The relationship between L2 students' writing experiences and their perceived poetry writing ability

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Abstract

This paper looks at how L2 students' writing experiences relate to the way they think they can write poems and to further investigate if any types of writing experiences contribute to their perceived poetry writing ability. The paper starts by bringing up the value of introducing poetry writing to L2 students. Then, the literature review section highlights the characteristics of L2 poetry and the values of writing poetry in L2 writing classrooms. For the methodology, semi-structured interviews were used to elicit the participants' understanding of their writing experiences. Additionally, a rating scale was used for the participants to identify their perceived capability of writing poetry. All 18 participants who were from regions that included countries from Eastern Asia, Middle East, or Africa, were L2 students from an M.A. TESOL program located in the USA. Through a hierarchical cluster analysis, the findings categorized these students as having five different types of writing experiences. Through a Pearson correlation test, the researcher also examined if any of the specific writing experiences were found to correspond either positively or negatively with the perceived poetry writing ability. The data suggest that if students recall more grammar and structured writing experiences, they are more inclined to perceive that they have a lower perceived poetry writing ability. Finally, the study seeks to contribute to educators' understanding about the potential of poetry writing instruction in L2 writing classrooms. It can trigger the exploration for L2 students to find their own personal purposes of writing as multilingual writers.

Keywords: meaningful literacy; poetry writing; grammar; teaching writing; second language writing

1. Introduction

The following is a poem by a Malaysian student presented in Hanauer (2010, p. 7):

"White Paper"

She stares at the paper
It stares blankly at her back
Without any traces of ink
All clean, white and smooth.

She picks up her pen
Gripping it tightly
Time is passing swiftly
She could not think of any

Whispers were heard from a distance
Chairs dragged from the floor above
Doors were slammed by the neighbors
She needs some peace and silence.

20 years of memories?
All to be reflected in a poem
Could that even be possible?
She begins to shed tears.

Hold on.
Her pen started to move.
It was a piece of paper
But with words and scribbles of all kind

To her delight,
Now she got it
Her first poem!

By acknowledging the existence of diverse definitions of poetry in different disciplines, I need to provide the notion of poetry used in this study. Hanauer (2004) defines second language (L2) poetry as "a literacy text that presents the experiences, thoughts, and feelings of the writer through self-referential use of language that creates for the reader and writer a new understanding of the experience, thought, or feeling expressed in the text" (p. 10). This statement focuses on the deep meaning that enables writers or readers of poetry to discover a more personalized and developed understanding of life experiences. This definition of poetry[1] is applied in this study because it is very useful for the empirical

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[1] Based on this definition of poetry that focuses on expression and meaning, some may wonder what makes writing poetry different from prose if both genres construct meanings

perspective. Using this perspective to examine poetry enables us to see its more fluid and spontaneous aspects, especially if we are dealing with poems written by L2 multilingual writers, who are very capable of playing with words, meanings, and structures with multicultural and multilingual potential.

Some might wonder why poetry writing should be introduced to L2 writers when the students primarily want to learn academic writing. I acknowledge the value and the need of academic writing for L2 students, and I do not intend in this study to advocate replacing it with other kinds of writing instruction. Instead, I hope to emphasize the value of inviting L2 students to write poems in their L2 as meaningful literacy instruction in language classrooms. A body of literature has shown that there is value of teaching poetry writing (e.g., self-discovery, engagement, or a sense of confidence) to L2 students (see e.g., Chamcharatsri, 2009; Garvin, 2013; Hanauer, 2004, 2010, 2011a, 2011b; Iida, 2008, 2010, 2012b). From my own standpoint as a teacher, the main purpose of teaching poetry writing to L2 students is not to teach writing skills; instead, the goal is to stimulate the connection of writing with personal experiences and instilling passion towards writing. With that being said, some might further wonder why poetry should be taught rather than other genres. Iida's (2012a) robust empirical results showed that the benefits of writing poetry can be transferred to different genres, such as prose. In addition, because some L2 students might feel that they cannot write poems because poetry is considered a genre for professional or gifted poets only, it is more likely that L2 students will gain a sense of confidence and authorship once they have been guided through the process of writing poetry in their L2. As Bomer (1995) stated, "our experiences form us; what we understand of experiences is what we understand ourselves to be, our identities" (p. 156). Students' writing experiences shape the ways they become writers. Therefore, if we consider poetry writing a significant subject matter to teach L2 students, then educators need to take into account how L2 students' writing experiences contribute to their perceptions of poetry writing. Thus, the purpose of this study is to investigate how L2 students' writing experiences relate to their perceived poetry writing ability.

The paper is divided into four sections. First, I contextualize the study by discussing literature on writing poetry in an L2. Second, I describe the methods of this study by presenting information on the participants, the data collection procedures and data analysis. Third, I present the findings of the study concerning five types of writing experiences. Last, I discuss the findings as well as the current study's limitations and suggestions for future research.

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and expressions. While I acknowledge such distinctions are under heavy debate, going into them is not the point of this paper.

2. Studies on writing poetry in a second language

There is an increasing body of literature focusing on L2 poetry writing (see Cahnmann-Taylor, Bleyle, Hwang, & Zhang, 2017; Cahnmann-Taylor, Zhang, Bleyle, & Hwang, 2015; Chamcharatsri, 2009, 2013; Garvin, 2013; Hanauer, 2004, 2010, 2011a, 2011b, 2014, 2015; Iida, 2008, 2010, 2012a, 2012b; Liao 2016; Ostrow & Chang, 2012; Tin, 2010). However, among them, only Hanauer's (2010) and Iida's (2012a) studies applied computational corpus analysis to explore the characteristics of L2 poetry. Their studies provided empirical insights into what L2 poetry writing looks like.

Some might assume that poetry is written by writers with innate talents. They might not think that L2 writers are capable of writing poetry. In order to demonstrate that L2 students are capable of writing poetry in an additional language, Hanauer (2010) presented a longitudinal study investigating 81 ESL students with a total corpus of 844 poems from the years 2003-2009. The data were presented in seven categories: text size, lexical category, Lexical Frequency Profile (LFP)[2] (Laufer & Nation, 1995), poetic features, thematic organization, lexical context, and expressed emotion. He found that the average text size is 53 words with an average of 10 lines with five words in each line. The data showed that the L2 students tend to compose descriptive or narrative poems in first person singular with high-frequency vocabulary. The common poetic features used in a poem are imagery (78.9%) and sound patterns (73.93%). The poems also include a high-percentage of emotional vocabulary. Hanauer (2010) argued that language learners are capable of expressing their feelings and personal experiences through writing poetry.

To further confirm that L2 students can write poetry in English, Iida (2012a) compared and contrasted his EFL haiku data set with Hanauer's (2010) ESL poetry one. Both studies examined the characteristics of a poetry corpus using several categories, including word numbers, linguistic features, word frequency band and percentage, high frequency words/usages, and percentage of words from total word count according to affective processes. Iida found the average size of 20 EFL students' haikus was 12.59 words in three lines, 3.63 words in the first line, 4.99 words in the second line, and 3.92 words in the third line. According to Iida, the short text size of the EFL students' haikus is due to its nature of three-line structure with 5-7-5-syllable patterns. Similar to Hanauer's results, Iida's study showed that the EFL haiku writing is short, descriptive, direct, and personal.

If now one can better understand that L2 students are capable of writing poetry in an L2, one may still wonder if writing poetry in a second language benefits L2 students. Some may doubt the educational value of applying L2 poetry

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[2] It is a tool created by Laufer and Nation (1995) to measure the percentages of words second language learners use in their compositions at different vocabulary frequency levels.

writing in the language classroom where the aim is to learn academic writing. Iida (2012a) conducted an empirical study that explored the influence of haiku writing on prose writing. Twenty EFL students wrote an essay within 40 minutes before the beginning of a 6-week haiku writing project. After finishing the haiku project, the 20 students participated in a post-test writing a second essay within the same timeframe. He reported that there were statistically significant differences between the two textual features: word count (from 117.00 mean to 156.05) and negation[3] (from 0.91 mean to 0.34). The participants were able to write more words in the post-test essay, which he interpreted to mean that haiku writing contributes to students' capability to express their thoughts more fluently. Also, the participants used fewer negations in the post-test, which Iida felt indicated that the students tended to write their prose in a more direct way compared to the pre-test. Thus, Iida proposed that EFL haiku writing benefits EFL students and its value can be transferred to a different genre like prose.

In line with this, studies have also shown that writing poetry in an L2 is valuable because student writers develop linguistically (Hanauer, 2010, 2011b; Iida, 2012a; Ostrow & Chang, 2012; Tin, 2010). Scholars have proposed that writing poetry in an L2 helps student writers construct voice as well as express thoughts and feelings (Cahnmann-Taylor et al., 2015, 2017; Chamcharatsri, 2009, 2013; Garvin, 2013; Hanauer, 2004, 2010, 2011a, 2011b, 2015; Iida, 2008, 2010, 2012b; Liao, 2016; Ostrow & Chang, 2012). Writing poetry thus allows L2 student writers to progress on two levels: personal and educational. On the one hand, writing poetry motivates English learners to explore the language focusing on the self-expression of their personal experiences and co-constructs interactions among writers, readers, and texts. On the other hand, writing poetry can improve language learners' linguistic competence and writing skills for other genres.

In sum, we have looked at the characteristics of L2 poetry examined in studies that indicate that L2 students are capable of writing poetry in an L2. We have also seen that L2 poetry writing is regarded as a process that is free, expressive, and valuable to L2 writers. If poetry writing is a suitable and valuable approach for L2 learners at both personal and educational levels, we could apply it in our language classrooms. Then, the next logical question to ask would be: How do our L2 students with various past writing experiences respond to this poetry writing approach? Therefore, this study explores the possible relationship between L2 students' writing experiences and their perceived poetry writing ability.

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[3] It is a grammatical term that indicates a sentence involves a negative word, such as *not, don't* or *won't.*

3. Method

To investigate the possible relationship between writing experiences and perceived poetry writing ability, this study was conducted by means of interviews and rating scales. In the following subsections, I present the information about the participants, data collection, and data analysis of this study.

3.1. Participants

All 18 participants were L2 students—coming from countries from Eastern Asia, Middle East, or Africa—in an M.A. TESOL program located in the USA (see Appendix A for more background information about each participant). The rationale for choosing this group of students was that they were advanced ESL writers who had devoted themselves to learning English for years. Some were English teachers already, and some may have already become ones by the time of publication. Their status and backgrounds gave them significant hands-on writing experiences as well as academic knowledge to be used to reflect on their learning journey. Therefore, their understanding and responses are important and valuable for the current study. Participation in this study was in agreement with the protocol approved by the host institution.

The majority of the L2 students' poetry writing experiences came from an M.A. TESOL class where the participants were required to produce a poetic inquiry in which they wrote ten original poems concerning their L2 learning experiences and then analyzed those poems. In a different M.A. TESOL course, three participants produced an original poem in a mini-lesson led by one of their classmates. Some participants had also written poetry because of their own personal interests in addition to one of the two M.A. TESOL experiences described above. Out of the 18 participants, five had not had prior experiences writing poetry. The participants had experienced English writing instruction from 2 to 17 years, and the range from eight to 15 years was the most frequent.

3.2. Data collection

Two methods were used in this study: interviews and rating scales. In order to yield rich information and facilitate understanding of each participant's perspective on their writing experiences, in the interviews the participants were asked to share at least three positive and three negative English writing experiences (see Appendix B for interview questions). Each participant was interviewed once. Also, each interview lasted around 40 minutes and was audio-recorded. A rating scale presented in Figure 1 was used with one of the interview questions:

"Do you think you are capable of writing poetry? Why?" The use of rating scales enabled me to measure each participant's perceived capability of writing poetry and to compare and contrast the participants' responses. Some scholars may question the application of a self-assessed rating scale as a standardized measurement; yet I want to emphasize not only that the focus of the study is on perceived poetry writing ability but also the fact that most of the participants (13 out of 18) had actual experiences in writing poetry.
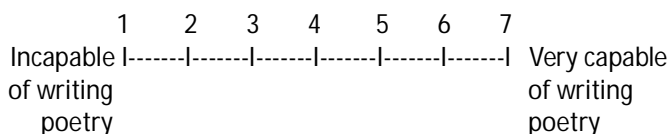
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                 1    2    3    4    5    6    7
Incapable I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I  Very capable
of writing                                                  of writing
   poetry                                                     poetry
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Figure 1 Rating scale

3.3. Data analysis

To examine the relationship between L2 students' writing experiences and their perceived poetry writing ability, the main data utilized for this study were the interview questions concerning the participants' three positive and three negative writing experiences along with the questions related to their perceived poetry writing ability. The audio data were transcribed and the participants' names replaced by pseudonyms. Next, I analyzed the interview data according to a coding system. Examining the participants' three positive and three negative writing experiences, I created a coding system that contained 11 categories of the writing experiences the participants had shared in the interviews (see the note under Table 1). These categories were created out of the themes and ideas mentioned in the participants' descriptions of their writing experiences (see Appendix C for the definitions and examples of the categories). Also, I counted the frequencies of each participant's writing experiences occurring in their descriptions of three negative and three positive writing experiences in the interview. However, if one described writing experiences involving different themes, all themes were counted. Through this, each participant was represented by a different combination of his or her specific writing experiences. Then, statistical analysis described in the next paragraph was conducted to examine the possible relationship between these different writing experiences and the perceived poetry writing ability yielded from the rating scales. I listed these frequencies and the rating scale results in Table 1.

Table 1 Frequencies of participants' writing experience categories and their perceived poetry writing ability (rating scale scores; *N* = 18)

Participant	Categories of the coding system											Rating scale score
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	
Amanda	1	0	2	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	3.5
Amir	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	5
Bob	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1
Charles	1	0	1	2	1	1	0	1	2	0	1	4
Ember	1	0	2	3	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	6
Enzo	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	1	0	2	1	5
Grace	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	3	1	1	1	5
Iris	1	0	0	3	0	1	2	0	1	0	0	4.5
Joseph	1	0	1	2	0	0	1	2	0	0	1	2.5
Joy	1	0	1	2	0	1	2	2	0	0	0	6
Kelly	2	0	1	2	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	4
Liz	0	0	3	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	7
Mike	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	4
Rania	2	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3
Roger	1	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	3
Sarah	1	0	4	1	0	2	0	0	1	0	2	6
Thapelo	1	1	0	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	5
Zak	0	2	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	6

Note. A = Grammar and structure, B = Components in the composition, C = Tests,
D = Interesting topics and free writing, E = Academic paper and research writing, F = Creative writing,
G = Topics chosen by teachers and uninteresting topics, H = Essays and journals, I = Writing style, J = Self-need and self-expectation mismatch, K = Feedback from the instructor.
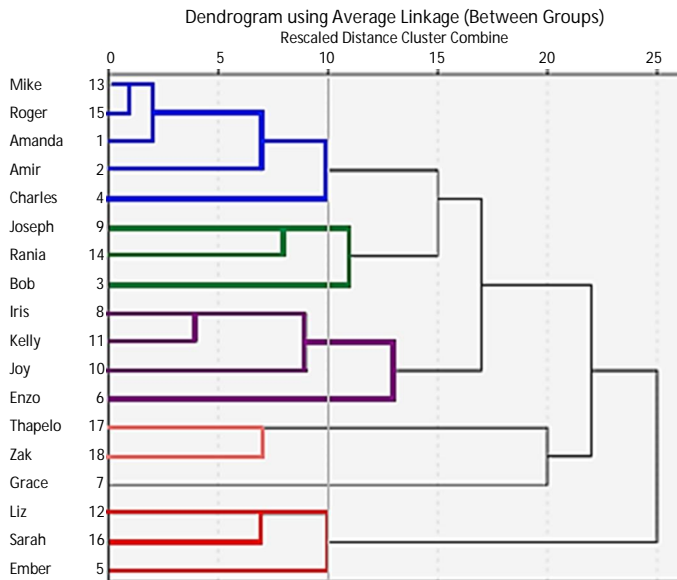

Figure 2 Dendrogram

A statistical method known as hierarchical cluster analysis[4] was utilized to explore these participants' writing experiences. Each individual participant's writing experiences represented different combinations, and this statistical approach helps to find similar patterns among participants and creates groups of similar participants through using multiple correlations. Since the data were coded statements about writing experiences, the groups identified by means of the cluster analysis represent shared sets of patterns of writing experiences. This means that each identified group includes participants with similar combinations of past writing experiences and perceived poetry writing ability. Therefore, by examining each individual group, the possible relationship between different writing experiences and perceived poetry writing ability can be studied. The groups were defined through the analysis of a visual representation in the form of the dendrogram depicted in Figure 2. The grouping was decided by the distance under 10.

4. Results: How writing experiences relate to perceived poetry writing ability

As presented in the dendrogram, there were five identified groups. These five groups showcase five different representative writing experiences that L2 students encountered and how those experiences relate to how they perceive their capability in writing poetry. In this section, I examine the possible relationships between the five different types of writing experiences and the perceived poetry writing ability.

4.1. The relationship of focus on assessment and perceived poetry writing ability

The first group of concern (Group 1) includes five students whose experiences with writing focused on *testing*, as shown in Table 2. These five participants addressed various examinations, such as the GRE, TOEFL, or school final exams. Table 2 also shows that the five students' writing experiences were frequently about the feedback they received. Most of them focused on good *feedback from instructors*, which encouraged them greatly, while three of them recalled negative feedback or poor grades as discouraging, frustrating, and embarrassing. Take Roger, for example, who described his negative assessment-based writing experience in the form of examinations:

> *I took the TOEFL and . . . I did good in the speaking and listening also in the reading part. But . . . I didn't perform well like very well like in the writing, so that was . . . shocking to me . . . it was actually . . . the worst score I took it. At the second time and*

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[4] Please refer to Yim and Ramdeen (2015) for more information about the use of hierarchical cluster analysis in research.

*it was . . . way better than the first one, like convincing at least to me and also to . . .
who . . . accepted me here in the States.*

Roger further described his positive assessment-based writing experiences:

*I got . . . good feedback from . . . professor . . . it was like a 15-page paper, and he
wrote something thoughtful paper, although that guy is really like well known for his
tough grading . . . and I know like some of my classmates . . . got B in the assignment,
so you know I was full of myself at that time and I was proud of that.*

As shown, this type of writing experience provides a certain evaluation to student writers in different forms: grades, written comments, or oral assessments. Therefore, the experience I am referring to as *focus on assessment* is a type of writing experience where L2 students are aware of the connections between the writers, the texts, and the readers.

Table 2 The categories of writing experiences of Group 1 members and their rating scale scores

Category	Amanda	Amir	Charles	Mike	Roger
Grammar and structure	1	0	1	1	1
Components in the composition	0	0	0	0	0
Tests	2	2	1	1	2
Interesting topics and free writing	2	1	2	1	1
Academic paper and research writing	0	0	1	0	0
Creative writing	0	1	1	0	1
Topics chosen by teachers and uninteresting topics	0	0	0	0	0
Essays and journals	1	1	1	0	0
Writing style	0	0	2	0	0
Self-need and self-expectation mismatch	0	0	0	0	0
Feedback from the instructor	2	1	1	3	3
Rating scale score	3.5	5	4	4	3

Group 1's rating scale scores are average. Students in Group 1 believe that they can write poetry, but there are some language barriers or more knowledge to learn. Take Charles for example:

*The reason is . . . I believe because I can write . . . just not that advanced . . . I won't
say . . . I'm incapable of writing poetry because . . . last year I proved that I could . . .
but . . . I wouldn't say that I'm very capable of writing poetry, because that I gonna
take . . . extra resources and . . . extra work, for me, you have to be poetic . . . it's . . .
sometimes genetic . . . it floats in your blood, so I wouldn't go that far, I will say, okay
I'm in the middle, I can write.*

This statement implies that Group 1 participants were influenced by this type of writing experience, that is, focus on assessment, which emphasizes the results of the evaluation. They were conscious of the existence of readers, but it caused them to perceive their ability to write less positively. The consciousness of being evaluated can be stressful for students, as Roger attested: "*It's challenging. It's like important, you know, to tell the teacher, see I'm a good student.*"

4.2. The relationship between focus on grammar and perceived poetry writing ability

Table 3 shows two writing experiences mentioned by all the three participants: *grammar and structure* and *interesting topics and free writing*. First, from their grammar and structure narratives, they learned how to write by studying the alphabet, grammar, sentences and paragraphs at the beginning. Next, the interesting topics that the participants had were themes related to personal experiences or culture-oriented issues. Take Joseph for example: "*Basically . . . in the secondary school, there is no . . . many tasks we did in, in writing, so we basically learn grammar in, in my context, so we learn grammar basically and there is no much about writing.*" Joseph further described his experiences in writing on a preferred topic as follows:

> *I wrote something . . . about . . . educational journey. That was interesting. I put everything in . . . two or three pages. The educational journey (is about) . . . how did you learn English . . . what did you like about English . . . why did you become a teacher of English . . . this is something . . . that I know . . . I mean . . . everyone likes to talk about himself . . . so I guess . . . because I was writing myself about my experiences . . . that's how . . . I like it.*

Based on Joseph's descriptions, *focus on grammar* is a type of writing experience that not only takes grammar or sentence structure into account but also gives L2 writers an opportunity to work on the topics in line with their interests. Focus on grammar can be described as participants consciously checking the grammar use in their writing, even though they enjoyed writing about topics they prefer.

Table 3 The categories of writing experiences of Group 2 members and their rating scale scores

Category	Bob	Joseph	Rania
Grammar and structure	1	1	2
Components in the composition	1	0	1
Tests	0	1	0
Interesting topics and free writing	1	2	1
Academic paper and research writing	1	0	0
Creative writing	1	0	0
Topics chosen by teachers and uninteresting topics	0	1	1
Essays and journals	0	2	0

Writing style	0	0	0
Self-need and self-expectation mismatch	1	0	0
Feedback from the instructor	1	1	0
Rating scale score	1	2.5	3

Table 3 indicates the lowest rating scale scores of all the five groups. Within this group, the participants are divided into two sub-groups depending on whether they experienced poetry writing or not. Both Joseph and Rania were not confident about their poetry writing ability due to the lack of knowledge and experiences of poetry writing. Also, Group 2 participants stated that because they were capable of making sentences and were also familiar with a great amount of vocabulary, they could not claim they were incapable of writing poetry. However, Bob experienced poetry writing in one of his classes, but he did not agree that he had written poetry, and he thought that his writing failed to reflect his English level. Therefore, among all the participants, Bob gave himself the lowest score. Another participant, Joseph, wrote:

> I can write something . . . after all this long journey . . . in learning English . . . I can write grammatical sentences . . . some vocabulary . . . I make myself clear . . . and my professor says your writing okay . . . but . . . it depends on . . . how do you define . . . this poetry writing task . . . what do the professor . . . will you expect me . . . to write in this . . . poem . . . that I need to present to you. Do I need to follow . . . the strict poetic devices . . . Do I have to follow . . . all these . . . strict rules for writing poetry?

Joseph did not know if he had to follow certain rules when writing poetry, which contributed to his lower rating for poetry writing ability. As revealed previously, Joseph studied grammar instead of writing. This shows that when using a form-based writing approach, students may fail to see writing as "authentic" (Raimes, 1991, p. 408). Joseph said: "*It's really annoying . . . to give our answer in writing, yea, because sometimes you have an idea, but you cannot write it down, so that's . . . why it's difficult and annoying.*" Therefore, L2 students might be unable to express themselves within the constraints of the forms or structures of grammar-based instruction. They are more likely to think about respecting specific rules while producing poetry, such as rhyme and stanzas. By doing so, students may perceive they have lower poetry writing ability.

4.3. The relationship between focus on topic type and perceived poetry writing ability

Group 3's writing experiences are mainly in the *interesting topics and free writing*, and topics *chosen by teachers and uninteresting topics* categories, as showed in Table 4. This group included Iris, Kelly, and Joy, while Enzo was the

outlier of this group (see Figure 2). Group 3 participants shared many positive writing experiences concerning free writing or topics that interested them, including personal diaries/online blogs, topics related to their own experiences given by the teacher, or topics selected on the basis of their own interests. In addition, three core participants addressed their experiences of writing about some topics that were not interesting to them but were provided by their teachers. For example, Iris shared one negative writing experience:

> *The teacher would like to talk about global warming, which is oh my God all of the students like that, they only know global warming when they hear the word global warming what comes to them what they are going to share. Oh my God we are going to talk about pollution, again, again, again, isn't that sad?*

Iris further described one positive writing experience:

> *First you are asked to read and after . . . about 5 to 10 minutes, the professor asked you to write a summary whatever you remember, whatever you want to write, there is no pressure, there is no obligation or there is no scores something like that, we are free to write anything although we don't remember anything . . . you kind of find that there is no fear . . . in heart when you write it.*

This indicates that teachers bored Iris by making her write prescribed topics. Meanwhile, she felt trepidation when she could choose her own topic. Therefore, *focus on topic* is a type of writing experience that emphasizes practice with different topics of L2 writers' or instructors' choice. That being said, focus on topic enables L2 students to take both the content of the writing and their own writing interests into consideration.

Table 4 The categories of writing experiences of Group 3 members and their rating scale scores

Category	Enzo	Iris	Joy	Kelly
Grammar and structure	0	1	1	2
Components in the composition	0	0	0	0
Tests	0	0	1	1
Interesting topics and free writing	2	3	2	2
Academic paper and research writing	0	0	0	0
Creative writing	1	1	1	2
Topics chosen by teachers and uninteresting topics	0	2	2	1
Essays and journals	1	0	2	0
Writing style	0	1	0	0
Self-need and self-expectation mismatch	2	0	0	0
Feedback from the instructor	1	0	0	0
Rating scale score	5	4.5	6	4

Group 3 members rated their perceived poetry writing ability above average. Both Joy and Kelly were confident in writing poetry, while Enzo was satisfied with his level of writing poetry. Similarly, Iris showed her concerns for rhyming; yet she still believed that she could write good poems. However, Kelly stated:

> I never think myself as a second [language] writer, I think I was the one who can write, who can write in English, so . . . basically I think . . . I'm not very good, like, put something . . . in a poetry . . . so that's the reason I didn't [feel] very close to the very capable of writing poetry, but . . . since . . . I think I am one of the English writer, so . . . it shows like I can write poetry, but not as good as I think.

Kelly felt that she did not have a good command of poetry writing, but she saw herself as a multilingual writer who can write poetry. Therefore, even if there was a topic that failed to meet the participants' interests, they were still able to complete the tasks. For example, when assigned job topics, she "*did some writing just because the teacher wanted . . .* [her] *to do it.*" Group 3 participants tended to have faith in their writing no matter what types of tasks they encountered, which contributed to their above average ability to write poems.

4.4. The relationship between focus on the process of completing writing tasks and perceived poetry writing ability

Table 5 indicates that Group 4's writing experiences were mostly *components in the composition* and *academic paper and research writing*. First, Thapelo and Zak both addressed learning how to organize paragraphs, including making statements for introductory, body, and concluding paragraphs. Next, both recalled their academic writing experiences concerning M.A. thesis and research papers. They both saw academic tasks as an interesting and helpful experience to improve their writing skills. Unlike the previous three groups, Group 4 focused on organization of writing and professional writing for academic uses. Thapelo explained:

> From high school, that is when we started to write . . . paragraph . . . We were taught to summarize . . . excerpts from a book in a plain form . . . That is our aim to write. But when I started to do my undergraduate, that is when we started to write a long paper maybe 15 pages . . . the research paper way . . . you should know this is . . . supporting ideas, how to write a conclusion, and how to write an introduction, and how to write a point.

Thapelo further described his research writing experience in the following way:

> I had to do a research about . . . underage drinking . . . looking at . . . how is it affect underage drinking, what are the circumstances of under drinking, and how to prevent that, so . . . the challenge was sometimes I got this study and I feel like . . . the way

> *the researcher phrase the idea, there is no way that I can change it . . . but . . . to find what I suppose to read* [and] *to put it in my own ways. So the challenge . . .* [is] *how can I put this in my own ways, even the fact that the statement is more precise.*

In his first experience, he was exposed to the knowledge of the elements in a composition, such as the supporting ideas, the introduction, or the conclusion. As for the second experience, he focused on one research paper he wrote for a class in which he encountered some challenges. Based on this data, *focus on the process of completing writing tasks* describes a writing experience which emphasizes writing processes. Group 4 participants embrace the significance of their writing processes and they act to accomplish their writing tasks.

Table 5 The categories of writing experiences of Group 4 members and their rating scale scores

Category	Thapelo	Zak
Grammar and structure	1	0
Components in the composition	1	2
Tests	0	1
Interesting topics and free writing	1	1
Academic paper and research writing	2	2
Creative writing	2	0
Topics chosen by teachers and uninteresting topics	0	0
Essays and journals	0	0
Writing style	0	0
Self-need and self-expectation mismatch	0	0
Feedback from the instructor	0	0
Rating scale score	5	6

As for the rating scale, Thapelo and Zak felt confident about their capability to write poetry. Despite the fact that Thapelo had poetry writing experiences while Zak did not have any, both were confident about their capability to write poetry. Also, similarly to the other groups, Thapelo had finished the poetry-writing task, but he still did not consider himself a poet, so he still needed to write and learn more about writing poetry. Similarly, Zak addressed his concerns about being a non-native speaker, which created certain challenges that he might face, such as word choice. Thapelo's reasoned:

> *Because I feel like . . . I'm not yet professional poetry writer, and I still need to learn more . . . Even the experience that I had in Dr.* [name of professor] *'s class . . . and then after that class, I never wrote in a poetry, so I feel like I still need to write more, cuz I'm not yet there . . . I'm still working on that, but even . . . you know the business in the program, I don't have time to take my poetry writing to the next level.*

This being said, if poetry writing is used as part of the curriculum in class, students would be advised to fulfill the class requirement. Students like Thapelo may not practice poetry writing after the course, but they may see poetry writing as a task that they could accomplish. Therefore, in line with the category of *focus on the process of completing writing tasks*, students may feel positive about writing poetry, but it still remains a classroom task.

4.5. The relationship between focus on purpose and perceived poetry writing ability

Table 6 shows that Group 5's writing experiences were mostly *tests, interesting topics and free writing*, and *creative writing*. First, three participants had many writing experiences with tests, and they complained about the pressure from the examinations, but at the same time they learned the writing skills from it. Second, all of them talked about their personal writing experiences with diaries, journals, or reflection on novels/literature. Next, all three of them had poetry writing experiences, including class projects, personal endeavors, and one mini-lesson. Although they confessed that some of their experiences were challenging for them, they all considered writing poetry as a positive experience. Sarah shared one writing experience with examinations:

> From my . . . 6, 7, 8, grade to . . . 12 grade, which is the last year of high school, all my English learning is based on examinations . . . because . . . I have to pass, so all my even writing and everything was just examinations . . . not only writing, like everything basically with learning English . . . is just for exams. So you just learn . . . like sometimes I try to practice a lot, especially when I have like very important exam, I try to get some topics or something like that from online and . . . then practice writing.

She further described her poetry writing experiences:

> After I start mastering the English language, I really start writing a lot of poems in English. So when I look at back at them now, I just feel like . . . it's so good . . . kind of positive experience . . . because sometimes I, I used to use writing poems to learn more English, so I used to . . . try to . . . find the words . . . so I used to find a words that has the same ending, so it rhymes.

The first narrative represents the case of obtaining a good grade for writing tests. However, the second excerpt describes the participant's personal interest in writing poetry. This being said, *focus on purpose* represents a type of writing experience emphasizing L2 students' own purposes in writing, which invites them to discover autonomy and meaning in writing.

As for the rating scale, all three participants were very confident about their ability to write poetry. Compared to all the other groups, these three participants all agreed they had a good command of poetry writing. However, three participants shared slightly different rationales. First, Ember stated she did not have any trouble writing poems but she could not mark 7 on the scale because of vocabulary problems, such as choosing fancy words to express her feelings. Second, Liz revealed her interest in and willingness to write poetry, and she also believed that once someone has become interested in learning something, he or she is able to have a good command of it. Last, Sarah described her rationale as follows:

> *I don't wanna say 7 cuz I don't wanna seem arrogant, so I just . . . rate 6 . . . because I have a lot of experiences and I like my poems . . . when . . . some of my really close friends read some [of my poems], they are like very impressed, which is kind of add to my self confidence about my writing . . . besides that, I think . . . sometimes especially when I have like stronger emotions, I really know how to . . . put them into words, because it makes me feel better, so I think I'm very capable.*

This excerpt reveals Sarah's high confidence in her own poetry writing ability. Also, Sarah released her emotions through writing poems, which can be seen as one of the purposes for which she wrote poems. This indicates that *focus on purpose* describes a tendency to have a positive effect on L2 students' perceived ability in writing poetry. L2 students can achieve ownership of their writing if they write for themselves or write for a self-identified purpose.

Table 6 The categories of writing experiences of Group 5 members and their rating scale scores

Category	Ember	Liz	Sarah
Grammar and structure	1	0	1
Components in the composition	0	0	0
Tests	2	3	4
Interesting topics and free writing	3	1	1
Academic paper and research writing	1	0	0
Creative writing	2	2	2
Topics chosen by teachers and uninteresting topics	0	0	0
Essays and journals	0	0	0
Writing style	0	0	1
Self-need and self-expectation mismatch	0	0	0
Feedback from the instructor	0	0	2
Rating scale score	6	7	6

5. Correlation between rating scale scores and narrative categories

The correlation between the different categories of writing experiences and the rating scale scores expressing the ability to write poetry was calculated. Unlike

finding shared patterns among participants through hierarchical cluster analysis, this final analysis aimed to see if any of the specific experiences were found to correspond either positively or negatively with the perceived ability to write poetry. The Spearman correlation test was chosen because the data set is not normally distributed. The assumption was that the data set should involve at least one kind of ordinal data. The data in this study were frequency counts of categories and rating scale scores. Both measures can be seen as interval, so an argument can be made in favor of examining the relationship between L2 students' writing experiences and their perceived poetry writing ability. Therefore, the Spearman correlation test was run at the end of the analysis. Table 7 presents the correlations between the participants' self-rated poetry writing ability and the 11 narrative categories.

Table 7 Correlations between the rating scale scores and the narrative categories ($N = 18$)

Category	Rating scale	
	Spearman correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
Grammar and structure	-.529*	.024
Components in the composition	-.125	.622
Tests	.341	.166
Interesting topics and free writing	-.033	.898
Academic paper and research writing	.169	.502
Creative writing	.447	.063
Topics chosen by teachers and uninteresting topics	-.187	.458
Essays and journals	-.034	.893
Writing style	.108	.669
Self-need and self-expectation mismatch	-.114	.654
Feedback from the instructor	-.406	.095

Note. *Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)

Among all narrative categories, the rating scale only significantly correlates on a two-tailed test with one writing experience: grammar and structure. This is a significant negative correlation, which means that high frequencies of grammar and structure experiences correlate with low scores for poetry writing ability. In other words, the more frequently participants recalled their writing experiences related to grammar or structures, the lower their self-rated writing poetry ability turned out to be. Conversely, the participants who had higher scores for their perceived poetry writing ability tended not to mention their writing experiences about grammar and structure. This does not mean these participants had not experienced learning writing within the grammar and structure approach, but it implies that they did not see grammar and structure as a priority for their writing. Therefore, for them, writing poetry is achievable. To sum up, it seems that learning

in a grammar heavy writing context was not conducive to developing a sense of ability in writing poetry for the L2 students in this study.

6. Discussion and pedagogical implications

The aim of this paper was to investigate the relationship between L2 students' writing experiences and their perceived poetry writing ability. I am aware that the number of participants is limited and the findings are generated mainly from interview data and one rating scale. There are no other types of data, such as written poems or observations. Despite these limitations, this study does provide some insights for the field of TESOL concerning a humanizing approach in language classrooms in which writing poetry is a way to express personal emotions and feelings, and its meaning-making is a stimulus for writing development.

6.1. Towards a humanizing approach in language classrooms

It is interesting that the five types of writing experiences explicated in this paper show different levels of relationship with students' perceived poetry writing ability. The data presented here do not support the claim that poetry writing involves a more valuable purpose compared to grammar and structure instruction in language classrooms. What the data do suggest is that there are different types of writing instruction, and each writing experience has its own strengths and purposes in the language classrooms. Oftentimes, L2 students learn English with test preparation and examinations in mind instead of real-life situations, with the result that the focus is on students' grammar and structure in their writing pieces (Bilton & Sivasubramaniam, 2009; Iida, 2008). Educators direct their students' attention to more technical writing rules and focus less on other important aspects of writing. Schultz (2001) addressed the emphasis on mechanical and practical features in foreign language classrooms, stating that "students are rarely afforded the opportunity simply to write from their imaginations, practicing their language skills in formats that they define for themselves" (p. 94). This implies that, to some extent, L2 writing classrooms are dehumanized. L2 students also need an outlet to express themselves instead of only being exposed to tedious and mechanical drill practices.

Being exposed to only one type of English variety, Standard English, through examinations, grammar instruction, or mechanical drills, L2 students acquire English in order to acquire near-native English ability (Fernsten, 2008; Kramsch, 2003; McKay, 2009). These students tend to compare themselves to native English writers and see themselves as outsiders when experiencing difficulty in producing native-like English skills, especially writing. This being said,

Pennycook (1996) stated that most EFL students fail to have ownership over writing in English. In line with Pennycook, Matsuda (2001) pointed out the difficulties EFL Japanese writers have when constructing their voice, noting that they might be "being deprived of familiar discursive options . . . combined with the writers' lack of familiarity with the discourse features that are available in constructing voice in written English" (p. 51). It is obvious that there are several obstacles that hinder L2 students' writing progression.

Fernsten (2008) undertook a case study using critical discourse analysis to examine the writer's identity of an ESL 1.5 generation student, Mandy, in the USA. Mandy voiced her notion of writing and her writer's identity as follows:

> I really see writing as like someone's individual expression . . . I personally just don't understand like how they [a lot of people] can put limits and structures and like borders and wall around writing . . . I have teachers like rephrase my words and that really upsets me. And I am like, you know, if I want it like that, I would have written it like that, but this is how I saw it, you know, so that is why I wrote like this . . . to me, that ruins my papers . . . like it is not mine anymore. (p. 49)

In much the same vein, a Chinese student from Dai's study (2010), whose name was Tian, reflected: "I seldom have the chance to put what I really think in them [compositions], just apply the useful sentence patterns and paragraph structure I've memorized. And always, the topic given was not something I wanted to write about" (p. 549). These two examples reinforce the view expressed in the previous paragraph that L2 students are often unable to construct their own voice in English writing. They also show the peripheral position of creative writing in L2 writing classrooms. L2 students fail to be introduced to a more diversified pedagogy because of the need to meet the requirements of mechanical correctness or standardized styles of writing. Given the limitation of emphasizing practical and mechanical features, eventually, the question for TESOL teacher training programs and L2 writing teachers is whether to limit L2 writing instruction to only grammar and structure drills or whether to invite more diverse instruction that contributes to voice construction, self-discovery, and emotional engagement.

6.2. Writing poetry as a way to express personal emotions and feelings

The concept of poetry is portrayed differently across the five groups in this study, especially between the focus on grammar group and the focus on purpose group. The finding is that the rating scale scores concerning perceived poetry writing competence significantly but negatively correlate with only one writing experience: focusing on grammatical and structural accuracy. This negative correlation

suggests that if students experienced more grammar and structure writing experiences, they were more inclined to believe they had lower poetry writing ability. This implies the possibility that these students associate rules with every type of writing, including grammar drills and poetry. For students in the focus on grammar group, the concept of poetry involves standards and rules. When asked about the reason for ranking his poetry writing ability as poor, Joseph revealed the following concern: "*Do I need to follow . . . the strict poetic devices . . . Do I have to follow . . . all these . . . strict rules for writing poetry?*" Therefore, for students who have dominant grammar and structure writing instruction, writing poetry makes them think they need to fulfill regulations like the use of poetic devices.

In contrast, after having the experiences of writing poetry in English, one student in the focus on purpose group, Sarah, revealed her rationale for a high perceived competence to write poetry in the following words: "*Sometimes especially when I have like stronger emotions,* [I] *really know how to . . . put them into words because it makes me feel better, so I think I'm very capable.*" The concept of poetry does not involve rules like those mentioned by the focus on grammar group; instead, it is associated with emotions. Therefore, for those students who have poetry writing experiences or any writing experience emphasizing its purpose, poetry writing expresses personal emotions and feelings. To some degree, this is in line with previous studies that have found that writing poetry in an L2 promotes constructing voices and expressing feelings and thoughts (see Chamcharatsri, 2013; Hanauer, 2015; Iida, 2012b).

As presented in Iida's (2012b) study, the participants reported benefitting from self-expression in the poetry project. The data of the current study coincide with Iida's association of writing poetry and self-expression, which plays a valuable role for L2 students. More specifically, Chamcharatisri (2013) conducted a study that examined how four Thai EFL students experienced love through writing poetry in both Thai and English. The results showed that EFL Thai students are inclined to express love in English, their L2, because it helps them to express themselves more freely. This emphasizes the use of poetry writing to help L2 student writers express emotions.

Moreover, according to Hanauer (2015), the notion of voice has its own theoretical stance and understanding in creative writing. The notion of voice under his lens means "the ability to construct a discerning identity in the creative writing that expresses the author's sense of himself or herself in his or her new social/cultural context and in a second language" (p. 71). Hanauer conducted both studies of computational linguistic analysis and human readers rating poetry pairs, and the results showed that L2 poetry writers had a discernible voice in their written poetry and those informed readers were able to distinguish L2 student poems written by the same poet from those written by different poets.

In this sense, L2 writers have their personalized ways of writing even in the genre of poetry. Therefore, the concept of voice is viewed as natural instead of as an end product or a goal that L2 writers need to accomplish. In line with his results, one can assume that those student writers in the current study who believed that they had lower poetry writing ability were are unable to recognize that every L2 student has natural embedded competence in writing poetry. On the other hand, those student writers who rated themselves as having higher poetry writing competence can associate writing poetry with a personalized and expressive act. However, the results of the current study on poetry writing in an L2 will need further theoretical and empirical discussion.

6.3. Meaning-making as a stimulus for writing development

The students who self-perceived higher poetry writing competence and how this furthered their writing progression seem to have experienced different types of writing instruction just like the rest of the students who rated their perceived poetry writing ability lower. These students also described anxiety or stress from their writing experiences, such as examinations. What makes these students different from others is that they focus every writing experience on its purpose or its meaning. Liz rated her perceived poetry writing ability the highest among all. She recalled one of her writing experiences as follows:

> *When we take examinations, somebody will sit right next to you . . . you just have two sentences, then, you see others have a whole paragraph, and then you become nervous and nervous more, more nervous, then you see somebody put their period to . . . their composition. Everybody just like checking the answers . . . and you're still working on the third sentence. That is terrible for me . . . I think couple times of that experience . . . I think that triggers my* [self] *intensive training for my college entrance examination . . . I want to . . . prevent* [it] *from happening* [again], *so I did something.*

No matter whether it is a positive or negative writing experience, these students tended to transform struggles or hard feelings they encountered into contributions to their own learning. This process of making meaning out of their writing experiences and furthering their learning stands out for this group of students, who see themselves as not only confident multilingual writers but also creative poetry writers. This concept of meaning making connects to what Hanauer (2011b) has labeled the "meaningful literacy" approach to humanize L2 writing classrooms. Hanauer believes that through writing poetry in an L2 "students learn about themselves, about the presence of others, and the diversity of thought and experience that are so much part of this world" (p. 10). In this sense, learning a language is beyond mere linguistic development. Instead, writing poetry in a

meaningful literacy approach invites a personalized and self-positioning way of learning a language, self, and the world. However, the connection between learners' meaning-making processes and their writing progression remains speculative until additional empirical studies are conducted and analyzed with larger samples and appropriate statistics in order to make any further generalization.

7. Conclusion

Overall, the data suggest that the more exposure to L2 poetry writing there is, the higher the perceived poetry writing ability. Again, I did not intend to claim that poetry writing has higher value than other kinds of writing instruction. Instead, my interpretations of the data support the idea that each type of writing instruction has its place in L2 writing classrooms. Students who have poetry writing experiences perceive poetry in a more personal and emotional way. However, the notion of poetry is associated with the use of poetic devices and formalities by those whose writing instruction has been dominated by grammar and structure. I do not aim to argue which approach is accurate or inaccurate. What I do suggest is that exposure to poetry writing instruction for L2 students can invite them to explore the genre of poetry from a new angle. Plus, the students who perceived higher poetry writing competence and had poetry writing experiences tended to make meanings or define purposes of their own writing and learning progression. The question which remains is whether L2 students in this study who find their own personal purpose in working on different types of writing are more likely to become confident multilingual writers who are able to autonomously continue this learning process as writers. I do not imply that only poetry writing instruction can help students to become competent and confident writers. Instead, the study indicates the potential of poetry writing instruction to trigger L2 students' exploration to find their own personal purpose of writing as multilingual writers. Therefore, poetry writing could usefully be integrated as a component in L2 language classrooms.

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APPENDIX A

Background information about participants

Participants	Gender	Country	First languages	Poetry writing experiences	Years of experiencing writing instruction
Amanda	Female	China	Mandarin	None	10
Amir	Male	Niger	French & local dialect	Personal interests and one in-class activity	8
Bob	Male	Saudi Arabia	Arabic & local dialect	One course assignment	15
Charles	Male	Saudi Arabia	Arabic & local dialect	One course assignment	17
Ember	Female	China	Mandarin & local dialect	One course assignment and personal interests	11
Enzo	Male	Saudi Arabia	Arabic & local dialect	One course assignment	12
Grace	Female	Indonesia	Indonesian & local dialect	One course assignment	13
Iris	Female	Indonesia	Indonesian & local dialect	One in-class activity	9
Joseph	Male	Iraq	Arabic & local dialect	None	8
Joy	Female	Ivory Coast	French & local dialect	One course assignment	13
Kelly	Female	China	Mandarin	One course assignment	15
Liz	Female	China	Mandarin & local dialect	Personal interests and one in-class activity	8
Mike	Male	Togo	French & local dialect	None	12
Rania	Female	Saudi Arabia	Arabic & local dialect	None	2
Roger	Male	Saudi Arabia	Arabic & local dialect	One course assignment	12
Sarah	Female	Algeria	Arabic & French	One course assignment and personal interests	11
Thapelo	Male	South Africa	Xitsonga & local dialects	One course assignment and personal interests	8
Zak	Male	Japan	Japanese	None	8

APPENDIX B

Interview questions

To all of the participants:
1. Tell me about how you learnt writing in English.
2. In general, as a student, how do you feel about the writing classes you had experienced in your own country?
3. What was positive or negative about the experiences?
4. Can you share three of your best and worst writing experiences?
5. What did you learn from these experiences?
6. Did you experience writing poetry during the years of learning English?

To those participants who never had poetry writing experiences:
1. If you were in a writing class and your professor told you to write your own poetry, what would you think of this assignment?
2. Do you think that you are capable of writing poetry? Why?
3. Will you apply poetry writing to your teaching in the future? Why?

To those participants who had poetry writing experiences:
1. Please try to recall your memory when you heard that you were going to have a poetry writing assignment, what did you think of this assignment?
2. What kinds of difficulties did you face when writing your poetry?
3. What did you learn from the poetry writing experience?
4. What are the differences between the writing classes from the past experiences and this poetry writing experience?
5. Do you think that you are capable of writing poetry? Why?
6. Will you apply poetry writing to your teaching in the future? Why?

APPENDIX C

Definitions and examples of the categories of the coding system

Category	Definition	Example
Grammar and structure	Utterances which describe participants' past writing experiences concerning the grammar and the structures	*Basically in in school in in the secondary school, there is no uhmm there is no uhmm many tasks we did in in writing, so we basically learn grammar in in my context, so we learn grammar basically and there is no much about writing.*
Components in the composition	Utterances which describe participants' past writing experiences concerning the patterns in the compositions, such as the introduction, the thesis statement, the body, and the conclusion	*Basically, teacher uh gave us some topics and explained how to organize paragraph and essays, and then we were assigned to write essay. So, following the instruction, for example, first section was organizing the introductory paragraph, and then body paragraph, and concluding paragraph.*
Tests	Utterances which describe participants' past writing experiences concerning tests, such as in-class quizzes, entrance examinations, TOEFL, or GRE	*The last year of high school, all my English learning is based on examinations, like just I wanna learn, because I wanna you know I have to pass, so all my even writing and everything was just examinations.*
Interesting topics and free writing	Utterances which describe participants' past writing experiences concerning interesting topics and their free writing experiences, such as personal blogs or diaries	*The coordinator cannot come up with just one single topic, so he gave us the opportunity to choose anything we want to write about. So, I have chosen up to four topics, because we were supposed to write four papers. I chose my topics, which are related to TESOL and, believe me, it was great. He guided us. He told us all that we need to know about writing. He gave us samples and all these stuff.*
Academic paper and research writing	Utterances which describe participants' past writing experiences concerning the research tasks or academic projects they had before	*It's about social orientation in second language acquisition. It's about sort of like identity or like culture like acculturation, so I pick about like 3 books . . . I hate the the 15 pages and because that's like well you read and then uhmm you you should select like 3 themes.*
Creative writing	Utterances which describe participants' past writing experiences concerning creative writing	*It's about science fiction you have to write your own story . . . you have to create a scenario, you know, you have the protagonist facing you know a problem and then you know how they overcome the problem, so when I was thinking and had a lot of thinking in mind . . . which was you know interesting because the professor likes it.*
Topics chosen by teachers and uninteresting topics	Utterances which describe participants' past writing experiences concerning topics chosen for them by instructors which they found uninteresting	*The teacher would like to talk about global warming, which is oh my god all of the students like that, they only know global warming when they hear the word global warming what comes to them what they are going to share, oh my god we are going to talk about pollution, again, again, again, isn't that sad?*
Essays and journals	Utterances which describe participants' past writing experiences concerning essays and journals	*The teacher brings texts related to polygamy, we discuss in class, and then, afterwards, the teacher tries to formulate some kind of topic from the broad issue of polygamy and have people write on it.*
Writing style	Utterances which describe participants' past writing experiences concerning the differences	*If it is in United States, plagiarism is so because it's the top number one, but in my country plagiarism because oh it almost ignored at all, so I'm sure that most of the*

	or connections between the first language and second language, or different types of writing they had been exposed to	*students who has a final paper they like to copy and paste copy and paste.*
Self-need and self-expectation mismatch	Utterances which describe participants' past writing experiences concerning their perceptions of the gap between their self-need or self-expectation and the real learning outcomes	*I spent about 9 to 10 years just learning some basic, and 1 or 2 year, I I I I transfer myself to this uh level where I am in the master, so uhmm my feeling about writing in XYZ* [his graduate program] *needs uhmm more improvement, because I did not give that uhmm expected outcome from the writing class that I need.*
Feedback from the instructor	Utterances which describe participants' past writing experiences concerning the feedback given by the teachers	*I got like . . . good feedback from . . . XYZ professor I'm not going to mention the name . . . it was like a 15 page paper, and he* [the instructor] *wrote something thoughtful paper, although that guy is really like well known for his tough grading . . . and I know like some of my classmates . . . they got B in the assignment, so you know I was full of myself at that time and I was proud of that.*