

UNIVERSITY of
HOUSTON



Name: Izabela Uscinski

Department/College: English

Research Area:

Biography:

The primary area of my research is writing pedagogy, with a focus on second language (L2) learners. I draw insights from various disciplines such as applied linguistics, composition studies, rhetoric, and TESOL. The goal of my research is to study the effectiveness of various approaches to writing instruction in different contexts, for different purposes, and different student populations. Through my experience in working with both native and non-native English speaking students, I have become interested in methodological approaches adopted in mainstream classrooms with linguistic diversity. I am also interested in investigating whether instructors' educational background relates to L2 students' success rate in courses that are not specifically geared toward L2 writers. Currently, I am involved in a research study investigating students' perspectives of the writing program developed for non-native English speaking students majoring in disciplines such as business and engineering. This collaborative research lead by four other instructors combines an anonymous survey, focus group interviews, and collection of students writing samples from future courses in their disciplines. The goal of this study is to assess whether the focus on writing in students' disciplines in their freshman year has a positive effect on the quality of their writing in advanced courses in their major. For my dissertation study, I investigated L2 writers' engagement with written corrective feedback in first-year composition courses to gain insights about how individual, social, and contextual factors affect their engagement. Based on the results of this study, I recommended various strategies to encourage students' engagement with WCF in the context of FYC. As a follow-up to my study, I plan to design an experimental research with a treatment and a control group to investigate the effectiveness of those strategies.