

Chapter 1

Defining L2 Student Audiences

The picture that emerges . . . is of a tremendously diverse student population along continua of language proficiency, language affiliation, and academic literacy backgrounds.

—Harklau, Siegal, & Losey,
1999, p. 5

HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES IS changing rapidly. More students than ever before are attending at least some college—by some estimates, nearly 75 percent of American adults will do so (Wurr, 2004)—and the linguistic, cultural, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity of the student population is unprecedented (Schwartz, 2004; Shin & Bruno, 2003; U.S. Department of Education, 2003; Wurr, 2004).

This volume focuses on the **second language student** in two- and four-year institutions and specifically at how the “second language” (L2) population has shifted over recent decades, evolving into not one but at least three audiences, or groups of students, with distinct characteristics and differing needs. The purpose of this initial chapter is to provide definitions of terms and descriptions of these L2 student audiences (see Figure 1.1)—**international students, late-arriving resident students, and early-arriving resident students**—and to outline practical questions arising from these distinctions that will be addressed throughout the book.

History of Second Language Higher Education: Teaching and Research

Before defining the three student audiences more precisely, we will first consider second language students in higher education from a historical perspective. To begin, some basic definitions are in order. The term *second language students* refers here to “any student whose primary or first language is not English.” The term will be used regardless of whether or not the L2 student is also literate in his/her L1 or knows/speaks/writes in additional languages. As we will discuss, in the case of some early-arriving students, it can be difficult even to identify which language is the “first” language, but in most instances it will refer to *the language primarily*

FIGURE 1.1
Basic Terms Used in This Book

Term	Definition
Second language (L2) student*	Students whose first language (the language to which they were exposed in the home as young children) is not English
International student	L2 students born, raised, and educated in another country who come temporarily to the U.S. on a foreign student visa for a short-term educational or training program <i>with the stated intent to return to the home country when the program is completed</i>
Late-arriving resident student	L2 students who intend to reside permanently in the U.S. and who arrived after age 10 and/or who have been in the U.S. fewer than eight years
Early-arriving resident student	L2 resident students who were born in the U.S. to immigrant parents, who arrived in the U.S. prior to age 10, or who have been in the U.S. eight years or longer

*Other terms used: *bilingual*, *ESL*, *multilingual* (used synonymously with L2), and *Generation 1.5*.

spoken by parents and other adult relatives in the home during the student's early years, prior to beginning school or becoming literate. It should also be noted that the terms *ESL* and the more recent *multilingual* student appear in the literature, and they will be used at times in this book as synonyms to *L2 students*.

In the brief history of L2 instruction in higher education, most attention has been focused on **international** students (Matsuda, 2006a; Matsuda & Matsuda, 2009). The number of international students in U.S. colleges and universities (including community colleges and pre-university intensive English programs) has increased rapidly since the end of World War II, from a mere 6,570 in 1940 to more than half a million in 2007 (Institute of International Education [IIE], 2007; Matsuda, 2006b; Matsuda, Cox, Jordan, & Ortmeier-Hooper, 2006). As for first- and second-generation immigrants, relatively few attended college: The rate of college attendance in the United States overall was much lower at the beginning of that era than it is now, and immigrant students especially were constrained by economic limitations and family/cultural expectations (see Matsuda, 2003a, for a historical overview).

However, student demographics began to shift in the 1960s following major changes to U.S. immigration law and to admission policies at institutions of higher education, particularly community colleges (Bosher & Rowekamp, 1998; Browning et al., 2000; Harklau, Losey, & Siegal, 1999¹; McKay & Wong, 2000; Roberge, 2002; Singhal, 2004). As a result, the L2 population at post-secondary institutions increasingly consisted not only of international students but also **resident immigrants**, such as refugees from war-torn Southeast Asian countries and others seeking economic opportunity or religious or political asylum. While some arrived in the United States as adults and sought higher education to learn English and/or for economic advancement, most arrived as children or adolescents with their parents, graduating from U.S. high schools prior to matriculating at colleges or universities.

As noted by Bosher and Rowekamp (1998), the changing student audience in post-secondary ESL classes was not immediately noticed² because the first wave of Southeast Asian refugees in the early-to-mid 1970s was relatively affluent and well educated and thus relatively similar to the existing international student population. However, later immigrants had fewer economic and educational advantages, and as their children made their way into college, the differences between these students and the “traditional” ESL population became more apparent. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the proportions of bilingual long-term resident immigrants in U.S. higher education increased, and in some states they comprised the vast majority of L2 writers in ESL writing courses (Goen, Porter, Swanson, & vanDom-melen, 2002; Harklau, Siegal, & Losey, 1999). More recently, in a 2006 survey of undergraduates in the University of California system, it was found that some 60 percent of the current students are either immigrants themselves or children of first-generation immigrants, and 35 percent reported that English was not their first language (Locke, 2007).³

Although secondary and post-secondary ESL teachers (especially in high-immigration areas) have noticed the growing number of resident immigrant students in their classes for the past 20 years or so, serious scholarly attention to the shifting demographics and blurring boundaries really began in the late 1990s with the publication of an edited collection entitled *Generation 1.5 Meets College Composition* (Harklau et al., 1999). Despite the contributions of the Harklau et al. volume, a theme issue of the *CATESOL Journal* (Goen et al., 2002), a theme issue of the online *Reading Matrix* journal (November, 2004), and various other pieces published in journals and books over the past ten years, we are still in the early stages of understanding the characteristics and needs of what McKay and Wong (2000) call “the new immigrant” in college and university writing/language programs. Empirical research on immigrant student writers has been scarce and largely confined to small-scale case studies (Harklau et al., 1999), and with the exception of a study by Bosher and Rowekamp (1998) and a forthcoming study completed in New Zealand by Bitchener (2008), no direct quantitative comparisons between international and immigrant student writers have been attempted.

This brief history of L2 students in U.S. higher education over the past 50 years informally highlights the three L2 student audiences who are the focus of this book: the “traditional” ESL **international** (visa) student, **late-arriving residents**, and **early-arriving residents** (children of first-generation immigrants). As we will see, defining these populations is not as straightforward as it sounds, as there is some dispute among scholars as to where “early arrival” begins and ends, and terms such as *Generation 1.5* are not always used consistently in the literature. Before we turn to these definitions and debates, perhaps a clearer picture of the three audiences can be painted through three stories of real L2 students currently pursuing degrees at state universities in California.

Different Student Audiences: Three Stories

John⁴ is a senior business major at a large state university in California. An **international** student from Hong Kong, he has been pursuing his undergraduate degree in the United States for five years. When he was interviewed, he was taking an ESL class in the campus Learning Skills Center to improve his writing so that he could pass the university’s Writing Proficiency Examination (WPE), which he had already failed once the previous semester. This class was the lowest-level course in the program, a full two semesters below the first-year composition level. However, it also enrolled upper-division students such as John who needed to improve their skills to meet graduation requirements. Before coming to the United States for college, John had studied English in Hong Kong beginning in the eighth grade. He is well educated and literate and fluent in his first language, Mandarin. He feels that he has a strong grasp on English grammar rules because grammar was the main focus of his EFL classes in Hong Kong. However, he did not have much experience writing in English before entering the United States.

John does not feel confident as a writer in either his L1 or L2, and when asked what he considers his strengths in writing, he said that he did not have any. However, he had a lot to say about his weaknesses. According to John, he has a very hard time putting his thoughts to paper, and writing in English is more difficult because he tries to translate from his L1. He seems frustrated that he does not have a larger vocabulary in English. He wants to use more sophisticated language and sentence structure but is unable to.

A sample of John’s writing (shown and discussed in Chapter 2) demonstrates strengths in macro- and micro-level organization and weaknesses in idea development, grammar, and word choice. He has clearly learned some things about inter- and intra-paragraph cohesion (such as the use of transitional phrases to mark relationships among ideas), but his writing still shows many problems in both content and accuracy. Based on this sample, if he does not make rapid and substantial progress, he will pass neither the course he is in nor the WPE. John wonders why at this late stage of his degree program and after so many years of English study he is still in

such a low-level ESL class and why he has so many problems with his writing. It is a legitimate question.

Hector, who is 19 years old, is a **late-arriving resident** student from Ensenada, Mexico, and he has been in the United States for two years. He currently attends a state university in southern California and is taking a freshman composition course. (This program, like many others, does not offer separate or designated sections of the first-year course for L2 students.) Although he has been in the United States for a very short time, he began learning English in school in Ensenada when he was six years old. Hector can speak, read, and write both English and Spanish, but it is unclear what his prior experience in writing *academic English* has been. Over the years, he has had a good deal of exposure to English; however, his writing (shown and discussed in Chapter 2) reflects his relatively limited exposure to the English language.

Hector does not enjoy writing in English and only writes what is required for school. A sample text he provided was a summary based on several chapters of *Huckleberry Finn*, which his class was reading at the time. His summary shows that he has good basic comprehension of the plot and conflicts in the novel. However, it does not necessarily show competent academic summary-writing skills, and there are errors in spelling, word choice, sentence boundaries, and punctuation. Though there are strengths in his writing that show good acquisition of written English, if his writing continued at this level, he would most likely not pass freshman English and might have trouble succeeding in other classes.

Luciana is an **early-arriving resident** student and a freshman at a California State University campus. Born in California to Mexican migrant-worker parents, her life and education have been divided seasonally between Mexico and the United States. She is thus what Roberge (2002) described as a *transnational* student. She is enrolled in a basic writing course (one semester below the college composition level) in the mainstream (native-speaker) track, though a parallel course for L2 writers was available. Prior to registration, she was unaware of the multilingual course option but might not have considered it if she had known, given her status as a native-born U.S. citizen (see also Costino & Hyon, 2007).⁵

A text sample (shown and discussed further in Chapter 2) demonstrates that Luciana's writing is more sophisticated than Hector's in both content and rhetorical structure, but her errors are more frequent and more stigmatizing, especially given her status as a non-native speaker of English in a mainstream composition class. Luciana's instructor is a graduate student teaching associate with composition training but no TESOL training. The instructor reported that eight of her 20 students (40 percent) had the same profile as Luciana. This teacher felt unequipped, both in terms of training and time available, to meet those eight students' individual needs, either in or out of class, so she sent the students to the campus Writing Center for one-on-one help. The students were told at the Writing Center that it was "against policy" to give them the sentence-level assistance that they and their teacher were looking for. The teacher, frustrated, asked: "What do we do

when the ‘ideology’ of a program conflicts with the students’ actual needs? And how am I supposed to meet the needs of these students with no training and no support?”

These three stories and their student subjects provide a snapshot of the complexity and challenges of educating “non–native English speakers” at English-medium colleges and universities today. The three L2 writers have extremely different backgrounds, and their writing (which will be examined closely in Chapter 2) has features not only different from the writing of native English speakers but from one another. It is also interesting to observe that only one of the three students (John) is enrolled in a specially designated English language or composition course even though all three are easily identifiable from their texts as L2 writers. Finally, the institutional barriers—a graduate writing examination that even a senior such as John was unable to pass, no ESL support options for Hector, an underprepared instructor and no assistance in the writing center for Luciana—are, unfortunately, far too typical and even representative of the experiences of L2 writers at U.S. colleges and universities.

Though John, Hector, and Luciana are real individuals who are at this moment of writing still pursuing their studies in state universities in California, they are also in a sense prototypes of the different “audiences” of L2 writers we are considering. John, of course, is an **international**, or *visa* student, pursuing an American degree with the stated intent of returning to his home country after completing his studies. Hector is a **late-arriving resident** student who moved to the United States, after graduating from high school in his home country, not only for his university studies but to live and work here after completing college. Luciana, born in the United States, is an **early-arriving resident** student, the child of first-generation immigrants. These are the three distinct groups or audiences of second language students at U.S. colleges and universities whom we must consider in our programming, assessment, and instruction.

As more researchers and teachers have become aware of the complexity entailed by the term *second language students* and have turned their attention not only to classification and description but to models of curriculum and instruction that might best (or better) meet these students’ needs, some helpful generalizations and issues have emerged. These in turn raise practical questions about how best to support and help those L2 students. Such questions include:

- Should college/university students such as John, Hector, and Luciana receive writing/language instruction or assistance specially designed for L2 students? If so, what kind(s) of assistance?
- What kinds of course placement options and support services are most appropriate and beneficial for an increasingly complex L2 student audience?
- What mechanisms will most successfully identify and place students? Which will be most successful for the greatest number of students?

- Who should teach those students—trained L2 specialists or mainstream writing instructors?
- How should L2 specialists be prepared?
- How can mainstream composition teachers and tutors be better prepared to work with multilingual writers?

Defining the Audiences

A Conceptual Framework

In the recent work on Generation 1.5 students in U.S. higher education, a 1992 paper by Guadalupe Valdés, originally published in *Written Communication* and later reprinted in a 2006 collection (Matsuda, Cox, Jordan, & Ortmeier-Hooper, 2006b), is frequently cited as a starting point. Valdés makes two key distinctions relevant to the discussion in this chapter: (1) elective versus circumstantial bilingualism and (2) incipient versus functional bilingualism (see Fig. 1.2).

Elective bilinguals are “individuals who choose to become bilingual” (Valdés, 1992/2006, p. 37) for some type of personal benefit—education, prestige, career advancement, or travel/cultural opportunities. They “elect” bilingualism by seeking out formal opportunities, such as classes or contexts in which the second language is used. In most cases, international students who come to the United States to pursue an undergraduate or graduate degree (or as exchange students in high school) would fall into the elective bilingual category, as would American students who study a particular foreign language and then travel or study abroad in countries where that language is spoken. In contrast, *circumstantial bilinguals* are those who

because of their circumstances, find that they must learn another language in order to survive . . . these individuals find themselves in a context in which their ethnic language is not the majority, prestige, or national language. In order to participate economically and politically in the society of which they are a part, such persons must acquire some degree of proficiency in the societal language. (Valdés, 1992/2006, pp. 37–38)

Circumstantial bilinguals might include political refugees to another country or those whose home country has been conquered or colonized (so that another language has become the official language).

As with most dichotomies, there are potential exceptions to these definitions, particularly as they relate to children. In some families, for instance, the parents elect for their children to become bilingual by speaking two languages in the home, by hiring a bilingual caregiver, or by sending their children to a bilingual or immersion

FIGURE 1.2
Defining the Audiences: Key Concepts

Term	Definition
Elective bilingual	One who <i>chose</i> to learn or study the L2
Circumstantial bilingual	One who was <i>required</i> by life circumstances to learn or study the L2
Incipient bilingual	One who is still an <i>active learner or acquirer</i> of the L2
Functional bilingual	One who has acquired a <i>stable</i> , possibly fossilized, form of the L2 and <i>can use it adequately</i> in many settings or for many purposes
Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS)	The language needed to function successfully in <i>everyday settings</i>
Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP)	The language needed to function successfully in <i>academic or professional settings</i>

Sources: Cummins, 1979; Cummins & Swain, 1986; Valdés, 1992/2006.

school. Valdés specifies that such children “may be considered elective bilinguals if the circumstances requiring the use of two languages are created deliberately by the parents and are not present in the surrounding societal context outside the home” (1992/2006, p. 39). Another possible exception is students in secondary or post-secondary schools who are required to study a foreign language in order to graduate. They have not themselves elected to become bilingual, they cannot elect to refuse, yet it could not be said that they must learn the language for survival. Nonetheless, this fundamental distinction between elective and circumstantial bilinguals is helpful not only as part of our underlying definitions of the different student audiences but also in understanding their differing motivations and the psychological and social issues which accompany them.

The second major distinction made by Valdés is between *incipient* and *functional* bilingualism. She defines *incipient bilingualism* as “the period of acquisition of a second language” (1992/2006, p. 42), immediately admitting that the length of this period is quite variable and determined by a number of disparate factors. Further, some individuals with limited access to native speakers of the L2 and few opportunities to learn it will experience a very long incipient period. Some may never achieve *functional bilingualism*, defined generally as “the ability to use a very broad range of styles and levels in both languages, including the second language” (p. 42). Valdés further observes that “the English of very few of these [functional] bilinguals will be identical to the English of the English-speaking monolinguals,”

but “no matter how many features remain that are non-nativelike, *there is a point at which an individual must be classified as a functional bilingual* rather than an incipient bilingual” (p. 43, emphasis added). Our third subject profiled, Luciana, would appear to fit this description. Despite her interrupted education and her trips to Mexico with her parents, she was born in the United States and graduated from a U.S. high school. Although her English writing is definitely non-nativelike, she functions well in English in most situations. It would be difficult to argue that she is still an incipient bilingual who belongs in ESL classes.

These basic terms help us not only to understand the complexities of our student population but some of the problems and challenges that exist with identifying them, placing them into appropriate instructional settings, and providing effective assistance to them. For instance, not all international students (most of whom could be considered elective bilinguals) are also *incipient* bilinguals. Some arrive in the United States from English-dominant countries or countries in which English is an official or prominent language (e.g., India or Kenya). Depending on their educational and second language backgrounds, they may be quite functional in English and beyond needing ESL support.

In addition to looking at the nuanced nature of the term *bilingualism*, it is helpful to consider the *type(s)* of language being acquired. Particularly relevant for this book is the famous BICS/CALP distinction made by Cummins (e.g., 1979; Cummins & Swain, 1986). **Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills** (BICS) are acquired naturally in L1 by all children who have no physical or mental impairment. For L2 learners, evidence suggests that BICS can also be acquired in natural, communicative settings in a relatively short time. In contrast, **Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency** (CALP, which includes advanced vocabulary and grammar knowledge as well as strong literacy and critical-thinking skills) takes much longer to develop in both L1 and L2 and in some instances does not develop at all (or adequately) (Collier, 1987, 1989; Scarcella, 1996, 2003). Collier’s studies demonstrated that it can take L2 learners at least seven years to develop CALP in L2, even under ideal learning conditions. The BICS/CALP framework further complicates the functional bilingual definition problem, as an L2 learner can appear to be quite functional as to BICS and far less so as to CALP. This seems to be the case for Luciana and Hector and even for John, despite his years of higher education in the United States and English language instruction and exposure in his home country.

With these conceptual distinctions in mind (types or degrees of bilingualism; types of language skills being acquired), we turn to definitions and descriptions of the three groups of L2 learners found in higher education. It is important to state at the outset of this discussion that a number of broad generalizations are necessarily made here. Within each subgroup are major differences in linguistic, cultural, and educational background and experience as well as individual differences in temperament, learning style, self-esteem, motivation, and so forth. However, as a starting point, they provide a helpful frame of reference.

International Students

International Students: Basic Definitions

The first and most traditional student audience is also the easiest to define. **International** students hold student visas to pursue their studies in the United States (or another country) with the stated intent⁶ to return to their home countries to live and work upon the completion of their studies (Leki, 1992; Reid, 1997; 1998/2006b). Some pursue bachelor's or graduate degrees to improve their career prospects; others come because more advanced learning opportunities in their field of study are available in the host country (particularly in scientific or technical disciplines). Some students come only for a few months or a year or two to broaden their cultural experience, similar to U.S. undergraduates who take a semester or year abroad. Others come not primarily of their own volition but rather at the request of their government or employer for advanced training and/or language skills. In K–12 settings and even community colleges, this group may further include the children of visiting scholars, of international graduate students, or of foreign workers. What all of these groups have in common is their specific immigration/visa status and the fact that their stay in the L2 country is intended to be *temporary* (with the occasional exception of students from oppressive political regimes hoping to obtain political asylum in the home country) (Leki, 1992). For the most part, these international students would fall into Valdés' (1992/2006) "elective bilingual" category.

International Students: Post-Secondary Context

As already noted, the number of international students in U.S. higher education has grown dramatically over the past half-century. According to the most recent (2007) *Open Doors* report published by the Institute of International Education (IIE), there were 582,984 international students in the United States. International students may be found at virtually all four-year institutions in the United States, but in differing proportions: Doctoral/research institutions have more international students than those that offer only master's, bachelor's, or associate's degrees. The largest sending nations were India, China, Republic of Korea, Japan, Canada, and Taiwan. California was the largest receiving state, followed by New York and Texas. The most commonly selected fields of study are business and management, engineering, physical and life sciences, social sciences, and mathematics and computer sciences, although these percentages vary depending on academic level (undergraduate versus master's versus doctorate) and type of institution. Only about 3 percent pursue majors in the humanities. In addition to students matriculated in degree programs at U.S. colleges and universities, another 45,167 students were granted visas to develop their language skills in Intensive English Programs (IIE, 2007). Nearly all four-year colleges in the United States require that international students demon-

strate English language proficiency through submitting scores from the TOEFL® (Test of English as a Foreign Language), which must meet minimum levels that vary from school to school, but exceptions are frequently made for international students who graduated from a U.S. high school or received a U.S. undergraduate degree.

International Students: Characteristics

Because it is expensive and challenging to study abroad, many international students come from relatively privileged and well-educated backgrounds (Reid, 1997; 1998/2006b). In 2007, nearly 62 percent of international students listed their primary source of funding as “personal/family,” though the proportions change for graduate students, 46 percent of whom are funded primarily by the U.S. institution at which they are studying (IIE, 2007). Others, however, may be subsisting on a small government allowance or support from families that have sacrificed to send them overseas: “These students live on a meager allowance under a great deal of pressure to finish their expensive educations abroad as quickly as possible” (Leki, 1992, p. 41). Some may be first-generation college students in their families (similar to their immigrant student counterparts). Many are surprised to find after taking an international student or ESL placement examination that they are required to take English language courses prior to or in conjunction with courses in their major field of study. Students under financial pressure may react with anger and panic when they realize that improving their English may delay their graduation and their return home. Others may be so wealthy or influential in their home countries that they expect special treatment from the university and may even arouse the resentment of their usually underpaid ESL instructors.⁷

Generally speaking, international students are hardworking, bright, and motivated. They have been good students in their home countries and are highly proficient and literate in their L1. Because they must obtain minimum TOEFL® scores to gain admission abroad, their English skills, generally learned through years of EFL classes, are fairly proficient. Depending on their country or culture of origin and their prior experiences with foreign travel, they may be experiencing various degrees of culture shock: “They may experience the United States as a veritable Sodom and Gomorrah or, on the other hand, as utterly provincial” (Leki, 1992, p. 41). They may also need time to adjust to an educational system which is quite different from what they are accustomed to. For instance, they may be surprised about the level of informality in American classrooms, that they are expected to attend class regularly and on time and to submit work on a deadline, that attribution of ideas to sources and avoiding plagiarism is an important issue, and that they are expected to formulate opinions and arguments rather than simply summarizing or repeating what they have heard in class or read in the textbook (Aebersold & Field, 1997; Leki, 1992).

International Students: Motivation

Since many international students intend to return to their home countries, their primary cultural identification will be with the home culture. Their desire to assimilate or integrate with U.S. culture may be non-existent or limited, and they may socialize only with other international students, particularly those from the same language and cultural background. However, some more outgoing students may enjoy learning about the host culture, visiting in U.S. homes, and befriending or even dating U.S. residents. Generally speaking, though, international students tend to retain their primary linguistic and cultural identity.

As previously noted, international students as elective bilinguals have usually chosen to study abroad for their personal benefit. They may have very clear ideas about what they want and need to gain from their experience and may resist requirements that strike them as irrelevant to their personal goals. For instance, a student pursuing a degree in science so that he can return to China to become a doctor or to Pakistan to become an engineer may not see the purpose in freshman English requirements or graduation writing requirements. They reason that they will never use English much again (and will certainly never write multiple drafts of an academic English essay), so if they can successfully complete their major coursework, why do they need classes in English composition? This instrumental motivation comes into direct conflict with the values of American post-secondary institutions such as, “A student earning a degree from an American university should be able to demonstrate minimal levels of English/writing proficiency.” ESL teachers (especially writing teachers) and administrators should not be surprised by resistance from some international students who may not agree with certain requirements or classroom practices.

Dividing Late-Arriving and Early-Arriving Resident L2 Students

Background

The problem of definition gets much more complicated once we move beyond the international students, who are readily identifiable by their visa status. *Resident* students, broadly speaking, are L2 students who intend to reside permanently in the new country. They may have *permanent resident* (“green card”) status, meaning they are legal long-term residents of the United States, or they may be naturalized American citizens. They may also be *undocumented* (illegal) immigrants. They may have come to the new country on their own or with family as adults or they may have come as children accompanying their immigrant parents—or they may be the U.S.-born children of first-generation immigrants. As noted by Matsuda et al. (2006b, p. 1), the 2000 U.S. Census reported 3.5 million foreign-born U.S. residents ages 19–24 and an additional 5.5 million English learners in K–12 public schools. While not all of these immigrants will attend college in the United States,

as their numbers and rates of college attendance increase overall, the proportion of foreign-born U.S. residents (or their U.S.-born children) in colleges and universities will also increase (see Matsuda, 2003a; see also Locke, 2007).

There are many different ways to characterize these resident L2 students. As previously noted, changes in U.S. immigration laws and the end of the Vietnam War led to a large wave of immigrants and refugees. These immigrants (or their children) began to make an impact on U.S. higher education by the 1980s, and teachers and scholars began noticing and discussing the differences between international and immigrant ESL students. However, in the 1990s, a different group of immigrants began to appear in larger numbers in post-secondary programs—the children of first-generation immigrants who had grown up and completed all or most of their education in the U.S.—and educators struggled to categorize them. Were they *language minority* or *bilingual* students? Could they properly be called *immigrants* if they had lived here most or even all of their lives? Were they *incipient* bilinguals who belonged in ESL classes, or were they *functional* bilinguals who should be mainstreamed with monolingual native English speakers? In my own institution at that time, we began to notice this third group when they took the in-house exam used to place students in our ESL sequence, and we coined an ad hoc label for them, *NESLs*, which stood for “not ESL.” They were non-native speakers of English, but their language abilities, as demonstrated on the exam, did not seem to fit into our traditional ESL program (see also Matsuda, 2008).

Other scholars and educators began to observe the emergence—which happened much earlier and much more dramatically in high-immigration states such as California, Texas, New York, and Florida (Harklau, Siegal, & Losey, 1999)—of this third group, and the use of the term *Generation 1.5* evolved. Rumbaut and Ima (1988), who studied Southeast Asian refugee children in the 1970s and 1980s, are credited with bringing the term into the educational mainstream (Harklau et al., 1999; Roberge, 2002), but as noted by Park (1999) and Roberge (2002), the Korean-American community also has a term in Korean that can be translated as Generation 1.5. Generation 1.5 students are so called because “their experiences, characteristics, and educational needs may lie somewhere between those of *first-generation* adult immigrants and the U.S.-born *second generation* children of immigrants,” and the term “denotes these learners’ in-between status” (Roberge, 2002, pp. 107–108). As observed by Harklau et al. (1999), when Generation 1.5 students arrive in college “with backgrounds in U.S. culture and schooling, they are distinct from international students or other newcomers . . . while at the same time these students’ status as English language learners is often treated as incidental or even misconstrued as underpreparation” (p. 1). Returning to the terms used by Valdés (1992/2006), many of these Generation 1.5 students are clearly functional bilinguals who exhibit non-nativelike features especially in their L2 writing.

While these definitions seem straightforward enough, a problem arises in determining where Generation 1.5 begins and ends. For example, some have narrowly defined Generation 1.5 learners as those who arrive in the United States during the

pre-school years (Goen et al., 2002; Roberge, 2002), so that all of their education has been in the United States and in English. Others extend the generation much more broadly to include students who arrived during elementary school, as adolescents, or even as young adults (e.g., Frodesen, 2002; Frodesen & Starna, 1999; Lay, Carro, Tien, Niemann, & Leong, 1999; Leki, 1999; Roberge, 2002; Rodby, 1999; Stegemoller, 2004; Yi, 2007). Some have also included U.S.-born children of first-generation immigrants as part of Generation 1.5 (e.g., Frodesen & Starna, 1999). In a report on the design of a special composition class for Generation 1.5 students at UCLA, Holten (2002) defined the Generation 1.5 group (those eligible for the new course) as “non-native speakers who had been in the U.S. longer than eight years.” To the “years in residence” aspect of the definition can also be added where the learners were educated, and for how long (Bosher & Rowekamp, 1998; Reid, 1998/2006b; Seymour & Walsh, 2006): Was their entire education in the United States? Some of it? Did they graduate from high school in the home country or in the United States? Was their education interrupted by time in refugee camps or by moving around with migrant worker parents?

Finally, as noted by Roberge (2002) and others, the demographic and sociocultural dimensions of language minority groups have become increasingly complex. As a result, Roberge argues for “a broad and flexible definition” of Generation 1.5 that “captures the in-between position of many different groups of students whose experiences fall between the poles of ‘native’ and ‘nonnative,’ and somewhere between the poles of U.S.-born and newcomer” (2002, p. 109). Others have questioned the term Generation 1.5 altogether (e.g., Schwartz, 2004, who prefers the term *crossover student* to refer to a non-native English speaker who is proficient enough to take mainstream freshman composition courses in college). Finally, one of the most articulate advocates for Generation 1.5 research, Linda Harklau, has recently cautioned against “tendencies to reify the term,” fearing that its use will label immigrants as “perpetual foreigners,” regardless of how long they have lived in the United States, and become a shorthand for “a discourse of need—a way to label bilingual students as in need of remediation” (Harklau in Matsuda, Canagarajah, Harklau, Hyland & Warschauer, 2003, p. 156). She prefers the use of the term to refer to “active English learners” (probably similar to what Valdés [1992/2006] would call “incipient bilinguals”).

Dividing Late and Early Arrivals: Parameters

While “broad and flexible” definitions and warnings appropriately capture the complexity of the bilingual/language minority population, for the purposes of this volume, we will discuss the three L2 student audiences with a bit more precision by sub-dividing the “immigrant” population into **late-arriving** residents and **early-arriving** residents. There are various ways we could divide “early” and “late” arrivals, all of which are somewhat arbitrary, but for the sake of discussion, “early arrivals” are those who have been in the United States longer than eight years.⁸

The “eight years” comes from Holten’s (2002) dividing line for the Generation 1.5 writing course at UCLA, as well as from Collier’s (1987, 1989) finding that it takes at least seven years to acquire CALP in an L2 (see also the definition provided by Destandau & Wald, 2002). This “early arrival” group will also include **U.S.-born children of first-generation immigrant parents whose primary language was not English**. We will adopt the shorthand **late-arriving students** for the later arrivals and **early-arriving students** for the early arrivals.

It should be noted, however, that there are problems with and exceptions to these group boundaries. Scholars and educators have correctly noted that it is not really a matter of *how long* an immigrant student has been in the United States, but *where and how* they were educated. There may be substantial differences, for example, between a 22-year-old college student who arrived in the United States at age 14—a difficult age developmentally and academically, and on the late side for L2 acquisition—and one who arrived during the pre-school years. Yet the “eight-year” threshold would place both students in the early-arrival group. Thus, it seems helpful to add a second characteristic to this boundary: Early arrivals are those students who have been in the United States for eight years or longer **and who arrived prior to age 10**. Second language acquisition research suggests that, for a variety of cognitive, sociocultural, affective, and academic reasons, younger arrivals have better long-term L2 acquisition success (e.g., Pienemann & Johnson, 1987). While certainly not perfect, these two criteria for dividing early and late arrivals (number of years in the United States and age at arrival) will give us a clearer picture of the distinctions among students in these two categories.

Late-Arriving Resident Students

Late-Arriving Students: Post-Secondary Contexts

Unlike international students who must present evidence of English language proficiency to gain admission to U.S. colleges, **late-arriving** students may have studied little or no English prior to coming to the United States. As a result, some may attend adult education ESL programs offered through K–12 or community college districts and/or low-level community college courses. Depending on where they live, they may also take classes and obtain services at refugee or community service centers designed for immigrants of their linguistic and cultural background. Their K–12 children may attend newcomer schools if available and then regular public schools, which may or may not offer bilingual education or ESL instruction. Adult immigrants wishing to obtain further education will typically choose community colleges, which are relatively inexpensive, tend to have extensive ESL and/or remedial English offerings, and offer open admissions and the opportunity to transfer later to a four-year public university. As for four-year institutions, it is more likely that late-arriving students will attend state universities focused on undergraduate teaching rather than public research universities or private colleges.

While some highly motivated and financially stable immigrant students may indeed pursue degrees at these more prestigious institutions,⁹ most late-arriving students do not have the financial means, the confidence, or the English language skills to attempt such a challenging path.

Late-Arriving Students: Characteristics

The literature on post-1965 immigration refers to *voluntary immigrants*, or those who came to the United States for greater opportunity following the loosening of immigration laws, and *refugees*, or those fleeing political or religious oppression or persecution. As a result of these distinctions, some late-arriving students may be financially well off (indeed, in some instances, they are required to demonstrate their self-sufficiency to be approved for immigration) while others have no money of their own and must be supported by relatives or receive public assistance in order to survive. Many work long hours at multiple jobs to survive and support their families, which in some cultural groups are quite large. Those who do attempt to attend college are often distracted or burdened by these financial and familial responsibilities, which can hinder their academic and L2 progress (Harklau, Siegal, & Losey, 1999; Lay et al., 1999; Rodby, 1999).

While there certainly is variation among international students in terms of academic talent, prior educational success, work ethic, and so forth, there is much more so among the late-arriving resident student population. Whether they are voluntary immigrants or refugees, there is tremendous diversity in prior educational achievement, L1 proficiency, and L2 ability. Some may have been well-educated professionals in their home countries; others may have had limited or interrupted schooling. Some may be highly proficient and fully literate in the L1 while others may have strong L1 BICS but limited CALP—and some may not be literate in the L1 at all. Many will have had exposure and/or education in the English language prior to coming to the United States, but others may have had little or none. Like international students, newly arrived residents may experience various degrees and stages of culture shock (Goen et al., 2002). James (1997) notes that immigrant children and adolescents in schools may be among the most at risk for psychosocial problems, including adjustment to the school system itself, interactions with peers, and increasing distance or alienation from their parents and home culture (see also Roberge, 2002).

Late-Arriving Students: Motivation

Because late-arriving immigrants intend to reside permanently in the L2 country, in general they are interested in learning about the culture and becoming assimilated into society. Again, however, there is variation depending on whether they live in a linguistic enclave with others from their native country or language background and also on the degree of difference between their home culture and American

culture. For example, conservative Christians who came to the United States to escape religious persecution may be horrified at what they consider the relative permissiveness or immorality in this culture and be very intentional about keeping themselves distinct from it—and may even openly express hostility toward lifestyles and value systems with which they disagree (Leki, 1992). However, the longer they remain in the United States, the more familiar and comfortable they become with the surrounding culture, and this increased awareness facilitates their language acquisition on several different levels.

In academic settings, late-arriving resident students may be more easily convinced of the long-term benefits of improving their L2 reading and writing skills, building vocabulary, and improving grammar and pronunciation. Unlike many of their international student counterparts, they plan to live and work in the new country (Hartman & Tarone, 1999; Raimes, 1991). This difference in motivation and goals may mean that immigrant students in language classes might be more receptive to requirements or suggestions about extensive reading in the L2, writing fluently and accurately, and learning more about the target language. For them, the L2 is not just a means to a short-term end but rather a key to their future success and that of their children.

Early-Arriving Resident Students

Early-Arriving Students: Post-Secondary Contexts

Because early-arriving students were raised and sometimes born in this country, they can increasingly be found in all educational contexts. In some states, such as California and New York, their presence in the K–12 school system and in community colleges has already had a significant and profound impact, one that will continue to grow as their numbers increase in proportion to the rest of the population (Bosher & Rowekamp, 1998; Harklau et al., 1999; Lay et al., 1999; Locke, 2007; Paral, 2008; Roberge, 2002; Schrag, 2008).

As noted by Harklau, Siegal, and Losey (1999), “Because U.S. colleges and universities collect virtually no information about U.S. residents’ or citizens’ native language status, we cannot say exactly how many [bilingual English learners] there are” (p. 4; see also Browning et al., 2000). However, counting not only incipient bilinguals (those who would be officially classified as ESL or English learners) but late-arriving and early-arriving L2 students at various stages of functional bilingualism, Harklau et al. (1999) estimated that there may be as many as 225,000 English learners graduating from U.S. high schools each year—and increasingly, many of those continue on to college.¹⁰ As with late-arriving students, there are probably more early-arriving L2 students in community colleges and state teaching universities than in private colleges or public research universities (Blanton, 1999). However, given the size, diversity, and complexity of the group called early-arriving students, it is also likely that there are more students from this group at more elite

institutions than there are late-arriving resident students (see Locke, 2007, for a recent report on resident immigrant students at the University of California).

Early-Arriving Students: Characteristics

Early-arriving students are most typically the children of first-generation immigrants. Many of those immigrant parents live in modest circumstances and must work hard at relatively unskilled and low-paying jobs to support their families. The parents also tend to know less English than do their U.S.-educated children. However, some immigrant parents are well off and well educated, and they tend to instill their work ethic and respect for education into their children. Early-arriving L2 children who grew up in less privileged circumstances likely also attended schools with fewer resources to support their academic development in general and their English language acquisition in particular. Some early-arriving students attended bilingual or ESL programs in elementary school; by middle school, many were reclassified as English proficient and placed in mainstream classes with monolingual English speakers (Browning et al., 2000; Roberge, 2002; Schrag, 2008). Most early-arriving students have acquired BICS in the L1 but do not become fully or even minimally literate in it (Browning et al., 2000; Chiang & Schmida, 1999; Harklau, 2003; Harklau et al., 1999; Singhal, 2004). The dominant *academic* language is the L2.

The educational outcomes for early-arriving students become more problematic to trace as they reach secondary levels. Some students have become fully functional bilinguals by that point, and they do well enough in mainstream classes. Many, however, are still in the process of L2 acquisition when they are reclassified (Browning et al., 2000). The mainstreaming produces the unfortunate effect of requiring them to meet increasingly complex and difficult academic demands while competing with monolingual native speakers and with no accommodation made for their status as continuing language learners (Hartman & Tarone, 1999; Miramontes, 1993; Roberge, 2002). Those who do graduate from high school and go on to college have often done so through taking a combination of courses that required fairly minimal language production and remedial English/ESL classes that were fairly mechanical (focused on grammar and controlled composition) and in which their classmates were non-standard variety speakers or had behavior or other learning problems. Because the early-arriving L2 students are considered “the good kids,” they tend to perform well in these classes (Harklau, 2000), but the classes often fall far short of providing them with the academic language skills they will need in college (Frodesen, 2002; Hartman & Tarone, 1999; Lay et al., 1999; Leki, 1999; Muchisky & Tangren, 1999; Olsen, 1997; Roberge, 2002).

Early-Arriving Students: Motivation

Early-arriving L2 students, having lived in the United States for most or all of their lives, have by far the greatest level of cultural awareness and assimilation

of the three L2 student groups. In many ways they look and act like any other American teenager or young adult. However, studies of the social, linguistic, and cultural self-identification of early-arriving students paint a much more complicated picture (Chiang & Schmida, 1999; Nero, 1997). Students may self-identify as American, as whatever their parents' cultural label is (e.g., "Hmong"), or as a hyphenate ("Hmong-American"). When asked what their "first" language is, they may reply with their parents' L1 (the language they first heard as young children in the home), with English, or with confusion, not exactly sure what is meant by "first" ("Dominant"? "Used most frequently"? "Most important"? "The language I speak with my parents? With my friends? At home? At school?"). Early-arriving students tend to identify strongly with their parents, including their home language and culture, but they also desire to fit into the surrounding culture they have always known. In terms of cultural and linguistic identity, they are truly "in-between," as implied when the Generation 1.5 label is used to describe them. However, again, there is a great deal of variation within this early-arriving group (Roberge, 2002). For example, students living in linguistic enclaves or in transnational families (such as our profile subject Luciana) may be less assimilated and comfortable with American culture than an early-arriving student who grew up in a monolingual English or culturally diverse neighborhood or school system.

There is also a bit of internal confusion caused by the application of either the Generation 1.5 or early-arriving label to U.S.-born children of first-generation immigrants, as those children are technically second generation. Previous research on immigration and assimilation patterns presented certain conclusions about second- (and third- and fourth-) generation immigrants, most notably each generation's increasing distance or even alienation from the home language and culture of the first generation. These generalizations appear to be somewhat less true for the late-20th-century immigrants, who for a variety of social and cultural reasons seem to assimilate more slowly and in many cases have a more difficult time acquiring English (McKay & Wong, 2000). It should also be noted that in many families, older siblings may be immigrants (born in the parents' home country) while the younger ones are U.S.-born. These siblings share every relevant linguistic, cultural, and environmental characteristic, so it makes sense to refer to all of the children of first-generation immigrants as being part of the early-arriving student group, regardless of birthplace or citizenship status.

Like the late-arriving residents, early-arriving students are motivated to learn English and succeed academically for the simple reason that they will live out their lives in the new country, so in order to survive and thrive, they must achieve linguistic and academic proficiency. Because early-arriving L2 students spend most or all of their years of education in American schools, their expectations are similar to those of other native-born English speakers, and like any other group of students, they will display a range of behavior patterns and attitudes toward their schooling. When they get to college, they are less likely than the other two groups to segregate themselves into fields of study that require relatively little English

FIGURE 1.3
Basic Comparisons of the Three Audiences

Characteristic	International	Late-Arriving Immigrant	Early-Arriving Immigrant
Literate in L1	Yes	Maybe	Maybe
Primary cultural identification	L1	Mostly L1	L2
Knowledge of L2 culture	No	Some	Yes
L2 literacy experience	Limited	Limited	Extensive (but not always effective)
Socioeconomic status	Upper-middle-class to wealthy	Working class	Working to middle class
Motivation to learn English	For instrumental purposes	For integrative and survival purposes	Like monolingual English speakers

(e.g., scientific and technical majors), and these early arrivals may be found in any and all degree programs available at the particular institution.

As the previous discussion demonstrates, L2 students at colleges and universities today can vary from one another dramatically. Indeed, perhaps their only real similarities are that they began life speaking another language and have been exposed to at least two different cultures. Figure 1.3 summarizes the basic differences across the three groups (see also Friedrich, 2006, and Matsuda, 2008, for similar schemes).

As will be shown in Chapter 2, these differences also affect the three student audiences' academic progress and especially their English language/literacy development. Once the differing academic language needs of the different L2 student audiences have been examined, we can begin to address the types of programs and curricula that might best serve each group (Chapters 3 and 6) and the ways in which classroom instruction can be sensitive and responsive to the differences across groups (Chapters 4 and 5).

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. Before reading this chapter, were you aware that the number of L2 students in colleges and universities has increased so dramatically—and become so diverse—in the past 50 years? Did the information presented confirm impressions you already had or did some of it surprise you—and if so, what and how?
2. As you read the profiles of John, Hector, and Luciana, what struck you, stood out to you, or concerned you? Have you known any students like them, and what are the similarities and differences between your acquaintances and these three prototypes?
3. After “Three Stories,” several practical questions or implications that this book aims to examine and address are given (see pages 8–9). Choose one or more of these questions, and make some notes about your own opinions, observations, or experiences with the issue(s) raised. Keep your notes and review them once you have read the later chapters.
4. An extended discussion is included about how to define or differentiate between students who are late-arriving resident immigrants and those who are in the early-arriving group. What is your opinion about the ways in which those lines are drawn (see also Chapter 1, Endnote 8)? Would you define the groups differently? Would you add more categories?
5. The final section of this chapter defined and described three distinct L2 student groups (international, late-arriving, and early-arriving students) across several different sub-categories, such as institutions, motivation, etc. Are these (admittedly generalized) “portraits” essentially accurate in your opinion, observation, and experience? If not, how might you change or adjust them?

CHAPTER ENDNOTES

¹ In this volume I cite two distinct pieces of work: Harklau, Losey, & Siegal (1999), which refers to those authors' efforts as editors of a collection, and Harklau, Siegal, & Losey (1999), which refers to their introductory chapter of that collection. Because of the potential for confusion, I will refer to the edited collection after first mention as "Harklau et al." and to the individual chapter as "Harklau, Siegal, & Losey."

² See also the historical analysis of Matsuda and Matsuda (2009), which points out that the presence of resident ESL writers in U.S. universities was "noticed" by the mid-1950s (Slager, 1956).

³ As another indicator, a recent report (Paral, 2008) based on U.S. census data notes that 49 percent of the children ages 12–17 in California have at least one immigrant parent.

⁴ I am grateful to my former student Lisa Henry Clark for her permission to use her profile of John in this chapter, to Cara Tupper for her profile of Hector, and to Ann Michaels for her profile of Luciana.

⁵ In this particular program, there are parallel courses for ESL/multilingual students. While some U.S.-born L2 students choose these multilingual sections, others prefer to take the mainstream composition equivalent, feeling that they left ESL courses behind years ago in elementary or middle school.

⁶ As noted by one of the reviewers, international students *must* have a stated intent to return to their home countries in order to obtain a U.S. visa—but they may nonetheless privately intend to stay permanently if possible.

⁷ Some years ago, I taught international graduate students at a private university in Los Angeles who paid more every year in car insurance than I had paid for my car and who thought nothing of going to Las Vegas for the weekend and gambling away \$35,000!

⁸ One of my survey respondents (see Chapter 6) took issue with my definitions here, arguing that the dividing line between "immigrant" (or late-arriving) and "Generation 1.5" (or early-arriving) should be whether or not the student graduated from a U.S. high school. While this would be a legitimate categorizing scheme, I would note that a student who arrives in the United States during high school (say at age 15 or so) and begins college at age 18 or 19 may still have major language/literacy challenges despite having graduated from a U.S. high school—challenges different from those faced by U.S. residents who were born here or who completed all or most of their schooling in English.

⁹ See Destandau & Wald, 2002; Frodesen, 2002; Frodesen & Starna, 1999; Holten, 2002; Locke, 2007; Scarcella, 1996, 2003 for discussions of immigrant and Generation 1.5 students at various University of California campuses; see Leki, 1995, 1999 for discussions of students at the University of Tennessee; see Blanton, 1999, 2005, for discussion of students at the private University of New Orleans and other prestigious universities.

¹⁰ In his *Sacramento Bee* column, Schrag (2008) notes that 43 percent of the students currently in California's K–12 public schools started out "speaking some other language." Though some are still officially classified as *English learners* and others have been redesignated as *fully English proficient*, the numbers demonstrate that a substantial percentage of students have experiences with or pathways to English different from that of the mainstream students. Though these percentages are much higher in California than anywhere else, they nonetheless underscore the urgency for schools, colleges, and universities to understand and better serve this increasingly diverse student audience.