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Writing Stories Across Languages: The Exploration of Students' Books Construction in an EAP Writing Classroom

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WRITING STORIES ACROSS LANGUAGES: THE EXPLORATION OF STUDENTS'

BOOKS CONSTRUCTION IN AN EAP WRITING CLASSROOM

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

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Doctor of Philosophy

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Title: Writing Stories Across Languages: The Exploration of Students' Books Construction in an EAP Writing Classroom

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This study explores the experiences of multilingual writers in an Intensive English Institute (IEI), English for Academic Purposes Program (EAP), composing short personal-narrative-based books. The short books consist of three components: a narrative chapter, a research chapter, and a foreword composed by a peer. The short book writing pedagogy, borrowed from the work of Dr. Claude Hurlbert and adapted to the EAP context, allows multilingual writers to compose work that is centered around their lives.

This study is a practical application of post-method (Kumaravadivelu, 2006) to the EAP context. It demonstrates that when students are taught to engage, and not comply with many of the conventions of writing in English, they develop a wide repertoire of means and ways of self-expression in English, confidence as writers, and a passion for writing, which has meaning beyond a class.

The following research questions are answered in this study:

1.   What were multilingual students' experiences constructing short books in an EAP writing course?

    1.1. How did the students perceive the impact of personal-narrative-based short book writing pedagogy on their writing in English?

1.2. In what ways did short book construction process impact the EAP students' development as writers?

The study shows that the short book writing pedagogy impacted EAP students in a number of ways. It positively impacted their attitudes to composing in English, academic lives, personal lives, confidence to compose in English, motivation to write, and writing in English. In addition, all the 13 study participants perceived to have evolved as writers in the course of the academic semester when constructing short books. Twelve participants also indicated that peer readings, freewriting, and whole class discussions about composing made them feel as writers and authors.

This dissertation demonstrates the underexplored potential of multilingual writers as users of and writers in English. It provides the fields of Second Language Writing and Composition with insight into writing practices of multilingual learners and how they can transform and enrich both multilingual and mixed (monolingual and multilingual) composition classrooms.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Prologue

When applied linguists read my dissertation, it may seem to them a little strange. The same may happen to composition scholars interested in the study. The truth is that this dissertation was written by a compositionist with extensive background in linguistics and designed for both fields. This study is constructed at the intersection of the two fields and is aimed at getting the two fields to start a dialogue.

As an ESL professional, I position this study as a practical tool for my peers to consult when constructing student-centered writing pedagogies for their ESL classrooms. As such, my research presents a way to have post-method and post-process implemented in a second language writing class by combining the knowledge of the two fields. Most importantly, it shows the outcomes of such an implementation.

As a compositionist, I strive to find ways to diversify and "internationalize" (Hurlbert, 2013) mainstream composition courses by means of deeper engagement of second language writers and their mainstream peers in meaningful interactions about composing and the composing practices and rhetoric al choices of one another. I truly believe that multilingual writers who come to the U.S. to study from abroad can contribute to the discipline of Composition on profound levels enriching mainstream students' linguistic repertoires and ways to make meaning in a highly globalized world.

In 2006, Jonathan Hall called for a dialogue between the fields of composition and second language teaching and acquisition. My study presents the short book writing pedagogy as an example of such a dialogue on the classroom level.

As Kumaravadivelu (2006) pointed out, up to the current moment, TESOL is not free from stereotypes regarding international students/ second language writers and their behavior

and abilities in western classes. However, to resist and destroy stereotypes, we need to start teaching composing differently and convert writing classrooms into platforms for our international students in all academic contexts to ask "bigger questions" (Benesch, 2001). In the ESL classrooms where students compose works that are personally significant and in mainstream composition classrooms where such composing takes place, the students form relationships that "can allow us to accomplish and become all things we could not do or be on our own" (Tobin, 1993). Short book writing helped my students construct more confident writer identities in the class so that they "can and want to do it again" (Interview, Ameeh).

An ESL scholar reading my study will, I am sure, see my struggles navigating the two genres and fields in one work as well as my constantly shuttling between terms: "writing" and "composing." A compositionist will, hopefully, understand the need for a more formal third person narration in the beginning and will be relieved to see the shift in the tone in the subsequent chapters of my study when I described students' journeys and experiences. I tried to be honest with my readers and account for such shifts and struggles in the text. I hope that my work can be equally interesting for the scholars and educators in both fields. Most importantly, I hope that the short book writing pedagogy that I borrowed from Dr. Claude Hurlbert's work and adapted to the EAP context, will be borrowed from me and adapted again, so that the dialogue can continue.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

I have been teaching in the context of an Intensive English Institute (IEI), English for Academic Purposes Program (EAP) for a number of years. The pedagogy, which has become the foundation for my writing course, has been assembled in the course of my doctoral studies and while teaching a variety of non-writing courses at an IEI. I encountered the short book writing pedagogy in a doctorate course taught by professor Dr. Claude Hurlbert. Claude has developed and taught the short book writing pedagogy primarily in Freshmen Composition courses. Claude's first year college students spend a semester constructing narrative-based short books and sharing those narratives with each other during peer readings. I borrowed the idea of short books and peer readings from Dr. Hurlbert's classes and adapted short books to the EAP context by inserting a research component into the short book project. My EAP short book writing pedagogy, similarly to Claude's, extensively relies on writing personal narratives or, as I will further define them in this dissertation, stories or narratives meaningful[5] for students' lives. The stories further develop into books with chapters including different writing genres: research/literature review, narrative, and a combination of the two in the form of forewords, written by a classmate. The process of assembling and teaching an advanced writing class in an EAP program has driven my study and sharpened its focus by organizing it around the following research questions:

1. What were multilingual students' experiences constructing short personal-narratives-based books in an EAP writing course?

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[5] By "meaningful" I imply "personally and socially significant"; also, from a pedagogical standpoint, "meaningful" would encompass students' choice of topic, made through reflection and discussion.

a. How did the EAP students perceive the impact of personal-narrative-based short book writing pedagogy on their writing in English?

b. In what ways did short book construction process impact the EAP students' development as writers?

I started teaching Advanced Written Communication (AWC) class at an EAP program when I was taking lessons as a doctorate student at the university in western Pennsylvania. I have taught the course for three semesters with three diverse groups of students:

1. Mostly graduate level Arabic-speaking writers, predominantly female, predominantly educators of various disciplines

2. Mostly undergraduate and younger, geographically mixed (China, Taiwan, Korea, Saudi-Arabia, Africa), gender mixed writers

3. Mixed-degree (graduate, undergraduate), mixed-gender writers from Mexico, Indonesia, China, Taiwan, and Saudi Arabia.

Each group has shaped the class in their own unique way and gave it a unique dynamic. For instance, my first group of students focused more on the writing itself as well as their individual writing voice. Their efforts were gaining the interest of the outside reader, attracting the reader with a beauty of style, the author's wit, or the creativity of writing. The second group was more internally focused on one another and our writing community. Their books were more ideological and political, explicating very complex visions and voices, focusing on everyday life experiences of living and fighting for truths. The third group of students in my AWC class reflected on issues of social and societal importance in their short books (family relations, loss of loved ones, peer conflicts, etc.).

They seemed to have discovered ways to use the short books to make a difference in their own lives and in the lives of people who mattered to them.

Notably, the vast majority of the third group of students volunteered to become participants in my dissertation research.

Interestingly, in the final class evaluations, all three groups expressed that their writing had evolved and indicated that they felt that they had become writers as a consequence of a semester-long book writing experience. Additionally, the students pointed out that they had felt a need for making research writing, first, personally and then socially significant and connecting the two in their books. The above research questions are aimed at exploring the multilingual students' experiences with writing personal-narrative-based books and unveiling the ways in which the students evolved as writers in their own perception.

Conceptualizing the Study

During my second semester as an ESL Instructor at an Intensive English Program (IEI), I had a conversation with a student, the content of which I remember up to this day.

I didn't have a chance to speak with him outside of class at that point, so I was happy he came to class early that day. In fact, the conversation started with basketball. He said he played professionally in Kenya. He asked me what I did apart from teaching. Frankly, I couldn't come up with much to say. At that time, I was so caught up between work, classes, family, moving to another state etc., I even gave up sports. He felt sad for me; he said he thought I was talented and hyper and needed to devote more time to doing something for myself outside of work. This incident indicated that people often do not easily connect personal fulfillment with their career.

Then this student mentioned I was different somehow: very organized, often strict, but at the same time active and enthusiastic. After a short pause, he asked: "Why do you teach?" Frankly, this question puzzled me for a moment.

"I teach because I've been through much of what's ahead of you. So, my being here, I hope will help you and others succeed." He obviously didn't consider teaching a good career and laughed at my answer.

"Helping others? Is that why you teach? You are crazy! Didn't you work in business before? Why did you leave your job? They didn't pay enough?"

"Oh, no, they paid well. I was happy in this respect. I earned in Russia more than I earn here now teaching two classes and being a GA."

"So what happened? Why did you leave?"

"I always hated coming to work to make profit for a few people on our board of directors. Who are they to me and to the workers at the plant? Those guys sit in New York collecting money and complaining about silly Russians who only bring trouble and negative indicators on the company's success metrics. I tried not to think about it. I convinced myself every morning: 'I go there for the people I will teach today.' I tried to think how I can transform US training packages to make them meaningful for Russian workers and help them make their lives better. It actually worked for three years… almost."

"Well, that's silly. If you don't like working for somebody else, why don't you open your own business?"

"Because it's not about money. That's not what life is about. If that's all we care about, there is no point living, just no point."

"Uhhm." I guess my observant student, so keen on being a businessman, realized something at that moment. At least, I hope he did. I enjoyed that conversation. I felt the "uhhm" was a good conclusion to it. Sometimes, we, silly teachers, hope we will change the world and we often succeed. At least, if we have courage to change ourselves by starting life and career anew, we have a good chance.

As Hurlbert & Blitz (1998) point out: "Writing and living and teaching are not separable […] We can't imagine why anyone would choose teaching as a profession unless he or she had a notion that educating people is somehow involved in making better neighborhoods, better communities, a better world (p.73)." My study is an attempt to follow my call for teaching and writing for the better world.

Development of Focus: Rerouting and Re-Writing of My "Self"

In July of 2010, I came to the U.S. to obtain a Master's Degree in Adult Education and Communication Technologies, which was supposed to be another step in my successful business-trainer career. One of my MA-level class assignments was to apply a formal business model of instructional design to develop and teach a class at an Intensive Language Institute, at the same time gaining experience teaching in a multicultural environment. That assignment gave me the opportunity to teach in the IEI.

In October of 2010, after a successful completion of the assignment outlined above, a semester of volunteering at the IEI as a conversation partner, and a job interview with the IEI Director, I was hired for a position of an ESL Instructor, teaching primarily oral communication courses at intermediate and advanced levels of an EAP program. In my first year of teaching ESL, I utilized my business-trainer background extensively both in curriculum design, class assignments, and the way I taught overall. I used a systematic

instructional design model with measurable outcomes and clear objectives, conducted needs assessment with my students using questionnaires, filled classes with role-plays and hands-on activities, focused at length on public speaking and presentation skills, thoroughly prepared lesson plans, and did not deviate from them. I seemed to be doing well. I received highly positive students' evaluations and have become quite popular in the IEI. There was only one problem: I was not changing and evolving to the extent I needed to. I felt that I was programmed to deliver a repetitive program or English training to my students, who did projects in the same way and achieved class outcomes as planned. At some point, I felt bored and as if my teaching had stagnated. Something felt wrong, as teaching stopped being a challenge and became a routine. Although my students assured me of their satisfaction from our classes, I felt I did not give them something very important that they needed to have for success. Possibly, I did not put enough critical thought into what "success" means for them and for myself.

In the summer of 2011, nearly a year into my ESL instructor job, I applied for a PhD in Composition and TESOL, and was admitted into the program. Additionally, I received an assistantship and continued teaching two EAP courses a semester while taking PhD classes. I consider my first year of PhD coursework the point of a sharp rerouting of my business-like pedagogy and mindset, and a time of constructing a writer-identity and reconstructing teacher-identities.

Ivanic (1998) explored the connection between writing and identity construction. She discovered that written texts are a "mediating mechanism in the social construction of identity (Ivanic, 1998, p.17)." Through writing we construct writer identities, which bear

certain beliefs, values, and views (Ivanic, 1998). Frankly (up to a certain point), I did not see any purpose or meaning in writing as a practice on a personal level.

I grew up and went to school and college in Russia, where the subject of composition does not exist. During middle school, my writing experience was limited to dictations in the Russian class and later, in the fifth grade, an essay, which still strongly resembled a dictation, since we were told what to write. My teacher of Russian had little interest in what we had on our minds, but making a mistake in grammar or misspelling a word could lead to a shameful "C", which was publicly announced in class in a very derogatory manner.

Later, in high school, I discovered research writing. I defended my first research project in linguistics at a school conference at the age of 16. That project got me to the regional conference, where I successfully presented as well. My high school had a partnership with Samara State University, one of the most prestigious institutions of higher education in the region. As part of this partnership, we were given a chance to work with the University professors while at high school. I took a research class from a University professor in the 10th and 11th grades. My research professor was very proud of me. He used to say that I wrote better than most of his freshmen. I had a passion for research and enjoyed working with him on a number of different areas: etymology, discourse analysis, etc. With the time and effort, quite a number of successful conferences, and a second prize at a regional competition in English I earned an invitation to Samara State University, Philological Faculty, in September of 2002.

Five years of college enriched my experience in research writing, made me a more confident researcher, but did not change my indifference to the writing itself. I have never considered myself a writer and showed no interest in the writing process. In contrast to most

of my multilingual EAP students, I have never written diaries or journals, never written for pleasure, or experienced the fear of the "white page", the mental struggle I went through every time I had to put my research findings on paper.

I held the same attitude of indifference toward writing during my first year of teaching ESL. I heavily relied on oral interaction in all of my ESL classes and avoided writing in all of its forms, seeing little use in it.

I spent three academic years in an outcome-focused "pragmatic" (Benesch, 2001) IEI, which provides intensive English instruction as part of its English for Academic Purposes program (EAP) with the primary goal of preparing multilingual students to enter an institution of higher education in the US. Benesch (2001) describes EAP programs as a highly pragmatic "practical affair", providing "the maximum possible support in the limited time available" (Benesch, 2001, p.ix). Due to the nature and the curricula focus of EAPs, these programs are set up to achieve the intended outcomes in the shortest amount of time (usually between three to twelve months) (Benesch, 2001).

Since I started my ESL Instructor journey, I have taught a variety of ESL courses, starting from a textbook-based conversation class, transitioning to Advanced Oral Communication, to Electronic Literacy, Academic Literacy, and Advanced Written Communication. Since 2013, I have shifted my teaching and research focus almost solely to second language writing. Looking back, I feel that throughout my journey as an educator, an ESL educator in particular, my pedagogy has been constantly evolving and continues to do so up to this day. I can clearly see how I moved from textbook-based skills-focused classes, scrupulous lesson plans, and business-like teacher- and institution- driven courses (Warriner, 2010) to a human-centered pedagogy, which integrates students' and teachers' personal

histories (Hanauer, 2012, p.108), their ideologies, and religious and political views (Berthoff, 1981; Hurlbert, 2013) with the idea of meaning making through writing and learning in the academy.

Post-Process/Post-Method Composition as International Practice

My pedagogical re-routing in relation to writing and teaching commenced in Dr. Claude Hurlbert's *Teaching Writing* class, which I took as a PhD student in the spring of 2011. In this class I wrote personal narratives, significant for my life, and researched a composition pedagogy, formulated by Claude Hurlbert, which makes meaning making happen through writing stories, centered on the writer and his/her locations, positions, and relations with the outside world.

As it is well-known, the field of Composition has developed gradually and overcome a shift of paradigms as well as understandings of what composing entails, and how it is to be taught. With the works by compositionists: Ann Berthoff, Peter Elbow, and, philosophers such as Ernst Cassirer and Susanne Langer, the field of Composition as well as other scholarly fields in the late 1970s started to move away from positivists' philosophy to epistemic rhetoric, emphasizing the formation of knowledge through "making of meaning" (Berthoff, 1978). Thus, Donald Murray in his 1972 work announced that "when we teach composition, we are not teaching a product, we are teaching a process" (p.11). Consequently, process-based writing pedagogies have experienced extensive criticism in 1980s for being "too close to the text and too far from the writer" (Vandenberg, Hum, & Clary-Lemon, 2006). Thus, the field of Composition has evolved beyond process towards the writer, who is not isolated and alone, but shaped by many voices, to which he or she also responds in return (Perl, 1994). So, compositionists moved from studying and teaching the process of writing to

post-process paradigm, which studies writer-in-context and the locations, relations, and positions of writers among others in the social world.

Notably, years later, in 2006, Kumaravadivelu, a well-known TESOL scholar, declared a move away from "method" in TESOL, towards "post-method" and the attention to the learner and pedagogy of positionality, particularity, and practicality, or, similarly, to post-process, learner-in-context or contexts paradigm.

Discovering the two fields (Composition and TESOL) and re-envisioning the unity of two paradigms (post-process and post-method), as well as my writing and research experiences in Dr. Claude Hurlbert's *Teaching Writing Class*, have shaped my second language writing pedagogy and equipped me with the lens to look at writing or, better, multilingual composing, as meaning making in and beyond the academy, by and beyond an individual writer.

I came to believe that writing is no more a process or a product neither for multilingual, nor for monolingual students. Writing is a situated and political practice, shaped by a student's locations, social relations, and positions in their particular localities, which are multiple. Similar to the post-process, post-method paradigm, formulated by Kumaravadivelu, writing builds off of the ideas of "particularity", "positionality", and "practicality", being extremely sensitive to the students and their teachers, their localities and lived experiences. Thus, post-method- based pedagogy cannot be guided by a predetermined set of goals and objectives in hope of fulfilling them, but should strive for a "holistic interpretation of particular situations" in hope of improving them and improving itself (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p.539).

In addition to the intersection of theoretical paradigms in Composition and TESOL, there has gradually been established the intersection of cultures and countries in composition classrooms and second language scholarship. Canagarajah's idea of "shuttling", or making composition sensitive to the movements of multilinguals across the languages, studying their vernacular writing styles and writing conventions, rather than apprenticing multilingual writers into the established Western conventions of academic writing, has been taken further by Hurlbert (2013). Hurlbert (2013) calls for the need in international idea sharing regarding composing as international practice. Hurlbert argues that Composition has to catch up with the pace of change in the student population in composition classrooms. Furthermore, "a nationalist view of composition is not sufficient for teaching writing, or for fostering the intellectual health or a well-developed subjectivity" (Hurlbert, 2013, p.18). Thus, Hurlbert (2013) states:

> To develop a more intellectually satisfying and international perspective, writing teachers need to study the rhetorics of the world.... Through this study the teaching of writing becomes new, becomes a study of the meaning of experience and creation, the meaning of the variety and wakefulness, of options and decisions, the meaning of being human in our equal searches for the meaning of our lives. (p.19)

Therefore, due to my presence at the intersection of composition and second language writing, or "monolingual" and multilingual, I have had a chance to assemble the two paradigms and a vision of composing as international practice into one by means of personal-narratives-based short book writing pedagogy. The narratives my students write as part of their short books answer the needs of their multiple voices and contexts, allow them to write among others for the ideas of practical use to them and their larger contexts and communities.

As a result, this study is a practical tool of implementing post-method in an EAP context by means of short book writing pedagogy and the exploration of the results of such implementation.

Advanced Written Communication Class in the EAP Context

My pedagogical and personal re-identification and re-routing happened at the point of alignment between my work in the PhD program and my practical experience of teaching ESL. Having realized the power of narrative writing in and beyond the academy, I felt an urge to bring meaningful personal narratives into my teaching context, creating a transformational space for my multilingual students in an EAP program and, hopefully, beyond it.

In August of 2012 I was offered an opportunity to teach an EAP Writing Course for high-intermediate and advanced international students, enrolled in our EAP program. Hence, the development of my narrative writing pedagogy continued in the context of an EAP (for the syllabus see Appendix E). I placed writing a personal narrative at the foundation of the course, focusing the narrative around the question: "What are you burning to ask the world?"[6] Personal narratives, as defined by Pagnucci (2004) and further Pavlenko (2004) are "all sorts of stories, romantic novels, comic books, and sports stories […] (Pagnucci, 2004, p. 47) that people tell about their lives (Pavlenko, 2004). Thus, a personal narrative becomes a starting point and a guiding thread, which binds the EAP students' short books, major assignments, in the Advanced Written Communication class (AWC).

Although the idea of book writing was borrowed by me from Dr. Hurlbert's practice in his freshmen composition classes, the concept of a short book, as well as its contents, had

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[6] The overriding question, indicated in the syllabus for COMP 101 by Dr. Claude Hurlbert is "What are you burning to tell the world?" This question is used to generate topics for the students' narratives.

to be reshaped in order to better answer the needs of my multilingual EAP students. In Dr. Hurlbert's composition classes, the students were granted a chance to write their books as narratives or stories on topics that were meaningful for them and focused around a specific event in their lives. The books by college freshmen are "letters for the living," written with the idea that "there is still someone living out there to respond..." (Hurlbert & Blitz, 1998, p.170). Dr. Hurlbert's freshmen were not restricted to only one specific genre or form, but encouraged to share what is important in writing. The goal of such a class, as I see it, is not to equip the students with formulaic skills of composing in and for the academy, but to engage students into a process of meaning making through writing, reading, and discussing personally meaningful stories.

In the context of an advanced English proficiency writing class housed in an English for Academic Purposes program (EAP), the short book assignment had to be re-planned and redesigned to meet the needs of the demanding audience. Since I will address the nature and culture as well as the target student audience in Intensive English programs or EAPs later in my dissertation, I will not go into details here. However, it is necessary to mention that an EAP is a much more restrictive and centralized institution in terms of curriculum and instruction. Most importantly, the goal of an EAP is to prepare international students for the academic studies in a college/university environment of the west (Benesch, 2001).

As a consequence, the short book project in my interpretation has acquired a structure: chapters. The short book consists of two chapters:

1. Chapter one: a narrative, in which the message, genre, and form are solely chosen by the students to better convey their meaningful stories; chapter one is guided by the question: "What are you burning to ask the world?"

2. Chapter two: a research study or a review of existing literature on the central topic of the narrative. The goal of the research chapter is to answer the above guiding question.

The short book is 15-20 double-spaced pages long. Apart from two chapters, the book has a foreword, written by a peer with the goal of introducing the book and the writer to the potential reader.

The semester is heavy in writing assignments, allowing the students to work on the book step-by-step and engaging them in peer-review sessions, or, "readings", when each of the students has a chance to read a page from his/her narrative and receive feedback from the peers and the teacher (see Appendix M for the rubric). In the end of his/her reading session, the writer is invited to comment on the feedback he/she has received. Additionally, the students are free to make choices on incorporating the feedback they have been provided into their stories. When all the readings are over, the students reflect on this practice by completing a peer-review self-evaluation form.

To prepare students for writing the research chapter for the book, I set up workshops on research writing in which I cover such topics as: formulating a research question, developing an argument in writing, writing a literature review, evaluating academic work (designed to help students choose between data sources, evaluate academic articles, which they choose for literature reviews, etc.), and plagiarism (see Appendices J,K, and M).

The short book is an on-going project, progress in which I track together with my students during their readings, in-class writing time, and as part of their homework when they are asked to bring drafts of their works for my review. Additionally, I collect a mid-term draft of the book to provide the students with a more formal evaluation of their work,

including thorough feedback on their punctuation, grammar, and structure when required. The amount of feedback I give to the students is decided by the students themselves. In the beginning of the semester we negotiate as a class and on an individual basis such questions as grading and feedback. Using questionnaires, I conduct needs assessment during the first class to pre-assess the students' experiences with writing as well as their expectations of the amount and type of feedback they would like to receive on their writing (see Appendix E for needs assessment form). If necessary, I arrange individual conferences to further negotiate the learning process.

The topics, genres, forms, and meanings that my Advanced Written Communication (AWC) students explore in their books vary richly from the discussion of women's rights in Saudi Arabia in poems, to symbolic allegories on the topics of greed and hate in a seemingly made-up country, "Srabia", to journals, graphic novels, short stories, creative nonfiction, etc.

Bamberg (2004) and Andrews (2001) connect the processes of narrative writing and identity construction, describing them as parallel. The researchers assert that "it is through the activity of narration that we create meaning in our lives" (p.77). Newkirk (1997) refers to narratives as the "literature of self-direction ...which protects against fatalism, helplessness, and determinism" (p.51) and "contributes to the exalted sense of agency … (p.89)." In addition to directing students on the way to self-actualization, narrative writing "enable[s] students to write with commitment and pleasure" (p.87). Thus, having taught an AWC class for two consecutive semesters, I witnessed quite a number of changes not only in the quality of students' writing, but also in the development of confident and passionate writer identities in both my students and myself.

Newkirk adds that the possibility of self-actualization through writing narratives "is enhanced if the students have access to mentors to guide the process" (p.51). Therefore, the role of a teacher in a writing classroom is crucial to the students' experience of the power of narrative writing. Park (2011) points out that writing and sharing personal narratives in adult ESL programs will impact both students and teachers. It "will shape our identities within and beyond academic and professional communities of practice" (p.157). Notably, my AWC class unites multilingual writers (the students and myself, the teacher) from different locales with the goal of constructing meaning in their lives through a continuous process of writing and reading meaningful narratives (in other words, unpacking topics significant on personal and social levels and chosen solely by students in process of facilitated reflection). Furthermore, these meaning construction processes shape our identities in and beyond the academy.

Thus, my dissertation is aimed at the exploration of the space of my classroom, writing practices of my multilingual students, and the impact of personal-narrative-based short book writing pedagogy on students' writing and writer identities construction in an EAP context. Undoubtedly, EAP programs, due to their nature and purpose, restrict instructors' freedom of teaching to some extent, but I believe that it is the instructor's choice to work harder and find ways of developing writers regardless of their circumstances.

I hope that my work will add to the scholarship of both Composition and Second Language Writing scholars as they internationalize composition and bring multilingual writers and their monolingual peers, both in EAP programs and universities, towards writing and researching for and beyond the academy.

Review of Relevant Literature

Undoubtedly, my personal-narrative-based writing pedagogy and research are largely informed by my practical experiences of teaching and learning. In the later chapters of my dissertation, I will refer to my pedagogy as "personal narrative writing" (Pavlenko, 2004) or writing "meaningful" narratives (Berthoff, 1981, Hurlbert, 2013). Pavlenko describes narrative writing as "the central means by which people give their lives meaning across time" (p.213). Both Hurlbert (2013) and Berthoff (1981) expand the concept "meaningful" to personal, ideological, political, economic and other dimensions that the writer brings into narrative or other writing. In this dissertation, when speaking about "meaningful" narratives, I imply narratives or stories, written on topics that are highly significant for students' lives on all levels: personal, social, political, ideological, etc. Furthermore, I infer that such topics are solely decided by students in and through reflection and discussion. Personal narrative writing pedagogy, founded on writing meaningful narratives, has become the focus of my dissertation. I believe that bringing such pedagogy in the context of an EAP continues a scholarly discussion among both Composition and TESOL scholars around the meaning of writing for students' lives in and beyond the academy and one bound by geographical and linguistic space.

The construction of my EAP writing pedagogy is a gradual process of bonding the works by leading compositionists (Hurlbert and Blitz, Tobin, Owens, O'Reilley, Luce-Kapler, Berthoff, Bizzell, etc.) and ESL scholars (Benesch, Canagarajah, Pavlenko, Hanauer, Morgan, etc.) under an essential motto of Paulo Freire that teaching is a human act (Freire, 1998). In further chapters, I will extensively cover the input of composition scholars into the development of my EAP writing pedagogy. Notably, the way composition scholars regard

writing as a social act (Luce-Kapler, 2004;Hurlbert&Blitz,1999), nurture (Tobin,1993), and a sustainable practice of intervening in the world (Owens, 2001; Welch, 2008) has found a deep connection with the role writing has played in my own life, my current research, and pedagogy. However, the challenge for me as a researcher in this particular study is to bring a composition lens into EAP programs.

To support the idea of such fields bonding, I consider it necessary in this section to briefly touch on key literary works by both Composition and critical ESL scholars in their unity of ideas related to writing. This unity has significantly shaped my ontology and epistemology and laid the foundation for my research and current teaching practice in an EAP context. The works by Benesch, Canagarajah and Hurlbert, Berthoff, Hanauer, Ivanic, and others provided me with the lens to look at knowledge construction in multilingual literacy education and the foundation for my pedagogy, which mends personal and academic, multilingual and monolingual, dominant and dominated into one meaningful space of an EAP writing classroom. In what follows, I briefly discuss each scholar's contribution to the gradual development of my pedagogy, starting with Benesch and the ways she problematizes the EAP context and its short-term needs focused curriculum. I continue with the works by Canagarajah and Hurlbert, who debunk traditional skills- and proficiency- based writing pedagogies and call for new visions of composing, which would become significantly internationalized. Furthermore, Hanauer and Berthoff offer ways to make composing meaningful for students' lives in any context, including EAP. These works are described below in the logical sequence, which reflects my thinking process as I constructed my personal-narrative-based EAP writing pedagogy.

Benesch

Benesch, as a leading EAP scholar, has brought the EAP context onto a wider ESL arena and problematized it. Benesch stated that the objective of an EAP program is to provide multilingual students, enrolled in it, with sufficient knowledge and skills to function in the academic environment of a mainstream program. Due to the nature and the curricula focus of EAPs, these programs are set up to achieve the outcomes in the shortest amount of time (between one academic semester and one academic year) (Benesch, 2001). However, Benesch (2001) argued that compared to mainstream classrooms, which are highly ideological, EAP's pragmatic nature prevents it from tackling issues, which go beyond the score on the English proficiency test and a set of skills for academic success (Benesch, 2001). Therefore, Benesch's work in the field of EAP, especially EAP writing, has pushed me, an EAP writing instructor, to attempt action to reach beyond the established pragmatism in the EAP context in order to provide space for EAP students to know, critique, and engage with mainstream academic communities. Benesch's work helped me construct a rational for narrative writing at Advanced Level EAP courses.

Hurlbert and Canagarajah

My aspiration to create a study at the intersection of Composition and Second Language Writing fields has been strengthened by scholarly work already situated at the crossing of these fields. There have been attempts to pull the fields closer by both composition and critical EAP scholars. Hurlbert (2013) calls for internalization of composition and quotes Canagarajah, who has outlined ways of accomplishing this goal: pedagogy of shuttling and a critical engagement approach to handling academic discourses. Canagarajah's extensive critique of a monolingual formulaic approach to EAP writing echoes

with Hurlbert's critique of a nationalist view of composition, which "is not sufficient for teaching writing, or for fostering the intellectual health or a well-developed subjectivity" (Hurlbert, 2013, p. 18). Canagarajah (2006) asserts that "the dominant approaches to studying multilingual writing have been hampered by monolingualist assumptions that conceive literacy as unidirectional acquisition of competence" (p. 589). In other words, EAP and other second language literacy instructors have so far focused mainly on their students' "immediate objective of becoming proficient in writing" in English (Canagarajah, 2002, p.33). Even in Advanced English proficiency EAP writing classrooms, the focus is still on error correction, clarity of thesis statement, paragraph sequencing, and other matters of skill and form in writing. Canagarajah (2002) continues posing that "the attitude encouraged is to orientate more towards achieving academic success and communicative fluency, rather than developing a critical awareness of the underlying knowledge-making process" (p. 33). In such an environment, there is little space for reflection (Canagarajah, 2002). Hurlbert (2013) adds to this formulation by saying that the view of composition as skills-based "does not sufficiently expand the processes needed to write for an even more interdependent world population, where, for instance, propriety in writing and school decorum do not even look or sound the same for one as for another" (p. 17). The harm of such focus, as seen by Canagarajah (2002), is in a routinely predicted and unchangeable outcome of writing pedagogies: use of the "established knowledge" in the expected way. This environment of "conformity" to the standards and conventions of mainstream monolingual linear writing hampers creativity and passion and hinders the students' learning possibilities. In such an environment, multilingual students see their monolingual counterparts as privileged and the mainstream academic community as rule setting and dominant. As Benesch (2001) pointed

out, such education puts the students in very narrow boundaries, in which larger questions are not being asked. Both compositionists and critical ESL scholars call for "reclaiming the imagination" (Berthoff, 1984) and opening possibilities for students to explore how "the difference," including multilingualism, can contribute to the knowledge-making process in the academy.

Berthoff's "imagination" was juxtaposed by Canagarajah to a multilingual context and compared to "double vision" (Canagarajah, 2006), which, as he states, multilingual students inherently possess. Supporting Hurlbert who calls for international dialogue for the sake of the intellect, field, and new ways of making meaning out of the world, I believe that multilingual writers have a lot to offer to the fields of Composition and TESOL and to the world. Therefore, allowing composition to become international, or allowing multilingual writers to compose, will open new ways of living, new hopes, and new peace. The scholars, who publish at the intersection of mono- and multi-lingualism, specifically Hurlbert and Canagarajah, increased my own confidence as an EAP writing scholar to step out of the well-established space of conformity into a much less explored ideological and even political interplanetary of a multilingual EAP writing class.

Berthoff and Hanauer

Hanauer (2012), in his article *Meaningful literacy: Writing poetry in the language classroom*, advocates for ESL/EFL pedagogies to become more human and student-centered (Hanauer, 2012). He points out that in 2006 a well-known applied linguist Claire Kramsch argued that second and foreign language pedagogy and research have lost the perception of "the flesh and blood individuals who are doing the learning" (Kramsch, 2006, p.98). Hanauer's work is aimed at developing the concept of student-centered pedagogy, which

helps multilingual students make meaning from their experiences of using English, as opposed to positioning those experiences as a struggle for a mastery of skill, genre, or language competence. Hanauer defines meaningful pedagogy as the one that allows the students to make sense of the world through a holistic activity, which involves intellect, "…affect, and intention, and integrates personal history (p.108)." Meaningful pedagogy, as defined by Hanauer, does not reject such aspects of being a human as affect, emotions, personal history, and sense of "self," but actively engages these aspects into a learning process. The main principles of Hanauer's student-centered or human-centered "meaningful" pedagogy are:

- Sense of the richness of the internal world of the multilingual individual

- Learning as widening and deepening the ways an individual can understand, interpret, feel, and express her or his personally meaningful understandings

- Interaction with everything that makes up the experience and understanding of the learner, including issues of identity and self (Hanauer, 2012, p.108).

Human-centered ESL/EFL pedagogy, designed for multilingual learners in their English literacy courses, places every subtle aspect of being a multilingual human at the center of a language classroom, sharpens the focus on "self" and "identity", and opens up space for constructing rich identities and confident senses of "self" among multilingual learners.

Hanauer (2012) brought his "meaningful" or human-centered pedagogy into a Second Language Writing class by means of utilization of autobiographical and emotional writing with personal insight, which helps the writer explore and understand self, "endorse the expression of personal feelings, and deepen understanding of personal experiences" (p.108). In practice, in order to approach "meaningful" pedagogy in a writing class, Hanauer offered

multilingual learners the opportunity to write poetry. Hanauer (2012) believes that the goal of "meaningful" literacy pedagogy is "to make the literacy work in the class meaningful on the personal and social levels, as well as giving a sense of depth and ownership to the writing itself" (p.108). The researcher states:

Furthermore, this way of designing writing instruction overcomes the absence of a sense of voice, authority and ownership so characteristic of the majority of language learning experiences, which are required to conform to conventionalized expression. (p.108)

While Hanauer chose poetry to "turn-on" human-centered meaning making mechanisms in a second language writing class, I made my choice in favor of a personal narrative-based short book. It not only incorporates every principle, but also combines such meaningful writing experiences as autobiographical, emotional, and personal insight writing into one entity: the narrative or the book.

While the notion of "meaningful" literacy has just recently started being conceptualized and developed in applied linguistics and second language writing, it has been well-established itself and its importance in the field of Composition since the late 1970s in the works of Ann Berthoff. However, the important distinction between what Berthoff and Hanauer call "meaningful" is that in Hanauer's concept the center is at a human being and his or her personal and social history. The social aspect in Hanauer's "meaningful" pedagogy is much less emphasized than the personal. Hence, Hanauer's concept of "meaningful" literacy or "meaningful pedagogy" translates into human-centered pedagogy or literacy. Notably, Ann Berthoff takes "meaning" in literacy education, specifically, composing, much further and refocuses the core of the concept on social and political aspects of a student. Berthoff

began her work on the relationship between meaning and writing within the process approach. In fact, Berthoff in the late 1970s moved away from the positivists' vision of writing as product-oriented towards writing/composing as acquiring and forming of knowledge through "the making of meaning"(Berthoff, 1981). In her book "Making of Meaning", she argues that students "learn to write by learning the uses of chaos…[by] rediscovering the power of language to generate the sources of meaning" (Berthoff, 1981, p.70).

Furthermore, Hanauer's understanding and conceptualization of the notion "meaningful literacy", being quite multifaceted and complex, however, does not include certain aspects, which come out in a second language classroom where meaning making occurs through writing, in particular, my own classroom and my students' short books. The short books that my students write, apart from being meaningful on the personal and social levels, explicate the students' political views and socio-economic struggles, as well as the issues of gender, class, ethnicity, and so on. As Hurlbert (2013) points out, "even when not overtly political, writing is always these things because it is a life impulse, an impulse toward freedom and independence that makes healthy forms of belonging possible" (p.25). Composing is inherently ideological.

Ann Berthoff states: "Pedagogy can mean simply the old normal schools' 'materials and methods' or it can name the means to a profoundly political awakening, as in Paulo Freire' 'pedagogy of the oppressed'..." (Berthoff, 1981, p.48). Berthoff argues for composition pedagogies of the second type, stating:

Composing involves the writer in making choices all along the way and thus has social and political implications: we aren't free unless we know how to choose [...]. It is not

too much to claim that the composition classroom is a place where students can discover their humanity in both a moral and a political sense. (Berthoff, 1981, p.22)

Therefore, if we intend to turn writing in its formulaic and skills-based version or more "advanced" human-centered version into composing, which is a "process of discovery and interpretation, of naming and stating, of seeing relationships and making meanings" (Berthoff, p.20), we will face compositions which are not just personal, involving affect and intellect, but also highly ideological and political, raising "larger questions" (Benesch, 2001). Therefore, whenever writing or composing are taught as an indispensable part of living and as meaning making processes, they involve crucial lived experiences, help construct and reconstruct those experiences in a variety of ways and, inevitably, expand the connotations of the concept of "meaningful literacy" to involving affective, intellectual, social, and political ways of being and knowledge construction. Thus, in my dissertation, I will use the attribute "meaningful" to talk about (1) literacy or (2) pedagogy. By "meaningful" I will imply: (1) the process of meaning making, and (2) teaching writing in its complexity in relation to what we know about knowledge, significance, interpretation, subjectivity, ideology, etc.

Finally, as a teacher of multilingual writing, I believe that multilingual learners, bound within a pragmatic, English-intensive EAP, are in need of space to develop meaningful (personally significant) literacies and creative confident writer identities, or identities of "a person, who writes" (Brook, 1988, p.85). I pose that EAP students, similarly to other multilingual learners in a variety of contexts, are inherently creative and capable of producing new genres and literacies (Canagarajah, 2002). This inherent creativity manifests itself in the short books I receive at the end of each semester. The books come out in different formats, with different fonts, margins, and design. The students design creative

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covers, which emerge from their passion and contain by-hand drawings, photos, or excerpts from religious books, etc. My students' books have poems, pictures, drawings, and sketches; they contain a variety of creative poems, mixed-genre stories, and narratives. Canagarajah (2006) claims that multilingual learners are "endowed with that mysterious 'double vision' that enables them to understand the possibilities and constraints of competing traditions of writing to 'carve out' a space for themselves within conflicting discourses" (p.602). These personal spaces could be carved within IEI in a writing class, where multilingual students can explore and build off of their rich multilingual identities in writing their short books, which bring personal stories onto a larger social arena. Short books help multilingual students make meaning of their lives and seek creative ways of engaging with the academic writing practices in meaningful ways. Books also enhance a sense of ownership of academic discourses among multilingual students, who don't just follow its practices, but adopt them for their purposes, like answering larger questions, which they pose in the introductory chapters of their books. Therefore, my role is to provide EAP multilingual students with the classroom space, which will allow for such "carving" of their personal spaces within writing in the academy. Notably, the above mentioned scholars provided me with a better understanding of the constituents of such classroom space and confidence to construct and research it within the IEI context.

Methodological Approaches

This study is a multiple case study within an institutional setting of the Intensive English Program (Stake, 1995) conducted in one EAP writing classroom, taught by the researcher.

Since the first research question of the study is focused around the students' experiences writing short books in the AWC class, the first case study to be conducted is that of the class as a whole. However, the other research question is aimed at exploring the students' evolution as writers in the course of one academic semester of short book construction. Therefore, five case studies follow the study of the class as a whole in order to explore five individual students' journeys.

The data sources for each case study include observations (Marshall&Rossman, 2011), semi-structured interviews (Seale, 2004), students' narratives and classroom artifacts (Creswell, 1998; Marshall, 2010). The data collection is focused around the experiences of EAP students writing short books. Having more than three data sources allows for the creation of a more realistic and complex version of reality in the study.

This study aims at getting a better understanding of EAP students' experiences writing personal-narrative-based short books at an EAP program as well as the impact that narrative-focused writing pedagogy has on the students as writers. Since, by means of a case study format I intended to gain an insight into my research questions, which are pre-determined by me, instrumental case study was employed to most effectively achieve my goal (Stake, 1995, pp.3-4). Additionally, since my study is extended to five individual student cases, it is "collective" by nature (Stake, 1995). Moreover, the ultimate goal of the study, which is to explore a pedagogy of book writing, defines its exploratory purpose (Yin, 2003). Since all of the cases will be explored within one institution, an Intensive English Program (IEI) in western Pennsylvania, the case study can also be referred to as institutional (Stake, 1995).

Notably, no case study is generalizable, as specific contexts are limited to their own environments. However, instrumental case studies allow the researcher to choose contexts that best address the research questions of a given study. This dissertation is a cross-case analysis of several individual multilingual writers within the Fall 2013 Advanced Written Communication class with the data being analyzed through multiple methods and in multiple forms, which allows a closer, more complex look at human experiences researched. Hence, the methods to be used in this case study are observations, interviews, and analysis of artifacts: students' narratives, students' needs assessment and various written reflections, class syllabi, handouts, etc.

Significance of the Study

There is a significant body of research on the far-reaching impact of writing personal narratives, meaningful for students' lives, in mainstream composition classrooms: Hurlbert&Blitz, 1998; O'Reilley, 1993; Owens, 2001; Tobin, 2004; Luce-Kapler, 2004; Hanauer, 2004; Pagnucci, 2004; 2008, etc. Furthermore, there is research on the healing and transformative power of story writing (C. M. Anderson & M. M. MacCurdy, 2000; Pennebaker, 2012). However, when the teaching of writing enters the ESL domain, especially the context of an EAP, the conversation about writing personal narratives takes a different turn: writing for peace (Morgan & Vandrick, 2009), living (Blitz & Hurlbert, 1998), sustainability (Owens, 2001), and self-actualization (Tobin, 2004) becomes writing to conform to the standards of mainstream U.S. college classes: strict conventions of academic writing, "clean" error-free texts, mastery of expository, descriptive, persuasive, and narrative writing modes, etc. (Baik & Greig, 2009; Bailin, 2006; Carroll & Dunkelblau, 2011; Ian, 2005; Kim, 2006; Lambert, 2008; J.-Y. Liu, Chang, Yang, & Sun, 2011; Min-fen & Bakken,

2004; Nordmeyer & Barduhn, 2010; Silva, 2001). Traditionally, the main task for EAP

writing educators lies in preparing EAP students for college and helping them meet the

expectations of the mainstream.

Interestingly, it is widely recognized by second language writing scholars that the

mastery of the linear conventions of academic writing in English is a key to academic

success (Leki, Cumming, & Silva, 2008). It is also commonly known that the conventions of

academic writing in English are extremely challenging for some multilingual students, since

westernized linear writing practices are often drastically different from what multilingual

students are used to while writing in their first language (Kachru, 2009). As a consequence,

EAP professionals often feel that they must provide their students with the skills of academic

writing in English by imposing on them a "teaching curriculum" (Warriner, 2010), which

relies on writing Westernized argumentative essays and cause-and-effect papers with a linear

progression of the argument and proper transitions. Such writing not only limits what

multilingual students can do with the language, but also treats their "difference" as a problem

to be fixed (Canagarajah, 2002).

Being a multilingual writer and educator, who has grappled with teacher-center

curriculum and the conventions of academic research writing in English and in Russian in the

course of a Bachelor's, Master's, and a PhD programs, I find such orientation towards

correctness and subordination to the norms of the western academy teaching practices in the

EAP scholarly research problematic and even alarming. It alarms me not just because it

hinders multilingual writers' individuality and puts them in the position of apprentices, but

because it is ill-grounded. It is widely known in the field of Composition that there is no

agreement as to what academic writing is (Bizzel, 1999), and, in fact, more and more

compositionists today criticize "traditional", skills-based approach to composing, calling for individualized student-centered composing, which is epistemological and is taught in its complexity in relation to what we know about knowledge, significance, ideology, subjectivity, interpretation, etc. (Bishop, 2006; Bizzel, 1999; Williams, 2006; Newkirk, 1997, etc.). Additionally, by trying to turn composing into a skill, EAP educators deprive multilingual writers of a chance to see how personally, socially, and politically significant academic writing, especially its research genre, can be. I specifically point out the research genre, because conducting research is a tedious, but very rewarding process at the core of which is the search for an answer. When so much effort is put into evaluating sources, collecting credible information, following the format, and citing sources, the hope is that what is discovered will at least be meaningful on a personal level. So, it hurts me to see that such a powerful writing genre could lead to nothing, and so much energy could be wasted, when the question asked and the answer discovered mean little to the student and his or her community.

This dissertation is intended to contribute to the ideas expressed by Benesch, Canagarajah, Morgan, and other ESL and EAP professionals, who oppose a skill-based notion of writing in an EAP context and call for a human-centered pedagogy, which will unveil the far-reaching power of writing for multilingual students and bring them closer to the realization of their selves in their academic roles and future careers as well as their well-being (Benesch, 2001; Bista, 2011; Ramanathan, 2002; Warriner, 2010).

Additionally, there is also a space for Composition to develop its international perspectives on composing. Therefore, the significance of my dissertation is in its attempt to create a platform for a conversation between the fields of composition and EAP which,

hopefully, will result in significant transformative changes for both teachers and students, who work and study in multilingual EAP and mainstream composition contexts, and beyond. I intend to found this platform on the outcomes of my study which aims at providing both fields with a better understanding of the impact of post method and post process pedagogy on multilingual writers in the context of an Intensive English Program.

My IEI

The Intensive Language Institute where I worked at the time of dissertation research has been established in the 1980s and has earned itself a respectful reputation since then. Physically, it unquestionably resembles an institute. It occupies almost the whole floor of a building on campus. It has nice computer labs, teachers' offices, staff offices, a conference room, and a little resource room with books, board games, CDs- many things one might need to design a class.

Administratively, the IEI is well-established, too. My program has recently been taken over by the Office of International Affairs and the Vice President for International Affairs at the University. Therefore, we have started to gradually develop increasingly more connections within campus and are developing more collaborative programs with the college faculty of various colleges and institutes at the university.

We have a very clear organizational structure: Director, Assistant Director, Secretary (the only three full-time employees in the Institute), about 11 part-time instructors, a few front-desk assistants and student workers. Most importantly, half of our instructors hold PhDs, while the other half are in process of completing their Doctorate programs. Some of us actively publish and travel to conferences, while others prefer to solely focus on teaching.

Interestingly, I have lately discovered, that we are a non-typical IEI Institute for a number of reasons: 1) absence of pre-determined fixed curriculum, 2) limited administrative control over teaching, 3) ability to be cross-trained if desired, 4) unstoppable creativity in course development and grateful support of these efforts on the part of the administration, and 5) the tradition of having at least 50% of instructors being multilingual themselves.

In the past two years, I have travelled to a variety of TESOL conferences where I discovered that those, as I see them "advantages", to which we have been exposed are (at least to some extent) due to the fact that we are a non-accredited IEI. I found that with accreditation and the ability to provide students with "real" widely accepted diplomas upon completion of our programs, we will have to develop a fixed curriculum and, on the bright side, two full-time instructor positions with benefits.

However, being free from any imposed fixed curriculum and pre-determined class materials, my colleagues and I were able to unchain our creativity and design learning environments together with our students in meaningful ways.

I have to admit that I am very grateful to the founder and the current administration of the IEI where I worked for a number of years and where I conducted my dissertation research. They have deliberately, for years, shielded the program from a fixed curriculum and scrupulous administrative control of compliance to the curriculum prescribed, providing me, specifically, with the space to teach, design programs, design and redesign courses, as well as being cross-trained into a testing coordinator and web-maintainer, while teaching at an IEI.

Chapter Summary

This chapter aimed at conceptualizing the study by unpacking the researcher's positionality and positioning amongst a body of literature on multilingual writing and EAP.

The chapter briefly outlined the tenets of composition and second language researchers and educators whose ideas guided the study. It took introduced the study context, the research questions, and the significance of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Being an international student who has come to the US for academic studies, I have had extensive experience engaging with western academic discourse in my graduate programs and, later, as a faculty member, teaching students with academic ambitions similar to my own in an English for Academic Purposes (EAP) program. At different points of my academic journey, I have grappled with academic conventions, acquired a toolbox of academic skills for success, have been successfully apprenticed into academia and the conventions of academic writing. But, I ran into a problem. Being a doctorate student pressured to publish and present my original work as well as complete thought-provoking and creative course assignments, I have been challenged to find my own unique voice and construct a confident writer identity. In the course of my apprenticeship, I was taught to suppress that voice and develop a monolingual native-like writing style, which would be in compliance with the expectations of the mainstream academia. I have long made peace with my subordinate position in the US academia and the fate of never becoming a native writer. I learned to write "clean" literature reviews, develop strong thesis statements, which, no doubt, helped me publish. What I lost, though, is the passion and genuine need to write, write so that my voice, creativity, and identity are manifested in and developed through writing, acquiring new meaning.

As an ESL composition instructor who works in a pre-admission [7]Intensive English program, I feel it my utmost duty to guide my students in developing their second language literacy, not in a reductive, submissive, native-like fashion, but in such a way that unveils their unique voices, imagination, creativity, and competences, and develops stronger and more confident identities beyond academia.

The purpose of my study, therefore, is to explore a personal-narrative-based short book writing [8]pedagogy (Pagnucci, 2004; Pavlenko, 2004) as a driving force, which unveils and shapes international students' unique voices, multifaceted identities, and multilingual competences, and allows the students engagement with the academic discourse on a "difference as a resource" principle (Canagarajah, 2002).

In order to explore the impact of personal narrative writing pedagogy on the construction of EAP students' identities as well as their experiences teaching and writing personal narratives in a pre-admission program, I would like to set a theoretical background for personal-narrative-based second language writing pedagogy in this chapter. In order to do so, I will structure the literature review in the following way:

1. Problematizing existing EAP writing pedagogies

2. Problematizing academic discourse

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[7] *Pre-admission* is the term used by Benesch (2001) to refer to English for Academic Purposes programs or institutions, which provide multilingual students with English instruction with the purpose of entering a US institution of higher education. Thus, successful multilingual students get admitted to an academic program of interest at a US 4-year college upon completion of an EAP program. EAP programs are also often referred to as *Pre-academic*.

[8] My definition of *personal narrative writing* is presented in the later section of this chapter (*The Power of Narrative*) and is a combination of Pagnucci's definition of a narrative- "all sorts of stories, romantic novels, comic books, and sports stories" (Pagnucci, 2004. P.47) and Pavlenko's definition of a narrative: stories people tell about their lives (Pavlenko, 2004). Personal narrative writing pedagogy engages learners to write all sorts of stories about their lives.

3. Debunking stereotypes: exploring the relationships between EAP students ethnicity/culture (s) and academic success in the educational environments of the west

4. Introducing accomplishments of the field of Composition Studies in the implementation of personal narrative pedagogies in mainstream composition classrooms and the ramifications of such practices

5. Establishing a case for a personal narrative writing pedagogy in the context of an EAP program

EAP Curricula and Writing Pedagogies: Academic Writing in its Hybridity

It was not just the power of writing itself that pushed me to teach and explore composing in a second language domain, but it is the way composing was taught when I encountered it in readings in the field of Composition and in the *Teaching Writing* class, offered by Dr. Claude Hurlbert. In fact, I have caught myself referring to composing in different ways. In the realm of Intensive English Institutes, the notion of "composition" gets substituted with "writing," since EAP professionals view language learning as the process of mastery of the four skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Thus, when it comes to teaching ESL or discussing the works by TESOL scholars, I tend to use the word "writing" and understand it as a formulaic and product-oriented process as it has been understood for years in the TESOL field.

However, when it comes to talking about the works by Berthoff, Elbow**,** Hurlbert, Owens, or referring to a mainstream composition class, I substitute "writing" for "composing." Thus, composing for me does not only have a different connotation, but is a qualitatively different process, the process of meaning making. This section will introduce

the reader to the context of an EAP and some key features of EAP curricula in general. In the second part of this section, I will focus on the teaching of writing (as opposed to teaching of composition) and explore current visions and practices relative to EAP writing pedagogies. I will further argue the myths that academic writing is a unilaterally established non-contradictory genre and that the academy is a bounded, heterogeneous community.

A Glance at a Pragmatic EAP

English for Academic Purposes (EAP) is an English program offered as part of Intensive English Institute (IEI) curricula. EAPs are not-for-credit pre-admission programs aimed at providing support to international students striving to gain admission to a US institution of higher education (Hong-Nam & Leavell, 2006). Therefore, an EAP's curriculum focuses on discovering expectations of the academic community, which its students are aspiring to join, and then "reducing this information to teachable units taught over a specified and often limited time period" (Benesch, 2001, p. ix). In an introduction to Benesch (2001) Dudley-Evans describes an EAP program as a highly pragmatic "practical affair", providing "the maximum possible support in the limited time available" (Benesch, 2001, p.ix). Such descriptors as "instrumental," "pre-admission," "goal-oriented," "intensive," "training," and "proficiency-based" reflect an EAP's environment. EAP is a short-term goal oriented program, which is designed to answer the students' assumed immediate need in college admission. Thus, an EAP's traditional pragmatic four-skills curriculum, assessment, and placement by proficiency levels are focused on gaining a desired English proficiency test score, which will secure EAP students' entry into a desired academic program. Therefore, Benesch (2001) argues that compared to mainstream classrooms, which are highly ideological, EAP's

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pragmatic nature prevents it from tackling issues which go beyond the score on the English proficiency test and a set of skills for academic success (Benesch, 2001).

Furthermore, Benesch (1996; 1999; 2001; 2009) problematizes the focus of EAP professionals on the students' short-term needs i.e. college admission. Benesch (1999) cautions against such a pragmatic, short-term needs based approach to EAP curriculum. Instead, she calls for a critical, dialogic approach, which "does not choose between immediate needs and the development of social awareness, believing that they can and should be taught simultaneously" (Benesch, 1999, p.579). Benesch believes that an EAP training to meet the expectations of the mainstream is not the type of education that will make a multilingual student successful at a U.S. IEI and beyond. On the contrary, it will teach multilingual learners to privilege mainstream and EAP classrooms, reducing the students to the role of apprentices (Benesch, 2001; Ellwood & Nakane, 2009).

EAP and the Academy

Canagarajah (2002) finds EAP apprenticeship pedagogies reductive and diminishing to multilingual students' identities. He finds several aspects of EAP curricula especially problematic: 1) orientating to the academy as a tightly bound homogeneous community, 2) describing an academic community's content and genres as non-negotiable, 3) assuming need of EAP students to achieve full membership in this community at the expense of their vernacular communities.

Canagarajah (2006) finds apprenticeship into the academic community inherently problematic since this model is based on a faulty understanding of the notion "community". Undoubtedly, EAP educators have successfully described the academic knowledge content, the genre conventions, and register in order to help students achieve communicative

competence in a prospective disciplinary community and academic discourse in general. However, Canagarajah (2006) argues that, in the first place, communities are "hybrid" and "boundless"(Canagarajah, 2006). Secondly, quite often communities are "imagined", not physically constituted (Norton, 2001). In other words, apprenticeship, which presupposes skills training to "master a certain trade" (Apprenticeship, 2003), is problematic in a community which constantly changes, shapes and reshapes its content, boundaries, and conventions. Apprentices are trained to do "the same job in the same way". Such training is bound to failure in the academy where new knowledge is created rapidly and diverse ways of gaining new knowledge are sought.

Furthermore, in addition to being bound and static, academic conventions, content, and registers are often viewed by EAP scholars as normative and non-negotiable. Such a view creates a problem for multilingual learners whose slight deviations from the "norm" in writing are labeled by EAP professionals "unproficient" (Lu, 1994). This labeling happens automatically, without exploration of reasons behind adopting those "abnormal" practices in multilingual students' written works (Swales, 1990). However, it's worth mentioning that there have been a number of studies, in which those "abnormalities" in multilingual students' writing were not automatically considered errors, but explored and, as a consequence, described innovative and welcomed by mainstream academic instructors (Li, 1999; Lu, 1994).

Teaching literacy in the context of an EAP is strongly conditioned by its pragmatic nature. There are a number of issues that arise from a normative-pragmatic attitude of EAP professionals to the academy and academic discourse in particular (S. Canagarajah, 2002):

1. "Going native" in the academic community deprives multilingual learners of membership in their vernacular communities and limits their opportunities

2. Multilingual students are imposed a distorted view of a social life, in which members enjoy membership in multiple communities

3. Multilingual students stay unaware of knowledge-making processes, acquiring a position of subordination to the norm

4. Reduction of literacy and discourses to "skills" and "information" deprives multilingual students of "space for asking larger questions of power and difference" (Canagarajah, p.33)

In other words, by reducing EAP literacy curricula to an apprenticeship model of learning, we work to develop submissive and passive individuals, who struggle to see beyond academia. Disciplinary communities "kept safe" from change, modification and democratization are "disempowering to multilingual students as it prevents them from engaging with the academic discourses in terms of their own interests and traditions" (pp.35-36). Lastly, Canagarajah (2006) asserts that "bilingual competence integrates knowledge of two languages and is, thus, qualitatively different from monolingual competence" (p. 591). Therefore, multilingual EAP writers should be given a chance to manifest their competences in a number of discourses and engage with the academy, writing meaningful creative texts.

Academic Writing in Composition: The State of Disagreement

In the section above, I introduced the existing discussion as it relates to academic writing, the academic community, and a pragmatic approach to writing (versus composing) in the field of EAP. Furthermore, I feel it necessary to demonstrate that while EAP scholars sharpen their focus on training multilingual writers to comply with the conventions of the western academic genre, composition scholars move further away from compliance and conventions in their research and practice. As Bizzell (1999) states, " from my experience

through these years of debate over teaching academic discourse […] defining academic

discourse is a more complex task than I earlier realized" (p.8).

Bishop (2006) pointed out that in the past composition was taught as a skills class

(Bishop & Strickland, 2006). She asserts that in the past students were asked to write

particular essay forms (narration, description, exposition, and argumentation) and to bring in

a finished essay each week for grading. Such classes are now labeled "current-traditional".

The researcher concludes that, because they are product-oriented, those classes resulted in

formulaic writing and rarely offered students glimpses into the messy, generative, exciting

process of writing (p.228).

Compositionists seem to agree on the need to forget "traditional" product and skills-

based composition as well as the notion of academic writing as a merely normative "science

privileged" (Williams, 2006) genre. In the traditional understanding, so popular among EAP

scholars, academic writing is "the key to success in the classroom, and subsequently in future

careers" (p.711). Additionally, the conventions, or just as often the formulas, of academic

writing can be taught to students and, when fully mastered, "allow them to march

triumphantly through the writing assignments of one class after another" (Williams, 2006,

p.711).

Williams asserts that such a conception of academic writing is part of a larger culture

that privileges science, rationality, linearity, and argument and disregards a human identity,

which is "emotional, subjective, lacking rigor, and impossible to grade". Bishop (1999),

Newkirk (1997), Williams (2006) and others confront such a reductive understanding of

writing in the academy, arguing that work that is explicitly personal and addresses issues of

identity can be as intellectually rigorous as what is conventionally considered academic

p.711. Leahy (2005) argues that "writing is not simply about the product" (Leahy, 2005). She believes that the students write to make meaning of the world and their "selves" in writing. Consequently, she states:

> What's of primary importance is that students learn to be confident in their own writing, that they hear the authority of their own experiences and voices…Writing classrooms are for students' advancement, not for teachers' egos. (Leahy, 2005, p.43)

Harris (2001) calls for a need to broaden the concept of the writing act, which, apart from the product, would include the human being "endeavoring to write" (Harris, 2001).

Berthoff (1982) continues that the making of meaning within the composing process does not occur in a linear fashion that pursues a goal to produce a product. Shaping, naming, recapitulating, and interpreting of concepts are the multiple dimensions of composing (pp.11-112). Berthoff (1982) states that teaching writing is not instructing students on how to follow rules and formulas to generate a five-paragraph essay (Berthoff, 1982). Berthoff (1981) explains that "composing- in contradistinction to filling in the slots of a drill sheet or a performed outline- is a means of discovering what we want to say, as well as being the saying of it" (p.20). Moreover, she adds that skills are, simply, not enough, since composing is a much more intellectually challenging than mechanical skills-based activities. And, finally, "in any case, neither skills nor model seems a well-formed concept, with the results that skills model is an obscure and muddling phrase" (Berthoff, 1981, p.52). Thus, according to composition scholars, skills- and product- focused traditional composition has proved an inadequate vision of what composing really and should do in and beyond the academy.

Bizzell also distinguishes between traditional academic discourse and non-traditional or "hybrid" academic discourse (Bizzell, 1999). The latter acknowledges the existence of multiple

discourses within academia and calls to experiment with the new forms. Bizzell holds with Canagarajah's view that discourse unites a community (a group of people who share language learning practices) and possesses powerful conventionalized practices, which often "create participants that suit its conventions, by allowing individuals no other options if they wish to be counted as participants" (p.11). While Bishop states that composition as a skills class, or current-traditional composition, is "the past," Bizzell claims that "traditional" academic discourse is "certainly not dead." Bizzell pointed out the existence of multiple hybrid academic discourses, which are still academic since "they enable new kinds of intellectual work" (p.11). These discourses are not simply "more comfortable" or "more congenial", but allow academics to do intellectual work in new ways, which were previously confined by the traditional academic discourse.

Thus, "traditional" product and skills oriented academic discourse, not new hybrid academic discourses, which are much less conventionalized or defined, is what the field of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) aspires to. The problem is that, in accordance with composition scholars, the "traditional" form of academic writing has proven itself inadequate to capturing the writers' selves and experiences and nurturing imagination and has become more a practice of the "past" (Bishop, 2006; Williams, 2006). This state of affairs portrays EAP scholars- followers of teaching to the academic conventions of the mainstream- as quite blind to the evolution of composing and the mainstream academy, which is no longer viewed as a tightly bound community.

Interestingly enough, notwithstanding the on-going argument about what academic writing is and how it should be taught, human individuality is becoming the center of increasingly more composition classrooms, while EAP pedagogies continue to blindly ignore

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these changes and fight for traditional "nationalistic" approach to teaching writing. As Hurlbert (2013) states it, teaching changes, and teachers will have to part with "the misguided versions of homegrown purity" in writing (p.40). He adds: "We have to start to learn beyond our comfort zones. We have to start to learn about the world" (p.112). So, now is the time to find ways of moving toward composing in the EAP and ESL fields. What makes it feasible, though, is that those ways have been already suggested, and will be discussed below.

Critical Engagement and Critical Writing

So, in accordance with post-process, post-method tenets of particularity, positionality and possibility, it is necessary to acknowledge that I need to teach my EAP students in a way that will not just prepare them for both vaguely defined "traditional" and not-defined "non-traditional" or "hybrid" academic discourse, but help them function beyond them. Thus, in my EAP writing class, students experience composing beyond the academic discourse through engaging with it on personally, socially, politically significant levels. Benesch (2001), Morgan (Morgan & Vandrick, 2009), Canagarajah (2002), and other critical EAP scholars together with such compositionists as Berthoff and Bizzell push composition teachers toward sound relationships of "critical engagement" (Canagarajah, 2006) where writers question academic discourses and move beyond them into a multitude of forms of writing. The term "critical engagement" was widely introduced in the work by Canagarajah, (2006) and resembles the term critical writing, introduced by Berthoff in her book *The Making of Meaning: Metaphors, Models, and Maxims for Writing Teachers* (Berthoff, 1981). Canagarajah (2006) asserts that the pedagogy of critical engagement encourages multilingual students to "reflect on their interests in writing, the values motivating their rhetoric, and the identities constructed by their

texts" (p.603). Thus, multilingual learners should not privilege conventions and rules or treat them as "given" and "pre-defined", but view them as "changing" and "changeable" with the ultimate goal of "shaping writing to achieve favorable voice and representation for themselves (p.603)". In other words, a pedagogy of critical engagement presupposes that multilingual students do not only critically reflect on the dominant genres and conventions of writing, but also act upon them in writing personally significant texts. Such pedagogy pushes EAP curricula to develop the students' awareness and critical thinking and teaches multilingual students to question dominant conditions, creating possibilities for "dissent" and "change", meaningful to students' lives and well-being (Benesch, 2001). Furthermore, EAP composition instructors need to help their students see beyond "text construction" toward regarding writing as a "rhetorical negotiation for achieving social meanings and functions". In this way, students can "carve a space" for themselves within academic discourses (Canagarajah, 2006, p.602). The researchers argue that having adopted a more critical approach to curriculum and pedagogy, EAP can become more student-centered. Hence, EAP must search for pedagogies, which tackle issues that are relevant to students' lives and bring EAP students beyond the English proficiency test and college admission toward the formation of strong, self-actualized, critical, multilingual selves, successful learners, and confident achievers of not just their short-term, but also their long-term, goals and needs.

Understanding Multilingual EAP Students and Their Educational Backgrounds

In the previous section, I opened a conversation about multilingual learners enrolled in EAP programs. I discussed the existing view of EAP students as apprentices, expressed by EAP professionals. I also explored the EAP setting and touched upon some reasons why an environment of apprenticeship is being constructed within EAPs. I have also introduced

recent works by Canagarajah (2003; 2006) in which he debunks existing stereotypes relative to the academic discourse and EAP students, who he views as highly multicompetent individuals, whose so-called "errors" are, in fact, opportunities for the discourses of power to grow and develop new genres and meanings. In fact, Shaughnessy in her book *Errors and Expectations: a Guide for the Teacher of Basic Writing* notes that errors in students' writing are "developmental errors". They mark the moments of growth and development in writers (Shaughnessy, 1977). Hence, in this section I would like to focus specifically on EAP learners. I start by laying out how multilingual students are essentialized or stereotyped in western educational contexts. I continue with insight into the educational landscapes of the two largest groups of EAP students enrolled in pre-admission EAP programs in the US: students from Saudi Arabia and students from different parts of East Asia (n.d., 2011b). I chose these two ethnic groups purposefully, since they are dominant in my study site as well. I conclude with an argument for a pedagogy, which will be sensitive to a unique multilingual identity. I will then explore and build off of its potential.

Ramifications of Essentialization in EAP Classrooms

The TESOL profession, as both Kumaravadivelu (2003) and Kubota (2006) state, is not free from assumptions and stereotypes related to linguistic abilities, class, gender, ethnicity, and other aspects of human life.

There are a number of studies pointing at a deficiency label "ESL" imposed on multilingual learners, who come to study in the US from other countries and speak English as their second language (Friedrich, 2006; Matsuda, 2003; Moussu, 2010; Ramanathan, 2002). This label has been debunked in multiple works by TESOL researchers. For instance, Roberge (2009) criticizes the perception of students who speak English as their second language as

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"cognitively underdeveloped" speakers of English, as students who need to be "remediated" and "fixed" (Roberge, Siegal, & Harklau, 2009). Arguing with such views, Rampton (1990) and Hall (2009) describe multilingual students as "experts" in English, placing expertise prior to nativeness (Rampton, 1990) and "new learners", who have special relationships with English and a multitude of quite complex identities developing through their growing linguistic competences in English and other languages (Hall, 2011).

In her research on the socio-economic status of former EAP students, Vandrick (2011) labeled a group of her participants "global elite". Vandrick (2011) described international students studying in the US as possessing "self-assured, comfortable demeanor usually found among young people who are used to financial security and privilege" (p.167). Undoubtedly, certain groups of international students enjoy the generosity of their home governments and families, which provide possibilities to complete educational programs in the US (Krieger, 2007; Sasaki, 2011). However, before placing international students under any label, it is important to explore aspects of their lives other than their socio-economic background: investment, motivation, educational and personal background, etc. which play into multilingual students' success in the educational climate of a U.S. college (Park, in press for 2013). According to Park (in press for 2013), labeling is extremely problematic in general and especially when it is based off of one single-sided component, like socio-economic status. Having covered the opinions of the above mentioned researchers, I would like to highlight the fact that trying to understand a person with the help of categories and labels will not, by principle, fully describe him or her. Therefore, such labels as "ESL," "non-native," "native," as well as many others created in the same manner, will fail to account for the richness, experiences, and professionalism of an individual.

In addition to labels, which pigeonhole individuals into groups and categories, there are stereotypes that are deeply rooted in the minds of individuals and, what's more problematic, in higher education professionals who teach and publish in multicultural contexts. A tendency to stereotype multilingual students by culture and ethnicity is strong both in research on second language writing and TESOL and in practices of mainstream academic disciplines. Thus, Nakane and Ellwood (2009), in their comparative study of silence as non-participation among Asian students, found that western educators link the students' academic success with active participation in class (Ellwood & Nakane, 2009). Such participation, according to the western educators, is expressed orally during in-class discussions. At the same time, Japanese students, as observed by their western instructors, remained silent in class, which was further explained by their cultural values. For instance, Ellwood and Nakane (2006) stated that Asian students , Japanese in particular, view talking in class as "timewasting and lacking consideration for other students […], a face-threatening act for the teacher […], or a face-threatening act for themselves" (Ellwood and Nakane, 2006, p.206). Thus "silence" has become a marker of students' of Asian ethnicity in the western educational contexts. At the same time, Anderson (1993), McVeigh (2002), Miller (2000) and others claim that describing Asian students as silent and indirect is faulty, stereotypical, and is not supported by empirical evidence (Anderson, 1993; McVeigh, 2002; Miller, 1994).

Canagarajah (2002) stated that a homogeneous orientation towards cultures and ethnicities, as well as a desire "to take students' cultures seriously and understand the conflicts in interacting with academic communities," comes from the traditions of Contrastive Rhetoric. Viewing cultures as separate and unvarying is, according to Canagarajah, an "essentialist orientation." Such an orientation, as stated by Canagarajah (2002), overlooks the "considerable

hybridity and heterogeneity evident in each community (p.35)," and ignores the reality of linguistic and cultural contact, diversity of styles, and the students' individualities, hidden under labels and stereotypes.

In the sections below, I will explore the educational landscapes of students, potential participants of my study, who belong to the geographical locales most widely introduced in my teaching context. I will focus on multilingual learners who come from Saudi Arabia and a number of locales in East Asia, keeping in mind the existing tendencies in the field and de-essentializing the above mentioned groups.

Educational Backgrounds of Students from Saudi Arabia

According to *Open Doors,* the number of international students in the US in 2011/2012 increased by 5.7% to a record high number of 764,495. The top fourth place of origin of international students studying in the US is Saudi Arabia, top third South Korea, and top first China (n.d., 2011a).

Figure 1. Top Places of Origin of International Students in the U.S., 2011/2012.

The vast majority of these international students enroll in BA-level programs in the US. The number of those enrolled in MA level programs in 2011/2012 almost equals the latter (n.d., 2011c). Interestingly, the number of students in a U.S. IEI (Intensive English programs) also increased from 29,603 in 2010/2011 to 35,108 in 2011/2012. Based on this data, the age and academic background diversity of prospective EAP students in the US continues to vary significantly: more adults with higher degrees are enrolling in EAP programs today, than just a year ago, while overall there has been a stable increase in the number of international students in the U.S. since 2004. Since the largest population of international students represented in EAP programs today, including the focal study site, come from East Asia and Saudi Arabia, the educational landscapes of these students will be explored in-depth in this particular section (n.d., 2011c).

Table 1

Leading Places of Origin of Intensive English Program Students, 2011

Rank	Place of Origin	2011 Total Students	2011 Student-Weeks
	WORLD TOTAL	**72,711**	1,089,296
1	Saudi Arabia	19,281	393,137
2	China	11,236	170,064
3	South Korea	7,621	108,307
4	Japan	5,502	63,639
5	Brazil	4,225	30,612
6	Taiwan	3,076	40,252
7	Turkey	1,560	19,067
8	Venezuela	1,129	15,429
9	Germany	951	14,586
10	Vietnam	933	14,103

The number of international students from Saudi Arabia in 2011/2012 has increased by 50% compared to the previous academic year. Therefore, Saudi Arabia is "by a wide margin the first among Middle Eastern countries in terms of sending students to the United States." (n.d., 2011b). There are few studies devoted to the educational backgrounds of students from

Saudi Arabia and their experiences of studying in the US (Alkhatnai, 2011; Krieger, 2007; Shaw, 2010; Vandrick, 2011; Vann & Abraham, 1990), etc. Krieger (2007) problematizes the concept of innovative, science-focused, and rapidly developing educational system of Saudi Arabia, pointing at hidden problems masked by the speed of progress, which are: lack of qualified, enthusiastic instructors, a conservative, authoritative culture unable to attract qualified instructors, and outdated teaching methods (Krieger, 2007). Malcolm (2005) signifies the crucial role the "native-like" mastery of English in Saudi Arabia (Malcolm, 2005). Malcolm's study participant, Hamad, regarded teaching English to be his future. Hamad was highly motivated to succeed in the language that has deeply penetrated into education and economy of Saudi Arabia. Hamad's peers in government and science schools possessed native-like English proficiency, which he strove to achieve. He struggled with Arabic education in the fields of biology, medicine, and science, since those majors in top Saudi colleges were taught in English. After years of independent battles with English, Hamad came to realize that he was in need of a "method of practice that was productive and enjoyable because he recognized that otherwise he would quickly lose motivation and begin to doubt his way was right" (Malcolm, 2005, p.79). Undoubtedly, self-management of learning plays an important role in a learner's development of proficiency (Benson, Grabe, & Stoller, 2001), but the understanding of multilingual learners, their educational backgrounds, and struggles on the part of language educators could significantly improve multilingual learners' experiences with English both in their home countries and in EAP programs in the U.S.

Shaw (2010) discusses the educational experiences of students from Saudi Arabia in U.S. contexts, focusing on the challenges these students face coming from a country, where there is a big divide between well-educated populations and uneducated populations like

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herders, where technological progress goes ahead of the development of awareness (Shaw, 2010). Some of these students, when they come to the West, also have to challenge the stereotypes of Saudi Arabia as a terrorist country, so widespread after 9/11. A large number of students from Saudi Arabia for the first time encounter a western educational system, where mixing genders in the classroom is a norm, and most public educational institutions are not founded on any religious principles (Oliver, 1987). In contrast to the US, religion on a large scale shapes the educational system of Saudi Arabia because education is stressed in a pious Muslim life (Berkey, 2004). When describing the educational system of Saudi Arabia, Shaw (2010) pointed out the Islamic conservatism of the country and its royal family in relation to education. The mere goal of education in Saudi Arabia is to strengthen "faith in God and Islam, and in Ahmed as God's prophet and envoy" (p.64).

Shaw's dissertation mainly focused on the concept of success relative to international students from Saudi Arabia, studying in the US. Shaw found that quite a large number of her Saudi participants construct academic success out of such factors as: resilience, positive outlook on life, motivation, and ability to manage time correctly (Shaw, 2010). Shaw's participants, in their vast majority, claimed to possess the above characteristics.

Interestingly, all 25 participants "appreciated the opportunities they had here and were steadily moving toward meeting their goals of finishing school" (p.212). In addition, 37% of the participants found Americans to be helpful and friendly. Thirty-two percent said that Americans treated them like everyone else, and they felt accepted. Talking about their educational experiences at an EAP in the US, Shaw's participants did highlight some difficulties adjusting to a different culture and new classroom practices. In fact, in their

responses regarding the causes of learning difficulties Saudi learners signified teachers'
personalities as "uninteresting" and "often unprofessional".

Although, more works manifesting stereotypes in TESOL are written about Asian
ESL students, the Saudi population has not avoided essentialization in the educational
contexts of the US academy either (El-Farra, 1996; McGowan, 1993; Qumsiyeh, 1998;
Shaheen, 2003). Abouchedid and Nasser (2006) charged the American media with info-bias
and asserted that it has consistently framed the Arab world in terms of dictators, human
rights abusers, discrimination against women, corruption, and illiteracy (Abouchedid, 2006).
Shaw (2010) asserts:

> The Saudi students studying here are not unconscious of the negative attitudes that
> form an important element of the context in which they are studying. They are
> confronted with info-bias and negative stereotyping when they turn on the TV, watch
> movies, listen to the radio, surf the Internet, or read newspapers. Negative attitudes
> about Arabs are present in educational institutions, too. (p.36)

Abouchedid and Nasser (2006) found that American college students with little knowledge
of the Middle East had the most negative attitudes about Arabs. A study conducted by Nader
Ayish examined the impact of negative stereotyping on Arab American Muslim high school
students (Ayish, 2003). Ayish concluded that these students are aware of the stereotypes, and
the stereotypes limited their academic achievement.

Thus, the majority of multilingual learners who come to the US from Saudi Arabia
are highly motivated to master the language and receive an academic degree, but they face
challenges studying in the west. The majority of those challenges are not related to the
educational context itself or cultural differences, but to the manifestation of stereotypes. If

unexplored and unaddressed by the classroom curriculum, especially that of an EAP program, where these students first engage with the academy, those stereotypes might hinder the students' academic success.

Educational Backgrounds of Students from East Asia

Undoubtedly, referring to the students from China, Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea as "Asian" or "East Asian" is an oversimplification (Ellwood, 2006). However, there are some key similarities between the above mentioned cultures, which prompted me to use an oversimplified term "East Asian", while describing the educational systems in those countries as well as the role that English plays in those societies. Park (2009) describes the penetration of the English language into all aspects of Korean society. Park states that "since 1997 English in Korea has been taught from the third grade of elementary school under the premise that, to become a successful global citizen, English should be mastered" (Park, 2009, p. 95).

Park continues describing the level of penetration of English into business, education, and government in Korea. For example, Korean companies conduct job interviews, business transactions and negotiations exclusively in English (Park, 2009). Many universities in Korea require content-based courses to be conducted in English. Additionally, "English proficiency is needed more than ever for government jobs" (p. 97). English has penetrated in the social aspects of life in Korea as well. Song (2011) asserts that Korea creates "English villages" on its land (Song, 2011). In those villages "a typical life in an English-speaking country is replicated so that non-native speakers of English can stay for a day or a short period of time, interacting with hired native speakers of English" (Song, 2011, p.36). Song continues as follows:

English, a language hardly or never used in everyday communication, has become so

important a criterion in educational assessment and performance evaluation that

South Koreans have no other option but to direct their financial resources to learning

the language, regardless of whether or not they will put it to use. (Song, 2011, p.40)

The situation in China, where a popular view is if "you are not from English-speaking

country, you know nothing" is similar to that of South Korea, Taiwan, and Japan (Zhou,

2010, p.89).

With the political and socio-economic situation in favor of English in "East Asian"

countries, East Asian educational systems continue to "disempower" Asian students by

placing emphasis on grammar-translation and extensive reading instruction, rigid testing,

punishment for grammatical mistakes, teacher authority, etc. (Zhou, 2010). Thus, it is quite

normal for students from East Asian and other countries, who come to study to the US, to

have some difficulties in adjusting to a new academic and social environment, as well as

quite different English language learning methodologies. However, it is hardly fair to say that

the difficulties will be the same for every student from East Asia.

Kumaravadivelu (2003) argues that "the TESOL profession is not free from cultural

stereotypes that are particularly associated with students from Asia" (p.710). Unveiling the

concept of essentialization, Canagarajah (2006) also provides an example of frequent

stereotyping of students from Japan and their behavior in academic communities. Kubota

(1999) argues that theorizing Japanese students' writing as uniform ignores the diversity of

styles in the Japanese community and the historical changes of Japanese rhetoric (Kubota,

1999). However, such theorizing does frequently happens. It is theorized that when Asian

students enter western educational institutions, they face the following challenges:

- Unclear roles of a professor and a student (formal, distanced relationships vs. friendly reciprocal ones) (Zhou, 2010)

- Extremely challenging teaching styles: critical independent thinking; self-motivation to learn (Zhou, 2010)

- Marginalization and invisibility of Chinese students due to cultural teaching of silence (Ellwood & Nakane, 2009)

Zhou's summary of challenges that East Asian students face in the U.S. is problematic. Zhou (2010), Fox (1994), Liu (1998) and others assert that students from Asia struggle with the ambiguously friendly role of a western professor as well as with western classroom practices due to a long tradition of unconditional obedience to authority of a teacher, who is an embodiment of knowledge. According to Kumaravadivelu (2003) "such an assertion defies both ancient wisdom and recent experience" (p.710). The researcher supports her claim with a number of Confucius sayings quoted from Cheng (Cheng, 2000), which downplay the teacher's authority and blind obedience, such as: "shi bu bi xian yu di zi; dizi bu bi bu rushi", which means: "the teacher does not always have to be more knowledgeable than the pupil; and the pupil is not necessarily always less learned than the teacher" (p.440).

Furthermore, some researchers assert that critical thinking is "incompatible" with the cultural beliefs of Asian students (Atkinson, 1997; Fox, 1994, Liu, 1998), but is characteristic of domestic western students, especially upper and middle class Americans. Benesch (1999; 2009), a passionate advocate of critical EAP pedagogy, in her works on teaching critical thinking in EAP, acknowledged a disturbing view of some ESL educators against even attempting to teach critical thinking in EAP contexts, doubting the students' benefit from such education. Kumaravadivelu (2003) explains such faulty assumptions about

the inability of Asian students to think critically with the historical process of colonial construction of the East and lists a number of unique inventions made by the Asians (compass, gunpowder, and printing) to rehabilitate these creative nations.

Finally, the issue of non-participation, which often arises in scholarly discussions about Asian students taking classes in the western contexts, deserves special attention. The matter of "silence" as a characteristic feature of East Asian students' behavior in mainstream academic and EAP classrooms has been explained by the cultural values of East Asian societies. Park (2009) quotes an old Korean proverb, which states that "it is a virtue not to openly express one's opinions or feelings but to show humility by remaining silent" (p.99).

Park (2009) continues by listing some values, characteristic of South Korea, such as: "indirectness and modesty, seniority and hierarchism, formality, collectivism, emotionalism (expressing personal concern)" (p.102). Describing the educational landscapes of students from China, Zhou (2010) points to Confucianism, which grounds Chinese culture in "respect [for] those carrying knowledge and avoid[ance] [of] challenging those in authority" (Zhou, 2010, p.51). Thus, the above mentioned researchers argue that Korean and Chinese students, who come to study in the US, have been brought up in a value system, quite different from the one they face in America. The researchers pose that this factor significantly impacts the way East Asian students perceive English, themselves, their teachers, and their success in a U.S. context. I will argue that such a view is essentializing, since there are different stories, cultures, and histories among the students placed as "Korean" and "Chinese" groups. One has to be cautious with grouping of any size and stereotyping the behavior of individuals in those groups, whose stories are not necessarily identical even though they share ethnicity. Additionally, there have been a number of studies debunking the above mentioned stereotype.

Thus, Kumaravadivelu (2003) cites a classroom action research project carried out by 38

ESL teachers which found that Asian students' passivity in classroom discussions is not

caused by their cultural disposition, but by their English proficiency and fear of making

mistakes (Tsui, 1996). Liu (2001) pointed out that analyzing Asian and all other ESL

students' classroom passivity, factors other than culture should be taken in account. The

researcher is talking about the factors which could impact the behavior of any student in a

class: "the relevance of the topic under discussion, the instructor's presentation of the

material, the students' familiarity with the subject, the students' motivation to participate, the

students' anxiety and tolerance of risk-taking, and their speaking abilities and communicative

competence" (p. 49). In other words, classroom instruction, writing instruction in particular,

should not perpetuate stereotypes, but focus on constructing curricula and learning

environments conducive to a student's individuality and strengths. Moreover, teachers should

acknowledge students' multilingual capabilities and strive to engage students' experiences

into a learning process as well as put effort into discovering the causes of "silence" rather

than blindly blaming cultures and geographies.

Additionally, Norton (2008) in her studies of investment and participation among

mainland China students found that the students remained passive in their discipline-specific

classrooms (Norton, & Gao, 2008). In the first study of Chinese students in Hong Kong, the

reason for silence was "power imbalance between the teacher and the students", but in the

second study, carried out with Chinese students in an Australian context, the reason lay in "a

different conception of what constitutes "mathematics" that limited students' engagement in

the classroom" (p.115). Furthermore, in her other works on "non-participation" of ESL

students in the western academic community, Norton points at the relationship between non-

participation and the students' "imagined communities"(Norton, 2001), or "communities of imagination", which remained "not accessible", unexplored and often downplayed by their teachers. In her study of a group of ESL immigrants in a western ESL classroom, Norton found that in some cases teachers would marginalize events or locales central to the students' imagined communities by calling their native countries less important or unimportant or stressing their "immigrant" status in an unpleasant manner. Consequently, Norton (2001) concluded that "non-participation was not an opportunity for learning from a position of periphery but an act of resistance from a position of marginality" (p. 165). This explains non-participation by cultural differences is an extremely limited look on the problem and highlights the importance of a more student-centered approach to teaching.

Although there are differences in the educational systems, values, and principles between East Asia and the US as well as within East Asia, mainstream and ESL educators need to acknowledge that "we unconsciously build walls that segregate cultures" by assigning academic behaviors of our multilingual students to cross-cultural differences and leaving our students' educational landscapes unexplored (Norton, & Gao, 2008).

Ellwood and Nakane (2009) conducted interviews with Japanese students and their western teachers in order to compare and contrast the students' and teachers' perceptions of silence and talk in a classroom. The interviews with teachers showed that the "perception of the students' capabilities derives from a student's classroom behavior" (p.213). Therefore, silent students are often viewed as incompetent. Additionally, "the students were left to their silence, as the lecturers assumed that they did not wish to speak […] or have nothing to say […]" (p. 215). Interestingly, silence, has been regarded by Western teachers as an aspect of Japanese education, which is viewed as inferior, with the causes of silence lying solely with

the Japanese. The findings from EAP students' interviews demonstrated the students' desire to be articulate in class, clearly express opinions, and be the person, who articulates their opinion. The interviewees explained their silence by lack of confidence in the subject matter and inability to assert opinions in as fast of a pace as the mainstream students. Students in both groups were aware of their silence and struggled in overcoming it. The students attributed silence to Asian norms of behavior. The researchers caution against oversimplifying the issue of silence among Asian students and attributing it to purely cultural differences, calling for new ways of engaging silent students in a classroom discussion and building on their cultural behavioral norms.

Indeed, EAP students' induction into academic contexts of the US results in a challenge for both multilingual students and their teachers in the mainstream educational context, which is set up as dominant and privileged. As it was noted above, western educators expect EAP students to be socialized into academic practices of the US classrooms (Ellwood, 2009), and manifest the curricula of conformity, which hardly helps students from Asian, Arabic countries, and other international contexts to fully participate in these practices or challenge them in meaningful ways (Canagarajah, 2006).

The concept of "academic" stands strong in the educational institutions of the US, where compliance to the "academic" is a priority. Conformity to what is traditionally considered "academic" in college writing may hinder multilingual students' development as writers and confident, self-actualized selves, and thus impede their success in the ideological print culture of the US. Thus, both EAP and mainstream college educators need to develop human-centered pedagogies, which build on the richness of the individual and allow multilingual students to fully engage with their own educational processes. With this

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dissertation, I feel a need to explore and construct such a human-centered second language

writing pedagogy for EAP contexts, where international students undergo initial induction

into the academy and shape their senses of self within it.

The Power of Narrative

The previous section described educational backgrounds of students who come to

study in the U.S. from other countries and the challenges these students face in a new

educational context.

In this section, I introduce the definition of "narrative" and a history of narratives in

TESOL. Further on, I present the attitudes in the field of second language writing and EAP

towards personal narratives and an argument for exploring the power of personal narratives

to engage multilingual students with academic discourses and develop a rationale for

personal-narrative-based short book writing pedagogy.

Personal Narratives Defined

Since my research is centered around the concepts of "narrative" and "narrative-based

short books," I will briefly foreground the concept of "narrative" in this section, providing a

definition of a "personal narrative", which I will use throughout my study. Before defining

narratives, it is indispensable to acknowledge the breadth and depth of the field of narrative

research. There have been a great number of definitions of "narrative" as well as approaches

to narrative research. Bell (2002) pointed out that narrative work had sprung from the field of

literary criticism (Mitchell, 1981). Bell continues unveiling the interdisciplinary nature of

narrative research, rooted in history (Carr, 1991), psychology and therapy (Riessman, 2008),

and, of course, education (Duff & Bell, 2002). Ethnographers have contributed to the field of

narrative research, having explicated rich narratives, which contributed to the understanding

of how language is used in stories and cultures (Toohey, 2000). Narrative research has developed into narrative inquiry ("working with people's consciously told stories") (Bell, 2002, p.209; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), learner autobiographies (Kaplan, 1994), diary studies (Lvovich, 2013), and life history (Hatch & Wisniewski, 2002). Originated in the fields of literature and folklore, narratives have gained popularity and become both a focus of research and a rich source of data in such fields as linguistics, in particular L1 acquisition, linguistic anthropology, sociolinguistics, and language education. Although, there are many branches of narrative-based research, narrative itself often stands separate from autobiography, life history, diary or other literary forms. In certain fields, narratives are strictly defined. For instance, literary narratives have a strict organization, and are defined as "a collection of events that tells a story, which may be true or not, placed in a particular order and recounted through either telling or writing" (Narrative, n.d.). However, when it comes to the field of TESOL, the focus expands to language learning narratives, autobiographies and other narratives written by the learners of English as rich sources of data (Pavlenko, 2002). As Pavlenko (2002) states, there are two types of personal narratives or the stories of our lives: oral and written. Labov devoted a number of his research projects to studying oral personal narratives. Labov (1997) asserts that personal narratives have evolved from historical autobiography, which is a Western construction (Labov, 1997). Labov states that life stories may not exist in certain cultures or were being told or written in different ways, which makes those personal stories even more crucial to explore by the field of TESOL. Exploring the value of personal narratives for the field of language learning and research Labov (1997) writes:

Such an approach will allow us to uncover multiple sociocultural, sociohistorical, and

rhetorical influences that shape narrative construction and thus to understand better how

the stories are being told, why they are being told in a particular way, and whose stories

remain untold—or, for that matter, not heard—for a variety of reasons. […] Most

important, such an approach will allow us to examine our own roles in privileging

certain narrative styles over others and in silencing certain voices while emphasizing

others—thus moving us forward in the implementation of more critical approaches to

TESOL research and practice. (pp.1-2)

Labov described the complexity and, therefore, attractiveness of personal narratives for

educators and researchers, who work with multilingual students. Complex narratives allow

educators to construct learning in a more holistic way, create a multidimensional, more

realistic, view of reality. In other words, it provides the opportunity to place students' lives in

the center of the educational process and make education more significant for a student's life.

Labov offers personal narratives as means of examining the construction of voice in a

language learning environment and the pedagogical tool, which can create more human-

centered learning environments in a multilingual classroom. Bell (2004) poses that education

narrative research has been focused primarily on teacher education and reflective practices,

"listening to the voice of teachers, hearing their stories" (p.208). Therefore, in my study I

chose to focus on students' narratives, which they compose in the first chapters of their short

books, and students' experiences of writing narrative-based short books in the context of an

IEI.

I have assembled a definition of a narrative, quite broad, but suitable for the

multilingual context I teach in, out of two definitions of "narratives" by Pagnucci (2004) and

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Pavlenko (Pavlenko, 2002). Notably, narrative is an important concept in the fields of composition and TESOL. Condon (2012) and Villanueva (1993) both extensively work at the intersection of theory and narrative and highlight the importance of narratives in helping writers understand themselves and feel bound to each other. Hurlbert (2013) argues that "stories tell us who we are and who we want to be…they point to new ways for thinking and doing…" (p.8). Pagnucci is one of the composition scholars, who devoted a considerable part of their career journey to narrative writing (Gian S. Pagnucci, 2004). Pagnucci (2004) defines narratives as stories and asserts that narratives of all kinds are valid and valuable for academia. Pagnucci states, "[..] a narrative teacher would be open to all sorts of stories, romantic novels, comic books, and sports stories. All stories are useful" (p. 47). This definition, while visibly broad, seems fair to me, since it does not discard any narratives as long as they are central to the lives of the students who write them. As Bell (2002) points out, "Although, the notion of story is common in every society, the stories themselves differ widely-one of the defining features of a culture is the story structures through which it makes sense of the world" (p. 207).

TESOL scholars have also used narratives in a variety of ways, forms, and purposes. Particularly, TESOL scholars, starting with Labov, have used narratives as research or modes of inquiry to learn about ways in which multilinguals learn and use language or to study and explicate cultures out of multilingual narratives. Pavlenko (2002) states that "explorations in linguistics show that narrative traditions differ significantly across cultures-in structures, schemas, rhetorical styles, storytelling conventions and devices, and embodied cultural values that are particularly evident in judgments as to which events are considered salient and tellable" (p.214). Thus, Pavlenko (2002) refers to narratives, the stories people tell about

their lives, as "the central means by which people give their lives meaning across time (p.213)". Additionally, Pavlenko (2002) argues that narratives can be particularly useful, not as factual data subject to content analysis, but as a foundation of an English language classroom, in which the students write the stories of their lives. Pavlenko (2002) adds that studying multilingual students' narratives both written and oral allows the students' voices to be heard. Additionally, narrative-based pedagogy is a means of empowerment (McMahill, 2001), since "the telling of life stories in a new language may be a means of empowerment that makes it possible to express new selves and desires previously considered untellable (p.214)". So, although narratives offer educators possibilities to teach in a personally meaningful way for students and "the lessons [we] learn from writing, reading, and hearing stories are so necessary and profound that [we] commit …to "choosing stories as a way of life" (Pagnucci, 2004, p.1)" (Hurlbert, 2013, p.8).

In order to define personal narratives, it is important to note that a "narrative" is a broader concept than a story and includes "all sorts of stories", personal, academic, institutional, oral, written, fiction and non-fiction, etc. Personal narratives, as I define them, building off of Pavlenko and Pagnucci, are stories- romantic novels, comic books, sports stories, short stories, anecdotes, legends, diaries etc., - which people tell about their lives. So, being a teacher of multilingual writers from a variety of contexts, it is necessary to open all kinds of possibilities for story-telling to my students, conducive to their cultures, contexts, and languages.

Additionally, operating with a broad definition of narrative opens new genres and visions of what constitutes a story for the fields of Composition and Second Language Composition, which have not been explored yet.

The Potential of Narrative Writing in ESL and Beyond

For a long time, EAP pedagogies have been building off of traditional "coverage of language system" (Benesch, 2001) approaches, which tended to present writing as "instrumental" (Canagaragah, 2002; Zamel 2011), proficiency-based (Raimes, 2001), and "vulgar pragmatic" (Pennycook, 1997). Influenced by audio-lingual methodology, second language (L2) writing has been seen as a habit-formed skill, to develop which, error is to be avoided, and correction and revision are to be provided continuously. Zamel (2001) asserted that L2 writing pedagogies often get reduced to "orthographic translation of oral pattern practice or substitution drills" and have "very little to do with creative process of writing" (p.28). When such L2 writing pedagogies prevail, composing is regarded as something beyond English language learners' abilities.

Furthermore, attempts to apprentice or train L2 writers into the writing processes of their L1 peers and forms of traditional "linear" academic writing deprive the field of Composition of a variety of unexplored forms and genres, conditioning it to just one "strictly bound" world view. Canagarajah (2002) points out that "knowledge is shaped by socio-cultural practices" and is, therefore, a "language game" that is maintained through the interaction of community members" (p.28). Thus, for instance, a linear western academic genre, the argumentative essay, exists in the Indian culture as well. However, Indian writers employ different practices to succeed in an argument. The Indian argumentation practice is focused on "establish[ing] the validity of theory by indirect hypothetical argument, which shows that the supposition of its contradiction leads to undesirable consequences" (Kachru, 2009, p.118). Chinese employ a historical method to argue in writing, while the value of Japanese expression is not in arguing, but in aesthetic and intuitive aspects, not in western

logical modes (Nakamura, 1967; Moore, 1967). So, Canagaragah (2002) warns the western academy against ignoring the diversity of styles and forms that multilingual writers could offer. Ignoring new forms is similar to ignoring the reality of language and "the reality of linguistic and cultural contact-in terms of which discourses of a community modify, reconstitute, and borrow from other communities" (p.35). Canagaragah (2002) asserts that "through discursive struggle, students adopt creative strategies to reshape academic conventions to represent their interests and values. Consequently, as dominant discourses are taken over by the students, new genres and literacies are born" (p.40).

Therefore, by reducing L2 writing pedagogies to the quest for correctness and native-like perfection in form and teaching multilingual writers to adopt western practices of writing, EAP educators stress hegemonic and elitist nature of academic writing in the west (Kachru, 2009). Hegemony hinders the academic success of students of various linguistic backgrounds and prevents the birth of new writing forms, to which multilingual students could have contributed, given a chance to simply compose (Silva 2001).

Benesch (2001) and other second language writing scholars (Raimes 1991a, 1991b; Spack, 1988; Zamel,1993;1995) view ESL writing courses as "places where students can become better writers no matter what personal, academic, professional, or rhetorical situation they might encounter" (Benesch, 2001, p.36). Benesch believes that the goal of ESL/EAP writing programs and classes should be not training, but education, which is long-term oriented and focused not on simply preparation for mainstream classes, but succeeding in those classes. Therefore, Raimes (2001) points out that all ESL educators should aspire to teach a "natural" writing process born out of a "genuine need to express one's personal feeling, experience or reaction, all this within the climate of encouragement" (Raimes, 2001,

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p.33). The researcher believes that such a "natural" pedagogy, focused on lived experiences of an individual, will remove the fear of writing and improve multilingual students' facility with the writing assignments of different types.

Current Composition Pedagogies: Writing Personal Narratives

Compositionists today are searching for new forms of writing in the academy, which would inform the discipline and, at the same time, be central to students' lives. Quite a number of composition scholars claim that writing personal narratives on topics relevant to students' lives informs composition as a discipline and opens new perspectives for composition teachers. Personal narratives are "the stories people tell about their lives" (Pavlenko, 2002). Compositionists, who transform their writing classrooms into a multitude of stories, argue that the power of writing reaches far outside of a classroom space.

Hurlbert and Blitz (1998), composition teachers and scholars, talk about the need to provide students with an outlet to convey and shape significant life experiences in their college classrooms. The authors caution against ignoring the reality of the lives our students live in the "neutrality" of academia:

> … to ignore violence as a reality in the lives of our students and ourselves, to see peace and freedom as irrelevant goals of education, is to invite a living death into our classrooms, to encourage insensitivity to living in the culture and a numbness of death. (Hurlbert & Blitz, 1998, p.22)

Hurlbert and Blitz teach college composition in contrastingly different contexts: urban New York and rural western Pennsylvania, but the violence that their students' face outside of academia knows no geography. The authors' experiences show that encouraging students to write personal narratives relaying their life experiences in composition classes is

crucial, since it can often be the only way for the students to truly live and know "that there is still someone living out there to respond" (p.170). Hurlbert& Blitz (1991) encourage composition teachers to move away from skills-based vision of composing and adopt an "uncomfortable state of mind" and allow meaningful writing in academia:

Composing as a matter of acquiring useful marketable skills[...] this kind of instruction serves mainly to industrialize composing by teaching students to assemble meaning, whether linearly or recursively, rather than to challenge the politics and economics of the markets in which these skills are supposed to be useful. (p.1)

The authors teach composition through writing of personal narratives, because they believe that this is the only way to raise healthy generations, to gain peace, and to develop consciousness and critical thinking skills, so valuable both in academia and in real life.

Furthermore, composition is ideological; therefore, a composition classroom is an arena of socio-political and socio-economic change. Derek Owens and Nancy Welch, in their composition courses, encourage students to write narratives, which tackle environmental issues, the issues of politics, economy, morale etc. with the goal of re-constructing writing as merely the power to adapt and get access to, to the discourse of power, or power to change the world we live in (Owens, 2001; Welch, 2008). Thus, Nancy Welch in her book "Living room: Teaching public writing in a privatized world" notes that: "We must not only teach students about languages of power but also teach students the language of power (2008, p.20)." She takes writing assignments beyond the classroom and views writing itself as a social act and a means to make a difference in the society. Dereck Owens in his book "Composition and sustainability: Teaching for a threatened generation" connects composing and life by offering writing to his students as a way to build sustainable future. In the book,

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he talks about environmental threats that exist in the current society and the ways in which composition instructors could help minimize those threats through their teaching. Derek Owens shares his classroom assignments and pedagogy in his book to help composition teachers see the ways in which they can engage their students to make a difference in the world through their compositions. Both Nancy Welch and Derek Owens engage their students in narrative writing to transform their classrooms into the sites of social activism.

Additionally, composing personally and socially significant narratives turn a writing classroom into a web of nurturing relationships, which positively impact the development of students' and teachers' selves. Newkirk (1997) argues that "students entering college have a psychological need to view their lives as progressive narratives" (p.87). Therefore, narratives, as "the literature of self-direction" perfectly satisfy this need (Newkirk, 1997). Luce-Kapler, O'Reilley, and Tobin practice composing narratives and sharing those narratives with peers as nurture to the students' perceptions of selves (Luce-Kapler, 2004; O'Reilley, 1993; Tobin, 1993). The authors talk about the reality of composition classrooms, revealing that "like all relationships writing relationships are dynamic fluid, and multi-faceted; and like all good relationships, they can allow us to accomplish and become all sorts of things that we could not do or be on our own" (Tobin, 1993, p.17). The authors emphasize the nurturing power of narrative writing as well as the relationships in the writing classroom as nurturing. They highlight the role of the teacher in a narrative-based composition class as someone who "writes herself as a teacher within it" (Tobin, 2004) and is also deeply impacted by writing, reading, and discussing students' written lives as a community of writers in class.

Additionally, Anderson and MacCurdy (2000) in *Writing and Healing* take the power of writing personal narratives a step further. They argue that:

[students] seek out the writing classroom for this kind of work because the very process of writing and rewriting invites them to tell their stories, to listen to what their stories tell them, to hear and be heard by others engaged in similar work, and it supports the healing those stories make possible. (p.7)

Tilly Warnock in Anderson & MacCurdy (2000) argue that narrative writing is indispensable for composition classrooms. The author emphasizes that "Excluding life writing limits what people can do with words…absence of attention to rewriting our lives impoverishes our conceptions of writing and our possibilities for living" (p.38).

Therefore, as composition classroom practices show, assigning students' to write personal narratives, which often tackle important socio-political issues as well as personal experiences of living, has been long established as a fruitful pedagogy in composition. In fact, by adopting such a nurturing pedagogy, composition teachers re-conceptualize the traditional notion of writing in academia. Academic writing, as it is practiced today in the academy, is not a clear-bounded formulaic phenomenon. On the contrary, it is writing beyond all boundaries, which calls for thinking beyond toolboxes, conventions, and formulas of power, in the direction of challenging, critiquing, and questioning conventional, and traditionally unquestionable ideas, for the sake of a better world.

Thus, academic writing has been re-conceptualized as a "nurturing", "student-centered" and personally relevant practice, by such scholars as Tobin, O'Reilley, Anderson&MacCurdy, Hurlbert and Blitz, etc. Such understanding of composing in the academy is challenging for multilingual students. EAP students, who will be encouraged to question, challenge, and critique in mainstream composition classrooms, need a revival of their hidden voices, senses of self, and confidence in order to write for change. Instead, EAP

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students are currently left with a toolbox of skills and a training to conform, accept, and adopt. Multilingual students are rarely given a chance to engage in the nurturing ecology of an ideological writing classroom, explore their selves, and, simply, compose.

Allowing to "Simply Compose": Writing Personal Narratives in EAP Classrooms

Andrews (2001) asserts that "human beings are inherently story-tellers, and it is through the activity of narration that we create meaning in our lives" (p.77). She revealed that personal narratives give shape to the experiences described and benefit the writers in a number of ways (Andrews, 2001).

Park (2011) points out that writing and sharing personal narratives in adult ESL programs will impact both students and teachers. It "will shape our identities within and beyond academic and professional communities of practice" (p.157). Newkirk adds that the possibility of self-actualization through writing narratives "is enhanced if the students have access to mentors to guide the process" (p.51). Therefore, the role of a teacher in a writing classroom is crucial in order for the students' to fully experience the power of narrative writing.

Pavlenko (2002) discusses the impact of narrative-based ESL writing pedagogies on teaching and teacher practices. Pavlenko argues that "the purpose of such a particular context-specific approach is for teachers to make sense of their own working situations and thus to practice in a contextually appropriate way" (Pavlenko, 2002, p.233). She unveils the transformative power of narratives in relation to language teachers. The author believes that "when teachers articulate and interpret the stories of their practice, they develop their personal practical knowledge to the extent that they act in the future with insight and foresight" (p.233).

Furthermore, as Barkhuizen and Park (Barkhuizen, 2008; Park, 2011) point out narrative-based ESL pedagogies help ESL educators understand the complexities of their

students' contexts in order to make the practice of teaching and learning centered on the students' lives. Barkhuizen (2008) asserts that "as opposed to focusing on only one or two isolated variables in a particular context, stories include many of these linked together, and the process of making sense of the stories means unraveling this complexity" (Barkhuizen, 2008, p.233). Therefore, writing personal-narratives in EAP programs will help EAP educators better understand their students' realities through students' writing and sharing this writing in a classroom community. Additionally, allowing multilingual writers to "simply compose" will unveil the richness of students' multilingual identities as well as new forms and ways of composing in English and make students' multicultural backgrounds assets of their education.

Importantly, writing non-academic or "non-traditional" texts, which would support the students' genuine need to express themselves, does not remove academic writing from an EAP classroom, but demystifies it as a "traditional" and "formulaic" genre. It expands the traditional understanding of academic writing and opens this genre for other meaningful, creative, and informative forms. Narrative writing can truly be academic and inform the academic discipline (Bishop & Strickland, 2006). Park (2011) practiced narrative-based pedagogy in her adult ESL writing classes as a means of increasing the adult ELL's confidence and abilities in using English for academic writing. Guy Allen's research introduced in (Anderson & MacCurdy, 2000) poses that the students' writing evolves through writing meaningful narratives. In Allen's study, students not only wrote better expressive essays, but their writing also improved in other courses in which the writing was less personal. Therefore, there is a correlation between writing personal narratives and academic success. Thus writing meaningful narratives in adult ESL programs contribute to multilingual students' success with academic writing in its multitude of forms and expressions, as it is currently practiced in today's composition

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classrooms. Hence, by helping multilingual students develop confidence in writing and a desire to write, narratives contribute to the students' success in the US academy.

Currently, college composition classes as well as high-school classes, catered for ESL learners, often adopt a narrative approach to writing and encourage ESL students to write autobiographies, literacy narratives, and other experiential pieces, which closely relate to students' lives (Amicucci, 2011; Canagarajah, 2006; Pagnucci & Mauriello, 2008; Park, 2011; Rumfelt, 2009). However, when it comes to EAP, "vulgar pragmatism" (Pennycook, 1997) and obsession with conformity to the standards of the mainstream, as well as proficiency and test-driven curriculum, leave little space for the development of multilingual writers' identities.

Undoubtedly, multilingual learners have different challenges on the way to academic success, but they also possess a rich linguistic and cultural resource and capacity, which have been undervalued by both mainstream and ESL educators (Leki, Cumming, & Silva, 2001; Leki et al., 2008). This richness and competence needs to be nurtured by EAP curriculum.

Chik (2011) stated that learner autonomy depends on learner self-concept (Chik & Breidbach, 2011). Many researchers argue that writing is a unique medium, which helps describe and shape our experiences, reconstruct, and restore our identities. There is a significant body of research in composition on the impact of writing personal narratives on both students and teachers (Blitz & Hurlbert, 1998; Luce-Kapler, 2004; O'Reilley, 1993; Gian S. Pagnucci, 2004), as well as on the healing and transformative power of writing (C. M. Anderson & M. M. MacCurdy, 2000; Pennebaker, 2012). Composition classrooms today often engage students in writing for peace (Morgan & Vandrick, 2009), living (Blitz & Hurlbert, 1998), sustainability (Owens, 2001), and empowerment (Pavlenko, 2002). EAP courses regularly remain faithful to the idea of writing to conform to standards of mainstream classes

and acquire a set of skills in order to get through a US college (Baik & Greig, 2009; Bailin, 2006; Carroll & Dunkelblau, 2011; Ian, 2005; Kim, 2006; Lambert, 2008; J.-Y. Liu, Chang, Yang, & Sun, 2011; Min-fen & Bakken, 2004; Nordmeyer & Barduhn, 2010; Silva, 2001). As Morgan (2009; 2011), Benesch (2001), Bista (2011), Ramanathan (2002), Warriner (2010), and others suggest, the time has come for EAP programs to look beyond short-term needs of multilingual students' towards the realization of their selves in their future careers, towards the students' academic and personal well-being.

Jonathan Hall writes about the need for the fields of composition and second language teaching and acquisition to start a dialogue (Hall, 2011). Canagarajah (2006) outlines innumerable opportunities, which could be born from the alliance of L1 and L2 writing fields (Canagarajah, 2006). The researcher poses:

> Rather than studying multilingual writing as static, locating the writer within a language, we would study the movement of the writer between languages; rather than studying the product for description of writing competence, we would study the process of composing in multiple languages; rather than studying the writer's stability in specific forms of linguistic or cultural competence, we would analyze his or her versatility (for example, life between multiple languages and countries) ; rather than treating language or culture as the main variable, we would focus more on the changing contexts of communication, perhaps, treating context as the main variable as the writers switch their languages, discourses, and identities in response to this contextual change. (Canagarajah, 2006, p. 591)

Undoubtedly, with the existing understanding of the matter in the field, the time for change in second language writing pedagogies has come. The field of L1 composition, remaining

ignorant towards the styles of their L2 writers, is in danger of losing pathways towards new genres, forms, and innovative visions. The EAP practitioners and L2 writing researchers, who do not confront dominant and hegemonic conventions of "traditional" academia, keep multilingual students farther away from achieving their life-long goals. Consequently, a great number of multilingual learners remain bound by a strictly defined academic community and conditioned by their ethnicity, culture and language. These highly competent individuals construct submissive identities, being "otherized" and disadvantaged by the "act of relativism" on the part of their educators (Norton, & Gao, 2008).

Many of my EAP students indicate in their needs assessment forms for my class that they do not consider themselves writers and are not confident in what and how they write. Hockey (1987) studied the difficulty among mature students in "establishing a confident and positive self-image", for despite having gained a place in the academy, "their academic identity often remains contested, threatened, and insecure (p.26)". Hence, this study also tackles the evolution of multilingual EAP students as writers, users of English, and members of the academic community through personal-narrative-based short books construction process. It is aimed to explore the potential of personal- narrative-based writing pedagogy in shaping such a positive and confident self-image or perception of self as a writer among EAP students.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided a review of relevant literature to support the theoretical foundation of the study. It focused on the main concepts unpacked in the study: second language writing, academic writing, critical writing, and personal narrative. A body of literature was compiled in the section devoted to the understanding of multilingual EAP students and their

educational landscapes. The latter section aimed at setting the tone of a conversation about

the above group of learners and avoiding stereotyping. The chapter concluded with a

presentation of narrative writing and its benefits in and beyond EAP classrooms.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

My study is grounded in a strong belief in the power of narrative-based short book writing pedagogy in the context of an EAP program. Having experienced the wide and powerful impact of writing narratives on multiple aspects of my personal and academic life, as well as my writer and teacher identity formation, I feel a passion and a need to further explore this matter. With the help of the proposed research project, I intend to conduct an in-depth exploration of the personal narrative-focused book writing pedagogy in an EAP context with the ultimate goal of transforming EAP curricula.

This chapter reveals the process of exploration and investigation into the short book writing pedagogy and focuses solely on the methodology of the proposed research. In this chapter, I discuss the researcher positionality and his/her role in a qualitative study. Furthermore, I introduce the reader to the study context and participants. Additionally, I provide an in-depth description of and rationale for proposed data collection and analysis procedures, elaborate on the trustworthiness of the study, ethics, and participants' protection from potential risks. I conclude the chapter with an introduction to the Advanced Written Communication class, which leads into the chapters where research findings are described.

Researcher Positionality

My ontology has been shaped by my multilingual identity and exposure to a variety of writing pedagogies during my graduate studies. It has also been formed by my experience of teaching in an EAP program and daily interactions with my multilingual students. Going

through my journey of a student in a graduate program and a teacher of multilingual writers, I shaped my position on the writing curricula and its long-term impact on multilingual students' identities, including my own. I look at multilingual students writing and pedagogy through a critical post-method lens. In order to describe realia, a post-method lens relies on three pillars: "particularity", "practicality", and "possibility" (Kumaravadivelu, 2001).

When composing my own short book for a doctorate class and teaching short book writing, I came to believe that writing is neither a process nor a product for multilingual or monolingual students. Writing is a situated practice, shaped by a student's location, social relations, and positions in their particular localities. A writing pedagogy, which builds off of the idea of "particularity", is sensitive to the students, their localities and lived experiences. It explores the writers' passions, the questions that they are burning to ask the world. It invites the writers' to articulate socially and personally significant issues and concepts that need to be voiced. Finally, it invites the writers' experiences to be conveyed using a variety of rich linguistic repertoires available to the writers. The short book writing pedagogy cannot be guided by a predetermined set of goals and objectives in hope of fulfilling them, but should strive for a "holistic interpretation of particular situations" in hope of improving them and re-shaping the concepts of writing and learning. (p.539). In other words, the primary outcome of composing short books is beyond a "skill" or a predetermined set of objectives. An attempt to explore and find answers to the "burning questions" in a short book often impacts students' lives, the lives of their families, and communities. The effect of composing short books reaches beyond a classroom. What is more important, short book writing changes the students' attitudes to writing and learning, making both processes strongly interconnected with the students' lives.

As a teacher-researcher who conducts a study of a pedagogy she practices and believes in, I violate the principle of "researcher objectivity" so essential in quantitative studies, but I follow the idea of "practicality," which is a key constituent of a post-method world view. Being a qualitative researcher, I struggle with the concept of "researcher bias," which puts the trustworthiness of a study, strongly impacted by the researcher's individuality and experiences, under question (Mertens, 2005). I find "researcher bias" unavoidable in a qualitative study and essential for its success, since being able to genuinely engage with the research participants and the researched phenomena is key for a successful study (Atkinson, 2003; Toma, 2000; Holstein & Gubrium, 2002, etc.). Thus, Kumaravadivelu (2001) asserts:

> A pedagogy of practicality, as I visualize it, seeks to overcome some of the deficiency inherent in the theory-versus-practice, theorists'-theory versus- teachers'-theory dichotomies by encouraging and enabling teachers themselves to theorize from their practice and practice what they theorize. (p.541)

In other words, being an EAP writing teacher who conducts research of a narrative writing pedagogy as implemented in her EAP writing classroom, I am enriching my practice and the field with a deep and highly situated practical study.

Finally, a post-method pedagogy, richly infused with a critical perspective of possibility, offers international students who often carry an "ESL" deficiency label "challenges and opportunities for a continual quest for subjectivity and self-identity" (Kumaravadivelu, 2001, p. 543). My critical, post-method lens has helped me formulate the need for post-method composition pedagogy particularly for pre-admission EAP programs, which traditionally favor pedagogies of apprenticeship (Canagarajah, 2006). Personally, I struggle with looking at my multilingual EAP students as apprentices, just like I struggled

being one during my graduate studies in the US. Kumaravadivelu (2001), Norton (2001), Weedon (1987) and other researchers stress the connection of language learning and identity formation and find it particularly important to create ideological classroom spaces for users of ESL that would "sensitize" these students to prevailing sociopolitical realities (Kumaravadivelu, 2001). Such possibility-based pedagogies will allow multilingual learners to contest enforced labels and power relations and shape non-subordinate identities. Hence, by giving students a chance to write beyond a pre-defined and bounded academic community, conveying in their texts a "concrete aggressive reality" of their lives, we make teaching English literacy a true "human act" (Freire, 1998). Subsequently, my goal as a researcher and teacher informed by her research, is to profess humane pedagogy and bring about a free, confident, and critical "engaged voice" (hooks, 1994), which in accordance with my post-method world view, "must never be fixed and absolute, but always changing, always evolving in dialogue with a world beyond itself" (hooks, 1994, p.11).

I take up this book writing journey as a critical post-method ethnographer in hopes of informing and effecting change in the existing practices of an EAP institution and encouraging their evolution (Creswell, 1998). As an ethnographer studies groups through long-term immersion in the context (Graue, 1997), I intend to embark on a one-semester journey in a composition classroom in an EAP program in western Pennsylvania. I hope that my study will elicit multiple voices of multilingual students engaged in writing stories in EAP writing classrooms and will become for EAP educators a practical tool of implementation of post method and post process in the context of an EAP writing course.

Why Qualitative Research?

Since my goal is to explore a phenomenon in context-specific settings, in particular, a narrative-based short book writing pedagogy in an EAP composition classroom, and to study participants' experiences, my study is qualitative in nature (Golafshani, 2003). As Golafshani (2003) stated, qualitative research uses a "naturalistic approach" in seeking answers to the questions asked in the study. It allows events to unfold, uncontrolled, like in an experimental study, with the researcher in the middle of those events, almost actively participating in the co-construction of meaning, occurring as a result of classroom interactions. Therefore, a qualitative study will allow me to participate in my research on multiple levels and allow "naturalistic data" to flow from real life real-time classroom practices.

Creswell (1998) points out that the focus of investigation in a qualitative study is a social phenomenon or problem (Creswell, 1998). Thus, my study is focused on the question of the development of second language literacy and identity construction and investigates classroom practices and pedagogies, which have ramifications extending beyond the physical boundaries of those classrooms. At stake are issues of students' rights and socio-economic well-being that, in turn, are impacted by the nature of the international students' engagement with their prospective, actual, and imagined academic communities in and beyond classroom settings.

Seale, Gobo, Gubrium, & Silverman (2004) describe qualitative data as especially valuable for social theory and research, since it gets closer to the individual's point of view (Seale C., 2004). Furthermore, qualitative data provides the researcher with a chance to "turn away from scientific theorizing and look down, below our feet, as it were, to everyday life" (p.3). Qualitative data emerges from the interaction of the researcher with the researched; and

instead of providing a one-sided, clear-cut representation of phenomena, it describes how the phenomena are shaped by situated interaction between the researcher and the researched (P. Atkinson, Coffey, A., & Delamont, 2003).

Additionally, Stake (2010) and Kvale (1996) stress the importance of human experiences in qualitative research (Kvale, 1996). Thus, all of my research questions require interpretive, experiential, and situational answers, and the experiences of multilingual students and teachers with personal narratives is my primary concern.

My research is focused around the following questions:

1. What were multilingual students' experiences writing personal-narrative-based books in an EAP writing course?

    1.1. How did the EAP students perceive the impact of personal-narrative-based writing pedagogy on their writing in English?

    1.2. In what ways did short book construction process impact the EAP students' development as writers?

Why Case Study?

Designed as classroom ethnography, my research is in need of a suitable format which allows me to both accomplish my above mentioned goals and achieve true deep immersion into one classroom context and the experiences of five individual writers, chosen out of thirteen study participants. Marshall (2010) advises on choosing the case study as a format for research focusing on society and culture in a group (Marshall & Rossman, 2010). Marshall states that case study "entails immersion in the setting and rests on both the researcher's and the participants' word views" (p.93).

Creswell (2012) asserts that case study is an efficient format for establishing a case. The case does not have to be specific and entail a concrete person or a group (Creswell, 2012). So, in my study, the case will represent one composition classroom engaged in a process of book writing as well as the experiences of five student-writers involved in this process.

Stake (2005) stresses the importance of defining the purpose for case study research and signifies two types of case studies which differ by purpose: intrinsic and instrumental (Stake, 2005). An intrinsic case study is focused on describing and detailing the case, while an instrumental case study allows investigating a certain issue or concern within the case. My interest lies in the exploration of a personal-narrative-based book writing pedagogy in an EAP composition classroom, which makes my case study an instrumental one (2005). Additionally, my research will focus on five writers individually as well as the class as a whole. Hence, according to Creswell (2005) I will employ a "collective case study" model with an instrumental purpose of investigating a matter across several cases.

My study will be organized around five individual cases and a class as a community of its own. In accordance with Stake (2005), such a format will require some cross investigation as the research develops and, therefore, will be conducted as "cross-site" or "cross-case" analysis. This is essential in order to get a holistic view on the phenomenon of personal-narrative-based book writing pedagogy in an EAP context and to understand connections among the unique experiences of the students in the class.

As stated by Yin (2009), my multiple case study will be organized by the "logic of replication," which means that all the procedures will be replicated by the researcher for each case.

Study Context

Intensive English Institute (IEI)

Since an EAP narrative writing pedagogy is the focus of the study, it was conducted in two EAP Advanced Written Communication classes at an Intensive English Institute (IEI), a pre-admission institution for international students in the Western University of Pennsylvania.

IEI is an Intensive English Institute which provides English instruction at a variety of levels and for a variety of purposes, focusing mainly on an English for Academic Purposes (EAP) Program. IEI has been providing English instruction for prospective IEI students at both Bachelor's and Master's degree levels, visitors, and family, which accompany scholars.

The IEI is a bridge between the international office and academic departments, preparing international students for college admission and academic success. The IEI at the Western university is an integral part of the Office of International Affairs, directed by the Vice President for International Affairs.

In its English for Academic Purposes program the IEI admits students from other countries who have been granted conditional admission to an academic department of interest. Conditional admission means that a student has to study in the IEI to gain an English proficiency test score required by the academic department (graduate programs) or University (undergraduate programs). After the required score is obtained, the student transfers to a mainstream program at the university.

English for Academic Purposes Program (EAP) Within the Intensive English Institute

English for Academic Purposes (EAP) is a key program at the IEI. It is designed for non-native English speakers who need preparation in English before starting degree

programs at University or other U.S. colleges and universities. EAP is an 11-week program in the summer and a 15-week program in the Fall and Spring semesters. The EAP traditional four-skills curriculum is focused on helping international students acquire necessary language and academic skills to be successful at college in the US.

Since my research is conducted in three advanced level EAP writing classrooms, it is worth mentioning that some research participants with advanced English proficiency are also part of an IEI-University Bridge program and are much closer to a mainstream college degree program at the University than all other EAP students. An IEI-University Bridge Program provides international students with advanced English proficiency an opportunity to start a credit program at the IEI while refining their English skills for the U.S. academic context. Admission to the Bridge Program requires a prior TOEFL score no lower than 20 points below the admission standard. Students in the Bridge Program are permitted to take one University course per semester. In special circumstances, students may take two University courses, with instructor and administration approval. No student may take more than two University courses while enrolled in the Bridge Program.

Levels. In order to provide quality Academic English instruction, IEI places its EAP students in groups by levels of English proficiency. Currently, there are five levels, marked by colors, progressing from "Low" to "Advanced": red, green, white, orange, yellow, and blue. Blue level students normally share classes with their IEI-University Bridge peers, who have similar, advanced, English proficiency. Placement into the levels occurs in the beginning of each semester and is a result of a TOEFL test which measures English proficiency, and oral interviews.

Level targeted. In my study, I target Blue level EAP students with High-Intermediate and Advanced English Proficiency as measured by IEI TOEFL test and oral interviews. However, proficiency, being a controversial issue, is not a key factor in choosing that particular group of students and classrooms for my case study. However, choosing students, who have acquired extensive English literacy skills by the time of the study, undeniably facilitates the research process.

Thus, in my study, I am targeting individuals who are the closest in time to their college admission and, in some cases, have already experienced mainstream college classrooms (IEI-University Bridge participants). Those students, in my opinion, are urgently in need to develop confidence in using their own voice to negotiate their academic identity and role in academic discourse (Canagarajah, 2002). At this stage on integration into a US academia, it's especially important for EAP students to discover their position towards their vernacular community, the academic audience, and develop engagement with academic discourses (Canagarajah, 2002). As Canagarajah stated, being engaged with the academic community allows for the understanding of it and critique. Thus, I hope that in the course of my study, the students who had some sort of initial induction into US academia will have a better chance for transformation and experience the stronger impact on their academic and writer identity.

Finally, narrative-focused writing has been taught in the IEI primarily by teachers in advanced level writing courses. This is another reason, why advanced writing courses were targeted in the study.

Study Participants

As Creswell (2012) remarks, in choosing which case to study, a number of possibilities for purposeful sampling are available. It is also preferable to choose cases, which show different perspectives on the matter the researcher wants to portray. Such sampling is referred to by Creswell as "purposeful maximal sampling". However, in my study, which is bound by one institution and one program, I chose accessible cases.

Initially, all the seventeen students enrolled in the course agreed to participate by signing confidential forms and placing them in an envelope that was sealed to prevent the teacher-researcher from having any knowledge of who agreed to become the research participant. This was a necessary measure to protect the students from any implications of teacher research, such as manipulation of grades, favoritism, etc.

Two weeks into the semester two students requested a level change and were moved to a different class. Thus, the number of participants was reduced to fifteen. However, due to absences, only thirteen students were able to fully participate in the study.

The table below presents the participants and their backgrounds.

Table 2

Demographics on Study Participants

#	Name	Gender	Education	Country
1	Max	male	college junior	Taiwan
2	Dan	male	college junior	Taiwan
3	Yazeed	male	high-school diploma	Saudi Arabia
4	Josh	male	college junior	Taiwan
5	Nameeh	male	BA in Medicine	Saudi Arabia
6	Ahmed	male	BA in Business	Saudi Arabia
7	Alma	female	BA in Education	Saudi Arabia
8	Vivan	female	college junior	Taiwan
9	Tessie	female	high-school diploma	Indonesia
10	Bader	male	high-school diploma	Saudi Arabia
11	Jack	male	college junior	Taiwan
12	Maggie	female	college junior	Taiwan
13	Ranita	female	high-school diploma	Mexico

All of my students-participants, except for the Taiwanese student-exchange visitors, intended to stay in the U.S. in order to obtain a degree.

Methods of Data Collection

As Creswell (2012) points out, "a hallmark of a good qualitative case study is that it presents an in-depth understanding of the case" (p.98). Hence, it is necessary for the researcher to collect a variety of qualitative data. In support of Creswel, qualitative research in general, and a case study in particular, explore complex phenomena in-depth (Flick, 2006). Richardson (2000), Flick (2006) and Ellingson (2009) unite this multiplicity of data sources to be collected in order to achieve research depth and rigor. Thus, in order to create a rigorous study, I conducted semi-structured interviews with each participant, a culminating whole-class discussion, observations, and collected classroom documents and materials as well as students' books. See all the above data sources summarized in the table below.

Table 3

Data Collected During the Study

#	Data	Collected
1	Field notes	During classroom observations throughout the semester
2	Semi-structured interviews	During the first weeks of break
3	Recorded classroom discussion	Final class
4	Course syllabus	End of semester
5	Needs assessment forms	First week of classes
6	Peer folder self-evaluation form	Mid-semester, when the peer readings were over
7	Final class evaluations	A class before the last class of the semester
8	Peer-reviewed one-page book excerpts	After each reading
9	Final book self-evaluation form	A week before the end of the semester

Classroom Observations

In order to assemble a case, it is necessary to spend considerable time and conduct observations of that case. In my study, classroom observations, or "looking, hearing, smelling, or touching"(Marshall & Rossman, 2010), were conducted by the researcher on a daily basis throughout one academic semester. Observations were documented in the form of field notes to be used in the study. The field notes were dated.

Classroom Discussion

Since I did not know who out of the 15 students in class agreed to participate in my study till I entered the students' final grades in the system, I wanted to have a whole class discussion about the students' experiences and final impressions from constructing short

books happen in the end of the semester. When the final grades were documented on the hard copies of the book projects and submitted in the form of the Excel spreadsheet to the EAP administration, I asked each student in class to speak about their books and experiences composing books. In this manner the final class of the semester turned into a group discussion which I recorded using voice memos. That discussion was later transcribed, and some quotes from it were used to support study findings.

Semi-Structured Interviews

As Marshall and Rossman (2010) point out, it is valuable to accompany observations with interviews in order to allow the researcher "the meanings that everyday activities hold for people" (p.145). Hence, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the thirteen EAP students enrolled in my writing course in order to explore their experiences writing personal-narrative-based books in their Advanced Written Communication classroom.

Being a qualitative researcher, I understand that interviews constitute active interactions between the researcher and the researched leading to "negotiated" results, which are situated in time and space, and are devoid of researcher neutrality. Traditionally, the interviewer has been viewed as someone who biases interview data, thus he or she has to be neutral, minimizing his/her presence during the interview (Seale, 2004). Seale pointed out that this view of a researcher has drastically shifted in current practice. He illustrated that "being neutral" is a "mythological (and methodological) interviewer stance. This mythology/methodology of interviewer neutrality has the fundamental effect of silencing and, in some cases, totally banishing the very active, collaborative work of the interviewer in producing that talk as it is" (p.21). Neutrality and detachment on the part of the researcher/data collector prevents discussion from happening and data from emerging (Seale,

2004). To elicit interview data, the researcher has to take on the active role of a "person" who no longer withholds his/her experiences, ideas, and thoughts, and is ready for self-disclosure if it's relevant at a particular moment. The researcher should experiment, "stay loose, stay flexible" (Seale, 2004 p. 30). The researcher takes this position in order to develop the sense of mutual trust that is essential in eliciting authentic data. Johnson stated that the researcher "must engage in reciprocity," since he or she will make interviewees feel more at ease during the interview and they will actively engage in producing talk" (as cited in Seale, 2004, p.23). Interviewing can enable hidden or silenced voices to speak; thus, "for interviewers and interviewees to engage in mutual self-disclosure it takes work and does work" (Seale, 2004, p. 25).

Furthermore, Motha argues that experience is not just constructed by what has happened in the classroom, but also by how the participants thought about what happened. In her research, which is rich in a variety of data sources, Motha found transcriptions of afternoon tea gatherings with the teachers, the participants of her study, especially helpful in capturing the meanings that her study partners made of their experiences (Motha, 2004). Motha (2004) claims that tea gatherings were a central data source for her research, and "made it possible to tell stories in a way that didn't exploit or break faith with them" (p.81). As an engaged researcher, I kept the interviews minimally structured, allowing the discussion to flow in the direction taken by my participants. I conducted the interviews in an informal context and, similarly to Motha, invited my participants to a student lounge. I tried to establish a close relationship with my participants through free conversation in order to "merge the people and the phenomena" and "enhance the breadth and depth" of the researched (Toma, 2000).

In order to elicit more in-depth individual reflections among the students' writer journeys in my class, I conducted semi-structured individual interviews a week from the end of the semester. Those interviews complemented by other data sources (short books, questionnaires, forms, discussions, etc.) allowed me to better understand the students' experiences while constructing their short books and explore the process of writer identity construction throughout the semester of short book writing.

The informal, semi-structured interviews with my students were conducted after the semester was over and the students knew their grades. I wanted my students to feel at ease while talking about the class and give me their honest opinions regarding what they had experienced. So, we set up a schedule to meet individually on the first week of winter break.

We met in the student lounge. I brought the books that I had collected from those who volunteered to participate in the research. We looked through them and chatted about the class. I implemented minimal structure in the interviews. My main goal was to see what kind of experiences the students had gone through during the semester, what they thought about book writing versus writing class papers, what the books meant to them, and what they had achieved by the end of the course as writers.

I tried to ask few questions and attempted to elicit students' voices by allowing them to talk about topics of their choosing. Fortunately, most of my questions were well-understood, and my students required little to no prompting. I began by asking a general question about the students' overall experiences in class. I wanted to see what emotions the class aroused, how the students reacted to the idea of book writing in the beginning, and how or if the reaction changed later on. I was interested to see what they had enjoyed the most while writing books and what had caused the most trouble. My fall cohort consisted of 18

students from different backgrounds, with slightly varied English proficiency, different strength and weaknesses in English and, of course, different degrees of exposure to English and the U.S. college environment. With this in mind, I understood that no matter how well everyone seemed to react to the class content and how professional and well-written the books were, every student had experienced the class differently. Thus I wanted to grasp this difference at an individual level.

A few additional introductory questions that I prepared ahead of time helped me put my students at ease. Most of them seemed relaxed while talking to me, and the week of individual interviews went by fast.

As a result of the interviews, I collected 40 pages of transcribed data.

Students' Short Books and Classroom Artifacts

Other data collection tools in my research are written classroom artifacts, such as:

- course syllabus

- needs assessment forms

- peer folder self-evaluation form

- peer-reviewed one-page book excerpts

- final book self-evaluation form

- final class evaluations

Additionally, students' books and major class assignments were collected as support for the analysis as well. Students' narratives are particularly important in seeking answers to the research questions that they relate to the development of students' writing and writer identity through writing personal narratives in an EAP composition course. As Marshall (2010) states, narratives validate how the narrator constructs reality. Narratives, written by

students, help the researcher deepen his/her understanding of the participants (Florio-Ruane & DeTar, 2001; Newkirk, 1997), their identities, and their writers' styles.

With so many data sources, the system was established to cite students' responses during whole-class discussions, final class discussion, semi-structured interviews, needs assessment, final class evaluation, peer-response folder evaluation, and published book self-evaluation forms and when quoting from the students' books. According to the system, the data source appears in the citation first followed by the students' name and page number if applicable, for example (Interview, Bader, p.6). Since, according to the APA guidelines, an interview is not recoverable data, no references are provided in the reference list.

Data Analysis

In accordance with Creswell (2012), a key to case study analysis is a description of the case. The researcher identifies "themes or issues or specific situations to study in each case" (p.99). Themes are organized into a chronology and analyzed across cases for similarities and differences, ending with "conclusions, formed by the researcher about the overall meaning derived from the case(s)" (p. 99). Yin (2009) calls these conclusions "assertions"(Yin, 2008), while Stake (1995) refers to them as building "patterns" or "explanations" (Stake, 1995).

Since multiple cases were chosen for my study, I conducted a "within case analysis" first, followed by a thematic "cross-case analysis" as well as assertions of the case (Creswell, 2012, p. 101).

My analytic procedures fell into seven phases (Marshall & Rossman, 2010): (a) transcribing the interviews and the whole class discussion, (b) organizing the data, (c) generating categories and themes, (d) offering interpretations, (e) searching for alternative

understandings, and (f) writing the report for presenting the study (p.209). In order to transcribe the interviews, I used non-phonetic transcription and transcribed, word-for-word, what was recorded using voice memos. I did not consider phonetic details relevant to my study, since I mainly focused on the meaning of what was said. I restrained from omitting fillers and signified pauses and inflections with punctuation. Each new interview was transcribed in a separate document. Date and time of the interview was recorded on top of the page. The list of acronyms (AA=Alma Alawdat, the interviewee; MH=Maria Houston, the interviewer, etc.) was included in each document. Finally, I avoided correcting the interviewee's speech in the transcripts. Some corrections were made where grammatical errors obscured meaning. Those corrections were marked by my initials in parenthesis and the date of correction.

Once the transcriptions of the interviews and the final class discussion were finalized, I systematically organized the data by files with the name of the student on each file. Each student file contained: copies of field notes relevant to the student (with his/her name highlighted on the notes), the interview transcript, each classroom artifact pertaining to the student. I used a log of data-gathering activities to assist the process.

In order to categorize the data, I used Hatch's (2002) pattern characteristics (similarity, difference, frequency, sequence, correspondence, and causation), which allowed for inside the case and further cross case analysis (Hatch, 2002). In order to capture my analytic thoughts in the process of categorization, I used "analytic memos" (p.8), which I organized in themes as the data accumulated (Marshall & Rossman, 2010). In order to identify themes at the initial stage of data analysis, I read through each student's file and each piece of data highlighting key words relevant to my research questions. I assembled the

words within each file into themes by documenting the themes on the analytic memos and, later, compared themes across files. At the interpretation stage, I described and analyzed the uncovered themes within each case and across cases for the class as a whole.

Kumaravadivelu's (2001) work on post-method theory will be my lens in guiding me through my analytic processes, reminding me of my own subjectivity immersed in the data and of its situatedness and co-constructed nature (Kumaravadivelu, 2001).

Trustworthiness

Qualitative data emerges from the interaction of the researcher with the researched; and instead of providing a one-side clear-cut representation of phenomena, it describes how the phenomena are shaped by situated interaction between the researcher and the researched (Atkinson, Coffey, & Delamont, 2003).

Schwandt (2007), while exploring trustworthiness criteria for judging the quality or goodness of qualitative inquiry (Schwandt, 2007), developed four criteria to serve as a "naturalistic inquirer's equivalents to conventional criteria": credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Shwandt, 2007, p.299). For each of these criteria, Lincoln and Guba (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) specified a set of procedures used to meet them, such as: auditing, member check, peer-debriefing, etc. Additionally, the researchers placed a special emphasis on systematicity in data collection and analysis as a key factor that impacts trustworthiness of the study.

In my study, the data collection and analysis procedures were conducted and recorded systematically, using computer data logs, memos, and stepwise procedures mentioned in the previous sections of this chapter (Creswell (2012) and Marshall (2010)).

While it is important for researchers to ensure researcher objectivity or neutrality through member checks or the use of triangulation (presenting data from three sources), I believe that there cannot be any neutrality in a study of this nature. In fact, researcher neutrality could hinder authentic data emergence in the process of my qualitative study. The credibility of qualitative data lies in its ability to represent authentic lived experiences as seen through the interaction between the researcher and the researched in a particular context. Hence, Toma (2000) uses the term rigor to discuss the "goodness" of qualitative data. She states:

> All researchers are responsible to assure the rigor of their work. […] Subjective qualitative researchers frame their responsibility differently (p.182)". Credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability of qualitative research are the markers of depth of the engagement between the researcher and the subject, and thus the quality of that engagement. (p.182)

Therefore, ensuring the rigor of my study, I focused on developing strong, quality relationships with my participants and eliciting authentic lived experiences assembled through my interaction with the participants. Moreover, as it was stated in the previous chapters, such rigor ensuring procedures as triangulation are reductive at its core, imposing a limited world view on the readers and portraying reality as a "triangle-a rigid two-dimensional object" (Richardson, 2000). The reality is multidimensional and will be presented in my research as a kaleidoscope through multiple forms of analysis from multiple data sources.

Ethics and Human Subjects Protection

The trustworthiness of the study consists not only in its rigor, systematicity of all the procedures, and multi-dimensional representation of phenomena, but also in "how ethically engaged the researcher is likely to be during the study's conduct" (Marshall and Rossman, 2011, p.44). When moral principles are discussed, the considerations of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice are reduced to the procedure of obtaining an informal consent form from the study participants. Davies and Dodd (2002) place matters of relationships with the research participants, stakeholders, peers and larger discourse communities as an integral part of an ethical and rigorous work (Davies & Dodd, 2002). The researchers argue that "our approach to ethics, then, should be both flexible and contextual. There should be an emphasis on a sense of 'empathy and imagination', rather than on demonstrating a 'deductive and calculative reasoning'-values more often equated with conventional descriptions of rigor" (p. 281).

Throughout my study, I am accountable for the acknowledgement and location of myself in the research project as well as for "laying open for examination, or making visible, the research process in all its disorder" (p.281). I consider discussions about the research process with the participants to be a necessary ethical practice.

Additionally, assuring ethical treatment of research participants is supported by the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board (IRB). Thus, procedural consent letters, approved by the IRB, were signed by all of the study participants. Copies of those consent forms were provided in the appendix of the dissertation. Participants' names and identities were protected by pseudonyms.

Conducting research in my own class posed certain risks to my students. Therefore, measures were taken to eliminate those. As a matter of the first priority, the research participants have the right to decide whether or not they will participate in the research. This decision can be made unilaterally outside of the investigator's influence. Not to explicitly as well as implicitly coerce my students into agreeing to participate in the study, my colleague explained and administered the consent forms. He sealed the envelope in the end. I personally was able to open the envelope in the end of the semester, after the grades were distributed among my students. Furthermore, interviews, whole-class discussion, and a final class evaluation form were administered the day after the students saw their grades.

The Advanced Written Communication Class

In order to help the reader follow my study, I will further explain, in a concise and structured manner, the major components of the Advanced Written Communication class: assignments, major class activities, and forms.

1. Assignments: the short book

The short book is a major class project. It consists of two chapters and a foreword.

   a. Chapter one

This chapter is a personal narrative. The topic for the narrative is chosen by the students. In order to choose the topic, the students are asked to reflect on the question, "What are you burning to tell the world?" This chapter is eight to ten typed pages long.

   b. Chapter two

Chapter two is a research chapter. The goal of it is to conduct bibliographic research in order to understand the subject matter posited in the first chapter. This chapter is written in

the form of a literature review with the research question guiding it and the answer to the question assembled at the end of it. This chapter is about ten pages in length.

c. Foreword

The foreword is a one to two page introduction to the book. It is written by a peer. The rubric for the foreword is constructed by the students.

2. Major class activities

a. In-class discussions

In-class discussions happen throughout the semester. The two major discussions that support this chapter of my dissertation happened in the beginning of the semester, when the students reflected on their relationships with writing, and in the end of the semester, when we talked about the impact of book writing on the students' personal and academic lives.

b. Freewriting

The students freewrite more in the beginning of the semester. Freewriting in class supports the narrative chapter and is guided by questions about students' past experiences, cultures and contexts, etc.

c. In-class writing

Since the narrative chapter is developed by mid-term, and the research chapter and the foreword are finished closer to the end of the semester, three to four class periods of writing time are built in the syllabus in order to help students finish their work and get timely advice.

d. Writing Center and Library workshops

The Writing Center (WC) workshop is set up by me in the beginning and the other in the middle of the semester in order to, first, introduce the students to the WC services and tutors and, second, to help them learn to get outside help and resources when constructing their research and working with citation styles.

The Library workshop is organized by me in collaboration with a university librarian to help students use library resources to conduct research. It is a presentation and practice session in which the librarian interactively presents the resources available in the library for writers. The second half of the session is devoted to a practice activity when the students have to apply what they have learnt from the presentation of the librarian to their own projects.

    e. Peer readings

Peer readings happen once the students begin writing their narrative chapters. Those events are scheduled in advance in order to give each student a chance to read one page of their narratives in class and receive peer feedback on the page. The readings will be described in detail further in this chapter of my dissertation.

3. Forms

For the purposes of the research and in order to scaffold continuous reflective writing in class, the following forms were developed for the students to complete at different times in the semester:

    a. Needs Assessment Form

This form is completed on the first class of the semester in order to capture the students' prior experiences writing in English as well as class expectations.

b. Peer Folder Self-Evaluation Form

The above form is administered once the peer readings are completed in order for the students to reflect on their experiences reading and reviewing peer narratives.

c. Published Book Self-Evaluation Form

This form is completed once the short book is finished. It requires the students to work with the book in order to reflect on its contents, develop potential improvement opportunities, and share writers' success.

d. Final Class Evaluation Form

This form closes the semester with the students' reflections on the class overall as well as its specific activities, assignments, and so on.

The brief introduction to the Advanced Written Communication class briefly outlines the content of the class that became the research site in the dissertation. It is aimed as a transition from the detailed description of the study, its focus and methodology, to the subsequent chapters which present the study results and reflections.

Chapter Summary

This chapter focused on describing the methodology of my prospective study and touched upon my positionality as a researcher as well as restated my research questions, setting a ground for a deeper insight into my research. The chapter introduced the main data collection and analysis procedures of my qualitative study, its participants and context as well as a rationale for the above. The chapter continued with the discussion of trustworthiness of my qualitative study and ethical considerations of a qualitative research project, in which the researcher is an active participant of the study.

A brief introduction to the Advanced Written Communication class concluded the chapter by outlining the content of the class - the research site of the study. Such an introduction is aimed as a transition from the detailed description of the study, its focus and methodology, to the subsequent chapters, which present the study findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

UNDERSTANDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS AS WRITERS IN THE EAP

WRITING CLASS

Introduction

In the previous chapters, I laid out the theoretical and methodological foundation for my dissertation research. While the three above chapters were meant to establish my position as a composition and TESOL scholar and were composed from the second person, the concluding dissertation chapters guide the readers with a first person narration. As a reader and a writer, I believe that telling students' stories, talking about experiences, and writer journeys, requires the writer to compose a more personalized text. A personalized text allows for the researcher's voice to be heard and considered a part of the study in which the researcher is also the teacher. Therefore, I shifted the tone in the subsequent chapters to be consistent with the above position.

Since short book writing pedagogy is centered around the life of each individual student-writer, I consider it necessary to begin discussing the outcomes of my study as they impact the individual writer in my Advanced Written Communication Class. Chapter five targets a focused in-depth exploration of the experiences of five multilingual students constructing short books in the course of one academic semester and their development as writers. The chapter opens with a clarification of terms as they are used in this dissertation. In this section I attempt to distinguish between "writing" and "composing", since the two terms impact the ways in which learners develop as writers. Consequently, offer the readers a chance to explore the individual journeys of five students in the class in the form of five

individual case studies. Reading those case studies will help the readers better understand the journeys of multilingual learners composing short books in English.

While presenting five individual student journeys is important for understanding the impact of short book writing on a student's development as a writer, a simple presentation may not result in a comprehensive chapter and a complete message. Thus, I conclude the chapter with a themes-based analysis of the journeys to better frame and interpret them in the context of an Intensive English Program, Advanced Written Communication class.

The Complexity of Terms

Since this section is meant to illustrate a journey that a group of multilingual writers embarked on in the course of the semester, I feel the need to begin with a few introductory words regarding the terms and concepts that I have re-shaped as my own writer journey continues.

Writing vs. composing. Earlier in this dissertation I pointed out my use of the words "writing" and "composing". Frankly, I am still using both words quite often and engage in both processes when I work on my scholarship or write for pleasure. In the first chapter of the dissertation, I highlighted that in the disciplines and fields where second language (ESL) speakers, or, better, multilingual writers, are widely present, the term "writing" is used and the word "composing" is nearly fully omitted. The most popular ESL journals and conferences use the word "writing" in their titles: The Journal of Second Language Writing, Symposium on Second Language Writing, etc. The courses in Intensive English Programs (IEIs), which enroll a large number of multilingual learners, are often titled "Advanced Written Communication," "Research Writing," "Writing," not "Composition 101". I added that I myself have been more

comfortable with saying "writing" rather than "composing" and use the latter only when I refer to my mainstream students or scholarship in Composition Studies.

Conducting research in my own class this semester has pushed me to re-think the terms I use. As a result, I see that "writing" and "composing" are not binary oppositions. These words are not contradictory or mutually exclusive. In fact, they are both present in the life of the writer and are equally important. While "writing" can sound to my colleagues, compositionists, as a more formulaic and diminutive component of composing, it is not necessarily true for multilingual writers who want to claim their place in the western academy where good writing skills are a important. Multilingual writers view good writing skills as a key to successful career as well as a powerful way of presenting themselves in academic settings of such a print culture as that of the U.S. Finally, second language learners believe that they have a lot to contribute to the western academy, but the contributions are meaningless if they are incomprehensible and, as a result, not understood

Notably, during individual interviews with my participants I noticed how they switched terms when they talked about working on different components of the book. Thus, when they talked about their narratives, they used "composing" more than "writing", but once we switched to the research chapter, the word "writing" started to dominate. Reflecting on this tendency, I realize that initially, when talking about research, we mainly focused on the issues of form since the students came into the class with a fear for research writing. They were not entirely confident that they would be able to succeed in academic writing. At the same time, narrative related discussions throughout the semester evoked interactions about living and composing experiences, not the rules and conventions of composed texts. Talking to my students throughout the semester as well as reading their Needs Assessment

Forms and other data, I realized that for them, future professionals in a current, globalized society, both writing and composing were crucially important. Additionally, once we started peer-reviews of narrative writing in class, we discovered that poor form damaged the meaning and the beauty of expression. Therefore, the students became motivated to use more in and out of class help to get their work read and commented on. In class, we mostly focused on composing, but outside of class I encouraged my students to get more feedback on their writing mechanics from their tutors, Writing Center professionals and librarians. In order to ensure initial extensive and timely teacher commentary on grammar, structure, punctuation and similar mechanical issues in my students' writing, I used "Desire to Learn" (D2L), a Learning Management System to provide and share my feedback with the students. D2L allows the students to upload digital copies of their writing for their teacher's feedback. Since the files are uploaded in MSWord format, the teacher can also take advantage of taking notes right inside the students' documents, typing comments and feedback on those documents, etc. It also allows the students to access their feedback as soon as it is saved by their teacher. Most of my students had issues with English grammar. Those issues ranged from minor grammar slips to structural systemic problems that obscured the meaning of what they were writing. D2L made it easy to both provide comments on the students' texts in an efficient manner and upload corrected pages for immediate review. Thus, after two to three uploaded and corrected drafts, my students realized that their grammar problems were repetitive and had a system of knowledge gaps behind them. I asked my students to review my feedback on their writing and note what gaps they had in English. Hence, we focused on understanding the system or the gaps in the students' knowledge of English grammar. Once the gaps were discovered and addressed with the help of Writing Center tutors and my online

and in-class feedback, the students were able to eliminate a considerable amount of grammar mistakes from their texts.

If we, educators, truly want to help our students succeed, irrespective of their linguistic backgrounds, we need to focus on both their writing and their composing processes. Through this study I came to realize that the writing aspect of my students' compositions cannot be underestimated, since the students want to not only learn to express themselves, but to be understood.

When the students' described their evolution as writers to me during the interviews, they touched on both improvements in writing and composing as well as in their relationship with and attitude to writing. Additionally, analyzing various class documentation that they had been completing throughout the semester, I could clearly see that there was a change in students' responses to questions about writing and their experiences as writers. In the beginning of the semester the students completed Needs Assessment forms to share with me their concerns, strengths, expectations and hopes in relation to their writing abilities and attitudes to writing in general and writing in English. At that time the students thought about writing as mostly mechanical. They heavily criticized their writing abilities in English and described a multitude of problems with grammar and organization that they had, etc. Most of them stated that they had poor relationships with writing and did not consider themselves writers. At the same time they all wanted to improve their academic writing skills in my class. Three months elapsed from the day the Needs Assessment forms were completed at the end of the semester. In that time the students filled out a number of other forms including

- A peer response folder self- evaluation form

- A published book self-evaluation form

- A final class evaluation form

Most of the forms that followed the Needs Assessment targeted the composing aspects of writing: meaning-focused peer feedback, reading sessions reflections and self-evaluations of provided feedback, meaning-focused reflections on published books, the composing and publishing processes and, finally, students' self-evaluations as writers in class. The first set of questions on the Final Class Evaluation form was identical to the questions of the Needs Assessment. By repeating the questions in the above two questionnaires I aimed at tracking changes in students' responses regarding writing, the evolution of their attitudes to and relationships with it. The second set of questions was focused on the students' self-identification as "writers" (i.e. authors) versus "students in a writing class." Thus, the students were presented with a list of in-class and outside-of-class activities that they engaged in throughout the semester to compose their books. They had to mark activities that made them feel as writers and authors, and the ones that made them feel students in a writing class. By means of the last "writer" versus "student in a writing class" section I wanted to see how the students identified themselves in relationship to writing throughout the semester, and if certain activities changed the way they felt. I did not design all of the above data collection sources solely for the purposes of research. Initially, those questionnaires were developed to scaffold the students' reflections about writing and how they see themselves in it. The forms invite the students to reflect on their perceptions of selves as writers and, as a result, move along the student-writer continuum and evolve as writers.

Five Students' Writer Journeys

All the data sets or forms designed by me for my Advanced Written Communication Class are accessible for readers in the appendices of this dissertation. Those forms and

questionnaires were meant to record the development in the students' perceptions of selves as writers. The set of forms that the students completed during the class as well as all of the class activities and the book itself were aimed to scaffold a journey that constructed writers. Although not all of the students in class identified themselves as writers in the Final Class Evaluation Form, all of them were more positive about getting closer to being a "writer" or an "author" as a result of book writing.

Frankly, in the course of the semester I had witnessed a number of rises and falls in the writer journeys of my students. I could also trace their evolution as writers and readers through the collected data: forms, discussions, and interviews. Since I had thirteen study participants, I knew that due to space and time limitations of the dissertation I would have to pick which journeys to assemble and present in my research. It was a hard decision since every student's journey was worth presenting. Each student had lived through book writing in their unique way. Thus all the stories were worth telling. Nevertheless, I decided to present the journeys of five students in my class. I chose the journeys that I presented below by picking five cards out of a thirteen-card-pile with a student's name on the reverse side of each card to provide my readers with an honest picture of the second language writers' journeys writing books in my Advanced Written Communication class.

Bader: "I want to learn to be a good writer." Bader comes from Saudi Arabia, a beautiful holy city, AlMadinah. He is a high-school graduate, passionate about acting and theatre. This semester was his second semester in the Intensive English Program (IEI). As part of a routine of the Intensive English Program placement procedure, I happened to interview him on the day of his arrival at the IEI to determine his oral English proficiency. I remember him being nervous but eager and enthusiastic about getting a college degree in acting. Bader

was always a highly capable student, eloquent and professional. It was a surprise for me to meet him again in the IEI program after the summer break. Students like him typically move on to enter a degree bearing program quite quickly. In response to my question "Why don't you try to take a test and enter a college program?" he exclaimed that there had been a lot of pressure on him regarding the choice of a major. So, he was thinking to "obey" his parents and major in biology now, but the interest in a college degree was slowly vanishing as well as the hope of becoming an actor.

During the first class, when we were working to construct an image of a "good writer" while talking and taking notes on the board, he exclaimed, "A good writer writes from the heart!" (*Blackboard notes*).

"Do you know what it means when you feel like there is no place that can save you from someone who is chasing you, or when you don't feel safe and comfortable in your own house? Have you felt like there is someone with you in the same room, but actually there is no one?" ("Demons", Bader, p.3)

The lines above are a part of an opening paragraph in Bader's book titled "Demons". In a culminating whole-class discussion, he noted that he was especially proud of the above lines: "I felt like this before and I am really proud of this sentence because I bring all my emotions to it and how I felt these days" (Culminating discussion, p.2). The concept of demons started to interest Bader since he had experienced a supernatural presence at an early age, "For a long time I have been asking myself so many questions about demons and how we can fight them. Now I have the chance to answer these questions and find more about them" ("Demons", Bader, p.8). Bader did not hesitate about the choice of the topic when he discovered that he would be writing a book. He said, "I didn't have any topic except for this

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because I have experience with it. At that time I thought I can do that because I can do research and then I can tell my story" (Interview, Bader, p.3). Bader confessed that he had known a lot about fighting demons by the time he had to come up with a question for his book. Since the overriding question that students are seeking the answer to in the short books is "What are you burning to tell the world?" students begin their research with the formulation of their questions for the world. In essence, it is a research question that gets answered through conducting and composing the second chapter of the sort book, the research chapter. Most students formulate those questions in the beginning of the semester. During the second class of the first week we discuss possible "burning questions" in class and select the ones that can make interesting short books. However, once the students are ready to write their research chapters, the "burning" questions are revisited. We work on the questions for research together, using certain criteria to make sure the questions are researchable. Those criteria were developed by me in a Qualitative Research doctoral course. I applied them in a number of my own research projects as well as in my teaching. Both my students and professors found them helpful and useful. According to these criteria, the research questions should be:

- Open-ended (do not seek a "yes" or "no" answer, invite the students to research and analyze various opinions)

- Contextualized (clearly define the setting, the time, and the population involved)

- Doable (possible to research within the given timeframe)

- Personally and socially significant (relevant to the lives of the students and their communities)

Thus Bader revised his research question multiple times to personally benefit from doing research. Bader's initial question was "What are some ways to fight demons?" As Bader thought more about the above question, he discovered that he he had already known a lot about exorcism. So, to make his question more socially and personally significant he decided to take advantage of having peers from different cultures in class and revise the question to "How do Mexican, Indonesian, and Taiwanese cultures understand demons?" The research chapter became for Bader a means of thinking about demons and exorcism from the perspective of other cultures. Thus, the above criteria helped Bader make research more interesting and engaging for him and others in class. They also helped him learn that an issue can be researched from various angles, which makes research a continuous process and a journey.

Bader's experiences in class were almost all positive. He pointed out that he learnt many things that were important for him and that he enjoyed writing his book:

> I really enjoyed writing my story and, ah, I didn't really know that I can put my feelings and my emotion in writing till I wrote this book. Second thing when I wrote research I learnt some many things, like how to do research, APA style, I didn't know all that. I am sure I am gonna need this in college. I can't t think really of any bad things. (Interview, Bader, p.5)

In fact, when asked to recollect a moment of transformation throughout the semester, Bader exclaimed, "Reading my narrative to the class!"

He continued:

> That was the most the most beautiful time in the whole semester. I really enjoyed every moment of that. I enjoyed that so much. I felt like actually like I was really

reading my story... and I tried to make my audience or my classmates feel what I really felt. That's what I tried to do. (Interview, p.9)

This moment of reading a story to the classmates transformed a student into a writer who felt proud reading his story. Later in the interview, Bader noted that peer readings turned out a significant learning experience for him. He learnt the various "faces" of writing, and how writing manifested itself through the prism of various cultures and experiences:

I learnt ….like some of my classmates… I still remember their story because of the beautiful writing. Some of my classmates are Taiwanese, so they said they translated their story from Taiwan to English, so I feel like it is Chinese style in English, so it was kind of interesting to learn. (Interview, p.7)

In the end of our interview, we talked about writing in English. In the beginning of the semester, Bader wrote that his writing in English was "normal" but needed improvement, especially in grammar and organization (Needs assessment, Bader). So, I asked Bader if his attitude to writing in English changed as a result of creating the book. He responded, "Actually it absolutely did. Like I said I didn't really think that I can really write something in English, but now that I wrote a book I was really happy that I can write in English" (Interview, p.7). Interestingly, throughout his writing journey in my class Bader took book writing very close to heart. In his Published Book Self-Evaluation form he asked for an "A", he wrote, "Please, don't break my heart and give me 'F' " (Published book self-evaluation form, Bader, p.2). He seemed to believe that every detail and every moment in class was deciding, crucial. Even his intriguing book cover portraying a possessed woman in a black-and-white picture, "ancient-looking" font style, etc. were designed to "be scary and to match my topic" (Published book self-evaluation form, Bader, p.1).

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I saw my students dress up and get nervous before their readings, but Bader gave the process a special meaning; he was discovering himself as someone he wanted to be, an actor. In class, he felt like an actor in a play. He was fascinated by stories and characters, and his role was a very important one. He put a lot of effort in his reading. He shared with me that he had practiced for hours to make sure his reading sounded the way he wanted it to sound. He carefully wrote his one page narrative, "the script for the play", to fascinate the readers or his "audience", as he referred to us. His page was full of descriptions, carefully set-up scenes, clearly pictured characters, talking with us from the page of Bader's narrative. Bader's reading had truly been a success among his peers. Till the end of the semester and on they could not forget Bader's "thriller" about demons.

Bader was also a "soul of the class." He was a friend of everyone. He deeply cared for his peers' books, and his feedback and comments on his peers' narratives showed it. His comments were sympathetic and cheering. For instance his comment on Sarah's story read, "I know a little of how you feel because my sister is pregnant too…you are such a strong woman. God be with you" (Peer Response Folder Self-Evaluation, Bader, p.1). The above comment illustrates Bader's growth as a writer, since it demonstrates his very close connection to the text, his ability to identify with writing and live the story. In his interview with me, Bader recollected Sarah's story and noted that from Sarah he had learnt "to write with my emotions" (p.1). Sarah's story helped him see how appealing emotional writing is. It makes writing genuine, honest, and keeps the reader connected with the writer. Bader also learnt how to put emotions on the page, what words trigger emotions and what stylistical choices. For instance, he noticed in Sarah's story the use of Arabic words to describe meals, prayers, and rituals. He found that insertions of native language makes the text more genuine,

emotional, and interesting. Sarah's text also inspired him to expand his vocabulary and use more adjectives that depict emotions more clearly and precisely. Instead of simply using "nice", he started to learn and use more adjectives with the same base meaning, like "comforting", "compassionate", "sympathetic". Thus, his peers' stories helped Bader grow as a writer and user of English. Notably, Bader confessed that not all of the stories interested him as a reader, and he "did not give good responses to all of them" (p.2). He explained that he only responded "from the bottom of my heart" when he found the story honest and deep. Evidently, Bader's passion was emotional writing. He believed that "a good writer writes from the heart" and had a weakness to devote more attention to more emotional narratives when providing feedback at the expense of less emotional ones. Bader was one of the few students who spent considerable amount of time interviewing his peers to get cultural data about demons: traditions, customs, and beliefs. In his Published Book Self-Evaluation form, which was meant to get the students to reflect on their finished books, he wrote that the major changes that he made in his book occurred due to his conversation with his classmate, Ranita. He stated, "We talked about demons in our cultures and religions. She helped me learn more about demons in the way that she sees them" (p.2).

Bader began his writer journey confident that he knew everything about his topic. However, when learning about writing as infused with culture and traditions, Bader decided to take advantage of our multicultural class and broaden his topic. He knew a lot about demons in Arabic cultures only. He also felt that he could interest his readers more if he offered the perspectives of other cultures on the problem in his book. Thus book writing provided Bader with confidence of a storywriter and a reader-focused vision of a playwright. It also gave Bader a chance to improve his narrative and research writing skills learning from

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his peers as well as seek more knowledge and find new angles of looking at his topic through peer work and readings.

As Bader's teacher, I can clearly see the evolution of his composing processes through peer-readings and reviews, as well as the development of his writing in terms of idea development, language, grammatical clarity, and academic writing style. In the Needs Assessment Form administered in the beginning of the semester Bader wrote that he considered one on one feedback from a teacher the most beneficial to improve writing. In his final class evaluation form he stated that peer feedback during whole-class readings was the most effective for him. He seemed to have developed more of a reader-focused perspective on writing. It seems that with the increase in his confidence as a writer and a reader he became reader-oriented. He gained the courage to write for the audience. In his journey from a student to a writer, Bader discovered that such a focus on the reader as well as the investment into the topic made a writer. In his Final Class Evaluation Form he noted that peer-feedback and reading his narrative in class were the activities that made him feel a writer, not an ESL student in a writing class (Final class evaluation, p.1)

In conclusion, artistic Bader had evolved as a writer as a result of book writing. He felt a writer in class when he composed for and with his audience. He discovered that writing went beyond the classroom and the teacher. Bader found his readers everywhere, in class and outside of it. Composing his book allowed Bader to see a large unexplored potential of writing for readers from different cultures and experience the joy of learning from stories.

Tessie: "I like writing, but I think I can't write well. I am willing to learn to be a good writer." Tessie comes from Indonesia. To my great surprise she turned out to be fluent in three languages: Mandarin, Indonesian, and English. Tessie was one of my most ambitious

students. She came to the Intensive English Program for one semester only. Tessie's goal was to improve her English, and her semester was expected to be full of hard work.

Tessie had a Bachelor's degree in Information Systems and was interested in "cooking, health, and photography" (Needs assessment, Tessie). In the Needs Assessment Questionnaire administered on the first day of the semester Tessie noted that she lacked experience writing and reading someone's writing. She felt it was hard for her to evaluate her own writing in English, but she definitely needed improvement in the organization of writing and choice of vocabulary. She said that she didn't write for any other purposes rather than school and that she was not a good writer. At that point, good writing for Tessie meant "good structure, vocabulary, and grammar" (Needs assessment, Tessie). Additionally, Tessie believed that a writer "has knowledge about what he wants to write". So the image of a true writer that Tessie was trying to create and to follow was that of an intellectual, with thorough knowledge of the subject matter, spotless grammar, and sophisticated vocabulary. When the class was brainstorming the characteristics of a writer, Tessie exclaimed: "And wearing glasses, looking serious!" (Class notes, p.1). The class laughed, but we added that detail to our writer portrait.

From the beginning of the semester, writing in English for Tessie was not something to be enjoyed, but she worked on it and significantly improved. Three months went by, and Tessie had successfully completed her book, the book that made her want to go home immediately to apply the knowledge she gained through writing her short book. During the culminating whole-class discussion, she, in contrast to other students, read the paragraph that she was mostly proud of from her research chapter:

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I like my chapter two, especially these lines, "to help the gamblers get through this problem, not only the gamblers should get treatment, but the family should work with therapists in hope that they can understand more about the problem and support gamblers". (Tessie, "Gambling Addiction", p.13)

While most of Tessie's peers found writing enjoyable, she treated it as a transformative force, as something that could help find ways to help her brother. Hence, the research that she conducted in her book meant so much for her life and the life of her family. After reading the above paragraph, she explained:

From this I learnt that family has one of the most important roles in helping the gamblers. They are the ones who can recognize the behavior of the gamblers. I think before I did this research I knew nothing about how to find out if this person has a gambling addiction or not. My family and I thought we can control my brother's finances and it will solve the problem. But in this chapter I learnt how to support him mentally […] I wish I can go home right now (Culminating discussion, p. 3).

This book which, undoubtedly, meant a lot for Tessie had become a result of a hard semester and a journey towards re-conceptualizing writing and her "self" as a writer.

Tessie was trying to feel the pleasure of composing that many other students had experienced while writing their narratives. She was fascinated by emotional writing and what others managed to achieve in their stories. She admired a highly intense narrative of her other classmates, "I learnt everyone has different writing style. Like especially like Lama, I really like Lama's style. I don't know how she makes our brain spin. I like that kind of reading. She never tells us what she wants to say" (Peer Response Folder Self-Evaluation Form, Tessie).

Tessie was fascinated with the narrative writing throughout the semester, but never fully felt that she was able to approach it, convey her story to the reader.

The most memorable moment in class, according to her testimony, was the day when I asked the students to take out a piece of paper and write down what they remembered from their childhood. She found that type of writing personal and almost magical because it helped her to bring out and record so many precious memories. She enjoyed free writing and the freedom to compose her experiences. In the end of the interview, she admitted, "I have lots of writing classes in the semester. I love your class the best. You gave us freedom and let us write how we want to write" (Interview, p.7).

Research writing gave Tessie the confidence of a writer who could make a difference. She discovered the power of research. She found that doing research benefited her, but writing the research chapter can, potentially, benefit millions of people who are either gamblers or a gambler's relatives. Reflecting on her journey from a student to a writer, Tessie pointed out:

> I never wrote research paper and I didn't know how to before. From the beginning I thought it was very difficult. "I still have language issues", I thought, "…and the teacher wants us to write research?" But with your guidance, you always encourage us…that it is not that difficult and you also give us very helpful advice. I see everything now. Before I did the research I didn't see anything.. .oh my brother was fine, he didn't look like a gambling addict. But after research I recognized the addictive behaviors in him. After now I still cannot trust him but I need to go back home and see personally how he changed now. And one thing is in the research what I found is it is a good option to go to the therapy with the whole family. In Indonesia,

however, it is not popular. But I am sure that my parents will not think about it. They

will just try to limit his financials. But I know I can help, so I want to go back now.

(Interview, p.8)

For Tessie, her personal narrative was a work-in-progress and a continuous journey of

rediscovering "self". However, research writing had earned Tessie's outmost admiration and

fascination, since it was able to help her reflect, re-discover, and find a real resolution to the

family crisis that Tessie and her family members were going through. Most importantly, she

learnt a way and a process of creating written research, so that many more transforming

experiences could occur in her life and the lives of her nearest people. Additionally, Tessie

fell in love with writing about distant memories. Composing her book made her feel closer to

her family who needed her in the moment of crisis. In her final class evaluation she noted

that she had gained confidence to write in English, even in research writing, but she still had

to work hard to achieve the status of a writer. She was not satisfied with her abilities of self-

expression in writing in English and needed more time to "grow into the language" to be able

to write "real" stories (Final Class Evaluation Form, Tessie).

Ahmed Saidi: "I felt like a king!" "After I got Shekah, I felt like a king because

every one of my friends wanted to get Shekah, but they couldn't" ("Original Arabic Horses",

Ahmed, p.3).

If you have come across some ambitious people, you will recognize Ahmed as one of

them. As a teacher who has been observing his progress in the IEI for at least three semesters,

I can describe him as a business-like, ambitious individual, who doesn't value groups or

friendships in the IEI, but purposefully progresses towards the goal of becoming a successful

Human Resources executive. Ahmed completed his Bachelor's in Business in Riyadh, the

capital of Saudi Arabia, and came to the US to enter a graduate program in Business. For me, it always seemed that he had spent too much time in the IEI. With his ambitions, Ahmed could have entered a degree bearing program after a year of IEI (Intensive English Program), but his institutional exit scores as well as his standardized tests scores thus far had prevented him from doing so.

In my class Ahmed identified himself as "not a writer". His mere goal in my class was to get the skills for the success in the US academy. For Ahmed, my class was a part of success plan. He intended to improve his academic writing skills, the mechanics of writing, and polish his language. In his interview with me, he noted that he came late in the semester, so he was considerably behind other students in class. He requested the help of the IEI tutor to get through. Working with his tutor, he was able to successfully complete all the assignments.

Reflecting on the personal and social significance of his short book topic, Ahmed explained, "I am interested in horses from back when I was a child. So I want to know about the Arabic horse and other horses. It is for fun…I think it is important for people who like riding horses to know about Arabic horses" (Interview, p.6). In contrast to other students, Ahmed avoided referring to himself or others as "writers" and the final class project as "book". He almost never mentioned his narrative when talking to me during the interview, at least, not until I asked. Then he explained, "The story is easier than the second chapter because you write from your mind; you don't have to look for things in the library, specific information, etc." (Interview, p.7). Ahmed said this with a tint of disappointment. His main goal of being in class was academic writing, not story-telling. I believe that Ahmed experienced a lot of pressure from his family for spending so much time in an ESL program.

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Most of his friends were studying in their majors, and he felt ready to transfer to the university. Ahmed's goal in my class was to write at the level of his peers, to develop strong skills writing research. He desperately wanted to catch up. He told me that his peers read his book and admired his research chapter. They explained to him that it [research] was the type of writing he would do in college. So, naturally, Ahmed wanted the class to focus more on research.

He struggled with the choice of a book topic and changed it a few times. The last time he decided to change the topic was an hour before his reading. Quite frankly, the whole class, who had already read the "Shekah story", was disappointed to hear the news. When we began discussing the questions that we were burning to ask the world as well as some stories from our past, Ahmed brought to class the Shekah story, a beautiful narrative written from the depth of his heart and filled with crucial childhood memories. The narrative described a little boy, Ahmed, who made a bet to win one of the strongest and most beautiful horses his uncle possessed by racing it for 10 minutes without falling. After months of training, Ahmed, age 11, rode Shekah and managed to stay in the saddle controlling the horse. So, having won over his older cousins, he made Shekah his own.

The class read the narrative, and, on Ahmed's reading day, I received a number of comments about the beauty of the story. My students could not believe that the story was written by Ahmed. It was so emotional, artistic, and passionate. "How come our reserved and always silent businessman, Ahmed, has written this?" exclaimed one of Ahmed's classmates. On that day Ahmed did not come to class. He missed his first reading. We heard back from him next class. He came in and declared that he would re-write the story. He decided to write about some aspect of Human Resources since a business topic would benefit his career more

than the story of his love for Shekah. My students protested. They waved the pages with their comments for Ahmed's story in the air arguing for the continuation of the "Shekah story". Ahmed seemed firm on his decision. We asked him to think. Next week, to our great joy, Ahmed changed his mind again and read the story about Shekah in class. He left highly satisfied with himself and inspired. He promised to do research on what makes Arabic horses differ from all the other horses in the world to satisfy the multiple questions that he received from the class.

Throughout my interview with Ahmed he mostly talked about his research chapter. As he said, the topic did not matter much to him. What mattered were the writing skills he got from working on the research chapter. Answering the question "Which book chapter was the most enjoyable to write?" he stated, "Second. Because it is new for me, and I learnt a lot of information from other sources. I think it is very good. I learnt how to write research, analyze sources" (Interview, p.6). In the end of the interview he proudly pointed out that his writing in English had changed for the better as a result of the class. He began, "It changed. Like when I was working on my book, I asked some MA student. He said it was the same way we wrote research in MA. So, it is good for me. But in the beginning I had some difficulty with writing. I came to class late. My problem was doing the search, key words. But it was all fine in the end" (Interview, p.7).

Overall, Ahmed rated his class experience as highly positive. He noted that while some aspects of book writing were useful and enjoyable, some changes could be made to the project for it to benefit ESL students more. I felt that Ahmed, granted the pressure he was under, truly wanted to enjoy book writing, but had no time for it. It was a "luxury" for him to focus on anything else but academic writing.

Ahmed's journey, randomly chosen to be presented in my research, demonstrates how varied the experiences of the students in my class can be. Ahmed was the only student in class who negatively talked about book readings, peer-reviews, and was not as impressed with narrative writing and the exploration of language, culture, or self through writing. For him, the book was a means of goal achievement, and he was proud of the outcome. At the same time, Ahmed's responses throughout the class were contradictory. He talked about learning from peer feedback and gaining confidence through readings in Peer Response Folder Evaluation form, but wanted to reduce the time spent on both in the Final Class Evaluation Form. In his interview he focused on the importance of research versus narrative, while in the final two lines of his research chapter, he wrote: "I chose this topic because I had an amazing story to tell, the story from when I was a child" ("Original Arabic Horses", Ahmed, p.10).

Ahmed does not have to love narratives and class readings to be a writer and to experience a transformation as a writer. He has gained confidence and knowledge through research as well as a pride through sharing his book with senior peers and professionals and making a small step towards acceptance in their community. The book provided this young writer with a chance to find and establish himself in the academy, and he had made his steps on the academic journey more confident.

Maggie: "I want to be understood". Having taught book writing to a large number of students, I feel that I am able to predict quite well who will develop into a confident writer in English during the first class whole-group discussion about writing and the students' needs assessment forms. The first whole-class discussion that always happens during the first class of the semester is focused around the question "What is your relationship with writing?" I ask my

students to take a few minutes to reflect on the question and respond to it in writing. Then the students read their responses to the class. Frankly, the way the students respond to the question helps me see how open they are to the challenges of composing, how well they see the composing side of writing, and, of course, how they think about writing. Different students engage in the discussion at a different level, depending on their interest in writing. Passionate writers are always easily discernable. Finally, the Needs Assessment Form summarizes for me the students' perceptions of selves as writers, their self-evaluation of their writing, and class expectations. Thus, the first week of classes helps me better understand the students I am working with and predict their writer potential. Although, my predictions sometimes fail, in Maggie's case it did not happen. In her response to my first question, she wrote, "writing is my best friend". Further she noted that she would like to build stronger relationships with writing as a result of the semester. This response made me feel that I was dealing with a writer who would flourish in my class.

Maggie is a junior at a Tamkang University, Taiwan. She majors in International Business, but her passion is painting and art. Maggie is an acknowledged writer and journalist in her university. In the interview she explained to me that she used to edit and write for a college newsletter in Taiwan. I shared that such experience shaped a good story-teller and added that I myself graduated from the school of journalism back in Russia. Maggie is very communicative. She eagerly sustains discussions, offers new ideas, and shares her experiences orally and in writing. She seems to be one of these "happy" people with a wide smile and a happy tone. She is a pleasure to be around. Her narrative revealed her for me from a different perspective.

On the question "What makes a good writer?" which I included in the Needs Assessment Form administered on the first day of class, Maggie responded in the following manner, "First, in my opinion, a good writer should convey her feelings correctly and creatively. I think I will and I can" (Needs Assessment, Maggie). Answering the above questions, the students seemed to think of writing in their native language, but once I shifted their thinking to English, the confidence disappeared. Thus thinking about her writing in English Maggie states, "Yes, I can impress the reader, but I can't write special writing because I am afraid of using English grammar, vocabulary, and sentences. If I knew how to use it, I can write something different" (Needs assessment). Further on, she wrote, "Writing and I are strangers. We see each other, but we are not friends anymore. Maybe, I met him several times, but I did not open my mind anymore". It became obvious to me that Maggie struggled at the intersection of two languages. She had talked about herself as a writer with more confidence when she had Chinese writing in mind. Once I asked her about writing in English, a "lost friend" had turned into "a stranger". She turned into someone who was afraid to write and could not write anything special in English. The English language seemed to have hindered her strength as a writer. Maggie appeared to me to be a student with a high potential. I knew she could "make friends" with writing in English as a result of my class. I have seen students like her do this. Of course, being a confident, professional, and creative writer in Chinese she struggled to feel a self-conscious beginner in English. Thus she made it her goal to overcome the struggle. On the question "What would you like to learn in class?" Maggie responded, "Not skills. It is something that will make me not afraid of writing. It is a first step to write" (Needs Assessment). Maggie saw and understood that writing was not a skill, but a part of her, and she needed my class to re-unite with a "lost friend".

The question that Maggie wanted the world to answer for her related to her own story of growing up in a family of divorced parents. Maggie wrote the book about family interactions. Having struggled with lack of attention and care on the part of her parents, Maggie asked the world, "What is a strong family?" and "How to make family interactions better? " In her book she intended to fight with the realia of modern busy and highly "wired" world to find a place for a family to talk and hear one another. Describing the significance of her book Maggie noted:

> Family is, I think, most important in everybody's life. Somebody is related to you in your life. Some bad things happen, and you don't know how to deal with them. Like, me, my background. I want to figure out what happened in my family before, and then maybe someone else with the same problem will fix if they have time. (Interview, Maggie, p.7)

Maggie meant her book as a helping hand for herself and others in similar family situations. She worked hard on both chapters. What made her stand out in class was that she wanted to discuss her writing with everyone. She explained to me, "I make lots of points in one sentence, but I don't know if make sense. I think I can tell the reader I have lots of opinions, but something confused the reader, so I like to share my article with my friend, so she can give me more ideas, or help with some grammar problems" (Interview, p. 16). Maggie was in desperate need to be understood. She was not sure if others would make sense of what she wrote. In the interview Maggie indicated that her story was crucial for the book. Looking back at her writing process, she explained, "This is my story. If I can convey my story correctly to the reader, that means I succeed. I just want to convey it correctly. I don't

care what people think about my background, what happened. I just want you to read it and understand it" (Interview, p.16).

Interestingly, this strong focus on the reader made Maggie's writing process very challenging. She had to learn to understand how her writing read and was accepted by the readers. The readings helped her learn "to listen people's opinions" and to feel that she was not wrong (Interview, p.17). While she received more reader feedback than anyone else in class, there was never enough of it for her. Maggie's work with the reader was astonishing to me. She was the first student in my classes who so intensely and eagerly co-created her writing with so many other readers, who helped her create effective descriptions, carve expressions in English, and work on the meaning of her sentences.

In her writer journey, Maggie focused primarily on her narrative. She discovered that it allowed her to "express myself in a Chinese way and still be understood" (Interview, p.16). Story writing brought her joy since her progress as a writer became visibly quickly in it. Additionally, the narrative allowed her to fully rely on two languages. Chapter two, research, on the other hand, seemed much less enjoyable for her to write, but she still considered it highly significant in answering her "burning question". For her, research was an opinion-forming mechanism. It could impact the lives of many teenagers and their parents who experienced similar family problems as she did. This made it important. She explained to me how hard it was for her to read the academic articles for her research chapter and understand their theses, evaluate their quality. At the same time she still wanted to write it. She said, "No. But Chapter two is a solution. If you just tell your story, but you don't tell the reader how to solve it, that is not very good end" (Interview, Maggie, p. 8). Maggie was one of those students for who the book made absolute sense. Chapter one developed her as a writer,

chapter two as an academic who made knowledge to help others. In her Final Class

Evaluation Form she established:

> Book is better than a few class papers. If its' an essay, every class does it. It is just
>
> paperwork. After you finish it, you just save it in your computer. You won't see it
>
> again. This is a book. It is like one of your textbooks and it's your life. You will look
>
> at it after, in the future (Interview, p.17).

Undoubtedly, I asked Maggie about her relationship with writing in the end of the semester.

She happily announced:

> Before I thought that writing is a barrier. If a teacher gave me a paper that he want me
>
> to write, I write one page then I will give up and throw it away. No one will force me
>
> to read it. It is not perfect. I will just hand in my paper.
>
> After the book I feel that writing in English is not very difficult. Yes, I have never
>
> thought I can write a book. But I did. Although, it is not the best to publish, it is my
>
> first masterpiece!" (Final Class Evaluation)

Additionally, such an intense focus on the reader transformed Maggie as a writer: "I

understand that I use lots of awkward words and grammar. Before, if no one noticed me, I

won't revise it or correct it. The book made me open my mind and listen (Final Class

Evaluation).

In her writer journey, Maggie began with a split writer identity. A strong and

acknowledged writer in Chinese and a self-conscious beginner in English, someone who

knew "how to impress the reader" in Chinese and was "afraid" of writing in English, Maggie

turned to the reader to overcome the split and to pull her English writer closer to the

Taiwanese one. As a result, she acknowledged, "I definitely feel more comfortable, however,

I still have lots of mistakes and I am still not good at writing, but I know how to improve it and I will improve it as much as I can" (Final Class Evaluation Form, reverse). She scribbled the above sentences on the reverse side of her Final Class Evaluation Form. For such an ambitious writer as Maggie, one semester could not be enough to make a considerable step towards forming a confident self as a writer in a second language. However, this time was enough for Maggie to discover a way to make her writing in English approach her expectations: "open your mind" and listen and hear your reader.

Jack: "Wow! This is my book!" "I enjoyed every moment when we were playing. It felt like I was embraced by music, notes jumping out of the book and dancing around us" ("Music and Emotion", Jack, p. 5).

Jack comes from Taiwan. He is a junior in Tamkang University studying hospitality management. Jack's passion has always been music. He has a long music history, beginning at the age of five. Jack is a talented pianist. In addition to having a perfect pitch, or the ability to identify and recreate a musical note without the reference tone, he leaves a special role for music in his life. "Music has different functions", he explained, "it can determine your personality, bring you back to your old memory, and activate your emotions" (Final Class Reflection, p. 2). Undoubtedly, he wrote his book about music and emotion. The purpose of the book was to ask the world about some benefits of music for human emotions. Jack approached the task with passion. Describing his narrative, he pointed out, "Although it took me a lot of time, this is the first time I wrote like this in English. I am not very good at writing in English; I used Chinese way of writing it. I am glad everyone can understand it. It is the most attractive point in writing that you can write something useful and put a lot of emotion into it" (Final Class Reflection, p.2). By a Chinese way of writing Jack meant, using

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Chinese expressions to convey meaning in English, like in "notes jumping and dancing around" ("Music and Emotion", p.5). Jack's narrative was highly praised by his peers for its originality and the complexity of language, which made the book interesting to read. Jack wrote using a lot of imagery and metaphors, which seemed for the students in class to be creative and sophisticated.

Jack was particular about what made a good writer. In his Needs Assessment Form, completed on the first day of class, he indicated, "A good writer can translate his feelings into words. It takes me a lot of time to decide on ideas, but I love what I write. It is always perfect" (Needs Assessment Form, p.1). Jack indicated that his main difficulty with writing in English was the time. He did not write fast enough, just because, as he explained "[…] of my English skills". He added, "To me the most difficult part is the accuracy of using the right words to explain what I want to say…" (Final Class Evaluation, reverse). For Jack, the narrative chapter was more enjoyable to write than the research. The research chapter restricted the creativity and forced him to spend more time reading and evaluating someone else's academic prose rather than coining new expressions and working on style. At the same time, meaning wise, Jack considered the research chapter important, since he "learnt a lot" from it, and was able to demonstrate that "music is more than people think" (Interview, p. 13). Jack explained that writing research helped him understand and learn the writing conventions of the research genre, citation style, and academic vocabulary. He also learnt to read and analyze outside research as well as incorporate it in his writing.

Jack's writer journey in class began with the hope that he would "not hate writing in English". In his final class evaluation, he concluded, "I have improved. After writing the book I found my writing skill become fluent and the writing speed increased" (Final Class

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Evaluation Form). He has also appreciated the introduction into research writing style, the knowledge of the genre and its conventions, such as references. However, the joy of the semester was Jack's main accomplishment, his book, "I like book writing. It's a new experience to me and I can write what I want…and…the feeling of a finished book is amazing! Wow, this is my book!" (Final Class Evaluation).

Jack's peers considered him the most skillful writer in English among the classmates. In their comments on Jack's book, his classmates admitted his talent and mastery of the language:

"I like this sentence so much. I feel the way you feel when I play piano," Tessie

"I like the way you explain words and concepts," Maggie

"I like how you express the way you feel about music. Great!" Lama

" I enjoyed your writing style," Alma. Etc.

Jack's peers felt that Jack had his own writing style. For instance, Alma explained that he never told the reader what was happening. He always showed it, like with the music "embracing" him and notes "jumping around". In addition, according to Alma, Jack's writing made everything alive: the piano, the notes, the music, etc. He also wrote with a sense of humor that she immensely enjoyed. Finally, he wrote in his own way, which Alma had to understand and imagine. As Jack himself explained, he used a "Chinese way" of saying or describing things, but translated the words into English to create his images filled with humor and life. Also, commenting on his writing, Jack stated that music was alive for him, it made him joyful, and it sparked up his mind and senses. Thus to write about music well, he had to "translate feelings into words and images".

Jack's narrative prompted a whole-class discussion regarding using a "Chinese way" of writing in English. The class pointed out that everyone wrote differently, and every narrative helped us learn about a new culture and ways of thinking about realia in different cultures. A few students noted that sometimes, because of a "very cultural text", it was hard to read it; it took time to decipher the metaphors. Other students highlighted that they have learnt about the existence of such concepts as "karma" in Buddhism, or "holy book" in Islam while discussing each other's writing. Jack himself noted that in Taiwan, English writing Chinese way was discouraged and labeled "awkward" and "non-idiomatic". So, he was surprised that he was understood by peers from other countries, including the teacher. Moreover, his Chinese English was praised as beautiful, mind challenging, and creative. In the end of the discussion, I agreed with the beauty of the culture in language idea and added:

> It is ok that you use a Chinese way to express things in English. It is the beauty of language that you can do that, and we will say: "wow!" because we won't have means to say it and we will learn from you. The point is not to be American only. The point is to be American and to be special, or, simply, yourself. You are special; writing can do this for you (Final Class Discussion, p.2).

In the Needs Assessment form, Jack indicated that his main objective for the semester was "not to hate writing in English". Consequently, in the Final Class Evaluation form, Jack stated, "I don't hate writing in English, but I am still a little afraid. That's because of my English skill, but I am really happy that my writing skill got improved" (Final Class Evaluation form).

Jack's writer journey offers a number of pedagogical implications for educators who try to neutralize multilingual writer's language by filtering "alien" elements out of some

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ephemeral standard American English. It would be sad to deprive the community of learners of all the knowledge that they could have acquired by writing otherwise. Educators should encourage writers to use all of their linguistic resources to compose in English. By doing so, they will encourage learning, culture sharing, and students' creativity and confidence in a writing classroom and beyond it.

Five Students' Writer Journeys: Common Themes

I have presented five writer journeys that took place in my class and continued beyond it. Since I continuously collected data from the first day of class, I was able to witness how the journeys transpired. Of course, my data sets were still limited and failed to fully portray the whole picture of complexity of emotions and experiences occurring in my students' lives during the semester, but they created a picture of what impact book construction may have on multilingual writers in advanced level IEI writing classes.

Thus, below, I present common themes that emerge from the students' writer journeys in my class. These themes were explicated from the five students' journeys in my Writing class. They represent ways in which the students evolved as writers composing short books in their Advanced Level EAP Writing course. The themes were also meant to provide a summary of the impact that short book writing had on the construction of multilingual students' writer journeys in the course of one semester of book writing.

Theme one: The evolution from writing for a grade to writing for a reader. All five students whose writing journeys were presented in this chapter evolved as writers when writing for their prospective readers. They all, in the beginning of the semester, expressed that they did not write in English outside of class or for reasons rather than a class grade. Also, they all noted that the teacher played the most important role in improving their writing. Notably, all

five students changed their attitude to writing as a result of the class. Bader treated his book as a play and his peers as audience. He was both the actor and the script writer in the book/play construction process. He enjoyed discussing his ideas for the book with his peers, discovering new ways of looking at his topic through gaining insights from students from other cultures. Maggie discovered reader-focused writing as means of overcoming her writer identity split and becoming as stronger writer in English. Ahmed incorporated the majority of the comments his readers had left for him after reading the book. He learnt to express emotions in writing due to having it read and reading his peers writing.

Theme two: The evolution from understanding writing as limited to grammar, vocabulary choice, and organization to writing as composing or meaning making. All of the students whose journeys I presented in this chapter during their first class indicated that they evaluate good writing as the writing that is grammatically correct, well-organized, and exhibits the writer's use of rich and varied vocabulary. In the end of the semester the students' thinking about writing shifted more into the realm of composing. They realized that working on grammar and similar mechanics was much easier than working on the meaning of what they wrote and ways to express the meaning to impact the reader and be understood. Hence throughout the semester the students' were seeking to construct their writing styles. Jack was especially successful in this undertaking. He was praised by his peers as an innovator who brought Chinese into an English writing classroom to create his images in the story and had proved "Chinese way" to write in English a success. Maggie discovered that a grammatically correct sentence was not enough to create a reader-appealing work that was worth reading and learning from. She realized that writing in English demanded her courage to try and develop "special writing," creative and in the best traditions of a good book. Ahmed learnt "how to

express emotions" in writing when developing his story. He learnt from Bader's narrative and explained that a well-written story was "more interesting to read" than a well-organized class paper. All of the students in class were not confident to write in English because of their problems with writing mechanics. However, the students' stories shifted their focus away from those mechanics and let them discover and enjoy the composing side of writing: working on style, constructing descriptions and images, and focusing on their readers.

Theme three: The evolution from writing as for-class to writing that goes beyond a classroom and affects lives. In the beginning of the semester my students did not think that a well-written book could bring them anything better than a good grade. However, my students' appreciation of writing as a transformative force had grown in the course of the semester. Maggie believed that her book would help improve family interactions in many households in Taiwan and around the world. Jack believed that with the help of his book a large group of people would re-discover the power of music and benefit from music on more levels than they could think of before they read the book. Other students were confident that their books could be used to educate children about death, support people who suffered from addictions, encourage the young to critically use technology, etc. Undoubtedly, good grades still mattered to my students, but a few of them felt rewarded beyond the grade once their family and friends had read their books.

Furthermore, the book had helped my students to create a support network of peers, tutors, librarians, and other potential readers and professionals to help them in further studies. Moreover, three out of five students whose journeys were presented above perceived book writing as taking them beyond the classroom towards their prospective academic communities. For instance, Ahmed admitted that the book that had been read and praised by

some of his peers in the Business program made him feel prepared for his future studies in Business and, also, helped him feel a proud part of his prospective academic community.

Theme four: The evolution of an image of a "good writer." My students' needs assessment forms indicated that a good writer was someone who possessed thorough knowledge about the topic and solid writing skills. Ahmed, for instance, explained that his major goal in my class was to gain enough writing skills to succeed in college. In their Final Class Evaluation Forms the students explained that the books helped them "open their minds" to composing. Tessie explained that the best writing she had ever read was that of her classmate, Lama. She noted that Lama's writing "made her mind spin," she couldn't tear herself from Lama's book. Bader explained that a good writer "writes from the heart" and constantly seeks ways to express himself. Four out of five students presented in this chapter, in their Final Class Evaluation Forms, expressed that they had become better writers as a result of the class because they learnt to "open their minds and listen" and observe the world around to make their meanings.

Theme five: The journey towards perceiving self as a confident writer in English through book writing. One hundred percent of the study participants did not identify themselves as confident writers in English initially. In the course of the semester, especially during peer readings, the level of confidence increased. Maggie realized that she could write in English as well as in Chinese, while in the beginning of the semester she had complained that her writing in English is incomprehensible and often not understood. Ahmed explained that he had never read his writing in public before the class and felt very nervous and self-conscious before his reading. In the end of the semester, during his interview with me, Ahmed explained that he gained confidence as a writer mostly through the readings and due to public praise that

his writing had received from his peers and classmates. In their Published Book Self-Evaluation Forms all students acknowledged that in the beginning of the semester they felt they would not be able to write the book. However, all of them coped with the challenge and expressed pride and confidence in their accomplished book projects. Jack, Maggie, and others remarked that they were not afraid of writing in English anymore; even research writing was not feared by them in the end of the semester.

Finally, the students' writer journeys took them from understanding writing as a mechanical process that did not go beyond the classroom to writing as composing and meaning making which could lead to creating professional networks, making steps towards the access to the prospective academic communities and, what is more important, improve lives. From a solely writer-focused process writing became for the students the work for and with a prospective reader. Additionally, book writing helped the students identify themselves as writers whose home languages were rich resources that contributed to their unique writing styles and writer creativity that appealed to the reader. Finally, the writers had lost the fear of writing in English as a result of the class. They understood that by tangling themselves in the issues of grammar and writing conventions they could not see their writer potential. Having realized how to work on grammar and how to efficiently address grammar gaps, the students were able to focus on composing their books and developing as writers.

Having analyzed students' writer journeys in my class, I noticed that while talking about their experiences writing books they mostly focused on the composing elements of book construction versus writing mechanics. They also highlighted the importance of peer readings and readers' feedback in their evolution from students to writers. I wanted to conclude the conversation about my students' journeys by demonstrating a connection

between class activities and the students' self-identification as writers versus students in a writing class.

In the end of the semester I asked my students to complete a final class evaluation form in which they were to reflect on all of the activities they were involved in the past semester and indicate which activities made them feel as writers and which as students in an ESL class. Thirteen students completed the form. I wanted to understand which course activities contributed to the students' evolution as writers and which hindered it. The visual below presents the summary of my students' responses. The numbers in the table indicate the number of students responding in favor of each of the two categories (Writer/ESL student):

Table 4

Writer vs. ESL Student-Focused Activities

Class Activity	Writer	ESL student
Freewriting	9	4
Whole-class discussions about writing	10	3
Individual writing time in class	5	8
Writing Center workshops	6	7
Library workshops	5	8
Teacher presentations/explanations	0	13
Receiving peer feedback during readings	13	0
Reading a page from the narrative to the class	13	0

The above visual summarizes the students' responses as to which activities throughout the semester in the Advanced Written Communication class contributed to their self-identification as writers and/or students in an ESL writing class. One hundred percent of the study participants agreed that reading their narrative pages and receiving peer-feedback were the only activities that made them forget their student status or the fact that they were taking a writing class for second language learners. This is an important finding for me as an

educator who works with multilingual writers. Undoubtedly, peer work had played a crucial

role in the students' understanding of composing as well as their improvements in and

evolution of writing in English. Peer work provided the students with an outlook on writing

as reader-centered and vision of how to significantly improve their writing. Moreover, peer

work increased the students' confidence as writers as well as their desire to compose.

Other activities such as free writing, class discussions, individual in-class writing

time, and workshops were ranked differently. Notably, less than half of the students felt

writers when they worked with the tutors and librarians during the workshops. Nine out of

the thirteen participants perceived themselves as writers when they freewrote, ten out of

thirteen when engaged in class discussions about composing. Less than half of the

participants considered individual in-class writing time the moment when they felt writers.

Additionally, teacher explanations and presentations, which were scarce in my class,

provided that I never use a textbook or any PowerPoints to teach writing conventions, were

referred to by all the students as extremely helpful, but did not make them feel as writers at

all.

I chose this visual to conclude the fourth chapter to make a point that teachers are the

ones who create classrooms where students feel writers or ESL learners. It's in a teacher's

pedagogy that a student finds power and confidence or despair and frustration. As a

compositionist, I understand that the teaching component will always remain in our classes,

but we can make the class, largely, a space for writers to compose and, at times, students to

write, depending on what is meaningful for the individuals who happen to be in our classes

every new semester. However, the healthy combination bears more fruit in a second language

environment where individuals want, at least for a short time, to forget that they speak

English as a second language, and just be who they are, and, simply, compose.

CHAPTER FIVE

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH WRITING: THE IMPACT OF COMPOSING

SHORT BOOKS ON MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS AND THEIR WRITING IN

ENGLISH.

Introduction

Chapter four presents the exploration of themes that came out during my semi-structured interviews with the students. It is preceded by my reflections on the students' attitudes to writing in English and themselves as writers in English before, during, and after book writing. Further I explore the impact of composing short books on the students-authors and their writing. The chapter is structured around five major interview themes that offer insight into the students' perceptions regarding a number of ways in which short book writing affected them as users of English, writers, readers, and academics. The chapter concludes with the students' reflections on the need for and the meaning of writing short books in a second language writing class. In short, chapter four is a presentation of the outcomes of post method and post process pedagogy implemented in a second language writing class.

Multilingual Learners and Writing in English: Experiences, Perceptions, and

Misconceptions

The third year of teaching book writing in an advanced level EAP class has come to an end. Every new group of students I teach shapes the class in their own way. The recent group of multilingual students that I had a pleasure to teach focused their effort in class on

the goal of becoming writers in English irregardless of any perceptions, misconceptions, and barriers they had on their way.

On the first day of class, I asked my students about their relationship with writing in English. This question led to a whole-class discussion about writing and what it meant for the students. I noticed that the "English" part of the above question disappeared in my students' thinking about writing as they directed their thoughts toward their experiences writing in their home languages. As they later explained to me, they were seldom given a chance to write in English before. Moreover, they never wrote anything "creative" in an English class or outside of it. Consequently, they had little experience building relationships with writing in English. My students shared that even in advanced college English writing classes, they mainly wrote on pre-defined topics and focused their effort on writing mechanics: grammar and punctuation. Undoubtedly, for most of them it was hard to think of the above assignments as building relationship with writing.

At the same time, the majority of students enjoyed writing in their native languages. Two of my students from Taiwan were editors of the University Gazette, and they frequently wrote articles for it. Other students enjoyed writing journals and diaries in their home languages or working as journalists to collect information for their college newsletters. The rest admitted to be very active writers on social networks back home.

I noticed that my students had more to share when talking about the role of writing in their lives, implying writing in their mothertonges, not English. They composed diaries in Taiwanese and Chinese, led blogs in Arabic, freewrote in Spanish when they had a need to understand their thoughts or record what was on their minds "for fun, to laugh when re-reading it many years after," and so on (Interview, Yazeed, p.1). While recollecting the

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moments when my students wrote diaries in their native languages, they expressed that those

diaries made them feel that writing was a "friend" who was always there to listen. We

discussed the moments when my students felt the need to write in the diary and why they felt

it. Ranita explained that she wrote when she could not share what was inside her since she

did not want to hurt people she loved. Ranita wrote a diary "to be heard without hurting

anyone" (Interview, Ranita, p.2). Vivian noted that she wrote when she wanted to "untangle

the mess in the head" and understand something that is very confusing (Interview, Vivian,

p.6). Often times such writing led to decision-making. Writing in Taiwanese for Vivian was a

means to the needed decision.

Composing was a part of life for the majority of multilingual writers I taught. At the

same time my students regarded composing in English to be only a "class project" that had

little meaning outside of school. Some of my students had limited experiences writing on

social networks in English. Maggie and Max, my students from Taiwan, shared that they

messaged their American friends on Facebook, using English. Max said "it was fun

sometimes because I had to use creativity and wit, post photos, use humor" (Interview, Max,

p.6). However, Max's overall attitude to writing in English was negative mostly because he

was "not good at it," especially when it came to writing in his college English class. Writing

in English made Maggie "feel bad" and "lose confidence" because of multiple grammar

mistakes and other issues pointed out to her by her college English professors.

Since my goal was to help my students re-discover composing in English, I welcomed the

discussion of how writing in my students' home languages transformed their lives, helped

them deal with stress, overcome difficulties, reflect on experiences, and keep friends. I felt

that such a discussion was a good first step to start transforming my students' view of writing

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in English. I thought that by helping them reflect on pleasant composing experiences they had, irrespective of the language they composed in, I would be able to set the stage for this class to be different and help them see writing in English in a new light.

I imagined that by understanding my students' thoughts about writing in general and writing in English in particular at that point of the semester, I would be able to better design and present class assignments to help them grow as writers. Additionally, I wanted to understand what perceptions about authors and writers the students carried with them from their home countries to better address my students' reservations about their writing skills and potential. I also wanted to see what writing they liked to read and what they valued most in the written texts. Thus, on the second day of class, I had the students reflect on the image and style of a good writer. I asked them to make a sketch of how he/she looked, and what his/her writing was like. The portraits and characters that the students came up with were indicative of their cultures and attitudes about people who write well. In the majority of Asian and European countries, including Russia where I am from, people with astounding writing skills are highly literate and respected in society. In Russia, for instance, such authors as Tolstoy, Pushkin, Dostoevsky, etc. are a cultural capital, of which the nation is extremely proud.

Interestingly, my students came up with portraits of people in glasses, older-looking gentlemen with mustaches, and ladies with books in their hands. Those portraits were accompanied with a list of some character traits which, according to my students, made a good writer. Good writers were described as "curious, emotional, knowledgeable, organized, talented, well-read, possessing a unique writing style and novel ideas" (White board notes, 8/27). As for the characteristics of the writing that "real" writers produced, the list came down to two items: "beautiful and complex language" and "creativity." It is known that

Middle-Eastern writers are famous for their ability to create complex imagery, long and intense sentences, though provoking but very non-linear texts. All of the students agreed that it was extremely difficult to develop such writing in English, especially with a limited experience of and exposure to English composition and real-life interactions in English. Thus, I concluded that the purpose of this semester for all of us would be to develop positive relationships with writing in English and make a substantial step toward the writing and the writers my students admire.

I do not think that multilingual writers are often asked to reflect on their relationships and connection with writing in English. Maybe it is often assumed that international students who make mistakes in their English speech are "bad at it". Furthermore, if they struggle expressing their ideas in English orally, how can they write well? Do they even have ideas worth reading about? Maybe it is sometimes overlooked or neglected that multilingual learners frequently compose on social networks, write diaries, edit newspapers and journals, actively blog, work as freelance journalists, or publish research in their native languages. The educators who work with multilingual writers may not always realize that their students are writers and authors in their native languages and, therefore, are highly capable to compose content worth reading. The educators who teach those talented multilingual writers to develop error-free western style writing in English may have some misconceptions related to the abilities, potential, and the writer talent multilingual learners may have. I believe that the misconceptions are rooted in writing pedagogies, which make correctness, not the individual writer, a priority.

Hence, my study is aimed at exploring the potential of my students to create excellent, both in its meaning and form, writing in English. In other words, with the help of short book

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writing I encourage my students to focus on what they love about writing in any language

and create interesting, witty, humorous, creative books, which are important for them beyond

the English class. Short books help me uncover my students' underlying drivers, passion,

interests, histories and let the above unpack in their writing. I believe that by focusing the

students on the meanings of their books, writing for a reader, sharing, receiving, and

analyzing feedback on their writing, I may help them become writers and authors in English

notwithstanding the perceptions and misconceptions that they are faced with.

Capturing Students' Experiences Writing Short Books: Interview Themes

After the very class with my new fall 2013 cohort, I anticipated the semester to be a

fascinating journey of building relationships with writing and observing how writing, again

and again, impacts lives and shapes who we are. The "journey" metaphor has become a

scaffold for my research. It scaffolds the class and the way it is taught, creates a framework

for analysis of learner experiences, and helps understand writer identity as a constantly

evolving through constructive process that is gently guided, in my class, by the personal-

narrative-based short book writing pedagogy.

Although the interviews were semi-structures and everyone chatted off topic at times,

as a result of my analysis of interview transcripts, I could delineate distinct themes that all

the students were discussing in the interviews. Every student spoke on the following distinct

themes:

1. Book writing as a responsibility: the impact of short book writing on the
   students' attitudes to composing

2. The impact of the social aspect of short book writing on the students'
   academic lives

3. The impact of peer readings on multilingual writers' confidence to compose in English

4. The impact of personal narrative writing on:

    a. The students' confidence as writers and users of English

    b. The students' writing in English

    c. Students' emotional state and healing

5. The need for and the meaning of short book writing in a second language writing class

I have organized this chapter around the above themes. The next section of the chapter reveals the impact that writing short books had on the students' attitudes to writing in English. It emphasizes the shift in the students' attitudes towards composing.

Short Book **Writing as a Responsibility: The Impact of Short Book Writing on The Students' Attitudes to Composing**

"What I remember the most is the minute when you said we'll be writing books. I was horrified!" (Interview, Yazeed, p.5)

When I asked Nameeh one of my introductory questions in order to understand what the short book project meant for him, Nameeh explained that the book was a "big responsibility." He continued that it not only required "creative writing, brainstorming of ideas, ranking memories, using strong vocabulary and using it correctly", but also "[…] developing a strong message by combining a foreword, a narrative, and a research chapter" (Interview, Nameeh, p.5). Since the short book consisted of three components, the foreword, the narrative, and the research chapter, it was a challenge for the students to make those components create a holistic picture of the issue they were trying to explore in their books.

The driving chapter of the book is its narrative, or the story that is focused around the question, "What are you burning to ask the world?" The class was designed to follow the narrative-research system. The first six to seven weeks were devoted to developing the narrative chapters, which were anchored in a particular context, time, and a set of events which prompted the writer to ponder over his/her burning question. The other six weeks of the semester the students constructed their research chapters in order to answer the burning question. In the end, each writer had the opportunity to read a book of his peer and respond to its theme, style, and meaning in a foreword to it. Therefore, the book demanded not only solid writing, but also a significant amount of thinking to construct a holistic message, from the question.

Nameeh, when reflecting on book writing, highlighted the importance of a "strong message" that binds the book. The burning issue that sets the stage for Nameeh's book is addiction to social networks and gaming technology that a number of young people are currently experiencing. This addiction, as Nameeh's book shows, may lead to devastation in the addicts' personal lives. Nameeh wrote his book with the goal of calling humanity to think about the impact that social networks and gaming technologies may have on human interactions. Nameeh's book stemmed from the narrative about his childhood friend, Khalid. The writer made a decision to share a set of unfortunate events that had occurred to Khalid when the latter had gotten tangled in a number of social networks and online gaming communities. Khalid became so involved with online gaming networks that he lost track of events happening in real life. Gaming days and nights in a row he became submerged into his online self, the avatar, the made-up character. He became a fanatic. Nameeh was near his friend at that time and offered support, but, to his disappointment, his support had failed to

help. Nameeh had to watch the changes in his friend, who "had lost his identity, family, job, and the whole life" to social networks and social gaming (Book, Nameeh, p.6). The aim of Nameeh's book was to share this story in order to prevent others from ending up the way his friend did. He wanted people to think critically about their on-line lives and understand what consequences may follow. In his interview, Nameeh kept thinking about Khalid. He remarked, "If he read it, he would be proud because I think about him and I care about him" (Interview, Nameeh, p.1). I felt that no matter what happened between the two friends a few years ago, Nameeh still held those relationships dear. In fact, he had been holding the pain and frustration resulting from his own helplessness and useless attempts to save his friend. Nameeh used the book project as another chance to show his love and support for Khalid and to help others who might be experiencing the same problem that Khalid had had.

Hence when Nameeh talked about the importance of a "strong message" that a book should be sending to the readers, he meant a socially significant message or learning that his book resulted in and that could possibly make a change in the world. In other words, Nameeh saw his book as more than a big class paper. For him, it was a socially meaningful project and his way of making a difference.

On the day when Nameeh read his one page excerpt from chapter one, the narrative, to the class, he received a lot of praise and encouragement from his peers, who thought that his topic was crucial for the life of humanity, especially the young who were so absorbed by social networks. He believed that by reading his book people may start to see that addiction to online games and social networks is a problem and a threat. Furthermore, as this problem increases, it may result in serious damage to the whole society which gets more and more immersed into their virtual lives neglecting reality.

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Nameeh came to me after class to chat about the feedback he had received during his reading. He seemed to be slightly nervous but excited about the impact his page had had on the class. When I asked him if he was nervous, he noted that his book was a "huge responsibility" for him. He said it was the work of a lifetime, and he had to "get it perfect." This remark seemed interesting to me for a number of reasons. First, I had heard it from many other students in class. I noticed that my students took the book project seriously and "devoted to it more time than to projects in other classes" (Final class evaluation, Ranita).

The books, at their draft stages, were crafted by the writers carefully, with the input of friends and family members. They were being composed with the meaning and ideas that reach beyond the classroom space and impact the students' lives. Two weeks before the end of the semester Sarah came up to me after class and asked me if she would receive the book back from me in order to take it with her to Saudi Arabia the very weekend after our last class. Sarah comes from a big, multicultural city, Riyadh. She grew up in a family where "studying abroad was a norm". Her dad and mom both have degrees from universities in the U.K. and the U.S. Sarah is a very ambitions young lady. She is a mother, a wife, and an ambitious student who never stops looking for a room to improve.

Before the semester ended, Sarah wanted to make sure her dad, who had helped her write the short book, would be able to see and read it when she got home. I was surprised to hear that her dad had helped her write the book. She explained to me that the idea for the book came to her when she was reflecting on her childhood. She was an older child in her family of six. She discovered that most of her early years she had spent with her dad coaching her how to become a great leader. She recollected how her dad taught her to set goals, check progress, and make adjustments to their goals if necessary. She told me that he

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had brought her to his office and, during lunch, they were drawing brainstorming maps on his white board, talking about goals, objectives, steps towards a successful career, and so on. Sarah's dad encouraged her to apply for a scholarship to study in the U.S. where he had acquired his Master's degree in Business. So, Sarah's book took the reader back to those daughter-dad office "training sessions," her path to success, and her future aspirations. Sarah was her dad's beloved older daughter. While her younger siblings were more pampered by her mom, she had become a "daddy's girl." Her dad had set high expectations for Sarah, which she, at the current stage of her life, managed to meet. Thus, in her research chapter Sarah explored whether the order of a child's birth in the family affected her/his character traits and future success. Sarah's book was meant to explore parent-child relationships and the impact of strong family ties on the child's future success. Sarah's book was to become a gift and a sign of gratitude to her father and, to some extent, self-exploration that could positively impact her own family. The above book became for her author much more than simply a class project,

Similarly, Alma was in a hurry to share the book with her sister, who had suffered their grandpa's death with her as a little child. Alma's sister became the main character in the book. Alma wrote about death: "I wrote about my grandfather's death. It was a hard time for everybody. We were little kids so we didn't know what it meant. So, I chose to write about it because maybe some people have the same situation that we had and my book can help them overcome death" (Interview, Alma, p.5). Alma's sister, Afnan, knew about the book that Alma was working on. Alma explained that she called Afnan a number of times when she needed help recollecting certain events. It was important for Alma to get Afnan involved in the book because she thought that the book, would be especially important for Afnan's two

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little children who, with the help of her book would be better prepared to face and understand death. When we discussed her research chapter in class, Alma shared with me that she was surprised to see how much research had been published to understand the phenomenon of death. She posed that having access to this research was crucial for everyone, especially mothers. She told me that she had found a number of articles that talked about explaining death to children and preparing them to handle and understand it. Alma and her sister had taken their grandpa's death as a shock when they were kids because that preparation was missing. Since Alma's book contained a well-written synthesis of research about death, it, according to her, would be able to educate parents and prevent the shock that children may experience when facing a death in the family.

Another student, Tessie, explained to me, "The first class of the semester you said we need to choose the topic that is really meaningful in our life. After I was thinking… what things really affect me… I chose this one because I still have these issues until now. It is my brother" (Interview, Tessie, p.3). Tessie wrote about her brother in order to help him and her family fight his gambling addiction. She was determined to go back home and read the book to her family.

For the majority of my students the short books were personally meaningful; they were written for and about their families. In those cases, a finished book was not the end, but a beginning, since it was meant to be read and shared in the family. In other words, the book was a "huge responsibility" for the students because it allowed them to attempt to make a difference in, for, and with the help of their families and friends. Some students had shared their family stories in their short books. Therefore, they felt responsible for having done so and wanted to make sure this sharing would help others who had been or might get into

similar situations as the ones portrayed in the books. Others undertook a responsibility to demonstrate their academic success by presenting their families with an accomplished book. Reflecting on the book as a challenge and responsibility for the writers, I understood that "the book" was more than a class project.

The talk about the "responsibility" in book writing can continue and occupy three hundred pages of another dissertation, since every student in my class had a story behind their books and a deep meaning and message at their core. They all felt a responsibility to produce books worth reading and learning from. The students wanted their short books to improve people's lives, to impact their thinking and actions, to help people learn from the authors' mistakes. My students wanted the books to have strong messages, to be complete and interesting to read. Those books were to not only have questions, but also possible answers to questions asked. Finding and presenting those answers was also a responsibility. Additionally, the short books were meant to be read. Therefore, my students felt responsible not just for their content, but also for the clarity of their meanings. Those books were written for the students' current and future families, friends, and others and "must not disappoint (Maggie, Interview, p.2)."

Describing her book writing experience as a whole and the challenges of book writing, Maggie stated, "Writing a book is very different from writing some class papers. A book must include a nice cover to appeal the reader, a catchy beginning, and a beautiful end. Writing a book has to conclude an important concept, it is not just sharing opinions, like in regular class papers…" (Final class evaluation, Maggie). Maggie felt that the short book had to have something very important as its message. It had to touch on and "conclude" an

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important concept. Therefore, the short book was a challenge, a responsibility, and a personally significant project for my students.

Dan and Jack both explained the deep feeling of pride for being able to complete such responsible projects as books. They were proud to present their short books to others and feel confident in the message, meaning, and form of their books. "Wow, this is MY book!!!" (Final class evaluation, Jack). Jack's book was devoted to his love of music. When I asked him who he was writing the book for, he answered that that book was, firstly, for him. He mentioned that writing about his childhood made him feel especially proud of himself. The years of hard work that he had put into a music school and philharmonics while his peers were playing outside and being "just kids" had not borne fruit. Jack followed his parents' advice and gave up music for a more lucrative major to secure himself a better-paying job in the future, but his talent of "perfect pitch" and passion for music remained with him and helped him develop in many ways. Jack's research chapter tackled the impact of music education on a child's mental abilities and emotions. Thus Jack's book made him proud for a number of reasons. First, he looked back at his well-accomplished childhood to feel strong and talented again. Second, his book helped him get reassured that his childhood years had not been a waste, since research showed how advanced the children with music education were on multiple levels. Finally, as Jack wrote in his final class evaluation form, he did not know he could write "something as big as a book," and he once again felt reassured about his abilities (Final Class Evaluation, Jack).

Thus, book writing is, based on my students' anecdotes, a responsibility carried before the readers for whom the books are written and an accomplishment to be proud of. All of the above enriches the writers' experiences of constructing books . Their commitment to t

the work they were doing in class helped them strive to make the best books possible. Book writing helped my students see writing as part of their lives. They took the short book project so responsibly because they saw the potential impact of the books on their nearest and dearest, the society, as well as on their selves. My students chose the topics that stemmed from their lived experiences. They wrote the books with the idea of impacting their lives by answering the "burning" questions that they has so many times wanted to ask the world. Furthermore, through book writing, my students' attitudes about writing being inside-of-class and for-the-class project started to shift. For my students, writing moved to the personal domain and became a means to an end, or the way to discover answers to the questions that they were "burning to ask the world".

The Impact of the Social Aspect of Short Book Writing on the Students' Academic Lives

While the previous section described short books writing as a responsibility for multilingual writers, the current section unpacks the social aspect of book writing as key in increasing the students' confidence interacting in English and building social networks for future academic success.

The relationships of my students with writing as well as their attitudes to it changed even more when the students discovered that writing helped them network, acquire new friends, and gain access to academic support communities.

A number of my students pointed out that book writing made them "go beyond a desk and a computer." Apart from in-class writing, whole-class discussions, and other work that we did in class, we spent considerable time working on the books outside of the classroom. For instance, in order to introduce the students to some outside resources available for them

on campus, I set up Writing Center (WC) and Library workshops. I was able to include five

workshops in our schedule. The first ones were aimed at introducing my students to the

tutors and research specialists who work in the WC and the Library and get my students to

interact with some of them. Other workshops were conducted by the tutors and the librarians

in order to help students with citation styles, research writing, and provide as much feedback

as students needed at the time. These workshops helped the students make connections on

campus as well as develop their professional networks and get more expert and reader

feedback on their books. Thus Ahmed remarked that he enjoyed using library resources,

reading a lot, consulting with others to develop his book (Interview, Ahmed, p.6). He pointed

out that due to book writing he had met a lot of new people, discovered how much help was

out there that he had failed to use before. In his interview with me Ahmed explained that it

"felt great to go to the library to discuss your project with a professional" or "to get a cup of

coffee and work on the book all day" (Interview, Ahmed, p.3). He also noted that he had

consulted his friends in the Master's Program in Business regarding the book he was writing.

He thanked me for the fact that I had set up the class similarly to graduate-level classes. His

friend assured him that the research chapter of Ahmed's book is the graduate level research.

It was important for Ahmed to work hard to develop his writing at the same level as his

graduate friends and talk to them about it as if he was taking the classes with them.

Fortunately, the book allowed him to temporarily access his target professional community

and feel stronger and more confident in making temporary access permanent.

At the end of the semester, Ahmed, who seldom had time to chat after class, shared

with me his surprise at how much the book made him work without realizing that he was

working. Not a single class paper ever took him so many hours of Writing Center discussions

with a tutor, library trips, conversations with his roommate, and peer-readings. In other words, Ahmed's writing has become for public and no just for himself. He was able to have his pages read and provided feedback for. With the time, he could see the patterns in the feedback he had been receiving. He pointed out that his readers were interested in more detailed descriptions, clearer imagery, "slower" and deeper explanations of events, etc. Consequently, Ahmed was able to develop a reader-focused perspective on writing. Interestingly, while the social aspect of book writing increased Ahmed's confidence in his ability to create knowledge at a graduate level, it also made him a better reader and a more engaging writer who writes for an audience, not just for himself.

As an integral part of the course, each student in class, in the first five weeks of the semester, was scheduled to distribute one page from their first chapters to the class and the teacher for feedback. The students were to photocopy the page and hand it out during the class. Their classmates took the pages home to read and provide written feedback on. Next class, the authors of the one-page narrative excerpts read from their pages. Then, each student who had brought feedback for the narrative excerpts shared their comments on the text. In the end of week five, once all the readings and feedback sessions were completed, I asked each student to complete a Peer Response Self-Evaluation form, in which they reflected on the feedback they had given to peers in the course of the first five weeks of the semester. In his Peer Response Self-Evaluation form, Ahmed noted that he had learnt how to "read and comment on writing" and "describe something so that the reader can imagine the situation." Ahmed quoted a few excerpts from Bader's book as exemplary descriptions of events and objects that helped him imagine. For instance, Ahmed was especially impressed with the way Bader set the scene for his book, "the house was big old and full of heavy old

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dust inside[…] When we got down to the basement and opened the door, a bad smell came out. When I walked into a basement bedroom I saw the bed, old yellow mattress, a small blood stain in the middle and bones around it" ("Demons", Bader, p.3). Thus Ahmed explained that Bader's writing truly helped him learn to imagine and write with imagination.

The vast majority of the students stated in writing or during individual interviews that they had enjoyed the social aspect of writing and revising. As part of the class, the students not only shared their writing with one another, but visited the writing center tutors, friends, and roommates, who they discussed their writing with. Maggie explained:

I make lots of points in one sentence. […] I think I can tell the reader I have lots of opinions, but something confused the reader, so I like to share my article with my friend, so she can give me more ideas. Or some grammar problem. Because that one is my story. If I can convey my story correctly to reader, that means I succeed. I just want to convey it correctly. I don't care what people think about my background, what happened. I just want you to read it and understand it. (Interview, Maggie, p.15)

Interestingly, all the participants marked peer-readings in and outside of class as activities that were highly writer-centered, making see themselves as writers rather than students. When I asked the students to explain why peer readings make them feel that way, they explained that the readings were designed to discuss the meaning versus the form. Ranita explained that in peer-reviews that she had experienced in other classes, the students followed a certain rubric to evaluate the writing of one another. It felt like they were in class, "playing teachers" or "grammar experts". However, during the readings in my class, they "just read stories and talked about them as if they were authors" (Peer Response Evaluation, Ranita). I believe that what my students were saying when comparing standard in-class peer

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reviews with readings in my class was that they did not have a pressure to evaluate or correct; they did not have to employ standards developed for them by someone else. They simply read the writing of one another as readers and authors, just like they read their favorite fiction books and novels. Also, what my students discussed during the readings was not how well the students in class were able to conform to the standards prescribed in the rubric, but how their meanings were received by other writers and what improvements they would make to their texts so that potential readers would better grasp what they were saying on the pages of the narratives. During their interviews with me, my students pointed out that the readings made them feel "a lot different". My students found it difficult to pinpoint why or how different the readings made them feel. I believe that this difficulty can be explained by the absence of any exposure to writer-focused peer-reviews among international students as well as monolingual writers. Maybe, teachers are still not comfortable parting with expert roles in the classrooms and allowing the students to be experts, authors, writers, who are capable of constructing and applying their own ways of reading and understanding a written work.

Also, ten out of thirteen participants noted that they had spent more time in the Writing Center working on the book than working on any other project before. Ranita and Bader constantly discussed their writing and ideas for books, Maggie made friends with her roommate and had everyday readings and discussions of book writing with her. Ahmed constantly visited his friend who is enrolled in an MA program in Business as well as a librarian to discuss his writing, and so on. Those students who took advantage of the offered resources outside of class discovered the importance of the social aspect of writing short books. Book writing helped my students see that composing does not have to happen "at home, alone", but may bring joy, friendships, and even access to a desired professional and

academic communities. Additionally, book writing helped my students gain confidence interacting in English and presenting their writing to a wide audience on campus. Lastly, having the opportunity to use campus resources for the book development, some of my students broke through the isolation of being in a new country for the first time which is important for a great number of multilingual learners who come to the U.S. to study and are not aware of the above opportunity.

While the previous section touched on the social aspect of short books writing and the impact it had on the students and their academic lives, the next section provides an in-depth overview of ways in which Peer Readings impact multilingual writers' writing in English and writer confidence.

The Impact of Peer Readings on Multilingual Writers' Confidence to Compose in English

As I have stated, my class emphasized for students that writing is a socially-focused practice. Not only it should target and involve their home communities, bring them friends, develop their support networks, but also it should be focused on the reader and designed with the reader in mind. Throughout the semester, the focus on the reader helped my students improve as writers in English and become confident writers and users of language that they did not consider their own.

Students' readings are an integral part of narrative writing in my class. In the first week of the semester each student gets scheduled to read one page from their narrative chapter to the class and receive feedback. Every student in class has a chance to read his work in front of peers, and the day of the reading stays in students' memories for quite a long time. Typically, all readings are scheduled on the first week of the semester when the

students sign-up for the day that suits their plans and pace. Readings take the whole class period and last for about four to five weeks depending on the number of students in class. The physical layout of the class is changed for the readings. The desks that were initially arranged in straight rows to resemble a typical school classroom are moved to the back; the chairs come up front, and get put in a circle. As part of the reading, every student receives a photocopied page of their peer's narrative to be read a class in advance. Thus they come to the reading with the original page with feedback and its photocopy, which is to be handed to me at the end of the class. All the photocopied pages with feedback are placed in a student's personal folder.

The way the feedback is provided during the readings is essential for the meaning and message of my class. Before the students are ready to provide feedback for peers' pages, we conduct a mock reading where we read a page from a narrative and learn how to develop comments on it. The feedback that the students leave on the page of their peer is limited to four comments: the students are asked to read the page and note, by circling and marking on the margins, the two aspects of the story they liked and the two aspects for potential improvements. The first set of comments always begins with "I like", and the second with "How would it change your meaning if". The latter always offer specific suggestions. The comments that the students write on the margins are very specific and relate to a certain indicated aspect of the narrative. Additionally, I ask my students to write a short "letter" to the author at the end of the page with feedback, addressing the author by name and signing it. The letter may contain anything the reader would like to say to the author as a result of the reading experience. Typically, those letters contain words of encouragement, understanding, and support.

Thus on the day of the reading, after the author reads his one-page story, the class take turns to read their comments. We begin with a round of "I like" comments and finish with suggestions regarding the narrative. Notably, the author of the narrative may not speak during the feedback session, but is offered a chance to respond to the class once his/her peers finish discussing the narrative. Often times, there are three narratives scheduled for one reading. Hence, these five weeks of readings are usually a busy and fruitful time for the class.

Over the course of the semester I was able to track the impact that the readings had on my students abilities to write in English by consistently collecting students' feedback on their writing abilities at various stages of the semester and recording it in a series of questionnaires and forms. One of the goals of administering a needs assessment from on the first day of the semester is to understand how confident my students are in their abilities to write in English. One of the questions on the form asks the students to evaluate their writing abilities in English. The other asks to describe "good writing" and if they considered themselves "good writers". As I anticipated, most of the students evaluated their writing as needing significant amount of improvement in grammar and organization and indicated that they did not consider themselves good writers or, in some cases, writers at all. Bader was among those respondents. By the time I welcomed him in my class, he had spent two years in the ESL program. Since then Bader had changed a lot. From a happy and excited new student full of aspirations to be a theatrical actor, he turned into an at times gloomy prospective Biology major who was not in a hurry to enter a U.S. university. In his Needs Assessment Form Bader wrote that a good writer "writes from the heart". He noted that he did not know how to do it in English. Additionally, he was "too lazy to write", and his grammar needed improvement.

I saw Bader participate in vigorous discussions with his peers about the plot of his story and its future development, sharing photos to include in the book in class, actively participating in readings, etc. I felt that Bader was enjoying his experience in my class. He seemed to have turned around in the course of the semester. When I invited him to an individual interview, he gladly agreed to come. I brought his book. When I took it out of my computer bag, his eyes sparkled. He said he had missed it and was happy to see it again. Bader was happy during the whole interview and discussed his book with pride and joy. When I asked him if there was anything that he had especially enjoyed during the class, it did not take him more than two seconds to respond:

> That was the most the most beautiful time in the whole semester. I really enjoyed every moment of that. I enjoyed that so much. I felt like I was really reading my story…like a writer… and I tried to make my audience or my classmates feel what I really felt. That's what I tried to do. (Bader, Interview, p.6)

Hence, the readings made Bader feel an actor on the stage reading or acting his own script for his "audience". He felt in control of himself. He was confident of the work that answered the main criterion Bader had set up for a piece of good writing- it was written from his heart. Undoubtedly, Bader's reading had a success among peers, and his "horror thriller" titled "Demons" became number one on the list of the books to read among his peers.

Quite a few students explained to me during the interviews that it was not easy for them to read their narratives in public in the beginning. However, once the anxiety of reading the first few lines was overcome, the students seemed to have gained confidence and pride in their work. Thus Ahmed posed, "It made me more confident to read my writing in front of the class. At first, I was nervous; I felt my writing was not good. After I felt relaxed. It made

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me more confident" (Interview, Ahmed, p.9). In other words, Ahmed, as well as other students, approached the readings as traditional peer-reviews meant to check compliance to the standards prescribed by the teacher. Ahmed was afraid that his writing was not good and he would be badly criticized for his poor grammar and spelling, and, maybe, other issues he thought he had. On the contrary, the readings were set up so that praise preceded improvement suggestions, and comments on meaning prevailed over feedback on the writing mechanics. Once Ahmed received a significant amount of praise and positive comments on the Shekah story, he was ready to work on improving the meaning of his narrative together with his peers.

Another student, Josh, had a similar first reaction to the readings. He explained, "I actually… I just was afraid the others will not understand what I write and maybe the others don't like it. So, I was afraid. But after I read, I felt released and confident. I could do it again!" (Interview, Josh, p.2).

Although all the students knew how the readings would go ahead of time and had been trained to provide a reader's feedback for their peers' writing, their negative initial reaction and the anticipation of being judged and criticized remained with them during the act of reading their narratives. Of course, two or three readings into the semester they understood the real purpose of the readings and the negativity disappeared, while some degree of stress remained. None of my students had ever read their writing in public, especially in front of 18 people they had met a few weeks ago. Thus, with as much amount of stress as accompanied some students on the reading day, they were able to overcome it and gain more confidence in the end.

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Another interesting observation I made when asking my students about peer readings concerned their strong desire to get the audience to like their stories. They were ready to work hard for public interest and praise. They wanted to receive the acknowledgement of the audience to reach the needed level of confidence in the work that they did. In her interview with me, Maggie revealed:

When we sat together in a circle and we spoke. We read our stories to classmates. That is totally difficult to us, but you have to have your story and know how to read it. Something I was afraid of that little will understand me.

I like the feedback, but it is hard to make a sentence perfect. Because there so many opinions. Maybe, someone likes it, someone don't; maybe, some of them don't get it. If I had time I could ask, but I don't have enough time to read it and correct it as much as I can. But, most important, giving feedback and reading made me feel that I am not wrong. (Interview, Maggie, p.15)

Notably, peer recognition and appreciation as well as public acknowledgement of a writer's work made my students feel more confident in how and what they wrote. Maggie and other students seemed to have released the fear of "being wrong" and gained the confidence to create, invent, and live on the pages of their stories without any fear of being judged or criticized. Undoubtedly, not all the narratives were easy to read and understand for the students. At the same time, there were no discouraging comments uttered during the readings. The writers worked with the tutors to make sure that their grammar slips did not interfere with the meaning they were trying to convey in the text. Similarly, peer readings offered help and clear suggestions for improvement. Interestingly, most of the students incorporated most to all of the "how would it change your meaning if" suggestions into their narratives, even

though they were not required to do so. I observed that my students worked much harder on their grammar when they heard from a reader that it had obscured a beautiful image or metaphor that had been so successfully created in the text. So, I noticed that when connected to the meaning of the text as opposed to being prevalent over it, grammar gained importance for my students. They did not want anything to interfere with the message they were trying to covey in their books. Gradually, I started receiving more and more reports in my mailbox from the Writing Center tutors informing me that my students had visited the Writing Center and worked on their grammar. Quite honestly, I do not think that I could have achieved such an effect if I had marked up every page of my students' essays with red ink. First, if I positioned correctness as dominant over meaning, I would have positioned myself as the dominant in class. I would have set a directive and instructive tone to my pedagogy and created a very teacher-centered classroom, where there is only one expert: myself. However, by looking at correctness as a support for meaning, I made the meaning and my students' ideas dominant while still emphasizing the need for correctness in my students' books.

The readings helped my students become better, more confident writers on multiple levels. The readings engaged the writers in a constructive process of co-creating each other's work by means of reading and responding to their writing; they offered the students public acknowledgement, pointed out their strengths, pushed them to seek more help while improving writing, and helped them feel that they were not wrong. Readings uncovered the students' potential as writers and readers by teaching them to focus on the meaning of the text versus its form. The focus on the meaning allowed for different ways of meaning making to exist. It allowed the students to compose through the lens of any culture and any language and still be "right". It allowed them to see that with some work and reader input their

meanings unpacked and stood out. Cumulatively, the readings made students more confident writers in English.

Based on my students' testimonies, readings were the most memorable in-class activities for them. Although for some of them the readings had been accompanied with stress and fear to read their work in public, in all cases the readings resulted in increased confidence for the writers, strengthened classroom community, and a deepened desire to learn from one another. Additionally, the students' responses in the Final Class Evaluation form show that about 50% to 60% of received peer comments were incorporated in the books and improved them. About 30% of students were pleased that peer readings ensured full participation of everyone in class. Finally, Ranita highlighted that the readings made her feel like she "lost student label and became an author".

Writing Personal Narratives in a Second Language Writing Class

My students chose to devote a large amount of time during their interviews to talking about their experiences composing first chapters, personal narratives. The majority of students singled out their narrative chapters as most enjoyable, creative, and impactful for them as writers and authors. Additionally, eighty percent of student responses in the Final Class Evaluation Form indicated that the writing personal narratives increased the students' interest in composing in English by providing them with an opportunity to learn about different writing styles and peculiarities of other cultures and languages that were manifested in the narrative chapters of their peers. Moreover, the students' stated that writing their narratives helped them improve as writers in a number of ways. Thus, in this section, I unpack the impact of writing personal narrative chapters of short books on the students' writer confidence, writing in English, and personal lives.

The impact of personal narrative writing on the students' confidence as writers and users of English. While observing my students' behavior during the readings and analyzing their feedback for one another, I noticed that the vast majority of "I like" comments sprang out of certain lines in the narratives, often rich in metaphors, analogies, and other literary devices which the students found fascinating. Thus, during many readings we had to pause at certain lines that the students' especially liked and ask the writers how and with what purpose those lines were created. For instance, on the first page of Ahmed's narrative, he made an analogy between a king's sword and a man's horse. He wrote that Shekah, his first horse, was as important as to him a sword for a king. This analogy prompted a class discussion about the culture of Saudi Arabia, where Ahmed was from. We talked about monarchy, the symbols of monarchy, and the importance of horses in the history and culture of the country. Ahmed was happy to provide us with all of the above information. There was no end to the students' questions. When the class went by, we could not believe how much we had learnt through the discussion due to one line in Ahmed's narrative.

Reflecting on the cultural peculiarities of his peers' writing, Bader remarked:

[…] like some of my classmates I still remember their story because of the beautiful writing [..] some of my classmates are Taiwanese, so they said they translated their story from Taiwanese to English, so I feel like it is Taiwanese style in English, so it was kind of interesting to learn. (Interview, Bader, p.5)

In the above lines, Bader was referring to the one-page narrative by Jack. Once again, the whole class was mesmerized when Jack read a line in which he described how he felt when he was playing his piano. The line read, "I felt like I was embraced by music, notes jumping out of the book and dancing around us" ("Music and Emotion", Jack, p.5). So, when some of

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the students asked Jack how he managed to write such an astonishing sentence, he said that he had simply translated it from Chinese. Jack seemed to have been surprised, since he, for the first time, was praised for something he wrote even though it did not sound "clean American". He exclaimed that he did not know that such writing was allowed; he so much liked his line that he kept it.

In their interviews, the students noted that while reading the stories of one another they noticed that the language and style of the stories was culturally unique (Interview, Tessie, p.4). Tessie explained, "I learnt everyone has different writing style. Like especially like Lama, I really like Lama's style. I don't know how she makes our brain spin. I like that kind of reading. She never tells us what she wants to say" (Interview, Tessie, p.13). Lama wrote her whole narrative in the form of a prayer. She filled the pages with her struggles and sufferings, pain, desperation, and loneliness calling for God's help. When Tessie talked about the effect of "spinning mind" that Lama's story had produced on her, she meant that Lama did not describe any events that had caused her sufferings, but Tessie still was able to feel what they were. Thus, for Tessie, Lama had a talent to "speak without words", to make the reader guess and, as a consequence, sympathize and suffer with the writer on the pages of the story. Tessie stated that she felt Lama's pain and could identify with it although she only guessed what had caused it. Notably, prayer fills the days of my Muslim students. They make meaning through prayer, and Lama intrigued Tessie and others with her ability to do so. When asked why she chose prayer as a genre to describe life events, Lama explained that she understood what had happened in her life while talking to Allah. The prayers are not always a set of lines written in a prayer book. Prayers are conversations with Allah that are free of form and style. As Lama described it, prayers are similar to a literary genre; they can be a

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poem or a short story with or without a discernable plot. Lama's short book was written as a prayer. It contained her life events and burning questions about those events that she asked Allah about in her prayer.

Yazeed, during his interview with me, remarked that the best feedback he had received on his narrative was from Tessie. He liked what Tessie had written for him because her comments praised Yazeed's "unique choice of vocabulary and expressions" (Peer feedback, Tessie for Yazeed). To my surprise, Yazeed could recollect every word of the short letter that Tessie had written. The comment said: "I enjoyed your story and you are different than anybody, and you are using cool words, kind of like, idioms" (Interview, Yazeed, p.10). When I looked through Yazeed's narrative I discovered that he had used a number of English idioms throughout his book: "out of the blue", "be on top of the world", "make ends meet", etc. He also incorporated a lot of colloquialisms in his story: "folks", "show up", "meet up", "wrap up", etc. In fact, a lot of my students came to the U.S. for the first time and had not been exposed to spoken English except through interactions on social networks. Thus, for Tessie, Yazeed knew the "cool words", and she enjoyed learning idioms and spoken English from the pages of his narrative. Yazeed had spent more time in the U.S. than others. In addition, he worked with native speakers of English back in Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, his parents' income allowed him to go to a better school in Saudi Arabia, where he could be taught English by native speakers. All in all, Yazeed absorbed American culture and language like a sponge and was able to demonstrate how deeply he associated himself with the English language and culture in his narrative.

The important role of culture in writing was recognized by all students while talking about narratives and forewords. The foreword, a one-page piece of writing developed by

each student after they read the whole book of his peer, is the last written component of the book. Once the books are finished, I invite the students to read a book of their choice and write a foreword for it. I let my students choose whose book they would like to read and write foreword for and document their preference on a tracking sheet. I use the tracking sheet to ensure that every student in class has a partner for foreword writing. The rubric for the foreword is constructed by the students with minimal intrusion from the teacher. However, before the rubric is constructed, I provide the class with examples of forewords and general overview of the genre. Typically, all forewords briefly touch on the main themes discussed in the book, provide some response to the author's ideas, and offer insight into the social significance of the topic as well as some information about the author of the book and why a particular book was chosen for foreword writing. The students are encouraged, but not required, to include the forewords written for their books into the books.

I noticed that my students chose to write forewords for the books that fascinated them. Hence, the students from Taiwan, who had never heard about the Holy Book, Hijab, or the fact that Saudi Arabia was a monarchy, not even mentioning the significance of Arabic horses, chose to write for their Arabic-speaking peers. While the two ladies from Saudi Arabia, curious about Karma and Buddhism, chose to write for the students from Indonesia and Taiwan. Bader, after he had discovered how big of a role demons play in Mexican cultures, decided to write for Ranita, who, in her turn, did not hesitate choosing Bader's "horror thriller", as she referred to it, for foreword writing.

Hassan, who had made a new friend, Ahmed, through foreword writing noted:

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I am especially proud of my foreword. My friend wrote it for me. I liked how he felt and

understood my topic and my writing. I appreciate how much effort he put in it. I think it

is a very important part of my book. (Final class discussion, Hassan)

Although the forewords were short, one-page peer-written book introductions, they became a

significant contribution to the class and the learning process. The process of writing

forewords engages students in conversations about culture, traditions, interpretations, and

worldviews. By culture I mean views and outlooks on life issues, writing practices, linguistic

culture and richness of various languages. In their forewords to their peers' books, the

students' wanted to not only describe the short books' contents, but also explain the ways in

which the books were personally meaningful for them. Developing connections with one

another's texts required deep conversations about what was written and how. Since the

narrative chapters of the books incorporated a large amount of culture and context specific

descriptions, characters, and imagery, they also included the language that had to be

interpreted. Thus the ability to see how the writers' "home" languages played out in their

writing in English was important for my students. Such culturally rich writing was accepted

by my students with fascination and treated as "unique" and offering a number of

opportunities for learning. Undoubtedly, the students' cultures showed not just in how the

students wrote, but also in what they wrote. Throughout the semester we discussed gods as

they exist in different cultures. We reflected on such concepts as "karma" (Buddhism), "holy

book" (Quran), "hijab" (head cover widespread among female Muslims), etc. Such culture

sharing kept us in the constant state of fascination, excitement, and anticipation of new

knowledge. It made our writing be part of our lives; it made our books worth reading. In fact,

four of my students, in the end of the semester, insisted on me placing all of the books in the

American Language Institute library because they wanted to read them all. Alma asked me whether I had books from other classes and if I could share them, too. Hence, the books helped the students connect writing with life and, what's more important, embrace and enjoy their multiculturality and multilingualism especially when manifested in students' texts, not see it as a "defect", but as a colossal "advantage" and opportunity for learning. As a teacher, I found that reading one another's texts allowed the students not only to share their cultures, but also share the way they viewed the world through the language they used in their short books. As a result, writing short books turned out to be a creative and enthusiastic process that made my students feel "right" and "confident" as writers in English. In addition to feeling more confident to write in English as a result of composing short books, the students perceived their writing to have improved significantly. First, as the students explained in the interviews, short book writing helped them learn to develop writing ideas and create reader-focused texts.

"I don't know what to write" problem? The impact of writing personal narratives on the students' writing in English. **I had a group of college juniors from Taiwan in my class: Jack, Josh, Vivian, and Max. On the very first day of class, when I asked my students about their relationships with writing, my Taiwanese students focused on their struggles with writing in their answers. At least three students in this group, while talking about their writer struggles, remarked that they "never know what to write". For instance, Jack described his problem with writing as follows,** "I am not into writing. It takes me a lot of time. It takes a lot of time to come up with ideas and decide which one I want" (Needs assessment form, Jack).

Thus during the interviews with me, each of the students pointed out that writing their narrative chapters was a pleasure primarily because it was easy for them to try to come up with ideas to write for the story. Jack conveyed that "every page came out easily, without push" (Interview, p.3). Additionally, reflecting on his book writing experiences, Dan explained:

> The best thing is that I wrote a lot, many pages, I was lazy and didn't write like that before. I am proud and I didn't know how I did it. It was like writing a diary from my memories. I don't like diaries because I don't know what to write in them, maybe, I am just lazy. I had experience with diaries in high school and I didn't like it because I didn't know what to write. But the book was different. Ideas come easy once I decide on the topic and the question for research. (Interview, Dan, p.8)

Dan described the "easy feeling of writing the story" in the book. Interestingly, Dan first compared book writing with diary writing because the events he described in both genres sprang from his life and his memories. Thus he felt that it was much easier to write about something he had personally experienced. However, he went on to explain that he never liked diaries in high school, but he had enjoyed writing the book. For Dan, the book had a higher purpose than a diary: he had to answer a very important question on the topic that had been extremely important for his life. Thus he felt a strong desire to better explain the question in the narrative, to describe the life events that had led him to ask the world that question in detail, with emotions, and using a lot of imagery. The mechanism that helped Dan generate ideas for his narrative was quite simple: he knew exactly how to unpack a story. Through peer readings, class discussions, tutor sessions he had realized what made a story a success. It was the ability of the writer to place the reader in the story, its space and time, by

showing, not telling the reader what happened. Dan enjoyed the creativity of personal

narrative writing. While he had to share his events and emotions on the pages of a diary, the

story for him was more than simply sharing; it required the reader involvement in the events

of Dan's life. Only the involved reader, according to Dan's opinion, could truly understand

the idea Dan was trying to convey in the narrative and then explore more in the research

chapter. Dan was curious to see what challenges and threats bring out in people; how threats

people face impact their development, maturity, and outlook on life. Dan wrote about his

one-month biking tour around Taiwan, its challenges, threats, dangers, and joys. His story

heavily relied on the writer's ability to "place the reader into the moment" and make him be

part of the story. Dan wanted to show how important it was for parents to let their children

face challenges early in life, be independent, and learn to face and fight threats. In his

Published Book Self-Evaluation Form which was meant to get the students' to reflect on

their published books, Dan wrote:

> I am very proud that my friends liked my story. I am also proud that I was
>
> able to describe everything in such a great detail. I liked reading the story
>
> again and again. I could clearly picture places, faces, building where we biked.
>
> I enjoyed that story! (Interview, Dan, p.9)

Therefore, narrative writing provided the students with a mechanism of self-

expression and description that was reader-focused. Stories had taught the students to involve

the readers, to provide them with detailed descriptions and imagery. While some academic

papers "tell" the reader the state of matters on a certain topic, keeping the matter and the

reader separated, the story brings the reader right into the matter and makes the reader a part

of the action. In order to help my students learn to "show," not "tell" about events in their

short books, I invited the students to read my own book that I once wrote for a Teaching Writing class. As I explained in the opening chapters of my dissertation, I discovered short book writing for myself in my doctorate program when I took a class with Dr. Claude Hurlbert. As part of the class, every graduate student had to write a short book about their literacy journeys. Thus, I wrote about growing up in Russia and learning English.

I did not tell my students that the story I was about to read to them was written by me until the end of the class. I brought a page from the book to class. On that page, I described how I got lost when a child and got sucked into a pool of raw concrete at a construction site by my parents' house. I made sure the page contained vivid descriptions of the construction site, the store nearby where my mom used to buy groceries, the noises that I heard, the smell of concrete, etc. I noticed that most of the students circled those descriptions and imagery as something that they liked the most about the story. Also, their ideas for the improvement of my text contained requests to better describe certain moments I had failed to describe well.

I was happy to see how excited the students were in the end of my reading. First, they felt important because I had shared my story with them; second, they could not wait to start their narratives and make them even better than mine. That workshop reading helped us get at the core of story writing in which the reader is taking a fascinating journey into the writer's life.

In conclusion, as my students pointed out that narrative writing, being "easy" and enjoyable, helped them produce well-developed books. It taught them to involve readers by means of descriptions and imagery that vividly re-created the context of the story. Interestingly, most academic genres are focused around concepts that require detailed explanations, clear examples, and well-developed support. Additionally, academic papers are

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also written for a certain audience that needs to be involved in the argument or thesis that the writer constructs in order to sustain the interest to read the paper till the end. Therefore, a good storywriter, skilled in involving readers into a story, can make an academic text equally engaging. Furthermore, a storywriter experienced in developing well-constructed imagery in stories is able to present an academic argument, concept, or hypothesis, with equal attention to detail, which is important in academic writing genres. This makes a storywriter a much more capable academic writer than someone who does not have experience in story writing.

I believe that narrative writing has a potential, largely underexplored, to positively impact students' writing in a number of genres, including academic writing. Narrative writing teaches the students to develop ideas, to involve readers into the text, and simply enjoy the writing process and its result. Also, based on the perceptions of my interviewees, narratives develop good writers, aka those who love to write and do it "from the heart".

The healing power of writing the narrative chapters of short books. Even a week after the end of the semester, talking about their stories made my students excited. Their eyes shone when they looked at their book covers. Throughout the semester and, especially, when it was over, I felt that the students did not want to part with their books. As part of the research, I collected 13 books. I could not believe with what difficulty the students parted with their original manuscripts. Some of them asked me to mail the original books to them once the research was completed.

The days when the individual interviews occurred were emotional for the students as well. They got to hold their books in their hands and look through them again. I felt that there was a strong emotional connection between those books and the students. Undoubtedly, most of those books contained very personal stories. Besides, story writing was an emotional

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"memory dive" for students who had left their hearts and selves on the pages of those stories. As Bader stated in the beginning of the semester, "a good writer writes from the heart" (White Board Notes, Bader). Later, during our individual interview, he explained, "I really enjoyed writing my story and, ah, I didn't really know that I can put my feelings and my emotion in writing till I wrote this book" (Interview, Bader, p.16). Bader admitted that he had become a better writer as a result of book writing. He added that he was much more confident in his writing abilities in English at the end of the semester. He managed to create such an intriguing and captivating narrative, full of plot twists, vivid imagery, complex emotions, and detailed descriptions that it read like a "professional horror story written by a famous author" or a "script for a blockbuster" (Foreword, Ranita, p.1). Bader's story was popular among his peers, and he was proud of it.

While story writing for Bader was emotional at all stages of the process, other students had lost emotions as a result of narrative writing. Thus, Vivian conveyed:

I wrote bad memory. It impressed me a lot. At the time I felt so sad and very tough, so I wanted to write to lose bad memories and to share with others. Now I don't care anymore, because I am happy now. My ex-boyfriend helped me, taught me something, too. So, I appreciate it. (Interview, Vivian, p.7)

Vivian had spent three years in a constant fight and confrontation with her parents who refused to approve Vivian's first "serious" and lasting relationships with a "guy who was from a lower social class" ("Love Trial", Vivian, p17). Thus she devoted her book to the issue of family pressure and parents' authority. In her book, she searched for ways to balance at-home and private relationships, but ended up with a reinforcement of her decision to break up with her fiancé.

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I remember the day when Vivian read her story to the class because it aroused a long and thought-provoking discussion about relationships. My female students, who were considerably older than Vivian, tried to support Vivian's decision to part with her boyfriend. Due to Vivian's story and the remarks of some male East Asian students in class, we discovered that social divide played a crucial role in the relationships of young adults in East Asian countries. Thus, Vivian's fiancé, who came from a lower social class, would hardly ever have a chance to marry her.

In reality, the readings often take more time than planned due to the discussions that the stories provoke. Vivian's story was not the only one that aroused such a passionate discussion. Of course, not all of the students sought compassion or reinforcement through book writing, but Vivian designed her book to be her "emotional aid". She hoped to share her "bad memories" with a potential reader and lose them in the end. Similarly, most of the students in class wrote personal narratives that were not "happy stories". They tackled eternal questions of death, truth, justice; they talked about struggles, losses, fear, pain, threats. Hence my students tried to involve their readers into the stories through expressive and emotive writing looking for compassion, praise, or just understanding, but they also re-lived those emotions while writing. As a result, story writing had made a difference in their lives. For instance, Vivian managed to "lose bad memories". In a similar way, Ranita's story helped her relieve anxiety and stress. She explained:

When I was writing this I was remembering everything about everything. I never have the time thinking about that. That is something you don't want to remember. But I started thinking. I had anxiety, stress. Now I can remember this and I am not

feeling the same pain and the same fear as I felt before writing this book (Whole-class

discussion, Ranita, p.2).

In fact, when Ranita read her one page narrative to class she received a great number of very

supportive and compassionate comments. Her peers expressed admiration for her and how

she handled the kidnapping of her boyfriend, which she wrote about in the story. Tessie,

Alma, and Sarah, when giving Ranita feedback on the story, pointed out her strong character

and ability to focus on constructive actions when dealing with a trauma. Tessie noted that

Ranita was not just able to control her own emotions when Juan, her boyfriend, was

kidnapped, but also support her mother-in-law who was lost and heart broken. Sara admired

Ranita's ability to focus on saving Juan, her determination and self-control in the moment of

stress. Alma was fascinated with Ranita's honesty when Ranita explained that horror and

panic were inside of her, but she had to resist those negative emotions to save Juan.

Essentially, stories are a part of their writers' lives. As such, they unavoidably bring

out the life events which are emotional. Additionally, stories thrive on emotive language and

reader involvement. Every page of a well-written story makes the past come back and the

memories live. Such emotional writing is challenging for any writer, since it demands

him/her to re-live both positive and negative moments in his/her life. Most of my students

wrote stories about significant events in their lives: loss of family members, pain caused by

illnesses in the family or among friends, threats and dangers of certain life styles, dreams that

never came true, etc. Those events came to life on the pages of the students' stories; they

were relieved by the students when assembled from memory in order to be recorded in their

books and, in many cases, let go. The potential of narrative writing to impact students in and

beyond a writing classroom, to my mind, is still underexplored. Stories are not simply easy

and enjoyable writing. The stories that set up a context for "burning" questions that the students are longing to ask the world are seldom all happy and positive. Such stories are necessary in the academy, especially in the academy that is becoming more diverse and multilingual. Such writing involves writers and readers in learning beyond the classroom; it instigates emotions, which may have transformative power. Finally, such stories bring compassion, peace, and even healing to those who write and read them; they promote tolerance and understanding among peers from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. They help students get to know one another and see and learn about the world.

The Need for and the Meaning of Short Book Writing in a Second Language Writing Class

The Final Class Evaluation Form that I designed in order to administer in the end of the semester, primarily aimed at tracing the students' development as writers in class. Additionally, by means of the questionnaire I wanted to collect my students' reflections and opinions about book writing. I felt that the students had grown attached to their books. One of the questions on the form asked the students to reflect on book writing versus writing a number of class papers. In their Final Class Evaluation Forms the majority of the participants (eleven out of thirteen) stated that they preferred book writing to writing papers in their composition classes.   Explaining their preference for short book writing over writing a number of papers, five students stated that a completed short book aroused more pride than a few finished papers. Therefore, it was a great achievement to have written a book. Jack wrote, "…and the feeling of a finished book is amazing. Wow, this is my book!!!" (Final class evaluation, Jack). In fact, Jack, Maggie, and Josh used the resources of a Media Department in the library to learn Photoshop and design very professionally-looking book covers. Josh,

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who wrote about the meaning of wine in Asian countries, designed a table of contents for his book in which each bullet looked like a grapevine, each page had a beautifully designed heading the lines of which were in the shape of grapevines as well. Josh's book cover was exquisitely designed to unpack the meaning of wine in Taiwan as the symbol of the culture, a science, a problem, and a threat. In his Published Book Self Evaluation Form, in which the students were asked to reflect on their already published books, Josh wrote, "My book is a study of wine and its meaning in Asian cultures. Not everyone knows about it. I want the book to tell the story, give knowledge, and make people think. I had to work on its design. It is a BOOK. It has to be perfect and deliver the message" (Published Book Self Evaluation Form, Josh). Josh had to work so hard on the little details of the exterior components of the book, such as font, bullets, page format, cover images, etc. He did it because the book as a whole, if carefully written and designed, produced a stronger message. The other student, Maggie, who wrote about the lack of family interactions in East Asian countries and its potential consequences, explained, "I thought for hours about my book cover. It had to give the reader a picture, what to expect. At the same time, it had to make him want to read it. Finally, I think I came up with a great collage and a great idea that made my book look like a book" (Published book self-evaluation form, Maggie). Thus, for Maggie and the other students, a book was a coherent work in which everything, not just the quality of writing, contributed to the message that was so important for the students to deliver to the reader. As such, the book felt a bigger and more important project for the writers than a series of disconnected class papers, and most of them went beyond what was required to complete their books. Alma said, "Writing a book makes you feel that you wrote something big! Because there are chapters, forewords, etc." (Final Class Evaluation form, Alma). Max

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added, "books are real writing: with a foreword, cover; it appeals to the reader" (Final Class Evaluation Form, Max)

For the students I had in class, a typical class paper in English never exceeded two pages. In their past experiences they had written two to three class papers which could in total equal seven or eight pages. However, although eight pages which still seemed to the students as too much did not feel as if they wrote "something big", while the book did. In her interview with me Alma explained that when she learnt that she had to write 15 pages to complete the book she was shocked. She thought she would fail the class. Yazeed explained that he still remembered the first day of class when it was announced that the class would be writing a book. Yazeed remarked, "It was a shock. I did not think I could do it!" (Interview, Yazeed, p.4). Not only had the page number scared the students, but also the format of the project itself. They thought they were not nearly as qualified as they needed to be to write books. The majority of them did not consider themselves writers in their native language, not to mention in English (Needs Assessment Forms). Thus the book, in my students' minds, was something that could not be written by ESL students even in an advanced level writing class. Later, in their Final Class Evaluation Forms, the students remarked how proud they were that they had written books. Nameeh said, "Before I came to this class I had many weaknesses in writing, but now I can do anything. This class pushed me to test myself" (Final class evaluation form, Nameeh). Later, during the interview with me, Nameeh thanked me for discovering the potential in him that he did not think he had. The book, in the minds of my students, was something "big" that professional authors could do. My students doubted their abilities to write something as big and important as a book, but doing so helped them re-

discover themselves, gain confidence, and believe that they "can write more than one book" (Final class evaluation form, Nameeh).

Other students explained that book writing was simply more fun than class papers, since the book required different types of composing as well as a more individual approach and creativity. Additionally, the students felt the book was written with a reader in mind and, therefore, was more interesting to write. Maggie explained:

> Writing a book is very different from writing some class papers. A book must include nice cover to appeal the reader, catchy beginning, and a beautiful end. Writing a book has to conclude an important concept, it is not just sharing opinions, like in regular class papers (Final class evaluation, Maggie).

Finally, Ahmed noted that writing a book allowed him to get more feedback and make more connections, since his friends and peers "really wanted" to read his book. He stated, "Books are interesting to read, thus there are more people willing to give you feedback on them" (Final class evaluation, Ahmed).

Two out of the thirteen students did not express such a strong preference for book writing versus writing class papers. Accordingly, Dan explained that book writing was much more difficult than a few class papers, since he had to take care of more structural and organizational issues. Finally, Tessie indicated that "any writing is enjoyable, even a few class papers, if the topic is personally meaningful for the student who writes" (Final class evaluation form, Tessie).

Of course, book writing, as Dan noticed, was challenging since it demanded a coherent message and flow of ideas across different genres and non-writing related components of the book (cover images, design elements, fonts, etc.). At the same time,

according to Nameeh, Josh, and others such a challenging nature of the book pushed the students to discover their strengths and abilities that they did not know they had had.

Finally, the book format did not leave my students indifferent from the beginning of the semester. The mere idea of it made most of them experience a certain degree of a "shock" on the first day of class. In the end, all of the students produced worth-reading books in class. Most of them found resolutions to their "burning" issues through book writing. The majority of the students experienced an increase in confidence as writers and readers as a result of book writing and were happy that they had overcome the challenge of composing the book. However, to fewer students the book seemed more challenging than they had wanted it to be. Also, for Tessie book writing did not seem very different than writing a series of class papers as long as the writers were to choose their own topics for both.

Overall, short book writing, changed the students' attitude to writing as "in and for the class" only process. It helped them see the potential of writing "beyond the desk and the computer". Composing short books not only increased my students' confidence in their abilities to write in English but also helped them see the ways in which writing can impact their lives on personal and academic levels as well as lives of their communities. Most of my students pointed out that had lost "fear of writing in English" as a result of writing short books and felt confident in pursuing new projects in any writing genre, possibly, even a new book.

Chapter Summary

Chapter five was meant as the exploration of the outcomes of post method based pedagogy of short book writing in the EAP context. It unpacked the themes that came out during semi-structured interviews with the students. It was structured around five themes,

which elaborated on various aspects of composing short books in Advanced Written Communication class. The chapter focused on the impact of writing short books on the students as users of English, writers, readers, academics, and human beings. The chapter concluded emphasizing the need to introduce short book writing in second language composition classes to increase students' confidence and shelter educators from developing misconceptions about multilingual learners abilities to succeed as authors and strong and dedicated writers in English.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Overview of the Students' Experiences Composing Short Books in the EAP

Writing Class

The interviews with thirteen multilingual writers, their culminating class reflections, and evaluation forms, and books revealed that the majority of students highly enjoyed the process of short book construction in all of its aspects: working on topics and questions for the short book, engaging in peer readings as readers and writers, spending time with tutors and librarians outside of class to work on the books, etc. However, there were moments in class that they students did not enjoy as much as others. For instance, while most of my students looked forward to the readings, others felt stressed and nervous in anticipation of those. While the majority of the students wanted the readings to last longer, Ahmed argued that they were too long and took the time from in-class writing. At the same all of my students-participants indicated that they had benefited from readings and had become confident writers as a result of that experience. Also, a few students struggled while writing the research chapter. They lacked the time to do research and had difficulties reading and understanding research articles. However, all students noted in their interviews that composing research chapters not only helped them learn more about the mechanics of research writing in English, but also discover research as especially meaningful process of creating knowledge and improving lives. Finally, most of the students enjoyed composing narratives and felt strong users of English while composing. Of course, Tessie's experience with using English in the narrative was unsatisfying. She felt she had not managed to express herself as she wanted in her story. At the same time, composing personal narratives let most

of my students feel powerful in creating texts that incorporate all of their languages and the extensive multicultural knowledge that they had.

By enrolling in my class, most of my students embarked on a writer journey in search for their confidence in writing in English and writer potential. As my data showed peer readings had caused a major increase in my students' confidence as writers in English. The readings allowed the students to receive public acknowledgement and praise of their work, learn to write for a reader, and find ways to build off of their native languages to construct authentic writing styles and imagery that they were rewarded for in their writing classroom community and often outside of it.

Fourteen out of fifteen study participants experienced a spark in confidence when the book was completed. The book, initially, seemed for them to be a "real writing", the prerogative of "real authors". However, in their Final Class Evaluation the students expressed their pride for the books that they had written. They also stated that the fact that they had written a book in English made any grain of fear for writing disappear from their consciousness, and they felt ready to write more than one book within a three month period.

Notably, while the majority of students enjoyed writing narrative chapters, more than writing research, all of the students found research chapters crucial for their books. Maggie stated that her research chapter offered her and the potential readers insight into ways to eliminate sad stories similar to hers. She thought that her research chapter offered a good closing to her story about the lack of interaction between her and her parents that had caused a number of problems in her life. The research helped her discover ways of improving family interactions which, potentially, may eliminate the number of "unhappy children" on earth. For Tessie the short book had become transformative in many ways. It helped her look at her

brother's gambling addiction not as a chosen lifestyle, but a disease, and move from strong negative emotions for her brother to the urge to help him by providing him with the professional support. It also demonstrated to her that writing in English could be very enjoyable. It could help her make friends in and outside of class, teach her to be creative when composing and critical when reading writing.

Pedagogical Implications

As part of the discussion of the study findings I consider it important to share my findings from teaching short book writing in an Advanced Written Communication Class. As a pedagog, I strive to constantly reflect on my teaching and to carefully analyze the feedback I receive and the problems I encounter. This section is aimed at summarizing the pedagogical implications of personal-narrative-based short book writing taught in a second language writing class. It opens with an emphasis on the importance of such a pedagogy for second language writers. It also shares my thoughts behind the book design and offers strategies that I developed to motivate all writers to pursue the short book project. Finally, in this section I elaborate on some difficulties my students faced when composing certain chapters of the short books as well as ideas for addressing those challenges. I conclude the section with some recommendations to the educators who have the privilege of working with second language writers and who may consider implementing short book as main class projects in their courses.

From ESL Students to Writers and Authors: The Importance of Personal-Narrative-Based Book Writing in a Second Language Writing Class

It is hard and problematic to make generalizations regarding short book writing, since every single writer in class experienced the process of book construction differently.

Therefore, book writing, as any other learning process, has to be centered on the individual writer in class, and, the book, as a genre that combines many different types of composing, encourages such student-centeredness. Combining narrative, research, and a foreword in the book meets the perceived needs of the students who come to Intensive English Institutes to receive extensive college preparation. Furthermore, it allows the writers to "simply compose" their stories in the narrative chapters and find their voices and styles. Additionally, possessing a significant social component in the form of foreword writing, the readings, and Library and Writing Center Workshops, the book project allows the students to fully benefit from getting feedback and help when working on their books. Furthermore, peer readings which rely on the students' ability to read for meaning of a story versus for the compliance of the story to a teacher-developed rubric, allow the students to re-discover writing as a reader-focused process. Finally, books, being "real writing" by "real authors" increase the students' confidence and elevate their self-esteem as users of English. Completed books also bring out in the students the feeling of "pride of accomplishing something big."

When I adapted the short book project for my advanced English proficiency EAP students', I understood the importance of incorporating research writing into the short books. As pre-admission students, EAP learners, at the Advanced levels of the program, are only a step away from entering a target academic program in the U.S. university. Thus, EAP students expect to master the conventions of the academy they are about to enter in all of their classes. Hence, to meet the needs of such demanding audience and, at the same time, retain the personally and socially significant aspect of students' books, I introduced research chapter as the extension of the personal narrative (first chapter) with the goal of helping students see and understand the power of research. I aimed the research chapter to be

constructed as a review of existing research on the topic of the narrative chapter with the goal of answering the "burning question" formulated in the end of chapter one. Thus, from a pedagogical standpoint, I found the narrative and research chapters complementing each other well in the short books. While narrative was aimed at allowing students to "simply compose" and discover themselves as writers in English, the research chapter writing experience satisfied their expectations and desires to approach a target academic community. At the same time, even when writing their second chapters, the students knew that the meaning of their research was as crucial for the book as adherence to the writing convention of the genre. They did not view their second chapters as focused merely on supplying them with a toolkit of writing skills. While the research chapter demanded from the students to adhere to the conventions of the genre, it also offered them a chance to experience the power of research to make a difference in their lives and beyond.

It was rewarding for me to see how much the students invested themselves in their books and how much pride all of them carried away from the class. Although only thirteen out of eighteen students participated in the research, all eighteen students successfully passed the class and produced beautiful thought-provoking books. I found that their books and the ideas expressed in them were so dear and important for my students that they had gone above and beyond to create their "masterpieces". Since writing books for most of my students involved as much work on the mechanics of writing as on meaning making, not all of the activities set up for my students during the semester helped them feel as writers in English. Of course, it is natural for students to feel students in a writing class, but I believe and strive for maximizing the activities that my students identified as helping them lose the "ESL student" label and feel "real authors" doing "real writing".

Personal Narrative Writing as a Means of Engaging Multilingual Writers in Conducting Academic Research

The title of this section might be found faulty at its core by some of my colleagues who work with both second language writers and domestic students. Many times I have heard from my colleagues, adjunct professors of English, that current student populations are weak writers because all they did in high school and in freshmen classes was write stories, fiction, expository essays, etc. It is hard to argue with the idea that limiting students to story writing throughout their academic studies may not be beneficial for all of them. However, it is worth arguing that expository writing is necessary in the academy. In fact, it is necessary as a first step towards understanding and developing stronger research projects (Moffett, 1968).

In the course of my academic journey, I was blessed with professors I was honored to learn from. I consider myself blessed for a number of reasons. First, none of my professors ever pointed out my multilingualism as a weakness or my rhetorical choices as non-compliant to the westernized writing genre of the U.S. academy. On the contrary, they encouraged me to explore my multilingualism in research and use it as a resource in writing. Somehow, such a pedagogy did not prevent me from successfully publishing in the western academy or getting invitations to present at conferences. Moreover, my professors encouraged expository writing that went hand in hand with academic writing in all of their classes. I wrote a book about my childhood as part of a PhD class in Teaching Writing. I should admit that for over four years of my being part of the U.S. academy, I had never felt disadvantaged, marginalized, or less competent due to my international student status or the fact that English was not my mother tongue. Never did I fear anything, especially the

research writing genre. Sadly, this is seldom the case with the international students who come to my writing classes. A few of my students in their final class evaluation forms described the initial "fear of the research chapter". For instance, Tessie stated:

> I never wrote research paper and I didn't know how to before. From the beginning I thought it was very difficult. I still have language issues, I thought, and the teacher wants us to write research?? But with your guidance, you always encourage us…that it is not that difficult and you also give us very helpful steps. (Final class evaluation form, Tessie)

Tessie's attitude toward research writing is widespread among multilingual writers. I often hear from my students that they fear writing research in English and that they don't feel confident and they are afraid to fail. I developed my book writing pedagogy to help my students succeed as my professors at Indiana University of Pennsylvania helped me succeed and, what's more, develop a deep love for writing, teaching, and doing research.

In order to help my students engage with the research writing genre, I developed a strategy in which expository writing served as a bridge to research writing and created a strong need for academic research. This strategy is book writing. To remind readers, the book consists of two chapters: a narrative chapter and a research chapter. The narrative is developed first. It is constructed around a question, "What are you burning to ask the world?" Once the narrative is finished and the question is asked on its last page, the need for research is inevitable. The goal of the research chapter, therefore, is to answer the "burning" question, which the students consider important. Each student is asked to compile a "literature review" to develop answers to their questions. They base their research chapters on eight bibliographic sources: four academic, peer-reviewed articles, and four internet sources of

their choice. In order to develop the research chapter, the students visit Writing Center and Library workshops, which help them navigate databases and find sources, correctly cite sources, and properly integrate them in their texts. Additionally, I developed a series of workshops in which I teach my students to critically read and analyze research. Therefore, although they may use any four Internet sources in their chapters, they are asked to acknowledge the strengths and weaknesses of all the sources while summarizing and analyzing them in their second chapters. Naturally, the research chapter completes the book and helps its author to make a step towards resolving a "burning issue" of his/her life.

I created the book in such a way as to help my students understand the importance of research and research writing. I wanted them to see that research writing, although painful at times, can make a difference in their lives. I anticipated the writing struggles that some of my students would face when working on research chapters. I understood that it would be extremely hard for some of my students to compile the research chapter within six weeks, since some of them had never been exposed to research writing before. Hence, Alma posed:

> I had a hard time writing research. First, because I didn't have enough sources. I thought I would find a lot of resources. Also, the way the research is was different from my country. They didn't concentrate on it. I didn't know how to write a summary...and so on. I needed more time. (Interview, Alma, p.3)

Undoubtedly, giving my students more time to work on research could make a difference, but my goal for them was not to master something that cannot be mastered within one semester. I aimed at helping my students understand the importance and power of research writing as a genre as well as instill in them the desire and passion to do research. Furthermore, I knew that finding, reading, and understanding research articles could be

extremely challenging for some of the students. Maggie, in her interview with me, talked

about reading and comprehension challenges in the research process:

> Chapter two is most difficult because you have to read the article first. The article is
>
> usually on the Internet, something that is very long, and I cannot figure out all the
>
> points. I act get it. I can get one of them, but sometimes you Google it, you just see
>
> the title, you are not sure if the resource is what you want. So you have to read it all
>
> and then, decide, it is not what I want. You have to go back and see another article.
>
> Yu spend lots of time, and sometimes, I like this article, but I have to reword it in my
>
> chapter two. I don't want to just copy words. I can copy, but I don't want everything
>
> to be copied. I want to say something that is from this article and reword it that it will
>
> make for my book more sense. It is hard. (Interview, Maggie, p.16)

Therefore, in order to help my students face the above challenges, I involved the Writing

Center and librarians into the learning process. As I mentioned in the previous sections,

librarians and writing tutors organized workshops for my students and had tutoring sessions

with them on an individual basis to help the students with both research and narrative writing.

I wanted to create a wider support network for my students to turn to when help was needed.

When analyzing my students' feedback and interview transcripts, I discovered that

the writing conventions of the research genre did not pose as many challenges for my

students as the research process itself. Most of the students seemed to have struggled more in

the initial stages of the research chapter development, when they were collecting sources,

reading and understanding the information in those sources. Some students pointed out

difficulties understanding and using academic vocabulary or remembering transitions

between paragraphs. A few students found paraphrasing difficult. Interestingly, summarizing

and analyzing research in writing as well as a citation format did not create a significant problem for students. In fact, some students found clear writing guidelines in the research writing process helpful in addressing research writing related issues. They felt that they knew exactly what to do. For instance, in her final class evaluation Tessie noted, "I have become a better writer because I was guided by the teacher, who gave us a lot of good input, examples, clear handouts, so I knew exactly how to write research, for instance" (Final class evaluation, Tessie). Research writing process could be made easier for the students by clear guidelines, constant feedback, encouragement, and a wide support network of professionals they can turn to.

To some it may seem that the narrative chapter had taken the time that could be spent on research writing. However, if that had happened, the purpose for the research chapter would disappear as would the students' desire to write it so persistently and vigorously, overcoming the difficulties that it posed. Hence, while the students still had to comply with some aspects of the research writing genre in English, they engaged with it at a higher level, the level of meaning that had to be made as a result of the research, the meaning they were looking for when they had begun writing the book.

Although the research process was described by most of the students as "tough" and "not-enjoyable," the research chapter was proclaimed by the writers to be a "very useful" and "essential" part of the book, "the answer" to the "burning" question introduced in the narrative chapter. The book by its design presents research as secondary, but essential to the students' learning. The research springs out of the narrative and answers it. The research serves its true purpose-to make a difference in people's lives.

Tessie explained how the research chapter opened her eyes and made her "see things". The research that Tessie had compiled, analyzed, and written in her second chapter helped her see that her brother's gambling was an addiction, and instead of condemning him, his family and herself should help him find professional support to deal with the addiction. Tessie stated:

> I see everything. Before I did the research I didn't see anything… oh, my brother was fine, he didn't look like a gambling addict. But after research I recognized the addictive behaviors in him. After now I still cannot trust him but I need to go back home and see personally how he changed now (Interview, Tessie, p.6)

The research chapter, the idea for which was born out of Tessie's story, changed the meaning of the story. It changed anger to hope. It helped Tessie "see things" that she had done wrong and realize how to make a difference in the life of her family.

My students unanimously agreed that the research chapter made the book complete. It helped them make knowledge and, as a result, live better lives. Alma explained, "I think research is very important as long as I know a way how to prepare, do the research. I really think it is important. We learnt the things we didn't know before and it changes how we live" (Interview, Alma, p.6). Max added, "I think both of them [chapters] are important. I think both of them have to be together because if you take chapter one out, there is no reason for chapter two, why I want to do this research. Chapter one supports chapter two, and chapter two supports chapter one" (Interview, Max, p.12). Maggie continued, "No. But chapter two is a solution. If you just tell your story, but you don't tell the reader how to solve it, that is not very good end" (Interview, Maggie, p.16).

In the light of the importance of the research chapter, the crucial meaning of the narrative as research-provoking and sustaining chapter may slip from my reader. My students "told their stories" because they wanted to achieve a deeper connection with their readers that would persist throughout the book; they wanted the readers to become part of the writers' lives. The research chapter by itself would not provide such a connection of the reader with the writer. Without the narrative, the research would be less contextualized and less personalized. Of course, the goal of research writing is to make knowledge, not connect with the writer on a deeper level. At the same time, the more contextualized research is, the closer it reaches the bottom of the problem, and the better it is able to address it. For instance, Tessie's narrative described the story of a gambler and the suffering of the gambler's family. The gambler was her brother. Her narrative was full of pain and anger at him. This story, sincere and full of pain, helped the reader better understand and connect with the research question.

So, why is the narrative-research unity that is manifested in my students' books so important for the writers? While Tessie's narrative was written in an emotional manner, condemning her brothers' behavior and disrespect for the family, she clearly changed her outlook on the problem while writing research. She remarked, "In the research chapter I learnt how to support my brother mentally" (Whole-class discussion, Tessie, p.3). The narrative-research unity helped Tessie make a progress in her thinking about a life important issue, her family crises and its causes. She discovered that gambling alone was not the only cause of the family problems. In fact, the whole family had to change their outlook on her brother's gambling and provide him with professional support to fight the addiction. Through the narrative-research unity that I had students explore, Tessie found hope and a way out.

When Alma conveyed the horror that she and her sister went through when their grandfather died in her story, she did not think about the research chapter. Similarly to Tessie, Ranita focused on a story that she had always wanted to tell. She focused on the story the meaning of which remained unresolved in her life. As a result of narrative writing, Alma let go of the fear of death that she had been experiencing since a little girl and became determined to conduct and write research which would educate parents to help their children understand and handle death. In my students' opinions, the narrative chapter had to be written for a number of reasons: to involve the reader in the context of the book, to re-live and better understand their life experiences and what had caused them, and to formulate a question that would help them resolve what had stayed unresolved for years and, for some of them, negatively impacted the quality of their lives. Ranita experienced anxiety since her boyfriend had been kidnapped and released. Once her book was finished, she was finally able to say, " Now I can remember this and I am not feeling the same pain and fear as I felt before writing the book" (Whole-class discussion, Ranita, p.2). In her opinion, she had achieved such a result due to both the narrative, which helped her re-live the kidnapping again, and the research, which made her understand the causes and ways to minimize anxiety. The narrative and the research chapter impacted the writer from two different angles, but the combined impact produced a transformation in her life.

Finally, the narrative-research unity is especially "healthy" for multilingual writers. The narrative helps release the fear for writing in English that the students had reported and eases them into research writing with less anxiety and danger to fail. Narrative writing allows the students to "play" with the language, draw on their vernaculars to create stronger metaphors and richer descriptions. Stories make multilinguals feel at ease in a different

linguistic domain, feel confident in their abilities to compose. Undoubtedly, praise and positive reinforcement that the students experience through readings adds to the confidence. With such an attitude to composing, the research chapter is undertaken by students as a challenge, but they do not dread it anymore. They understand the need for it. Provided with clear instructions, they know what to do. Additionally, with the confidence they have and half of the book written, the research chapter does not look as threatening.

Lastly, when I was shaping the narrative-focused book writing pedagogy with the multilingual student population in mind, I tried to cater to their needs in the first place. I understood that the students who come to an Intensive English Program expect to get solid preparation for their majors. They fear research writing, but they know they will need it in their future. Ahmed, a prospective Business major, heartily thanked me in the end of the semester for teaching him to write academic research. He explained that his friends had looked at his research chapter and told him this was exactly the type of research he would do in his major. Ahmed left the class feeling ready for his future college classes. Bader, who did not like research writing too much, in his interview noted that he was grateful that he had a chance to write research, learn about citation styles, etc. He added, "I am sure I will need this in college!" He felt good and confident in his ability to write academic research in the end of the class.

From the beginning of the semester, I knew that the goals I had set for myself as an educator were extremely challenging. I aimed at helping my students get confident in writing in English and understand that writing went beyond the classroom and affected their lives. I wanted them to be masters of their lives through writing and research. Finally, understanding their immediate needs, I wanted my students to engage with the research writing genre,

becoming confident writers able to function in the U.S. academy and beyond. Notably, the narrative-research unity was the strategy that helped me in achieving all of the above goals. Of course, my students need more time to increase their confidence in writing in English to be sure that the personal healing that some of them claimed will be long-lived. However, I believe that my class helped them make a step in the right direction.

Linguistic Challenges of Book Writing

Chapter four was aimed at exploring the impact that short book writing had on the multilingual students' attitudes to and relationships with writing in English. Additionally, the chapter was focused on the students' perceptions of the impact that short book writing had on them as writers in English. As it was shown above, most of the students perceived that short book writing had a positive impact on them as writers and on their writing. However, it would be fair to explore the challenges that composing short books posed for my students as well.

While describing their overall book writing experiences, my students pointed out some challenges and difficulties that made their writing process painful at times. While most of the students felt that they became much stronger users of English while writing their stories, some of them lost the confidence when faced with the research chapter. As Yazeed explains:

> Writing a story, first chapter, was most enjoyable for me cos I am gonna say something, I have the idea in my mind, I have all the words in my mind. I feel confident. I see the words. I can choose better words. I can create. (Interview, Yazeed, p.1)

In other words, narrative writing did not pose many linguistic challenges for Yazeed. On the contrary, he felt he had become quite a powerful user of English, able to "play with words", create better ways and expressions to precisely depict his meanings. Yazeed remarked that it was not always easy to come up with better, more impactful ways to describe events and emotions in his story. However, the advantage of the narrative was that it did not require the writer to learn and use academic vocabulary as well as understand the academic language of the research he was reading. Nameeh also pointed out how "strong vocabulary" in the book was challenging. Nameeh referred not only to the narrative, but also to the research chapter. He explained that while writing both chapters he not only had to think about correct grammar, but also search for strong linguistic means of expressing himself, such as metaphors, analogies, native language insertions, powerful descriptions, and so on to make his writing stand out among the writing of his peers (Interview, Nameeh, p.3). Nameeh clarified that it was much harder for him to properly use academic vocabulary in his research chapter than a "good metaphor" in his narrative. He felt that in his narrative, creativity was appreciated and necessary, while in the research chapter he needed to write in "clean academic language" (Interview, p.4). The linguistic challenges of the narrative were, for some students, enjoyable and resulted in increased confidence in their usage of English. On the contrary, the language choices that the research chapter dictated to the students made them feel quite the opposite.

In fact, a number of interviewees pointed out that the students had "language problems" mostly while writing the research chapter. Six interviewees talked about "translation" issues when writing research. Bader offered an interesting insight into his research writing experience and language use:

I had a hard time translating from Arabic to English. I was trying the whole time to

think in English, but I couldn't, and then, ahm, I spent a lot of time writing.

[…]No, only in research, In the story...it was all in English…but in the research I

couldn't. I pushed myself in the research more than in the story. The story was easier

(Interview, Bader, p.2).

Bader noted that he had enough linguistic means to write chapter one, while writing

the research chapter was a constant challenge for him. Of course, Bader worked hard on his

English in the narrative as well. He did not simply use the vocabulary he had known. He

knew the language had to be appropriate to the genre, the "horror story." He worked hard on

his metaphors, imagery, and descriptions. At the same time, this work process was creative

and enjoyable. He knew he could hardly go wrong there. He was not afraid to use a word or

expression incorrectly. In the end, he was praised for successful language choices. Bader

anticipated research chapter writing to be similar experiences and result. However, research

writing turned out to limit Bader's writing choices rather than expand. Bader expressed that it

was difficult to be as creative in the research chapter as in the narrative. Hence, his attempts

to vary his academic repertoire in academic writing were not successful, and did not make

significant impact on the text. So   , "if someone uses 'I assume' instead of 'I think', it is

better, but not really different" (Interview, Bader, p.3). Also, Bader knew that research

writing demanded him to comply with the components of western academic writing genre,

leaving less creativity and space for his vernacular. If he could use an "Arabic way of saying

something" in the narrative and was praised for it, the research chapter had to be written

according to the best standards of American English. Bader used a translator to avoid a

mistake. He did not feel confident to think in English while constructing his chapter two.

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Most of the students admitted thinking in their native languages and using translators while compiling their research chapters. Vivian, Josh, Yazeed, Nameeh and others explained that they did not feel ready to think in English when writing research, or that they simply could not do so.

There was one student, Tessie, who acknowledged that both her native language and English failed her throughout the book. She could not think either in English or Indonesian when she was writing. In her case, however, narrative writing posed more linguistic challenges that writing research. Tessie explained:

> The problem is the English. What I want to write I cannot put in my chapter one because of the barrier of the English. Sometimes I used Chinese sometimes Indonesian. For me I don't know why but explaining using Chinese is sometimes better than using Indonesian. I went to Beijing for two years and learnt it. I learnt it pretty fast. Chapter two… I was thinking in Indonesian. The connection that I get with my story it is more helpful using Chinese. (Interview, Tessie, p.3)

Similarly to other students, Tessie was using a translator and thinking in Indonesian, her native language, while writing her research chapter. However, contrary to others, she did not think in English while writing her story. Moreover, Indonesian failed her in story writing as well. She puzzled me when she stated that Chinese helped her express herself better than the other languages that she spoke. I was puzzled because Tessie had only been learning Chinese fore a little over three years. I was fascinated by the fact that she found Chinese more expressive and suitable for emotive writing. Of course, Tessie is an extremely competent English user. She is far more advanced in English, especially written English, than anyone else in class. She has a good memory and learns languages quickly. Although she had learnt

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Chinese while on a short exchange program in China, she was using it upon return to Indonesia while chatting with her Chinese friends on social networks. She seemed to have developed a strong emotional connection to Chinese. She explained to me that she found Indonesian "very dry", unemotional. English, as she described it, "also lacked something". Chinese, on the other hand, helped her express her emotions much better because it had "more means" of doing so, in her opinion.

Throughout my career, I was fascinated by multilingual writers. I myself constantly switch from Russian to English and back when I think. I find certain expressions and words in Russian much more emotional than their English equivalents. Also, certain metaphors that exist in Russian seem to me so complex and intricate that I am often tempted to use them in my English texts. Of course, the writers who use more than two languages, have them all "switched on" at the same time while thinking, thus they pull on the resources of whichever language seems to offer more in a particular situation. Such constant decision making is challenging for multilinguals, but at the same time it may serve to their advantage. Multilingual writers have more resources at hand unless they are discouraged from using them in the writing classrooms where the western writing manner dominates.

To sum it up, all of my students faced linguistic challenges while writing their books. They struggled "picking the right words", constructing images and descriptions in English, reading, integrating, and manipulating academic language in their research chapters. Notably, some of my students had never written research projects in English; few of them had written texts that are bigger than a page or two. Some of them are advanced users of English and multilingual speakers of more than three languages, while others still struggle with basic grammar in English. Such factors impact the degree of difficulty that writing in English in

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any genre may pose for the multilingual writers. However, most of my students struggled and expressed a lack of confidence while working on research chapters. The westernized academic genre of research writing made the students feel less competent in English and alienated from their own writing. The students, who were placed in my class due to their advanced knowledge of English, used translators to write research. They were afraid not to comply, "to be wrong". My students learnt a lot from the research they had done, but most of them were not satisfied with the writing they had produced in their research chapters.

From a pedagogical standpoint, it is then necessary to find ways to engage multilingual writers with academic writing, not to force compliance. The western academics have to open up the boundaries of the academic writing genre to make space for multilingual writers who heavily populate today's composition classrooms.

Recommendations for Educators

As advice to educators who work with IEI students in advanced level Writing courses, I would recommend maximizing meaning focused activities in their classes. Such activities as peer readings and reviews, free writing, reflective discussions on the meaning of writing in students' lives, and so on should occupy a significant portion of an IEI writing class. Also, it is important to remember that there is a place for narrative writing even in the most research-focused composition courses as I demonstrated above.

Linguistic challenges when composing narratives cannot be underestimated. It is necessary for the instructors to encourage the students to address those challenges and remember that they can build off of various languages and linguistic resources at their disposal to compose English texts. I would advise both Composition and TESOL educators working with international students to view their multilingualism as an advantage and a

source to build off of in their writing. I found it important to let students use "Chinese ways" and "Spanish ways", etc. of expressing ideas and constructing descriptions and imagery in their books. I encouraged insertions of the native language in English texts when talking about certain realia like meals, prayers, clothes, which are unique to my students' cultures. I also welcomed the usage of idioms, metaphors, proverbs, and stylistic devices typical of my students' home languages. I often asked to accompany those with some explanations, rather than eliminate those types of writing. Many times during peer readings the students praised what they called a unique writing style of a number of individual writers in class. The individual style was achieved by "thinking in Chinese" and using the prism of a certain culture to make meanings in English. For example, when Jack wrote, " I was embraced by music, notes jumping and dancing around", he first constructed the sentence in Mandarin Chinese and then translated it to English, word for word. The result was fascinating for some of my students. They found the above sentence unusual and attractive. Most importantly, it made sense for everybody, so no one requested Jack to explain it more. Also, my students from the Middle East often insert a brief "praise to god" phrase in the end of certain statements. Typically, the insertion occurs when they talk about something very important for the family: baby birth, marriage funeral, hospitalization, etc. The peers of my Middle Eastern students asked them to keep that "praise to god" insertion in their written narratives to make those more culturally rich and interesting. I welcomed such a change as well. I found that it is important and encouraging for multilingual students to realize that they can build on more resources and challenge the reader by doing so.

Finally, it is crucial for educators to find less teacher-centered and more interactive ways to reach individual writers. My students agreed that teacher presentations and

explanations, although helpful, did not make them feel as writers and, at times, caused a drop in their confidence by overwhelming the students with new knowledge. I found it useful to substitute teacher lectures and presentations with take- at- home handouts and, later, once the students got a chance to study the handout, some practical activities in class. For instance, rather than lecturing on MLA, I provided a handout with examples and simple exercises for the students to complete at home and then check in class. I found it important to provide my students with quality resources on the mechanics of writing and writing conventions of academic English, but I did not lecture on those topics in class. Undeniably, I provided feedback on writing mechanics and conventions when reading students' drafts and addressed some issues that were recurrent among all or some students during the class. However, writing conventions seldom sparked a deep whole-class discussion and students' passion and interest; therefore they remained at the background of the class. Notably, without placing extensive focus on writing mechanics and conventions in class, I placed more pressure on my students to use the help of the Writing Center (WC). I did so because I wanted to educate students to succeed beyond my class and the IEI, and I made sure that they knew where to go for help with writing. As a result, most of the students make strong connections with tutors and librarians and drew on those connections later when taking classes in their majors.

Final Remarks: Reflecting on Writing vs. Composing

My teaching experience thus far has mostly been in TESOL, working with international students who came to the U.S. to study. Hence, the majority of my time in the western academy was spent teaching Second Language Writing in the EAP context. At the same time, as a doctorate student, I was exposed to Composition when taking classes. Furthermore, I had a chance to teach a semester of College Composition after my doctorate

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coursework had been completed. So, I experienced literacy education in both second language and mainstream English contexts as a teacher and a student. I noticed that the more exposure to Composition I had, the more I was reshaping my pedagogy in the Second Language Writing classes. For instance, once I wrote a short narrative-based book as a doctorate student in a Composition class, I took over the short book assignment, re-designed it to fit the EAP context, and started teaching to it in my EAP classes. Also, when teaching second year College Composition to mainstream university students, I placed the emphasis on personal and social meaning of writing as well as critical reading and analysis of outside research. This emphasis was welcomed by my mainstream students. Such a critical and personally and socially significant approach to composing helped my mainstream students re-discover composing as a process that can change lives. While critical and social aspects were removed from the curriculum of my EAP program, I placed those aspects in the heart of my Advanced Written Communication class because I had seen the impact that critical and socially and personally significant approach to writing had produced on the mainstream college students. I wanted my multilingual writers to have the same exposure to composing as a personally and socially significant and critical act. I wanted them to discover writing as an indispensable part of their lives. I also wanted my multilingual students to feel powerful when composing short books on the topics which are relevant for both the students and their home communities. Additionally, I wanted my second language writers to critique and question outside research that they had been taught to accept as "authority" only because it was written in the academic journals in the language that was not their mother tongue. While I tried to expose my students to critical and socially and personally meaningful composing, I had also felt a constant need to work on their writing. As Maggie had said in her interview, it

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is crucial for a writer "to be understood." Therefore, I believe that all writers, mainstream and second language, need to work on the mechanics of writing, including grammar, punctuation, and so on. However, the mechanics must not become a mere goal and purpose of a Writing class. As a teacher of English, a writer, and a researcher I constantly work improving my writing mechanics and knowledge of academic writing conventions. I have always found it useless to critique something that I had no thorough knowledge of. I carried this philosophy, right or wrong, into my Advanced Written Communication class where we compose academic research and acquire the knowledge of the genre. However, the class is set up so that the research chapter is written after the personal narrative. I found that after the students discover personal narrative writing, they feel more confident to compose and critique academic research in English.

Being situated at the intersection of writing and composing, I have struggled in my own career to stop constant balancing between the two. I have discovered overtime that my ability to compose personally and socially significant texts rely also on my confidence in writing in English, my facility for the language, its grammar and mechanics. This dissertation once again reassured me in the above belief that the balancing had to exist. Writing and composing co-exist as the two processes of book creation, and they complement one another. Writing helps the writers work on the form to free the meaning in the lines of the book and be understood. Composing takes care of creativity, language play, manifestation of culture in language and a true joy of building a relationship with writing and readers. In their interviews and other data sets my students unconsciously separated writing and composing. Writing was something they had always been familiar with and focused on and, maybe, limited to. Most of my students in the beginning of the semester thought about writing as

grammar, vocabulary, and structure of a text. They could easily identify multiple weaknesses they had in writing in English. They could not see how a piece of writing could make a difference in the lives of people including their own. Furthermore, they could not identify themselves as writers, especially in English. Lastly, more than half of my students confessed to have a fear for writing in English, especially research writing. When I turned the attention of the class away from writing to composing and started asking the students the questions about their relationship with writing and characteristics of a good writer, the fearful submissive tone in their responses immediately changed to cheerful remarks about "writing from the heart", creativity, ability to intrigue the reader.

It was fascinating to me how much the way my students viewed writing as well as their confidence and ability to identify themselves as writers depended on me, the way I structured assignments and posed questions. I began the first week of class inviting my students to free write, to compose their childhood memories. In fact, those memories inspired most of the book topics. Alma wrote about her and her sister's struggle understanding their grandfather's death, Ahmed's narrative took us back to the first victory of an 11 year-old-boy when he had won his horse, Shekah. Jack's book brought back what he most loved: his music and his piano. By allowing my students to free write, share their memory write-ups with the whole class, and view writing as meaning making, I helped them make another step towards becoming confident writers in English.

Undoubtedly, some students in my class could not and did not disregard the writing mechanics. For instance, Maggie's grammar gaps obscured her meaning. When she first got her writing read, bits and pieces of it were not understood by the reader at all. Maggie as well as the other students in class understood the importance of working on their writing no less

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than composing, since composing relied on writing. However, I did not want to focus the class solely on polishing my students' grammar. I helped them view the issues of writing mechanics as something that can be fixed within a relatively short period of time. I helped my students identify systematic mistakes that they were making and the gaps in grammar knowledge that had caused the mistakes. The majority of grammar-focused work was done by my students outside the class with their Writing Center and IEI tutors. Interestingly, during the interviews with me, most of the students pointed out that my class was very different from other writing classes they had taken. They explained that in my class they were able to explore their writer potential in English, compose, be creative with English, experiment and search for better ways of expressing their ideas, and enjoy the composing process. They noted that they could learn writing mechanics from books or the Writing Center, while our class time was meant for them to make meaning of their lives and experiences using their multilingualism as a resource and discover the true meaning of writing in their lives. I hope that my study will become a practical tool for either EAP educators of compositionists, especially those who work with multilingual writers, to bring post-method and post-process into their everyday practice.

Ideas for Future Research

Composing is a continuous process. Therefore, I did not aim at perfection in the course of one semester, but I aimed at helping my students make a significant step in their journeys from ESL students, non-native speakers, to confident writers in English. This dissertation research provoked my thinking in all of its stages. Due to my students' active participation in the research and construction of my class, I was able to see the improvements that could make my class better. This study got me interested into certain aspects of

multilingual writing that I wanted to pursue, but was unable to due to the focus of my study and time limitations. I would like to point out those aspects as opportunities for future research. In the current study I did not conduct any formal textual analysis of my students' books, especially their personal narrative chapters. I believe that such an analysis could significantly improve our understanding of where and how my students' languages and cultures merge to create imagery, descriptions, and rhetoric and stylistic moves that opened up new ways of meaning making. Also, it is important to explore how and why multilingual writers make choices in favor of one of their languages to compose in English.

As a way of closing my study, I would like to come back to the words of Paulo Freire who insisted that education was a "human act" (Freire, 1998). I truly believe that the above statement must find its way into the curricula of constantly growing Intensive English Institutes in the United States. I understand the business nature of an IEI, but business-like education is aimed at satisfying the needs of the customers. IEI programs, in contrast to business institutes that provide trainings to their customers, do not conduct a thorough needs assessment together with their prospective students and all of the stakeholders. Business institutes actively involve their students in the process of curricula construction and learning. This is their way of finding and catering to their students' needs. With the above in mind, business institutes provide a more humanistic education to their trainees than some IEIs. IEI programs offer more of a teacher-focused than learner-focused education and often times refuse to take any responsibility for their students beyond the walls of the ESL program. In the end, students' leave IEI writing classes stuffed with writing skills, rules and regulations of English grammar, but still self-conscious and unable to express themselves and feel comfortable in their second language. As Ann Berthoff explained, skills are, simply, not

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enough, since composing is a much more intellectually challenging than mechanical skills-based activities (1998). If IEI programs truly want their students to succeed in and beyond an ESL class, they should aim at better understanding their students' needs. Warriner warned that students' needs in the higher educational context are much more difficult to define (Warriner, 2010). Often times the students who come to an IEI program do not fully understand their needs since they simple have little knowledge about the U.S. academy and its expectations as well as life in the U.S. beyond school. IEI teachers should challenge themselves to construct pedagogies that will help multilingual writers identify their needs in each of their classes and work towards their achievement. As an educator, I do not consider limiting my students' education to a toolkit of skills and to the context of an IEI program a human act. Any educator, no matter where he/she teaches, should provide their students with the knowledge to succeed beyond the academy. Book writing helped my students become more confident writers and users of English. It helped them feel multicomponent and capable. I consider it a first step towards their success in and beyond the academy and the U.S.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Protocol for Semi-Structured Interviews with Students/Participants

The semi-structured interviews with students/participants take place bi-weekly for the period of about 3 months or one academic semester.

Sample Interview Questions	
1	Describe a writing experience you have had in _____class this semester.
2	In what way did the class help your writing development?
3	What assignments were particularly meaningful to you and why?
4	What are some questions and issues touched in the class that helped you develop as a writer?
5	How did the class change your opinion about yourself as a writer?
6	In what way has the class shaped your personality?
7	What impact did the class have on you?
8	In what way has the class changed you?
9	What assignments or activities contributed the most to that change?
10	What helped you succeed in the class?
11	What assignments or activities were the most meaningful for you?

Protocol for Classroom Observations

The observations of a focal EAP writing class will be conducted on a weekly basis and last for 75 minutes (the length of the class). The observations will be carried out during one academic semester, which approximately equals 3 moths. Merriam's (2009) checklist of observable elements was considered in the protocol. Thus the protocol includes: the physical setting, the participants, activities and interactions, conversation, subtle factors, and the researcher's behavior.

Observation Field Notes
Researcher:
Site:
Purpose:
Participants present:
Date/time:
Diagram of setting:

Observation Data	Reflective Comments

Advanced Written Communication Syllabus

Time of the Writer

ALI 6100 Advanced Written Communication II
Blue Level
Spring 2013

Instructor: Maria Ananyeva   Class Time: TR, 11:00-12:15

Email: qrdr@iup.edu   Classroom: Eich 106

Web site: http://www.people.iup.edu/qrdr/

Course Description

The course is designed to help the students improve their written communication skills in English. The course aims at developing better writers and readers of written works and at making writing a means of achieving the students' short-term and long-term goals.

Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to

1) Read written works critically, providing meaningful feedback to the writers
2) Discuss their writing and reading processes with the class
3) Demonstrate research skills and appropriate incorporation of research into individual writing
4) Write and edit written works in accordance with the standards of the American Psychological Association
5) Write forewords to books

Tentative Course Schedule

On the days when Workshops take place the students will bring one page of their books to share with the class and receive feedback on. The students can choose any page from their work. The sign-up sheet for the workshops will be provided on the first day of classes.
Detailed schedule is provided on the class wiki accessible at:
http://ali320b.pbworks.com/w/page/62628242/Spring%202013%20schedule

Evaluation: Final grades will be an average of 5 grades:
In the end of the semester the students will submit a BOOK PROJECT consisting of the following chapters:

1. **Chapter 1:** Literature review (as an introduction to the topic) (2-3 pages double-spaced) **25 points**
2. **Chapter 2:** Story/Genre Experiment(5-10 pages double-spaced) **25 points**
3. **Foreword to the book of the classmate** (1-2 typed double-spaced pages **20 points**

BOOK PROJECT (70 points) – The students will be writing a book. The overriding questions to consider before coming up with the topic is "What are you burning to tell the world?" You may think about your personal believes, your passion or experience of something, that you would like to share with the world. **You should begin with a specific question, which will become your book title, and all the chapters of your book will be aimed at answering it from different perspectives and in different forms/genres.**

After much revision the students will publish their books, meaning they will edit and desktop publish them, and hand-in one copy of a published manuscript. Together with the desktop-published Book the students will hand in Book Manuscript Self-Evaluation Sheet. Each book must have a foreword, main text and references section, if applicable.

4. **Response folder (30 points) –** During the semester we will have in-class peer-review workshops. We will have a sign-up sheet for each student in class to bring a page (only one page, 12 point font, single-spaced) from his/her book to share with the rest of the class. Prior to the workshop, those students, who will share their works during that workshop, must hand out a copy* of that one page work to the whole class, including the teacher. The rest of the class will comment on that one-page writing in an appropriate way (see the handout PEER-REVIEW). Then the one-page writing with the response on it will be photocopied. The copy has to be submitted to the teacher on the day of the workshop, and the original returned to the author. Late papers are NOT ACCEPTED.

*free copies can be made on the first and the ground floor of the Stapleton Library

Grades Allocation

90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
59 and below	F

Attendance
Attendance is required to be successful in ALI courses. To benefit from in-class discussion, group work, instruction, and activities students must be present and on time to class. If students come to class late they will be marked tardy, with three tardies counting as an absence. Absences from class may lead to a lower class grade or an incomplete. Instructors and staff meet regularly to discuss concerns about students' attendance.

- Excused Absences: If students have an emergency, family emergency or are very ill, it is their responsibility to communicate with the teacher and provide appropriate documentation.
- Excessive Absences: If students miss more than two classes, they need to discuss an attendance improvement plan with their instructor. If students continue to miss class, they will receive an official attendance warning from the ALI office and may be placed on academic probation or dismissed from the program.

Students must be at the ALI by the final day of orientation. If they cannot be on campus by that time, they may be asked to defer enrollment to the following term.

Personal Electronics and Acceptable Use
Personal electronics such as cell phones and MP3 players should be turned off and put away during classes unless the instructor has specifically given permission for students to use them. If students do not to follow this policy, teachers may count them absent or ask them to leave the class.

Students should use IUP computers for educational purposes and use the IUP network in a responsible fashion. When in the computer lab for class, students need to focus on instruction and not use the computer for personal purposes. Outside of class time, students should use the university computer labs rather than the ALI computer lab.

Classroom Etiquette
IUP has a policy of reciprocal courtesy known as IUP Civility. This policy states that a classroom is a place where everyone should feel safe and respected. Tolerance, understanding, fair treatment, and open-mindedness should be maintained at all times when interacting with fellow students and instructors. Disrespectful and disruptive behavior towards other students or the instructor will not be tolerated and may lead to removal from a class. Serious offenses may lead to academic probation or removal from the program. Students also need to follow IUP rules for classroom spaces. These rules include not smoking in any university building and not eating or drinking in any computer lab.

Disability Accommodation
If you have a disability or if think you might have a disability, please contact IUP's Disability Support Services in the Office of Advising and Testing. Accommodations for disabilities must be approved through Disability Support Services. To make an appointment with Disability Support Services, students may call 724-357-4067. If students need help with this process, they can ask at the ALI Office. Students also need to inform their instructors about accommodations.

The syllabus may be adapted to suit the needs of the students and teacher at any time during the semester.

Appendix D

English 101 College Writing Syllabus

C. M. Hurlbert Office: 354 Sutton Hall
email: hurlbert Office Phone: 7-2322

ENGL 101
COLLEGE WRITING
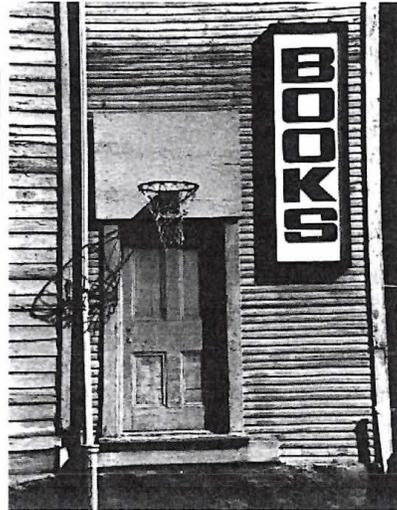
I. Objectives
This class is designed:
1) to help you become a better writer by offering
    you opportunities to compose multiple
    drafts of writing.
2) to help you improve your writing by helping you
    to experiment with your writing.
3) to help you become a better writer by becoming
    a better reader of your own writing and the
    writing of others.
4) to provide ways for you to evaluate your writing.
5) to create ways for making writing a means for
    accomplishing personally meaningful and socially significant goals.

II. Evaluation Note: Assignments may be changed to meet the needs of the class.

Your final grade will be an average of 6 grades:
1) Book Manuscript, 2) Published Book, 3) Foreword, 4) Response Folder, 5) Effort,
and 6) Final Exam

Description of each assignment and grade:

1) Book Manuscript
You will be writing a book this semester. The book is to be based on the question: What are you
burning to tell the world? The book should begin with one specific event, located in one specific
time and place. The subject matter can then be explored from there. Your book will be a memoir
of sorts, for it will chronicle your personal investment in your topic. The style of your book will be
established through class discussion, but its length will be at least **15 single–spaced (with an extra
space skipped between paragraphs and dialogue blocked), typed pages** long. Your book must
consist of new writing that has not been handed in for any other class at any time in your life. The
manuscript will represent how you ideally envision the look, feel, and sound of your book.

2) Published Book
Later in the semester, after much revision, you will publish your book. In class we will discuss
desktop publishing, including fonts, margins, page–size, paper selection, cover–art, formatting,
page–cutting, binding materials (spiral, cloth, plastic, do–it–yourself, etc.). You will then hand in
one copy of the published book (plus the **Book Manuscript** and **Manuscript Self-Evaluation Sheet.
Please don't lose these!**). This copy will be used for evaluation, and it will be kept in my files. Each
book may have a foreword (see foreword below) and will include a main text, and a works cited
section (if necessary). We will discuss other optional inclusions in class (See Outreach Letter).

3) Foreword
This semester you will read a book manuscript written by one of your classmates. You will then
compose a foreword for their book. This foreword will be **two and a half single–spaced typed
pages** long. In it, you will discuss the key issue in the book and connect your classmate's book to

Appendix E

Needs Assessment Questionnaire

Name_____
Please, answer the questions below. Fill out blank spaces where necessary. Be as detailed as you can.

1. Indicate your educational level achieved (High School Diploma, BA, MA etc.): _____

2. Indicate your major/majors:_____

3. Indicate your interests:_____

4. How would you evaluate your writing ability? Why?

5. What are characteristics of a GOOD WRITER? Do you consider yourself to be it?

6. Do you think your written skills have to be improved? If yes, in what way?

7. Do you write outside of school? What? Why?

8. What is your attitude to writing?

9. What would you like to learn in this class?

10. How do you prefer to receive feedback? Indicate in front of each option on a scale from 1-3 (1 is the least likely; 3 Is the most likely). Make sure not to skip a bullet.
    a. From teacher
    b. From peers
    c. In person
    d. In discussion with the whole class
    e. Detailed feedback with lots of red ink on the paper
    f. General feedback about the quality of the paper

g. Focused on the grammar and punctuation mainly
h. Focused on the message and ideas
i. Focused on the structure of the paper mainly

11. Any suggestions for the class, for me? Any additional comments?

Appendix F

Progress-Assessment Form

Student Name_____

1. How do you feel about the class so far?

2. Do you think you can finish your book on time?

3. What is/are the biggest challenge/challenges for you in this class?

4. What do you think about integrating writing workshops into the class?

5. Mark the workshops which interest you and suggest your own below:
   a. Research writing workshop
   b. Technical writing workshop: resume, letter of interest or cover letter
   c. Developing a written critique (response to the reading)-focused on the development of critical thinking skills and written argumentation
   d. …
   e. …

6. Do you think you can develop academic writing skills while writing a book? Why

7. What is academic writing, in your opinion?

8. Any suggestions to me?

Appendix G

Self-Evaluation of Published Books Form

Complete using post-it notes
Student Name_____
Book Title_____

1. Locate each major revision you made to your book as you prepared it for publication. On post-it notes explain each one of these revisions, including why you made it. Then place a post-it note over the revision. You may also explain any general or global revisions you have made in the space below.

2. Explain the process you used to revise and publish your book. How many hours did the revising and publishing take? How much effort? What was effective or ineffective in your work process? Did you use the Writing Center?

3. Locate a shining moment or two in your book. Put an "S" on a post-it note, explain why it is a shining moment and place the note over it/them.

4. What parts of your book would you still like to rewrite? Put an "R" on a post-it note; explain why you think these passages are not as effective as they could be and how you might have revised these passages to make them more effective. Place the post-it note over them.

5. Describe the significance of the font, size, layout and appearance of your book. How does the book's appearance add to or detract from the meaning or impact of your book?

6. Describe the change/changes you made in your writing process this semester as a result of watching or talking to someone else in the classroom (say who it was and how you learned it) and say if you have used this knowledge in your writing process.
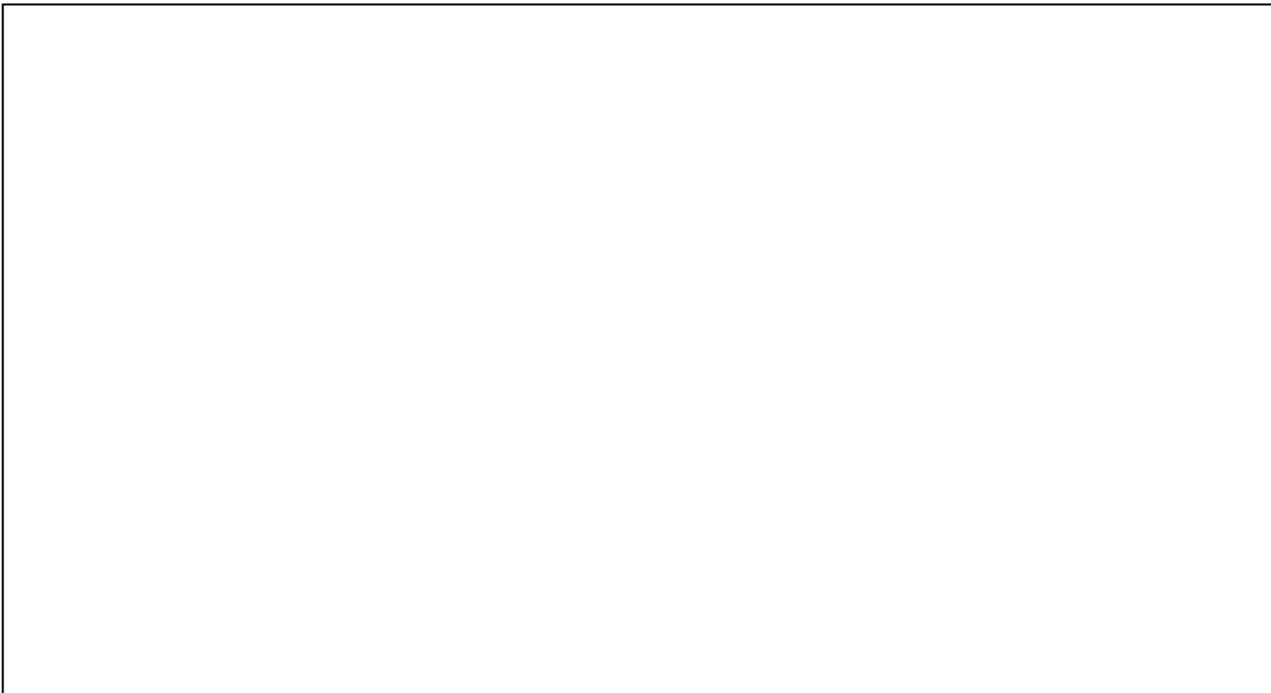
7. What grade would you assign to your finished book? Please, explain why (part of your justification should be to explain the book's personal and social significance, as well as its achievement).

Appendix H

Self-Evaluation of Peer-Response Folder Form

Student Name_____

9. How many workshop papers have you responded to and included in your response folder?

   ┌───┐
   │   │
   └───┘

10. Have you written four comments on these workshop papers? How many of them did you not do four comments for? If you did more than four comments on some papers, how many papers had more than four comments? Also, explain why you did more than four and anything else you think I should know as I evaluate your folder.

   ┌───┐
   │   │
   │   │
   │   │
   │   │
   │   │
   │   │
   │   │
   │   │
   └───┘

11. Did you include a short "letter to the author" in the end of each paper you responded to? If you did not, explain for how many and why. Quote your best and your weakest "letters" here and tell which papers they are on. Analyze them.

12. How did your responses change from the beginning to the end of the semester? Why did these changes occur?

13. What are some things you've learned about writing from responding to workshop papers written by your peers? Quote specific responses you made (name the papers they are on) to show you've learned these things.

14. Did you hand back all of your workshop responses on time? Please, offer whatever explanations you think I should have as I evaluate your response folder.

Final Class Evaluation Form

Student Name_____

Dear all
Please, answer the questions truthfully and thoroughly, since your feedback will mean a
better class for students, who will take it in the future semesters.
Maria

1. What, in your opinion, was the main goal of this class? Would you agree or disagree with such a goal?

2. Have you improved you writing in this class? In what way and what contributed to it? Be specific here (if no improvements, why?)

3. What are top three things you have learnt in this class?
   a. ..
   b. ..
   c. ..

4. Were the workshops useful? Give your feedback on each one

   a. Research paper

   b. Letter of admission

   c. Critique paper

5. Were peer-response workshops useful for you? What would you change/improve in doing those?

6. Was grading fair? Did it meet your expectations? Explain.

7. What would you remove/add to this class to make it better? Why?

8. Do you think you are a writer? Why?

9. How would you describe yourself as a writer? How good are you? What are your strong points?

10. Do you think "Book writing" made you a better writer? Why "yes" or why "no"?

11. What was the most meaningful experience for you in this writing class? Why?

Appendix J

Research Chapter Process and Structure Worksheet

1. Develop your Topic (narrow it down)

Example: Writing-Writing in English-Writing stories in English in an ESL class

The best strategy is to turn your topic into a research question to be answered, so that the outcome of your paper becomes very clear (avoid questions starting with "How", substitute "How" with in "What way").

Example: What is the impact of getting ESL students to write stories in a writing class?

2. Write up a short introduction in which you include the topic (what you will write about), rationale* (why will you write about it), and your research question.

* rationale can be your personal interest, a "gap" in the literature on this topic, or a continuation of an active discussion about a certain topic, etc.

3. Conduct Research

Find articles that will help you answer your research question. **For instance, I found an article by Dr. Gian Pagnucci about writing stories in ESL classes** (one article is never enough, usually professor requires a certain amount of references in your paper)

4 *(optional). Develop and write up your ARGUMENT

ARGUMENT is your idea, your argument that you offer to your reader about your topic. Usually it is formed by your own experiences and visions about your topic and the research and reading you have done about it.

To write up an argument, think how you can answer your research question (after reading all the information you collected) in one sentence? Write this sentence up.

Don't try to give a detailed answer to the question-details will go in the body of your paper. Give a broader answer to it in your argument.

For instance, my argument is: Writing stories in ESL classes develop students as writers and readers

5. Make an outline of your paper(your paper's goal is to "unpack" your thesis statement or just to simply provide a complete answer to your research question!!!)

For example:

1. **Introduction** (I will mention my topic, talk about why I chose that topic, and FINISH with my thesis statement)
2. **Body** (a logically developed sequence of ideas (minimum 3) with sufficient support)
3. **Conclusion** (detailed answer to your research question)

Note: you can develop your outline in different ways, depending on the goal of your research paper or essay. For instance, if you want to convince someone in something or argue with someone, think about the way you argue and an effective way to argue in your paper. You can develop just one aspect of your topic in the outline or cover a number of them, represent view points by different researchers (if that's your goal) or back up your view point by those of other researchers'. So this part is important and you should think about it very well. The most important thing is that you need to keep your thesis in mind while making a paper outline. Your outline has to support your thesis, they have to be "one whole". If you argue about the effectiveness of writing stories, but your paper has no support of this argument, it will fail (just like if it was a conversation).

6. Write up a draft (the skill of paraphrasing-read a paper linked here before writing your draft!!!)

7. *Edit your draft (APA6) (follow the link to check APA format guidelines).

* Try to follow APA as much as you can, but do not kill yourself over it. Most important is to cite your sources and have a list of "References" in the end of the paper to avoid plagiarizing!

8. Submit to the teacher for feedback (see the due date on the schedule)

P.S.

There are a number of strategies to structure your research paper. The most frequent I use is to structure it around the research you have done or around your own idea backed up by the research done.

For instance, you are interested in "Effects of culture shock on students from China, who study in the US". If the goal of your paper is merely **informative** (i.e. to inform the reader of the problem), than your paper has to be built around a large number of research articles/items that you have collected for this paper. Your research question will be: "What are the effects of culture shock on students from China, who study in the US?" Your thesis statement will be very broad and introductory and start with something like: the goal of this paper is to introduce a variety of viewpoints on the effects of culture shock on students from Chine ..., and your body paragraphs will represent a variety of viewpoints from the researchers' works as well as your conclusion, which will summarize the works that you have read.

If your goal is **persuasive or argumentative** (i.e. to develop your own view point on the issue or to argue with the research you've done), then both thesis statement and body get adjusted to represent your view point (which you still have to back up with research) or your position in an argument with someone (which you also back up with your research). Your thesis statement becomes your own claim about the topic or the essence of your argument with someone else.

Appendix K

Research Chapter Worksheet

1. Paraphrasing Exercise

5 Steps to Effective Paraphrasing

1. Reread the original passage until you understand its full meaning.
2. Set the original aside, and write your paraphrase on a note card.
3. Check your rendition with the original to make sure that your version accurately expresses all the essential information in a new form.
4. Use quotation marks to identify any unique term or phraseology you have borrowed exactly from the source.
5. Record the source (including the page) on your note card so that you can credit it easily if you decide to incorporate the material into your paper.

Directions: On a separate piece of paper, write a paraphrase of each of the following passages. Try not to look back at the original passage.

1. "The Antarctic is the vast source of cold on our planet, just as the sun is the source of our heat, and it exerts tremendous control on our climate," [Jacques] Cousteau told the camera. "The cold ocean water around Antarctica flows north to mix with warmer water from the tropics, and its upwellings help to cool both the surface water and our atmosphere. Yet the fragility of this regulating system is now threatened by human activity." From "Captain Cousteau," Audubon (May 1990):17.

2. The twenties were the years when drinking was against the law, and the law was a bad joke because everyone knew of a local bar where liquor could be had. They were the years when organized crime ruled the cities, and the police seemed powerless to do anything against it. Classical music was forgotten while jazz spread throughout the land, and men like Bix Beiderbecke, Louis Armstrong, and Count Basie became the heroes of the young. The flapper was born in the twenties, and with her bobbed hair and short skirts, she symbolized, perhaps more than anyone or anything else, America's break with the past. From Kathleen Yancey, English 102 Supplemental Guide (1989): 25.

3. Of the more than 1000 bicycling deaths each year, three-fourths are caused by head injuries. Half of those killed are school-age children. One study concluded that wearing a bike helmet can reduce the risk of head injury by 85 percent. In an accident, a bike helmet absorbs the shock and cushions the head. From "Bike Helmets: Unused Lifesavers," Consumer Reports (May 1990): 348.

4. Matisse is the best painter ever at putting the viewer at the scene. He's the most realistic of

all modern artists, if you admit the feel of the breeze as necessary to a landscape and the smell of oranges as essential to a still life. "The Casbah Gate" depicts the well-known gateway Bab el Aassa, which pierces the southern wall of the city near the sultan's palace. With scrubby coats of ivory, aqua, blue, and rose delicately fenced by the liveliest gray outline in art history, Matisse gets the essence of a Tangier afternoon, including the subtle presence of the bowaab, the sentry who sits and surveys those who pass through the gate. From Peter Plagens, "Bright Lights." Newsweek (26 March 1990): 50.

5. While the Sears Tower is arguably the greatest achievement in skyscraper engineering so far, it's unlikely that architects and engineers have abandoned the quest for the world's tallest building. The question is: Just how high can a building go? Structural engineer William LeMessurier has designed a skyscraper nearly one-half mile high, twice as tall as the Sears Tower. And architect Robert Sobel claims that existing technology could produce a 500-story building. From Ron Bachman, "Reaching for the Sky." Dial (May 1990).

1. **How should your resources look in your text?**

The original passage:

Students frequently overuse direct quotation in taking notes, and as a result they overuse quotations in the final [research] paper. Probably only about 10% of your final manuscript should appear as directly quoted matter. Therefore, you should strive to limit the amount of exact transcribing of source materials while taking notes. Lester, J. (2006).*Writing Research Papers*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

A legitimate paraphrase:

In research papers students often quote excessively, failing to keep quoted material down to a desirable level. Since the problem usually originates during note taking, it is essential to minimize the material recorded verbatim (Lester, 1976, p.47).

References: (last page of your paper)

Lester, J. (2006). *Writing Research Papers.* Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Additional Resources:

References: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/05/

In-text citations: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/02/

General APA format: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/

Sample paper: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/18/

PEER-REVIEW

❖ In our class peer-review will be focused on the meaning of the written work. When you are reading through a one-page work of your peer, concentrate on the meaning of what you are reading and how it is received by you.

❖ You are to leave 4 comments on the margins of the one-page single-spaced paper.

❖ Each comment should start with: *How would it change your meaning if or HWICYMI...*

❖ On the back of the page you should leave a comment (about one paragraph long), which would be directed to the writer. You can write about your overall impressions about the work, your connection with it, your wishes to the writer. Sign your name at the bottom of that paragraph and start the paragraph with the name of the writer, who you are leaving it for.

❖ You do not need to concentrate on grammar and punctuation, unless the absence or presence of those distort the meaning for you as a reader.

❖ Make a copy of your response to the written work of your peer or peers. Return the original to the peer/peers (the authors of the manuscript). Hand in the copy of your response/s to the teacher on the day of the workshop. If the teacher doesn't receive your copy/ies, you will not be given a grade for your response. No late papers are accepted.

nose-ring and used to frequent the house and kiss our friend from time to time, causing him much pain and no small dismay by her nose-ring. And although he had the greatest dread of going to the right and encountering the two dogs of the Aduites, or of going to the left and encountering the evil of Said and his wife, Kawabis, still he used to find in every part of this somewhat limited and restricted world of his, various kinds of amusement and games, which would occupy the entire day.

The memory of children is indeed a strange thing, or shall we say that the memory of man plays strange tricks when he tries to recall the events of his childhood; for it depicts some incidents as clearly as though they had only happened a short time before, whereas it blots out others as though they had never passed within his ken.

For example, our friend remembers the fence and the cultivated land which lay alongside it and the canal which marked the end of the earth, and Said, and Kawabis and the Aduite dogs; but when he tries to recollect the passing of all these things he cannot grasp anything. It is just as though he went to sleep

Left margin annotations:
HWICYM if you talked more about them!

I like the way you ponder about things like memory

Right margin annotations:
HWICYM if you explai who whose dogsare

I like the way you show the place to the reader —very vivid!

12

Dear Hussein,

I connect to your story. I enjoy the way you write. The abundance of details you provide helps me to portray the time and place of your being and travel with you through the story.

I wish you the best in continuing your very engaging story.

Maria

Literature Review Rubric

In order to generate a literature review you will need to find **3-5** research articles for your review, and all of them should address the guiding question you generated for your review. The major sections of the paper are outlined here:

I.   Introduction
- Introduce your topic and define any key terms useful for contextualizing the topic.
- Give some background information about your topic
    o using a theory OR
    o using ideas from published sources OR
    o discussing an issue (e.g., problematize your topic)
- Articulate your guiding question
- Articulate the importance of your topic (Why is this an important topic? Who will benefit from reading about it?)
- Explain what the goal of your literature review is (How will it add to the current literature?)

II.   Method
- What keywords did you use to search for relevant research articles?
- What databases did you use?
- What were your criteria for inclusion and exclusion of studies?

III.   Results
- Introduce each article your reviewed in the following way and in order, one by one:
    o **In one or two paragraphs, address these questions (this is your summary of article # 1):**
    o What is its purpose/research question(s)?
    o Who were the participants?
    o What was the context? (e.g., a high school in Canada; a language program in the U.S).
    o What were the data sources? (be brief)
    o What are the key findings that provide an answer(s) to your guiding question for the review?
    o **In a new paragraph, analyze the article:**
    o What is your interpretation of the findings?
    o What are your concerns about this article to which you want to alert the reader?

*** DON'T FORGET TO USE TRANSITIONAL SENTENCES WHEN MOVING FROM

IV.   Discussion & Conclusion
        This is the synthesis part:
- What are the similarities and differences between the studies reviewed above?
- What should we take away from these study findings?
- What do their results suggest for practice?
- What are your questions for future research? (What is the research gap? What research question(s) will you ask to fill that gap?)

Appendix N

Students' Experiences Writing Books: Common Themes

What did you enjoy the most while writing the book?	What were some challenges and downsides that you had experienced when writing your book?
"word play" in the narrative, the process of developing different ways to express myself	Translation issues when writing research
Researching " personal topics"	The struggle to express "self" while writing the narrative
Creativity when designing the book: cover page, font, book size, headings, etc.	Lack of time conducting research
The social aspect of book construction: "going beyond a desk and a computer"	Reading-comprehension difficulties while compiling bibliography for the research
Peer cooperation in foreword writing	The initial fear of research writing
The anticipation of a finished book	Organizational and structural problems when compiling the book. Making all of its parts connected.
A constant flow of ideas, "writing with ease", especially in the narrative	Too much time was spent on readings
"Losing" negative emotions and finding a resolution to a life issue through book writing	Being nervous before the reading of the student's own one-page excerpt from the narrative
The joy and ease of "writing up memories"	
The pride of a finished "real" book	
"Learning new things", especially related to research writing	
Reading the narrative page in front of the class	
Providing and receiving feedback during the readings	
Learning about different cultures and lives of people in different countries during the readings	
Having everyone involved in discussions during the readings	
Getting so much support and encouragement during the readings	
Learning "other ways" of meaning making as they exist in different languages	