Fostering the Creative Mind: Creative Pedagogies in the ELT Classroom

Zachary W. Fish

Follow this and additional works at: https://knowledge.library.iup.edu/etd

Recommended Citation
Fish, Zachary W., "Fostering the Creative Mind: Creative Pedagogies in the ELT Classroom" (2016). Theses and Dissertations (All). 1341.
https://knowledge.library.iup.edu/etd/1341

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Knowledge Repository @ IUP. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations (All) by an authorized administrator of Knowledge Repository @ IUP. For more information, please contact sara.parme@iup.edu.
FOSTERING THE CREATIVE MIND:
CREATIVE PEDAGOGIES IN THE ELT CLASSROOM

A Thesis
Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research
in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

Zachary W. Fish
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
May 2016
Indiana University of Pennsylvania  
School of Graduate Studies and Research  
Department of English

We hereby approve the thesis of

Zachary W. Fish

Candidate for the degree of Master of Arts

________________________________________
Curtis Porter, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of English, Advisor

________________________________________
Gloria Park, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of English

________________________________________
Chauna Craig, Ph.D.
Professor of English

ACCEPTED

________________________________________
Randy L. Martin, Ph.D.
Dean  
School of Graduate Studies and Research
The content of this study focuses on the pedagogical perceptions and creative choices of a single ELT instructor, as well as the creative output of the multilingual writers in her class. Through the use of a classroom case study format, perceptions of the instructor and students were collected and compared with classroom materials and student writing samples, allowing for the potential identification and analysis of participants’ “creative acts” as they appeared in the data. Instructor perceptions and pedagogical stances were collected through pre- and post-course interviews, which were then compared with syllabus excerpts, assignments, and in-class activity designs. Student data was collected through observational field notes of an in-class writing exercise, the written productions of said exercise, and a culminating focus group interview. Intersecting themes in the instructor’s and students' creative acts contextualize final implications for the purposeful use of creative acts as pedagogical tools.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To be brief, I would like to thank everyone involved in helping me to realize, understand, and author this project: Dr. Porter, who always had something for me to read, to watch, or to listen to; Dr. Park, who lovingly kicked my ass at the beginning of my studies and research; and Dr. Craig, whose thoughtful candidness in criticism extends beyond pedagogy and writing studies, into the everyday. This experience has prepared me, in so many ways, to be ready to misunderstand, to fumble, to mismatch, and to take all of these moments as opportunities to reframe my perceptions of any given situation for a better approach the next time. You’ve helped to shape the teacher I believe I will be.

I extend my gratitude and best wishes to all of my classmates and cohort members. The ways you pushed me to learn and think are the foundation of my future work. I’ll never forget all the potlucks, either.

My deepest thanks also go to my family and friends, of whom I wish to see more after this writing. This means we can finally hang out again.

Finally, to Brandi: These past semesters have deconstructed my worldly perceptions, upended my personal beliefs, and left me, it seems, with more questions than answers. Still, even through all of this, you supported me, listened to my rants and tangents, and found it in yourself to give me the deepest understanding when my worries and fears got the better of me. Without you, I would never have made it this far, nor would I have maintained any sense of sanity at all. Thank you. I love you so.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ONE</td>
<td>CONTEXTUALIZING THE STUDY: HOW IT ALL BEGAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Scope of This Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Research Gap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TWO</td>
<td>LITERATURE REVIEW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Defining “Creative Acts”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conceptualizing Studies on Creativity and Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Practitioners Using Creative Pedagogies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Language Educators Utilizing Creative Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creative Ideations of MLW Task-Based Approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Closing Remarks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THREE</td>
<td>METHODOLOGY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Qualitative Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Research Site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classroom Case Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participant Selection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Methods of Data Collection and Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Procedure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stage 1: Interview with class instructor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stage 2: Preliminary interview analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stage 3: Collection writing samples and field notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stage 4: Focus-group and post-course interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stage 5: Transcription and member checking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Researcher Positionality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Closing Remarks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOUR</td>
<td>PRESENTATION OF DATA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction: On a cold day, early into Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instructor Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Background, Aesthetic Perceptions, and Philosophy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Curricular Development for Creativity Among Multilingual Writers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion of an In-Class Writing Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In-Class Field Notes and Student Writing Samples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Proceedings, Informed by In-Class Field Notes</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Writing Samples</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Focus Group Interview</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor Exit Interview</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing Remarks</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FIVE**

DISCUSSION OF THEMES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH ..... 77

Introduction ................................................................. 77
The Aesthetic Frame: Mirror and Portrait of Pedagogy ............... 79
  Artistic Expression and Naturalism .................................. 80
  Academic Refinement Through Personal Validation .................. 84
Reframes of Reframes: Student Reactions to Creative Acts ............ 87
  Strategic and Writerly Developments ................................ 88
  Personal Developments .................................................. 90
  Intersections of Perspective: Pedagogy’s Role in Fostering Creative Minds ....................................................... 92
Reflections as a Qualitative Researcher ................................ 95
Closing Remarks ......................................................... 96

REFERENCES ..................................................................... 98

APPENDICES ..................................................................... 102

Appendix A - Excerpt of Qiu’s Syllabus—“Book Project” .............. 102
Appendix B - The “Room” Exercise ...................................... 105
Appendix C - In-Class Writing Exercise—2015/10/29 .................... 106
Appendix D - Writing Samples of Focus Group Participants .......... 113
Appendix E - Qiu’s Syllabus Description of Student Learning Objectives ................................................................. 115
Appendix F - IRB Approval Letter ........................................ 116
CHAPTER ONE

CONTEXTUALIZING THE STUDY: HOW IT ALL BEGAN

Introduction

My first story was titled “The Pumpkin Hotel,” a single handwritten page on loose-leaf paper, attached via glue stick to a bright orange paper pumpkin. My fifth-grade teacher gave us our writing assignment to help us produce a polished piece of writing—as polished as cursive written in pencil can be—while allowing us to explore the bounds of our imaginations. The next assigned story was to be longer; five pages, handwritten, stapled inside of a book cover with our own original art design. I remember how the class filled with groans at this announcement, though I could not wait to start. What I came up with was an adventure heavily influenced by the stories of my youth. Most of these came in the form of videogames and television shows, produced in Japan. Inextricably tied together, my further forays into writing and reading would inevitably be dictated by the fantastic and strange found in anime and games.

The greatest stumbling block I encountered in my later life, however, was my own apprehension regarding the actuality of a career as a writer or scholar. After a lengthy struggle, I was able to admit to myself that it was possible to follow a career in writing, focusing on the fictional pieces that composed such a great portion of my personal literacy. Through my college writing career, I found that short fiction was an outlet that allowed not only for a deeper understanding of the self and the world in which I lived, but planted a deep love for the complexity of meaning and form found in English prose. The texts of my youth never left me, however, and I’ve found that bridging the gap between my own literacy and the parent culture/cultures of these texts is a pursuit I would wish to fulfill. Seeking a deeper understanding
of myself through writing is something I have done and will continue to do; the next step is
bridging the gap in my understanding of others’ cultures.

As conflagrations between my assumptions and my new experiences fill my mental
space, my ideas of future plans shift into new, more recognizable patterns. Even the technical
jargon of TESOL, as mysterious as it seemed to me at the beginning of my first semester,
becomes clearer with every new reading, seminar, and discussion. As it should, this continual
transition has had an effect on my previous schooling and experimentation as a creative writer,
and the ways that I might be able to incorporate my past experiences into my future work are
slowly taking form. For example, an interest I have carried with me in my life, creative writing,
seems to have a strong place in my future work as an English educator. Still, there have been
numerous times that I have wondered about the nature of creativity as it applies to the field of
TESOL: How is it utilized? How do educators perceive its value? What benefits do students see
from its use?

In order to connect with the parts of my own literacy I do not fully understand, it is
necessary to reach out toward the creative understandings of the writers with whom I want to
work. The one most effective way that I know how to do this is through the practice of writing,
not just in the most conventional sense, but in the greater sense of creating a piece by openly
sharing ones’ beliefs, through editing, review, revision, and the synthesis of one’s purview into a
refined piece. This is not to say that prose written in another language besides English would not
have the same effect for its writer; instead, I posit that the ability to connect more deeply with
one’s purview can help strengthen the bond between thought and word. In other words, the depth
of meaning and ability to speak and write in English may be tied to the creativity with which one
approaches the language.
The Scope of This Research

Fostering the ability to make personal connections for oneself through creative writing is one of my long term goals as an English educator. However, my involvement with multilingual writers is predicated upon my desire to further understand my own background as a learner, speaker, and writer of English. Just as my own language learning journey was shaped by the words of writers from other cultures, translated from their home language to my own, the students that I hope to teach will have some similar experience; the life of each individual will have been touched by the English language prior to my interaction with them as their instructor. I hope, then, to have two simultaneous effects as a teacher of multilingual writers: to fulfill the language learning requirements of their institution; and to afford them the space, the linguistic tools, and the impetus to rectify the people they are becoming through their new and continued language use.

Research Gap

Definitions of creativity are elusive, as they should be; a personal definition of creativity may not fully comprise the definition that another person would ascribe oneself to, and vice-versa. The concept of creativity is something with which I feel comfortable in my own mind, but it is also something I need to consider, as a burgeoning educator, from the perspectives of others, educators and students alike; each educator will have his or her own concept of what creativity looks like, just as every student will. Therefore, direct involvement with an educator who utilizes creative pedagogy in a multilingual writing classroom is necessary to help me to understand the ways that I will implement creativity in my own future classroom and the ways that I will study it.
To justify my approach, I have selected the following questions as the guideposts for my research:

- How did the English language teaching (ELT) instructor implement her own ideation of creativity into the basic MLW classroom? How do these ideations of creativity reflect the instructor’s aesthetic frame as they are applied to a creatively founded pedagogy in the ELT classroom?
- How did multilingual writers respond to the teacher’s writing assignments?
- How, if at all, did the multilingual writers perceive or utilize their own ideations of creativity in their assignments? How did these writers negotiate the meaning of creativity with their instructor and/or with their peers?

To reach these questions with some contextually specific examples, the reviewed literature focused on multilingual writers, their instructors, and the creative approaches to learning and teaching utilized by both groups. This review will also entail analysis of other considerations for the use of creative pedagogies with multilingual writers, namely in the conceptualization of creativity in the English language teaching (ELT) classroom, social/practical/political considerations for its use, and finally its implementation in a study with an ELT writing educator. Following the development of my theoretical framework, I will discuss the approaches of an individual instructor of multilingual writers at a small northeastern university, as well as the written production of those multilingual writers themselves. Through the level of variation in the collected literature and study data, I hope to illustrate at least a fraction of the possible creative pedagogical approaches to multilingual writing instruction and the ways in which this instruction reflects the personal creativities of all individuals involved.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

As a mode for developing integrated language skills, I feel that creativity in writing, as an act both on the students’ and the instructor’s parts, has the ability to inspire learning opportunities at every turn of the writing and editing process. It seems that the greater portion of current research on creativity with multilingual students is being conducted in foreign contexts, though some of the research presented here is local to my American university context. Studies from such varied contexts should allow for some musing on the aspects that I hope to address in the current study, namely one involving multilingual writers and an English as a second language (ESL) instructor.

Due to the exploratory nature of the current study, this literature review seeks the answer to one overarching question: How do English language educators around the world incorporate creativity into their writing classrooms? While the scope of this topic may seem broad, the collection of data for empirical study necessitates the collection of a wide range of sources. Moreover, the trends discussed in this literature review indicate the ways in which creative pedagogies may be enacted in different teaching contexts, both foreign and domestic. In all, the articles included in this bibliography show the possibility of integrated skill benefit for multilingual writers through creativity in writing and peer editing.

The first section of this literature review will be used to define “creative acts,” a construct that will serve a larger purpose in the interpretation of study data later. Still, creative acts will invariably be seen throughout the rest of the literature review, and should help to shape the critical lens through which the rest of the study is viewed. Next, the focus of the literature review
will shift to uses and ideations of creativity in writing instruction and peer review. By generally describing the tone used in recognizing creativity in the MLW writing classroom, I hope to illustrate both the restrictions that users of creative pedagogies face and the successes that they have seen through their tenacity. Finally, this literature review will focus on various creative approaches to writing pedagogies as they are illustrated in relevant academic literature. Each of the articles covered in this section evinces some helpful variance in a creative approach to writing instruction, and helps to widen the concept of creativity as I have attempted to define it here. Still, I feel that the widely varied and contentious definitions of terms that I focus on—creativity included—might lead to occasional, problematic confusion in terms of semantic difference. With that said, I will attempt to offer functional definitions for relevant terms as I have encountered them in each of these texts and, more importantly, as I have come to understand them as they relate to this study. In all, this review should help to elucidate the landscape surrounding multilingual writing instruction and the creativity burgeoning within it.

**Defining “Creative Acts”**

According to Pomerantz and Bell (2007), creative language use in language learning classrooms may contribute to “increased metalinguistic awareness, [and] syntactic and semantic development” (pp. 556-557). As these distinct skills represent the tangible result of classroom writing instruction (running parallel to university defined grading conventions), perceptions of course effectiveness from both the instructor and students can be gauged through salient terms and themes found in aesthetic theories of creativity. For the purposes of my approach to this study, utterances seen as creative acts will therefore not be limited to the discrete genres of creative writing, as Hyland (2007) confers the “cognitive homogeneity” (p. 149) resultant of strict process approaches to L2 academic writing courses. He posits, instead, that, “Providing
writers with a knowledge of appropriate language forms shifts writing instruction from the implicit and exploratory to a conscious manipulation of language and choice” (Hyland, 2007, p. 151). In this case study, applicable genres will not be limited by name, but will be honored based upon the instructor’s choice to perform a creative act in any genre they have chosen to fulfill the course requirements. According to this framework, students are allowed to operate creatively within the instructor’s aesthetically driven response to university standards, leading to utterances that I will continue to refer to as creative acts.

Next, to recognize the producer’s choice to engage in a creative act, this construct must include all utterances that are considered by the producer to be aesthetically pleasing or prudent, novel, dangerous, or experimental. The first and, arguably, most difficult example is that of aesthetically pleasing materials or responses, as they remain highly subjective as interpreted signs and as signs to be interpreted. However, Elizabeth Grosz (2008) attempts to make the connection to personal aesthetics through art and the act of framing worldly chaos (p. 11). Following her logic, art seeks to encapsulate a worldly item or event, allowing the viewer or participant to elaborate upon it through the contextual space in which it appears. Grosz (2008) further amplifies the territorial nature of human reactions to chaos through the concept of “framing,” which she elaborates upon as the collected knowledge and set of personal affects that one brings to the reaction to a phenomenon (p. 11). This definition of framing, while seemingly simplistic, informs the later analysis of creativity as personally realized and relevant acts. All of this reactionary interpretation cycles back to the human need to react to and interpret surroundings. Guided by what she perceives to be overarching human difference from and attraction to phenomena, Grosz’s (2008) description of art speaks directly to my study, specifically that it could be limited to “all forms of creativity or production that generate
intensity, sensation, or affect: music, painting, [...] literature” (p. 3). In essence, by recognizing the individual personal histories and backgrounds (frames) of participants in this study, writing assignments (chaotic phenomenon) may compel interpretation through the need to respond; the impetus for response (grading) is carried out, and the cycle repeats with the feedback further changing the participant’s frame. Put simply, for a student to excel in the course, his/her interaction with the instructor’s materials, syllabus, and pedagogy should fulfill some of the traits that comprise a creative act, either for oneself, the instructor, or both; for an instructor to fulfill his/her role, he/she must react to the student’s creative act and reframe it as a new creative act. This continual process of compulsion/reframing/response is an interaction between the personal creativities each participant controls. In this case, genres chosen or imposed either by the instructor or student are merely components of the frame, meaning that they help to shape, but are not exclusively responsible for, the nature of the creative act. Regardless of this observation, the predominant amount of literature that I have reviewed for this study remains still firmly rooted in so-called creative genres, mostly because these works exemplify those traits—aesthetic prudence, novelty, danger, experimentation—that comprise creative acts. It is my hope to show, through purposeful creative choices, that divergent ideas applied to pedagogy might have similarly uplifting effects for students and instructors as those considered to be more traditional.

To address novelty, Grosz’s (2008) concept of framing might again be useful, but this time through the reinterpretation of Maybin and Swann (2007). These authors suggest that creativity lends itself to the individual frames through which a speaker views the world and that slight differentiations in occurrences elicit novel responses to them. Frames, as they are the individual’s personal/socio-historical history, foreground “important sociocultural and sociohistorical dimensions in creativity—that conceptions of creativity are culturally/ historically
variable, and that new creativities may emerge to meet particular (changing) goals and purposes” (Maybin & Swann, 2007, p. 501). In terms of a language learner or instructor in this study, as goals and the purposes of those goals change, so too should the completions of those goals change, making novel utterances of any sort both an adjustment to an individual’s personal frame and a creative act in itself.

In the case of danger, Pomerantz and Bell (2007) offer an explanation of an experimental utterance that may help to operationalize a creative act. In their study, they describe the interactions between two students, Ravi and Prajesh, as they listlessly complete the in-class conversational assignment. Though the instructor provided a conversation prompt (which type of government is best), Ravi begins to disrupt the conversation by sarcastically lauding the benefits of dictatorships and fascism (Pomerantz & Bell, 2007, p. 567). Though this act is an experimental one, an utterance that subverted the tone and meaning of the prompt itself, the authors note that, “in their minor act of transgression, they are actually producing more elaborate and thematically cohesive utterances than they had earlier in the activity" (p.567). Craig and Porter (2014) further elaborate on dangerous utterances by describing the sense of subversive resistance and danger elicited in student responses. Engaging with their students’ graffiti-style defacements of mandatory newspaper reading sections, the authors reveal that, “Unanticipated and irreverent responses do not necessarily mean that a student is disengaged, apathetic, or unmotivated. Such responses may suggest the creation of new forms of life/practice that are incompatible with the goals of global learning objectives" (p. 40). While the goals of global learning objectives may be subverted, the objectives of student text production and literacy enrichment are maintained when students create risky responses.
Tin, Manara, and Ragawanti (2009) developed a study in which the considerations of creativity were gauged by teachers and students in a series of Indonesian writing workshops. Framework was an important part of this study, as the researchers sought to interpret participant responses to poetry in order to extrapolate their personal definitions of creativity. As such, the researchers presented a body of pertinent research on the nature of creativity. Relying on researchers like Dörnyei (2005), the authors’ piecemeal definition seems to encapsulate creativity for similar contexts, stating that “creativity is often associated with originality, novelty, and divergent thinking” (Tin, Manara, & Ragawanti, 2009, p. 76). By association, then, creative writing can be seen as written with intent for some novel or original expression in a way that pushes against some ascribed conventions. This shapes the ways that responses are gauged, leading the researchers to a scale of creativity based on content, language, aesthetic effect, and moral value (Tin et al., 2009, p. 78). A group of students was asked to write a set of poems, and to in turn critique their own work. A group of teachers then critiqued the poems, followed by a group of outside students.

Based upon the student authors’ critiques of their own poems, the research questions attempted to show the similarities and differences between student and teacher perceptions of creativity. The researchers found that the most popular poems were agreed upon by teachers and students to have contrasting positivity and negativity in their content, inventive word choices, and unusual combinations and phrasing (Tin et al., 2009). With all of these points in conjunction, the researchers’ concluded that students and teachers valued the emotive and novel properties of wordplay in creative writing.

Following similar terminology and definitions, a study by Park (2013b) illustrates various uses of creative writing in identity creation. The central goal of Park’s (2013b) article was to
describe the ways in which one comes to deeper understandings about the self through autobiographical writing. Specifically, Park references the work of Richardson, citing three unique parts of personality that shine through autobiographical writing: the autobiographical, composed of their personal histories and predispositions; the discoursal, the underlying writerly watermark that expresses their personality through discourse; and the authorial, a writer’s expression of their argument, observations, or beliefs (Richardson, 2000, as cited in Park, 2013b). Applying these to her own ESL teaching context, she created a series of writing prompts to help her class develop a Critical and Linguistic Autobiography (CLA) (Park, 2013b). The researcher pushed her students to search their past experiences in transitioning to their American English language learning context, to write about family, otherness, risk, reward, learning, and migration. In turn, her students confirmed that they came to greater realizations about themselves, stating that their various identities were bolstered in surprising ways. Some took personal strength from the writing experience; others even expressed that their writerly identity was strengthened simply through the strengthening of their writing and reading skills (Park, 2013b). Possibly the pleasantest takeaway from this article, however, is that Park makes this framework available for an educator willing to use it, including in her article the prompts that she used and the rationales behind her development of these questions. As a multilingual writer, she had struggled with the shifting and changing of her identities throughout her formative years; as such, she provided a way for both educators and students to explore, identify, solidify, and embrace these changes.

Especially pertinent portions of this article include the author’s inclusions of definitions of identity, which seem to overlap with Tin et al.’s (2009) descriptions of creativity. Specifically, Tin et al.’s illustration of the linguistic aspects of creativity stems from novel sentences, from
variation of forms for some more appreciable gain in meaning or originality. Concurrently, one of the respondents in Park’s study stated their gain from the CLA was some greater mastery of subordinating clauses, an ability she saw as making her “writing [less] monotonous” (Park, 2013b, p.342). Similarly, another student stated that the self-generated content of her CLA was dependent on the “real” aspects of her life, that material based in truth has some greater grounding in her identity. This could be tied to Tin et al.’s (2009) realization, that the participants in the study found greater creativity in the writing grounded in personally developed truths. While this is only a connection between two articles, the rhetorically shared language of creativity and identity could help to develop a new way of looking at both. Creative identity may stem from the intertwining of a personal need to express intrinsic feeling, emotion, belief, and the desire to do so with some novelty in presentation and development. The scope of this perceivable correlation is much larger than the bounds of this short review might allow, though it can be seen throughout some literature in the following sections. Overall, the connection of a creative act to any multilingual writer’s personal self-identification could be seen as a successfully acquired skill or piece of practical language.

**Conceptualizing Studies on Creativity and Writing**

Some multilingual writers in an American university setting might never have been exposed to creative approaches to writing in English, despite the creative acts instructors may have made in the development of the class. Still, the mere practice of this writing itself could be of enormous benefit to their acquisition of language skills as well as a meaningful sense of their place within the world they perceive. Accordingly, this literature review seeks to perform two functions: firstly, to propose a lens through which creativity is viewed for both multilingual writers and their instructors; and secondly, to discover the ways in which professors of creative
writing and of ESL incorporate their own ideations of creativity into their teaching frameworks, and the ways in which their students benefit from them. This section further elucidates the concept of a creative act as it may be seen in relevant literature, described by teacher scholars from many domains and disciplines. In all, this aggregate review collects individual iterations of creative acts for consideration and helps to broaden the considerable view of what creative acts look like in the language classroom.

Implementation of creative pedagogies into multilingual classrooms will inevitably come with many detractors, as the larger body of literature seems to consider the difference between creative and technical writing to be an enormous gap. Specifically, the presented studies by Knoch and Sitajalabhorn (2013) and Hanauer (2011) illustrate a split in the perceived importance of writing pedagogies, between creative/expressive and academic or technical.

Knoch and Sitajalabhorn’s (2013) literature analysis, “A Closer Look at Integrated Writing Tasks,” seeks to narrow the definition of integrated writing tasks for the purposes of testing in English as a second/foreign language (ESL/EFL) settings. According to the authors, integrated writing tasks come in myriad forms, the definitions of which are too vague for consistent testing purposes (Knoch & Sitajalabhorn, 2013). These tasks are sometimes filed under catch all categories like “Read-to-write,” “Read and listen,” and “Learner generated discourse,” which are categorized individually by the teachers who put them into practice. As the authors point out, it is the definition of the governing construct–prompt, article, source–that leads to the measurable quality of the later interpretations. Five desirable elements of the cognitive construct of writing proficiency compose the authors’ basis for measurement (e.g., Mining Data, Synthesizing Ideas, Transforming Language, Choosing Structure, and Connecting Ideas) (Knoch & Sitajalabhorn, 2013, p. 303). Stricter definitions of Task Design and Rating Scale Design are
presented, before concluding with the further narrowed definition of integrated task design—characterized by language rich source material (written or heard), a written product of synthesized ideas from the source, and transformed language from that source.

While this article does not provide formal suggestions for creative writing modules in classrooms, it does provide two distinct sources for interpretation: firstly, this article largely ignores the concept of personal voice in multilinguals. Secondly, the definition of “Integrated” skills is taken away from the realm of language skills and into the realm of academic linguistic conventions (e.g., citing sources, use of TOEFL-appropriate stylistic conventions, etc.). Further, the perpetuation of social conventions in academic writing could stifle the critical development of multilingual students. The case is justifiably made that a student should cite researchers who they have referenced—as would be necessary for an introductory research writing course. However, the researchers encourage the idea that recognizable structure, similar to that found in the source material of the writing exercise or prompt, should be included in student output. It is the structures of standardized testing methods that necessitates the synthetic nature of this student writing, not the continued need for the students to be able to develop an evolving functional use of English. An ignorance toward the amalgamation of reading, writing, listening, and (especially in this case) speaking does very little justice for a student applying to an American or British university or, for that matter, towards the usage of English in their home context.

Conversely, David Hanauer’s (2011) “The Scientific Study of Poetic Writing” makes the case that practices in poetry writing can be analyzed through empirical methods, and that data from such studies could have a measurable effect on future literacy and educational practices. An important piece of Hanauer’s (2011) research touches on the current practice of reading and
inspecting a corpus of literature by one group or person. For the purposes of teaching in an ESL/EFL context, this form of reading would only benefit students so much as their critical abilities, and the instructor’s pedagogical stance, would allow; the perpetuation of esoteric philosophical knowledge seeks only to affect the students who are receptive to it. Instead, Hanauer’s presentation of integrating these corpus practices into the writer’s reflective space gives way to a wealth of learning possibilities for ESL/EFL students. In Hanauer’s case, turning classical literature into the foundation for novel student output is one way to maintain curricular requirements prescribed by a university while subverting traditional uses of the content.

Personal conceptions of identity and feeling are at the heart of poetry writing, though it is not common for most writers to internalize the desire to perform these practices for themselves. However, the latent experiential capital that students control can be a viable source of impetus for writing in the classroom. Therefore, with the empirical nature of Hanauer’s study in mind, the natural material that students have to work with is able to become a mode of classroom activity and discussion. The implications for this information reach into different spaces within the scope of teaching ELLs; the sociocultural applications for poetry writing in the classroom are blended with the possibilities for grammatical and syntactical learning through writing, peer reviewing, and editing. Further, taking a direct approach to these processes, while incorporating an outlet for personal expression, bridges the gap between the metalinguistic and expressive learning needs of multilingual student writers.

In conjunction with this presentation of the assessment landscape in multilingual writing classrooms, the current study necessitates further inspection of some common, best practices they may utilize. In Nelson and Carson’s (1998) article, “ESL Students’ Perceptions of Effectiveness in Peer Response Groups,” the authors focus on the process of peer revision
interactions between five ESL students in a writing classroom. As the authors point out, the inclusion of peer revision into English L2 writing classrooms was a matter of much study and debate at the time of publication. A gap in this research, however, was the “phenomenological” nature of most studies performed on the subject (Nelson & Carson, 1998). To counteract this issue, the authors performed a longitudinal and data rich experiment (of which this article was a smaller part) to capture student’s perceptions of peer revision’s effectiveness in their writing classroom. There was considerable data suggesting that students would have preferred the responses of their instructor over the responses of their peers, that the comment variety was limited to grammar, and that the students’ judgments regarding different aspects of the process (group cohesion vs. task completion) were at odds.

In all, this article provided a conflicting view of peer editing in the ESL classroom, between the students’ preference for negative comments (essentially commoditizing the “correct answer” as the purpose of such feedback) and some students’ unwillingness to defy the general cohesion of the group at the expense of potentially meaningful comments. This led the participants to feel as though their time was being wasted, or that they were not receiving the responses they desired, which would have come from the teacher. However, an issue with this research is that there is no discussion of how the students were taught to revise their papers, and that there could have been some extra considerations taken into making meaningful comments a priority. Less of a focus on sentence level edits and an incentivization to generate meaningful discussion on the content of the work could have generated a richer experience for the students.

As an experiment, then, this seeks not to define ways that teachers can create effective collaborative learning environments for their students, but instead decries the nature of ungoverned group work. The process of writing creatively is a deeply personal experience, one
that can make the editing process difficult, yet rewarding. The light in which these authors have painted peer response is from an exclusively academic standpoint, and further, considers the process of peer response to be one that is typically self-governed. From a language educator’s standpoint, this study misses the larger purpose of focusing on the form of writing itself, rather than just the unadulterated comments that students will make based upon their own wants for or perceptions of their own work. The situation proposed here also discounts the students’ collected aesthetic frames, as these students might not have been asked to utilize their L1 writing or rhetorical backgrounds for L2 English writing, and might have been reticent to do so without some prior suggestion. With no context or constructive guidance given to students participating in this lesson, they seemed to turn into fact checkers rather than constructive critics.

An opposing view of peer review in the MLW classroom, however, helps to illustrate the holistic benefits of creativity and creative acts for budding writers. In her study of a group of intermediate level EFL students, Huahui Zhao (2014) illustrates the effectiveness of teacher-supported peer review and editing practices in a writing classroom. Performed among a group of 18 multilingual writers, Zhao retrieved data from nine individual assigned tasks, within the genres of fiction, research writing, poems, letter writing, and argumentative papers. Upon introduction of each genre, Zhao taught a basic lesson on the types of feedback that would be most effective to exchange during sessions of peer review; this is the focal point of the study, implying that guidance in the process of peer review would precipitate more succinct and relevant feedback. As Zhao mentions, the literature on peer review shows that educator feedback is usually seen by students to be of significantly greater value than peer feedback. Through the course of this study, Zhao illustrated the opposite, that educator supported feedback generation and implementation was seen by students to give even greater validity to peer feedback.
Zhao (2014) presented numerous exciting illustrations of modes for directing student feedback generation, both within the sphere of creative writing—represented by poetry and short fiction—and in the greater scheme of peer review. For example, Zhao (2014) taught students that wording should be the focus of review on pieces of poetry—rather than simply focusing on grammatical errors—to the end that poetry read aloud should exhibit some “rhythm” (p. 157). While this might seem potentially derisive to a more complex ideation of poetry, for an introduction to the genre, this prompts students to make suggestions that are far more meaningful than simple spelling or grammar mistakes. Indirectly, this teacher direction might even inspire some meaningful content generation, either through direct feedback (e.g., proposing a solution) or indirect feedback (e.g., merely indicating a point of dissonance) (Zhao, 2014, p. 157). In turn, the classroom practice of focusing on genre related feedback rather than grammatical feedback might instill a sense of meaningful feedback generation later, in genres and in levels of depth not covered in these introductory lessons.

Further, Zhao (2014) reported the students’ responses from follow-up interviews, which encompassed a number of positive recognitions of peer feedback for their writing. Most surprisingly, some students showed a preference for the received student feedback, with one student stating that he/she had “a wider gap with the tutor than with peers owing to different life experiences, so it’s harder to communicate with the tutor than the peers” (Zhao, 2014, p. 163). This could mean that the directed feedback lessons, coupled with the inclusion of peer interaction, allowed students to further contextualize the writing of their peers while simultaneously helping them contextualize their own writing as well. As a source for skill integration in the writing classroom, these suggestions present a wealth of practical opportunities.
Although skill integration is a necessity for words and ideas to solidify through creative acts, the content that an instructor expects from multilingual writers may have a similarly powerful effect in their written production, as discussed by Bizzaro and Baker (2014). The authors present a logical problematization of the academic essay as the most privileged form of writing in the American university setting. Through this study, they postulate numerous applications and subsequent reasoning for the utilization of poetry in university ESL classrooms. The theoretical framework of this piece is centered on the idea that poetry—elaborated upon by the authors as the “poetic function of language” intrinsic to creative writing (Bizzaro & Baker, 2014, p. 4)—shares a more ubiquitous place in the cultures of ESL students. This is opposed to the academic/rhetorical essay, a genre that is not widely shared outside of academia, and which might not be recognizable to writers outside of these narrow contexts. Bizzaro and Baker posit, then, that the most nurturing way to acclimatize a multilingual writer to these practices is to first scaffold to this academic genre via their previous social and cultural capital.

Bizzaro and Baker (2014) introduce functional concepts, “for turning monolingual ESL classrooms into multilingual arenas of instruction” (p. 12). One such conceptual activity would be an assigned research project to bring a specific form of poem from a writer’s home context, and to share the basic concept of this form with the class. A wealth of learning opportunities could arise from this activity, as a student might learn something new about their own home context, then in turn allowing them to take ownership over its representation in class. Further, this would allow an educator to get a sense of cultural relevance for the student’s previous language practices.

Tying this to a previously reviewed article, the cultural applicability of students’ home contexts imply that students would then have a chance to create a novel piece within the
scaffolded body of a construct stemming from their own cultural background (Tin et al., 2009). This simultaneous affirmation of their cultural capital and their development of genre and skill acquisition could create a greater personal ownership over their own journey in language learning. Further, this appropriation of English, small as it may be, could contribute to the eventual creation of a more nurturing community of practice for these writers (Tay & Leung, 2011).

The previous three articles illustrate the importance of an instructor’s role in the development of the classroom demeanor. While not every classroom will be filled with eager student writers, the enthusiasm and consciousness for the whole writerly student body that an instructor can bring may inspire the conglomeration of some once conflicting student views and intentions. Concurrently, the student role in interaction will make a similar mark, driving peer review and editing through the diverse and chaotic purviews from collected voices; one student’s deeply interested response has the opportunity to ignite the creative desires, furies, fevers of another. As such, without addressing the people behind the written and revised words, the personally meaningful interaction of writing is at risk of being buried beneath over-attentiveness to academic discourse. In turn, the current study will be viewed through this lens, to the classroom practices and atmosphere that an instructor utilizes, and the ways that peer work is treated and viewed by all participants. Employing an open classroom for candid, truthful discussion should serve the purposes of both language learning and self-expression in the MLW classroom.

**Practitioners Using Creative Pedagogies**

A large body of literature in ESL and EFL teaching contexts illustrates an increasing number of creative writing pedagogies used in the classroom. This growing number of writing
teachers utilizing creative approaches is indeed supported by the positive ideations of TESOL professionals in the above sections. For consideration, then, are some individual practices, utilized both by teachers of ESL and EFL with their students, and by those who do and do not necessarily identify as teachers of creative writing. In all of the following articles, the authors demonstrate how their own personal ideations of creativity have shaped their pedagogical approach with the developing multilingual writers that they teach. As such, these illustrations have shaped the perspective from which I will study English language educators and their students.

**Language Educators Utilizing Creative Writing**

Eddie Tay and Eva Leung (2011) performed an ethnographic study of the creative writing cultures surrounding Hong Kong and Singapore. This study reflected deeply on the lead author, a native of Singapore teaching creative writing at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, as an exploration of fostering meaningful cultural interactions for his students of creative writing. The lead author finally suggests some tactics for continued shaping of creative writing pedagogies in Hong Kong and Singapore, considering the continued proliferation of traditional Anglo-American literary canons and the pressures of local governments to recognize English as a functional *lingua franca*.

The most intriguing portion of this study is the authors’ entrenchment in the tenuous relationship between English and the local languages of Hong Kong and Singapore, respectively. While the economic cultures of both cities have increased the access of the academic public to English poetry writing—the genre most heavily referenced in this piece—the process of appropriation and localization of English has been antagonized by the perceived functional nature of the language. This is complicated further by the local governments’ subsidies for
creative production in English. On the positive side, there is a real avenue for the financial support of creative writers in these locales; however, their success is contingent on their willingness to write pieces fitting the sociocultural outlook of the government operated writing-prize organizations. As Tay and Leung (2011) state, writers who resist these norms are working against the compartmentalization of their independent linguistic identities, while simultaneously forging spaces for these identities within the scope of the city’s English literary culture.

Colliding with this appropriative discourse, however, is what it means for one to be “bicultural and bilingual and its implications for the Hong Kong Anglophone creative writer. It speaks of a need for the student of literature to negotiate between the languages and cultures of England and Hong Kong” (Tay & Leung, 2011, p. 110).

Tay and Leung’s (2011) suggestions for pedagogical practices in the Singaporean and Hong Kong creative writing classroom are also worthy of note, as they may apply to classrooms outside of these contexts. Chiefly, the authors suggest a more realistic usage of the traditional Anglo-American literary canon taught in these locales, if not a movement away from them entirely. By presenting the authors of these monolithic works in a more realistic and humanistic light, students of creative writing may move on to view their own idiosyncrasies within their writing as a positive, therefore more fully embracing their linguistic histories. The authors also mention that the practice of creative writing should not be viewed as a solitary action, but should instead be considered socially embedded, implying that students of creative writing should be asked to submit their works to writing journals and public exposition. The effects this could have on student writing are immense, considering the potential for writers to gain recognition from wider readership for their submissions, and further, that the socially relevant content included in such poems would be centered within the effected community of practice. By asking students to
put themselves *out there*, a practitioner could essentially include all of the real world networking and collaboration that the university setting might not be able to match.

In Wan Wan’s (2014) study, “Constructing and Developing ESL Students’ Beliefs About Writing Through Metaphor,” the author follows seven Chinese female MA students in a UK setting and their elicited responses to creating metaphors about the academic writing process. Wan begins with a review of past studies of metaphor in ESL writing, outlining Vygotskyan ‘scaffolding’ as both an internal process used by those creating metaphors, and by those interpreting metaphors (Vygotsky, 1978). Another important piece of the framework for this study came from past uses of metaphor building, revision, and interpretation in ESL classrooms (Villamil & de Guerrero, 2005).

Wan’s (2014) richly developed framework places high importance on student recognition of writing processes and self-actualization of the actions that are expected of them. Moreover, Wan’s (2014) data supports multiple aspects of student development: immediately recognizable metaphors, such as “assembling a Jigsaw puzzle” (p. 59) or “mining for raw materials” (p. 60), showed participants understanding of metalinguistic demands for their academic writing projects; “passing a personal driving test” (p. 61) was used to describe the anxiousness of being at the mercy of the professor’s grading process; one student even mentioned her writing looking like a “doctor’s prescription” (p. 62), hard to understand and easily misinterpreted before the process of grammatical and content revision. This was not just a study of how the students conceptualized the process of writing, but of how they conceptualized their readers and themselves as writers.

Wan’s (2014) exercise was entirely contingent on the participants’ advanced control of English for academic writing purposes. Even though similar data from freshman ESL classes
could be of great importance in helping to interpret student actualizations of themselves and their learning, bridging the skills gap might be an issue. Still, the intentions of this study could be reached in another context through continued lessons on the concept of metaphor, with the culminating result being the coinciding course metaphor itself. Such a metaphor, a small yet dense piece of creative writing, could speak volumes for a research study performed in a multilingual writing classroom.

In Jill Ostrow and Lynn Chang’s (2012) “I’m a Poet? International Doctoral Students at a U.S. University Participate in a Creative Writing Workshop,” the researchers interpret three years’ worth of longitudinal data from student experiences in a three hour weekly creative writing workshop, offered through their mid-western university. Ostrow, the primary author and creator of the workshop, first describes the early realization that students were able to come to revelations in their creative writing through the use of their L1; in turn, this produced individually relevant completed pieces in their L1, and led to a deeper connection to the content of their writing in English. Second, Ostrow notes another early realization, specifically that some lessons–on genre, on creative forms–cannot be assumed. For example, they describe the moment of dispelling the idea that poetry has to rhyme; and further, ideations of one’s surroundings produce different mental images, therefore requiring different descriptive words and phrases. Lastly, the authors cover the positives of working in both academic and creative genres, citing supportive student input from interviews and conferences.

Not only does the reformatting of the rigid scholarly article help to accentuate Ostrow’s realizations made over the long period of this study, but those realizations in turn serve a greater purpose in describing continued language learning needs in highly advanced multilingual writers (Ostrow & Chang, 2012). A surprising feature of this article is the first author’s position as a
teacher educator; she is neither a practitioner of ESL studies nor creative writing directly, but is instead a specialist in critical literacy and multimedia studies. This interdisciplinary work is, appropriately, at the heart of what TESOL educators seek to do: to provide the sociocultural and linguistic framework for language learners to flourish in their pursuits. In this regard, Ostrow and Chang (2012) mention that when the students started writing, “They were afraid of assuming the authority of their own words, and they didn’t realize they could” (p. 51). The authors drive home the point that this workshop was meant to give students some greater internal benefit in their writing: not just honing in on academic, creative, L1, L2. There were no predictions as to how writers might benefit from the instruction, but instead, the pursuit of individual exploration through self-generated writing, editing, and group/individual revision was the focus. These writers were finally inspired to shed the constant internal nagging of their rule heavy ideals of their writing instruction, and were simply asked instead to play. The resulting works may be finished pieces, but the greater benefit can be seen, for example, in Ostrow’s co-author Lynn, who had been a student in the workshop before helping to write the article. She was able, after completing the workshop, to self-identify as a ‘poet,’ recognizing a portion of her greater self that she had never expected to see or hear from. This poetic tinge will never leave her writing, a register of personal voice that will permeate her academic works.

Through the unlocking of latent memories and cultural capital, students in this workshop were able to come to greater levels of self-identification and to greater levels of confidence in writing; further, students were able to explore their writing in a less stressful environment. This, however, was all dependent on their high proficiency at the doctoral level. That is not to say that these realizations cannot be made at lower skill levels, but the immediate benefit of this style of workshop is not designed to fit beginning or intermediate learners. Still, with this information in
mind, identity creation and the fostering of meaningfully generated student writing could become the focus of a larger study. Further, the process of inspecting educators’ pedagogies could be made more fruitful with the use of some of the interpretive strategies used by Wan (2014) and Ostrow and Chang (2012).

A special outlier in the collected literature is that of Park (2013a). Utilizing a merger of autobiographical, ethnographic, and critical discourse research styles, the author inspects her shifting, intermingling identities as a TESOL professional, forged during her career in academia. This article focuses on four shifts, called “autobiographic poetic waves” by the author, as she introspectively deconstructs the focal periods of her academic career (Park, 2013a, p. 10). The author also critically inspects a poem she authored early in her career, reinterpreting it with each of the four shifts she lays out. The first of these shifts covers her arrival in United States as a non-native English speaker (NNES) in 1976, her resilience to prejudices perpetrated against her by classmates and educators, and her inward feelings of ostracization from her native English speaking (NES) peers. She transitions to her struggles as a new educator, both in the US and in her native country of Korea, where she was the recipient and resistor to further subjugative and hegemonic discourses. She moves into her continued education, the disparities between her international NNES cohort and herself, and finally into her struggles and triumphs as a mother and professor/teacher educator in TESOL.

As researchers, the internal struggles we face may be subsumed in our work, directing us in ways that may not be immediately recognizable without further consideration. For this reason, the author presents strong reasoning for this sort of research: “Narrating my own story was a difficult task, but it was a task I had to start in order for me to begin sharing my stories my stories of experiences and identity constructions with my students” (Park, 2013a, p. 16). In this,
Park sums what it means to create a meaningful identity as a teacher/teacher educator; her students will develop their own English L2 identities in her classes through the care of her tutelage, itself based on her own development of an L2 identity. As this piece is heavily reliant on the symbolisms that she recognized from her own life’s journey, the takeaways too should be largely symbolic for other educators. Even if their memoirs are not published, this creative piece provides the framework for other educators to consider their backgrounds as teachers, to encapsulate their motivations and reasoning for creating the educational world they would like to see as a reality. In turn, this Autobiographical narrative style is a tool for the creation of greater understanding within educators’ inner pedagogues.

The possibility that this work might reach other educators provides hope that TESOL can be a more deeply understanding field. Similarly, this work further opens the possibilities that educators could understand, through their own development and definition of their fluid identities, how better to assist students in making meaningful progress with their own identities. As ‘meaningful’ could have its own problematic definitions, it would be up to both educator and student to create them; comfort within one’s standing or progress in a society could be seen in either a positive or a negative light, and would thusly be up to individual interpretation.

Continued study into such introspective genres could prove useful to defining researcher/educator goals, as well as their ideations for student creations of identity. The psychological and sociopolitical discomfort of being an NNES is something that I will never truly experience, no matter how I attempt to empathize. It will be beneficial for me to read further into student and teacher journeys through identity creation; with this information, I might be able to guide a future student in a meaningful, positive direction in one of my own language classrooms. Furthermore, it is prudent for me to inquire from the educator in my study about
these biographical considerations; the development of a personal aesthetic regarding creativity is an aggregate, a cultivation of knowledge and beliefs that shapes an educator’s frame throughout their lifetime. An educator’s past experiences as a student of writing, then, are crucial in the development of a need for (and recognition of) creativity as a salient act of learning and intellectual development in the multilingual writing classroom.

**Creative Ideations of MLW Task-Based Approaches**

Compiled in this section of review are some notable examples of educators who have attempted to integrate creative writing activities into their pedagogical practices. The topics found in this collection include skill integration, grading methodology, creative genre conventions, and the language of emotional expression. Not surprisingly, this wide spectrum of literature should indicate the kinds of creativity used in the development of personal pedagogies. While it would be impossible for me to gather data in an EFL context at the time of this writing, educators practicing globally are utilizing varied techniques and exercises to elicit creative responses from their students, while attempting to meet their curricular and linguistic needs. As such I believe that the following studies exemplify the creative pedagogical stances that could be used in EFL writing instruction, and hope to illustrate their creative use by English educators around the world.

In her article on an intermediate-low level Turkish EFL writing course, Yasemin Kirkgöz (2012) studied student responses to the inclusion of creative texts—in the form of short stories—and creative writing exercises as a mode of increasing comprehension, vocabulary retention, and personal investment in classroom activities. The author presents a comprehensive review of positive applications of creative writing texts into ESL/EFL classrooms, stating findings from increased confidence in enjoyment of reading to increased vocabulary acquisition. She
characterized Turkish teaching contexts by referencing “boredom, lack of interest, a negative attitude towards learning, [and] an absence of stimulation to actively use the L2” as the norm (Kirkgöz, 2012, p. 112), and posited that the inclusion of creative writing texts and exercises could potentially inspire imaginative student writing through interaction with the text. The presentation of data was almost unanimously positive, with student responses describing a heightened level of enjoyment as bringing them closer to both the content and practices of the course. In closing, the author presents some loose guidelines for applying creative texts and exercises in an ESL/EFL setting, stating that the enjoyable nature of such tasks will generally increase student investment and, in turn, language skill improvement.

The findings of this study heavily promote the use of creative writing exercises in an EFL setting, and in some surprising ways. While the author’s proposal of using contextually relevant readings with PDP instructional designs is expected, it is the inclusion of more highly engaging writing tasks that shows serious promise for applications in ESL writing courses. The author described a letter writing task as a mode of inspiring students to think critically while promoting their L2 writing output. In this task, the students were asked to respond to the actions of a character in a story they read, and to develop a creative response to a fictional person. The resulting sample from one student exemplified creative response, as the student commended the character’s selfless actions of charity in the story (Kirkgöz, 2012, pp. 118-119). Student generated content was also supported by student responses to the included tasks and texts, with students mentioning their increased feelings of creativity, writing/reading confidence, and emotional investments as positives. As an application of creative writing, this strategy seems to be appropriate for including the reading and writing of creative texts.
This article, however, ignores a few critical issues. The author’s avoidance of definitions for theoretical applications (e.g., *meaningful* grammar use/context, *student centered learning*) skews the potential validity of her findings, as she never attempts to define what will be meaningful for her students; instead, she seems to define *meaningful* in terms of the vocabulary and forms that the students practice. While this may seem appropriate for an intermediate-low level teaching context, there was no attempt on behalf of the researcher to locate *culturally* relevant materials, citing the inclusion of non-Turkish texts as “real world experiences, relationships between people and society where the target language (L2) is spoken” (Kirkgöz, 2012, p. 111). Due to the separation from reality—no matter how interactive students may be with the texts—this real world experience is most likely stilted.

Similarly, to portray the student data in a positive light, the researcher admitted to editing student responses for grammatical correctness. While this might seem a positive consideration, the lack of unmodified student data changes the perceived result. The author’s unwillingness to show grammatical errors does not indicate how student’s responses fell under her definition of “error.” Instead, it describes an over indication of trust into the results, without consideration of researcher fairness. This slight tweak changes the study from exploratory to hypothetical, which seems to defeat its original intent. Similarly, I feel that this choice by the author is counterintuitive to the supposition of her teaching “real life” material; it should not be up to the author to manipulate data in order to suit her hypothesis. Kirkgöz’s (2012) students developed their own creative responses to the course material, regardless of the way that they may not have succinctly fit into the standardized grammatical forms proposed in the course outline. So, to say that the students committed “errors” diminishes the exploratory nature of the writing that they completed; the errors in the writing should take subsequent position to the nature of the writing
that students produce in these situations. Just as Canagarajah (2011) showed in his study centered on a class with both multilingual and monolingual students, negotiating the meaning of a purposeful and explorative act in writing can open students to various possibilities for their own linguistic advancement, rather than quashing them for the purposes of research or standardization.

Opposite to Kirkgöz’s (2012) study, the following seems to encapsulate the spirit of creative writing pedagogy in the multilingual classroom: providing students with culturally relevant outlets for their own interested studies. In Scott Stillar’s (2013) study, “Raising Critical Consciousness via Creative Writing in the EFL Classroom”, the author creates a strong case for the inclusion of creative writing exercises in advanced Japanese EFL classrooms. Stillar (2013) begins with a discussion of supporting literature behind his ideations of Creative Writing and Critical Consciousness, which he describes as “center[ed] on promoting a deeper and multifaceted understanding of the sociocultural and political realms” (p. 166). Utilizing this framework, Stillar advocates the inclusion of creative writing exercises as a means to practice functional use of English and to increase the critical consciousness of his students regarding sensitive topics, specific to a Japanese context. Stillar’s findings showed that the class was largely receptive to the style of the assignment, and that the students embraced the ideas laid out more so than he had originally hoped; their use of internet research brought surprising vocabulary words and ideas into the following classroom discussions, spurring further critical debate.

Overall, the research presented in the article seems to be a success. The author, however, is quick to point out the potential failings of the study, citing his own Anglo-American teacher status as a stumbling block to his student’s comfort with his critical prompts (Stillar, 2013). With
all of that in mind, he still considered the study a success in terms of functional application and bolstering classroom enthusiasm for writing. In terms of my own study, I believe the author’s attentiveness to the cultural needs of the students, mixed with the desire to provide appropriately challenging writing prompts, is an ideal to seek in educators of creative writing with multilingual writers. The researcher’s concerns regarding his limitations also gave me some information to pause on, specifically in terms of the discussion of personal identity, background, and researcher positionality.

While the tone of the following article is distinctly about creative writing pedagogy, and less so on the field of second language acquisition, Dan Disney’s (2012) *Poetry as radical technology* illustrates a solid grounding in the integration of language skills. Throughout the article, Disney (2012) described the background theoretical and philosophical research–ranging from the works of Aristotle (p. 7) and Ezra Pound (p. 11) to those of empirical contemporaries like David Hanauer (p. 6)–that served as the basis of his design, while simultaneously interpreting student interactions. While it is clearly stated that his primary intent was the development of creative competence in his students, Disney mentioned that, “teaching L2 tertiary students how to craft poems transfers creative knowledge skill-sets characterised by increased aptitudes for linguistic variety and complexity” (Disney, 2012, p. 5).

Specifically, it was his discussion of inspiring students to move toward an emergent language acquisition, toward “creative zones where language is a material with structures (grammar, syntax, diction), surface textures (phonemes and potential sound patterns), and tensions (forms, idiolects, registers)” (Disney, 2012, p. 5), that illustrated much about his personal approach to teaching. He may not have used the jargon for EFL teaching, but his reasoning–that students can build functionality through creative language use–is one that I mirror
myself. This new envisioning of multiple skill integration could help in the development of useable materials and writing prompts, as well as an interpretive framework for a writing practitioner’s creative development of materials for a writing classroom. While Disney’s work could be seen as the ‘qualitative’ approach to incorporating poetry into the EFL classroom, the following article by Iida focuses on quantifiable results.

This study, authored by Atsushi Iida (2008), seeks to describe the negative effects of teacher centered instruction in Japanese EFL classrooms and the ways in which an expressive pedagogy would address the issues promoted by this teaching style. The author suggests the inclusion of haiku poetry as a portion of this expressive pedagogy, stating that teaching it in an EFL context would promote learner autonomy and induce the development of personal voice. Especially promising features in this piece are the included strategies and materials for the grading of haiku poetry (Iida, 2008). Systems of governance that place high standards on testing—as we have in the United States—do not typically instill the need for full language skill integration. This article, while not in direct opposition, proposes a means to work inside that stifling space. This framework could be seen as the opposite side of Disney’s (2012) work, with the highly quantifiable rubric laid out for use. Iida’s (2008) methodological perspective, however, maintains the need for a creatively driven approach to English writing instruction and provides a highly functional system of grading and feedback to epitomize both institutional and student needs.

Asma Mansoor’s (2014) “Ekphrastic Practices in Catalysing Creative Writing in Undergraduate ESL Classrooms” introduces her specialized definition of the concept of ekphrasis, “the post-modern notion of a text which places both a written text and a graphic representation within the category of a ‘text’ since both incorporate multiple semiotic forms in
the process of signification” (p. 209). Throughout the article, she uses this definition in the
development of varying creative writing exercises, implemented in a Pakistani undergraduate
ESL context. An important part of her framework for establishing ekphrasis is the discussion of
multi-modal signs as a mode of mediation into artistic understanding, with the added intent of
inspiring learner’s own interpretations of foreign ideals and concepts.

Through the visual depictions of speaker interaction in foreign (primarily American and
British) documentaries, television segments, movies, novels, and plays, it was possible for
students in Mansoor’s (2014) study not only to glean and interpret new information, but to recast
this information within the terms of their own socio-cultural background. Nativization of foreign
texts was of further importance, since the students in her class were taking the forms that they
learned from heavily westernized media. Some student’s excerpts showed their willingness to
recast the presented stories into a Pakistani context, in the forms of a narrative, poem, or play of
their own. The author states that this willful action on the parts of students potentially bolsters
the legitimacy of Pakistani English and Pakistani Literature in English (Mansoor, 2014, p. 225).
This article seemed to tie into the importance of personal voice, proposed by Iida (2008),
considering it a means to taking control of one’s L2. It can also be seen in line with the proposed
definitions of creativity by Tin et al. (2009), as the appropriation of these stories can be seen as
novel within the sphere of Pakistani English literature. This framework of creative recasting,
coupled with the potential for engaging teacher-inspired modules on varying subjects,
exemplifies my primary takeaway from this article: the development of creative writing exercises
does not have to be so heavily reliant on the format of what the students will write, but on the
theoretical purpose and direction of the exercise itself.
In the following study, Tarnopolsky (2005) illustrates some of the beneficial outcomes of a pre-intermediate Ukrainian EFL class in which the students were given consistent instruction in creative narrative writing. As a follow up to an earlier study, the author performed this experiment to gauge the response of pre-intermediate learners to larger bodies of reading (with a focus on genre conventions) and longer genres of writing. Overall, the author’s findings were positive, with noticeable strides made not only in the depth of self-expression but in syntactical accuracy, working vocabulary, and use of increasingly complex sentence structures. He elaborated on the integration of language skills via editing activities.

While the bounds of this study present ample referential material for developing a curriculum, it seems staunchly grounded in its positivity. The author even goes to say that creative writing “should be taught to all future professionals in the area of language (whether L1 or L2): specifically to future EFL teachers, translators, and interpreters” (Tarnopolsky, 2005, p. 87). He makes this statement earlier in the article as well, that students who “learn English for their future profession (…)” will be the most motivated to explore the possibilities of the language (Tarnopolsky, 2005, p.77). Statements such as these, while promising, never show the full experience of all involved parties, and place a gloss over the potential difficulties of the students. Nevertheless, this article illustrated a sound theoretical framework and a set of guidelines for introductions to increasing difficulties of exercises (through genre changes) at progressive points in the semester (Tarnopolsky, 2005, p. 79, 82, 85). This dependence on genre conventions can be seen in Disney (2012), in which students came to emergent discoveries in the target language with new writing prompts. These methodological points will be useful, not only in developing a strategy for in-class study in the near future but in developing a writing curriculum later.
Chamcharatsri (2013) studied a group of four male Thai students, interpreting their ability to express the emotion of fear in both their L1 and L2 (Thai and English, respectively). The background literature for this study precipitated its inception, as the author notes a distinct gap in the studies surrounding emotion in English language teaching, that is, expressions of fear in written discourse. To this end, Chamcharatsri sought to recognize the ways in which expressions of fear are manifested between Thai and English, and attempted to contextualize them from within his own scope as a speaker of Thai.

Findings from this study may have various implications for practitioners utilizing creative writing pedagogies with multilingual writers. Namely, Chamcharatsri (2013) noticed various levels of intimacy with the meanings of words in both Thai and English: where one participant thought his exposition of a fearful life event in Thai more succinctly expressed his experience than his exposition in English. Conversely, two other students felt that the content of their expositions in English more thoroughly expressed their feelings of fear. Chamcharatsri elaborated that this could have been due to the differing meanings, or the lack of equivalencies, between words in Thai and English. This study, then, illustrates the needs writers may have in fully expressing their emotions. While, in Chamcharatsri’s study (2013), English may have made for a more elaborate illustration of the fearful event (p. 71), culturally grounded concepts like ‘wai’ (p. 66)—a formal greeting, also used for respectfully acknowledging others within Buddhist practice—had a distinct loss of meaning in English for the study participants. These concepts illustrate a need for the co-creation of meanings between a multilingual writer’s L1 and L2.

Tying into the work of Bizzaro and Baker (2014), Chamcharatsri (2013) closes with the idea “that passion is always a part of expressive writing,” implying that emotional expression in these forms is inseparable from the rhetorical writing found in an academic setting (p. 73). In turn, a
student’s control of language surrounding emotional expression might contribute to their future academic endeavors.

While this literature review could not possibly represent the full extent of research conducted on creative writing pedagogies with multilingual writers, it does display a spectrum of innovative ideas for use in an ESL writing classroom. As evidenced by the previous authors, attention to detail in regards to integrating multiple language skills, developing relevant exercises, and recognizing linguistic and cultural strengths of the individual are a few approaches, among others, to effective and creative writing pedagogies.

**Closing Remarks**

In order to further understand the ways that instructors use creative writing with their multilingual writers, more information could benefit the depth of this study. However, what is evident from the compiled sources is the nature of what creativity means to the educators who use it, and what benefits are lacking in the classes of those who do not. As is shown in the course of this literature review, a view of open-mindedness assists greatly in creating a positive space for multilingual writers. When considering the needs of multilingual writers, any suppositions made in regards to their desired content could perpetuate hegemonic action against their cultural background. In fact, the only supposition that could reasonably be made by an educator comes from Ostrow and Chang (2012), in that there should be *no* suppositions when it comes to *forms* in creative writing; the rule governed nature of writing coupled with the freeing nature of creative expression may, in turn, be an ideal learning space for budding multilingual writers. For the purposes of the current study, this review sharpens the critical lens through which I will observe an English educator and their creative writing pedagogy. In turn, I will be receptive to
the actions, behaviors, exercises, and most importantly, the reasoning that an educator utilizes to enrich their students’ learning process.

Through the course of this literature review, the guiding question—how English educators incorporate creativity into their classrooms—has been shaped by individual trends in the literature. In terms of individual identity as it is shaped by creative writing, it might be said that creative writing exercises might be the catalyst for shifting ideations of the self. While this theme may not have been most strongly represented in this literature review, the studies in question did provide the impetus for further research; as writing comes from a space of personally invested knowledge and belief, so will it be intrinsically tied to the linguistic upbringing of the individual. Likewise, the investigation of communities of practice for multilingual writers requires further research. Freeze-frames from a few countries could hardly exhibit a recognizable pattern in community trends. However, these studies, both inside and outside of the university, exhibit the ways that creative writers have sought to include and support multilingual writers, from novice to professional levels. Finally, individual examples of creative writing pedagogies at work in the classroom, while enthralling, do not always instill a clear picture. Instead, what this literature review is written to achieve is a gestalt image, a collection of points that begins to meld into a larger cohesion of viable and meaningful pedagogical practices. The end result of this review, then, is not a completed picture. It is the beginning of a broader idea for how a pedagogue decides upon a philosophy for teaching, how that philosophy is embedded in socially relevant experiences, and how those experiences reflect the lives of the students he or she has taught and will teach. One’s collection of personal experiences and perceptions potentially leads to the point of a developed pedagogy, which, in turn, is added to the frame. Cyclically, we reframe our perceptions of our students through our own perceptions of ourselves.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The following section outlines the methodology of the study, designed to elucidate the creative approaches of both instructors and students to course writing assignments. Interpreting creativity in the multilingual writing (MLW) classroom required data based upon the individual responses of participants, as these responses illustrated their personal understandings regarding the nature of college writing, the intention of the course in which they are teaching/learning, and their own perceptions of the aesthetically creative utterances that they produced for the course requirements. Due to the classroom itself, to the makeup of the class, and the backgrounds of the instructor and students, the unique interactions in which participants engaged should provide a set of data indicative of the learning environment that a basic MLW classroom is intended to achieve. With this creative practice in mind, the research questions are designed to shed light on this classroom setting:

- How did the English language teaching (ELT) instructor implement her own ideation of creativity into the basic MLW classroom? How do these ideations of creativity reflect the instructor’s aesthetic frame as they are applied to a creatively founded pedagogy in the ELT classroom?

- How did multilingual writers respond to the teacher’s writing assignments?

- How, if at all, did the multilingual writers perceive or utilize their own ideations of creativity in their assignments? How did these writers negotiate the meaning of creativity with their instructor and/or with their peers?
This chapter will describe the approach to personal responses, my positionality as a researcher, the research site itself, methods of participant selection, the methods of data collection and analysis, and the ways in which all of these steps seek to answer the proposed research questions. In this approach, the desired gestalt should represent a classroom setting in which students are able to actively take hold of the language they are learning and to apply it in ways that are surprising both to them and to their instructor.

**Qualitative Study**

In order to illustrate students’ and instructors’ creative acts in the MLW classroom, it would first be prudent to describe the need for qualitative data in the bounds of this study. Primary forms of data for this study include: a pre-class interview with the instructor; field notes of the proposed classroom activity; exit interviews with a focus group of student participants; a solo exit interview with the instructor; and copies of relevant assignment prompts and syllabi from the instructor and willingly provided student drafts. This study draws heavily from the methodology laid out by Pomerantz and Bell (2007). As the authors illustrated in their study, both the elicited and unexpected student verbal responses displayed a level of novel production through playful use of multiple languages. Through the collected field notes and transcriptions in their study, Pomerantz and Bell (2007) found that “language play [their primary code] was not dictated by activity type. Learners engaged in language play when … expected … (i.e., during role plays and games) and when … not necessarily [expected] (i.e. during small-group discussions)” (p. 562). Like these researchers, I chose these multiple methods of data collection to address intersecting instances of creative acts, as they are originally instantiated by the instructor and, in turn, interpreted by the students. Any agreement or disagreement between participants’ statements in data sources presented an opportunity for further analysis, as the
novelty of a creative act would almost certainly look different to a participant than it would to me.

Field notes of in-class interactions provided one avenue for obtaining a rich form of such comparative data, especially in terms of the students’/instructor’s intentions as they are elicited in their discrete course requirements. In other words, collecting field notes allows for the triangulation of data between my participants’ writing samples and interviews and is designed to strengthen the evidence of creative acts as they are utilized in the basic level MLW classroom (Creswell, 2012). Interviews, on the other hand, were designed to draw out individual participant perceptions of their own creative acts and how they saw them as acts in fulfillment of the requirements of the course.

**Research Site**

Research on this topic was performed at Western University of Pennsylvania (WUP), a predominantly white institution situated in the northeastern United States. According to the school’s website (Western University of Pennsylvania, 2016), WUP is the site of hosting and student exchange programs, most notably connected with universities located in Saudi Arabia and China. Aside from the growing influx of students from these countries, diversity at the university is admittedly shallow, with the largest portion of the student body hailing from the two major American cities within driving distance.

Multilingual students at the university hold various positions and majors, though a large portion of them are also enrolled in non-mainstream English language classes and tutoring at the university. According to the WUP undergraduate course catalog (2015), “non-native students of English who have not been admitted as undergraduate students, either international students or

---

1 All names of people and institutions are pseudonyms.
those from the US for whom English is not their first learned language, are required to take an ESL Screening/Placement Test” prior to their registration in any classes. Concurrently, the liberal studies requirements of the university maintain that all students must pass an introductory college writing course (ENGL 101) and an introductory research writing course (ENGL 202). Any students who do not place into these classes are admitted to the university’s language institute for intensive English instruction. As they grow in their level of English proficiency, multilingual students transition out of their intensive English language training and into the writing intensive 101 and 202 courses to complete their liberal studies requirements through the university. Specific sections of these courses are set aside for students in the midst of this transition and have been deemed “MLW” to denote the population of all students in the course as multilingual writers. MLW sections are taught by certified ELT professionals, and candidates for these sections include those who have begun or recently completed Ph.D. work at WUP or those who are in positions as assistant professors. The class on which this study is focused was denoted as a MLW section of ENGL 101 and appropriately represented the population of multilingual writers that could provide the desired responses.

**Classroom Case Study**

Participants for this research were comprised by nearly the entire roster for one MLW section of ENGL 101, including the instructor; all but one student returned the informed consent form to participate in the in-class writing exercise. MLW sections of intensive introductory writing courses offer the kinds of research spaces that I might encounter as a future ELT professional. For this reason, the MLW classroom offered both the professional participant and the student participants about which I am most interested. This setting and diverse group of
research participants provided the needed case through which I could inspect the creative acts of multilingual writers and an ELT instructor in a basic MLW college writing course.

Participant Selection

Due to the instructor centered nature of this study, participants were first selected by availability; once a roster of available MLW sections was open, I was able to consider the array of instructors who were viable for the elicitation of desired data. During the development of this methodology, the ideal instructor was one who practiced or discussed creative pedagogies with interest and one who incorporated at least some of these interests into their interpretation of the university’s requirements for the course. Serendipitously, I was offered the chance to work with one such instructor as I was preparing to make the final choice. As a part of my Master’s coursework, I was placed in my instructor participant’s ENGL 101 MLW section and was introduced to the class as an observer. This allowed me the opportunity to build rapport with the instructor and students prior to conducting my own observation of an in-class writing assignment that would fulfill my requirements.

Once the intention and bounds of my study were informally discussed with the instructor, I extended the formal invitation to participate in my study. Once she agreed to participate in the study, similar contact was performed with students, two weeks prior to the observed in-class writing exercise upon which the study is centered. A description of the study was provided, and a formal invitation, by way of an informed consent form, was distributed to student respondents. As previously mentioned, all students but one returned the informed consent form; in the case of this student, his writing sample was not collected, and his interactions with the instructor or other students during the writing exercise were not recorded. Finally, student participants were asked to volunteer for a post-activity focus group interview. Students who expressed an overt desire to
participate in the interviews were selected, and those students were then provided another informed consent form to ensure their understanding and knowledge of the interview recording process. This sample was originally to be limited to five participants, though as it stood, only four participants showed interest in this focus group interview by the time it was conducted.

**Methods of Data Collection and Analysis**

As mentioned previously in the justification for qualitative study, the desired data was most readily found in recordings of individual utterances, in the form of written papers, classroom interactions, and interviews. The collection and analysis of these data sources fell asynchronously to one another, meaning that, while one source of data was being collected, another was under analysis. This staggered timing allowed for constant reconsideration of data as they were presented through field notes and writing, culminating in the completion of the post-course interviews; these asynchronous steps are described in the following procedure. Next, my rationale for the continuous analysis of data governed by the operationalized definition of creative acts is discussed.² Finally, my own positionality as a researcher is an important consideration in this process as well, as is discussed in greater length at the end of this chapter.

**Procedure**

The overview of procedural stages is as follows:

**Stage 1: Interview with class instructor.** A preliminary interview with the instructor was performed, seeking to describe the ways she incorporates creativity into course development. Through the use of semi-structured interview questions, I sought the instructor’s professional characteristics as they relate to relevant teaching experiences, educational background, personal aesthetics, and pedagogical philosophy.

² See *Defining “Creative Acts”* in Chapter Two for a more detailed description
**Stage 2: Preliminary interview analysis.** The preliminary instructor interview was transcribed and analyzed according to the interpretive aesthetic values described as a creative act. Course materials presented by the instructor for analysis were also inspected according to the definition of a creative act, and are considered alongside instructor interview data.

**Stage 3: Collection writing samples and field notes.** During the second half of the semester, the instructor chose a prompt that she found prudent for teaching a lesson on descriptive writing (this prompt is discussed in much greater detail in Chapter Four). On the day that this prompt was used, I took double sided field notes in order to include as much contextual information as possible, including student-teacher interactions, student-student interactions, and any other utterances I could catch (Creswell, 2012). Directly after the class period was over, I wrote my inferential comments on the second half of my field note document in order to capture student positioning, posture, and placement in classroom space that proved useful in contextualizing utterances (Pomerantz & Bell, 2007). Finally, at the end of the class period, students submitted their writing samples to me directly, without the instructor having seen them.

**Stage 4: Focus-group and post-course interviews.** Prior to the last day of class, students were invited to participate in a focus group interview regarding their experiences during the in-class writing exercise. Student participants who expressed interest in the interview were provided with the operationalized definition of a creative act, and were then formally invited to participate in the focus group. A post-course interview was conducted with the instructor to seek her description of creative acts on her part and on the part of the students. This interview also further elaborated upon instructor responses from the pre-course interview in terms of the course design and student responses to individual writing assignments.
Stage 5: Transcription and member checking. Interview data was audio recorded and transcribed. Participant perceptions were be measured for their content, as participant reports of creative acts may only incidentally be creative acts in themselves. To ensure that instructor participant data was accurately interpreted, some member checking was performed prior to aggregation into the final study.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was performed consistently throughout the study to consider the different ways that creative acts may manifest themselves. Due to the highly personal and subjective nature of personal aesthetic values, I inspected individual participants’ responses through the construct of a creative act. By defining and observing these creative acts, the proposed effects of creative pedagogies should be seen as a synthesis of participants’ responses to the course and their recognition of different modes of participation in the course as creative acts. Within the bounds of this study, the performance of data analysis hinges on the definition of a creative act. In operationalizing a creative act, the intention is to leave open all avenues for coding creativity as it may be seen within study data. In short, without this definition, the data produced from this study would supersede its use in a study of creativity.

Due to the style of data collection and analysis utilized for this study, a previously unforeseen aspect of analysis arose during the process of data transcription and the writing of Chapter Four. Specifically, the instructor interview preceded the in-class writing exercise by about two weeks, meaning that the relevance of our discussion had the potential to change. Due to reasons to be discussed in Chapter Four, she used her authority to change the specific exercise between class periods; by the time I observed the instructor’s in-class exercise, I was taking notes on an in-class exercise the relevance of which we had not discussed. In order to parse out
the relevant information and its interaction between the discrete segments of the data, I chose to present the data in Chapter Four in chronological order. By using a chronological, partially narrative-driven format, I hoped to elaborate on the complicated and perception-driven nature of teaching and learning in the multilingual writing classroom. As Chapter Four will show, perceptions of effectiveness and expectations for classroom instruction can change very quickly, and this thematic element of compulsion/reframing/response is indeed very relevant to the discussion of creative acts in the multilingual writing classroom.

**Researcher Positionality**

As I learned from the work of Stillar (2013), my presence as a white American graduate student is a problematic aspect within the bounds of this research. In order to fairly collect data from my participants, I have been careful not to impose any of my judgments on the outcomes of the study due to my outsider status (white, American, monolingual), even within the American university setting; I am neither a multilingual writer or teacher, nor do I hail from any country in which English is not a predominant language. As an observer, collector, and analyst of class proceedings and other materials, I must remain open to all possibilities, including the scenario that I might misunderstand or misinterpret some creative acts entirely. Therefore, a view through a critical lens is only desirable if the lens has been tested for clarity, and that clarity comes with a desire to shape a writer’s critical abilities without presupposing or imposing any prejudicial information onto them.

**Closing Remarks**

In all, this chapter was meant to elucidate the need for these specific types of data, and the ways in which they will be used to study creativity. Collecting various iterations of similar data types for students and instructors will help to triangulate the elicited responses. Personal
reports and perceptions of creativity are slippery ideas, difficult to encapsulate. However, with the aforementioned procedure and constructs in place, I hope to recognize the use and perceptions of creative acts in the MLW classroom. The following section presents the collected data from all participant interviews and writing samples.
CHAPTER FOUR
PRESENTATION OF DATA

Introduction: On a cold day, early into Fall

.... we milled about her cubicle in the large-group office designated for all the other adjuncts, an aged holding pen where, I imagine, not much actual work was done. Its dreariness stifled the air in an oddly public way. Our next choice of interview space did us no better, a tiny mutant annex near the cluster of offices where her husband was situated. A mixture of places somewhere between a lunch room, a library, and a motif of a water cooler, it was neither inviting nor comfortable, neither private nor acoustically forgiving. We sat awkwardly, waiting to begin as I futzed with my phone-turned-recorder, when Qiu made the first on the fly decision that would change my thesis: “Should we just go outside? Like, walk around?”

We exited Leonard hall, lingering on the front steps as torrents of kids red nosed from the crisp October air flowed dutifully past us. I held up my phone, my fingers positioned in a grip to open our conversation to the listening microphone, a grip that would begin to feel cold and very claw-like, very soon. We began.

***

As the interlude above indicates, the bounds of the formal interview for this study were changed on a whim, a fact that I find to be aesthetically apt, thematically relevant, and appropriate for a starting point in the presentation of collected data. In order to capture the sense of creativity of students and instructor alike, some liberties in flexibility pushed this study in unforeseen, yet meaningful, directions. Flexibility was just one predisposition this young pedagogue introduced as a crucial belief about her pedagogy. Likewise, for all of the reasons above that I would call any act “creative,” I would call her personal philosophy on teaching a
creative pedagogy, a divergent, novel, experimental, and occasionally dangerous approach to the practice of teaching. Regardless of the precision that was originally planned for this study, I hope to show in this section that the creative proclivities of the focal instructor should indicate the appropriate sensitivity which creative pedagogy represents: the ability to change with the relevance of course materials and needs of the students present. As will be illustrated later, this situational awareness on the part of the instructor did not go unnoticed by her students; this dance between planning and experience shows just how an instructor’s conscious and creative ideas can shape multilingual writers’ perceptions of the writing process.

The purpose of this section is to detail the multiple data sources collected, in order to address the research questions laid out in Chapter Three:

- How did the English language teaching (ELT) instructor implement her own ideations of creativity into the basic MLW classroom? How do these ideations of creativity reflect the instructor’s aesthetic frame as they are applied to a creatively founded pedagogy in the ELT classroom?
- How did multilingual writers respond to the teacher’s writing assignments?
- How, if at all, did the multilingual writers perceive or utilize their own ideations of creativity in their assignments? How did these writers negotiate the meaning of creativity with their instructor and/or with their peers?

The first portion of this section details an interview with the instructor of the proposed ENGL 101 course, a doctoral candidate at WUP named Qiu. Supplementary information about her course syllabus will be covered to help contextualize the information discussed in her interview. Next, a presentation of the collected field notes will be closely followed by a description of some student writing samples from the in-class writing assignment; this tandem discussion will be
used to illustrate the in-class collaborative process, both among groups of students or between students and their instructor. Next, the student focus group interview will elucidate individual student perceptions of the in-class writing exercise. Finally, the instructor exit interview will be discussed in order to show similarities or differences regarding proposed intentions for the in-class writing exercise or the class more generally. Within the bounds of this discussion of the data, it is my intention to illustrate the ways in which the creativity of the course instructor is, as Grosz (2008) argued, an aesthetic framing, reinterpretation, and response to the perceived classroom space/actors/requirements. As such, I hope to show through this illustration how the instructor’s developed pedagogy ties together personal aesthetics and values with a creative pedagogical model to generate a unique system that also fulfills the needs of the students and the requirements of the course.

**Instructor Interview**

At the time of this writing, Qiu was the instructor of the observed ENGL 101 MLW section and was working on her doctoral dissertation at WUP. Following her completion of the M.A. in TESOL at WUP, she became concerned with the uses of multimodality and creative writing in the ESL classroom, and sought to develop a study that observes the two. Whether through her upbringing in China or her studies in the U.S., the development of her aesthetic frame was crucial in addressing questions about her course planning choices and pedagogy. The personal philosophy she cultivated in the learning environment of her home contributed significantly to the start of this frame, and her approach to teaching English in the U.S. relies heavily on this framework. Through these elements of her upbringing and background, I believe that Qiu’s pedagogical practices hint not only at the aspects of teaching that are personally relevant for her but at those she believes might be more enriching for her multilingual writers.
Background, Aesthetic Perceptions, and Philosophy

As a native of China, she completed her undergraduate degree there before moving to the United States to complete her master’s degree. From the way that she described her life there, she was raised with a view that diverged from the predominant assumptions about her role in society. Her grandmother, one of her primary caregivers during her youth in China, passed on to Qiu what she called her “artistic eyes,” a feature that is central to the world view that she has developed for herself:

My mom stayed there, too, but in the daytime I was with my grandma. My grandma was really artistic […] and she could do the little sculptures with just anything… With the clay. So vivid. She can draw and my mom can draw, and they all have artistic eyes. Even though they didn’t have education on that. (Qiu, interview, 10/16/2015)

This focus on self-directed study and divergent thinking permeates much of her teaching philosophy; she even mentioned using her textbook to cover the poetry journals that she would secretly read in her high school math class. When it came to her development of an “artistic eye,” she recognized her family had a large impact on her beliefs about creativity and learning, rather than traditional schooling (Qiu, interview, 10/16/2015).

Her upbringing in a rural seaside town also imparted an awareness of the natural world, something she wished to share with her students. When it came to her own personal perceptions of writing, she was constantly seeking to increase her awareness of what she considered to be “a network” of “connections between people and the outside, including other people, including nature, including the buildings, the blocks, the leaves, the plants” (Qiu, interview, 10/16/2015). As she continued, she described the way that her connection to the natural world was also intrinsic to her feelings on writing. In discussing her views on art and creativity, she was quick to
mention her underlying belief about the interconnectedness of life in the world, describing it as “rhizomatic,” branching out underneath the surface of the perceivable world and interacting in unforeseen ways. With this interconnectedness in mind, her underlying goal is that when she teaches, she tries “to get students to get to know themselves better, too. That’s a powerful thing to aim at and also to experience.” (Qiu, interview, 10/16/2015). In the end, her aim as an instructor is to enkindle curiosity, so that they “look at the details of the places they go to more, and they will pay attention to what people say more;” she even elaborated by expressing the hope that, on any given day, “they can hear a kind of noise, or sound, that wouldn’t even appear in their life. So, literally, they experience life more […] by having this exercise” (Qiu, interview, 10/16/2015). Intermingling in her background, these artistic and naturalistic modes of perceiving the world contributed greatly to her finding a place in academia and eventually developing a structured course for her multilingual writers. As such, the frame that any instructor may build over a lifetime is the foundation for the sorts of pedagogical insights they will find years later, just as aesthetically driven responses to one’s surrounding world are crucial to operating within it.

Although Qiu carried many of these perceptions and ideas with her throughout her lifetime, it seemed that more recent experiences made her aware of this personal philosophy, leading her to develop it into a personal pedagogy. To clarify, prior to teaching at WUP, Qiu believed herself to be unique in her literary and creative interests, though she never acted upon her personal insights. Even during her stint as a university instructor in China, she was considered by her colleagues to be unconventional, or “too philosophical;” she even mentioned her mother’s belief that Qiu is “not practical,” “not realistic,” or “not grounded in this world” (Qiu, interview, 10/16/2015).
Importantly, however, the relationship that she developed with her husband, a professor at WUP, was crucial in drawing out her creative abilities. In fact, she recognized a turning point in her creative development soon after she and her husband met in the summer of 2012, when she started to write poetry in English. After he bought her a book of poetry by the philosopher Rumi, she “started writing on that book, because the words just triggers all the imaginations, you have to put things on the page. Otherwise you just don’t have a place to go to” (Qiu, interview, 10/16/2015). Soon after this revelation, she began writing poetry more consistently and sending it to publishers. Overall, the relationship that she developed with a like-minded writer opened her to the idea that her personal perceptions of nature and the world might be applicable to her teaching:

But it was not until I met [Bill], my husband, did I realize that that’s a way of living. I thought it was just normal and then, when I saw him and he said I talk in a way that not everybody talk, the same way, I realized, “oh, ok!” So gradually, I got to know myself better by meeting people who are like me. (Qiu, interview, 10/16/2015)

This deeply personal connection with another teacher unlocked applicable beliefs and abilities that Qiu would eventually come to use in her classroom. As she revealed in further depth later in the interview, exchange with other instructors and writers influenced her decisions as a pedagogue and in the development of her syllabus for the ENGL 101 course.

Qiu’s perception of creativity seemed to be an amalgam of her upbringing in rural china, her transition to the U.S. university setting, and her personal set of aesthetics, derived from her naturalistic and nurturing experiences with her closest relatives. The process of creating something outside of oneself, according to Qiu, is a way to “feel one’s existence more,” and this experience is not limited to those who perceive themselves to be inherently creative; to some
extent, every writer has the ability to interact with their perceived world and simply requires some “stimulation to arouse that nature in themselves” (Qiu, interview, 10/16/2015). She addressed this holistic sense of creativity as a way for her students to thrive in her ENGL 101 class:

[… In] the process of creating their past experience right now by writing this memoir […] a lot of them wrote in their reflection, [that] they’ve never thought they had that emotion but they did… I see that as a basic element in our experience, but we just don’t think it as it is, like, creativity. (Qiu, interview, 10/16/2015)

By asking students to detail personally meaningful experiences, she required them to interact creatively with their past while simultaneously authoring an essay in fulfillment of the course requirements. This lead to her develop an approach that she hoped would achieve this goal.

Curricular Development for Creativity Among Multilingual Writers

Qiu’s ENGL 101 class was centered on a book project which asked students to include four distinct genres of essay writing: informative, in the form of student reflections on an interview a parent or parental figure; narrative, in the form of a longer, memoir-styled piece; argumentative, in the form a foreword for another student’s memoir; and reflective, in the form of a cover letter written as either an afterword to their book or a letter to their instructor (Refer to Appendix A for a full project description). To further bolster the evaluative process of writing, students were required to participate in workshops during class, either as the presenting writer or as the creative critic.

In developing her syllabus for ENGL 101 MLW, Qiu was guided by a number of professors at WUP, both by older, well-established pedagogues and younger, praxis-savvy associates, including her husband. From the latter, she received suggestions on possible writing
prompts and strategies which allowed her “to change [the focus of the lesson] to suit [her] needs in classroom” (Qiu, interview, 10/16/2015). For example, the overall book structure was planned from the outset of the course, but Qiu made it clear that her intentions in teaching writing through this project were much more reliant on student needs:

[You just have to lead them into it, which we all always need when it comes to dealing with new things, new experiences [...] when it comes to putting those moments into the classroom or into the students’ head, you just have to facilitate them during the process. You just have to know what their struggles are… They didn’t know how to start. (Qiu, interview, 10/16/2015)]

Adhering to a malleable class structure, she was able to “feel what [her students] need[ed]” by responding to their questions with a new activity, either in the next class period or the same day (Qiu, interview, 10/16/2015). In terms of her mentorship with tenured professors, Qiu had a positive experience as a GA in a mainstream ENGL 101 class, where she learned ways to facilitate students’ abilities to “figure out [their] own way[s] of wiggling into it;” she learned from her mentor teachers to “lead” her students into writing without taking their current, varying language proficiencies for granted (Qiu, interview, 10/16/2015).

As Qiu showed, instructors who wish to develop and enact their own pedagogical designs may be well justified in formulating their own practices similarly to those instructors they admire and learn from. While this strategy might not lead directly to totally novel classroom activities and interactions, it allows instructors to borrow activities that they are already familiar with and reframe them with their classroom’s needs and demeanor in mind. Qiu even admitted that her older mentor’s class did not utilize as many “creative writing elements as [hers], so he didn’t really give students … writing activities, small activities, or brainstorming” similar to hers.
Considering the progress she had already seen at this point with her multilingual writers, however, she seemed justified both in structuring her class similarly to his and in tweaking it to fit her creative pedagogical style (Qiu, interview, 10/16/2015).

Likewise, Qiu’s approach to WUP’s shared syllabus for ENGL 101 was again a matter of wiggling and interpreting. Qiu described what may have been a moment of revelation in her mentor teacher’s class, when he began to rely on the students’ abilities as writers in a mainstream class to direct them through exploratory conversations about their topics, and even when he expected his students to know the phrase “more showing, less telling.” Qiu recognized a distinct difference between this mainstream classroom style and the style she would have to adopt with her students:

[H]e led the students to think by themselves, which is hard to implement into my own class, because you can’t tell multilingual students to just “think by ourselves.” Or, more showing, less telling? What is that? They don’t know, they are so new […] New to memoir writing… and new to the American writing, English. Even though they are not that different to start with, they think it’s different. That’s what counts. (Qiu, interview, 10/16/2015)

In this statement, Qiu alluded to the idea of her ability to present students with a viable way for them to approach writing in English, to fulfill the requirements of the WUP shared syllabus for ENGL 101 while navigating and taking ownership in some more typified American university English writing practices. Reminiscent of Tay and Leung’s (2011) call for the appropriation of American and English literary canons, Qiu’s syllabus and materials exuded an awareness of the established university-wide norms, as well as an interwoven desire to reinterpret them creatively for the benefit of multilingual writers. By simply choosing “a writing activity to fit their needs”
whenever she perceived some difficulty or confusion, Qiu was able to taper her class structure to include writing prompts and activities that she had borrowed and modified or even created from scratch, effectively enabling her to “create a bridge through these kind[s] of introduction writing activities, a bridge between their former writing experience to their English writing experience” (Qiu, interview, 10/16/2015). As she had done for herself in becoming a more established writer, Qiu connected her students’ histories with their current pursuits in writing. Likewise, ELT instructors have the opportunity to search for the pivotal moments in their own linguistic development that might translate to their students’ beliefs about the process. While this strategy may seem overly dependent on the instructor’s perceptions of language learning, its coupling with an adaptive teaching mentality would generate a shifting classroom that could eventually find its way to the needs of the student body.

From Qiu’s descriptions of expectations for student writing in the class, creativity in the classroom was her means to the end of students achieving certain affects in their writing. As students were required to write informative, narrative, reflective, and argumentative pieces in the class, she approached different writing genres based on the audiences and messages that they are used to address, all the while incorporating writing activities that asked students to input aesthetically pleasing reflections on their own life experiences. By navigating tone through different genres, Qiu sought to embed student writing in a space that was personally meaningful while pushing it toward relevance for an audience:

We did have a handout of those three things, novel, memoir, and blogs. So, I think that’s related to the audience or the tone. […] We have a lot of tones, and then we start to write different things […] when we talk to grandma, when we murmur to ourselves, when
we talk to each other, it’s all different. So students need to realize that, to be very aware of that when they write. (Qiu, interview, 10/16/2015)

She even recognized that early drafts of her students’ writing took a declarative tone, saying that “they tend to [write declaratively] in any kind of writing. … Like ‘hey, do you know that? Let me tell you that’” (Qiu, interview, 10/16/2015). By providing a lesson on blog posts and the subsequent requirement that they keep a blog for class, she invited students to continue using a tone they felt comfortable with while differentiating it from other styles of writing. In contrast, she described writing a memoir as a more personal act and one that alludes to the audience only as a part of the performance:

Memoir is more of a person on the stage with the spotlight on, and then the person can’t really see the audience […] it’s more like performing by ourselves, and then knowing that somebody’s watching, but you don’t know who they are. You can’t talk to them because they are in the dark. (Qiu, interview, 10/16/2015)

Her decision to make an explicit difference between the genres of blog and memoir was founded in the idea that the details in a memoir were more crucial to for the reader who was not directly addressed. Writing in detail, from Qiu’s perspective, was the first step in telling a story to the readers that students would most like to address. By addressing the genre specific nature of memoir writing in conjunction with its deeply personal subject matter, she was utilizing a writing project that would ask students to use their innate creativity while maintaining the goals of the class.

**Discussion of an In-Class Writing Activity**

For the final portion of the interview, Qiu discussed a challenge that she noticed her students having and, upon the suggestion of my interests in creativity in multilingual writing,
decided to address it in an in-class writing activity. The issue at hand was a level of simplicity in student writing that seemed to detract from the impact of the piece, what she called “layering.”

By not layering a simple explanation of past events with the reticence of the writer in the present day, students seemed to be missing some of the deeper descriptions and reflection that she had attempted to inspire from their written memoirs. For this, Qiu suggested a writing exercise that she called “voice of innocence and voice of experience” (Qiu, interview, 10/16/2015). This exercise, adapted from an activity by non-fiction writer and poet Sue William Silverman (2009), was meant to ask students to write from the perspective of a younger version of themselves about an incident in their lives and then reflect on the same incident from the perspectives of their older selves.

The end goal of this exercise was to illustrate for students how to not only describe their past experiences but to reflect on them as well. Describing the way that this activity would connect to the class, Qiu postulated that “memoir is not all about the product, it’s about you reflecting on the former experiences, [and ] it’s about you writing down your reflections now, too;” she continued, saying, “your thinking, that’s the only way you can lead the reader deep into your life in the past. Otherwise it’s just a story, there’s no you in there. It’s just so remote.” Her goal, then, was to require students to understand themselves while simultaneously addressing their audience in the most appropriate way. However, her awareness of student needs in the classroom setting came to the fore during the later proposed class period, and the depth of layering in student work was not addressed in the way that she originally proposed. Instead, Qiu chose a new activity based upon overall negative students response to “voice of innocence/experience,” since she noticed in another class period that many students in the class just “didn’t get” the original activity (Qiu, field notes, 10/29/15). As the next section shows, this
last minute decision to change was her response to the stimulus of students’ experienced difficulty, and as such, it illustrated the importance of aesthetic perception, reframing, and creative response in the multilingual writing classroom.

**In-Class Field Notes and Student Writing Samples**

About two weeks after our first interview, the scheduled day for my observation came. I had already collected student informed consent forms a few weeks prior; my preparations were made in such a way that I would simply observe Qiu and her students during the activity, and that the written samples would be submitted to me after class. Unforeseeable circumstances, however, would make for one of the most appropriate free radicals in the proceedings of my study. During this exercise, which Qiu later came to call “the Room” exercise, students collaborated to build their own narrative in a space that they chose to build together. In turn, this collaborative activity provided students with the opportunity to explore and negotiate their own experiences and to place them into a written piece using new and sometimes fantastic linguistic devices. Although I had the opportunity to observe the classroom interactions, my data collection was limited to field notes detailing the individual interactions and occasional overheard conversations in the room. Framing the proceedings of the class as a series of negotiated and collaborative interactions before discussing the student writing samples should help to add an additional layer to their analysis.

**Class Proceedings, Informed by In-Class Field Notes**

At the beginning of class, Qiu handed out an assignment sheet to each student, and she began to read short prompts from the sheet, twenty-four in total. She then asked students to arrange themselves into pairs or groups of three, and she handed out plastic baggies and a few sets of scissors. When I received and examined the assignment sheet, it was not the one that we
had originally discussed during our interview. Rather, it was a series of prompts that asked the
writer to describe either a physical space or their personal affect that they perceived themselves
to experience in that physical space (See Appendix B for full prompt). Qiu began by explaining
to students that they would use these prompts to describe a physical space that they were familiar
with, and they were to do so in “story” form (Qiu, field notes, 10/29/15). She complicated this by
asking students to either cut or rip the paper apart to isolate each individual prompt. The students
were asked to start with #1, “Enter the room,” and write at least one sentence to complete this
idea. They were to draw the rest at random, until they reached #24, which prompted them to
“Exit the Room.” This way, she insisted, they would be able to mix-up and randomize their
prompts to “expand” their writing (Qiu, field notes, 10/29/15).

It is important to note here that Qiu made a conscious effort to use the “Voice of
innocence/experience” exercise in the class period prior to the one that I observed. However,
during my observation, Qiu commented to me privately that the activity did not go over well
with her other students. She speculated that the task may have been “too advanced,” because it
seemed to her that students in the prior class period just “didn’t get it” (Qiu, field notes,
10/29/15). As I would later discover, Qiu chose to center the class on a content generation
prompt for creative non-fiction writers, originally authored by Richard Hoffman (2009). In order
to specialize Hoffman’s pensive and introspective prompt, Qiu modified the original by
excluding about one third of the original content, keeping mostly those questions and items that
prompted the description of sensory images. Rather than forcing students to belabor over an
activity that did not resonate with them, she chose to change the activity between class periods to
address another consistent concern she had in reading their work—description and detail.
Utilizing this malleability can be a significant asset to an instructor in the classroom, as in-class time is precious and limited.

The class period was filled with interactions one might expect to see in the writing classroom, especially those regarding the completion of the task at hand. However, the collaborative aspect of this exercise also seemed to energize students in the process of developing their curiosity in and interpretation of the prompts, which lead to some interesting interactions among student groups and with Qiu. As questions popped up around the class, Qiu moved back and forth to offer opinions and guidance. For example, one student was having trouble fitting his story into the format in which he assumed he was supposed to write. When Qiu intervened, she suggested that he write in a narrative format, then she encouraged the whole class to “start [their sentences] off with a verb” (Qiu, field notes, 10/29/15). In this case, she noticed that other students may have been struggling with this format requirement and suggested a strategy for the whole class to use. Likewise, she suggested that prompts that would disrupt the flow or coherence of their stories could be discarded in favor of another random selection. As another overall suggestion, Qiu announced to the class that for this activity, “[t]he product is not important. It’s the experience that is important. Expanding something, that is the skill” (Qiu, field notes, 10/29/15). Student inquiries even reached the point of resistance to the lesson format. At one point, after discussing with a group of students, told the class to skip any prompts that made little sense in the progression of the story, meaning that students had the opportunity to decide if their story was progressing in a way they found meaningful. After this announcement, the students overall volume and excitement of their individual discussions seemed to increase.

Spoken language in the process of student interactions represented much of the information collected via field notes. Many student pairs were essentially predetermined by their
seating prior to the beginning of class, even though Qiu insisted that they could move around at will. During my prior observations of this class, I noticed that students would typically arrange themselves according to their L1, so many students sat with friends who shared their L1; this class period was no exception to the typified speaker alignment. Still, there were some notable exclusions during this activity, including one group composed of an Indonesian student and a Saudi student and a number of students who preferred to work by themselves. This linguistic diversity inspired a lot of discussion in students’ L1s as well as English, allowing for some idea exchange and negotiation.

A few instances of smartphone usage occurred around the classroom, where students would keep their device on their desk while writing, check their phone, type briefly, and then return to their writing. I assumed that these students were texting, though one group’s interaction with me revealed another more heartening possibility. An exuberant group seated in front of me was exchanging in Mandarin, going back and forth before writing anything else down, until they turned to me and asked in English: “what planet is it that Superman comes from?” As a general fan of all things Science Fiction, I knew that Superman was born on Krypton; however, I was surprised to see that the student took my spelling, plugged it into her iPhone translating app, and reported it back to her group for a consensus decision before they included it in their work. I had taken for granted that students might need to refer to outside resources for the process of drafting on the fly, and that the smartphone was one of the quickest ways to confirm some additional vocabulary with groupmates. Likewise, students asked for assistance from another teaching assistant observing the class, who I overheard discussing the sounds of cooking. While these were the only examples of outside resource and knowledge use that I was privy to during the class observation, a later data source supports this further.
As the class was wrapping up, Qiu stopped the students in order for them to share their writing with each other. However, the students seemed reluctant to read their written work aloud, and almost seemed to ignore the request to stop. A number of students continued to pull new prompts out of their plastic baggies, and those who did stop preferred to show their work either directly to Qiu or myself. To conclude, Qiu addressed the class to remind them that the purpose of the activity was to “help [them] to picture [their] scenes, to write about more places filled with people” (Qiu, field notes, 10/29/15).

For the purposes of this study, I believe that a glimpse into the classroom interactions helps to contextualize the negotiations and creative exchange that students exhibited in their written work. That is not to say, however, that the field notes I collected could capture every minute detail of student interactions, or that this information could be used to deconstruct the creative process. Rather, by explicating various glimpses at student interactions, I hoped to offer a gestalt image of the collective process involved in authoring a creative act. As a focusing of multiple creative aesthetic frames on a stimulus, or even an instance of “chaos” (Grosz, 2008, p. 4), students took the in-class writing assignment as an opportunity to creatively reframe Qiu’s reframing of another author’s work. As the next section will show, many students took these liberties and used them to their fullest extent.

**Student Writing Samples**

The whole class of twenty-two was present on the day of the activity, but due to the collaborative nature of the activity, only twelve student writing samples were collected; a thirteenth was not collected due to that student’s choice not to participate in the study (Student writing samples can be found in Appendix C). In terms of the creativity of student writing, it was not possible for me to perform member checking with every student due to my own time
constraints, as well as the time and potential emotional strain it would have placed on students. However, there were obvious points at which students took liberties with the assignment by authoring fantastic, sometimes comical stories, rich with sensory details. In some of the best examples, the stories were coherently placed in a fictional world or presumably non-fictional setting in the student’s life; in others, students more directly responded to their prompts using simpler declarative statements, occasionally using more vivid description for a particular scene or idea.

This collection of ideas through the random progression of the prompts allowed students to play with the form and presentation of their stories, and by inspecting the writing samples sentence by sentence, it is plain that student interpretations of the prompts were widely varied. One surprising submission came from a solo writer whose memoir I had encountered during previous class periods. He typically used short, declarative statements to express his exuberance for school, work, or personal wealth, and his memoir, while chronological, seemed to lack reflection on the narrative’s purpose. However, by beginning presumably with #7 (“Where were you before you arrived?”) and following up with #8 (“Who was there? Describe your interactions with that person or persons. Was that interaction one that you would have wanted?”), this student reflected on what seemed to be a prior experience that he valued. His in-class writing offered a view of his life among friends in his hometown, where they would sit on the quiet mountainside and watch cars pass on the nearby highway, pulling pranks and joking with each other until midnight. This passage offered a more honest glimpse at the moments that he valued, before he returned to a montage of his daily work routine. Considering my exposure to his previous drafts, there seemed to be some novelty in this deeper personal reflection, as it was atypical for him to
go beyond what seemed to be his own expectations for a meaningful narrative; in this example, he seemed to reach beyond the material and into a more poetic realm.

Eleven of the twelve prompts mentioned food in some capacity, possibly owing to the fact that #16 and #17 asked the questions, “When was the last time you ate?”, “What did you eat?”, and “Are you hungry?” Student responses fluctuated between entire stories about the experience of eating and simple, direct statements that the narrator was either hungry or not. One group’s narrative had them standing on the bottom of the ocean, looking up at the surface and marveling at the depths; these students collected fish and seaweed that they had noticed earlier in their story, then they climbed onto shore to cook them over an open flame. Another group—the ones who enquired about the planet Krypton—implied that their narrator had somehow turned into a car and sought gasoline to fuel its super strength. Still others used this allusion to hunger to express the tension of a formal interview; these two students described the feeling of walking into an interviewer’s office, being very aware of one’s appearance, feeling the uncomfortable growl in their hungry belly, and looking forward to the treat of a “12 ounce steak” at Ruby Tuesdays. In each case, the use of sensory details expressed some strong connections between their perceptions of the realistic/fictional worlds in which their stories were placed, illustrating the aesthetically driven choices involved in the process of writing a narrative in this style.

The examples above show the various interpretations that students brought to the writing activity shared in class. Even in cases where students did not follow the prompts and formatting suggestions that Qiu laid out, each group seemed to find some novelty in the group composition of the activity. Only one student writing sample seemed to indicate either the student’s limited linguistic abilities at the time or his purposeful resistance to the activity; regardless, his writing did still draw on some of the Halloween tropes that were more commonly observable on campus.
during that time of year. Including this sample, each student writing sample seemed to access an aspect of their lived experience—most typically in the university setting—or recognizable ideas about the writing styles they chose to include in their piece. In all case but one, then, the student writing samples indicated student’s willingness to cooperate with and engage deeply in the instructor’s creative interpretation of this activity.

**Student Focus Group Interview**

About three weeks after the observed writing activity, and following the closer inspection of the student writing samples, four students voluntarily stayed after class to provide their insights on the proceedings of the in-class activity. They were also provided with a copy of their sample and were asked to take a few moments to reflect on what they had written. Of the participants in this focus group, I was fortunate to have two complete authoring pairs who represented two strong submissions (these selections can be found in Appendix D). During our short interview, we discussed their perceptions of the activity’s effectiveness and relevance, and then shifted toward their perceived employment of creative acts in authoring the pieces.

After refreshing herself on the content of her group’s writing, one student, S1, was quick to mention the odd timing of this activity in the timeline of the semester. She mentioned that there was a gap between when she would have found this content to be most useful and when the lesson was taught, stating that Qiu “already talked about what kind of details have to have in [the memoir assignment]” (S1, interview, 11/19/2015). For her memoir about some strange events she experienced on vacation in Egypt, she had already put herself “in that space, [s]o it was like [she’d] already done the same thing.” Qiu’s exercise did not go unappreciated, however, as both S1 and S3 agreed that their practice with this skill contributed to images and ideas that they

---

3 To comply with my IRB approval, students will remain unnamed. These numerical categorizations for students are based on the order in which they first spoke during our focus group interview, as per the interview transcription.
incorporated into later drafts of their memoirs. This comment may illustrate one of the drawbacks to a malleable class structure, since students who may have already grasped certain important concepts in the course content could feel disenfranchised by a change made on the behalf of other students. However, regardless of the concepts embedded in the material, these students’ comments could also contribute to the argument for more in-class practice of writing strategies, as even these experienced students made changes to their final projects based on this practice in class. From this example, S1’s awareness and criticism of the in-class writing seems to allude to an instance of her own personal aesthetic frame acting as a catalyst for her ideas. She recognized the ways in which a creative reframing on Qiu’s part helped her to form new ideas, though, in terms of its novelty, she recognized a disparity between her expectations for the activity and the activity itself.

In further discussion of these additional ideas and resources for their memoirs, S2 and S3 brought up the crucial point that these writing activities had some basis in their real life experiences. Their writing sample, in which the narrator experienced the stress of preparing for and entering a college interview, was filled with different examples of things they had negotiated with each other. S2 implied that the narrative was intended to remain on the topic of the interview, but their experiences from the day leading up to the in-class exercise contributed some strange sources of inspiration. Explaining the shift from the interview to the gnawing thought of hunger, S2 revealed that the thought process behind one of the more comical lines in the piece came from her interactions with S3 and her roommates:

The expired bread is because I go to [S3’s] room all the time … And sometimes there might be [food that] might be expired the next day, and then they didn’t finish eating it! So I’ll put it in their fridge, and then it sometimes just stays there for another week or
so… and so she thought it’d be a good idea to put that inside [the narrative]. (S3, interview, 11/19/2015)

These overlapping interpretations of S2 and S3’s real experiences lent themselves to composing a short yet dense piece of fiction, allowing these students to practice and play with the writing strategies the class was intended to teach.

Another potential strategy utilized by all four students was that of inquiring for new and fitting vocabulary. As S1 mentioned later in the interview, “[e]verything was new” when it was included into their writing sample; by this, she meant that neither she nor her partner, S4, had written about their regular excursions to their favorite Thai restaurants (S1, interview, 11/19/2015). During the in-class activity, they asked the other teacher-observer in the class for the relevant vocabulary to describe the sounds and smells of their favorite restaurant; their finished product used the sensory descriptions “clattering utensils” and “hissing oil” for the noises coming from the kitchen. Likewise, S2 and S3 made mention of their narrator’s outfit in upon entering their interviewer’s office. In order to describe the confining and uncomfortable fit of their protagonist’s “wool blazer” and “pencil skirt,” S2 mentioned that she had searched one of her favorite shopping websites to find “what was the right thing to say” (S2, interview, 11/19/2015). In both cases, these students used resources to complete the ideas that were most relevant to their narrative, even though those ideas were previously beyond their abilities to express.

In closing the interview, the students expressed their enjoyment of the exercise, even considering some previous skepticism at its timeliness. For S1, the exercise helped her to compose more specific description for her memoir:
I think for like the physical part, I was able to do that a little more. Before that I didn’t.

So, we’re writing, like we reach out our hands, and grab the fork. And that really helped me writing new sentences in my memoir. (S1, interview, 11/19/2015)

This awareness of physicality is crucial to narrative writing, and this exercise seemed to directly inspire this type of writing for many students, S1 included. Similarly, S3 found that she was actively encouraged by Qiu to include her “inner thoughts” or even “something funny” as a part of her memoir (S3, interview, 11/19/2015). By directly addressing her students’ involvement with the subject matter of their writing, Qiu was pushing them to write in a more detailed, more personal way. As a response, all four of these students interacted with their lived experiences in a way that was relevant enough for inclusion in a narrative, resulting in the fictionalization, reinterpretation, and eventual elaboration of their own personal memories as creative acts. This push toward the personal aspects of student writing fits with Qiu’s intention to have her students inspect their world more carefully. In turn, an aesthetic framing of the personal importance, meaning, or humor of a situation became a topic that could fulfill the requirements of the course while edifying the student’s abilities to perceive and reflect.

Instructor Exit Interview

After the completion of Qiu’s ENGL 101 MLW course in the Fall, she and I met for a final follow-up interview in the beginning of the spring semester. As we were working in another class together at the time, some of our discussion spread into the proceedings of the current semester, though this led to some interesting overlaps in themes that we had discussed in our first interview. To start, Qiu’s course design for a section of ENGL 202 MLW–Research Writing for Multilingual Writers–during the following semester was progressing along the same naturalistic, deeply interpretive pattern that it had taken for ENGL 101 the semester before. In discussing the
ENGL 101 writing activity and the completion of the course, Qiu touched upon the importance of her pedagogical style in recognizing and addressing multilingual student needs and how she saw students’ writing change. This also led her to discuss the progress of a particular student in whom she saw significant improvement over the course of the semester. This final interview with Qiu illustrated just how poignant an appropriate she found creative writing techniques to be for multilingual writers and also showed how she would continue to hone her ideas for course development.

To begin our interview, we first discussed exactly why she had changed the activity that I was set to observe. When I had asked Qiu about this change previously, she had given me the impression that the students just “didn’t get it.” She elaborated on this point, however, by mentioning that the students in her earlier class understood the concept that “voice of innocence/voice of experience” was meant to address. According to her, students had already begun to write in this style in their longer drafts, though it this was not clear to her until she collected them later. So, rather than spend a class session on an activity that had her students “run[ning] out of words,” she opted for the more productive activity (Qiu, interview, 2/4/2016).

This reflects on the malleability of her course syllabus, which could be seen more as a collection of possible avenues for instruction rather than a strict set of guidelines. This strategy, though time consuming, addresses student needs on a more discrete basis, and therefore allows for aesthetic pedagogical judgements to be made in direct response to a notable and particular skill gap.

Interestingly, when she discussed “the Room” activity, she both corroborated and refuted some comments statements made during the student focus group interview. When I mentioned the student participants’ comments, she was not surprised to hear that S1, S2, and S3 had such an
easy time of writing strong sensory details in their samples. However, she said that, for the most part, students did not “do the details. That is one thing that is missing in, maybe, seventy percent of the people’s work” (Qiu, interview, 2/4/2016). This disparity she noticed provided greater justification than I had previously noticed for the switch, since the narrative genre she chose to utilize was so highly dependent on sensory detail.

Aside from the addition of detail into student writing, Qiu recognized the importance of the selected genres included into the course, as they were so divisive in the creation of the course and defined students’ interactions with the class materials. Since the course required that students would have to partake in informative, narrative, argumentative, and reflective writing, Qiu’s course had to justify the inclusion of an appropriate writing assignment for each, while maintaining her desired goals as a creative pedagogue. In light of the course’s completion, Qui was most compelled by the parental interview assignment, rather than the memoir the class was centered on, as the most poignant piece for the class. To begin, Qiu’s feedback from students was the most positive regarding the interview assignment; many of her students found “that it just really opened up their eyes, and let them see their parents [the focal participants of each student’s interview] more” (Qiu, interview, 2/4/2016). She further elaborated on the effects of this assignment on the class:

[A] lot of them said that they literally got closer with their parents. And then, that was designed as a stepping stone for writing a memoir. So they interviewed their parents first, and then they feel shocked by how little they know about them, and at the same time they realized there might be something within themselves that they can dig, and they can write more… emotions, things that they went through. (Qiu, interview, 2/4/2016)
From this statement, then, it can be seen that the interview informed the depth of students’ writing, rather than any “inherent” need I may have originally supposed. As Qiu’s stepping stone to the narrative, the interview portion of the class provided students with an avenue for deeper personal investment, as well as the impetus for the development of stronger skills acquisition.

Finally, our conversation came to the question of whether the chosen design for this course had “worked” the way that Qiu had intended. To this question, she discussed the development of one student in her class who had struggled significantly with the process of writing his memoir. According to Qiu, this student’s past experiences with school had not inspired him with a sense of personal investment, as he wrote in his memoir that about how “he didn’t get to study the things he really wanted to study in college. And then he became a bad student from then on. … He wouldn’t go to school at all, and then he missed the classes” (Qiu, interview, 2/4/2016). She noticed inklings of this in the student’s performance in class, but noticed a change one day during another in-class writing assignment centered on contextualizing other students’ overheard dialog:

[You] capture what they said, and then you add one description, one sentence from your own perspective, about this dialogue. And he didn’t get it. And then, when I was talking to him about what these people said, and then what to add, and he just suddenly said “Oh! I understand. I know it.” And I just saw that all over in his memoir. (Qiu, interview, 2/4/2016)

According to Qiu, prior to this moment of realization, he had already produced around 8 pages for his first draft. However, by addressing his question in a way that he was not familiar with, she opened him up to the opportunity to engage with his writing in a different way:
So in that question, so, like two people talking, and you add such a simple thing, you add a description, you add feelings about your ideas about what they’re talking about… just that little thing made him realize that [...] the importance lies in the process of writing the memoir rather than producing it for me. (Qiu, interview, 2/4/2016)

After this interaction, Qiu noticed a powerful change in his writing. While these successes are left up to the interpretation of the instructor involved, the training and experience that she has cultivated as a teacher and writer should not be discounted. The perception of a reshaped worldview, even from an outsider’s perspective, might indicate both the change in skill and the change in demeanor that this ENGL 101 class was meant to achieve. Likewise, a case could be made for the varying worldviews that any pedagogue brings with them to the writing classroom. Just as instructors ask their students to bring their personally meaningful and relevant experiences to the fore, instructors personally developed aesthetic frames help them to perceive and reinterpret their students’ learning needs in a way that is unique to them. Therefore, opening one’s pedagogical development to these reframes and responses could lead to a more personally meaningful sense of pedagogy while more succinctly addressing the linguistic development of students.

**Closing Remarks**

The presentation of these various data sources should speak to the multilayered interactions that the instructor and students in this class underwent in the process of creating their final works. By interviewing the instructor, I hoped to show that her pedagogy lent itself in the intended fashion to the employment of the observed in-class writing activity and that this malleability may be a crucial trait for creative approaches to language instruction. Further, I hoped to show, through the conflations of opinion and perception among the students and
instructor, that while the instantiation of a creative act is slippery to define for certain, they can clearly be seen as the source of students’ finest moments in the writing classroom. In the following section, I will discuss the intersection of these multiple discussions, in order to elaborate further on the nature of the creative acts instantiated in the course proceedings.
CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSION OF THEMES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH

Introduction

Throughout the process of writing this research, my first and most immediate concern proved to be my own interest in maintaining this thesis as a creative work. When first undertaking it, I realized that it would not shape itself into the likeness of my previous creative pieces, though it would take a level of concentration and consistency in style that I had only dabbled in previously. With the greater portion of it behind me now, I believe that I have managed to swim against the wavering currents toward something unique, a perspective both succinct and (hopefully) thought provoking. This goal pushed me toward a piece that better encompasses my understandings of aesthetics, creativity, and the continued struggle for multilingual writers to utilize these intangible tools to grip onto their real lives. As such, I find that I have used all of those intangibles myself, grasping at the synaptic burn that comes with changing ideas in a field that I mistakenly believed I understood. In a sense, then, the nearly two years it has taken me to conceptualize, plan, research, and write on the nature of creativity through an aesthetic lens has shaped my own perceptions of creativity, has shaped my own ability to see my work or choices as creative acts in themselves. One implicit, possibly unforeseen result of this work is the change I have undergone as a learner and a pedagogue. As I will share below, I believe that this can translate to the ways that other teachers, whether young or well-established, might conceptualize and research their roles as fosterers of creative minds.

The most problematic aspect of this research, as has been illustrated time and again in the previous pages, is the intangible nature of an aesthetic view of creativity. However, by witnessing and inspecting aesthetic choices in writing, I believe that I can argue for the nature of
creativity utilized by the instructor and students in the focal ENGL 101 class. These aesthetic choices, or “creative acts,” represent the purposeful and personal choices that all focal participants made in the course of their writing, alluding to the idea that so much of learning and teaching is not only a matter of overlapping personal aesthetics but of nearly constant creative inquiry and interaction as well. With this in mind, I hope to suggest some strategies for instructors, including myself, to utilize their own sets of creative aesthetics in the development of their own pedagogical standpoints and, therefore, their understanding of themselves as instructors; I do this in the understanding that an aesthetically pleasing/challenging/provocative idea has the power to evince a similarly driven response from a student writer.

As this case study was focused on a single focal instructor and one of her classes, the only inferences and suggestions I can make are based upon the evidence that she provided for me in this microcosm; the suggestions for instructors that stem from this research should then not be seen as a prescription for how to develop one’s creative pedagogy, but should instead be viewed as a description of one possible permutation, one example of alignments that provided ample opportunity for creative work in the multilingual classroom. In order to elucidate this viewpoint, I believe it is prudent to simply follow the functional progression of my original research questions, as these are the guideposts by which I have collected and explored these perceptions of creativity and their ephemeral interrelation with the concepts of aesthetics. For the final time, my research questions are included here as a predictor of the following discussion:

- How did this English language teaching (ELT) instructor implement her own ideations of creativity into the basic MLW classroom? How do these ideations of creativity reflect the instructor’s aesthetic frame as they are applied to a creatively founded pedagogy in the ELT classroom?
• How did multilingual writers respond to the teacher’s writing assignments?
• How, if at all, did the multilingual writers perceive or utilize their own ideations of creativity in their assignments? How did these writers negotiate the meaning of creativity with their instructor and/or with their peers?

In order to comprehensively discuss these questions, this section will first begin with an analysis of the instructor’s upbringing as both a naturalist and as an artist, as these seemed to have a heavy influence on her pedagogical standards and pursuits. Then, topics concerning the students’ writing and participation in the class will be compared with the literature discussed in Chapter Two as many similar occurrences and themes obviated themselves among student related data. Following that, a discussion of the instructor’s perceived intentions for the coursework, through pre- and post-course interviews and syllabus excerpts, will be compared with the student expectations captured in the field notes and focus group interview. Intermixed in these discussions, the implications of this research should help to contextualize the observations therein. To complete this section, I will discuss the limitations and shortcomings of the study and how I might address these in future work.

The Aesthetic Frame: Mirror and Portrait of Pedagogy

As I learned from Qiu, the development of one’s aesthetic frame over time encompasses all of the help and hindrances, the successes and failures, the deeply held beliefs about one’s world and the outright misunderstandings, among so many other conflating aspects. These things in turn lead her to be the creatively driven instructor that she found would be most fitting of her beliefs and intentions, just as they might contribute to the development of aesthetic frames and pedagogies in other instructors. However, it makes sense that not every instructor would come to the same revelations and precise choices, and Qiu’s deviations from more traditional norms in
ELT found their root in her naturalistic and artistic understandings of the world around her. As such, she adapted to her own unique pedagogical style through the positive and negative experiences she underwent as a child, as a budding writer, and as an academic. Likewise, it is clear that her past experiences informed the way that she would go on to interact with her students, as a kind, consistently understanding instructor interested in the holistic development of her students as writers and as people. For these reasons, I believe that I see a split between her perceptions of youth, nature, and creative expression and the structured world of academia.

**Artistic Expression and Naturalism**

Qiu’s discussion of her upbringing and young life in China alluded to some of her proclivities as an instructor of English, and it was these early revelations that led, at least partially, to her development of a creative pedagogy. I believe the foremost indicator of these developments was her description of her “artistic eyes,” the seemingly critical creativity that she inherited from her mother and grandmother (Qiu, interview, 10/16/2015). Exposed to the self-taught artistic abilities of her caretakers from an early age, Qiu developed a sense of self-guided exploration as one of the primary tenets in her aesthetic frame. As she was building on her aesthetic perceptions and responses (Grosz, 2008), she was also developing her penchants for novelty (Tin et al., 2009), danger (Craig & Porter, 2014; Pomerantz & Bell, 2007), and personal identity (Park, 2013b). All of these aspects flowed together into the philosophical young learner that Qiu became over the course of her life in China. Accordingly, her artistic sense of exploration was possibly the most consistent aspect of her teaching philosophy as I observed her teaching and discussed it with her. Her understanding of artistic creativity bordered into her development of higher level concepts; she even stated that she would extrapolate her theoretical understanding of instruction as it was based upon her experiences as a teacher and learner:
… I want everything to be original, though when I think of theories I like to think about theories from really down on the basic levels and gradually climb up… sometimes I come up with ideas that are exactly expressed in certain theories, but in a more pure way… mine is … not polished, but it’s from the experience. (Qiu, interview, 10/16/2015)

These artistic eyes that she described may represent the beginning of her deeply creative aesthetic frame, as it is this perceptive ability that led to her to a theoretical understanding of her teaching through diverse experiences.

From her discussion of the natural world and her place within it, it seemed that her early perceptions of poetry and philosophy were tied closely together with her “rhizomatic,” interconnected understanding of life (Qiu, interview, 10/16/2015). Possibly due to her fascination with the beauty of the metaphysical world, she continually asked herself questions about her existence; likewise, she asked those same questions in passing during our first interview, rhetorically wondering:

[Why are we walking? What is this walking doing? … While our feet are touching the earth or the ground, at that moment, where are we? Where are we in this physical world? Where are we in this spiritual world? (Qiu, interview, 10/16/2015)

By cultivating and maintaining this curiosity for the underlying machinations of her world, Qiu harbored a deep connection between her perceptions of the world and her ability to express those ideas with others. As such, this could have led to her inevitable connection to the poetry community from a young age. Her underlying, rhizomatic view of the world through her writing reflects Deleuze and Guattari’s (1980/1987) concept of the rhizome, a philosophical treatise that recognizes thought as a self-replicating and largely non-linear “assemblage” of interconnected ideas (p. 4). Qiu’s rhizomatic view of the world through poetry seems to agree with these
philsophers’ recognition of the self-exploratory nature of writing as a system of deeply connected ideas, budding continually and tangentially. Likewise, Qiu’s desire to inspect her world through poetry might also reflect the work of Park (2013b), who recognizes writing as a mode for personal development through critical inquiry. If Qiu did internalize some of this critical inquiry from a younger age, it is possible that these philosophical viewpoints permeated her aesthetic frame and, later, affected her pedagogical insights.

Being that she was aware of trends in poetry and writing from high school age on, it is sufficient to say that language was one of her primary inputs for the witnessing, processing, and outward response to aesthetic beauty. Even as we walked during our interview, her gaze would shift to our surroundings, where she would comment on the leaves, the cold, or the underlying roots of the grass as a metaphor for our interconnectedness as people. These connections to metaphorical meanings would fuel our discussion, leading me to believe that she has inextricably tied her understanding of the world to her ability to describe it in words:

I want to look at this world in the way that only my eyes can see, and I want other people to look in that way for one second, which… has the possibility of changing your view of the normal things. (Qiu, interview, 10/16/2015)

The implications for this search-in and expression-of aesthetic beauty are twofold. Firstly, by seeking metaphorical understanding of her world and, therefore, her use of language, Qiu came to develop a more advanced and meaningful interaction with linguistic abilities throughout her youth. While this may not indicate her direction toward English specifically, it does say something about her linguistic development and her care for an ability to express and understand herself as well (Park, 2013b; Wan, 2014). Also important was her recognition and activity focused on a community of likeminded writers; she admitted seeking out and reading poetry
journals in her youth, meaning she exposed herself to potentially new and burgeoning ideas in
the playfulness, beauty, and danger of language (Bizzaro & Baker, 2014; Tay & Leung, 2011;
Tin et al., 2009). This community of likeminded writers, though distant at the time of exposure,
laid the foundation for her belief in a possible community of practice for her future profession
and her singular bent: language instruction through creative pedagogy.

These foundational aspects of her philosophical upbringing indicate certain life events or
exposures that may contribute to the development of a creative pedagogue. An early exposure to
the artistic or divergent cultures in one’s community might lead that learner to be more accepting
of difference in herself while leaving her conscious of the machinations behind common facets
of the world. In a way, it seems that this artistic or naturalistic divergence might be a product of
rhizomatic thought which, in turn, creates a self-perpetuating creative aesthetic frame, or vice-
versa. In either case, a tenacious sense of creativity eventually led Qiu to make choices from a
more personally meaningful perspective, which translated to her ability to push and reshape her
creative ideas into her future work. An upbringing interlaced with an appreciation of nature
might enrich one’s ability to see the inherent aesthetic beauty in the minute interactions between
people, which inevitably compound into the greater interactions of everyday life and, later,
experiential learning. While these inferences are my own, I find that this underlying aesthetic
framework might lend itself even to studies of less “creatively driven” instructors.

Hypothetically, an English instructor specializing in the work of Shakespeare will have had some
exposure to the craft, the performance, and the relevance of that author’s work within their
lifetime; it follows that one’s exposure will have been so aesthetically meaningful that an
instructor could dedicate their life’s pursuits to the furtherance of the field. In essence, I believe
that this case study model, if repurposed and performed again with another instructor, would
provide the background on that instructor’s pedagogical model and their penchant for certain teaching strategies. Likewise, I feel that Qiu’s background naturalistic and artistic beliefs make her choices as a pedagogue obviously, even inseparably related to her continually constructed aesthetic frame.

**Academic Refinement Through Personal Validation**

The next crucial layer of Qiu’s aesthetic frame was potentially derived from her experiences as a writer, student, and teacher at the university level. This period of academic refinement can be seen as split by her shift from the university setting in China to that of WUP. According to the interview that we conducted, the period prior to her arrival in the United States was characterized by her continual coping with the fundamental differences between her aesthetic perceptions and the expectations of her peers, parental figures, and employers. Just as she had admitted to subversively reading her poetry books during math classes in high school, she expressed a philosophical gap between herself and other instructors at her university in China. Where Qiu believed herself to be a “normal person,” her colleagues, as well as her mother and grandmother, believed that she was “too philosophical for a college teacher… [or] for a wife” (Qiu, interview, 10/16/2015). Though these expectations could not stifle the creativity she expressed in her own personal writing pursuits, it was clear that her creative pedagogies were not welcome in the stringent system to which she belonged. Qiu provided very little additional information about her time spent teaching in China, though it is clear here that her philosophical upbringing preceded these experiences. Therefore, it could be supposed that her reframing of and response to these beliefs about her teaching in China might have been in the form of a more subdued resistance or subversion. Qiu’s aesthetic frame, which she developed over her time living and teaching in China, continued to branch beyond the requirements prescribed for her by
her peers, supervisors, and parental figures. Considering again the concept of rhizomatic thought, Deleuze and Guattari’s (1980/1987) concept of a “rupture” could contextualize her experience; they state that a “rhizome may be broken [or] shattered at a given spot,” though it has the ability to “start up again on one of its old lines, or on new lines” (p.9). Following this pattern, Qiu’s rhizomatic philosophical views, though quashed temporarily by various institutional and personal barriers, would eventually find a new start in a different context.

The story of Qiu’s transition into the United States was unfortunately left out of our conversation, though the marker of greatest importance for Qiu was at the center of her pedagogical development. Through both of our interviews, pre- and post-course, Qiu clearly described the importance of her connection with her partner as a contributing factor in shaping her pedagogy. Having been a Master’s student at WUP for a short time, Qui came into contact with her partner in 2012, after which they became closer and discussed each other’s personal interests in writing (Qiu, personal interaction, 2/4/16). It was at this point that they recognized not only the value of their personal relationship but of their distinct expertise as writers in specific creative genres. As an instructor of writing at WUP and a fan of a radio project Qiu had been working on, he originally sought to meet her as a friend on facebook. Before long, Qiu described the summer of 2012 as the time that she first sent pieces of writing out for publication, got feedback from her partner, and fell in love with him as well. This could be seen as her first active step into a nurturing community of creative practice (Tay & Leung, 2011). Likewise, this deeply personal connection with another teacher unlocked applicable beliefs and abilities that Qiu would eventually come to use in her classroom. This aspect of exchange and adaptation extends beyond Qiu’s case alone, as illustrated by Mansoor (2014), Disney (2012), and Ostrow and Chang (2012), among others. Constant creative exchange among peers, whether as students
or as instructors, serves to inform the continued development of one’s aesthetic frame and, therefore, opens the challenges of a task up to more varied creative interpretations.

As Qiu’s studies continued, she also recognized the mentor teachers she had worked with for the beginning years of her doctoral work. These instructors shared with her their syllabi, their thoughts on “aural” approaches to multimodal teaching, and how this work might tie into her larger doctoral dissertation project. However, I find that there is no coincidental overlap between the period of time in which she came to meet her future partner and the time at which she began to fully grapple with the more meaningful pedagogical bent she now uses. Having received some validation of her creative pursuits, she was finally able to fully realize the ways in which her collected aesthetic framework might contribute to her work as a pedagogue. This realization compounded with the fact that she herself had experienced possible disenfranchisement due to the expectations in her previous employment, leading to an outward reaching blooming of her creative perceptions. Recognizing the ways in which she was previously unable to express herself creatively in a formal setting, Qiu adapted the tested methodology of a well-established pedagogue and blended it with her own naturalistic and artistic perceptions. In a way, this creative appropriation of academic syllabus design mirror’s Mansoor’s (2014) discussion of ekphrasis, where Qiu recognized the meaningful aspects of her creative expression and interjected them within the bounds of a relatively rigid genre. The result was a course syllabus designed to instruct multilingual writers on the strategic use of specific forms while simultaneously drawing on their experiences as multilingual students for content creation and inspiration. Her investment as a creative writer, artist, and multilingual English language instructor all cycled into this compulsion/reframing/response that she used to develop her pedagogy.
From a pedagogical standpoint, it should be clear that the aesthetic framing model that I have borrowed from Grosz (2008) has the inherent benefit of justifying important stylistic and methodological choices that instructors make. However, I also believe that this viewpoint could be used to extrapolate the meaning from pedagogical beliefs if they have not yet been reflected upon. That is to say, an instructor’s ability to reflect on his/her aesthetic frame might readily allow for the introspective deduction of some underlying themes in their upbringing and development as a teacher; these themes could then be used to inspect that instructor’s pedagogical practices and aid in the critical development of their pedagogical future. Using a reflective practice similar to Park’s (2013a) autobiographic poetic waves, introspection on the aesthetic framing and creative practices of one’s past might offer deeper insight to the meaning and intent of current practices, as these underlying factors inform our reframes of phenomena found in English language instruction. Creative reflection provides instructors with the framework to consider their backgrounds as teachers, in order to encapsulate their motivations and reasoning for creating the educational world they would like to see as a reality. In turn, this autobiographical narrative style is a tool for the creation of greater understanding within educators’ inner pedagogues. With introspection in mind, I believe that Grosz’s (2008) readings on the nature of art and chaos as they relate to our human perceptions stand as a valuable tool for complicating and deepening pedagogical thought.

**Reframes of Reframes: Student Reactions to Creative Acts**

Crucial to describing the intentions of Qiu’s pedagogy through this case study, student responses to the in-class writing activity were recorded in the hopes that this data would contextualize the instructor’s desired outcomes. Field notes detailing the face-to-face class period also served to provide a richer detail, since it is during these times that Qiu’s students had the
opportunity to negotiate the meanings and outcomes of their writing projects with her. Finally, the focus group interview invited a group of four students to vocalize their experience with the in-class writing exercise, providing a space for their perceptions of Qiu’s pedagogy and its effects on their growth over the semester. Through these three forms of data, it became clear to me that the students in this class were changing as writers and, therefore, changing the way that they might continue to operate as students. In this case, I believe it is most prudent to show the possible connections that these students underwent during the course, since Qiu’s pedagogy spoke directly to the intention of strengthening their writerly skill through their human perceptions.

**Strategic and Writerly Developments**

Having observed many of their interactions during the focal semester, I believe that students made substantial progress in their academic writing pursuits through the honing of some significant practical skills. The most obvious example that I can elucidate here are those skills pertaining to the practice of independent research and fact checking skills. While it was clear that Qiu’s students had successfully traversed the challenges of English language instruction up until this point, the students’ use of questioning tactics and data collection saw considerable testing over the course of the semester (Knoch & Sitajalabhorn, 2013). As an example, while it became clear to me that most students who used their phones were not texting, I cannot make the assumption that they *learned* this strategy for Qiu’s class. However, I can say that this class, through its creative interpretation of WUP’s shared syllabus, challenged writers to use their linguistic, social, and electronic resources to synthesize and author ideas that were once unfamiliar to them. As shown by the participants’ rich descriptions of kitchen sounds and fashion in writing samples and the focus group interview, it is clear that these students were able to
visualize a hypothetical space in which they could operate but that required further investigation to fully populate. According to Knoch and Sitajalabhorn’s (2013) definitions of the five desirable traits of student writing—“Mining Data, Synthesizing Ideas, Transforming Language, Choosing Structure, and Connecting Ideas” (p. 303)—students were operating on a critical level that achieved integrated skills development while maintaining the usage of their aesthetic creative choices. This interaction from students also mirrored Stillar’s (2013) letter writing activities, during which students provided their own vocabulary and topics for conversation.

Likewise, students’ pairing during the in-class writing activity proved to be an unexpected and useful indicator of the power of negotiated meaning for multilingual writers. As I heard examples of students parsing out the meanings of their word, sentence, and structural choices from the field notes and focus group interview, it could be supposed that this act of negotiation among student authors was a continually developed skill throughout the semester. While students may have developed some of these skills prior to their enrollment in the course, this space allowed for more constructive criticism (Zhao, 2014), rather than prescriptive grammar correction (Nelson & Carson, 1998). In her syllabus, Qiu prescribed the use of practical peer review sessions over the course of the semester, during which students would read one page of a classmate’s work before offering them one positive and one constructive feedback comment. Though these sessions were not observed for the data in this study, their effects were seen in students’ produced works. The primary example of this was obviated by the group who researched the terminology for their character’s fashionable clothing. As they discussed in the focus group interview, they melded their visions of similar experiences into a realistic depiction of pre-interview jitters (S2, S3, interview, 11/19/2015). By utilizing their honed skills in
constructive criticism, these two students were maintaining a relevant co-reflection on their life experiences while completing the in-class writing assignment in remarkable detail.

As evidenced above, integrated skills development and constructive feedback development stand as two very attainable goals for a pedagogue interested in the utilization of students’ aesthetic frames and capabilities. I believe that this observation might have implications for any institution that utilizes a shared syllabus for the purposes of teacher training or assurance of best practices. A creative pedagogical approach might inspire an instructor to reinterpret a set of constructive guidelines in such a way that their experiences with a body of students could inform positive change. The caution I would like to express, however, is that a shared syllabus in the case I describe should remain a set of constructive guidelines, rather than a monolithic document meant to remain staunchly, even ignorantly, static. Due to the slippery nature of defining student aesthetic frames, it still remains unclear what factors drove these students to work with each other, whether they were outside friendships, religious similarities, or simply an overlap in their aesthetic leanings. However, I believe it is due to the fact that these students chose to work together and were coached on techniques for developing creative acts in fulfillment of the course requirements that they produced strong writing samples.

**Personal Developments**

While the inferential nature of this section limits the observations I can make with certainty, a few students shared perceptions and written excerpts that alluded to some personal connection with their writing. Through the utilization of some aesthetically poetic language (Disney, 2012) and some autobiographical and cultural themes (Bizzaro & Baker, 2014), students fulfilled the requirements of the in-class exercise while eliciting the goals in Qiu’s pedagogical stances as well. As one such requirement, coming to some deeper reflection on
one’s upbringing proved to be challenging for some students. However, a surprising development came from one such student when he wrote somberly about the experience of sharing bonding time with his friends until nightfall, giving a glimpse into a life beyond his job, his car, and the annoyance of his morning commute—all later topics in his written work. Just as Kirkgöz (2012) suggests that students might be more willing to operate in the aesthetically creative space of a writing activity, this student willingly displayed a glimpse of his own personal background and provided deeper inferential reflection beyond simple declarative statements. And while he was not reachable for comment (he did not choose to participate in the focus group interview), his written work made it clear that he was grappling with a deeper sense of aesthetic development than his earlier work in the class had originally suggested.

Examples like this one provide the backing that illustrates how students’ expanding aesthetic frames over the course of a semester can exhibit concurrent strengthening with their writing skills. Just as Ostrow and Chang (2014) sought to describe the change one might undergo in the process of realizing the poetic self, this course was designed to draw out these students’ narratively aware and reflective selves—or as Qiu might say, their “artistic eyes”. Without the underlying push toward greater utilization of students’ aesthetic frame, this fulfilling cycle of reframes might never have happened. Instead, though, this class focused on directing students toward their aesthetic perceptions of their world as a potentially fulfilling element for the completion of the course.

If I can—and I know I can—I would like to offer the expression of a personal development I underwent in the process of research. This study, encompassed as in the realization and noticing of worldly chaos as a roiling stream of unending stimulus, opened my mind to concepts of creativity that I had internalized without first giving them words. Being a
writer by nature, my perceiving anything without words makes me crave to shape them, though I was using a process to do so that I could hardly give a name. For this reason, giving a name to creative acts, even if it is only useful in this study, was a feeling so necessary that it made me sick, physically ill, until I finally did it. Creativity can never be finished, I know, as it is an idea that each of us can envision as an entirely different, personally unique entity—that’s the point. Still, I believe that this action, this thesis as a long string of creative acts based upon creative acts, is a reflection of the lives that contributed to my writing it and of our ability to traverse life as individual, yet ephemerally tied, creative entities. This means much for my future as an English language teacher, since, if I continue to see the world this way, these creative instances will be pervasive throughout my entire teaching career, and throughout the rest of my life. I offer this information for any pedagogues who find that their perceptions of the world have always seemed strange or different to their peers. It is possible that the frame has already been built, building, and is ready for a more conscious social actor to take hold of it, utilize it, and add to it.

**Intersections of Perspective: Pedagogy’s Role in Fostering Creative Minds**

From Qiu’s naturalistic and artistic perspectives, she illustrated her own pedagogical grounding for her intentions in the course. However, her choices in course development showed a melding of her background and her training as a teacher, combining these distinct ideas into a form that supported her own intentions as a pedagogue while fulfilling the students’ current needs as language learners and future needs as college writers. Qiu’s course syllabus was meant to elicit crucial developmental progress from her students, namely through: the production of “essays that show structure, purpose, significant content, and audience awareness”; the act of becoming “a better writer by becoming a better reader of your own writing and the writing of others”; and, most importantly, the creation of “ways for making writing a means for
accomplishing personally meaningful and socially significant goals” (Qiu’s ENGL 101 MLW syllabus, p.1–See Appendix E for full description of student learning objectives).

From the discussions in the focus group interview, some of these students clearly made the connections that Qiu was seeking. As an example, S1 described during the focus group that she had some potential qualms with the placement of the in-class writing exercise, as this exercise encompassed a skill which she felt that she had already mastered. She later admitted, however, that this exercise did contribute some richer imagery and detail to her final memoir. In this interaction, I see two significant factors to the negotiation of student and instructor intentions as a product of creative interpretations to the format of class proceedings.

Firstly, S1’s in-class writing exercise illustrated the utilization of detailed writing in one student pair, and the writing samples of other students seemed to corroborate this trend in almost every case. S1’s concurring admission that it took her and her partner very little time to complete the activity seemed to be an indicator of their acquisition of that particular skill. Further, having mentioned that she went on to include relevant imagery into her memoir, she obviated that this skill was relevant to her success in the class and that this written production contributed in some way to her successful final draft. Not only do S1’s statements concur with Qiu’s own desire to have students reflect on their own work, they mirror Disney’s (2012) recognition that “creative knowledge skill-sets characterised by increased aptitudes for linguistic variety and complexity” are a mode of recognizing student skill acquisition (p. 5).

S1’s procurement and use of new imagery allude to her success in completing the course, as well as her conscientious use of an ever developing creative aesthetic frame, and while this is not generalizable to the entire class, obvious cases of ingenuity can be seen throughout the collected in-class writing samples. Writing in detail, from Qiu’s perspective, was the first step in
telling a story to the readers that students would most like to address. ELT instructors interested in a creative pedagogy have similar opportunities. By identifying and promoting a key skill for writers to learn, instructors who are willing to push the interpretive boundaries of their institutional guidelines may have the leeway to produce a pedagogy that is both meaningful for them and engaging for their students.

Secondly, I feel that it is crucial to recognize the malleability of the class structure as a necessary response to student needs. S1’s complaint that the in-class writing exercise was too easy, and the subsequent agreement of the other focus group participants, signalled to me that the use of this particular exercise was the proverbial “lesser of two evils.” Through its use in an earlier class period, Qiu recognized that her original prompt was either beyond the students’ current skill level or was simply not a concept with which they could grapple. This recognition triggered Qiu instead to return to an idea, detail writing, with which the students were already familiar but that she considered to be “missing” from some students’ drafts. Through her consciousness of collective student progress, she took the necessary steps to make the best of the class period, and the students did seem to respond positively to this change.

As was illustrated in the literature I reviewed concerning task-based instruction, the collection and authoring of relevant materials is a constant process of reframing student perceptions and responses to activities, tropes, and themes. With that said, I believe that the spectrum of task based instruction methods covered in my literature review speaks to this concept of malleability that I have come to associate with Qiu’s pedagogical style. Mansoor (2014), Hanauer (2011), and Iida (2008) all saw fit to reinterpret philosophical approaches to writing instruction and employ them in ways that could potentially subvert their original developers’ intentions. However, it is this recognition of student need that drives a change, a
direction toward the malleability of pedagogical standpoints that I believe Qiu was so precisely utilizing in her class. By appropriating and developing materials that she might use at a moments’ notice, Qiu was capitalizing on her sensitive attunement to the demeanor and needs of her students and responding to it in the most enriching way that she could. This pedagogical approach represents, then, a difficult balancing act that a creatively driven pedagogue must maintain, between the reframing of student response in class and the constant tweaking, troubleshooting, development, and employment of new activities and ideas in the development of a course.

**Reflections as a Qualitative Researcher**

It would be unfair to say that this study was fraught with difficulties, though I believe that there are a few points at which its development could have been tweaked to elicit richer results. Firstly, while I believe that my placement in Qiu’s class was the most advantageous one I could have asked for, the timing of the in-class exercise could have changed the results of this study significantly. An earlier timing, for example, could have caught the students’ earlier developments in detail writing and would, therefore, have portrayed a more honest glimpse at their progression through the course materials. On a related note, upon learning the intended design of my study, Qiu agreed to schedule an in-class writing exercise on my behalf. While I am grateful that she was willing to add this to the class proceedings, I believe that my own interference in the class might have reduced the naturalistic intention of her original course design.

Next, I believe that the ephemeral nature of understanding another person’s aesthetic frame is a difficult issue to grapple with in this study. Interviewing Qiu did not prove to make this so difficult; while there was no way that I could gather *every* relevant aspect of her aesthetic
development for my research, I do not believe that I have created an unrealistic portrayal of it here. Unfortunately, I was not able to gather a similar amount of information from the student participants. This left me with much less ability to inspect their writing samples and focus group interview data through an understanding of their aesthetic frames. Rather, I had to infer from a cross section of their utterances and writing samples what could be either typical or atypical linguistic choices. Should the opportunity arise in the future, my data collection methods will include focal student participants as well as a focal instructor, so that similar characterizations of their aesthetic frames might be developed.

Finally, and most frustratingly, I believe that my later scheduling of student exit interviews severely decreased the amount and depth of student feedback that I received through the focus group interview. Having only four participants in the focus group, I could only confer with a very narrow cross section of student participants, in turn limiting my ability to interpret the writing samples as creative acts. As such, I could only make the occasional inference into the outlying student samples, those beyond the pairs of S1/S4 and S2/S3. If I choose to collect student exit interviews in the future, I believe that asking students to stay directly after the focal activity might provide much more verbose, vivid, and plentiful student responses.

Closing Remarks

If it’s not already abundantly clear, I have a predisposition to the philosophical and artistic sides of English language instruction. My love of the language has driven me in this direction, and I do not see myself ever teaching in such a way that does not address that beauty I sense. Still, I hope that this work has helped to illustrate the ways in which this pedagogical approach might go beyond a simplistic sense of creative pedagogy, or even creative writing for its own sake. I recognize that this pedagogical approach will not and cannot be adopted by every
English language instructor out there in equal form, though I would implore those teachers to consider looking at their class in this light, through this lens of creative aesthetics, so they might consider the ways that writing instruction might *really* help their students.

This study has made me very aware of the nature of my own creative and aesthetic choices, not just as a future instructor, but as a student, writer, tutor, boyfriend, son–I think this concept of aesthetic compulsion/reframing/response has permeated my entire thought process, to the point that it is now inseparable from me. Certainly, there’s an analogy about the red pill and the blue pill to be made in here somewhere. In short, I believe that as my own understanding of this subject has grown, so too has my ability to see a classroom full of students–instructor included–less as corporeal forms and more as a collection of perceptions, feelings, encounters, demeanors, and beliefs. A similar approach might help any instructor who is struggling to understand the individual troubles of a reticent student, who continually encounters issues with the materials they have developed for their class of multilingual writers, or simply one who seeks to inspire divergent, self-actualizing thought in their students. I do not suggest that this approach is a pedagogical panacea, but rather a mind-expanding philosophical frame geared toward a deeper interaction with one’s creative understandings of the surrounding world. This fuller, richer understanding of the ephemeral nature of thought and learning has changed the way that I will teach, before I ever really had the chance. Through future work in this field, I hope to incite change for those who want to cultivate their own engagement with their students’ deeper feelings on the world.
References


Appendix A
Excerpt of Qiu’s Syllabus—“Book Project”

**Book Project**

This project, just like a real-world book project, will be made of parts. In this case, these parts are genres of essays. The following essays will appear in your book project:

**Informative Essay: Meeting Your Parents for the First Time (Interview)**

The writing of this essay is meant to facilitate your awareness of the centrality of asking the RIGHT questions in order to fully explore and reflect upon people, events, or other phenomena you might think you already know. Such question asking is crucial to the research and exploratory dimension of all writing. So how do you specifically do this in terms of this assignment?

First, you should think about what you know about your parents or parental surrogates and what you don’t know. Think of all the questions you’ve ever wanted to ask them or things you have wondered about them. Next, think of the questions you would need to ask a complete stranger to get a grip on who they really are. Finally, brainstorm any other questions that occur to you. If it helps, think of this activity in terms of how you would analyze a character from a movie or book. As well, remember to ask open-ended questions. In other words, don’t simply elicit a yes-or-no response but rather ask questions that allow your parents to answer them in their own way and to go off on whatever tangents they feel are appropriate (We’ll brainstorm and discuss this further in class.)

Once you have a preliminary list of questions to ask your parents, interview them, making use of a notebook or a digital recorder, and document a few of your findings and write a brief reflection on how your perception of your parent has changed. Keep in mind the results of your interview when attempting to create multi-dimensional characters (your parents, in this case) in your essay.
Narrative Essay (memoir): The essay is to be based on the question: What are you burning to tell the world? This essay should begin with one specific event, located in one specific time and place. The subject matter can then be explored from there. Your essay will be a memoir of one event in your life, and it will chronicle your personal investment in your topic. Make sure to give a title to your essay, which will later become the title of a chapter in your book. Also, consider adding some images to your manuscript. The images could be directly related to your experience, e.g., childhood pictures, places that have significant meaning to you, people you love, or photo that don’t belong to you that you think is appropriate to go with your content. (Public Domain Photo Websites: http://www.publicdomainpictures.net/, http://pixabay.com/, etc.)

Argumentative Essay (foreword): For this essay, you will read one of your classmate’s books and write a foreword for it. The essential function of a foreword is to argue for the importance of the book and to convince readers that it is worth reading. We will also discuss the genre of foreword in class.

Reflective Cover Letter: In this letter, you will reflect on how your writing has progressed after taking this class, what you gained most, or what you wish you had chance to do more, etc. You can write it as an afterword of your book, or simply as a letter addressed to me.

Workshops and Response Folder: We will read and respond to one page (typed, single-spaced) of everyone’s essays in a classroom workshop. As a writer of a workshop paper, you will photocopy and distribute to everyone in the class the one page of your essay on the day of your workshop. However, you will email it to me by 10am Monday (for workshops on Tuesday) and 10am Wednesday (for workshops on Thursday). This workshop handout may be a draft, but it must be sufficiently developed so that the class will be able to give helpful feedback. The class will read the
draft in class and make written comments and suggestions —a minimum of four comments/suggestions on each page. The comments should include at least one beginning with “I like...”, and one beginning with “How would it change the meaning if you did...” We will then spend 20-35 minutes discussing each person’s draft and providing helpful and creative feedback. After class, you will make three photocopies of the draft you have commented on and give one to the author, one to the teaching associate, and one to me in the next class session.
Appendix B

The “Room” Exercise

1. Enter the space. Be sure to use and action verb.

2. Where is the source of light?

3. What special or important object is there with you?

4. Notice what you are wearing.
   Why are you wearing these clothes?

5. What can you hear from here?
   What can you hear if you listen very carefully?

6. Mention the position of your body.

7. Where were you before you arrived here?

8. Who was there? Describe your interaction with that person or persons. Was that interaction the one you would have wanted?

9. What do you wish had happened?

10. Change the position of your body.

11. Reach out and touch or handle an object in this space.

12. What is your biggest fear?

13. When you leave this space, where will you go?

14. Is there someplace where you would rather be going? Why?

15. Shift the position of your body again.

16. When was the last time you ate?
   What did you eat?

17. Are you hungry?

18. What do you know now, at this writing, at the age you are now, that it would have been useful to know then?

19. Take a deep breath. What do you smell?

20. How will you know when it’s time to leave this space?
   How will you prepare yourself to leave?

21. What did you know then, what you were sure of, that you see now, at this writing, at the age you are now, to be false?

22. Can you still hear what you heard before? Any new sounds?

23. What has changed since you entered the space?

   And, finally, exit the space.
I’m taking a long nap time and waking up by the noise sound from the outdoor birds. I’ll have a class after 30 minutes. I’m so tired now, because I had a bad dream last night. I dreamed about my most horrible animals: snake!!! A group of snakes surrounded me, I tried to escape, but I was tripped over a branch, the snakes soon catch me up, then they all wrapped in my body. I’m wearing a Winnie Pooh’s pajamas. This cloth makes my feel better when I wake up by the bad dream. I back my bag lave the room and go to class. I saw a lot of small squirrels on the road, looking for food on the ground. Then I went to my teaching building. I been to class for 10 minutes, I thought the class is too boring, so I truancy the class and drive my jeep to the western desert. Ye!!!! I’m free!!!

***

I walk through a narrow alley. I dreamt of my last journey to Australia. It is a wonderful country I’ve ever been. But now, I was living in the United States. I was not regretful about my choice. Sometimes I just missed something I lost, even it was bad memories. It is cold outside. I have not felt hungry yet. However, I ate some pieces of chicken pizza in a pizza house by the roadside just now. I was full and a little sick about greasy food. Now I’m going to a church beside the school. Actually I haven’t been to a church before. It is holly in my mind. Everyone prays piously in the church. In my opinion, no matter what good or bad things they did, they came to the church, talking about their inner feelings. Then I go out of the church, the wind is blowing, I smell flower fragrances. The fall is already coming.

***
Entering Thai Restaurant, we smelled the amazing spices. We hear the utensils clattering and oil hissing in the pan from the open kitchen which is behind the cashier where the chef cooking. There is five tables and Thai theme pictures hanging on the wall. [S1] and I wearing thick cloth and a jacket because it is cold and windy outside. We are starving. We leaved right away from the IUP library together to the Thai Restaurant. The sun light shines through the window, the lights in the restaurant just a waste at that moment because the sun light is enough to light up the place. A moment after that, a waitresses come and serve our food on the table. We reach out our hand and grab the fork and start eating. The restaurant become quiet again except the sound of us eating because there is no customer get in after us.

***

The light was blinding when I first entered the room. After a while my eyes finally adjusted to the bright light in the room. The light on the right corner of the ceiling was flickering, causing the right side of the room to be dimmer than the rest of the room. There he sat with a serious expression on his face. The light was flickering on his face. Seeing him caused an unsettling feeling in my stomach, I heard it growling. “After this, I would go to Ruby Tuesday and treat myself with a 12 ounce steak.” I thought to myself:

My stomach growled louder at the thought. The only thing I ate so far was the expired bread my roommate left for me in this morning since I didn’t have the appetite because I was too nervous. I wished I ate more by then. I took a deep breath and forced my feet to move towards the direction of the examiner. “I’d rather be doing house chores for my mom.” I thought as I approached and managed to put on a brave face. I stood in front of him and took a last check at my outfit through the reflection in the window behind him. The black heels I’ve just bought
yesterday was causing pain in my heels. The white shirt was suffocating me. The pencil skirt was
tight around my waist. My armpits were wet because of the thick wool blazer.

***

I went into the living room, the light was turned off, the volume of the TV was too loud,
nobody has been there. I looked at the screen, it was a video of a rock music. I went out to my
room and I found my brother playing video games. “hey [Brother’s Name], where is
everybody?” I asked him. seems to be not listening to me. I called him out loud and finally he
noticed me, “Hey, I don’t know my mom was in the kitchen.” he said. Good, I haven’t been
eaten since 20 hours ago. I just came from my collage, I had a lot of classes, I was like working
in the whole day. While my way to the kitchen, I smelted the smell of cooking. Well, apparently,
my mom is cooking.

I entered to the kitchen, I saw my dad is cooking. Oh my god, this is my first time in my life
seeing my father is cooking. What a day!!! He smiled at me and he said, “Yep it’s true I know
how to cook.” After a while the food is ready. it smells fantastic.

***

It is our tradition that we go to my grandma’s house every Chinese New Year. My grandma
lives in southern Taiwan, and we live in northern Taiwan, so we have to take High Speed Rail to
my grandma’s house. It doesn’t take much time to go there because Taiwan is very small. I like
to take HSR because the seat is big and comfortable. Now, I’m standing at the train platform
waiting for the HSR. I am very hungry because I haven’t had a breakfast yet. I want to sit in the
train and have my breakfast; I look around, and I find out there are full of people in the platform.
I see a mother carrying a baby, and she also has many luggage with her. His husband isn’t beside
her. Maybe he is busy at work, so he can only have a break tomorrow. Finally, the train arrives. I
enter the train, and find my seat. I take out my breakfast and start to eat it. It is so delicious! My mom made it for me.

***

I jumped into a sea, and I saw many kinds of fish which made me hungry. Suddenly I found sea-grass around me, I thought I can use it as a seasoning. It could be delicious. I took a deep breath under the sea, I choked. And I smelt a fishy smell. It was a really big sea, I stood on a giant stone under the sea. It was a sunny day, I looked at the sky through the water and felt sunlight was dazzling. I went ashore, because I was starving. The last time I ate was two days ago, just some fruits and vegetables. I really wanted to eat some meat for my next meal. So I landed the fish and sea-grass. I found some branches and made a fire so that I could grill the fish.

***

I jumped into the female bathroom after I had lunch about 12 o’clock. The light from the ceiling makes me feel so hot. And then I take off all of my clothes, except underpants. I don’t know what happen, but when I wake up, it is amazing! I become a superman who needs oil gas to be alive, so I have to go to the gas station. At the moment, I suddenly remember who I am. In my deep heart, I feel the super strength spraying out. I am sure I am full, and I feel full of energy now. I want to save the Earth and Krypton—where am I from right now. But I find a very significant important thing, I don’t have leisure time! I need to sleep, if not, acne will on my face! I am a playgirl. Oh, no, I even turn into a girl!

***

I entered University Stylists, a salon near the campus, to have a haircut the day before yesterday. Similar to what a regular salon should look like, the light, spread from the ceiling, was shinning, and the whole space was well decorated. If I had listened to the sounds from anywhere in the
surrounding, there should have been the noises of razors, scissors, and dye machine. However, I just focus on what Chelsy, my hair designer, said and answered to her. Hanging my coat, I seated on a spiral chair, which enabled Chelsy to spin it whenever she need a new angle for cutting my hair confortably. Then I put down my glasses and got prepared. After sitting on the chair for about thirty minutes, I stood up and got closer to the mirror to appreciate my new hairstyle.

***

I want to class room and I see my friends they eating chocolate for the Halloween with out me. I feel so sad because they eat all the chocolate. When I leave from this space I’m going to bring my nephew from his school. I just site up from my share to see

***

After playing soccer for two hours, I went to my house to take a cold shower in quick. I was really tired after I finished my shower and went out to meet my parents. I usually rather be meeting my special friends when I have eaten the dinner with my family. my friends and I often hang out to quiet place back home; there are places we like to go after playing soccer game. We gather sometimes on a mountain nearby the main highway and we staring at the cars or laughing at each other. After teasing others until the midnight, we cleaned the area behind us, and then, I went to drop my friends off. Finally, I am laying on my bed, it is time to sleep.

It such a sunny day in Riyadh, it is 7:30am, and I am on my car going to my office drinking my coffee among the crowd cars. I was in a small cafeteria close to my house, there is an Indian chief were papering my breakfast as usual. He has been for more than twine years and I am his agent for two years. I was stuck on the car, I was too late, the air condition was not that good, and eventually, I arrived to my office to start working, my job was in insurance company
and it was easy for me. I walked to the chair and turned my computer on and then, I start
working seriously.

***

I noticed that I’m wearing a black T-shirt and green camal pants. I wore these clothes because I
fell comfortable.

The source of light is then the room is dark and no light on it, I noticed that there is a light is
shining from the window, so the source is the sunshine.

The last time I ate was in today at 2:40PM at the HUB.

I’m in the Eng 101, class. If I leave this space, I am going to the HUB because there is Saudi
National day.

I am actually not hungry because I already ate chocolate from Prof. [Qiu].

If I want to prepare my self to leave, I will close my laptop and take my back bag then leave.

There is one place that I would rather to go, I want to go to London because I like the place in
there, and it is good place to spend time with the people I love.

Honestly, I my writing and my thinking have changed to better writing and thinking, which is
logical thinking.

I went down to pic up my pin because it fall down.

I am in the English class, and I am writing a paper for the activate in the class.

The most important object in this class is to make a dissection with my classmates.

Sometimes I can hear all my classmates sounds in the class, but sometimes I pay attention with
who is next to me.

I will know the time to leave the space when the professor tells us to leave.

I just changed the position of my body and I saw a bag of chocolate.
I tried to take a breath but I could not smell any thing because I have a could.

The position of my body is sitting in the cheer and writing.

Before I arrived here, I was at the HUB.

I hear people talking and when I listen carefully, I hear only one person.
Appendix D

Writing Samples of Focus Group Participants

Writing Sample–S1 and S4:

Entering Thai Restaurant, we smelled the amazing spices. We hear the utensils clattering and oil hissing in the pan from the open kitchen which is behind the cashier where the chef cooking. There is five tables and Thai theme pictures hanging on the wall. [S1] and I wearing thick cloth and a jacket because it is cold and windy outside. We are starving. We leaved right away from the IUP library together to the Thai Restaurant. The sun light shines through the window, the lights in the restaurant just a waste at that moment because the sun light is enough to light up the place. A moment after that, a waitresses come and serve our food on the table. We reach out our hand and grab the fork and start eating. The restaurant become quiet again except the sound of us eating because there is no customer get in after us.

Writing Sample–S2 and S3:

The light was blinding when I first entered the room. After a while my eyes finally adjusted to the bright light in the room. The light on the right corner of the ceiling was flickering, causing the right side of the room to be dimmer than the rest of the room. There he sat with a serious expression on his face. The light was flickering on his face. Seeing him caused an unsettling feeling in my stomach, I heard it growling. “After this, I would go to Ruby Tuesday and treat myself with a 12 ounce steak.” I thought to myself:

    My stomach growled louder at the thought. The only thing I ate so far was the expired bread my roommate left for me in this morning since I didn’t have the appetite because I was too nervous. I wished I ate more by then. I took a deep breath and forced my feet to move towards
the direction of the examiner. “I’d rather be doing house chores for my mom.” I thought as I approached and managed to put on a brave face. I stood in front of him and took a last check at my outfit through the reflection in the window behind him. The black heels I’ve just bought yesterday was causing pain in my heels. The white shirt was suffocating me. The pencil skirt was too tight around my waist. My armpits were wet because of the thick wool blazer.
Appendix E

Qiu’s Syllabus Description of Student Learning Objectives

**Student Learning Objectives**

Students who successfully complete English 101 will be able to:

- use writing processes to generate, develop, share, revise, proofread and edit major writing projects.
- produce essays that show structure, purpose, significant content, and audience awareness.
- produce a variety of essay genres.
- understand and integrate others’ texts into your own writing.
- reflect on your own writing process and rhetorical effectiveness.
- help you become a better writer by becoming a better reader of your own writing and the writing of others.
- provide ways for you to evaluate your writing.
- create ways for making writing a means for accomplishing personally meaningful and socially significant goals.

Because this section of ENGL101 is designated for multilingual writers, you can expect to engage with cross-cultural and culturally sensitive texts, practice conversation and oral communication, and receive integrated and contextual grammatical instruction. You should also expect that in addition to class time, you will spend time at the Writing Center and/or SkillZone, and you will work closely not only with the instructor of the class but also with graduate students from the MATESOL and C&T programs and/or other tutors or teaching assistants.
Appendix F

IRB Approval Letter

June 1, 2015

Zachary Fish
1430 Greenbriar Court
South Park, PA 15129

Dear Mr. Fish:

Your proposed research project, "Fostering the Creative Mind: Creative Pedagogies in the ELT Classroom," (Log No. 15-145) has been reviewed by the IRB and is approved as an expedited review for the period of May 28, 2015 to May 26, 2016. This approval does not supersede or obviate compliance with any other University requirements, including, but not limited to, enrollment, degree completion deadlines, topic approval, and conduct of university-affiliated activities.

You should read all of this letter, as it contains important information about conducting your study.

Now that your project has been approved by the IRB, there are elements of the Federal Regulations to which you must attend. IUP adheres to these regulations strictly:

1. You must conduct your study exactly as it was approved by the IRB.
2. Any additions or changes in procedures must be approved by the IRB before they are implemented.
3. You must notify the IRB promptly of any events that affect the safety or well-being of subjects.
4. You must notify the IRB promptly of any modifications of your study or other responses that are necessitated by any events reported in items 2 or 3.

Should you need to continue your research beyond May 26, 2016 you will need to file additional information for continuing review. Please contact the IRB office at irb-research@iup.edu or 724-357-7730 for further information.

The IRB may review or audit your project at random or for cause. In accordance with IUP Policy and Federal Regulation (45CFR46.113), the Board may suspend or terminate your project if your project has not been conducted as approved or if other difficulties are detected.

Although your human subjects review process is complete, the School of Graduate Studies and Research requires submission and approval of a Research Topic Approval Form (RTAF) before you can begin your research. If you have not
yet submitted your RTAF, the form can be found at

While not under the purview of the IRB, researchers are responsible for adhering
to US copyright law when using existing scales, survey items, or other works in
the conduct of research. Information regarding copyright law and compliance at
IUP, including links to sample permission request letters, can be found at

I wish you success as you pursue this important endeavor.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Roberts, Ph.D.
Chairperson, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
Professor of Criminology

JLR:jeb

Cc: Dr. Curtis Porter, Thesis Advisor
    Ms. Brenda Boal, Secretary