventually succeed, and the perception that one is succeeding in turn encourages and motivates one to look ahead to future success.

Desire to be More Native-like

I frequently made comments in the diary that revealed a desire to write German in a more native-like way. For example:

. . . Annette often takes advantage of parallel structure to omit nouns or verbs. . . This seems to result in a more graceful, sophisticated style. I'd like to incorporate this into my own writing more. 11.07.95

Once again Annette uses “mal” and “schon” and little words like that that fill out the flow of sentences and make things just a little clearer, more connected. I hope these things can get into my ear, so to speak, so I can do it more instinctively. 11.10.95

This desire to become more native-like, like my desire to excel, existed before my study began and no doubt helped prompt it.

Desire to Repay the Reformulators

Another factor very grounded in my personality was my desire to give something back to the reformulators—to contribute something to those who were doing something for me. Lest this sound completely selfless and virtuous, let me add that I have always felt frankly guilty at the thought of imposing on anyone. Guilt in turn has an extremely negative influence on my level of motivation. In Germany, this was not much of a problem to overcome, because Paula insisted that she welcomed the change in her daily schedule (she was at that point staying home with an infant). In the U.S., however, my reformulator Margot was terribly busy. I found a way to still work with her but not feel guilty:

I always went out of my way to make a really good supper for Margot (who indicated that these suppers were the only good meals she was getting, as such a busy student—this made me feel good) when she would come over to drop off or discuss a reformulation. 10.16.95

Later, when I asked all three reformulators to do more reformulating than I had anticipated asking them to do, I wanted to offer to pay them even though all three were willing to do the work without pay:

[Margot] is so busy that I dreaded asking for more, but at least now I was offering to pay, which she said was unnecessary but which I insisted on doing. (I feel good knowing that she needs the money—again, it allays my guilt! I mean, she’s taking 19 credits and graduating, for crying out loud.) . . . And again, paying them allays my guilt, helps me feel I’m not taking advantage of them. Plus it’s enjoyable to pay people who are not demanding it! 10.14.95

The nature of this factor resonates with the above discussion of “The Attitude of the Reformulator,” in that any feeling that I was imposing on the reformulators would have presented a sort of emotional barrier to be overcome. I found that the thought of such an emotional barrier—one more thing to overcome in the learning process—had a negative impact on my level of motivation and therefore needed to be removed via one strategy (not working with a particular native speaker) or another (offering to give something to my reformulators).

Summary

Several personal factors that affected my motivation to engage in reformulation have been discussed here. The most significant negative factor, grief, dominated my affective state for months; however, several other factors provided an important balance:

- genre and content
- attitude of the reformulator
- shared religious beliefs (with a reformulator)
- concern about others’ perceptions of me

Genre and Content and Attitude of the Reformulator were particularly important. Other personal factors not so directly related to grief were also identified:

- desire to excel
- perception of success
- desire to be more native-like
- desire to repay the reformulators

All of these factors were rooted in my unique circumstances and individual personality; they reflect the way I reacted to the affective content of the language learning situation in which I found myself. The next chapter will present factors more directly relating to the reformulation work itself. It should be remembered, however, that they too were experienced against the

background of my emotional schemata and as such are as unique as the factors already presented.

CHAPTER SIX

MOTIVATION AND THE LEARNER: AN ANALYSIS OF DIARY ENTRIES: REFORMULATION FACTORS

The factors relating more directly to the reformulation procedure itself will be presented in the following order: Native Speaker Factors (Contact with Reformulators; Writing *to* a Reformulator; Contact with Other Native Speakers; Amount of German in My Life; Perception of the Reliability of Reformulators' Nativeness); The Learning Itself (The Inherent Fascination of Reformulation; The Perception of the Value of the Learning Experience; The Chance To Use What I Was Learning; Amount/Intensity of Work; The Number of Choices; Noting What the Reformulators Kept); and, The System/Process of Analysis (Logistics of the Analyses; Obsession with Accurate Labeling of Changes; Redoing Analyses; Cross-reformulator Comparisons).

I will then conclude my examination of motivational factors by presenting several chronologically arranged diary excerpts, in an attempt to show a number of the motivational factors from both this and the previous chapter in context.

Native Speaker Factors: Reformulators and Other Sources of German

In addition to the all-important Attitude of the Reformulator, several other factors related to the reformulators and other native speakers proved important to my level of motivation.

Contact with Reformulators

Having contact with the reformulators—in person, on the phone, or through letters—proved to be a highly motivating event throughout the study. On December 21, 1994, I wrote to Andrew Cohen:

. . . while the comparison or analysis was in and of itself really absorbing, the debriefing with Paula was the really exciting part. The many observations that had begun to seem overwhelming when I studied them alone fell into place and were clarified. So I'm highly motivated at this point to get going on the next set. . .

Since my mother died the next week and I left Germany abruptly, I was not in contact with Paula again for nearly 10 months. When I did finally call her from the U.S. to ask for more reformulating, it was motivating just to talk to her again (in German and in English), even though we were not discussing a particular reformulation:

. . . it was so exciting to talk to her again, auf Deutsch! It made me homesick for Munich and my experiences there, which were so rudely interrupted; it made me eager to look at how she would reformulate things, compared to the others, and made me eager to someday go back to Germany and become more fluent, at the same time that it depressed me to remember the perfect set-up there that I'd had and lost. A complex combination of emotions. I was heartened to understand what I understood of her German. . . and it depressed me to think how much more fluent I'd have been if my plans had not had to change. I do want to go back to Munich someday, perhaps even to live for awhile. 10.14.95

It was indeed a “complex combination” of feelings that this conversation aroused; yet it is clear that it reminded me of some of the joys of language learning and appreciably increased my interest in seeing what Paula's reformulations of my writing would look like.

Correspondingly, a lack of contact with reformulators tended to lower my motivation level. I found it frustrating in particular when I was far away from reformulators and wanted to ask clarifying questions:

I also wonder why she's putting the subject first so much, when I tend to start with a time clause which I also thought was typically German. I know I need to talk to a native speaker about some of this. That's the one disadvantage of having a reformulator “pen pal.” 10.30.95

I did add immediately that I still found it highly motivating to have such a “pen pal” because we were really communicating. The next time I noted this same frustration with distance, I was again loathe to give up the pen-pal idea, inconvenience notwithstanding:

But I am thinking. . . of writing to each of them with a few carefully-chosen questions about the generalizations I come up with—the hypotheses I generate, really. It's a problem to have such a time-lag; I don't see any way around it. That's the main reason why it's great to have a reformulator with you. On the other hand, I still think the idea of a reformulator pen-pal is a powerful one with its own special motivation. 11.12.95

That “special” motivation actually goes beyond the motivation of writing letters for reformulation and will be discussed next.

Writing to the Reformulator

While letter-writing was motivating because it was real and meaningful communication, studying the reformulation of *the person to whom the letter was written* was especially interesting in a way I had not foreseen:

Oh—a couple of times [Annette] makes little changes that I think are a result of the fact that we know each other well. Like once, where I explain that T. also lives in Rochester; she changes it to, “naturally I visited T. there too,” because she knew he and L. lived in the same city from previous conversations we’d had. But then, since I really was writing the letter to her, it was more appropriate to write it that way, wasn’t it? Maybe there’s something extra-useful about writing a letter to someone and having them reformulate it. They know the context of what you’re saying much more thoroughly. Interesting. 11.03.95

The strength of this observation increased as I continued the analysis:

The other revelation is that a number of changes Annette made are really influenced by the fact that I was writing the letter to her, and she and I have this history based on that. She made certain changes that no one else could have made based on what she knew about the topic, about past conversations we’ve had! This seems really valuable to me: you get a reformulator who not only rewrites so your ideas seem more nativelike, but who can also rewrite *so your ideas seem more nativelike and more true to who you are as a person*. This is exciting! I love the letter-writing reformulation assignment idea!

. . . And fascinating to see how the fact that Annette had a vested interest in this letter, based on our history, and based on her as the recipient of the letter, affected things. By the way, she emphasized how much I miss her more than the other reformulators did! :-)

11.05.95

Later that same day I wrote:

By the way, what I refer to above—Annette making changes no one else could have made, based on our history/prior knowledge—happens five times. Sometimes it’s more subtle than others, but once, for example, she refers not to babysitting for my niece and nephew but to going to my sister’s to babysit. Paula couldn’t have said that; she didn’t know they were my sister’s kids. Funny. 11.05.95

Of course, this phenomenon may have more to do with how well the reformulator knows the nonnative writer than with whether the letter is written to the reformulator. But it seems clear that writing to one’s reformulator may have an effect on the reformulation produced. At any rate, once I had realized that such an effect existed, my interest was piqued:

Now I'll type in Let.1A, which is mercifully short although probably she ripped it apart. I'll be interested to see how she handled this first personal letter to her! 11.07.95

Contact with Other Native Speakers

In general, when my enthusiasm for all things German—including the language, the country and culture, and the people—was strong, my motivation to engage in reformulation work in German was boosted. This is demonstrated in the entry above in which I describe my phone call with Paula (10.14.95). In another entry, I describe minimal contact with another native speaker who was not a reformulator, but with whom the thought of even potential future contact was a motivating experience:

I got a postcard today from a woman from Germany who I met on the plane over the first time. She had been very friendly and invited me to visit, but while I was in München, I was so busy and also shy about calling her; I finally sent her a postcard around Christmas. Then of course, Mom died, I came home, etc. . . Well, Annette sent this postcard on to me. . . and she reminds me who she is, says they're traveling again, and closes that she'll try to call me when they're through travelling. So it seems like the perfect opportunity for me to sit down and write a letter in German explaining what happened and telling her where I am now. And I'd like to do this because I could use my reformulated versions to make my letter more native-like.
11.04.95

(This experience was also motivating because of the opportunity it presented for me to use what I was learning through the reformulation procedure, and as such will be discussed below under “The Learning Itself.”)

Amount of German in My Life

A factor related to the amount of contact I had with native speakers (reformulators or otherwise) is the amount of German I had in my life. Simply put, having German roommates, taking a German class, and using German every day helped motivate me to engage in reformulation. I did not appreciate the full importance of this until I was back in my hometown, continuing the study from there:

I also write to my grandpa auf deutsch once in a while and receive letters in kind. Other than that, though, I don't have much German in my life except for the writing. It's hard to motivate myself to study German much when I'm not using it or taking a class. . . 4.14.95

As the entry goes on to say, this factor was not nearly so debilitating as the grief I was experiencing. But even in my grief I could recognize that the lack of German in my life had a very negative impact on my motivational level.

Perception of the Reliability of Reformulators' Nativeness

The question of “reliability” of nativeness was raised in the case of one reformulator, Margot (see “The Americanized Reformulator,” p. 57):

. . . when I questioned [Margot] about the removal of so many commas, she laughed and said freely that she has been overinfluenced by American punctuation, and that I was right about most of them! Interesting questions raised here: is a native speaker as fluent in English—and as long in the U.S. (6 years)—as Margot not reliable as a reformulator? I don't think [this is true], regarding most aspects of writing. She seems to move very readily and instinctively when we discuss idioms, style, vocabulary choices, etc. The main problems for her seem to be punctuation. . . and the occasional trouble thinking of the German word when she has the English one right in front of her. . . 4.27.95

This was the only time I ever questioned the nativeness of any of my native speakers' work, and I only did so because I had immediately picked up a strong feel for German punctuation habits during my first reformulation with Paula. The question remained in my mind on some level, however:

. . . she still immediately seemed to identify non-native aspects of my writing and would say, “We just wouldn't say that.”. . . after all, she is still spending summers at home, and it's not like she is 100% native-like in English. . . But I did feel wary about accepting her reformulations as being as “authentically native-like” as Paula's. More specifically, I worried that Margot might be more tolerant of my foreignness auf deutsch; since she's so Americanized, my Americanized German probably doesn't seem so odd or unacceptable to her. . . 10.16.95

It is easy to imagine why it might not be motivating to work with a reformulation that one suspects may be less than completely native-like—and indeed, it should be emphasized here that the issue was really my *perception* of her nativeness, rather than her nativeness itself, which I alone would not be qualified to judge. Bearing that in mind, then, I did believe throughout the study that Margot was somewhat more tolerant of my German than Paula and Annette were. Evidence for this is suggested by the fact that I noted fewer changes in discourse functions in Margot's reformulations than I noted in Paula's and Annette's (see Table Two, p. 49). (This does not necessarily prove that Margot was indeed more tolerant of my Americanized

German; it could simply prove that she approached reformulation in a different way, for example taking less poetic license or viewing reformulation as more similar to an edit than a complete rewrite. I may have also noted fewer changes in Margot's reformulations because I was *expecting* fewer changes.) But the complexity of the interplay between motivating factors again comes into play: if I was ever less motivated to analyze Margot's reformulations because I suspected them to be less reliable sources of native-like German, I was at the same time often more motivated to analyze Margot's reformulations because I expected to be less overwhelmed by the number and nature of changes. This issue will be explored in greater depth in the next section in the discussion of the highly negative factor, "Amount/Intensity of Work."

The Learning Itself

A number of factors that had an influence on my level of motivation seemed to spring from the learning process itself.

The Inherent Fascination of Reformulation

Reformulation offers something that other forms of second language writing feedback do not: the chance to see what one's ideas look like in native-like language. This is the inherently motivating aspect of reformulation, and it motivated me to design and carry out this study. In response to my first attempt at analysis (Essay.1P) I wrote:

Mostly I found this really fascinating, absorbing. 12.15.94

It was gratifying throughout the study to see ways to express my ideas in native-like language:

**[Annette] does remove the rhetorical question, as Paula did. . . And she expands the part about Americans wanting to shop on weekend, which looks good to me—it's actually what I wanted to say but didn't know how.
11.06.95**

I was motivated by many of the different steps in the reformulation process, including the first one of simply writing something in German. This was true even during the worst stage of grief:

I can honestly say. . . that when I'm writing in German I am very absorbed in the process. 4.14.95

It was also highly motivating to note changes in vocabulary, given the fact that these changes occurred in a context I had created:

One comment I don't want to forget: if learning vocab. in context is as important as they say (the ubiquitous "they"), reformulation would seem to provide the perfect context because it's one created by the learner. I mean, Margot is using words I've never seen before, and in most cases I know just what they mean because after all, I said it first. . .¹³ often I have a better understanding from the context than the dictionary gives me. 4.16.95

(This factor overlaps with one to be discussed next in "The Perception of the Value of the Learning Experience.") And again:

Paula of course chooses nice, specific words, some of which are new to me but all of which are appearing in context so I can understand them. Again, nice way to be exposed to appropriate vocabulary! 10.21.95

In a more general sense, it was highly motivating simply to see "real," even elegant, German:

. . . I'm seeing some nice sentence variety and so on, seeing ways of putting things that I wouldn't have thought of or didn't know were possible. [Paula's] way of phrasing seems so elegant compared to mine! 10.30.95

The diary includes numerous references to Annette's style in particular:

. . . it's fascinating to see the way Annette wrote my letter. . . 11.01.95

I like the style with which [Annette] writes—lots of personality, very expressive. 11.03.95

Maybe I'll reread [Let.2A] first. . . a clean copy, I mean, to get the full impact of her nativeness in all its unanalyzed glory. 11.05.95

¹³This characteristic of reformulation—the fact that the nonnative learner "says it first" and provides the ideas to be used—is reminiscent of the Community Language Learning Method, derived from Charles A. Curran's Counseling-Learning approach (Larsen-Freeman, 1986, p. 89). In Community Language Learning, the teacher helps the students translate what they want to say into the target language, with the students tape-recording their new utterances. Students therefore completely determine the content of the lesson. See also *Counseling-Learning in Second Languages* (Curran, 1976).

The Perception of the Value of the Learning Experience

Throughout the diary I made reference to the fact that I felt I was involved in a valuable learning experience, which was naturally motivating:

Ah yes—and “Kummer” is not necessarily more unusual than “Trauer,” but it does apply more to heartsickness from love than from the grief over a loved one’s death. Again, I think this is a great way to learn words in context! 4.27.95

It helped, of course, that I perceived that the level of language in the reformulations was right for me. I had been anxious about this before beginning the study; since earlier reformulation studies had usually focused on more advanced learners (Cohen 1983c, 1983b), I had wondered whether reformulation might not be too advanced a process to adapt to a low-intermediate level learner:

First of all, I found maybe only ten words or phrases that Paula used that I didn’t know (or wasn’t sure of) and had to use the dictionary for. I’m rather pleased about that; ten words in context seems like a reasonable number to be able to learn and remember. Also, it indicates to me that reformulation is able to work at my level, i.e. that Paula can rewrite my work to sound more native-like without completely jumping to a difficult level of Deutsch. 12.15.95

Moreover, I felt that I actually was *learning*. Of course, the question of whether something has been learned (i.e. actually acquired) is a hairy one. I am presenting here what I as a learner was perceiving about my reformulation experience; I do not claim as a researcher to be definitively proving what was actually learned according to the strictest definition of the word. Given that caveat, the feeling that I was learning, that some of my observations were “sinking in,” was highly motivating:

When I read, *Wir waren uns damals einig*, I thought, *Wir sind uns im Klaren*, which was Margot’s, and I looked at Paula’s and recognized, *Wir fanden die beide. . .*¹⁴ I do think some of this sticks with me. 11.10.95

This positive feeling that I was really learning was often attributed to the reinforcement of engaging in ongoing reformulation analysis:

And I’m still excited every time I see words/phrases that I’ve learned from other reformulations. Write now [sic], this is all the German I’m getting—and it’s a lot! 11.05.95

¹⁴All of these are different ways to say, "We both agreed [that]. . . "

It's still exciting when I run across a word that I only know from another reformulation. In this case, *Hinsicht*, which I now know and always will. . . I'm convinced that even if one is just trying to increase one's vocab., reformulation is a great way to go—you have your very own context, right there. I really think these new words and expressions are sinking in. And they are the only German I've been getting for a long time. When I read one of Annette's phrases, I found myself repeating what Paula's version had been—so I was understanding the meaning and remembering another native-like way to say it. That was encouraging. Oh yes, it was this: Annette said, . . . wann immer man will [whenever one wants] which is close to mine, and I found myself thinking, . . . wann immer es einem beliebt. 11.06.95

I also found it motivating to feel that reformulation was able to provide me with actual generalizations about writing in German:

The fun part in all this is when a pattern jumps out at me. 10.21.95

I really look forward to having all the analysis done so I can concentrate more on the big picture, on trends and patterns. 11.03.95

These “trends and patterns” were exciting because I felt I would be able to use them in my own German writing:

Again [Annette] omits words when there's parallel structure—this is a nice general principle I ought to be able to practice! 11.10.95

The idea that I was not only being exposed to native-like German (as mentioned above), but was actually learning to distinguish between my reformulators' styles as well, was also highly rewarding and motivating, and completely unexpected:

I'm beginning to feel I could pick up a piece of writing and know if it was Margot or Paula who wrote it. . .
What would it say to me as a learner if I were able to distinguish between two writers because of their style? I would find that very encouraging! Like I was learning to get the sense of something, the tone of a piece, and not just the literal words.
Okay—I just had [my roommate] read two excerpts. . . and yes, I could pretty easily tell who was who. . . it was fun to be able to tell the difference, and to feel that they each had a slightly different style! One could presumably make the choice to imitate the native speaker of his/her choice.
10.24.95

On the other end of the spectrum, I felt that I was being made aware of specific grammar points:

**I seem to often choose the wrong word, between das and es. . .
Reformulation is a good way to be alerted to things like this that sort of border on grammar problems. . .
It's good for me to see noch used here and there; I feel like I'm getting a slightly better sense of it but often wouldn't have thought of using it myself.
11.01.95**

At its best, reformulation provided valuable insights and breakthroughs that were truly motivating to experience¹⁵:

**Every so often as I compare my version with Paula's (or whoever's!), I have these delightful little moments of epiphany (maybe that's overstating it) in which I think, "Oh, that's the perfect word," or "What a great way to say that—of course!" Usually I understand the new word/phrase from the context immediately when I see it, but would never have thought of it on my own. I felt that way, really pleased, when I read how Paula expressed the idea that time has seemed strange to me since Mom died; she said, Seit meine Mutter gestorben ist, habe ich ein merkwürdiges Zeitempfinden. (Change is in italics.) And I thought, "Zeitempfinden—that's perfect." Like "sense of time."
10.24.95**

The Chance to Use What I Was Learning

If it was motivating to feel I was learning something from my reformulation work, it was also motivating to find opportunities to actually put what I learned into practice:

**I got a postcard today from a woman from Germany who I met on the plane over the first time. She had been very friendly. . . and she reminds me who she is. . . and closes that she'll try to call me when they're through travelling. So it seems like the perfect opportunity for me to sit down and write a letter in German explaining what happened and telling her where I am now. And I'd like to do this because I could use my reformulated versions to make my letter more native-like. I mean, I can remind myself of appropriate vocabulary, idioms, nice syntactic structures, etc. . . it seems like a nice way to use what I'm learning. I'd like to show the note to someone then—maybe the reformulators?—and just ask them how "native-like" it seems to them.
11.04.95**

Reformulation, then, was not only inherently motivating and interesting in and of itself, but had the potential to motivate me to use German in real communication.

¹⁵And there is good reason to find such insights highly motivating. As observed in Chapter 3 (p. 26), consciously noticing what one is learning may be a critical part of second language acquisition (Schmidt and Frota 1986).

Amount/Intensity of Work

The factor that had the most negative impact on my level of motivation next to grief was the amount and intensity of the work involved in analysis:

**An hour and a half straight of analysis is about all I can take at one time.
10.21.95**

One little confession: sometimes I'm really excited when a reformulator doesn't change something, because it means I wrote something native-like, but sometimes I'm really excited just because it means less work. 11.03.95

Two things in particular contributed to this factor: the number of changes with which I had to deal in a given reformulation set, and the amount of work I spent on analysis in a short period of time, especially towards the end of the study. A high number of changes per analysis affected me negatively from the first:

I definitely need a break from this! Toward the end I started feeling a little panicky as the number of changes rose. . . 12.15.94

YIKES. Just went through looking at syntactical changes. Lesson #1: don't try to note everything, or I'll be so overwhelmed I won't be motivated at all, just discouraged! 12.15.94

Likewise, a lower number of changes made the process more pleasant:

I like analyzing this letter [Let.1M]. It feels like there aren't an overwhelming number of changes. . . 10.23.95

Two things affected the number of changes I would find: personal variation from reformulator to reformulator, and the length of my original writing. Regarding reformulator variation, Margot and Annette were on opposite ends of the spectrum:

Anyway, with Margot's essay there will be fewer changes to record. Thank goodness for an Americanized native speaker! (That's the tired student in me speaking.) 10.21.95

Annette definitely seems to be making the most wholesale changes, completely rearranging or restating things. . . I'm feeling daunted right now by the actual analysis process. . . 11.01.95

Just finished the highlighting part of Let.2A. ARGH!!! Eighty-six changes in vocab. alone. . . and there are tons of syntax, cohesion, and discourse function changes. . .

. . . So I think I may be analyzing this thing all weekend. Then I need to start on Annette's version of "Auto/U-Bahn." I'll bet she made tons of changes there, too. sigh. 11.03.95

It is important to note that while I always anticipated the most changes whenever dealing with Annette's work and the least when dealing with Margot's, there were exceptions:

WOW. The first highlighter pass through Ess.1M took a lot more out of me than I'd anticipated! . . . It probably did need a lot of changes. Paula did a lot too. Annette changed less than I'd expected. 11.12.95

The length of the writing had just as big an impact on the number of changes I had to deal with. The second letter that I wrote was 700 words long, and I felt overwhelmed during the analysis of each version:

YIKES. Just finished the vocab. section on Let.2P. . . I needed a break; the letter is so long that I was feeling rather overwhelmed. . . 10.30.95

Now I need to type in Let.2M and get that analyzed. The sheer length of it is daunting. 10.31.95

In Annette's version, these two factors—length and reformulator variation—combined to make Let.2A my single most daunting task. I began to refer to it regularly as "this monster":

Anyway, I have to get this monster analyzed today. Heavy sigh of self-pity. 11.03.95

. . . so I need to get the rest analyzed. But first I must finish this monster. 11.04.95

I hope this won't be necessary for the other things of Annette's I'm studying. I just glanced at them and they all look so short compared to this 700-word monster. 11.05.95

After that analysis was complete, it was literally a relief to work on other pieces:

Okay, we've got 64 vocab. changes in Ess.1A—a breeze compared to Let.2A!. . .

Next I'll type in Ess.2A. . . I'm looking forward to doing a shorter piece. 11.06.95

Just did the first pass in Ess.2A with the highlighters: only 40 changes in vocab.!. . . I know this essay was shorter, but even accounting for that, she really left a few sentences and parts of sentences completely untouched. It

feels merciful, so much more manageable!

Now I'll type in Let.1A, which is mercifully short although probably she ripped it apart. . . 11.07.95

Just made the highlighter pass through Let.1A—once again, quite a few wholesale changes, quite a bit of yellow. But thank goodness, this time it's about half the length of Let.2A! 11.08.95

Finally, the fact that I was accomplishing a lot of analysis in a relatively short period of time—far more than I would ever expect of a student—contributed to the amount and intensity of work:

. . . it's overwhelming to deal with a longish essay with tons of changes. After this many analyses it is, anyway. I hope I'm not rushing things just to get done. But my motivation level has definitely dropped, as far as finishing these analyses goes. I want to be done and get on to looking for the big picture so to speak, generalizations gleaned from the whole diary.
11.12.95

I feel like I'm rushing because I'm sort of burned out on this. 11.06.95

Just did syntax. Okay, I confess that lately when I'm feeling really burned out on this I leave the tv on for background noise while I'm analyzing. Just a couple of times. 11.10.95

The Number of Choices

If the number of *changes* I faced was often overwhelming, the number of *choices* was beginning to overwhelm me as well by the time I wrote the final diary entry:

. . . I've taken in so much information that I feel the need to filter out everything that isn't crucial. In other words, if something is native-like enough in my version, leave it alone! . . .

Like I've already noted, the more different versions of one original that I study, the more I'm afraid that one original will sink in. I don't want to sound too extreme though. It's just that at some point, too many choices will be confusing and my original may be what I remember. . . But it's a result of the way I'm analyzing so many versions of things, all in a row. . .

I think I would need to just read through the whole thing, a clean copy, in order to get her options in my ear. Right now there have been too many changes in too many versions for me to soak up much more German.
11.13.95

And the final line in the diary:

My head is too full of options. 11.13.95

Noting What the Reformulators Kept

While I was usually absorbed with noting what the reformulators decided to change, I occasionally found myself encouraged by what they kept:

I'm in the middle of syntax, and I wanted to note that I wrote noch nicht angeschaut and Paula didn't change it—one of the few times I used noch correctly! But so often, as I've said before I don't notice what doesn't change, I only notice what does. Could be a shame. Page three has an oasis on it: practically a whole paragraph with no changes. 10.30.95

The role of this factor in helping to offset the extremely negative impact of so much intense work should not be understated:

Now I need to type in Let.2M and get that analyzed. The sheer length of it is daunting. However, there were a few sections in Let.2P that weren't so ripped apart, and one whole (albeit short) paragraph on p. 3 that was untouched. !!! Hopefully there will be some of that in Margot's version. It's encouraging to see what doesn't get changed. Again, I wonder if I shouldn't some time focus on that. After all, it's encouraging to see that something I said was native-like, and since it's obviously already a form that I know (because I used it), seeing a German choose to keep it would be reinforcing something I already know. Profound thought for the morning. 10.31.95

Okay, just did vocabulary. A fair amount of poetic license, I think. Hey, [Margot] kept my metaphor of grief not going in a nice straight line!
11.10.95

When they all [Paula, Margot, and Annette] leave something alone (rare but happy occasion!), I can feel pretty secure about it. 11.12.95

The System/Process of Analysis

A number of factors that had an impact on my level of motivation were closely related to the system of analysis that I was using and the way in which the analysis process played out.

Logistics of the Analysis (Use of Highlighters; Listing the Changes; Parallel Column Format)

Use of Highlighters. I had a color-coding system for the analysis, using four highlighters (orange, green, blue, and yellow) to represent the different aspects of language I was studying

(vocabulary, syntax, cohesion, and discourse functions, respectively; see Appendix B). From the start, this had a positive effect on my level of motivation:

I really like the colored highlighter idea. Keeps me awake! 12.15.94

Highlighting always preceded listing the changes within each of the four categories, and while I originally intended to highlight one aspect of language only and then list those changes before moving on to the next aspect of language, I soon found myself switching colors and marking whatever I noticed:

Oh—this may be important: this time, I did all aspects of the analysis sort of at once. I mean, I took the highlighters of diff. colors and marked all changes that I noticed as I went, which felt more natural (usually I notice lots of changes but force myself to wait before marking them until I'm doing that sweep). . . I did stick to one category at a time later, when I went back and listed the changes. 4.29.95

. . . while I start out looking for vocab. changes specifically, I always start picking up the other highlighters and coloring things in here and there that I don't want to forget I've already decided on. It gives me the feeling that I'm doing things more holistically, like I'm seeing the forest in spite of the trees. That's encouraging. 10.21.95

In addition to this, the highlighting phase of the analysis was usually the most enjoyable, and I generally thought of it as the “fun” part:

Did the fun part yesterday, the highlighting of everything; I get into quite a rhythm with it and know just what color represents what. I think doing it all at once like that helps me see how changes are related, keeps things more holistic and less out of context. 11.01.95

Listing the Changes. Systematically listing the changes that I had found in the highlighter phase, however, had both motivating and unmotivating aspects to it. It was much easier—and hence more motivating!—to list the changes on a separate worksheet than to try to discuss them all in prose in the diary, as I had started out doing in Germany:

I have several specific things I'll ask [Margot] about that are on my list (I like the list thing—it's easier to refer to than putting it all in here in paragraph form). 4.29.95

I also felt that it was much more productive to list the changes:

I've just reanalyzed the first ever ref./rec. set, Ess.1P, which I had already analyzed in Germany. I redid it for one main reason: I have since found. . . that listing the changes after color-coding them is really helpful, but I hadn't done that with Ess.1P. I had simply discussed it in this diary after color-coding and numbering it, and it's much harder to refer back to that way. I think that in listing the changes it's sometimes easier to spot patterns, too. One thing I realized this time around that I missed before was that Paula uses es gibt four times when I don't. I suspect now that I really underuse that form! 10.18.95

This belief that I was spotting patterns more effectively through listing was naturally motivating. However, listing was still the most labor-intensive part of the analysis and therefore tended to lower my motivation level—sometimes rather sharply (see “Amount/Intensity of Work” above):

The part with the highlighters is fun and absorbing. It's the listing I dread.
10.25.95

I'm looking forward to seeing how [Annette's version] compares to Margot's and Paula's, but I'm dreading the listing part. 11.01.95

One of the reasons that listing was so draining was that I tried to account for as many of the changes as possible—a daunting task in some of the longer reformulation sets. Once I recognized the fact that some changes were due to poetic license, the task was somewhat easier:

Oh—I've added “pl” to the list of comments I make: “poetic license.” I did that so I'd have a nice easy way to account for a lot of changes that I think are just that. If I think it's really poetic license I don't want to go into huge explanations. Not with an analysis this long. 11.03.95

The analysis referred to here is the second letter as reformulated by Annette, and it was the longest (700 words) and most intimidating of the analyses, with numerous wholesale changes. In addition to inspiring the use of the term “pl,” this analysis set prompted me to break with my usual listing procedure:

Next up: discourse functions. Okay, I've made an executive decision here. My heart quails at the thought of trying to list the changes in discourse functions, so instead I'm printing out a clean copy and I'm going to mark it up in yellow and number the changes and discuss them right there, on the copy. . . Otherwise I think I'm making a fascinating procedure needlessly painful for myself. . . 11.05.95, 1:44 p.m.

The change helped boost my motivation level considerably:

. . . I really like looking at discourse function changes in this way!! It's so much easier to look at major changes this way, and less time-consuming besides. For that very reason, it's much more motivating to look closely at things. I think for any sort of reformulation work that involves huge sweeping changes, this might be the way to go—although I think in general, for the other things I've done, the other way is preferable (marking up one copy with four colors), which keeps one looking at the big picture. . . Oh—26, count 'em, 26 changes in discourse functions. YOW. But so much more fun to do it with this modified system! 11.05.95, 3:36 p.m.

Parallel Column Format. Another improvement to my system of analysis that I found very helpful was the use of parallel columns:

In reanalyzing Ess.1P, by the way, I've used the latest improvement in my system: I enter both my rec. and the ref. into the computer in parallel column format and can then study (color-code, number) them closely side by side. I really like this. . . 10.18.95

These logistical aspects of analysis therefore had a definite effect on my level of motivation. And I definitely found it motivating to look back on my analyses and see tangible evidence of the process:

I must say I do like having my rec./ref. set all decorated with four bright colors, numbers everywhere, and four sheets of lists that correspond to it; makes me feel I've got something. What I've really got, though, is the generalizations that end up in this diary. . . 10.18.95

Obsession with Accurate Labeling of Changes

Probably the most demoralizing aspect of analysis itself, and the most damaging to my level of motivation, was the problem of how to label accurately the changes that I found. Sometimes I became frustrated during the highlighter phase of analysis with changes that overlapped categories, and sometimes during the listing phase. Throughout the study I had to occasionally give myself little “pep talks” in the diary in order to remind myself that it was fine not to label things 100% accurately:

I actually don't care too much if I occasionally discuss something in one category that technically could also belong in another. . . I don't consciously divide everything up into four categories anyway, thinking, “Let's see, now let's use a transition word.” Wait—the minute I wrote that I realized I'm wrong; I bet I do do that in German sometimes. I'm sure of it. But the point is, when I'm writing I know automatically if I'm dealing with cohesive

devices or a simple vocab. choice, without consciously labeling it so. I know when I'm trying to compare or introduce or conclude without thinking, "Is this a discourse function?" So for the purposes of this study, I'm trying to be accurate, but I'm not. . . going to have a cow if there's some overlap between categories. 12.15.94

In spite of this resolve I frequently lapsed into frustration:

(I'm growing more dissatisfied with trying, at this point, to separate all my observations into the four categories, perhaps because I started out being too detailed. . . perhaps because it isn't really the way one naturally notices things; I'm suspecting maybe I won't remember things so well. Again, I feel like I'm not seeing the forest for the trees. And this isn't a motivating feeling!) . . .

. . . I also find it distracting to worry overmuch about whether a particular point should be discussed under "cohesive devices" or "vocab. changes", etc. . . I'd rather notice things now, and label them later during the analysis of this diary. I'm afraid otherwise things become too artificial and "meta-something", in which I'm noticing what type of language I'm noticing more than I'm getting a feel for the language itself. Does this make sense?
12.18.94

This tension between believing that accurate labeling was of limited importance and yet feeling driven to be as accurate as possible became even more of an issue once the study involved not one but three reformulators:

. . . originally, in doing a longitudinal study with one reformulator, I didn't feel too worried about inconsistencies in how I labeled the different changes. . . I just wanted to get a feel for more native-like writing and see if the patterns entered my own writing. . . learners using reformulation for their own benefit should not overconcern themselves with quibbling over how to label things. I am convinced, esp. since meeting with Andrew yesterday and discussing some tricky passages, that one could write whole dissertations on just some of these labeling issues. Well, I'm not in this to become an expert in labeling something syntactic vs. cohesive, although a basic grasp is helpful in guiding one through the analysis, and I don't think any learner should get too hot and bothered over it. . . That just isn't what's important.

However, because I will now be comparing several different reformulators' work, I feel the need to be as systematic as I can, as consistent from one analysis to the next as possible. This is really hard, and it doesn't boost my motivation level. . . So I must define my terms as carefully as I can, try to be consistent, but not overdo it lest I kill the inherently interesting part of all this, which is the changes themselves, not the labels. 10.18.95

I found it particularly frustrating to catch myself in inconsistencies:

I hate it when I classify something (say a prep. change) under syntax, and go back and look at the other analyses and see that I'd classified it under vocab. or something. Like it matters! Just happens once in a while. What's ugly is when I've colored a word in three different colors because I keep realizing it should be classified differently. This is rare though. 11.04.95

However, I did come to believe that accuracy in labeling was beneficial to me:

As I analyze Ess.2P, it's occurred to me that it really is useful to at least try to be somewhat systematic and consistent in labeling changes, because it gets me to thinking more about why something was changed, which of course eventually leads to generalizations. Sometimes, when I'm struggling over whether a change was due to syntax or cohesion or both, I find myself thinking, "Okay, what was probably wrong with my version? Is she combining sentences again because mine tend to be shorter and more simplistic? Do I lack sentence variety? Was that transition awkward?" While it's definitely not helpful to spend too much time on deciding on a label (burnout!), it does get me to think more deeply about reasons for change than just noting the change would. 10.21.95

References to this frustration appeared throughout the rest of the diary.

Redoing Analysis

I analyzed several of the reformulation sets more than once, due to changes in my system of analysis (for example, using a parallel column format, or listing the changes separately on a worksheet). This usually had a negative impact on my level of motivation:

(. . . the main unmotivating thing about doing Ess.1P today was that I was redoing it and therefore felt like I wasn't making progress.) 10.18.95

. . . this is the sixth day in a row I have analyzed an entire reconstruction/reformulation set. Of course I'm feeling a little burned out. (Of course, a couple of them were re-analyses; but that doesn't necessarily make it easier. In fact, I feel like I'm going over old ground when I do that, and it's less encouraging than embarking on something new. But that was necessary just because I'd changed my system some.) 10.25.95

Cross-Reformulator Comparisons

While I did not formally compare the reformulators' different versions while analyzing a reformulation set, I constantly found myself driven to compare them through sheer curiosity.

Thus, the fact that I had three reformulations of each essay and letter was highly motivating and kept my interest piqued. The diary contains numerous entries to this effect:

It will be so interesting to compare my reformulators! It was so exciting to look at the letters Annette and Margot sent back. . . 10.16.95

Oh—one last thing: it’s fun to have Margot’s version (Ess.2M) next to the set I’m analyzing, just to get a feel for how she and Paula compare.10.21.95

It was fun to read through all three reformulators’ versions of Let.2; it’s the first piece that I have all the reformulations back on. 10.25.95

I’ve been doing lots of comparison between Annette and the other two as I go; I do this naturally, because I’m curious. Sometimes I can remember what they did, and I just want to double-check. 11.04.95

Not only was it inherently interesting to compare their versions, but it was often useful as well:

. . . it’s fascinating to see the way Annette wrote my letter, and when I see certain things for the third time (i.e. that both Margot and Paula did too), it sets bells off in my head. I mean, that really gets my attention, convinces me that something is natively like and not just personal preference! 11.01.95

Considering Motivational Factors in Context

I have presented the above factors according to various categories because it seems like the most useful and feasible way to consider them. It is all too easy, however, when pondering the effects of this or that isolated factor on my level of motivation, to get a skewed perspective of its relative importance or unimportance, particularly since snippets of this and that diary entry are of necessity pulled out of context in the process. In an attempt to place these factors in context, and to remind the reader of their complex interplay, I now present the following excerpts in the order in which they were written over a three-day period spent analyzing one piece, Letter.2A:

amount/intensity of work

Just finished the highlighting part of Let.2A. ARGH!!!. . . She really went to town on my letter. The thing is, I would really enjoy reading her version of my letter if I didn’t have to also analyze it so rigorously. . . Overwhelming. . .

writing to the reformulator

Oh—a couple of times she makes little changes that I think are a result of the fact that we know each other well. . . Maybe there’s something extra-useful about writing a letter to someone and having them reformulate it. . . . Interesting. . .

amount/intensity of work	Anyway, I have to get this monster analyzed today. Heavy sigh of self-pity. . . I really look forward to having all the analysis done so I can concentrate more on the big picture, on trends and patterns. . .
inherent fascination of reformulation ; amount/intensity of work	. . . I feel like I've shifted into a different mode, for self-preservation. . . I'm doing a section of the vocab. and then taking a break, then more vocab. and another break. Smaller amounts make it easier to take. In fact it's really interesting. But with 87 changes in vocab. alone, it'd be too intimidating to make myself do it all at once. . . I like the style with which she writes—lots of personality, very expressive. . . I find that when I analyze the third version, I constantly compare changes with the other two versions... 11.03.95
cross-reformulator comparisons	
cross-reformulator comparisons	I've been doing lots of comparison between Annette and the other two as I go; I do this naturally, because I'm curious. . .
obsession with labelling	I hate it when I classify something (say a prep. change) under syntax, and go back and look at the other analyses and see that I'd classified it under vocab. or something. . .
contact with native speakers	I got a postcard today from a woman from Germany. . . it seems like the perfect opportunity for me to sit down and write a letter. . . And I'd like to do this because I could use my reformulated versions to make my letter more native-like. . .
desire to be more native-like	I'd also like to give my three versions of Let.2 to another native speaker and ask them to comment on styles. I love Annette's style. . .
inherent fascination of reformulation ; amount/intensity of work	. . . I need to get the rest analyzed. But first I must finish this monster. Sometimes I'm not motivated to work, not because it's hard work, but because missing Mom never goes away. Day in and day out I live with a huge hole in my life. . . it's exhausting, all this emotional effort. Exhausting describes this year pretty well. It's exhausting to grieve. . . , it's exhausting to exercise the discipline to set it aside and concentrate on German. 11.04.95
grief	
amount/intensity of work listing	Next up: discourse functions. . . My heart quails at the thought of trying to list the changes. . . so instead I'm printing out a clean copy and I'm going to mark it up in yellow and number the changes and discuss them right there, on the copy. . .
logistics of the analysis	. . . I really like looking at discourse function changes in this way!! It's so much easier. . . and less time-consuming besides. For that very reason, it's much more motivating to look closely at things. . .
genre	. . . She made certain changes that no one else could have made. . . This is exciting! I love the letter-writing reformulation assignment idea! . . .
amount/intensity of work	Oh—26, count 'em, 26 changes in discourse functions. YOW. But so much more fun to do it with this modified system!

inherent fascination of
reformulation

**Time to type in Annette's other reformulations.
Maybe I'll reread this one first, though—a clean copy, to get
the full impact of her nativeness in all its unanalyzed glory.
11.05.95**

Summary

The motivational factors presented here include several Native Speaker Factors:

- contact with reformulators
- writing *to* the reformulator
- contact with other native speakers
- cross-reformulator
comparisons nt of German in my life
- perception of the reliability of reformulators' nativeness

It can be strongly stated that having contact with native Germans and exposure to German in general motivated me to engage in reformulation.

A number of factors related to the learning process itself, including:

- the inherent fascination of reformulation
- the perception of the value of the learning experience
- the chance to use what I was learning
- the amount and intensity of the work
- the number of choices
- noting what the reformulators kept

It was shown that the reformulation work I engaged in was both very interesting and a great deal of work. My level of motivation to do the work was therefore under the influence of both positive and negative factors that seemed inherent to the process. However, let me note that one of the main reasons behind the Amount/Intensity of Work is clearly *not* inherent to reformulation and can in fact be controlled by the nonnative writer: the *length* of the piece being reformulated. The shortest piece I wrote was about 370 words (Letter.1)—that is, twenty words *over* the maximum limit that I would recommend for most students (see Chapter Eight, “Teaching Implications”)—while the longest was almost twice that, at about 700 words (Letter.2). By limiting myself to shorter pieces, I could have reduced the impact of one of the most negative influences on my motivational level.

Finally, the system and process of analysis or comparison were also important to my level of motivation. Several logistical items were:

- the use of highlighters
- listing the changes
- parallel column format

Using highlighters and a parallel column format boosted my level of motivation; listing changes offered both pluses and minuses. Several other factors relating to the analysis process included:

- obsession with accurate labeling of changes
- redoing analysis
- cross-reformulator comparisons

The first two were strongly discouraging factors, while the last was strongly encouraging.

It is of the utmost importance to remember that a discussion of motivational factors could be misleading if the factors are not presented in context. When considered in context, however, it becomes clear that their existence and interplay depended on the reformulation procedure itself, circumstances, and the unique emotional schemata that I brought to the learning experience. How those components play off each other will be different for every language learner.

CHAPTER SEVEN

DISCUSSION AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The reformulation work described in this paper provided an amply rewarding learning experience for me. An examination of the diary has shown that I was exposed to new vocabulary items and more sophisticated syntax and was able to form broader generalizations about German writing in the areas of vocabulary, syntax, cohesion, and discourse functions. Unexpectedly, I also found myself developing an awareness of my reformulators' different styles and a better understanding of my own strategies as a second language writer.

These findings are strong recommendations for the use of reformulation. However, several limitations of the study now need to be considered, as well as some possible pitfalls resulting from my general approach to reformulation and limitations inherent to reformulation itself.

Limitations of the Study

The most serious limitation of the study is perhaps the one inherent to all diary studies (as mentioned in Chapter One): the difficulty in knowing how aware the diarist really is about what is going on in his or her own mind (Schmidt and Frota 1986). For example, throughout the diary study I recorded the factors that I perceived were influencing my level of motivation; however, I may also have been influenced by factors of which I was not conscious. It is clearly possible, perhaps likely, that some aspects of my learning experience were “filtered out” and never recorded, or that the emphasis given to certain factors did not accurately reflect their relative importance. The diary therefore cannot be assumed to tell the whole truth, only my *perception* of the whole truth.

The fact that I could not always debrief my analyses with my reformulators, in person and immediately, was also a limitation of the study, although it led to interesting insights into motivation. More contact with the reformulators would almost certainly have enriched my understanding of both the reformulations themselves and the process the reformulators went through to create them. Many of my conclusions about native-like German thus had to remain somewhat tentative—certainly plausible, but not authoritative. More feedback from the reformulators regarding this or that change would have shed light on how close my educated guesses were to the truth. (The solicitation of such feedback is in progress at this time via letters.)

The study was also limited by the consistency of my labeling of the reformulators' changes. The analyses I produced as a learner reflect what I noticed, not necessarily what actually existed. It would be helpful to have other researchers analyze my reformulation sets themselves and compare their findings with my own, thus establishing with more certainty how consistent I was.

Finally, the comparison or analysis of so many reformulations so close together makes for a highly intense and focused reformulation experience—atypically so. (Even the reformulations originally analyzed further apart—Essay.1P and Letter.1M—were later reanalyzed with the others in order to be consistent with my newly refined system.) The intensity of the experience probably gave the negative motivational factor “Amount/Intensity of Work” much greater weight than it would otherwise have warranted. Reformulation activities built into a normal ESL writing class would not be nearly so frequent or intense.

Limitations of My Approach to Reformulation and Possible Remedies

It is likely that several aspects of my general approach to reformulation limited or influenced my experience. For one thing, my perceptions about German writing may have been skewed by the fact that I usually attended to what the reformulators *changed*, and not what they *kept*. For a more complete perspective on one's nonnative writing, one could make an effort to note both what does *not* change in a reformulation and what does.

Towards the end of the study, I was also troubled by the suspicion that studying three different reformulations of each writing sample may have been unwittingly reinforcing my original nonnative version through the sheer repetition involved in reading my version three times. The suspicion arose when I noticed that certain of my nonnative-like phrases had begun to have a ring of familiarity. As I noted in the diary:

. . . the more different versions of one original that I study, the more I'm afraid that one original will sink in. . . at some point, too many choices will be confusing and my original may be what I remember. That's not what I want! But it's a result of the way I'm analyzing so many versions of things, all in a row. 11.13.95

At the same time, studying three reformulations of everything did keep my analysis in perspective when I could not talk directly to the reformulators after each analysis. To counteract the effects of too much repetition of a nonnative-like original, one could reread a reformulation several times over, before, during, and after its analysis.

And finally, there is the matter of the reconstruction step itself. Since Levenston first proposed the technique, the reconstruction step has usually been maintained for a number of reasons:

- It can give the nonnative a sense of where he or she stands grammatically before considering higher issues of style.
- It can demonstrate the inadequacy of mere correction, since there is a vast difference indeed in the number (and nature) of changes made in a reconstruction versus the number of changes made in a reformulation (Cohen 1983c).
- An error-free piece of writing enables the reformulator to focus on meaning and style alone, whereas it can be extremely distracting to try to reformulate a piece of writing with many grammar problems (Tarone, Personal Communication 1996).
- Reconstruction can reveal places where the intended meaning has not been successfully communicated, allowing the nonnative to make changes before the work is reformulated; this in turn prevents the nonnative from ending up with a reformulation failing to reflect their ideas.

Ideally, of course, the reconstruction of a piece is *authoritative*, and not merely *plausible*; in other words, the reconstructor consults with the nonnative writer about his or her intended meaning whenever there is any ambiguity. When the reconstructor is done making corrections, the nonnative rewrites the work and gives a clean (and hopefully error-free) copy to the reformulator.

This is an ideal description of the reconstruction step as I included it in the reformulation procedure. In reality, I found that every reconstruction in my study still had little grammar problems that the reconstructors either missed or tolerated, or that I misunderstood; these errors never made it into the reformulations, which to the best of my knowledge had no grammatical errors whatsoever. The fact that perfect reconstructions were elusive was generally not a problem. It is possible, however, that engaging in a reconstruction step limited my reformulation experience in certain important ways. Reconstruction may have caused me to focus unnecessary energy on grammar instead of considering the work holistically (Wakefield, Personal Communication 1996)—something that L2 learners are often all too apt to do anyway. Furthermore, it conceivably limited the extent to which my reformulators rewrote my work, because a reformulator faced with a nearly error-free piece of writing may be tempted to make fewer holistic changes (Wakefield, Personal Communication 1996), which clearly defeats the purpose of reformulation. We may speculate on several potential advantages, then, to engaging in reformulation *without* a reconstruction step:

- The reformulation process may be streamlined, since reformulators automatically correct any grammar errors while reformulating anyway.
- The reformulator may feel freer to make wholesale changes, resulting in a more native-like text.
- With a separate error-correction stage omitted, the nonnative writer may have a greater sense of the piece as one whole work in progress, of which grammar is simply one element.

Of course, if the reconstruction step is omitted, the reformulation itself must be authoritative, i.e. the reformulator needs to read through the learner's original version in the learner's presence and ask questions about meaning as necessary. And even if this is done conscientiously, it may be that the reformulator will still find the errors highly distracting while creating the actual reformulation. Clearly, there is a need for research exploring the effects of leaving out the reconstruction step; this will be discussed in greater detail below under "Suggestions for Further Research."

The Inherent Fascination and Limitation of Reformulation

Reformulation by definition requires a native to preserve a nonnative's ideas, and this is the unique and inherent fascination that the technique has to offer the second language learner. This very quality, however, also limits how native-like a reformulation can ever be, particularly on the discourse level. Certain topics may not be native-like to write about at all in another language, or it may be more native-like to omit or include certain ideas in relation to a main topic; but the reformulator is forbidden to change the writing in these ways. For example, it was probably not truly "German" to write about grief in the direct way I did (Ray Wakefield, Personal Communication 1996), and while my reformulators could change many things about the way grief was discussed, they were certainly limited by the content I had chosen¹⁶.

In the same way, it may also have been more German to digress more than I did. According to Michael Clyne (1987), there seem to be fewer limitations on what material one can include in a German essay than in an English one, which is primarily concerned with "relevance" (p. 74). Digressions are tolerated or even encouraged, and this results in more repetition as a means of maintaining the logic of an argument; thus, a German text may ultimately be longer (1983, 1987). But again, a reformulator cannot create a digression that does not already exist. Thus, my potential for seeing absolutely German discourse was limited

¹⁶In fact, it occurred to me towards the end of the study to wonder whether it was hard for the native speakers to reformulate letters about grief, simply because it was such personal and painful material; they may have felt constrained by a desire to be sensitive. This is the same sort of problem a teacher faces when correcting a personal essay. It is often harder to mark personal material with red ink than to mark an essay on an impersonal topic.

by the procedure, even though it gave me the chance to see a more native-like version of my own ideas.

It is well, however, to bear in mind that this limitation is a necessary one in order for the nonnative writer to have the freedom to write about what he or she wants (Tarone, Personal Communication 1996). In the two letters included in this study, I wanted and needed to express certain things about my grief, and restricting my freedom to do so may have been unethical, not to mention severely unmotivating. The best balance between freedom and true nativeness may perhaps be struck by adding a step beyond the usual reformulation procedure in which the reformulator is allowed to actually change the content; the reformulator and the nonnative writer could then have a dialogue about the cultural reasons for the changes. This possibility will be discussed further in Chapter Eight, "Teaching Implications."

Suggestions for Further Research

While a myriad of questions about reformulation remain, several seem most compelling. The long-term effects of reformulation have not been formally studied to my knowledge, although I am convinced that my own German writing has become more native-like due to the reformulation experience recorded in this diary study. For example, I have been strongly impressed with the German preference for the word Trauer over Kummer (grief) for certain contexts, and I believe a number of new words and phrases have entered my lexicon. I also think I have a much stronger tendency now to embed transitional words and phrases, and my punctuation is definitely more native-like. On the discourse level, I am more aware of how to use direct apologies and rhetorical questions appropriately. It would be fascinating to attempt to prove assertions such as these through a longitudinal study and see whether or not a nonnative's writing becomes more native-like on a long-term basis after engaging in reformulation for a period of time (or even after just one enlightening experience!).

A more rigorous comparison of different reformulations of the same piece of writing could also be revealing, particularly if the reformulators can be closely questioned regarding their choices. In this way, the nebulous matters of poetic license, personal style/ability, Americanization, etc., could begin to be understood. An important aspect of this research would be the directions given about how to reformulate and how the reformulators interpreted them.

A closer look at genre would also be warranted, particularly at the advanced levels where a great difference in register may exist between letters, essays, etc. Questions could include whether insights gained in studying reformulations of one genre differ qualitatively from

insights gained in studying another genre, and whether one genre tends to undergo more extensive change than another.

It would also be useful to examine motivational factors among a greater number of subjects. For example, what do students using reformulation on a regular basis in a class report about their motivational level? Do any of the factors identified in this diary study appear to affect other learners as well? The answers to these questions could enable teachers to adapt the method to various student needs.

I would also strongly recommend research exploring the effects on the nonnative writer of including or omitting the reconstruction step in the reformulation procedure. (Again, if the reconstruction step is omitted, an *authoritative* reformulation should be understood to be crucial: the nonnative should discuss his or her writing with the reformulator before reformulation to make sure the reformulator understands the intended meaning.) Does the nonnative focus better on the piece as a whole—and perhaps on issues of nativeness—when there is no initial, separate focus on grammatical problems? Or is the process more confusing or unsatisfying for some reason when reconstruction is omitted? Such a study should also examine the reformulator's perspective, to find for example whether or not it is too distracting to reformulate something that has not first been made error-free (Tarone, Personal Communication 1996).

This last point relates to my final research recommendation: a diary study in which the *reformulator* keeps a diary. The reformulator's perspective is a largely unexplored facet of reformulation at this point, and such a study could be an invaluable way to uncover issues that the reformulator faces. It could also yield a clearer description of what happens during reformulation itself. We see, then, that the possibilities for further research are exciting and numerous, ranging from the long-term effects of acquisition on the nonnative writer to a closer look at aspects of the reformulator's experience.

CHAPTER EIGHT

TEACHING IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Teaching Implications

I would offer several suggestions for the practical use of reformulation in a university-based preacademic ESL writing classroom. First, since reformulation is a new technique to most ESL students, it would be helpful before beginning reformulation work to engage the class in a brief discussion of the issue of *nativeness* and how native-like writing might or might not relate to their goals. In my experience as a composition teacher, most students will readily express a desire to write in a more native-like way and to see exactly how their writing falls short of nativeness. (Of course, if the majority of a class has no need or desire to sound more native-like, then reformulation is probably not the best technique to be using. It is better to find this out before the effort has been undertaken.) It is especially helpful to provide some brief example of student work that may be grammatically acceptable but is still nonnative-like. Some rationale may also be provided as to benefits of native-like writing (for example, professors may respond more positively to their papers, etc.). This kind of pre-discussion can infuse students with an enthusiasm for the work and prepare them to view their writing in light of style and nativeness issues rather than grammar.

Several options for the writing task itself have been suggested by those who have tried the technique in the classroom. Allwright et al (1988) assigned a research paper very similar to what their students would be facing in academic classes but supplied the basic propositional content; this ensured that students would have a common writing task while relieving them of the burden of library research, which some students would be unwilling to do on a topic outside their field. It was important for students to have a common writing task because Allwright et al recommended reformulating just one of the students' essays and basing class discussions on that. This makes the procedure feasible for the teacher and still relevant to the students, since everyone's essays present very similar material. While this is one excellent model for writing teachers to use (especially when it is not possible to find individual reformulators for each student), it should be remembered that it may be a less motivating version of reformulation, since only one student will see his or her own essay reformulated and even that student is not writing about his or her own ideas. Allwright et al acknowledged in the case studies presented in the same paper that having one's own work reformulated did seem to have a more positive effect than studying another's reformulation (p. 251). However, the class discussions of a reformulation may influence students more powerfully than the reformulation itself (p. 252).

If, however, an instructor deems it desirable and feasible to find a reformulator for each student, the writing task may be more personalized and could range from a business letter to a personal experience essay to a short research paper. The ideal situation may be some combination of approaches, if reformulation is being built into the class as a regular part of writing assignments. Teachers may assign a common writing task similar to Allwright et al's for the first reformulation assignment and then move to a more personalized assignment. This allows students to learn as a class how to study reformulations and then use those skills in analyzing a reformulation of their own work.

Lower level students may find personal letters both challenging and motivating (this genre will be discussed more below). In any case, I recommend that the assignment be kept short enough (150 to 300 words) to keep students from being overwhelmed by a plethora of changes and engaging enough to motivate the student to express meaningful ideas or opinions. It is possible, of course, to work with a longer piece of writing and have only one section of it reformulated, particularly if one is focusing on a specific discourse function such as introducing or concluding, etc. (Cohen 1983a). It is nice, however, for students to see how a piece looks *as a whole* in native-like terms, since changes made in one part often bear on changes made in another. At any rate, limiting the length of the piece to be reformulated is a simple but crucial way to keep the reformulation work from becoming a serious drain on student motivation.

Individual reformulators can often be found fairly readily on university campuses. Fruger and Freeman (1985) paired students with members of a class of education majors, and I once paired my students with graduate students and faculty in the University of Minnesota ESL Program and Minnesota English Center. This teacher-led pairing tends to ensure that students will have competent reformulators, which shouldn't be taken for granted; as Fruger and Freeman pointed out, "Although all native language speakers possess linguistic competence not all possess composition competence" (1985, p. 17)¹⁷. The possibility that students can find their own reformulators should not be entirely dismissed, however. The teacher can ask that students find a native speaker who fits whatever restrictions the teacher is comfortable with (i.e., has been in college at least two years, etc.), and through roommates, friends, and classmates in academic classes, students can often find a willing and competent reformulator.

Regardless of the specific writing task, a prewriting activity such as brainstorming should still be built into the assignment (Fruger and Freeman 1985, responding to Cohen's suggestions (1983a).) While some may choose to have students write the essay itself in class (Fruger and Freeman 1985), I recommend giving students at-home time to work on it so that they can bring it as far along as possible on their own. The teacher then needs to decide

¹⁷Allwright et al (1988) attributed at least some of the problems of one subject to the influence of poor reformulations of her work (pg. 251).

whether or not to include a reconstruction step in which grammatical problems are dealt with. Students may appreciate the explicit grammar feedback, and the experience of seeing how much farther the reformulation goes than the reconstruction may be eye-opening for students. Reconstructing student work before showing it to a reformulator may also prevent misunderstanding in meaning and be less distracting to the reformulator. At the same time, Fruger and Freeman combined the reconstruction step with the reformulation step with success (1985), and perhaps omitting separate reconstruction work helps students focus on the writing more holistically (Wakefield, Personal Communication 1996). If students do receive reconstruction help from their teachers, they should correct the errors as indicated and produce a clean copy to give their reformulators.

Once the reformulations are completed and given back to the students, I recommend that the teacher select one set for the class to study together before expecting students to carry out their own analyses. (Of course, if the Allwright et al model is being followed, only one reformulation is created anyway.) This allows students to practice analysis together and promotes whole class discussion about native-like writing. A good way for students to analyze a reformulation together is to have four groups of students each responsible for a different aspect of writing: vocabulary, syntax, cohesion, and discourse functions. (See Appendix D for the worksheet that I used in an advanced ESL composition class.) Students tend to take such in-class work more seriously if they are asked to present their findings to the class on an overhead transparency. Discussion and clarification of important points can be incorporated into this part of the process, and teachers should focus primarily on providing rationales for changes whenever possible and helping students formulate generalizations about native-like writing. I have also found it useful to announce that students will have a short follow-up quiz the next day in which they must describe at least three generalizations they have learned about native-like writing. Vocabulary quizzes could also be a good way to reinforce the new vocabulary students have learned from the procedure.

If students are working with individual reformulators, a writing lab in which each student meets with his or her reformulator is ideal, providing the same sort of input as teacher-led in-class discussions (Fruger and Freeman 1985).

After the students have compared the reformulation with their own work, the instructor may choose to give them an actual native response to the assignment, emphasizing that reformulations are merely *native-like* and leading the class in discussing the characteristics of the native writing. An intriguing alternative to this step—and one that may be more to the point—is to bring the reformulator back into the picture and allow him or her to create yet another version of the student writing, one in which he or she actually takes ownership: ideas may be added, deleted, etc., in order for the writing to become as truly native-like as possible

(Wakefield, Personal Communication 1996). For example, digressions may be added, or a topic that is taboo in the target language may be actually omitted or changed. Extremely important to the success of this step would be the opportunity for the reformulator and the nonnative writer to have a follow-up dialogue about the changes. What cultural reasons are behind the changes? Why is it nativelike to include certain ideas or references and not others? And what, if any, are the consequences of violating these expectations? In this way, students still receive the native-like version of their own ideas (i.e., the first reformulation), but are also made aware of the ways in which even that version may deviate from norms in the target language. It is then their own choice whether or not to adapt their future written communication in the L2 accordingly.

Finally, as follow-up to the entire procedure, students can be given the same writing assignment a week or so after the essays and reformulations have been collected. This gives them the chance to try to use what they have learned about native-like writing and enables the teacher to monitor progress.

Another approach to reformulation that arose directly from this diary study is the “pen-pal” approach, in which a student writes letters to someone who reformulates for him or her. This may be especially ideal in a non-classroom learning situation involving a fairly motivated learner (although I maintain that letter-writing is one of the most motivating kinds of writing most learners can engage in, since it involves real two-way communication). In one possible variation, a student would be paired with a native speaker trying to learn the student’s language (perhaps through such programs as the Tandem program at the University of Minnesota). The student and the native speaker then exchange letters, each writing to the other in the language he or she is trying to learn. The recipient of a letter always first writes a reply to the partner in his or her target language (the partner’s native language), and then reformulates the letter they received in their native language (their partner’s target language). For example, I write to Annette in German; she first writes me a reply in English, and then reformulates my German letter and sends both back to me. I write a reply to her in German and then reformulate her English letter and send both back to her. This could result in a mutually satisfying and challenging for both learners.

Regardless of the exact nature of the reformulation assignment, I recommend that teachers bear in mind the highly individual nature of motivation and allow students to write about material that is highly engaging and relevant. If reformulation is to be used as a regular part of class, it could also be highly valuable for students to be required to keep a journal or diary about their observations, much like the diary I have presented in this paper (although on a smaller scale). This can open students’ eyes to issues such as their own habits as second language writers and can help foster a sense of ownership for the experience.

Conclusions

Based on this diary study, I offer the conclusion that reformulation work at the lower-intermediate level can:

- expose the learner to new vocabulary in context and to more sophisticated syntax
- lead the learner to form generalizations about native-like writing in the areas of vocabulary, syntax, cohesion, and discourse functions
- help the learner develop a sensitivity toward different native speaker writing styles
- help the learner become more aware of his or her own strategies as a second language writer

I have also shown through a cursory comparison of the three reformulators' work that there seemed to be enough consistency between reformulators to instill confidence in the procedure. Similar numbers of changes were noted in each aspect of writing from reformulator to reformulator, and a close look at their treatment of cohesive devices in one excerpt showed that they agreed strongly on the nonnativeness in my writing.

Finally, in discussing the motivational factors as recorded in the diary that variously discouraged and encouraged me throughout the study, I have tried to contextualize the learning experience and thus present a more comprehensive and accurate picture of what occurred throughout the study. Factors ranged from the intensely personal (such as grief, my reformulators' attitudes, personality factors, etc.) to the logistical (for example, relating to my system of analysis).

Merely by engaging in this diary study, I have implied that trying to write in a more native-like way is a good thing. But some would question whether it is desirable or even ethical to try to influence a learner's second language voice through reformulation, since that voice is presumably a reflection of his or her identity. I believe that the rightness or wrongness of this depends on the learner and his or her goals. If a learner wants only to communicate clearly, it may not be appropriate to focus on nativeness, as long as he or she is made aware that nonnativeness may at times interfere with this goal. And reformulation may not be for learners who value the unique flavor that their "foreignness" brings to their second language communication efforts, or for learners not wanting to identify too closely with the target culture.

But for those who do desire to be more native-like, I am convinced that reformulation, far from destroying one's voice, may provide valuable "voice training" (Cohen's term, *Personal Communication* 1996), especially at the lower levels where a learner may not be in control of the language enough to have developed a distinctive personal voice in the second language. (Of the many students in my ESL composition classes, only a relative few—and they were usually

quite advanced—had writing styles which I would say reflected strongly developed voices.) For one to develop a distinctive voice, one must first be in control of the language enough to experiment, to “play” with different voices, in a similar way that one must learn the rules of grammar before one can break them effectively for stylistic effect.

Furthermore, reformulation has the potential to expose nonnative writers to the composing process itself in a new way. As a creative writer, I know from instinct and experience that writing is really a matter of rewriting—of changing, rearranging, throwing out, even starting over. To an unskilled writer, such apparent chaos may seem frightening and counterintuitive, even sacrilegious. But reformulation shows the nonnative writer that the language he or she used to express an idea is not static, that the same idea can be played with and rearranged in wholesale ways. Reformulation—both for the reformulator and the nonnative writer—is thus undoubtedly a creative process. In fact, the most valuable thing that I gained from my reformulation experience was something I would wish for every L2 writer: a new sense of ownership for the second language I was struggling with, and for my own approach to reading and writing in that language. I can only imagine that the benefits of this may reach well beyond any specific insights about native-like writing in German.

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Appendix A

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APPENDIX A
A1: Original of Essay.2

Auto oder U-Bahn?

Zwischen Deutschland und den USA gibt es einen großen Unterschied:

Deutschland hat die pünktliche U-Bahn vervollkommen^t, und die USA ist das Land von ^{des} Privatverkehr. Man ^{braucht} muß nur an zwei Städte, München und Minneapolis, zu denken, ^{um} diesen Unterschied zu sehen.

In München braucht man gewöhnlich kein Auto. Die U-Bahn ist sehr ^{zuverlässig} pünktlich, und es ist nicht schwierig, ^{den} die U-Bahnplan zu verstehen. Auch ist es ziemlich sicher, allein ^{mit} der U-Bahn zu fahren, ^{Sogar?} selbst bei Nacht. Und wenn man ⁱⁿ ^{Ort} ^{kleiner} ^{Stadt} in der Nähe von München fahren will, gibt es schon kein Problem, weil die S-Bahn ^{dortin} zu viele Städte fährt. Deshalb ist es leicht, in München mit ^{öffentlichen} dem Verkehrsmittel zu fahren ^{sogar}—sonst für Ausländer, die München nicht gut kennen!

Aber in Minneapolis ist es nicht so leicht. Minneapolis hat natürlich Busse, die ^{in die Umgebung} die meistens pünktlich sind, aber sie fahren nicht so weit ^{von der Stadt wie in} München. Zum Beispiel, viele ausländische Studenten, die ^{öffentlichen} von Verkehrsmittel ^{öffentlich} abhängen müssen, fragen, "Wie kann man zum Zoo gehen? Ohne Auto ist es sehr schwierig." Auch ist es nicht so sicher, ^{nechts} ^{Kannst} beim Nacht allein mit ^{die} Busse zu fahren. Und ^{wie} ^{er} ^{U-Bahnplan} die Bussefahrplan ist nicht so leicht zu verstehen, ^{als} die U-Bahnplan in München.

Was machen dann die Leute von Minneapolis? Die meisten^{en} haben Autos, natürlich. Deshalb können sie einfach die ganze Stadt—und ^{das} ^{Um} ^{erreichen} die ganze Land—fahren. Und es ist sehr leicht, etwas zu kaufen und nach Haus bringen; das ist nicht so leicht mit der U-Bahn oder dem Bus. Aber mit Autos gibt es mindestens drei Nachteile. Die ^{Erste}, so viele Autos sind nicht umweltfreundlich. Auch sind Autos sehr teuer, teurer natürlich als ^{öffentlichen} ^{Besonders} Verkehrsmittel—sonst in München, ^{die} ^{teureste} ^{Stadt} in Deutschland. (Man kann für ungefähr 60 DM pro Monat ^{für} ^{den} ^{ganzen} ^{Innenraum} die ganze Innenraum in München fahren). Man muß für das Auto, ^{das} ^{die} Benzin, die Autoversicherung usw. bezahlen. Wenn es einen Unfall gibt, oder wenn das Auto kaputt ist, muß das Auto repariert werden. Und

schließlich ein Auto braucht nicht nur Geld, sondern auch viel Aufmerksamkeit. Das Auto muß gewaschen werden, und immer getankt werden, usw. Im Winter geht es sonst schlechter, weil der Winter in Minneapolis viel Schnee und Eis bringt. Dann braucht das Auto Ketten für die Reifen, und die Fenster muß geschabert werden. Und wenn es sehr kalt ist, vielleicht geht das Auto nicht.

Warum dann verbessern die Leute von Minneapolis die öffentlichen Verkehrsmittel nicht?

Warum bestehen sie ^{dar} auf Autos zu haben? Es gibt nur einen wichtigen Grund: Sie mögen ^{ihre Privatphase} das Zurückgezogenheit. Amerikaner können mit vielen Problemen leben, wenn sie ^{sich in ihre Privatphase zurückziehen können} das Zurückgezogenheit auch haben. Deshalb bezahlen sie viel Geld und ^{brauchen um sich} geben sie viel Zeit in ihren eigenen Autos zu setzen und zu ihren eigenen Radios zu hören.

A2: Reconstruction of Essay.2

Auto oder U-Bahn?

Zwischen Deutschland und den USA gibt es einen großen Unterschied: Deutschland hat die pünktliche U-Bahn vervollkommenet, und die USA ist das Land des Privatverkehrs. Man braucht nur an zwei Städte, München und Minneapolis, zu denken, um diesen Unterschied zu sehen.

In München braucht man gewöhnlich kein Auto. Die U-Bahn ist sehr zuverlässig und fast immer pünktlich, und es ist nicht schwierig, den U-Bahnplan zu verstehen. Auch ist es ziemlich sicher, allein mit der U-Bahn zu fahren, sogar bei Nacht. Und wenn man in einen kleinen Ort in der Nähe von München fahren will, gibt es kein Problem, weil die S-Bahn dorthin fährt. Deshalb ist es leicht, in München mit den öffentlichen Verkehrsmitteln zu fahren—sogar für Ausländer, die München nicht gut kennen!

Aber in Minneapolis ist es nicht so leicht. Minneapolis hat natürlich Busse, die meistens pünktlich sind, aber sie fahren nicht so weit in die Umgebung wie in München. Zum Beispiel, viele ausländische Studenten, die von öffentlichen Verkehrsmitteln abhängig sind, fragen, "Wie kommt man zum Zoo? Ohne Auto ist es sehr schwierig." Auch ist es nicht so sicher, nachts allein mit den Bussen zu fahren. Und der Busfahrplan ist nicht so leicht zu verstehen, wie der U-Bahnplan in München.

Was machen dann die Leute von Minneapolis? Die meisten haben Autos, natürlich. Deshalb können sie einfach die ganze Stadt--und das ganze um Land-- erreichen. Und es ist sehr leicht, etwas zu kaufen und nach Haus zu bringen; das ist nicht so leicht mit der U-Bahn oder dem Bus. Aber mit Autos gibt es mindestens drei Nachteile. Der erste, so viele Autos sind nicht umweltfreundlich. Auch sind Autos sehr teuer, teurer natürlich als öffentliche Verkehrsmittel—besonders in München, der teuersten Stadt in Deutschland. (Man kann für ungefähr 60 DM pro Monat durch den ganzen Innenraum in München fahren). Man muß für das Auto, das Benzin, die

Autoversicherung, usw. bezahlen. Wenn es einen Unfall gibt, oder wenn das Auto kaputt ist, muß das Auto repariert werden. Und schließlich braucht ein Auto nicht nur Geld, sondern auch viel Aufmerksamkeit. Das Auto muß gewaschen werden, und immer getankt werden, usw. Im Winter geht es sonst schlechter, weil der Winter in Minneapolis viel Schnee und Eis bringt. Dann braucht das Auto Ketten für die Reifen, und die Fenster müssen geschabt werden. Und wenn es sehr kalt ist, geht vielleicht das Auto nicht.

Warum dann verbessern die Leute von Minneapolis die öffentlichen Verkehrsmittel nicht? Warum bestehen sie darauf Autos zu haben? Es gibt nur einen wichtigen Grund: Sie mögen ihre Privatsphäre. Amerikaner können mit vielen Problemen leben, wenn sie sich in ihre Privatsphäre zurückziehen können. Deshalb bezahlen sie viel Geld und brauchen sie viel Zeit, um sich in ihre eigenen Autos zu setzen und ihre eigenen Radios zu hören.

A3: Reformulation of Essay.2P

-1-

Auto oder U-Bahn?

Vergleicht man Deutschland und die USA hinsichtlich ihrer Verkehrsmittel, so muß man feststellen, daß sich beide Länder hierin sehr unterscheiden.

Während Deutschland das Netz der öffentlichen Verkehrsmittel fördert und ständig weiter ausbaut, sind die USA das Land des Privatverkehrs.

Betrachten wir nur einmal eine deutsche Stadt, München, und eine amerikanische, Minneapolis, um diesen Unterschied deutlich zu machen.

In München braucht man kein Auto.

Die U-Bahn ist sehr zuverlässig und fast immer pünktlich. Der Fahrplan ist nicht schwer zu verstehen. ~~und~~ Die U-Bahn ist nicht gefährlich, tagsüber wie nachts

kann man, auch als Frau, unbesorgt alleine fahren.

Das ^{das} Münchner Umland kann man ohne Schwierigkeiten mit der S-Bahn gelangen.

In München kann deshalb jeder, auch ein Fremder, problemlos die öffentlichen Verkehrsmittel nutzen.

In Minneapolis ist dies nicht so einfach.

Minneapolis hat natürlich Busse, die meistens pünktlich sind, aber sie schließen große Teile des Umlandes nicht mit ein, wie das der Fall in München ist.

Ausländische Studenten beispielsweise, die von den öffentlichen Verkehrsmitteln abhängig sind, haben es schwer. Schon der Weg zum Zoo^{z.B.} ist ohne Auto eine Himmelfahrt.

In Minneapolis ist auch das Busfahren auch nachts alleine gefährlicher.

~~Zudem ist der Busfahrplan nicht so leicht verständlich.~~

-2-
Zudem ist der Busfahrplan nicht so leicht verständlich wie die Münchner Pläne.

Was machen also die Minneapolisiter?

Die meisten besitzen ein Auto, um beweglich zu sein. Ein weiteres Vorteil des Autos ist natürlich, daß man Einkäufe darin transportieren kann, was mit U-Bahn oder Bus beschwerlich ist.

Autos haben aber Nachteile - drei will ich hier kurz ansprechen:

Erstens sind Autos nicht umweltfreundlich
Zweitens ist ein Auto in der Unterhaltung sehr kostspielig, denken wir nur an Benzin, - Reparatur -, Versicherungskosten, usw.
Öffentliche Verkehrsmittel sind vergleichsweise dazu preiswert (besonders in München, der teuersten Stadt Deutschlands, wo man für ungefähr

60 DM im Monat immerhin im gesamten
Innenstadt Bereich ^{befördert} ~~transportiert~~ wird)

Drittens muß ein Auto ^{regelmäßig} ~~ständig~~ gewartet
werden, was auch viel Zeit in Anspruch
nimmt, sei es Autowaschen, Ölwechsel o.ä.

In Minneapolis bringt der Winter zudem
viel Schnee und Eis, was für einen Auto-
fahrer Kettenanlegen, Fensterschaben und
ähnliche Winterarbeiten bedeutet.

Vorausgesetzt das Auto springt überhaupt an.
Warum werden also in Minneapolis die
öffentlichen Verkehrsmittel nicht mehr
gefördert? Warum besteht jeder auf sein Auto

Der einzig wichtige Grund ist wohl der, daß
die Amerikaner nicht auf ihre Privatsphäre
verzichten wollen.

-3-

Amerikaner können mit vielen Problemen leben, wenn sie sich nur in ihre Privatsphäre zurückziehen können.

Deshalb sind sie auch bereit Zeit und Geld zu investieren, um sich in ihre eigenen Autos zu setzen und ihre Radios anzustellen, um die Musik ihrer Wahl zu hören.

APPENDIX B
B1: Essay.2P in Parallel Column Format

Reconstruction	--->	Reformulation
<p>Auto oder U-Bahn?</p> <p>Zwischen Deutschland und den USA gibt es einen großen Unterschied: Deutschland hat die pünktliche U-Bahn vervollkommenet, und die USA ist das Land des Privatverkehrs. Man braucht nur an zwei Städte, München und Minneapolis, zu denken, um diesen Unterschied zu sehen.</p> <p>In München braucht man gewöhnlich kein Auto. Die U-Bahn ist sehr zuverlässig und fast immer pünktlich, und es ist nicht schwierig, den U-Bahnplan zu verstehen. Auch ist es ziemlich sicher, allein mit der U-Bahn zu fahren, sogar bei Nacht. Und wenn man in einen kleinen Ort in der Nähe von München fahren will, gibt es kein Problem, weil die S-Bahn dorthin fährt. Deshalb ist es leicht, in München mit den öffentlichen Verkehrsmitteln zu fahren--sogar für Ausländer, die</p>		<p>Auto oder U-Bahn?</p> <p>☞ Vergleicht man Deutschland und die USA hinsichtlich ihrer Verkehrsmittel, so muß man feststellen, daß sich beide Länder hierin sehr unterscheiden.</p> <p>☞ Während Deutschland das Netz der öffentlichen Verkehrsmittel fördert und ständig weiter ausbaut, sind die USA das Land des Privatverkehrs.</p> <p>☞ Betrachten wir nur einmal eine deutsche Stadt, München, und eine amerikanische, Minneapolis, um diesen Unterschied deutlich zu machen.</p> <p>☞ In München braucht man kein Auto. Die U-Bahn ist sehr zuverlässig und fast immer pünktlich. Der Fahrplan ist nicht schwer zu verstehen. Die U-Bahn ist nicht gefährlich, tagsüber wie nachts kann man, auch als Frau, unbesorgt alleine fahren.</p> <p>☞ In das Münchner Umland kann man ohne Schwierigkeiten mit der S-Bahn gelangen. In München kann deshalb</p>

München nicht gut kennen!

Aber in Minneapolis ist es nicht so leicht. Minneapolis hat natürlich Busse, die meistens pünktlich sind, aber sie fahren nicht so weit in die Umgebung wie in München. Zum Beispiel, viele ausländische Studenten, die von öffentlichen Verkehrsmitteln abhängig sind, fragen, "Wie kommt man zum Zoo? Ohne Auto ist es sehr schwierig." Auch ist es nicht so sicher, nachts allein mit den Bussen zu fahren. Und der Busfahrplan ist nicht so leicht zu verstehen, wie der U-Bahnplan in München.

Was machen dann die Leute von Minneapolis? Die meisten haben Autos, natürlich. Deshalb können sie einfach die ganze Stadt--und das ganze um Land--erreichen. Und es ist sehr leicht, etwas zu kaufen und nach Haus zu bringen; das ist nicht so leicht mit der U-Bahn oder dem Bus. Aber mit Autos gibt es mindestens drei Nachteile. Der erste, so viele Autos sind nicht

jeder, auch ein Fremder, problemlos die öffentlichen Verkehrsmittel nutzen.

¶ In Minneapolis ist dies nicht so einfach. Minneapolis hat natürlich Busse, die meistens pünktlich sind, aber sie schließen große Teile des Umlandes nicht mit ein, wie das der Fall in München ist.

¶ Ausländische Studenten beispielsweise, die von den öffentlichen Verkehrsmitteln abhängig sind, haben es schwer. Schon der Weg zum Zoo z.B. ist ohne Auto eine Himmelfahrt.

¶ In Minneapolis ist das Busfahren auch nachts alleine gefährlicher. Zudem ist der Busfahrplan nicht so leicht verständlich wie die Münchner Pläne.

¶ Was machen also die Minneapolisiter? Die meisten besitzen ein Auto, um beweglich zu sein. Ein weiterer Vorteil des Autos ist natürlich, daß man Einkäufe darin transportieren kann, was mit U-Bahn oder Bus beschwerlich ist.

umweltfreundlich. Auch sind Autos sehr teuer, teurer natürlich als öffentliche Verkehrsmittel-- besonders in München, der teuersten Stadt in Deutschland. (Man kann für ungefähr 60 DM pro Monat durch den ganzen Innenraum in München fahren). Man muß für das Auto, das Benzin, die Autoversicherung, usw. bezahlen. Wenn es einen Unfall gibt, oder wenn das Auto kaputt ist, muß das Auto repariert werden. Und schließlich braucht ein Auto nicht nur Geld, sondern auch viel Aufmerksamkeit. Das Auto muß gewaschen werden, und immer getankt werden, usw. Im Winter geht es sonst schlechter, weil der Winter in Minneapolis viel Schnee und Eis bringt. Dann braucht das Auto Ketten für die Reifen, und die Fenster müssen geschabt werden. Und wenn es sehr kalt ist, geht vielleicht das Auto nicht.

Warum dann verbessern die Leute von Minneapolis die öffentlichen Verkehrsmittel nicht? Warum bestehen sie darauf Autos zu

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☞ Erstens sind Autos nicht umweltfreundlich. ☞ Zweitens ist ein Auto in der Unterhaltung sehr kostspielig, denken wir nur an Benzin -, Reparatur -, Versicherungskosten, usw. Öffentliche Verkehrsmittel sind vergleichsweise dazu preiswert (besonders in München, der teuersten Stadt Deutschlands, wo man für ungefähr 60 DM im Monat immerhin im gesamten Innenstadtbereich befördert wird). ☞ Drittens muß ein Auto regelmäßig gewartet werden, was auch viel Zeit in Anspruch nimmt, sei es Autowaschen, Ölwechsel o.ä.

☞ In Minneapolis bringt der Winter zudem viel Schnee und Eis, was für einen Autofahrer Kettenanlegen, Fensterschaben und ähnliche Winterarbeiten bedeutet. Vorausgesetzt das Auto springt überhaupt an!

☞ Warum werden also in Minneapolis die öffentlichen Verkehrsmittel nicht

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mehr gefördert? Warum besteht jeder auf sein Auto? Der einzig wichtige Grund ist wohl der, daß die Amerikaner nicht auf ihre Privatsphäre verzichten wollen.

☞ Amerikaner können mit vielen Problemen leben, wenn sie sich nur in ihre Privatsphäre zurückziehen können.

☞ Deshalb sind sie auch bereit Zeit und Geld zu investieren, um sich in ihre eigenen Autos zu setzen und ihre Radios anzustellen, um die Musik ihrer Wahl zu hören.

B2: Analysis of Essay.2P

= vocab.
 = syntax
 = cohesion
 = discourse func.

Reconstruction

--->

Reformulation

Auto oder U-Bahn?

Zwischen Deutschland und den USA gibt es einen großen Unterschied. Deutschland hat die pünktliche U-Bahn vervollkommenet, und die USA ist das Land des Privatverkehrs. Man braucht nur an zwei Städte, München und Minneapolis, zu denken, um diesen Unterschied zu sehen.

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Auto oder U-Bahn?

Vergleicht man Deutschland und die USA hinsichtlich ihrer Verkehrsmittel, so muß man feststellen, daß sich beide Länder hierin sehr unterscheiden. Während Deutschland das Netz der öffentlichen Verkehrsmittel fördert und ständig weiter ausbaut, sind die USA das Land des Privatverkehrs.

Betrachten wir nur einmal eine deutsche Stadt, München und eine amerikanische, Minneapolis, um diesen Unterschied deutlich zu machen.

In München braucht man kein Auto. Die U-Bahn ist sehr zuverlässig und fast immer pünktlich. Der Fahrplan ist nicht schwer zu verstehen. Die U-Bahn ist nicht gefährlich, tagsüber wie nachts kann man, auch als Frau, unbesorgt alleine fahren. In das Münchner Umland kann man ohne Schwierigkeiten mit der S-Bahn gelangen. In München kann

München nicht gut kennen!

Aber in Minneapolis ist

nicht so leicht. Minneapolis hat

natürlich Busse, die meistens

pünktlich sind, aber sie fahren

nicht so weit in die Umgebung wie in

München. Zum Beispiel, viele

ausländische Studenten, die von

öffentlichen Verkehrsmitteln

abhängig sind, fragen, "Wie kommt

man zum Zoo? Ohne Auto ist es sehr

schwierig." Aber ist es nicht so

sicher, nachts allein mit den Bussen

zu fahren. Und der Busfahrplan ist

nicht so leicht zu verstehen, wie

der U-Bahnplan in München.

Was machen die Leute von

Minneapolis? Die meisten haben

Autos, natürlich. Deshalb können

sie einfach die ganze Stadt- und das

ganze um Land- erreichen. Und es

ist sehr leicht, etwas zu kaufen und

nach Haus zu bringen. Das ist nicht

so leicht mit der U-Bahn oder dem

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erste, so viele Autos sind nicht

jeder auch ein Fremder, problemlos

die öffentlichen Verkehrsmittel

nutzen.

In Minneapolis ist nicht so

einfach. Minneapolis hat natürlich

Busse, die meistens pünktlich sind,

aber sie schließen große Teile des

Umlandes nicht mit ein, wie das der

Fall in München ist.

Ausländische Studenten

beispielsweise, die von den

öffentlichen Verkehrsmitteln

abhängig sind, haben es schwer.

Schon der Weg zum Zoo z.B. ist ohne

Auto eine Himmelfahrt.

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Und der Busfahrplan ist nicht so

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Was machen die Minneapolisiter?

Die meisten besitzen ein Auto, um

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Vorteil des Autos ist natürlich, daß

man Einkäufe darin transportieren

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umweltfreundlich. ^{19.} Auch ^{15.} sind Autos
 sehr ^{29.} teuer, teurer natürlich als
 öffentliche Verkehrsmittel-- ^{5.}
^{20.} besonders in München, der teuersten
 Stadt in Deutschland. ^{21.} (Man kann für ^{30.}
 ungefähr 60 DM ^{16.} pro Monat ^{23.} durch den
 ganzen Innenraum ^{34.} in München ^{35.} fahren).
 Man muß für das Auto, das Benzin, ^{36.}
 die Autoversicherung, usw. bezahlen.
 Wenn es einen Unfall gibt, ^{37.} oder wenn
 das Auto kaputt ist, muß das Auto
 repariert werden. ^{38.} Und schließlich
 braucht ein Auto nicht nur Geld,
 sondern auch viel Aufmerksamkeit. ^{39.}
 Das Auto muß gewaschen werden, und ^{7.}
 immer getankt werden, usw. Im
 Winter geht es sonst schlechter. ^{20.}
 weil der Winter in Minneapolis viel
 Schnee und Eis bringt. ^{19.} Dann braucht
 das Auto Ketten für die Reifen, und ^{8.}
 die Fenster müssen geschabt werden.
 Und wenn es ^{20.} sehr kalt ist, geht ^{38.}
 vielleicht das Auto nicht.
 Warum ^{25.} verbessern ^{39.} die ^{21.}
 Leute von Minneapolis die
 öffentlichen Verkehrsmittel nicht?
 Warum bestehen sie ^{22.} darauf Autos ^{23.}

9 Autos haben ^{14.} ~~zwei~~ ^{16. 27.} Nachteile ^{7.} drei
 will ich hier kurz ansprechen: ^{4.}
 9 ^{18.} Erstens sind Autos nicht ^{28.}
 umweltfreundlich. ^{9.} ^{19.} Zweitens ist ein ^{15.}
 Auto in der Unterhaltung sehr
 kostspielig, denken wir nur an
 Benzin -, Reparatur -, ^{12.}
 Versicherungskosten, usw. ^{6.}
 Öffentliche Verkehrsmittel sind
 vergleichsweise dazu preiswert
^{24.} besonders in München, der teuersten
 Stadt Deutschlands, ^{16.} wo man für
 ungefähr 60 DM ^{31.} im Monat ^{32.} immerhin ^{33.} im
 gesamten Innenstadtbereich ^{34.} befördert ^{35.}
 wird. ^{9.} ^{22.} Drittens muß ein Auto
 regelmäßig gewartet ^{37.} werden, was auch
 viel Zeit in Anspruch nimmt, sei es
 Autowaschen, Ölwechsel o.ä.
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^{23.} viel Schnee und Eis, was für ^{19.}
 einen Autofahrer Kettenanlegen,
 Fensterschaben und ähnliche ^{8.}
 Winterarbeiten bedeutet.
^{24.} Vorausgesetzt das Auto ^{39.} springt
 überhaupt an!
 9 Warum werden ^{25.} ~~zwei~~ in Minneapolis die ^{21.}
 öffentlichen Verkehrsmittel nicht

haben? Es gibt nur einen wichtigen Grund. Sie mögen ihre Privatsphäre. Amerikaner können mit vielen Problemen leben, wenn sie sich in ihre Privatsphäre zurückziehen können. Deshalb bezahlen sie viel Geld und brauchen sie viel Zeit, um sich in ihre eigenen Autos zu setzen und ihre eigenen Radios zu hören.

9.

mehr gefördert? Warum besteht jeder auf sein Auto? Der einzig wichtige Grund ist wohl der, daß die Amerikaner nicht auf ihre Privatsphäre verzichten wollen.

Amerikaner können mit vielen Problemen leben, wenn sie sich nur in ihre Privatsphäre zurückziehen können.

Deshalb sind sie auch bereit Zeit und Geld zu investieren, um sich in ihre eigenen Autos zu setzen und ihre Radios anzustellen, um die

Musik ihrer Wahl zu hören.

B3: Worksheets for Listing of Changes Noted in Analysis

Ref./Rec. set: Ess. Q2P Analysis of: Vocab
 Syntax
 Cohesion
 Dis. Func.

Reconstruction:	---->	Reformulation:	Reason:
1. die punctuelle U-Bahn	→	das Netz der öffentlichen Verkehrsm.	stets genau (regard train) (1st time with very talked about)
2. vervollkommnet	→	fortschrittlich und ständig weiter ausgebaut	quite more accurate sense of continuous
3. braucht... zu denken	→	betrachten	I'm too imitative or into choices / limited vocab.
4. zu sehen	→	deutlich zu machen	my choice more simplistic; more idiomatic?
5. gewöhnlich	→	♠	?
6. schwierig	→	schwer	? - Monika did it!
7. U-Bahnplan	→	Fahrplan	more common term? Exp. since it's clear from referring to U-Bahn
8. gefährlich sicher	→	nicht gefährlich	? Monika did too!
9. ♠	→	unbesorgt	nice emphasis on safety
10. in der Nähe von München	→	Münchener Umland	idiomatic?
11. leicht	→	problemlos	more idiomatic? Also related to syntax change
12. Ausländer	→	Extr Fremder	could mean just a stranger, too
13. die München nicht gut kennen	→	♠	repetitive, doesn't sound like a stranger
14. zu fahren	→	nutzen	since he has ridden & knows over and over; this is just more appropriate
15. fahren nicht so weit	→	schließen gerade... nicht so weit	again, since "fahren" is much
16. in die Umgebung	→	das Umland	using vocab. words from class; she changes them!
17. wie	→	wie das der Fall	nice idiom! "as is the case" - Tom thought
18. Myem Beispiel	→	Beispielweise	for a preference?
19. viele	→	♠	I think I often use this where she just doesn't think it's necessary
20. nicht so sicher	→	gefährlicher	here she used the simplest possible word again, though it becomes using a negative
21. U-Bahnplan	→	Pläne	
22. die Leute von Mümm.	→	die Münchener	I didn't know this was even a term
23. haben	→	besitzen	again, my verbs too simple & general
24. etwas	→	Einkäufe	too general; I didn't know this form

Reconstruction:	---->	Reformulation:	Reason:
25. gulleifen und nach Hause zu bringen	→	darin transportieren	again, she knows just the right word
26. nicht so leicht	→	beschwerlich	again, more complex
27. mürkeltra	→	Ø	
28. soziale	→	Ø	mine is ambiguous, actually
29. teuer	→	Kostspielig	too simple
30. kennfahren	→	befördert wird	
31. pro (Monat)	→	im	humor...
32. Ø	→	immerhin	filled word?
33. lurch	→	im	wrong prep.
34. gangen	→	gesamten	
35. Innenraum	→	Innenstättbereich	my term is too specific to the 12 buildings Hill Pet
36. die Autorversicherung	→	Versicherungsgesellschaften	already, what it refers to
37. braucht aufmerksamkeit gewartet werden	→	Ø	too simple (for this) much more
38. geht	→	springt an	(of course! concerning 'go')
39. verbessern	→	gefördert	?
40. möge (Privat sphere)	→	nicht auf verzichten wollen	much more explicit - nice!
41. Ø	→	mer	misemphasis
42. bezahlen und brechen	→	investieren	really nice! Monica, don't you think
43. gehören	→	angestellen	of course more specific
44. leicht	→	einfach	pg. 2!! (Frankit while doing syntax)
45.			
46.			
47.			
48.			
49.			
50.			

Ref./Rec. set: Ess. 2P

Analysis of: Vocab.
Syntax
Cohesion
Dis. Func.

Reconstruction: ---> Reformulation: Reason:

1. ^{1st part.} Man braucht nur gucken → Man braucht nur gucken → Vergleich man ... *disc. func. change here anyway, "guckt es" removed*
2. Man braucht nur gucken → Betrachten wir ... *more formal?*
3. zwei Städte, M. und M. → zwei Städte, M. und M. → *emphasize diff. culture*
4. es ist nicht ... → Der Fahrplan ist nicht ... *had over more "it is"?*
5. ist es ... → Die U-Bahn ist ... *"*
6. allein mit der U-Bahn → allein mit der U-Bahn → *gafahren, was? / tagen wie nicht ankommen, auch als Frau, punkte, allein fahren my phrase → whole sentence?*
7. Und wenn man ... geht es ... weil ... → Und wenn man ... geht es ... weil ... → *in der M.-Umgebung kann man* *look like & read several simple clauses joined together - still has one elegant sentence*
8. ist es leicht → Kann jeder *more "ist es" or more*
9. zu verstehen → verständlich *? & unbrüske adr.?*
10. Der U-Bahnplan in M. → der Münchner U-Bahnplan *more is simple + auch.*
11. Denkblöcker sie ... erreichen ... → Denkblöcker sie ... erreichen ... → *war - reduces a whole explanation!*
12. es ist → es ist → *kein weiterer Vorteil des Autos ist* *reduced is: it*
13. das ist ... → das ist ... → *was mit U-Bahn* *stronger sentence*
14. gibt es → Autos haben *?*
15. sind Autos → ist ein Auto *to possess, do they use singular plural?*
16. Deutschland. (Man kann ...) → Deutschland. (Man kann ...) → *(... Deutschland, wenn man* *again, complex for!*
17. Wenn es einen Unfall gibt ... → Wenn es einen Unfall gibt ... → *Reparatur* *was! Reduced a whole example to one word!*
18. Im Winter geht es ... weil ... → Im Winter geht es ... weil ... → *Im Winter, bringt das Wetter ...* *more is too much a translation?*
19. Wenn man das Auto haben ... → Wenn man das Auto haben ... → *weil für eine Autofahrt ...* *behalten! Simple*
20. es ist → es ist → *?* *occasion, unusual* *more elegant*
21. schaffen die Leute von M. → schaffen die Leute von M. → *die öffentlichen Verkehrsmittel* *she was positive*
22. bestehen sie → besteht jeder *like in IS: use sing. for generalization*
23. Autos zu haben → auf sein Auto *I'm less comfortable with possessive phrases; nouns "haben"*
24. Es gibt nur ... → Es gibt nur ... → *Der einzige ... ist ...* *wohl der, daß* *German doesn't use so many:*
- stand to see the action: it's only, not a noun*
quantity it - more complex + obvious, less abstract act, more concrete

Reconstruction:	--->	Reformulation:	Reason:
25.	eigenen Radio zu hören	→ Radio einstellen um die...	more ^{clearly} point more clearly
26.	ist es	→ ist das Berufswahl	obvious point
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50.			

12. I -
müde genug
off

Ref./Rec. set: ESS.2P Analysis of: Vocab.
Syntax
Dis. Func.

Reconstruction:	Reformulation:	Reason:
1. Unterschied: Deutschland → ,oo		major changes in syntax rules, but still it works with certain: they don't connect with: much!
Deutschland... und die USA → (Während D., nicht die USA)		(could be int. wrong too)
2. ,und → Der... (Ø)		since these occur in a row, I suspect
3. Auch → Die (Ø)		I'm overdoing it by connecting each item in my list. It's almost as if any connecting/transition words here!
4. Und → Ø		
5. Deshalb → ...deshalb		
6. -sogar → ,auch auch		they are redundant -!
7. Aber → &		overdoing it again?
8. es → die		this refers back more specifically
9. Myer Beispiel → beispielweise		she changes the form & embellishes it
10. Auch → auch		embellishes it
11. Und → Zudem		much more specific - definitely holds even though this transition
12. dann → also		
13. Undee → Um weiteren Vorteil des Autors		she repeats the idea being developed...
14. ; see → ,see		they use fewer ;
15. Aber → aber		embellishes it
16. Ø → -		syntax change too, & disc. func.? Why any is the only time she uses a - here & don't!!
17. Die erste → Erstens		better form?
18. Auch → Außerdem		she told me once that if you use First, Second, etc., you must start with it
19. -besonders → (besonders		again, removes - begins () sooner than the
20. (Man → (, we man)		syntax change too
21. Und schließlich → Drittens		like 19.
22. → zudem		(syntax change too)
23. Und wenn → Vorausgesetzt		new transition word! she had known it!

major
local func.
change too

Reconstruction:	--->	Reformulation:	Reason:
25.	denn → also		Es ist vorüberdenn?
26.	: → daß		again, don't use:
27.	Ne → die Amerikaner		better preferred? rather than 'Ne'?
28.	→ auch	das himm...	or normally instead of other things
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Ref./Rec. set: Ess. 2P

Analysis of: Vocab.
Syntax
Cohesion
Dis. Func.

Reconstruction: --->

Reformulation:

Reason:

1. opening: I boldly state that there's a big diff. between D. & the USA, & then mention the U-Bahn vs. private transportation; → she opens by saying that in comparing D. & the USA regarding their transportation, a big diff. can be determined; then she describes the specifics in each a little more. This is so much nicer! She captures the main idea much more adroitly than I do. Results in a longer intro...
2. I ~~used~~ put (hypothetical) words in a foreign student's mouth "me"; she doesn't do that, just explains. I express myself by showing too much, since she's simpler & more concrete.
3. similar to 2.: I think I'm expressing by demonstrating; she's more abstract.
4. by making a special point of saying she will briefly explore three disadvantages, she makes a bigger deal out of moving to the neg. aspects of Autos.
5. she doesn't give the info. on ~~structural~~ ^{public} transportation being cheaper than Autos until after ~~she~~ discussing the expense of Autos, & then quite all of München in ()
6. here again, I demonstrate the expense — how this looks childish?! — while she radically simplifies by saying "we only need to consider gas, repairs, insurance, etc." — and repairs replaces a whole sentence!
7. something: I say the car must be washed, greased up, etc.; she lists a few nouns.
8. Looks like the same thing; I say the tires need chains, the windows need cleaning → she simplifies to, [it] means chains & window cleaning for the car owner. Maybe it's not simpler, but it's a diff. approach.

Reconstruction: ---> Reformulation: Reason:

28.9. she emphasizes people's desire for privacy & choice by
adding, "um die Musik ihrer Wahl zu hören"
- structure seems of more // too; gives emphasis to
classy?! Nice.

Maybe
not a
disc.
maybe you listen to
music, not to
the radio.
Monika did
too.

- 30.
- 31.
- 32.
- 33.
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- 50.

Appendix C

Following is a list of new vocabulary and idiomatic phrases that I began keeping during the analysis process. I jotted down those new words or phrases that especially interested me or that I wanted to remember; the list does not include all the new words and phrases I was exposed to during the study.

The words and phrases appear in the original order in which I wrote them down.

Let.1M:

es kommt mir. . . vor
Was ist neu bei Dir?
seltsam
neuerdings
trauern/Trauer
mit Trauer hinweg kommen
sind schon [3 Wochen] vergangen
vorwärts zu gehen
kurz gesagt
wir sind uns im Klaren
empfinden
verschwinden
und vor allem

Ess.2P:

vergleichen
hinsichtlich
das Netz
fördert
ständig
ausbauen
betrachten
gelangen
einschließen
wie das der Fall
Himmelfahrt
beweglich
kostspielig
vorausgesetzt
überhaupt
verzichten auf
bereit
zudem

Ess.2M:

verwirren

selbstverständlich
zumindest
triftig
(etwas) leisten können

Let.1P:

scheint
merkwürdig
Zeitempfinden
mein Leben wieder in die Hand nehmen
anscheinend
die Ablenkung
fällt
weder. . . noch
ständig
die Tagesordnung
zurückkehren
erleben
Geschehen
vorangehen
erzielen
her
nicht einmal
Kreislauf
ertragen

Let.2P:

eher
fällen
auswählen
bereuen
Buchkritiken
wertlegen
großzügig
allerdings
sehnen
übrigens
zwar

Let.2M:

ebenso
zeig(ten)
mitgefühl
ungewohnt
das Einzige

Let.2A:

blendende
verhält
niedlich
Gutachten
überwinde
ausleihen

Ess.1A:

besagt(er)
gezwungen
köstlichkeiten
letztlich
vorerst
zu Lasten der Qualität
geradezu
überleben

Ess.2A:

angewiesen sind
das Ziel
außerhalb
Ausgaben
anfallen
verursachen
ausbauen
verschwenden
bewegen s.

Let.1A:

her
Zeitgefühl
Anforderungen
irgend etwas
beschäftigen
angeblich
anpacken
hälst Du/hallen
dennoch
geringste
aufbringen
erfassen
verlaufen
eher

Ess.1M:

der Brauch
in Anspruch nehmen
ist vorhanden
existenzfähig
fordert

APPENDIX D

R/C 237-C
Spring '93
French/Gilbert

Reformulation Worksheet

Study your original summary and its reformulation in reference to the following categories. List what changes were made (refer to line numbers as needed) and why they were made -- if you're not sure, take a guess!

Vocabulary

Changes:

Reasons for change:

Sentence Structure

Changes:

Reasons for change:

