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## **A Literacy Narrative of a Female Saudi English Teacher and A Qualitative Case Study: 12 Multilingual Writers Identify Challenges and Benefits of Daily Writing in a College Composition Class**

Ghassoon Rezzig  
*Eastern Washington University*

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A Literacy Narrative of a Female Saudi English Teacher and A Qualitative Case Study:  
12 Multilingual Writers Identify Challenges and Benefits of Daily Writing  
in a College Composition Class

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A thesis

Presented to Eastern Washington University

Cheney, Washington

The United States of America

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree

Master of Arts: English

With an Emphasis in

Teaching English as a Second Language

By

Ghassoon Rezzig

Winter 2018

THESIS  
of  
Ghassoon Rezzig

Approved by

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LaVona L. Reeves, Ph. D.	Date
Professor of English	
Chair, Graduate Study Committee	

---

Tracey McHenry, Ph. D.	Date
Associate Professor of English	
Member, Graduate Study Committee	

---

Joneel Russell, M.A.	Date
Instructor, English Language Institute	
Member, Graduate Study Committee	

### **Abstract**

The author begins this thesis with her literacy narrative and practices what Kirsch and Royster call “strategic contemplation” about the material conditions of her mother’s life leaving school at 12 to marry and to raise 12 children. Her mother’s illiteracy is not the focus, however. Rather it is her mother’s strengths and her commitment to educating her children—all of whom earned college degrees before her mother died. The case study that follows emphasizes that developing English writing skills among multilingual speakers is considered a hard task. In order to improve academic writing, writers must make a tremendous effort and practice using the language while working on organization and writing mechanics through daily writing in class. Several factors have been found to have a direct effect on the writing skills: vocabulary, content, developing ideas, composing well-formed sentences, selecting and analyzing written information, and synthesizing ideas and resources effectively. One of the life-long dreams, especially for the ESL students, is to produce an organized piece of writing. The purpose of this case study and action research was to explore the common challenges faced by the ESL students when writing English and to discover what they consider the benefits of daily writing in class. The study was done at Eastern Washington University’s Department of English. A total of 12 of 20 students signed the consent form allowing the researcher to include their final reflection essays in this thesis. They were also asked to respond to the questionnaire concerning their histories of writing in English, the challenges they had when writing English, and their editing processes. From the data, it emerged that there are many challenges faced by ESL students when writing English. These 12 writers reported that they faced challenges in grammar, vocabulary, sentence structure, and writing speed. In addition, five of nine Saudis identified spelling as a challenge. Further, they identified the following benefits of daily in-class writing of journals and Friday essays: (1) increased fluency—all could write 500 words in 45 minutes by the end of the ten-week quarter; (2) increases in active vocabulary studied in videos and readings and used/tested in the Friday essays; (3) getting to know peers, interns, and professor by sharing their journals in class and responding to others’ writing; (4) development of their ideas and use of examples and details; (5) improved note taking; (6) improved reading for academic purposes, including transcripts from videos and the biography; (7) overall quality of writing improved when conferencing with the intern and the professor; (8) increased motivation to be present every day; (9) increased engagement through listening, speaking, writing, and viewing of materials related to the biography; (10) increased confidence by volunteering to read aloud the daily journal on the document viewer immediately after writing for five minutes. Together, the primary investigator and the responsible investigator (the professor in class and the thesis adviser) concluded that in future English 112 classes they would recommend at least one grammar mini-lesson each week to address learner needs. They will also continue the daily journal writing with volunteers sharing and the weekly in-class essays with intern conferences and professor conferences between drafts.

**Keywords:** English as Second Language, writing, writing challenges, writing approaches, benefits of daily in-class writing and sharing.

## Acknowledgements

I want to thank the following people for their help along the way to this degree.

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- Dr. Reeves, my beloved mentor, professor, thesis chair, and “other mother.”
- Dr. McHenry, my professor and dear lady who co-hosted a baby shower with Dr. Reeves for me last spring.
- Mrs. Joneel Russell, my ELI teacher and dear friend who treats the Saudi women so kindly.

My family:

- My husband, Amr, who has encouraged me to pursue the master’s degree, and he left his career as an engineer to come here with me and to take care of me here.
- My sisters, Jimi and Afra, and my brothers for being role models for me.
- Finally, I thank my little daughter, Afra, who is now nine months old, for being such a happy and easy baby. I will make up this lost time to you someday soon.

## Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to mother, Aisha Al Ahmar, who raised 12 children, who left school at age 12 to marry, and who was illiterate most of her life. Mother, however, saw to it that all 12 children earned college degrees. Thank you, Mother. May you rest in peace.

I am sure you are proud of me and watching from heaven today. I also dedicate this thesis to my father, Mohammed, who taught in a boys’ elementary school up in the mountains for 50 years and came home on weekends to his family.

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### The Literacy Narrative

I believe that Allah created humans without language or knowledge, ignorant of all the imams of truth. The Quran (30:22) says: ‘And among His Signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the variations in your languages and your colors ...’ (web). Despite the lack of language at the beginning of time, humans are great creatures because we have developed languages for communication with one another so that we can come closer, communicate, and express what we are carrying inside ourselves. I believe that language learners need dedicated, patient, and inspiring teachers, and I want to become this kind of English teacher and do my best, as my mother did for me. As the twelfth and last of her 12 children, I was given considerable time at my mother’s side, learning numbers, the Arabic alphabet, and the Quran. For this reason, I begin this thesis with a literacy narrative, reflecting briefly on my life in elementary school in Saudi Arabia and on the present time in graduate school in the United States. As recommended by Gesa Kirsch and Jacqueline Royster, feminist rhetoricians, I will do strategic contemplation “...to reclaim the genre of... ‘meditation’... in order to claim strategic contemplation as an important step in scholarly productivity...” (p. 656). They suggest that strategic contemplation, as they define it, is most needed “when traditional...sources...are in short supply, as is often the case with the documentation of women’s experiences (Reeves & Rezzig, 2017, 2018), or when the ecologies of person, time, and context” call for less traditional ways of telling women’s stories (Kirsch & Royster, 2010, p. 656).

In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the 1960’s when my mother had her first



children, starting at age 12, little was written about the material conditions of women's lives, and many Bedouin women were not sent to school. They were, however, taught very important lessons about raising children, cooking, cleaning, vegetable gardening, keeping the Islamic faith, and getting along with family and community. I will describe my mother's lived experiences, giving birth to twelve children from ages 12 through 33 when I was born as her last child. This was not uncommon for her generation in the South of Saudi Arabia in Jazan, which was developing at the time. During the 1920's when my grandmothers were growing up, the education system in Saudi Arabia was focusing on educating boys, and the majority of girls received no formal education, which was true for my grandmothers on both sides. One of their rules was that women who married could not be in school. Even fifty years ago it was common for girls to be married at age 11, so that meant their formal education ended. It must be noted, however, that they were well prepared as wives and mothers, except that they could not read the Quran.

My mother, Aisha, wanted more from life and was motivated to learn and expand her knowledge beyond homemaking. As explained, she married at age 12 and had 12 children by the time she was 33, so her main job was taking care of all of us. But she would not give up. She asked my father to give her a private teacher to teach her to read and write at home and not allow anyone to know that she was studying on her own. My father agreed with her because he was an elementary school teacher up in the mountains but kept his wife and children near his family in Jazan, coming home only on weekends and holidays. Because he was gone most of the time, my mother did not have to worry about taking care of him. Though she had good intentions and tried to learn to read and

write for a while, she couldn't continue because she had 12 children in 19 years, leaving no free time to study. She never gave up her goal to be educated, however, and she was always buying magazines and newspapers. At the same time, my father was also encouraging her by bringing home books that he was teaching. Sitting together by the sea, sometimes my father even read to Mother about the prophets (Peace be upon them), such as the story of Moses leaving Egypt and of Joseph, who was going to become a prophet (Figure 1).

When she was a child, like most Moslem children, she listened to cassettes of the Quran and memorized verses and stories, so when she was learning to read, she already knew most of the stories. She could read a little bit because she had gone to school until age 12, but now she was becoming a really good reader with my father's help. This was a liminal moment for both my mother and me, as her youngest child. Literacy made my mother very powerful and motivated in my eyes. Although she had little formal education with little ability to read and teach her children, she could succeed through hard work. By her power and patience, the lowest certificate that she earned was the high school diploma, but my brother earned the engineering degree because of my mother's encouragement and belief in him. And the highest certificates were earned by other siblings, including sisters—the bachelor's Degrees in Math, Science, Chemistry, Islamic Studies, Arabic, and English—my major. My mother could do what other women couldn't do: she educated herself by working hard and her children by modeling hard work for them while my father was away.



Figure 1. My Mother and Father Sitting at the Sea of Jazan  
Struggling While Teaching Me

It is common for the last child to be very spoiled in Saudi Arabia, so that child can get anything she wants from the parents. The other 11 children in this family were respectful and thankful, and their success was easy to achieve for my mother. I was the difficult child. My mother faced challenges and difficulties in teaching me because I had difficulty writing numbers and verbs in the correct way. For example, in the lesson of writing numbers with math, it was written from 1-9 in a proper manner except 10 when I would place the zero on the north instead of the right, which would make the number null, without value (Figure 2). As for the writing of the texts, I was not good at constructing the Arabic sentence in its correct form. The struggle of my mother and her wish not to surrender made use of educational methods to facilitate my educational

process—using the chalkboard and smart devices and learning with a group of siblings. These methods made me superior in Arabic writing, especially poetry and prose. I kept a flowered notebook just for my poems, and it is pictured in Figure 3 sitting on a table with a tablecloth.



Figure 2. Ghassoon in First Grade—Doing homework.

I wrote a poem about my country in elementary school (Figure 4) and gave a copy to my mother because she always liked to hear me read anything I wrote since she could still not really read in Arabic. Even though she had taught me the alphabet and the numbers,



she could not read full sentences, so she made my father teach me Arabic grammar, which helped me be a better writer in Arabic. I translated this poem for this thesis, and it appears in part after the photo of the poem in Figure 4.

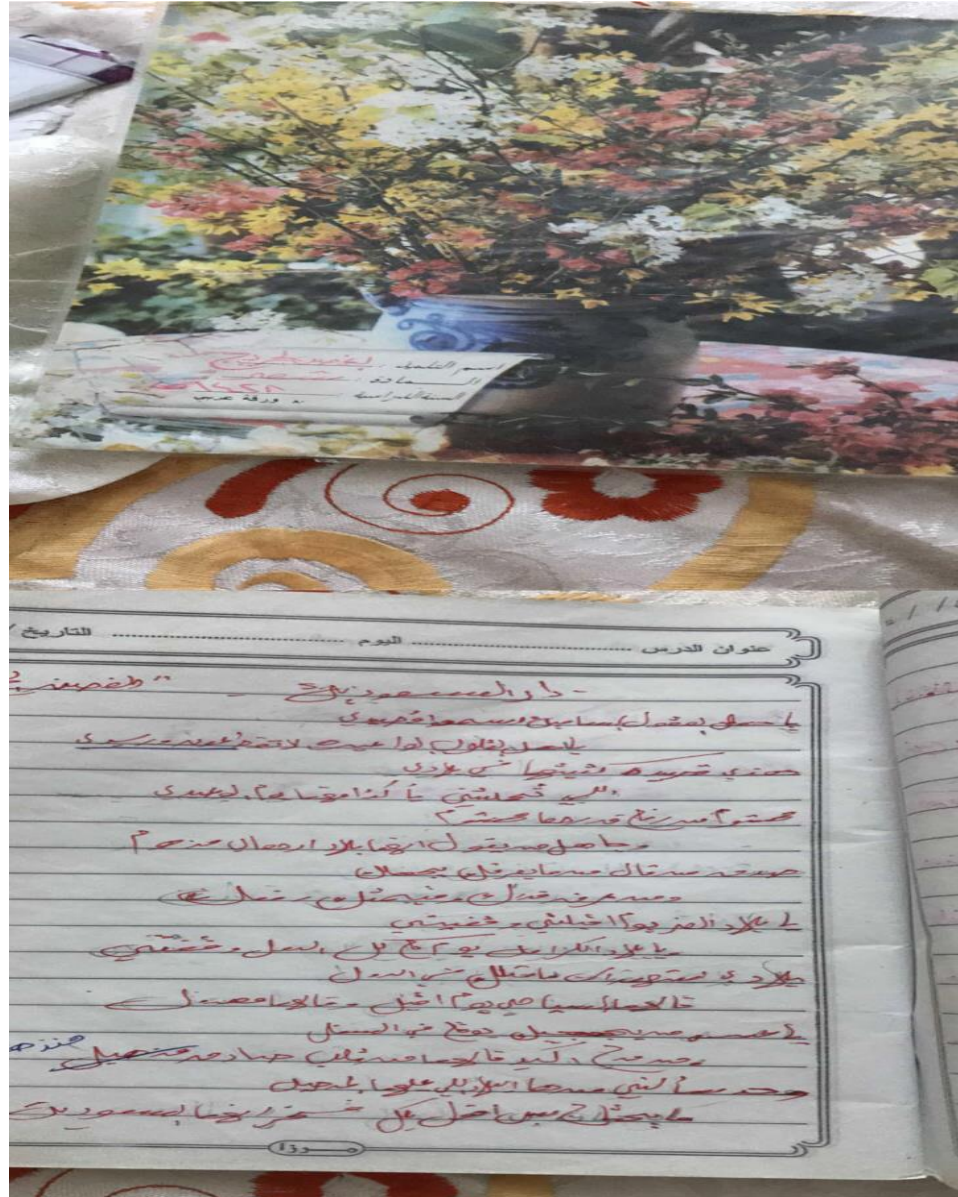


Figure 3. Notebook since 2007

Figure 4. Poem about my country written in Arabic in second grade.

Saudi country

For all people who have awareness, listen to me.

People who have heart, do not cut my life short....

This poem, I have written this about my country

That has held me on its shoulders since I was born....

The Bad News

By studying hard, I could receive A+ in all my classes k-12 and in college. I wanted to get A+ not to be proud of myself, but to give it as a gift for my mother. In my last month college, my mother received the bad news. However, Mother wouldn't to tell her "Kitty" that news because she wanted her "kitten" to focus on her final exams. After I finished my exams and I got good grades, I remember that day when I wanted to tell her about my grades and what I received. She was so sick with a painful headache, and she was silent. I went to her room, and I said loudly: "Mom, I got A+ in my degree." I can't forget this moment when she was screaming very loudly, and it was happy scream. After this moment, my brother came and said, "Mom, we must to go to the hospital because the doctor wants to see you." I was shocked at that time, and I was waiting until they come back home. I could see the horrible reaction on my brother's face. Mom said, "My kitten, your mother wanted to be in the ferdous "the highest level in heaven, and God will give me that because of my patience. Your mommy has cancer, but she is strong. She can do it." Clearly, I learned to be strong and patient from my mother over the years when she was raising us almost alone and again when she was dying from cancer.

2015

While I was taking care of my mother at home, I was granted a scholarship to continue my education. However, I could not accept it because of my mother's condition. Soon, she knew about it and forced me to go abroad and get the master's degree. She said, "I will be with you, even in my heart. I will never lose you. One thing you should believe is that you are strong and you can do it." These were the last words she said: "I am here waiting for you to complete your master's degree and come home to teach in a university." After one year in the United States, I lost my mother. She died before I finished, before even I got acceptance in the graduate program at EWU. Her death continues to make me feel weak, disabled, and quiet. I was alive because of her, I was breathing because of her smile, I was strong because of her protection. But now I have to be strong, able and communicative because I am going to have my first child soon. Mom, I thank you and I love you.



Figure 5. Mother holding me after I was born

## Purpose of the study

The purpose of the present study is to tell my story of becoming literate in both Arabic and English while remembering my community and asking other writers how they came to literacy in English. TESOL wants teachers to explore their identities through case study and/or autoethnography, which is why I began this thesis with a literacy narrative and a tribute to my mother for laying the foundation for my own literacy. Like Eli Goldblatt (2017), I believe:

Both personal expression and community engagement have a place in current conversations over college literacies, but the aspirations of individual authors within their home communities can get lost in public debates that foreground disciplinary knowledge and preparation for remunerative work.

In graduate school in the United States, my mentor and thesis chair encouraged all of us to remember our home communities and bring them with us as we prepare to teach English. She values expressive writing and asks thesis writers to incorporate their literacy narratives into their research studies, as Goldblatt suggests:

Recognizing that expressivism is not gone but woven into our present ways of understanding writers and writing will add to our core strength as a discipline faced with daunting social, administrative, and intellectual challenges in the American and global literacy scene.

Thomas O'Donnell explained that "what we do is encourage students to bring words to bear on their experiences, to ground their writing in their lives, to be responsible for their words, and to be responsible to the community in which they are reading, writing, and responding" (cited in Goldblatt, 2017, p. 439).

Writing difficulties like other learning problems can be devastating to the education and self-esteem of students. The progress of students in schools is marked by the expectation to express through writing what they know not only in English but also in other subjects. American journalist, Byron Pitts, for example, discusses how he pretended to be able to read and write, but his math teacher discovered that he could not read the math questions and was also failing math (2018). When his mother and grandmother



began to believe he could learn to read and write and they moved him to a Catholic school, he became successful at school and eventually earned a college degree.

Pitts attributes his success by being surrounded by ‘regular folks,’ including coaches, teachers, the priest from his high school and his college professors. People, who on their own, regular folks who ‘stepped out on nothing’ to say an encouraging word to help me out,” he said. (web)

Pitts pointed out that his childhood illiteracy is not rare and that an estimated 30 million people are illiterate in the United States. He makes

“If that were a state, it would be the second largest state in the United States,” he said. “Thirty million people who struggle and have shame. And I can relate to that shame. And the book is to encourage people that you can do it.” (CBS News, web)

Recently, he wrote a book to show that there should be no shame in being illiterate and that anybody can learn to read and write it if they try. Failure of students to develop some basic skills, however, can put them in the position of not writing with required speed and fluency. The writing process can interfere with students’ learning in other classes too. Therefore, students with such problems struggle to stay motivated. It has been found that certain problems can potentially impact the students’ writing abilities. Such problems include attention, sequential ordering, spatial ordering, memory and language (Alsamaani, 2014).

### The Statement of the Problem

The most widely spoken language in the world is English, in part due to the revolution of the business environment and the technological advancements such as the internet. Around the world, people can easily converse or interact with each other using

the English language fluently. However, for nonnative speakers, English is still a challenge, especially writing in English. As a result, the study concentrated on those who do not use English as their first language and employed qualitative research methods of action research, case study, and critical ethnography.

Writing is not just like spoken language since it requires the audience or readers to fully understand and interpret the written word. The greatest challenge may be to compose a “fluent, coherent and extended written piece” (Nunan, 1999, p. 27), which is even more challenging to the ESL learners. To write an essay, there must be critical thinking, drafting, and revision—all special skills that cannot be naturally developed learners working alone without instruction and feedback.

When students approach writing tasks, they actually search for a solution to several problems. In the language teaching history, several studies have been conducted with the aim of investigating the writing challenges which block students from presenting a written reflection essay about their writing process. Many multilingual writers feel less proficient in writing English, so they often cannot accomplish the written task satisfactorily (Jordan, 2015). Even some advanced ESL writers like those in the present study find it difficult to construct both simple and complex sentences in English. The ability of these students in terms of writing is far from being satisfactory. Several studies have also revealed that ESL writers have difficulties in adequately expressing themselves in writing (Alsamaani, 2014). There is a lack of consistency, unity, coherence, and order in their writing. Most English language instructors in ESL writers have a general consensus that EFL students are weak in writing courses.

English is considered a global language today. However, its use still remains a major challenge particularly among the ESL/EFL speakers like Arabs, Chinese, Ukrainians, Japanese, and others. It has emerged that there are several challenges encountered by the EFL/ESL speakers especially with regards to writing. Several studies have been carried out to investigate the root cause of these challenges. However, there hasn't been conclusive findings to such studies. This leaves writing as a major problem and one of the challenges faced by some multilingual writers.

### Aim of the study

The aim of this case study was to explore the (1) challenges facing multilingual writers, (2) the benefits of daily writing as self-reported by 12 multilingual writers enrolled in a composition class for multilingual writers at the college level, and (3) the writers' experience learning English in their own countries: Saudi Arabia, Ukraine, Iraq, Japan, and China.

### Research questions

In order to gain a clear understanding of the actual challenges these 12 multilingual writers had and to learn what they perceived as benefits of L2 writing, final reflection essays and questionnaires were analyzed by the researcher, an intern in the class, and by the professor who was also the thesis chair, who taught the class in which the writing samples were collected for the purpose of this project.

### The Research Questions

1. What are the most common challenges these ~~twelve~~ 12 writers identify in their final reflection essays?
2. What do these 12 writers identify as the benefits of the writing class they took?
3. What curricular changes can be put in place to address the challenges?
4. What experiences of learning English in high school do these 12 writers report?

### Researcher's Assumptions

TESOL requires researchers to disclose their assumptions, biases, and beliefs about the learners, the materials, the setting, and the topic at hand. The following assumptions were made by the researcher before she began the project. In the Discussion chapter, she will explain if her assumptions were accurate or not.

1. All writers in English 112 had experience writing in the L1.
2. All writers in English 112 face challenges in their writing.
3. The greatest challenge will be identified as grammar.
4. Writing speed and word count will increase over the ten weeks of the study.
5. Writers will feel that their writing improved in ten weeks.

### Research Methods

#### Case Study

Like Bertrand (2013), De Paula (2015), Hansen (2015), Leung (2013), Mount (2015), this thesis is a case study of 12 multilingual writers who represent a convenience sample of this population at the university level in the United States. TESOL definitions were applied and the guidelines were followed:

In TESOL, a case typically refers to a person, either a learner or a teacher, or an entity, such as a school, a university, a classroom, or a program (see Faltis, 1997; Johnson, 1992; Nunan, 1992). . . . Unlike ethnographic research, case studies do not necessarily focus on cultural aspects of a group or its members. Case study research may feature single cases or multiple cases. (TESOL.org, 2018)

TESOL explains how case studies have changed over time:

TESOL case studies have adopted the more subjective and interpretive stance typical of case studies in education and other fields (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996; Johnson, 1992; Stake, 1994, 1995), with less emphasis on the acquisition of discrete linguistic elements and more emphasis on such issues as learners' and teachers' identities, skill development and its consequences for learners, teachers' professional development experiences. . . . Both approaches are legitimate but require sufficient detail and contextualization. (TESOL.org, 2018)

TESOL asks researchers to explore their own lives and influences as well as those of the participants and other relevant players such as the mentor for the researcher and/or the philosophy of the program in which they are teaching and/or conducting the case study:

Acknowledging multiple realities in qualitative case studies, as is now commonly done, involves discerning the various perspectives of the researcher, the case/participant, and others, which may or may not converge (Yin cited in TESOL.org, 2018).

TESOL emphasizes the inductive nature of case studies and the experience, which the responsible researcher (faculty sponsor and professor in the class) and the primary investigator (thesis writer):

As an interpretive, inductive form of research, case studies explore the details and meanings of experience and do not usually attempt to test a priori hypotheses.

Instead, the researcher attempts to identify important patterns and themes in the data. (TESOL.org, 2018)

In the present study, the researcher and the instructor read the 12 essays and 12 questionnaires several times about one month after they were collected. As requested by TESOL, we provided the writers' entire essays in which we identified about 12 themes, focusing on the benefits and challenges of the writing done in class—with journals written daily and essays written weekly. This reading again and again to try to find the meanings of the learners' experiences is called an iterative process that is necessary in action research. Letting the writers' voices prevail is a top priority of this kind of research.

### Action Research

Action research is the kind of classroom research that is done to make changes in the materials, the ways of teaching, the learning objectives and the ways of assessing learning, and case study is one of the best ways to determine the what needs to change and how to make the changes based on information provided by the learners in the case study and by the reflections on the findings of the researchers—who are most often also the teachers in the case study:

The richness of case studies is related to the amount of detail and contextualization that is possible when only one or a small number of focal cases and issues are analyzed. The writer's ability to provide a compelling and engaging profile of the case, with suitable examples and linkages to broader issues, is also very important.

### Thesis Overview

This thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 is the introduction with the researcher's literacy narrative, the statement of the problem, the aim of the study, the research questions, the researcher's assumptions, and the research methods. Chapter 2 is a brief review of literature about (1) second language writing and literacy (Aguilar, 2016; Sanchez, 2016); (2) Arabic writers' challenges (Alrasheed, 2014; Asiri, 2010; Bertrand, 2013; Mount, 2015); (3) multimodal materials. Chapter 3 includes details about the research methods, the participants, the data collection of the 12 writers' essays and five questionnaires with a brief summary of the findings. Chapter 4 is divided into two sections (1) findings from the 12 reflection essays and the 12 questionnaires and (2) the researcher's reflections on the findings and the experience working with the writers in English 112 in the fall of 2017. She identifies major and minor themes found in the essays and presents them in nine tables with commentary on her findings. She then the answers the four research questions and reflects on the research experience. Chapter 5 is a summary of the findings, a brief discussion of the researcher's assumptions and limitations of the study, recommendations for future research, implications for teaching writing and viewing at the university level in the United States, and final reflections on what the researcher learned from writing this thesis.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Chapter 2 is a brief review of literature about (1) writing time constraints (Wood, 2017) and fluency (Narathakoon, 2005) and second language literacy (Aguilar, 2016; Lovejoy, 2009; Sanchez, 2016; Zamel, 1995); (2) Arabic writers' challenges (Alrasheed, 2014; Asiri, 2010; Bertrand, 2013; Mount, 2015); (3) multimodal materials (Albalawi, 2014; De Paula, 2015; Hansen, 2015). The present study builds on the research of others who studied the same population at Eastern Washington University, so summaries of their findings are included.

#### **Time Constraints on Writing**

Wood (2017) brings to our attention time constraints for writers to improve their skills, often in very short periods of time: "Structures of time exist by definition in a classroom; every class has a first day and a last day. Every class has due dates, measures of time for when students should complete a task, and a stop-time for their work on that task" (p. 260). Often, when writers are worried about producing an essay in a short period of time, they struggle to express their ideas and convey the meaning they want the readers to receive. "Timed writing is often used as a tool to generate discussion, to do quick evaluations or comprehension checks, or for practices of invention" (p. 260), and when this kind of timed writing is used, writers may feel less stress because they are just getting ideas down on the page. In some cases, timed writing is done just for pre-writing an essay that is coming later in the term. In this case, Wood suggests that there may not be as much stress for writers when it is scaffolded: "A core principle of writing



pedagogy, the ‘scaffolded’ assignment, relies upon time, having some sense of pacing and sequence...In other words, we must pay attention to how we construct time....” (p. 260). Wood interviewed 35 students “(over 2,000 minutes of audio, over 200,000 words worth of transcript)” and argued that “one way (not the way) to increase accessibility in composition classrooms is to rethink our conceptions of time” (p. 261), particularly as it relates to writing apprehension (Reeves, 1997) when “normative, compulsory time frames may contribute to or unproductively exacerbate anxiety” which might be “alleviated through crippling time, increasing flexibility, avoiding rigidity, and lowering the stakes of writing...(particularly in the beginning stages of a course)” (p. 270). Wood’s writers indicated that more flexible time frames would lower their stress levels. As Reeves suggested in her article about writers’ apprehension, Wood asked her writers to talk about their concerns and their challenges when writing in the college composition class.

Lovejoy (2009) writes that at the foundation of “promoting growth in student writing is the teacher’s understanding and appreciation of ‘the basic linguistic competence that students bring with them to school’ (20). The authors emphasize the importance of social context as a leading contributor to gains in writing development and student learning: Whether you are conscious of it or not, your classroom is a fertile social context for literacy learning.” She practices reflection in ways that provides a good model for writing teachers of all levels: “I ask myself whether I have taken the time to connect with students’ lives, hear their stories, understand their frustrations, and discover what each brings to the classroom as a social context for learning.” Lovejoy cites Wynne: “For as long as mainstream students think that another’s language is inferior to

theirs, they will probably not bother to understand it, and therefore, there will be much about the other they will fail to understand”

Mount (2014) argues, like Matsuda and colleagues, that many who are teaching ESL writers in mainstream composition courses “may not be familiar with academic discussions taking place in rhetoric and composition...[and] many composition instructors still do not know how to effectively work with ELLs...Many instructors make no changes to the curriculum or offer special ‘provisions’ to these students” (p. 16). It is also argued that “the exclusive focus on rhetoric” may be “counterproductive for L2 writers” (p. 16). Mount’s longitudinal case study of Arabic male writers over one academic year includes many writers’ unedited voices and their perceptions of their own academic reading and writing as substandard, but they do say that they felt they were improving with continual practice and feedback from Mount, the instructor of all three classes in which the writing was collected.

Zamel (1995) also conducted surveys of both instructors’ and ELLs’ expectations, experiences, and perceptions. While Zamel explains that she did not receive many responses from faculty but does not say how many, she did collect 325 (voluntary) student responses from different departments and programs on campus. The following is a summary of students’ perceptions of helpful behaviors from instructors:

- 1) patience;
- 2) definition of vocabulary they may not know—written on the board;
- 3) assignments written on the board and announced in class;
- 4) acknowledgement of the efforts ELL’s made compared to Americans;
- 5) affirmation that they were worthy of being in the American university;

- 6) recognition of their hard work;
- 7) focus on what they can do rather than what they cannot do in English;
- 8) inclusiveness of all students, including them;
- 9) creating spaces for them to speak and not feel silenced or fearful of talking;
- 10) designing assignments that were open to many different kinds of content with purpose

to them; In the present study, the researcher and the instructor read the 12 essays and 12 questionnaires several times about one month after they were collected. As recommended by TESOL, we provided the writers' entire essays in which we identified about 12 themes, focusing on the benefits and challenges of the writing done in class—with journals written daily and essays written weekly.

- 11) contextualizing writing assignments in culturally meaningful ways (Zamel, p. 512).

Even in 2018, Zamel's survey is considered a landmark study that helps faculty understand ELL's concerns and needs at the university level, as does Margaret Mount's thesis. One instructor, however, did write:

My experience with teaching ESL students is that they have often not received adequate English instruction to complete the required essay texts and papers in my classes. I have been particularly dismayed when I find that they have already completed 2 ESL courses and have no knowledge of the parts of speech or the terminology that is used in correcting English grammar on papers. I am certainly not in a position to teach English in my classes. (The problem has been particularly acute with Chinese/S. E. Asian students.) These students may have adequate intelligence to do well in the courses, but their language skills result in

low grades. (I cannot give a good grade to a student who can only generate one or two broken sentences during a ten minute slide comparison.) (1995, p. 509)

Zamel writes in response to this faculty member:

The first assumption I see in this response is the belief that language and knowledge are separate entities, that language must be in place and fixed in order to do the work in the course. This static notion of language is further revealed by the instructor's assumption that language use is determined by a knowledge of parts of speech or grammatical terminology. Given this belief, it is understandable why she is dismayed by what she characterizes as students' lack of knowledge of grammar, a conclusion she has seemingly reached because her corrective feedback, presumably making use of grammatical terms, has not proven successful. (p. 509)

Zamel points out the reductionist view of language as mostly parts of speech, and she goes on to explain that it seems the faculty member faults the students and the English Department for students' challenges. She challenges the native speaker norms as well here:

This practice itself is not questioned, however; students or their inadequate English language instruction are held accountable instead. If students had been prepared appropriately, if the gatekeeping efforts had kept students out of her course until they were more like their native language counterparts, her commentary suggests, students would be able to do the required work. (p. 509)

Zamel reminds readers of the elements of collegiate literacy that may be unfamiliar to ELLs:

There is little sense of how the unfamiliar terms, concepts, and ways of seeing that are particular to this course can be acquired. Nor is there an appreciation for how this very unfamiliarity with the course content may be constraining students' linguistic processes. (p. 509)

Zamel asks us not to focus on difference but to focus on how instructors can contribute to language acquisition and to avoid a deficit model of what learners bring to the table:

She [the instructor who responded to the survey] does not see, focusing as she does on difference, how she can contribute to students' language and written development, how she can build on what they know. (p. 509)

Zamel also states that this instructor is stuck on the language problems and is unable to see the content, which is a bias shared by many faculty who may not be able to distinguish between higher order and lower order errors—those which interfere with meaning and those that do not, respectively:

Despite indicating that students may have 'adequate intelligence to do well in the course,' she doesn't seem to be able to get past their language problems when it comes to evaluating their work, thus missing the irony of grading on the basis of that which she acknowledges she is not 'in a position to teach.' (p. 510)

As related to the present study, Zamel reminds readers that even when students can produce only two "broken sentences" (p. 510) in ten minutes, they are often lacking experience with timed writing and fear they will not be able to express themselves so write almost nothing.

Like Zamel (1990, 1995), Asiri (2010) also contributed to faculty's understanding that timed writing will produce many mistakes in spelling, but those mistakes are like slips of the tongue in speaking: given the time and focus, writers could correct most of these mistakes, suggesting that they were made in haste. Students knew that their rough drafts written in class were not graded for spelling, grammar, and mechanics, so they focused more on conveying the meaning. For that reason, Asiri and the instructor, Dr. Reeves, made the following assumptions about Saudis' spelling errors prior to collecting the data:

- We assume that most of the misspelled words will not affect the meaning of the context.
- We assume that we could guess the misspelled words from the context.
- We assume that some of the misspelled words will be performance mistakes since the essays were written in class in a limited time without any knowledge of the topic beforehand. (p. iv)

The greatest number of spelling errors appeared in Saudi males' essays, possibly due to negative transfer from L1 and from the lack of emphasis on spelling in teaching English in Saudi Arabia.

These assumptions were found to be accurate based on the analysis of the errors and the general readability of the final reflection papers. The data source for the present study was also the final reflection essays and responses to questions asked by the instructor.

## Arabic ELL's

Out of the four skills in language, one of the major concerns of the Arabic speakers has been writing. In order to write, the writer must know both the specific process needed for this particular product or kind of writing. Writing is key in contributing to the development of cognitive skills such as synthesis, analysis, and inferences. Salem (2007) in his attempt to study the views of 55 students at the University of Al-Azhar in Egypt who majored in English with regard to writing found that most of them were overwhelmed, especially when they needed to write on a particular topic. Writing was a difficult task for them. Actually, they did not know where to start, which meant they had no invention devices, and how to come up with ideas as well as how to make a reasonable conclusion to the essay. Salem also found that these students did lack the technical skills of writing a good composition which is acceptable in English. It emerged in this study that the students repeated ideas and made serious mistakes in punctuation and grammar and most of the presented irrelevant information.

Hourani (2008) did the analysis of the reasons behind the weaknesses or inability to write in English among the first-year students at the Taibah University. According to the findings of this study, it emerged that students had some reasons behind their poor writing skills. They highlighted themes such as knowledge and understanding, grammatical weaknesses, lack of adequate practice, and their background in education as the major hindrance factors to their writing skills. In fact, most of them could not accurately express themselves in writing when they were asked to do so. The study done by Latif (2007) focused on exploring the anxiety in writing the second language and writing self-efficacy within the context of EFL in Egypt. The participants in this study

were fifty Egyptian English students. Based on the result, it was found that second language anxiety was associated negatively with writing performance of students. Latif went ahead and conducted a study where he did insightful analysis on some factors that lead to poor performance in writing and production. Concerning the learners, he stated that the findings had it that the most of the teachers assumed the effect of L1, lack of motivation, reading, and practice. This resulted in poor performance in writing among students. The students stated that the difficulties were not only in writing but also occurred at every level of the sentence, a paragraph or the whole essay.

The main causes of errors in writing can be due to interlingual and intralingual errors. Interlingual errors can be described as those errors related to the native language. Intralingual errors, on the other hand, are those that exist or occur due to the language being learned. One way of helping students to become more accurate when writing a foreign language is the correction. Research done by Russel and Spada (2006) revealed that there is increasing evidence that correction of errors is generally important and helpful in enhancing English writing skills among Arabic Speakers.

Russel and Spada reaffirmed that the first language of students contributes or affects their writing skills, especially punctuation and capitalization problems. The result of the study done by Almarwany (2008) revealed that students committed grave errors, especially in sentence construction, grammar, organization but above all, capitalization and punctuation. Almarwany pointed out that punctuation errors were as a result of inadequate mastery of the ESL rules coupled with Arabic interference, now called negative transfer. As a result of inadequate language proficiency, students apply the rules of their first language without considering that there is a different system of punctuation



and different syntax and morphology. In some cases, certain punctuation can be used both in English and Arabic, but the cases are not similar throughout. Such a case only holds in a situation where there is a similarity between first and second language that can lead to a positive transfer. Several studies have addressed spelling in different ways.

Swan and Smith (2008) did an observation and found that all English writing aspects cause problems for the Arabic speakers. In their study, they discussed some of the main differences between English and Arabic that cause Arabic speakers to have a lot of difficulties in writing. For instance, the writing system in Arabic rarely recognizes written words in the isolated form of letters. A good example they gave is the word “study” which in Arabic is written as *يدرس*. This word is formed with three Arabic characters representing three phonemes. This is unusual phenomenon since in most cases, Arabic words are not written as separate phonemes. Another difference noted is that unlike English words, Arabic words are written from right to left. As a result, Arab learners sometimes misspell or misread words containing letters that with mirror shapes to those of Arabic. The mirror letters include d and b and p and q. Based on this study, they also found that the right to the left system of writing makes it technically hard for learners to read letters within words especially from right to left movement of the eye. For instance, it is possible that learners may misread form for from.

Bahloul (2007) in his study on the possible causes of spelling mistakes believes that the primary cause of spelling mistakes is the writing system irregularities. Such irregularities have caused most Arabic-speaking English learners a major problem in spelling proficiency development. The inconsistencies in writing system appear to confuse students and learners that come from different language backgrounds. Bahloul

suggested that the main cause of irregularities a lack of one to one correspondence between pronunciation and written word. He also attributed many difficulties in spelling that are encountered by Arabic speakers to the inconsistencies in English Word structure.

Russel and Spada (2006) in their further study reiterated that writing is a challenge to Arabic speakers due to varied reasons. One of the reasons they pointed out was the significant difference between English writing and Arabic writing principally in terms of organization, style, and structure. In addition, they stated that Arabs dislike sitting studying for hours especially in the library. They are oral and social communicative. Mostly, Arabic speakers like listening and talking rather than reading and writing. As a result, they find it difficult to construct a sentence in English and to write the same sentence. Arab-speaking students often have high speaking skills and low writing skills since much of their time is spent on speaking rather than writing.

## Summary

Because English is a productive skill in language, the style of learning among students basically manifests itself by way of writing. What is perceived as input and what is produced as the output by students, especially multilingual writers, may be judged harshly when formative feedback is often needed before summative evaluation is done. Speakers may write as they speak, and at first, the writing may not be comprehensible. In learning a language, input can be described as the language data which a learner may be exposed to. One of the assertions that have been made is that for learning or getting to know the second language, two prerequisites must take place (Ansari, 2012): The first one is the second language input available to the learners as well as a set of internal

mechanisms which account for how the data for the second language are processed. We, as language teachers, know that not all input is intake. We have to reteach many lessons.

A second language speaker can possess skills of writing the first language in the context of EFL if there is plenty of time to learn English. For nonnative speakers, there is a great need to put into practice English usage on a daily basis and interact with people who are knowledgeable about English and who speak English—whether as natives or nonnatives. It is also important for them to treat English as a means of communication rather than a subject to be learned. Both teachers and learners should put more focus on the meaning followed by the form of language. Bahloul (2007) reiterated that effective learning and writing skills could lead to great achievement in the writing skills of a student, especially EFL students. Writing skills among the international speakers greatly depend on their teachers. The role of teachers is to motivate and inspire students to put maximum effort for maximum accomplishment. In the case of nonnative speakers in EFL settings, such as Saudi Arabia, most of the input of the English language they receive largely occurs within the classroom, though many teachers there still speak Arabic while teaching the English language.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODS, DATA COLLECTION, AND ANALYSIS**

Chapter 3 includes details about the research methods, the participants, and the data collection of the 12 writers' essays with a brief summary of the findings, and data analysis. The researcher identified themes found in the essays and presented them in 10 tables with commentary on her findings.

The study adopted qualitative methods in order to gain insight about challenges the 12 multilingual writers faced and the benefits of daily writing in English (Table 1), *Composition for Multilingual Writers*. Qualitative research was chosen since it gives first-hand information and, in this case, the ability to interact with the source of data (Silverman, 2016) because the researcher was an intern in the class in which the data/essays were collected. She is considered a participant-observer.

#### **Case Study**

Like Bertrand (2013), De Paula (2015), Hansen (2015), Leung (2013), Mount (2015), this thesis is a case study of 12 multilingual writers who represent a convenience sample of this population at the university level in the United States. TESOL definitions were applied and the guidelines were followed:

In TESOL, a case typically refers to a person, either a learner or a teacher, or an entity, such as a school, a university, a classroom, or a program (see Faltis, 1997; Johnson, 1992; Nunan, 1992)....Unlike ethnographic research, case studies do not

necessarily focus on cultural aspects of a group or its members. Case study research may feature single cases or multiple cases. (TESOL.org, 2018)

TESOL explains how case studies have changed over time:

TESOL case studies have adopted the more subjective and interpretive stance typical of case studies in education and other fields (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996; Johnson, 1992; Stake, 1994, 1995), with less emphasis on the acquisition of discrete linguistic elements and more emphasis on such issues as learners' and teachers' identities, skill development and its consequences for learners, teachers' professional development experiences.... Both approaches are legitimate but require sufficient detail and contextualization. (TESOL.org, 2018)

TESOL asks researchers to explore their own lives and influences as well as those of the participants and other relevant players such as the mentor for the researcher and/or the philosophy of the program in which they are teaching and/or conducting the case study:

Acknowledging multiple realities in qualitative case studies, as is now commonly done, involves discerning the various perspectives of the researcher, the case/participant, and others, which may or may not converge (Yin cited in TESOL.org, 2018).

TESOL emphasizes the inductive nature of case studies and the experience, which the responsible researcher (faculty sponsor and professor in the class) and the primary investigator (thesis writer) did:

As an interpretive, inductive form of research, case studies explore the details and meanings of experience and do not usually attempt to test a priori hypotheses.

Instead, the researcher attempts to identify important patterns and themes in the data. (TESOL.org, 2018)

In the present study, the researcher and the instructor read the 12 essays several times about one month after they were collected and in the weeks that followed the first reading of the essays. As recommended by TESOL, we provided the writers' entire essays in which we identified about 12 themes, focusing on the benefits and challenges of the writing done in class—with journals written daily and essays written weekly. This reading again and again to try to find the meanings of the learners' experiences is called an iterative process that is necessary in action research. Letting the writers' voices prevail is a top priority of this kind of research.

### Action Research

Action research is the kind of classroom research that is done to make changes in the materials, the ways of teaching, the learning objectives and the ways of assessing learning, and case study is one of the best ways to determine what needs to change and how to make the changes based on information provided by the learners in the case study and by the reflections on the findings of the researchers—who are most often also the teachers in the case study:

The richness of case studies is related to the amount of detail and contextualization that is possible when only one or a small number of focal cases and issues are analyzed. The writer's ability to provide a compelling and engaging profile of the case, with suitable examples and linkages to broader issues, is also very important...(TESOL.org, 2018)

As noted, the researcher was an intern in Dr. Reeves' class when the data were collected.

#### Data Collection and Analysis

The researcher investigated the challenges that nonnative writers face and the benefits of daily writing in the department of English at Eastern Washington University, English112 class. In order to realize the study purpose, elements of these three methods were used to collect and analyze data.

Table 1. Writers' Nationalities

English 112 Fall 2017	
Nation of Origin	High School Status
Saudis	8 (Didn't graduate from high school in the United States)
Iraqi	1 (graduated from high school in the United States)
Chinese	1 (graduated from high school in the United States)
Ukraine	1 (graduated from high school in the United States)
Japanese	1 (Didn't graduate from high school in the U.S.)

### Convenience Sample

A total of 12 students out of 20 signed the consent forms and took part in the study, but all 20 completed the required reflection essay, which counted as part of the final exam. In Week 11, they were asked to write a short essay addressing the following research questions that were designed to guide the case study. Ten of the writers actually wrote an essay, but two of the Saudi females, Farida and Dana, followed a question-answer format.

- 1) What were the greatest challenges in writing weekly compositions in English 112?
- 2) What papers did you write in high school in your first language in your country?
- 3) How did you write them? What was your writing process?
- 4) What was one of the topics you wrote about in your high school in your first language?
- 5) What was your best essay? What made it your best essay? How many words was it?
- 6) What were the hardest parts of revising your essays in English 112?
- 7) What areas did you improve your writing in?
- 8) How did you improve your writing in this area?
- 9) What did you learn from having conferences with your intern?
- 10) What did you learn from the midterm conference with your professor about your goals essay?
- 11) What are you still working on in your writing?
- 12) Based on the literature review and the results of the study, what are the suggested remedies that can be put in place to overcome the challenges?



## Procedure of the study

In order to answer the questions, the participants were asked to write approximately 500 words in a reflection essay. The students' written products were then analyzed by the researcher and her mentor with the researcher identifying major and minor themes and color coding them in each essay.

## Data analysis of the 12 Essays

The 12 essays were studied and themes were found by the researcher in consultation with the thesis chair, who was also the instructor of record in the class where the essays were collected at the end of the quarter before the final exam. She first color coded themes of the challenges and then color coded the benefits in the same way. Then she created the tables included here in this chapter.

The 12 essays appear here unedited for grammar or mechanics or meaning so that the writer's voice is unaltered and the essays remain intact here. The offering of the whole essays is meant to honor the voices of the student writers and to let their voices dominate this chapter—as a community of writers. The 12 essays were written outside of class and submitted electronically on Canvas within 24 hours of the assignment. These are the rough drafts as first submitted. Most students would have revised them one last time before placing them in the final portfolio, but the revised essays were not readily available, so only the rough drafts are included here. All students had to write these essays for the final portfolio, though only 12 signed the IRB consent form, giving permission to publish the essays in this thesis. Each participant was given a new name by the researcher before including the essays here in this thesis.

## 1. Miriam

### My Reflection Essay

This quarter was my first quarter at the university and taking an English class in the beginning was really helpful for me. As an international student and the English language is my second language, this class was something I really need it. I improved this quarter in many ways such as, how to organize my ideas, how to write fast and vocabulary has grown. So, I'm going to talk more about how I improved.

Organizing my idea has been grown in this class. Before this class I was just writing to fill out the papers and I was never care about the reader if they will understand or not. But now, since I have to revised my essays, I have to read it and understand some sentence, I have to rewrite it again. So, this kind of teaching benefit me a lot.

Next, I will discuss how this class made me a fast writer. Before this class I was taking more than two hours to write my essay. But now, I can finish it in less than hour and read it again and see if I have any mistakes. As I learned to write more than 500 words which I never do it before. I remember my first essay about 'time I was afraid' I wrote less than 300 words. However, my last essay which was 'Letter to Mr. Opama', it was include 619 and I get 100 points on it. That showed I'm really grown in writing.

Next, I learned a lot of vocabulary in this class. My vocabulary skills were terrible [at the beginning of this course]. I couldn't write my essay without looking to the translator. But now, since I learned more than 30 words [each week?], I can write my essay [in class in 50 minutes] without using my phone, and I did.

Finally, I will introduce what I am going to do in the two weeks left of the class to improve my English. I will focus more in the class. Also, I would like to read newspaper in my free time. I will participate in the class. I will read more in the class book. Also, I will study well for the final exam.

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Two students, Farida and Dana, followed a question-answer format in their rough drafts instead of writing an essay, so these are included here, not the final essay that was not available to the researcher at the end of the quarter.

2. Farida (The shading was done by Farida and is left unaltered here.)

Friendly opening of your letter thanking both professor and intern.

...and Dear Mie Dear Professor Reeves

I cannot find words to thank you. You and my intern- Mie-, have ability to teach me and correct my mistakes. Dr. Reeves and Mie have done well, both of you spent time to Thanks to you, I'm improved and my ability to write and speak .improve my language .became better than in the past

Favorite video & why.

it was so obvious, I mean by My favorite video is the hard time generation b ecause obvious that the story was so clean [clear] to understand especially because I'm foreigner and I do not know about AmMinghuaans' issues. Another thing is what happened last .video when they got job and had a happy end

Discuss your best essay and why it is your best essay. What do you like best about 3 this essay? What did you learn from writing this essay?

My best essay is Children Grief and Culture Burial Custom. It includes a lot of information that was in my mind because I lost my uncle before two months and I have lived with this situation so it was so easy to me and so easy to explain all position. Especially because he had two boys who now became orphan.

Which parts of writing in English are the most difficult for you? Grammar

Why?

Because for each grammar, there is a different situation that sometimes makes it difficult to understand to me. Also, in Arabic language, we have different role and different position cannot match to English's grammar.

Give an example from one of your FRIDAY essays?

For example, in Fear Essay I have started with "Great woman in the united states" that was wrong because I have to start with "The" or "A".

Which parts of your writing improved?

I become faster than in the past.

In ELI, I spent two hours in the final essay to write three hundred words.

but with Dr. Reeves, I improved myself to write seven hundred words just in forty minutes which I never imagined.

What helped you to improve in this area?

Writing every day.

On a scale of 1-4, how much did you improve in this area? 4 is highest, so rate yourself on improvement in this area.

three

Give an example from one of your papers to show how you improved.

In the first essay which is Fear Essay, I wrote two hundred. With time, I wrote seven hundred in the homelessness and destine that shows to me how I transformed to be faster.

What did you work on the most as you revised your essays?

Grammar mistakes.

What kind of changes did your intern ask for in your revised essays?

Most of the time, Mie focused on grammar mistake.

What kinds of changes did your professor ask for in your conference on your goals essay?

She asked to inform her more details for every majors and more cultural information.

On a scale of 1-4, how much did you improve your essays that you revised?

Three

Describe what you learned from the conference with Dr. Reeves.

I learned how I can provide my essay with important and exciting information. Also, I learned how I make my essay clear to any reader.

Describe what you learned in your conferences with your intern and how your intern helped you.

She helped me with grammar mistakes and how make it obviously without any mystery.

Three important lessons you learned in English 112 + explain.

First, I learned how I can show respect for my teacher

Second, I learned how I come to class on time and never be late

Third, I learned how to write good format for every paper and I learned how I can write faster.

An area you wish you had done better in. Explain what you could have done to learn more.

Speaking because speaking out loud is not easy especially if you speak directly to a native speaker. I started to read more articles, and study new vocabulary every day.

Your effort in class every day. Did you give 100% every day? What did you do to make the class better for everyone?

Yes, I got 100% every day. I tried to be braver and more self- confidence by sharing my journals in front of class. Also, I was speller for Dr. Reeves many times.

What advice do you give to the students in the next 112 class?

I would like to say to any student, you should attend to the class every day and do all homework without missing any homework. Another thing that, students should exploit each chance to earn extra credit such as sharing journal, going to Dr. Reeves's ceremony.

Note of appreciation to your intern and Dr. Reeves.

Thank you for everything and Thank God for meeting these people who supported me and encouraged me to go better.

Signature

Farida

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Dana

English 112

Letter to me and your intern about your progress in the class.

I became faster in writing, now I have more ideas when I start to write, and I became better in grammar.

Friendly opening of your letter thanking both professor and intern.

Dear, Dr. LaVona Reeves

I want to thank you, because I learned a lot of things from you, I learned how to be fast in writing, how to be forced in the class, and I really appreciate this. You had treated us like your children. You are an amazing professor. Thank you for your time with us!

Dear, Danielle

You helped me a lot with my essays and you taught me how I fixed my mistakes. You are a helpful person I was lucky to have intern like you. Thank you

Favorite video & why. Triangle Factory Fire

Discuss your best essay and why it is your best essay.

I think my best essay was the Triangle Factory Fire, it was my best essay because it is very clear topic and it was easy to write about it, the video that I watched about the Triangle Factory Fire and because it is a true story.

What do you like best about this essay? What did you learn from writing this essay?

The most part that I like it the it was a true story, I learned that there are some people in this world have a pain for their lost.

Which parts of writing in English are the most difficult for you? Why?

Writing fast. Because I don't know a lot of words in English and it was hard for me to write fast.

Give an example from one of your FRIDAY essays?

My Teacher essay

Which parts of your writing improved?

Writing fast and grammar and the new word that I learned, now I am a better writer.

What helped you to improve in this area?

Write every day in the class.

On a scale of 1-4, how much did you improve in this area? 4 is highest, so rate yourself on improvement in this area. 3

Give an example from one of your papers to show how you improved

My homelessness and destined I wrote 754 words, because in my first essay I just wrote 372 words in courage essay. Now that is a big change for me

Your revision

What did you work on the most as you revised your essays?

The walk with me essay

What kind of changes did your intern ask for in your revised essays?

We worked in the grammar the most

What kinds of changes did your professor ask for in your conference on your goals essay?

Cultural information and more explain

On a scale of 1-4, how much did you improve your essays that you revised?

I give myself-3.50

Describe what you learned from the conference with Dr. Reeves.

That more details are more important than I think, because not anyone can know what I'm talking about expect myself and now I focused more in the details and to explain more.

Three important lessons you learned in English 112 + explain.

I learned that I should pay more attention to the student when they talk, how to be more respectful with you professor and the student in the class, try to not talk when there a student talk or the professor talk.

An area you wish you had done better in. Explain what you could have done to learn more.

In the grammar because I wish that I worked hard in it, because the grammar in Arabic is very different from the English.

Your effort in class every day. Did you give 100% every day? What did you do to make the class better for everyone?

Yes, I give myself 100 because I have never absented, and do try make everyone better with explain for them some questions, they didn't understand in the class, also, sometimes I have some answer that is true, and all the student listen and know what I am talking about, someday I gave information about chapter in the class and I tried to explain more to make that students understand.

Your attendance. How many times were you absent? Explain why.

I never absent

Make-up work. Did you make up all work you missed when absent? If not, why not?

I never absent because of that I don't have any Make-up work

Your grade in English 112—what grade do you think you should earn? Why?

I think 100, because I always try to work hard and understand in the class and be focused with the professor.

What advice do you give to the students in the next 112 class?

To work hard in English 112 to get better fast as I do, bay more attrition the professor in the class, be respectful person. Try to do your homework in time. If you think that you don't understand in the class, try to talk with the professor.

Note of appreciation to your intern and Dr. Reeves.

I am thankful for your time (Dr. Reeves, Danelle) in the class with us.

Dear, Dr. Reeves

you are lovely with the student and we learned a lot of things from you, you have a big heart. I will always remember you

Dear, Danelle

Thank you for your time with me to help me with my essays, and make me understand better in class

Signature

Dana

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#### 4. Masayo

Dear Dr. Reeves,

Hello, thank you for teaching me at English 112 class in fall quarter 2017. I think that I improved my English skills because of your wonderful teaching. In this letter, I will write about the wrap-up of this class.

First, I will talk about the videos which I saw in the classes. The most memorable video is about the Triangle Factory Fire because I did not know about such a sad accident, and I did not know the bad environment for labors in America in 1930s. I was surprised, and shocked that most of victims in this fire were young women. Moreover, I felt it was interesting that many Americans grieve every year for victims. It is nice movement that every people remember the fire, and they think about the environment for laborers every year.

Second, I discuss my Friday essays. I think my best essay is about the goal which I write as 8th essay because I could consider well about my future, and I could mention to many Japanese cultural tendencies. In the essay, I also wrote about my families and I noticed that what my families did are part of the Japanese culture. It was interesting because I took my family's behavior as granted.

Third, I am going to write about my writing process. The difficult point of writing in English is vocabulary because my amount of vocabulary in English is much smaller than that of Japanese. When I write a Friday essay, I always call up what I want to write in English, but I cannot change it in English. In Friday essay time, students cannot use any dictionaries, so I cannot use words which I have to look dictionaries. Therefore, I always took too much time for writing my essay, and it was difficult for me to write 500 words in first draft in early weeks' Friday essay. However, I could improve my writing skill through this class. I got to write English faster. I think my writing skill was improved from 2 to 4. For example, I could reach 500 words in the last Friday essay.

Through revising of Friday essays, I worked on putting details the most. My intern, Min, always asked to add more details in my essay such as cultural background, and what people looked like. Moreover, Dr. Reeves asked to add more Japanese cultural episodes on my goal essay. For example, she asked me to add what my parents did for my grandparents on the paragraph about the family goal. I think my essays were improved



from 1 to 3 on a scale. In Dr. Reeves' conference, I learned how to extend topics and I learned the importance of details in my intern's conference.

Q: three important lessons you learned in English 112

- a. Not to think too much when I am writing an essay: this was the biggest problem through this class. I think I could overcome this problem.
  - b. Do not be afraid to make mistakes: if I am afraid of making mistakes. I would escape from speaking English. Even if I make mistakes, I should try to speak English.
  - c. The importance of facing difficult problem: Eleanor's life explained the importance of facing fears, problem and stress.
- 

5. Minghua Su

ENGL-112

Thank you so much for being an amazing teacher, you are probably one of the best professor I ever had. You are more than just a professor to us, you showed that you care about each one of us, you care more than just the grades in class. You made sure we understood everything before dismissing the class, a lot of my professors don't so that. They don't really care if we listen or not, because that is not their job. I also thank all the inters for putting time and energy on all those journals, they didn't have to, but they did anyway. I truly appreciate that.

We did so many things in this class (probably not able to name them all), you showed us so many videos, one of my favorite video is about the homeless. It showed me how hard life can be, and made me grateful for what I have today. And that is also my best essay, because I truly spoke my mind on what I think about the homeless and how hard life is.

My writing contains a lot of errors (even in this one), English is not easy to learn. I don't necessarily have problem with word counts, because if I am interested with the topic then I will be able to write about it. The most difficult part is probably grammars, how I write is how I talk, I know you don't want to do that in an essay. We write everyday in class, so that helped me with telling stories. Now, I can give a more detailed description about what happened. Knowing what 5 W's is helped me a lot with storytelling. On the scale of 1-4, I would give a 3. I remember in the teacher essay I used the 5 W's to explain who Mrs. Axel is, and I believe I did a good job on it.

No matter how good a write I am, I still need to revise my essay. I would say one thing I worked on the most is grammar and punctuation. Once I read my essay out loud, I will realize where I should fix and improve. One thing Dr. Reeves asked me to improve on my essay is give more detail on the stories I'm telling, which I should really work on.

From the conference I learned that nobody is perfect, everyone makes mistake, and there is a lot of thing we can improve on.

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6. Fares.

Dear Dr. Reeves and my intern Tatiana,

I would like to begin by thanking both of you for putting in the effort and time to educate and support me and my fellow friends in our ENGL-112 class during this fall quarter. Your remarkable contribution and assistance are much appreciated. I have benefited from this class in many ways especially in terms of writing, listening, and reading skills and I am very glad I had the chance to take this class. In this reflective essay, I will reflect on what we had to do and learn about in class and will mention the progress I made for this course.

First of all, during the course, we studied and read about the biography of the

American President Franklin and his wife Eleanor Roosevelt - the first lady of the United States during her husband Franklin's presidency back in 1933 in a book titled "Eleanor Roosevelt –A Life of Discovery-"written by Russell Freedman. Furthermore, we have written and done many writing assignments such as the everyday journals and Friday essays along with other different assignments like reading the chapters of the assigned book and taking quizzes and exams on them. We were assigned group presentations from the book that we had to play roles on and had to prepare for and execute in class at different assigned times for each group.

Secondly, I have in particular improved the overall fluency and quality of my writing. For example, the number of vocabulary words used in my journals and essays has increased fairly. In the past, I had trouble with reaching the word count fast enough but now I can feel the improvement I made on that matter as I have become better able to write a large number of vocabulary words in a fairly short amount of time or at least within the allowable time limit. I also learned some unfamiliar terms and phrases, especially from the book and the short video clips played in class that I believe, are very helpful in the long run for fluency.

During days of class, if my memory is correct I showed up to class every day on time except for two days I showed up a little late due to a difficulty I had with finding a parking space for my car. I missed two days of class one of which I had an excuse for (For health issues). My Listening comprehension has improved as well and I have become more capable of comprehending long Spoken English settings through conversations. Among videos and clips we were shown in class, I found the homeless kids of the Great Recession and Kristina's bucket list story to be the most informative, educational and enjoyable.

The conferences I had with Dr. Reeves and my intern Tatiana were of a great help. These one-on-one meetings assisted me with improving, editing and revising what I wrote in my essays and finding out about my weaknesses and work on avoiding them in my future essays by tips and advice given by the instructors. For example, coming up with and generating ideas to write about the assigned task, improving the organization and structure of paragraphs and the contents, and correcting grammar and spelling mistakes. I found the Goals essay to be a particularly useful essay that I think I did well on with the help of Dr. Reeves's conference.

Finally, once again many thanks to my valued professor Dr. Reeves and my intern Tatiana for their great work and contribution to my knowledge and education.

Sincerely,

Fares

7. MingHua Dec 2nd 2017

To Professor Reeves and Moe:

With the fall quarter quickly coming to a close, I have been reflecting about my composition for the multilingual class. Through the progression of this class writing daily journals, observing videos and writing essays every Friday, I had the ability to improve my writing skills significantly. With the assistance of Professor. Reeves and our helpful intern Moe, I did not only improve in my general grammar skills but I was also able to improve on the fluidity of my essays. Their motivation to help me learn and succeed in this class is greatly appreciated. Enclosed in this letter are some specific examples of how much I improved in English course.

One of my favorite video in this class was the one about the families living in cars in Orlando, Florida. This video broke my heart because I couldn't stand watching the children telling their stories about their daily life struggles of being homeless.

Through writing essays every Friday, I gained the ability to learn multiple skills to write better academic essays. One of my best essays was the Walk with Me essay. In this essay I wrote about my Parents' Marriage experience while detailing important information. Adding specific details and information in this essay aided the reader to better understand the concept of Saudi Arabian marriages. Linking together sentences with appropriate transition words was one of my problems. Through the quarter and with the aid of Dr. Reeves I have improved with the problem of linking sentences. Aiding my writing skills, Dr. Reeves would always advise me through the use of comments on my daily journals that would be written in class. Another one of my weaknesses in writing was the use of details in my papers and Dr. Reeves would always remind me about this through her comments, through her help I was then able to write more detailed/ audience oriented papers.

The revision process was not easy since I would critically look over the punctuation, mechanics and the structure of my essays. Moe asked me to be more careful with using punctuations like: commas and periods in the appropriate places of the sentences.

The chapter presentation was a fun team work experience since my Intern Moe, Minghua and I were group members. We met once for an hour to distribute chapter nine from the book, everyone was in charge of three pages from the chapter. My intern Moe was extremely helpful in that presentation since he took charge of putting together the PowerPoint presentation and role plays. In the role play I tried using an appropriate tone in hopes of making it sound realistic and not sound like I was just reading a newspaper. Through our extensive effort as a team I expect us to obtain an excellent grade. In English 112 I learned that good attendance is a major key for any college level class, and that as students who want to succeed in all courses we need to be prepared to take daily notes in every class. Reading the textbook is yet another major key to success in any course.

Dr. Reeves is one of the most inspirational professors that I've ever met at EWU, her inspirational stories like that of raising her children, the struggles in her academic life and the culture shock she went through while living in Japan inspired to be a better student and much more understanding young man.

I have achieved great attendance in this course: while I never missed a class for the first eight weeks of the quarter the only two absences I have in this course were due to a severe fever. On quiz number 2, I obtained a grade of seventy-six percent in which case my desire to obtain a better grade I retook the quiz. With no hesitation I expect an A grade in this class due to great attendance, participation in class and exceptional growth in my English writing skills. Some advice that I would give to incoming students would be to show up to class every single day and make sure to do the chapter reading daily in order to keep up with the professors lectures. Making a list of new vocabulary words to practice on a daily basis would be of great benefit for new students of this course.

I would like to thank you Dr. Reeves for the understanding you have for your students cultures, and for keeping your students motivated to learn new material throughout the course. I am grateful to have met such an inspirational role model who showed that she cared about the success of her students in her class. I would also like to take the time to thank Moe for the time he took in correcting my papers and his feedback.

MingHua

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8. Nada

November/27/2017

Major: Finance

## English 112

In this class, I learned lots of things. First, I learned how to write 500 words essay in only 30 minutes, so that makes my writing improving. Second, In the beginning of this class, I felt that the subjects that you chose for us to write about are very deficit, and I had a hard time when I was thinking about each subject and what I should write about it, so I learned that there is no subject that I can't write about. Also, I learned very nice thing which is sharing some of my life with my classmates. That is made me know about them and know about their thought and how there are living their life. In this way, if someone shares his story about something, I will learn now thing about their exceptions or they made me interested in trying something that they talked about it. In addition, I think I need to improve my spelling to improve my writing to be-cause sometimes when I know a word about I don't know how it is the spell, and that makes me try to find another simple word that has the same meaning to use it. Having lots of academic words I think it's going to make my writing perfect. In the beginning of the class sometimes I wrote less than 100 words in the journals and 300 words in the essays, but after some weeks, my total words is increasing. Right now, I can write 200 words in the journals and about 700 words in the essays. The vocabulary also the same thing is improving. I tried to take note for all words that you with it in the bored, so in the end of my day, I try to study these words. Some of my spelling problems that I had I fixed it by the way that you taught us which is trying to split the word and write each part separately. I totally agree that the attendance is the most important things that the students should do to be a successful. Because if the students are absence a lot

they will be lost about the important information that the Dr says in the class, and even If the students have some friends in the class that they can ask about what the Dr said, it 's very different if you be in class and take note and understand perfectly. For me, I only miss two days of the whole quarter. I had hard reasons. I also am late probably only two times. The first one was be-cause I was talking on the phone with my SACM advisor, and the second time because I couldn't take the right bus, so I was late about only 3 or 4 minutes. Moreover, I see that meet with my in-tent is something has benefits. For example, If I meet with my intern, of course we are going to talk about something else about the life, and that going to be as a precise my language with her. Something else is she is going to teach me some ways that make my papers clear and anyone will read it will understand it. Also, I learned some writing skill that I know I will need it in different classes in the future. Because of the videos that you made us hear them in the class my lis-tening is improving more than anytime else. The most thing that it is improved because of Eng-lish 112 is the writing section. I maybe need a lite review for some grammars. In addition, I am trying to work more on my vocabulary, I think this is the most section that I need more work in.

Nada

9. Maher

Dear Dr. Reeves and my intern Tatiana,

First of all, I would really thank and appreciate you for helping and improving me in this class. Dr. Reeves I have learned from you a lot not only in English also in how to be a better person and useful person like you and Eleanor. When told us how you raised your children and treat us nicely and make us take the responsibility of this class and make us to the things that I did not expect to do such as writing 100 words in five mints and 500 words in thirty mints.

This is my third quarter in the university and this the only class I felt like I'm working with my family, the way how we work as a group and how the interns treat us and help us. Tatiana thank you for the time that you spent with me revising my essays and make them better. First time when I came to the class and you asked us to write 100 words in five mints I found it difficult but at the end of the class you told us do not worry you will improved and you write more than 100 words a week later I wrote 131 words in five mints, since the time I started learning English I did not think of writing this amount of words in time like that because I thought it's very difficult but now I found easy. The thing that I like the most in this class is the reverence between the students, when someone is talking all the class will listen.

Next, my writing skills have improved a lot when I see my old essays and my essays now I cannot believe how I improved, now I can write without looking up for the word or the grammar. However, there is one thing very important has changed in my life which is talking in front of the class, from the day that you told us about the presentation I was afraid and nervous because I have never talked in front of people or to my classmates too, that presentation was the first presentation in my whole life, but Tatiana helped us preparing for the presentation and remembered when Eleanor face the fear, and I faced fear and I talked in front of people in the first time of my life I'm so thankful to both of you for making me talk in front of people.

In conclusion, I will not forget you in my whole life and I hope to see you again and again. I might transfer to another university because my fiancée's major is not at EWU, but I hope to have a good relationship and keep talking and asking each other, and I hope to see both you in my wedding.

Sincerely, Maher

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## 10. Salem

English 112

Dear Dr. Reeves and Natalie

Thank you for this progress I learned a lot of things from everyone in the class and I learned to work with my class meat and helps each other.

First, I want to say thank you, Dr. Reeves, about helping me and everyone in the class to improve them English I am really glad to be one of your students, and thank you for both of you to help as to be better in writing and ready for another class in the university.

My best essay is Walk with me because it's explained how my parents get married and how the loves each other. The best about this essay its talk about married in Saudi Arabia and how it used to be easier than it is today. I learn from this essay a lot first how married change today and I learn from my parents that if you love someone you will do the beat that you can to be with it. Writing in Friday essay are the most difficult for you because I will spend long time to think about what I should to write. For example, when I wrote about the fair in the factor I have a lot of details but spend a long time to thinks how I will start writing maybe because the time was short and I was thinking about it but after that it is improved my writing for I can writing so fast and not spend a long time in one burger. Writing in Friday essay helped me to improve in this area because I will try to write 500 worlds in one hour. I think I improve in this area from 2 to 4 because first the time will finish and I will not finish 350 or 400 worlds' maybe, but in Goals essay I wrote maybe more than 500 worlds. In revised your essays I work to make sure that everything is clear in my essay and I don't have to repeat what I'm talking about. First, my revised essay intern ask me to not switch from past tense to present tense a lot, but Dr. Reeves ask me to put the important details if I'm going to talk about something such as if I am going to talk about amount in my country I should to say the name and where it is and some details. I improve my scale to 3 in my essays that I revised. I learned from the conference with Dr. Reeves that if I am going to put more details for what I am talking about that will make my essay good. My intern helped me with my grammar in my essay and she explanation the errors for me and she asked me to try to fix it by myself first Thant she going to help me with it. My chapter presentation is 6 "The Education of Eleanor Roosevelt. Natalie Giles is your intern and Nada is in my team. I think we meet 6 hours and I attend all meetings. I did my part and I ask her if I need to put more details. In those meetings we changes so stuff in the PowerPoint and we work the 10 worlds after that we made the role plays. I did nothing for preparing the handout, but I work in my part in the PowerPoint. We did talk about the PowerPoint and everyone did them part than the intern helped with it. Because we met and we talked about it a lot and every one helps each other to get some information I think make the presentation go well. My voice if it was not low that will make it better if you could do it over again. I think I should receive 90 or 89 because my voice was low. I think everyone in my group will get a good grade because everyone do well maybe they will get 90 or more than that. Three important lessons I learned in English 112 first I learned from Dr. Reeves if I start stay

something I have to finish it noting is difficult in this life, and if I need any help I can ask for it and if we work in group we will learn from each other. I wish I had done better in speaking and grammar. My effort in class every day 100% I come early for I will understand everything that Dr. Reeves will talk about and even the interns and students because everyone will learn new things in his life every day. My attendance is not bad because I was absent one time because I was sick. I think that I make up all work I missed when I was absent because it is just one day. I don't know—what grade I should earn in English 112 because Dr. Reeves can see if I improved my English or not and what things that I need to work on it. They have to learn new worlds because for they can have better English. Thank you Natalie and Dr. Reeves to helps me to improve my English.

Sincerely, Salem

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Dear Dr. Reeves, my professor and intern,

Thank you for all of your hard work. You taught me a lot this semester. I wouldn't be where I am without you. In this class, the Triangle Factory Fire was my favorite video we watched. Because it left me shocked and informed. I learned how this event changed our working conditions today. I think my best essay was the Triangle Factory Essay. When writing this essay I was writing about something I actually liked. The video inspired me to write this essay with great details. This essay gave me a larger vocabulary range. Avoiding the vernacular is something I struggle with when writing an essay. Also, comma splits are another problem I discovered I had, as well as starting a sentence the same way. For example, in my Fear Essay, I wrote: "I think Eleanor Roosevelt is right in order to overcome your fears you need to be courageous enough to face it, and when you do, only then will you defeat it and become braver, stronger, and confident." This shows two sentences in a sentence or also known as the vernacular. Some improvements I noticed was fluency and vocabulary. I have been learning a lot of new vocabulary words. In class, you explained every unknown vocabulary word. My vocabulary has increased since college started. Fluency was always hard for me. Since I took this class the number of words in my essays and journals has been increasing. Since my class writes journals every day we are getting better and faster at writing. My words have increased by 80 words at least. For example journal 2.2 Parents Influence, I wrote 102 words. Then on journal 8.4 on Discrimination, I managed to write 182 words. On a scale from one to four according to improvements in these areas, four being the highest. On fluency and vocabulary, I would say a four. When revising my essay spelling and repetitive writing is what I work on the most. For my revised essays, you ask me to start my sentence a new way, add more detail, and avoid the comma splice. On a scale of 1-4, I have revised my essay with a four, being the highest. Sarah Albaqshi



ENGL 112

Dr. Reeves

Sarah Reflective Essay 2

Dear Dr. Reeves and my intern Danielle,

First, I want to thank each of you for helping me in my first class in my first quarter.

Thank you, Dr. Reeves, for teaching me. You have been a great teacher to us all. I learned a lot of things in English from you, and you improved my writing. I also enjoyed the class and sharing with you and the class my fears and other stories from the student and me. Thank you, Danielle, for spending time with me out of the class to help me with my essays, and I enjoyed working with you, you have been such a kind friend for me.

Second, in this class, we watched several videos. My favorite one was the Harvard 1938 study on happiness, "What makes a good life?" video. When Robert Waldinger talked on the TED Talk stage about how they did their study processes on people, I was amazed to see such a long study like this, and how this research took from them 78 years to discover that being in a stable relationship makes you happy in your life, and they still studying it until today.

Third, in every Friday in this class, we had an essay to write. We wrote about many different things such as our fears, our life goals, and the videos we watched during the class before. My best essay was "Walk With Me" essay because it was about my parent's marriage and writing this essay made me see how important they are to me and showed to me how powerful their relationship is. More than that, I liked words of the song, I also liked when Dr. Reeves sang "Walk With Me" with her lovely voice to us in the class, it was fun. In short, I learned that being in a relationship needs power, respect, love, patient, and sacrifice.

Another thing we did in this class was writing journals every day. It was easy and helpful for my writing. Besides, writing 100 words every day made me fast at paperwork, and I also learned two things, spell words better than before and MLA style. However, the most challenging part of writing in English for me was the grammar, spelling, and vocabulary. For example, when I started to write my goals essay, I had trouble finding the right words to describe something, so I had to explain the one word in mind in simple words instead of just looking up and writing it in English. Meeting with Dr. Reeves and my intern Danielle helped me to improve this issue and find the correct words, and now I would give myself (3.5-4). For example, my first journal 1.1 I wrote just 50 words, but now, I started to write more than 100 words in a short time in my last journals.

Next, the best thing in this class is when you write an essay, you will have the chance to revise it and make it better. That's good because I will have more time to think and give

ideas. Sometimes when I resave my essay from Dr. Reeves after the first draft, I add more details that I

couldn't write it in the class, and I but commas and arrange my sentence to make it more clear. Then, I meet with my intern Danielle to check it if there is anything needs to change or to add step by step and that was helpful for me because I learned from her that I need to read my essay in loud voice to discover what the essay needs, and make correction step by step and I give my revised essays (4-4). More than that, I made a conference once with Dr. Reeves and we talked about my goals essay, she advised me to but more transitions and added more details in some parts. In addition, I learned from her the (Fun Boys) role and new vocabulary words such as "install", "gaining" and more.

Finally, English 112 class was a fantastic class. I learned a lot of things. First, I learned about Eleanor Roosevelt, who was the first lady and the president franklin's wife. She was an adorable and active lady who loved to help people. The second thing I learned was about the WWI and the Triangle fire factory, and new vocabulary that I would never know if I didn't take this class. Third, I learned to pay attention to my teachers always in the class and respect them, and being strict does not mean that the person is rude. However, I have only missed one class this quarter, and I feel sad to waste a day in this course. After that absent, I made-up the journal that I missed, it was Moe's journal "dealing with stress", and I asked my friends to let me know what happens and what I have lost. Moreover, my grade is good. It is 97.34% and I hope to take 4.0 in this class. My recommendations for all who want to take English 112 class to pay attention all the time and listen well, read each chapter from the book you will receive in this class, be on time and don't be absent especially on Friday because it's the most important day in the week. All in all, I appreciate Dr. Reeves work because she did her best to improve us and teach us English and to behave right, and I appreciate my intern Danielle for all her times that she spend on helping me on my essays. I will never regret taking this class.

Sincerely,

Sarah

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### 11. Final Reflective Essay Olga

Dear Dr. Reeves, my professor and intern,

Thank you for all of your hard work. You taught me a lot this semester. I wouldn't be where I am without you. In this class, the Triangle Factory Fire was my favorite video we watched. Because it left me shocked and informed. I learned how this event changed our working conditions today. I think my best essay was the Triangle Factory Essay. When writing this essay I was writing about something I actually liked. The video inspired me to write this essay with great details. This essay gave me a larger vocabulary range. Avoiding the vernacular is something I struggle with when writing an essay. Also,

comma splits are another problem I discovered I had, as well as starting a sentence the same way. For example, in my Fear Essay, I wrote: "I think Eleanor Roosevelt is right in order to overcome your fears you need to be courageous enough to face it, and when you do, only then will you defeat it and become braver, stronger, and confident." This shows two sentences in a sentence or also known as the vernacular. Some improvements I noticed was fluency and vocabulary. I have been learning a lot of new vocabulary words. In class, you explained every unknown vocabulary word. My vocabulary has increased since college started. Fluency was always hard for me. Since I took this class the number of words in my essays and journals has been increasing. Since my class writes journals every day we are getting better and faster at writing. My words have increased by 80 words at least. For example journal 2.2 Parents Influence, I wrote 102 words. Then on journal 8.4 on Discrimination, I managed to write 182 words. On a scale from one to four according to improvements in these areas, four being the highest. On fluency and vocabulary, I would say a four. When revising my essay spelling and repetitive writing is what I work on the most. For my revised essays, you ask me to start my sentence a new way, add more detail, and avoid the comma splice. On a scale of 1-4, I have revised my essay with a four, being the highest.

In English 112, I learned that it's important to listen and not interrupt the speaker in class. Not only the professor but the intern as well, or any of my classmates that are speaking to the whole class. I also noticed that it's important that everyone understands what you are talking about, whether it's a vocabulary word or history. The third lesson I learned is to put in as much effort as possible in anything we do. An area I wish I did better is asking questions. I should have asked questions during class. Every day when coming to class I always made sure to give 100% of my effort. During class, I never distracted the class by coming in late. I was never absent to class or came late. I never had to make up work because I was never absent. For my grade, I think I should earn an A- because I didn't always get A's for my in-class work Friday essays. For the students in the next 112 class, I advise them to always participate and listen in class. To always ask questions if they don't understand. Lastly, I would advise them to come to class every day and always on time. Lastly, all of these new improvements I mentioned in this essay is only a fraction of everything I have learned in this course. Thanks to my professor Dr. Reeves I am becoming a better writer. What I need to do to improve my writing is notice my mistakes and practice on them. I'm glad that we have conference's that way I can be told exactly what I need to improve on. Thank you to all the interns that helped me.

Sincerely,

Olga

Table 2. Summary of Challenges and Benefits by Writer

Name	Challenges/Problems	Solution/Benefit
1-Miriam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vocabulary</li> <li>• Organization ideas</li> <li>• Time to write 2h + words count</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn a new vocab</li> <li>• Reread+Rewrite +Revise</li> <li>• Practice</li> <li>• Focus and participate in class + read textbook and newspaper.</li> <li>• Write faster in short time 1h</li> </ul>
2-Dana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing fast (time)+ word count.</li> <li>• Vocabulary</li> <li>• Grammar.</li> <li>• Ideas (topic + details).</li> <li>• Culture information.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write every day in class.</li> <li>• With intern worked in grammar.</li> <li>• Focus more on details and explain.</li> <li>• Videos.</li> </ul>
3-Farida	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grammar.</li> <li>• Culture language.</li> <li>• Article.</li> <li>• Time 2h</li> <li>• More details</li> <li>• Spelling.</li> <li>• speak</li> </ul>	<p>Write every day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With intern worked in grammar</li> <li>• Videos.</li> <li>• Write fast in. 40min</li> <li>• Clear idea + more information</li> <li>• Read articles, study a new vocab</li> </ul> <p>Sharing journals</p>
4-Fares	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vocabulary count.</li> <li>• Writing ( time, count).</li> <li>• Listening comprehension+ conversation.</li> <li>• Organization, structure, contents, grammar and spelling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write daily journal and Friday essay Writer center</li> <li>• Look up for words and definitions, phrases</li> <li>• Quality of writing skill</li> <li>• Videos</li> <li>• Write faster</li> </ul>
5-Ahmad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grammar</li> <li>• Ideas (topic + details).</li> <li>• Linking together sentences.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write daily journal and Friday essay</li> <li>• Videos</li> <li>• read textbook and newspaper.</li> <li>• study a new vocab</li> </ul>
6-Nada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing fast (time)+ word count.</li> <li>• Ideas (topic + details).</li> <li>• Spelling</li> <li>• Grammar</li> <li>• Listening</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write daily journal and Friday essay</li> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• With intern worked in grammar.</li> <li>• Videos</li> <li>• Focus and participate in class</li> <li>• Sharing story life</li> <li>• Use academic words</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking note &amp; study it</li> <li>• Split the words separately</li> </ul>
7-Maher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Point out opinions</li> <li>• Grammar</li> <li>• Writing fast (time)+ word count.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Videos</li> <li>• Write daily journal and Friday essay Sharing story life</li> <li>• Listening</li> </ul>
8-Ahmad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grammar</li> <li>• Ideas (topic + details).</li> <li>• Listening</li> <li>• Writing fast (time)+ word count</li> <li>• Speaking</li> <li>• Vocabulary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Write daily journal and Friday essay</li> <li>• With intern worked in grammar. Sharing journals</li> <li>• Focus and participate in class</li> </ul>
9-Masayo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing fast (time)+ word count</li> <li>• Vocabulary</li> </ul>	
10-Minghua	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grammar</li> <li>• Writing fast (time)+ word count</li> </ul>	
11-Olga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing fast (time)+ word count</li> <li>• Comma splits</li> <li>• Vernacular</li> </ul>	
12-Sara	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grammar</li> <li>• Spelling</li> <li>• Background</li> <li>• Writing fast (time)+ word count</li> <li>• Ideas (topic + details</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Write daily journal and Friday essay</li> </ul> <p>With intern worked in grammar. Study new words Practicing on writing skill</p>

Table 3. Theme 1 for Challenges: Grammar

1 Dana	"I worked in grammar the most."
2-Farida	"Grammar. Because for each grammar, there is a different situation that sometimes makes it difficult to understand to me. Also, in Arabic language, we have different role and different position cannot match to English's grammar."
3-Fares	"correcting grammar and spelling mistakes."
4-Mohammed	"I did not only improve in my general grammar skills, but I was also able to improve on the fluidity of my essays."
5-Nada	"I did not only improve in my general grammar skills, but I was also able to improve on the fluidity of my essays."
6-Maher	"my writing skills have improved a lot when I see my old essays and my essays now I cannot believe how I improved, now I can write without looking up for the word or the grammar."
7-Ali	"My intern helped me with my grammar in my essay and she explanation the errors for me and she asked me to try to fix it by myself first Thant she going to help me with it .... I wish I had done better in speaking and grammar."
8-Ahmed	"The most difficult is probably grammars."
9-Afra	"the most thing that I had work on when I revised my essays is grammar mastics."
10-Sarah	"the most challenging part of writing in English for me was the grammar, spelling, and vocabulary."

Table 4. Theme 2 for Challenges: Vocabulary

N=12 n=7

1.Masayo	"The difficult point of writing in English is vocabulary"
2.Miriam	"My vocabulary skills were terrible. I couldn't write my essay without looking to the translator."
3.Masayo	"The difficult point of writing in English is vocabulary because my amount of vocabulary in English is much smaller than that of Japanese."
4.Fares	"the number of vocabulary words used in my journals and essays has increased fairly."

5.Nada	"Having lots of academic words I think it's going to make my writing perfect."
6.Olga	"avoiding the vocabulary is something I struggle with when writing an essay...some improvements I noticed was fluency and vocabulary."
7.Sarah	"the most challenging part of writing in English for me was...vocabulary."

**Table 5. Theme 3 for Challenges: Spelling**

N=12 n=5

Fares	"correcting grammar and spelling mistakes. "
Nada	"I think I need to improve my spelling to improve my writing to be-cause sometimes when I know a word about I don't know how it is the spell."
Sarah	"the most challenging part of writing in English for me was..., spelling,"
Afrah	"I think I need to improve my spelling to improve my writing."
Olga	"when revising my essay spelling and repetitive writing is what I work on the most."

**Table 6. Theme 4 for Challenges: Word Count & Writing Speed**

n=8

Miriam	I was taking more than two hours to write my essay... As I learned to write more than 500 words which."
Faridah	"I spent two hours in the final essay to write three hundred words."
Dana	"I don't know a lot of words in English and it was hard for me to write fast."
Masayo	"I always took too much time for writing my essay, and it was difficult for me to write 500 words in first draft in early weeks' Friday essay."
Fares	"I had trouble with reaching the word count fast enough."
Maher	"write 100 words in five mints I found it difficult."
Nada	"In the beginning of the class sometimes I wrote less than 100 words in the journals and 300 words in the essays."
Afrah	"I learned how to write 500 words essay in only 30 minutes, and 100 words in 5 minutes...in the beginning of the class, sometimes I wrote less than 100 words in the journals, and 300 words in the essays,."
Olga	"Fluency was always hard for me. Since I took this class the number of words in my essays and journals has been increasing. Since my class writes journals every day we are getting better and faster at writing. My words have increased

	by 80 words at least. For example journal 2.2 Parents Influence, I wrote 102 words. Then on journal 8.4 on Discrimination, I managed to write 182 words.”
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**Table 7. Theme 5 for Challenges: Details & Support**

n=8

Masayo	“I worked on putting details the most... add more details in my essay such as culture background, and what people looked like.”
Minghua	“One thing Dr. Reeves asked me to improve on my essay is give more detail on the stories I’m telling, which I should really work on.”
Miriam	“organizing my idea has been grown in this class.”
Faridah	“more details for every majors and more cultural information.”
Dana	more details are more important than I think, because not anyone can know what I’m talking about expect myself and now I focused more in the details and to explain more.
Mohammad	“Another one of my weaknesses in writing was the use of details in my papers and Dr. Reeves would always remind me about this through her comments, through her help I was then able to write more detailed/ audience-oriented papers.”
Sara	“I think after this class, there is nothing difficult to write. I can write about any subject, but if I don’t have any information about the subject, I felt that is going to be difficult to write.”
Olga	“For my revised essays, you asked me to start my sentence a new way, add more details, and avoid the comma splice.”

**Table 8. Themes of Benefits of Daily Writing & English 112**

Theme 1 Videos

Ali	
Masayo	The most memorable video is about the Triangle Factory Fire because I did not know about such a sad accident, and I did not know the bad environment for labors in AmMinghuaan 1930s. I was surprised, and shocked that most of victims in this fire were young women. Moreover, I felt it was interesting that many AmMinghuaan grief every year for victims. It is nice movement that every people remember the fire, and they think about the environment for labors every year.
Minghua	one of my favorite video is about the homeless. It showed me how hard life can be, and made me grateful for what I have today



Olga	“Triangle Factory Fire was my favorite video we watched. Because it left me shocked and informed. I learned how this event changed our working conditions today.”
Faridah	“it was so obvious, I mean by obvious that the story was so clean [clear] to understand especially because I’m foreigner and I do not know about Americans’ issues. Another thing is what happened last video when they got job and had a happy end.”
Dana	“the video that I watched about the Triangle Factory Fire and because it is a true story”
Fares	“Among videos and clips we were shown in class, I found the homeless kids of the Great Recession and Kristina’s bucket list story to be the most informative, educational and enjoyable.”

### Theme 2 Best Essay

Masayo	I think my best essay is about the goal which I write as 8th essay because I could consider well about my future, and I could mention to many Japanese cultural tendencies. In the essay, I also wrote about my families and I noticed that what my families did are part of the Japanese culture. It was interesting because I took my family’s behavior as granted.
Minghua	“the homeless. It showed me how hard life can be, and made me grateful for what I have today. And that is also my best essay, because I truly spoke my mind on what I think about the homeless and how hard life is.”
Olga	“I think my best essay was the Triangle Factory Essay. When writing this essay I was writing about something I actually liked. The video inspired me to write this essay with great details. This essay gave me a larger vocabulary range.”
Miriam	“my last essay which was ‘Letter to Mr. Opama’,”
Faridah	“My best essay is Children Grief and Culture Burial Custom. It includes a lot of information that was in my mind because I lost my uncle before two months and I have lived with this situation so it was so easy to me and so easy to explain all position. Especially because he had two boys who now became orphan.”
Dana	my best essay was the Triangle Factory Fire... because it is very clear topic and it was easy to write about it.”

### Theme 3 Advice from Professor & Intern

Masayo	My intern, Min, always asked to add more details in my essay such as
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	cultural background, and what people looked like. Moreover, Dr. Reeves asked to add more Japanese cultural episodes on my goal essay. For example, she asked me to add what my parents did for my grandparents on the paragraph about the family goal. I think my essays were improved from 1 to 3 on a scale. In Dr. Reeves' conference, I learned how to extend topics and I learned the importance of details in my intern's conference.
Minghua	One thing Dr. Reeves asked me to improve on my essay is give more detail on the stories I'm telling, which I should really work on. From the conference I learned that nobody is perfect, everyone makes mistake, and there is a lot of thing we can improve on.
Olga	"For my revised essays, you ask me to start my sentence a new way, add more detail, and avoid the comma splice... I'm glad that we have conference's that way I can be told exactly what I need to improve on. Thank you to all the interns that helped me."
Faridah	"I learned how I can provide my essay with important and exciting information. Also, I learned how I make my essay clear to any reader. She helped me with grammar mistakes and how make it obviously without any mystery."
Dana	"I want to thank you, because I learned a lot of things from you, I learned how to be fast in writing, how to be forced in the class, and I really appreciate this. You helped me a lot with my essays and you taught me how I fixed my mistakes.
Fares	"Dr. Reeves and my intern Tatiana were of a great help. These one-on-one meetings assisted me with improving, editing and revising what I wrote in my essays and finding out about my weaknesses and work on avoiding them in my future essays by tips and advice given by the instructors."

#### Theme 4 Future goals

Masayo	"Not to think too much when I am writing an essay: this was the biggest problem through this class. I think I could overcome this problem. Do not be afraid to make mistakes: if I am afraid of making mistakes. I would escape from speaking English. Even if I make mistakes, I should try to speak English. The importance of facing difficult problem: Eleanor's life explained the importance of facing fears, problem and stress."
Minghua	"One thing Dr. Reeves asked me to improve on my essay is give more detail on the stories I'm telling, which I should really work on."
Faridah	"speaking out loud is not easy especially if you speak directly to a native speaker. I started to read more articles, and study new vocabulary every day."
Dana	"In the grammar because I wish that I worked hard in it, because the grammar in Arabic is very different from the English."
Nada	"I learned some writing skill that I know I will need it in different classes in the future... I maybe need a lite review for some grammars. In addition, I am trying to work more on my vocabulary, I think this is the most section

	that I need more work in.”
Mohammad	“The revision process was not easy since I would critically look over the punctuation, mechanics and the structure of my essays. Moe asked me to be more careful with using punctuations like: commas and periods in the appropriate places of the sentences.”
Fares	“in my future essays by tips and advice given by the instructors. For example, coming up with and generating ideas to write about the assigned task, improving the organization and structure of paragraphs and the contents, and correcting grammar and spelling mistakes. I found the Goals essay to be a particularly useful essay that I think I did well on .”
Afrah	“I think I need to improve my spelling to improve my writing to because sometimes when I know a word about I don’t know how it is the spell, and that makes me try to find another simple word that has the same meaning to use. Maybe I will try to challenge my self to study more: for example, 10 words weekly, so in the end of the quarter, I will be studied 50 words or more.”
Olga	“I learned that it’s important to listen and not interrupt the speaker in class. Not only the professor but the intern as well, or any of my classmates that are speaking to the whole class. I also noticed that it’s important that everyone understands what you are talking about, whether it’s a vocabulary word or history. The third lesson I learned is to put in as much effort as possible in anything we do. An area I wish I did better is asking questions. I should have asked questions during class.”
Miriam	“I will focus more in the class. Also, I would like to read newspaper in my free time. I will participate in the class. I will read more in the class book. Also, I will study well for the final exam.”

Overall, the final reflection essays suggest that English 112 helped writers with fluency, timed writing, word count, development of ideas, audience awareness of cultural issues, and grammar to some degree in conference. They appreciated the daily writing and suggested more grammar instruction each week.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION**

Chapter 4 is divided into three sections (1) discussion of the researcher's assumptions, (2) answers to the research questions based on the findings from the 12 reflection essays and the 5 questionnaires and (3) the researcher's reflections on the findings and the experience working with the writers in English 112 in the fall of 2017.

#### **Researcher's Assumptions**

TESOL requires researchers to disclose their assumptions, biases, and beliefs about the learners, the materials, the setting, and the topic at hand. The following assumptions were made by the researcher before she began the project. She will explain if her assumptions were accurate or not.

- 1) All writers in English 112 had experience writing in the L1.

This was correct in that all 12 reported that they had at least some experience writing in L1 in their country, but they indicated they did not recall any specific type of writing such as essays or research papers in their native languages.

- 2) All writers in English 112 face challenges in their writing.

This assumption was accurate because all 12 identified challenges (Table 2, Chapter 3).

- 3) The greatest challenge will be identified as grammar.

All but one writer identified grammar as the greatest challenge. This was a student who had gone to high school in the United States and lived with an American family.

- 4) Writing speed and word count will increase over the ten weeks of the study.

This assumption was accurate in that all 12 indicated that their word count and speed increased in the 11 weeks of the quarter. In her thesis, *Increasing ESL Writing Fluency through Dialogue Journals*, Narathakoon (2005) found that the same population increased their word count by 200%, so this was expected to some degree, though the population that Narathakoon studied included more Asians and no Saudis or Arabic speakers. All 12 writers were able to achieve the goal on the Friday essays of 500 words. Aqeela indicated that she went from 200 to 700 words by the end of the quarter.

5) Writers will feel that their writing improved in ten weeks.

This assumption was correct. All 12 writers felt that their writing improved considerably as shown in Table 2 in Chapter 3.

## The Research Questions

1. What are the most common challenges these 12 writers identify in their final reflection essays?

To get to understand in detail, the types of writing problems or challenges faced by the 12 multilingual writers, the students' writing modules were analyzed. In this regard, the following were the illustrations of the different challenges encountered by these students.

A total of five major challenges were identified by the writers as summarized in Table 2 in Chapter 3: grammar, speed, spelling, word count, support. Based on the analysis of the challenges in the table above, it is evident that most common difficulties the 12 multilingual writers faced were related to what they perceived as the most common

challenges of writing in English. A total of 12 cases belong to the grammar, and about eight of the students were struggling with using details in their writing papers. In point out, these could be as a result of the influence of the first language as some of them mentioned cultural background. According to Grami (2001), Arabic grammar and culture influence writing. For example, in Arabic, there is only one single tense, the simple present, unlike in English that has both tense and aspect. Arabic speakers face a real challenge in using their first language when constructing sentences in English and developing their ideas. In fact, most of them use less detail and provide less support when writing an academic essay in English than their American peers. It seems that some Saudis feel that they are writing more for themselves than for others, so they may not remember that their audience does not know about their culture or religion or government. This could have been attributed to the fact that in Arabic after the topic sentence of the paragraph, there is no requirement to write more supporting details. The challenge here is that Arabic speakers when writing in English try to relate English to their mother tongue and upon doing that they lose it all (Bahloul, 2007).

In relation to the challenges of timed writing in class, eight of the 12 students recorded major challenges when writing an essay in 50 minutes. The second major challenge was word count because they were expected to write 500 words in 50 minutes, but in the end, they reported that they had all reached this goal—some by midterm. In addition, sentence structure or linking sentences and articles was also another writing challenge. Finally, almost half identified spelling as a major challenge, but only four were Saudis and one was from Ukraine. Several studies on the role of the influence of the first language show

that there is a negative transfer of the mother tongue on the performance of learners in the second language (Alrasheed, 2015; Asiri, 2011). For example, with the transfer from the Arabic, Japanese, Chinese, and other language structures to the English, students made many grammatical errors as well as organizing ideas and support details by applying cultural ways of writing. Melissa Van De Wege (2013), for example, discovered a number of differences in her master's thesis, *Arabic rhetoric: Main idea, development, parallelism, and word repetition*. While other students who are from Japan, China, and Ukraine identified development as a major challenge, they also felt challenged by development, vocabulary, and timed writing.

2. What do these 12 writers identify as the benefits of the writing class they took?

The greatest benefit was identified as daily writing of journals and the weekly Friday essay written in class. They also reported that they felt the sharing of journals in class with peers was very beneficial because they were learning about other cultures and worldviews, which was interpreted by the researchers to mean creating a community of writers (Tompkins, 2014). Other benefits they identified were learning through videos, committing to being present, reading the biography and learning history, note-taking, getting help with spelling from the instructor on the Friday essays (she wrote the words they needed help with on the board so they did not lose time looking up words in the dictionary), getting one-on-one help with drafting in conferences with interns and the instructor, increasing listening comprehension, and overall improvement of their writing, speaking, listening, and reading.

3. What curricular changes can be put in place to address the challenges?

Based on the findings, we would normally take some action because this is action research, so the most important change would be to increase the mini-lessons on grammar to one or two a week for just 10 minutes on errors that are common to the majority of the writers as noted in the Draft 2 of Friday essays.



## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION AND FINAL REFLECTIONS

Chapter 5 includes discussion of the implications for teaching writing and viewing at the university level in the United States, limitations, recommendations for future research, and final reflections on the project.

#### Implications for Teaching Multilingual Writers

These 12 multilingual writers valued the daily writings and sharing in the whole group and with one partner, the Friday in-class essays, the increased writing fluency, and the creation of a community of writers where everyone wrote together for five minutes Monday through Thursday, including the instructor and interns. Based on the findings, the instructor and researcher recommend continuing the daily writing in class and the weekly Friday essays on topics of interest such as those identified in this case study: child labor and the Triangle Factory fire of 1911, homelessness, children's grief, overcoming fears, and the parents' marriage. The one concern was that the same writers shared their journals with the whole class throughout the quarter, so it is suggested that writers share with one person first and the partner takes notes, and then the pair comes to the front and summarizes what the partner wrote while the class takes notes on each one's ideas.

#### Limitations

The only limitation that stands out at this point is the absence of my mother's voice. If she had lived to see me complete this thesis, I would have interviewed her and

asked her how she got the strength to raise 12 children while my father was away teaching. I would ask her how she felt about having to leave school at age 12 and being nearly illiterate. At the same time, I would ask her what her special gifts were for raising children who became so well educated. Of course, like most Saudi families, we had maids to clean the house for us, but my mother never let the maids take care of us. She did it herself, unlike Eleanor Roosevelt, who allowed nannies to take charge of her children. When Franklin and Eleanor's baby died, Eleanor took more control over her remaining five children and vowed to keep a close watch on them. This is what my mother did. We were the center of her entire life until she took her last breath.

#### Recommendations for Future Research

It is recommended that future researchers ask students to interview their parents or send questions to them to be answered and include the parents' voices and experiences in the essays about marriage, homelessness, grief, and/or child labor. Further, there could be a research component for the essay on grief and burial customs in the country of origin to help prepare students for the next composition class. Finally, students could be asked to identify which grammar lessons they feel they need to improve their writing and as well as ways to provide more details and cultural information.

It is also recommended that other thesis writers do strategic contemplation as they write the literacy narrative and consider the material conditions of their mothers' and fathers' lives as well as possibly interviewing the parents.

## Final Reflections

In *The Birth of a Mother*, a book published in the 1990's, "Stern showed that becoming a mother is an identity shift, and one of the most significant physical and psychological changes a woman will ever experience. The process of becoming a mother, which anthropologists call 'matrescence,' has been largely unexplored in the medical community," Alexandra Sacks (2017) explains. She adds: "Instead of focusing on the woman's identity transition, more research is focused on how the baby turns out. But a woman's story, in addition to how her psychology impacts her parenting, is important to examine, too" (2017, web). As I have written this thesis and the literacy narrative appearing in Chapter 1, I explored the material conditions of my mother's life as well as my own identity as the youngest of 12 children my mother brought into this world between the ages of 12 and 33. I also thought about becoming a mother myself halfway through this graduate program, and having my daughter gave me the focus and motivation to complete the program and begin a teaching career, eventually completing a doctoral degree if possible. Taking up the challenge of applying Kirsch and Royster's strategic contemplation to motherhood and literacy, Dr. Reeves and I discovered that we learned to work hard from our mothers, who had limited formal education (Rezzig & Reeves, 2018). Through discussion and data analysis—an iterative process in this kind of research—we discovered how important literacy is to the 12 writers in the study we conducted in Dr. Reeves' composition classroom (Reeves, 2018, 1997) where I was interning at the time. As we were completing the analysis, we had the opportunity to share our mothers' stories and honor them at the Spokane Regional ESL Conference in February of this year and earlier in October at our state conference of the Washington

Association for the Education of Speakers of Other Languages. We discovered that the 12 writers in the case study all valued daily writing in class and felt they needed more grammar instruction, so it was decided to include a weekly mini-lesson in grammar. One evening as my mentor and I were poring over our 12 writers' essays one last time, we realized that my mother had died knowing that all 12 of her children had completed at least one college degree, and I was starting the master's degree. As a person who could not read or write when she married at age 12, she valued our education and supported all of us along the way to full literacy. Our tears fell as we both realized that somehow she felt her work was done in this world as she moved on to the next life, to the highest place in heaven where the people who have suffered the most always go.

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## Vita

Author: Ghassoon Rezzig

Place of Birth: Saudi Arabia

Undergraduate School Attended: Jazan University, Saudi Arabia

Degree Awarded: Bachelor of Arts in English Language, 2014

Honors and Awards: SACM Scholarship for the Master's Degree

Professional Experience: Internship in English 112, Composition for Multilingual Writers

Professional Presentation:

Rezzig, G. & Reeves, L. L. (2018). Literacy/Illiteracy Narratives: Mothers, Selves & Malala. Paper presented at the Spokane Regional ESL Conference at the Mukogawa Ft. Wright Institute, February.