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Poetic Research in the Second Language Classroom

Carter L. Clapsadle
St. Cloud State University

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POETIC RESEARCH IN THE SECOND LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

by

Carter Clapsadle

B.S., University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, 1992

A Thesis

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of

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for the Degree

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This thesis, submitted by Carter L. Clapsadle in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts, Master of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, at St. Cloud State University is hereby approved by the final evaluation committee.

Chairperson

Dean
School of Graduate Studies

POETIC RESEARCH IN THE SECOND LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

Carter L. Clapsadle

Questions in second language teaching ask if literature is relevant in acquiring a language and if so how do students perceive literary works. The motivation of this study to investigate a small diverse group of international students is to understand how they perceive literature and all genres including poetry. This study conducts a Likert numerical survey to find what literary background students experience in their native country and what attitudes students have learning English. Analysis shows that students overall have positive L1 and L2 learning attitudes regarding literature and culture. Interview questions provide a more reflective understanding of students' experiences. Pedagogical implications include models for incorporating poetry in lesson plans and how poetry lends itself to digital applications. These models can help develop the four language skills but equally important create cultural awareness and self-expression.

Month Year

Approved by Research Committee:

James Robinson Chairperson

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I wish to thank the six students who gave their time and allowed me to interview them for this research—sharing their personal lives was invaluable. And to all the international students in the Intensive English Program—they have taught me more than I have taught them. And to Alwyn Powell (October 27, 1925-October 28, 2014) who wrote: Maybe. “No” is not the answer. Nor is “Yes”. In the constant struggle between “this” and “that” lies the unfolding of all the possibilities—the “maybes”. Our world craves exactitude; seeks absolutes—the clear cut. Yet, unachievable in the chaos of change, of mobility, we grope for certainties still. It is in the eye of the artist, the ear of the musician, the heart of the poet, the wonderment of the spirit (which we all contain) that lie the answers, which come to us mysteriously, unannounced, unheralded.

Proverbs and Songs # 29

Walker, your footsteps
are the road, and nothing more.
Walker, there is no road,
the road is made by walking.
Walking you make the road,
and turning to look behind
you see the path you never
again will step upon.
Walker, there is no road,
only foam trails on the sea.

Caminante, son tus hellas
el camino, y nada más;
caminante, no hay camino,
se hace camino al andar.
Al andar se hace camino,
y al volver la vista atrás
se ve la senda que nunca
se ha de volver a pisar.
Caminante, no hay camino,
Sino estelas en la mar.

—Antonio Machado, “Proverbs and Songs # 29”

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Literature has a long history as a tool for language learning. The grammar-translation method is one example (Hanauer, 2001; Khatib, 2011b; Cetinavci & Tutunis, 2012; Chen 2009). However critics argue that the use of literature and especially poetry in the classroom doesn't conform to grammatical structures and standards while others argue that its place is in a literature class not in a language learning class (Edmondson 1995; Khatib, 2011b; Cetinavci & Tutunis, 2012). Because poets often break grammatical syntax or use non-standard vocabulary, teachers are often irresolute to the value of poetry (Khatib, 2011a; Schultz, 1996; Cetinavci & Tutunis, 2012). Poetry, like other literary genre, is found throughout world's cultures and histories—literature, a product of language, is a product of culture and they cannot be separated (Kramersch, 1998; Shanahan, 1997). There are benefits for using poetry in teaching: it can strengthen and integrate language skills (vocabulary, grammar, authenticity, motivation, pragmatic knowledge) and it can develop cultural awareness through language development because culture and language are intimately linked in the past and present (Khatib, 2011a; Kramersch, 1998; Lazar, 1996; Finch, 2003; Nasr, 2001; Cetinavci & Tutunis, 2012).

The universality of poetry is found among all human languages and “no known language is without it” (Maley & Duff, 1989, p. 8). Arabic speaking countries have a rich poetic orality (Zettler, 1978) and literature is at the “center of Arab artistic expression” (Barakat, 1993, p. 206). African peoples also have a widely varied heritage of poetic traditions and orality (Finnegan, 2012) and in ancient China poetry is its greatest art—it is considered “the language of the heart” (Porter, 2003, p. 4). We have some understanding of international students’ historical literacy but what are their literary currents today? If we are to teach a language that can be meaningful for English learners, then we need to have some understanding of their cultural background and educational experiences. Because most language learning students come from these world regions, where poetry may be culturally more important than in English speaking countries, it is important to understand this cultural aspect and ask these research questions: What are their experiences in literature classes in their respective countries? Do they appreciate literature—in their native language and in English? How do international students perceive poetry today?

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

Because poetry falls within the broad landscape of literature, an overview of the discussion on literature and second language learning is necessary to present a wide-angle view on the topic. Teaching literature in second language classrooms has experienced several historical phases during the past Century. Accounts reveal it as the “only source for teaching, as moral and social, as content and entertainment, as humanistic practice, and today is seen as a source of authentic language” (Kramsch & Kramsch, 2000, pp. 554-567). In theoretical discussions on the subject of literature in second language classrooms, there are arguments that support the practice while other arguments question those assumptions and take a non-essentialist approach. Course disciplines such as English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) argue that literature is irrelevant in preparing students for academic writing and their respective careers (Paran, 2008; Shanahan, 1997).

Edmondson (1995) claims that literary texts have no distinction from other types of texts and questions the value of literature in a second language classroom. He gives several arguments regarding claims that proponents make. First Edmondson (1995) questions the ‘cultural access’ assumption that maintains literature gives

insight into the cultural character of a people. Using an example about 19th century working conditions in England, he suggests there are better means than reading Charles Dickens. Furthermore, he questions what is meant by cultural access and how does it affect second language learning; answers from the other side he claims “is rather nebulous” (p. 47). Secondly, connected with the cultural access argument, he questions the ‘language is literature’ claim. Often in target language discourse there are phrases referring to hidden literary meanings. For example, in a business negotiation or advertisement slogan a phrase such as “To delay, or not to delay, that is the question” (intertextuality and indexicality) requires some insight to literary references of Shakespeare. Here he contends that some literary instruction is necessary; however, there are many “fixed expressions” (p. 48) in a language, especially in video broadcasts; he does not see the differences between the two. Therefore “if ‘the language is literature’ argument holds descriptively, it does not hold prescriptively” (p. 48). Thirdly, ‘the motivational argument’ is not grounded empirically. While researchers suggest literary texts can increase learners’ interest and motivate them to invest their time, Edmondson (1995) observes otherwise: his data collection of 143 autobiographies from German students reveals that literature had no influence on their language learning nor were they interested. What was noticeable however was their enthusiasm for English pop and rock music, which has a literacy element within the lyrics. Fourth, ‘the psycholinguistic argument’ claims literary texts activate the cognitive process. Edmondson (1995) does not dispute this claim,

however he questions the cognitive models developed by researchers who claim literature plays a role in such an acquisition—they never mention literary texts.

Paran (2008) reports, “language learning is not only about language—it is about learning” (p. 469) and the classroom focus should include “holistic perspectives...look at the whole person and the whole culture in which literature is part...” (p. 469). Kern and Schultz (2005) further add that learning a language “involves familiarization with new cultural schemata, and stories belonging to the language community’s cultural heritage...” (p. 382). Additionally, Nasr (2001) theoretically states that when language exercises are derived from literary texts, the components are no longer isolated unrelated sentences but “become thematically coherent in addition to their linguistic cohesion” (p. 351).

Empirical Research

Because the arguments for or against the use of literature in the second language classroom are purely theoretical, there is a need for in-depth research on the process of literary reading tasks. Hanauer (2001) takes issue with Edmondson’s arguments however, they both agree on the lack of empirical data relating to literary reading tasks; Hanauer’s (2001) research sets out to rectify this lack of data.

Hanauer initiates an empirical study asking what is the process by which pairs of advanced second language learners understand a poem. By setting up ten dyads of female, native Hebrew speakers, ages 20-24, enrolled in an advanced EFL reading course, he asks them to read Leonard Cohen’s poem *Suzanne*. They were recorded

while discussing the poem and all discourse was transcribed. A grounded theory approach was employed to the analysis—a cyclical procedure of reading written protocols, reaching conclusions, and then evaluating those conclusions. There were four stages to this lengthy process and a coding system was developed along with a functions and progressions category summary. A Cronbach's alpha coefficient was computed to measure a 0.864 internal consistency and a Spearman rank-order correlation coefficient was calculated for each dyad. The results show that “poetry reading is primarily a close reading, meaning construction process” (Hanauer, 2001, p. 316).

Furthermore, results show participants noticing or directing attention to a specific line, grammatical usage, or repetition. Ninety-five percent of all remarks made while undertaking the reading task “were connected to the on-line construction of meaning.” In essence what this research has shown is that the task of reading poetry can develop knowledge of L2 by providing a context within their language resources and develop understanding of new linguistic and semantic forms. A psycholinguistic argument can be proposed from this study in that poetry reading tasks directs a process in which “learners extend their understanding of uses and meanings of an existing linguistic structure” (Hanauer, 2001, p. 319). To answer the criticism that poetry reading enhances a learner's L2 as it relates to literary form, and not linguistic form, is not supported by this research. On the contrary, only 9.87% of poetic elements were noticed and commented on. The study also presents indirect evidence that poetry could

be useful for developing cultural awareness. The negotiation between a pair of readers on the meanings of a line/s involved both world knowledge and linguistic resource. The study demonstrates how the process of questioning, interpreting, and using world knowledge is a part of the process of understanding a poem. “This process can direct the reader to view the distance between the poem’s content and her/his own knowledge of the target culture. It is in this way that the poetry reading task can enhance cultural awareness” (Hanauer, 2001, p. 319).

He also argues that reading literature is a naturalistic endeavor and it exists in the realm of real-world language use. Since the literary field research has redefined literature to include lyrics and songs, the field has opened up new considerations for the classroom as Edmondson (1995) has noted in his classroom data and observation. The most widespread argument for literary studies inclusion in the classroom is that it is a source for motivation, enjoyment, and personal involvement (Maley & Duff, 1989; Lazar, 1993; Schultz, 1996; Hanauer, 2001, 2004; Mattix, 2002; Chen, 2009; Khatib, 2011a; Nasr, 2001). As empirical evidence, Kim (2004) uses literary discussion circles that students performed in a “very relaxed way...frequency of laughter and smiling” (p. 163) and found literature to be motivating and enjoyable. She found through student interviews “students comprehended the text better...experienced the pleasure of reading...fostered an aesthetic appreciation” (p. 163).

Hanauer (2004) suggests incorporating poetry-reading strategies in the classroom enables students to “construct personal meaning” (p. 67). Selecting poetic material, even popular lyrics from songs, that students find interesting can stretch their understanding of how English works. Establishing discussion groups allows them to explore meanings and suggest understandings. As they try to interpret a poem, a teacher can indicate the poet’s grammar used in an idiosyncratic way. Cultural understanding is another component to poetic material presented in class; students work with issues from and perspectives of the poet as well as their own linguistic and cultural knowledge. The main argument for using poetry in a second language classroom is that it is authentic text that directs the readers to the text as they formulate meaning (Hanauer, 2004). In Hanauer’s (2010) studies he introduces poetry reading and writing at the intermediate to advanced level—“semantic activation processes [reading in general] are slower even for advanced level proficient learners” (p. 34). Zynigier’s (2010) literacy workshop participants are at a low intermediate level. Melin (2010) recommends introducing poetry at the beginning level to emphasize the relationship between language and literature by focusing on “receptive skills and explicit learning strategies: draw pictures...practice critical thinking...(Who? What? Where? When? Why?)” (p. 361); however, in the context of this statement she is referring to teaching foreign languages to American students. Maxim (2006) furthers this notion that by introducing poetry at an early adult language learning level can become a basis for learning literary conventions.

Because learning a second language is a demanding task, Hanauer (2004) suggests that writing poetry allows students to express their feelings and experiences. Through language exploration, students can reflect creatively “without being penalized for breaking the rules” (p. 77). In a language classroom “learning new rules and conventions seems to be the norm” (p. 77) however poetry writing encourages students to experiment with new “modes of expression” (p. 77).

Empirical research is lacking to produce usable knowledge and several reasons have been put forth for researching poetry in the classroom. Hanauer (2011) suggests there are four main areas of importance for research of this type.

1. *Genre-specific literary knowledge*: because of the ever-widening text types that come under the heading of being a poem, such as “I”, blotz, adverb, acrostic, ska, dub, hero, wish, and picture poems, new forms are consistently created and therefore could create a range of interesting genre-specific literary practices.
2. *Literacy transfer effects*: the process of writing a poem may enhance a range of literacy and linguistic potentials such as awareness of structure, concise expression, pictorial expression, and emotional communication.
3. *Social and Educational Functions*: the poetry writing process relates to self-discovery, multicultural communication, and critical interaction.
4. *Research uses*: poetry writing can be used in a range of social sciences and humanities with diverse populations.

Khatib (2011a) takes a different research approach investigating poetry and the EFL classroom: he hypothesizes that literature and poetry teaching is to blame for student malaise in literature and disinterest in poetry. Traditional teaching methods worldwide have created an environment that does not inspire students to investigate, to rely on their own intuition, nor instill a reflective posture (Edmondson, 1995; Hanauer, 2004; Khatib, 2011a). Traditional methods include formal row seating, teacher-centered lectures, and no student activity, nor small-group participation. New teaching methods include small circular seating, group activities, pre-reading activities, and while-reading activities. Khatib asks the question: Will students change their attitudes toward poetry if taught with a new approach? His investigation of 200 college, male and female, Iranian EFL students shows that a restructured classroom environment and new pedagogical approaches develops a more enthusiastic classroom—depending on how poetry is presented, students are motivated and interested. The 11-week longitudinal study implemented attitude surveys, language proficiency tests, t-tests, forty-two teaching poems, and twenty-three take home poems. The results show that literary appreciation did not develop within the control group using traditional methods however it did with the experimental group. Students partaking in experimental groups were given opportunity “to react to poems based on their own experiences, emotions and ideas” (Khatib, 2011a, p. 168). The method encouraged students to express their own understanding of a poem instead of listening to answers formulated from a lecturing teacher. Many teachers find learners uninterested in

literature and ask, “Why bother”? The research demonstrates it is not necessarily the students’ lack of interest in literature but in the way the classroom is structured and how teaching materials are delivered.

The findings from Khatib’s (2011a) research relates with Ray’s (1999) investigation on teacher attitudes toward poetry. Ray (1999) visited primary schools in England as a participant in “Poetry in Schools” and perceived reluctance by teacher trainees to engage in teaching poetry; a questionnaire was administered to a group of forty-eight teacher trainees to elicit data regarding their attitudes and experiences with the topic. Data from the questionnaire shows teachers had negative experiences in their education and therefore feel inadequate to teach poetry in school. However, all teachers believed it should be taught and is worthwhile regardless of their experiences. Their reasons for teaching poetry were for motivational (entertainment, enjoyment), affective (expression, emotions), and cognitive (generalizable skills and knowledge other than specific to poetry purposes).

Examining ELT faculty in Turkey, Cetinavci & Tutunis (2012) elicited views from two groups (experimental and control) with a questionnaire to understand faculty attitudes towards poetry use in an EFL classroom. Both groups attended a course in poetry analysis and teaching prior to participating in the survey. The experimental group was taught how to utilize poetry in language teaching contexts with examples and peer teaching; the control group studied under the prescribed syllabus. Furthermore the experimental group was provided with new techniques and activities.

The results reported the experimental group favored poetry as an asset for teaching English. The new techniques, along with prepared poetry-centered activities, the experimental faculty saw poetry “as a literary genre can be used to facilitate language learning by reducing anxiety and increasing motivation” (p. 83).

Nasr (2001) suggests poetry can be adapted to her country’s new Lebanese content-based curricula and demonstrates theoretically how useful poetry can be for “linguistic analysis of literature” (p. 345). Her analysis of two poems by Lebanese writers, Gibran Kahil Gibran and Ameen Rihani were selected for their use of “syntactic structures, grammatical patterns, juxtaposition of ideas, antonyms...grammar and vocabulary within related thematic teaching units” (p. 351). Problems with the old curriculum created gaps in grammar and language skills because they were never directly taught. Literature and poetry in this new curriculum integrates language and content with the focus on teaching the language. Because of the new framework “students acquire proficiency while they continue to develop cognitively...reinforce their knowledge of content...exposed to content in new forms” (p. 360).

In Taiwan, Yeh (2005) mixes traditional teaching, multimedia, and online videos in a task-based classroom lesson. For students who have little exposure to American poetry, *We real cool* by Gwendolyn Brooks was used for task-based projects. Yeh (2005) maintains that poetry is a source of information about the target culture, examines social and political issues, and offers historical background.

Learners proceed through the text and discover how the language is used and develop opinions, feelings, and personal experiences. Through videos, students see/hear how a poem is read and listen to others' interpretation; they hear viewpoints from the reader who shares personal meaning. Students write their own poems or a poem of their own choosing to prepare for presentation. After the task, they were given a questionnaire about the activity; they thought it helped them with their skills, learned different writing styles, experienced reading a poem aloud, and overcame some of their fears (Yeh, 2005).

Zyngier's (2010) Literacy Awareness workshops in an EFL situation demonstrate how poetry can be used for critical literacy by creating poems and developing essays. She compared two groups analyzing Langston Hughes' poem *I, too, sing America* with accompanying worksheets. Third semester EFL students read, analyzed, and then wrote their poem modeled from the Hughes' poem. Students were then asked to write a short essay reflecting on their poems. The difference between the two groups was in pedagogical approaches: teacher oriented with a large group vs. teacher as mediator with small groups. Group 1 results produced more linguistic flexibility, a wider range of themes, and longer, detailed essays over Group 2. Overall evaluations from the class experience produced a more enthusiastic response from Group 1 whereas, Group 2 made little reference to the quality and lacked appreciation for the class.

Several of these studies report that changing classroom environment, incorporating new teaching strategies, and creating task variation address an underlying principle in L2 acquisition: attitudes and motivation are key factors in learning. Dornyei (1994) describes motivational theory as it relates intrinsically and extrinsically to language learners. Extrinsic behaviors are manifested in individuals who perform to receive awards such as good grades. Intrinsic behaviors are demonstrated within the learner, or internal rewards, such as the joy and satisfaction of completing an activity or creating an end product. Intrinsic motivation is seen as the primary motivator in learning and some studies confirm this (Dornyei, 1994). Extrinsic requirements in the classroom such as compulsory readings, dominating environments, correctness, tests, grades, etc. can deflate student enthusiasm; however, other research demonstrates that both motivators can work in tandem “if they are self-determined and internalized” (Dornyei, 1994, p. 276). Dornyei (1994) presents a list of several ways to motivate learners on the language level, the learner level, and the learning situation level. The language level should include, among other things, a socio-cultural component and a development of cross-cultural awareness. The learner level encourages students to set personal and attainable goals that build self-confidence and autonomy. The learning situation level addresses classroom environments such as “arouse and sustain curiosity and attention” (Dornyei, 1994, p. 281) this is accomplished by physical movement and bringing in “unusual and exotic materials” (p. 281). Increasing students’ interest by varying tasks should include

games, puzzles, elements of imagination, and personalizing tasks are also important for motivational development. Language games “can be an effective way to create interest, motivate students, encourage... and reduce anxiety” (Young, 1991, p. 433). Language anxiety arises from several factors such as learner and teacher beliefs about language learning and teaching, classroom procedures, classroom belief systems (personal and interpersonal), and language testing (Young, 1991). This research suggests, therefore, poetry reading (cross-cultural), poetry writing (intrinsic), and poetry performance (physical movement) is an effective tool for motivation and coping with language anxiety. In other words, the practice of poetry or the making of poems has both intrinsic motivating factors of self-expression and extrinsic rewards of a completed poem or body of poems. Writing poetry offers student perspectives on the frustrations of using another language and interacting with another culture (Hanauer, 2010).

Developing Cultural Awareness

Poetry as a vehicle of emotive expression and critical literacy is worth researching. Study abroad programs promise positive experiences and outcomes, however, issues of gender, language variety, host country, cross-cultural communication become challenging realities for the language learner. Hanauer’s (2010) six-year research on the study abroad experience at the Indiana University of Pennsylvania provides insight on how students experience American culture in a university setting. Similar to other state universities (where this research study was

conducted), Indiana University of Pennsylvania has an enrollment of 14,000 students—93% are in-state residents, 15.6% are minority students, and the remaining 4.7% are international students in an immersion program. Hanauer (2010), who conducted the study there, collected poems that would fall under the heading of study abroad experiences; a resulting sub-corpus of 78 poems was selected. They were then categorized and analyzed for content, linguistic, literary choices, and range of perspectives understanding the experience. The results were organized according to seven types of experiences, such as, contact with American students, negotiating American culture, emotional response to language, emotional response to academic classrooms, etc. Examples of poems analyzed and catalogued are as follows.

Study Abroad

Before study abroad,
The color of image is
Yellow, Orange, Pink, Sky blue.

But in fact

The color changed into
Sorrow Gray, Dark Black, Regret Purple
Blood Red.

Nervous, Tough, Cry, Shock
I just remember these words.

(Hanauer, 2010, p. 95)

The study abroad program that promises wonderful experiences does not coincide with this student's experience. With minimal vocabulary this student was able to express a very emotional and unpleasant experience.

Dorm

I have a roommate
 Sleep late at 2pm everyday
 Eat cheeseburger everyday
 Never turn off the TV (Hanauer, 2010, p. 114)

This short poem clearly describes an international student's perspective on the experience of living with a roommate. We don't know who the roommate is, whether an American or international student, but it does convey that he/she does not think highly of the roommate. The following poem expresses homesickness and the poet seems embarrassed to let others know, hence, the locked door and the title of the poem. It's an emotional poem that expresses sadness and happiness at the same time.

Hidden Tears

I'm holding a picture.
 The door is locked.
 My eyes are wet.
 I remember that Sunday picnic
 Here is my brother
 Hugging my shoulder
 Here is my mother
 Holding my hand.
 Tears are falling down my cheek
 I miss my home.
 I want to be there,
 To see my family again,
 To breathe fresh mountain air,
 To dip my legs into the rough river,
 To see my grandma cooking
 And fall asleep in my tiny room. (Hanauer, 2010, p. 126).

Poetry can provide concise, snapshot imagery, focused content, descriptions of experiences in life that engage readers' understanding of the 'other'. Furthermore it is an ethical way to conduct research because poetry writing allows participants to have a voice and presence within the research project and a product of their body of work (Hanauer, 2010).

In sum, the literature review establishes poetry as a useful literary genre in language development. If teachers are provided with adequate instruction to develop lessons, they develop confidence, which is reflected in classroom attitudes and motivation. Not only for language development, poetry can be a vehicle for students to rethink what they know about a particular culture. As Kramsch & Kramsch (2000) state "the teaching of foreign literatures...intersects with the social and political history of nation-states and their symbolic cultural capital...in particular the teaching of culture" (p. 553) which is demonstrated in the following interviews.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

Participants

Fifty-four international, university-level students studying English as a second language in the Intensive English Program were surveyed. Their ages range from 18-35; 32 are males and 22 are females. Four levels of students participated in the survey: Pre-level 1, Level 3, Level 4, and Level 5. Participants' L1 are Arabic, Chinese, Portuguese, Korean, French, Bengali, Nepali, and Spanish. They come from Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Syria, China, Brazil, Korea, Burkino Faso, Burundi, Mali, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Chile. They are pursuing degrees in biosciences, computer sciences, education, economics, business and finance, engineering, actuarial science, communication and marketing, and electrical engineering.

Materials

A Likert 1-6 scale, forty-five-question survey contains items targeting participants' backgrounds, cultural interests, attitudes, and motivations. The questionnaire consisted of four parts (see Appendix A) and translated into learners' native language (Arabic and Chinese) for those that were not fluent in English (Dornyei, 2002). The items were coded into nine categories: L1 Attitudes, L2

Attitudes, Future-self, Career, Anxiety, Games, L1 Poetry, L2 Poetry, and Culture. Also included in the questionnaire was descriptive statistics such as gender, age, nationality, and proficiency level. An open-ended question asked students for their opinion on literature from their native language and to provide an email address for volunteer interviews.

Procedures

For this qualitative study, the Likert scale questionnaire was distributed to levels 3, 4, 5, and pre-level 1 in classrooms particularly literature, reading, and writing to maintain the contextual ethos—the researcher was not a teacher in any of these classes, but was personally present during survey distribution and completion. The average time to complete the survey was 30 minutes or less. The purpose of this survey was to establish what cultural interests and attitudes students have and to discover what experiences or exposures they might have had with literature and poetry especially in their native countries. Levels 1 and 2 were not surveyed either because of language deficiencies to read the English survey or the translation of the survey into several languages was unattainable. Nine Pre-level 1 students were all from Saudi Arabia and were given a survey translated in Arabic. Problems in Arabic translation (difficulties reading, mistranslations, etc.) may have skewed results. Furthermore, the Chinese translation was not used because there were no pre-level 1 Chinese students and levels 1 and 2 were not surveyed because of logistics of multiple translations needed such as German, Turkish, French, etc. as well as time constraints and

scheduling. The Cronbach alpha for L1 Attitudes $\alpha = .843$; for L2 Attitudes $\alpha = .801$; for Future-self $\alpha = .778$; for Cultural $\alpha = .749$; for L1 Poetry $\alpha = .794$. Category numbers for Career, Games, L2 Poetry, and Anxiety fall below the reliability criteria of .70. Reasons for lower threshold numbers in these categories could be too few in number of questions for analysis, the way they were worded, or mistranslation.

The questionnaire (Appendix A) was designed and based upon Dornyei's (2002) text *Questionnaires in Second Language Research*. Statements pertaining to careers and future-self were designed to recognize self-confidence and how participants see themselves using their L2. Cultural statements such as, "I respect the values and customs of other cultures", were designed to bring out attitudes regarding the participant's culture versus other cultures. Statements about games such as, "I like playing with word games or puzzles", were written to elicit perceptions on games because poetry can be a form of word play game. L1 and L2 attitudes were written to see how participant's feel about their own literary experience in first and second languages.

Following the questionnaire, follow-up questions were asked of random volunteers who submitted a contact email address; the complete interview transcriptions are located in Appendix D. Six interview participants were selected and a Sony® audio recorder was used to record individual conversations with the researcher.

Chapter 4

ANALYSIS

Data analysis from the survey and interview dialogues provided a basis of understanding international student population attitudes, experiences, and knowledge of poetry. In other words, the research asked what they thought and experienced to establish a ground on which to build a learning/teaching experience. It was an open inquiry not to establish a hypothesis, but to find out what current attitudes are; it was an inductive approach that may establish a pedagogical theory or explain certain phenomena. The questionnaire design format created a positive or negative column: 3 or less was unfavorable and 4 or more favorable, allowing for no “gray” or undecided areas. Although the statistical analysis for t-tests and correlations were meant to complement the interview findings, there are no significant results to report. On the Likert 1-6 scale, the mean scores of 4 and over indicate a positive attitude toward L1 language skills (reading, writing, literature, and poetry) and L2 language skills. One exception—Anxiety, the means of 3 actually represents a positive attitude because of the way the question is worded. The rationale behind these codes was to establish attitudes in general and if students are receptive to poetic forms.

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

The Questionnaire

The group means suggest that students have favorable positive attitudes with regards to their L1 literary and L2 literary experiences that is further supported with commentaries from the open-ended question and individual interviews. The assumption here is that if a student has positive motivations, attitudes, and reading abilities in their L1 literature and classroom experiences, then it's possible that motivation and attitudes translate into L2 literary practices and achievement (Ebrahimi, 2012). Surveying a larger population could show greater statistical differences; surveys should at least have population numbers of 100 or more (Dorneyei, 2002).

Anxiety can have a negative role in language acquisition and responses to this item fall in the 3 range. This is misleading because the statement reads: "I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my English class." The means fall in the "disagree range", so in reality the participant is saying that they actually don't have anxiety. Perhaps rewording it to say: "I do not get nervous and confused..." would be a better statement. As for items with low Cronbach's alpha reliability, they were too few in number and/or wording was problematic. For example, there is only one

Anxiety item and therefore could not be dropped to raise the item reliability higher; more questions coded for this category could improve reliability. The same could be said for games and puzzles, and L2 poetry with one and two items respectively. The rationale for asking about games and puzzles was to develop a sense for language play. In many cultures riddles and word games play a significant role in language acquisition. Dornyei (1994) suggests to stimulate student involvement develop varied tasks and activities that include game-like components such as puzzles, items of suspense, and concealed information and therefore decreasing student anxiety. Hanauer (2010) demonstrates that poetry writing can help students cope with language and cultural anxiety.

Participants in the survey were offered a choice to answer an open-ended question. The following are an extract of responses (Appendix C) to the question: “Is there anything you would like to say about literature (stories, books, poems, songs) of your native language?”

1) There is a sense of honor and respect with regards to their literature as in these responses:

The literature of my native language is very rich and has a cust[o]m value in my country I appreciate the literature because it is related most of the time in the daily routines of people.—Burkino Faso student

I think stories, poem, and songs of my native language are more interesting than English, because they have almost one rhythm and variety of themes. — Saudi Arabia student

Storie[s] from my country are wonderful, if you begin to read you can't stop. Poems and songs are mor[e] difficult because you find there many metaphor, proverbs...—Burundi student

Songs, poems, books and stories in my own language are really interesting and exciting...Portuguese is a beautiful and exciting language to learn about.—Saudi Arabia student

We have the most amazing poems in the world—Saudi Arabia student

Literature relates to them personally—“daily routines”, expresses an aesthetic they appreciate—“exciting”, “wonderful”, “beautiful”, “rich”, and challenges their cognitive skills through “metaphor” and “proverbs.” These statements also reveal that participants take possession of literature in their own language. “Poems and songs are difficult...” demonstrate the uniqueness of poetry—L1 and L2 reading operate with similar systems.

2) Literature is difficult, in target language and in their language:

There should [be] another way of making it more interesting because big books bore me.—Burundi student

...The authors are really smart and sometimes, even though I am a native speaker [Portuguese], I can't understand the meaning because of different cultures and ways to say the same thing using different words...—Brazil student

Large volumes of text, or “big books” challenge the learner's cognitive loads and “making it more interesting” suggests the subject is not relevant to the reader, the classroom tasks assigned are not engaging, or the learner is engaged in something else. Even in their language, literature is challenging in vocabulary, writing styles, and contexts and metaphors.

3) Literature opens windows into other cultures:

The literature is very significant to learn any languages. Plus when someone is learning second language, it is very important for him to be choosed to adequate degree.—Korean student

I think literature is very important for someone who wants to learn very well a new language. It doesn't matter if this literature isn't in English. With literature you can learn more about others cultures.—Burkino Faso student

I like this story (Great Expectations) and basically I don't like reading at all but this time I am very exciting to complete it.—Saudi Arabia student

These quotations stress the value of literature because in learning languages a learner learns about other cultures and histories. Where one student finds large books boring another, who doesn't "like reading at all", discovers a story and is excited about reading it although it is about another culture, another history, and another place—demonstrating that literature appeals to different people universally. In addition, literature can elicit a range of emotional responses from despising long texts to "I am very exciting to complete it."

4) It is important in their language learning and careers:

... Plus when someone is learning second language, it is very important for him to be choosed to adequate degree.—Korean student

What this student seems to be saying is literature should be practical and should be selected to complement the course degree the student is pursuing. This is a common theme discussed throughout the interviews—although literature is interesting or important, some believe it should be relative to their career perspective.

The Interviews

Six volunteer students answered questions pertaining to their literary background and perceptions. For student anonymity pseudonyms are given; a brief demographic at the time of the interview is as follows:

1. Maya, a female, (age not given), from Nepal, level 5 student is currently pursuing a degree in computer science; she has lived in the U.S. for 9 months.
2. Ali, a male, age 25, from Saudi Arabia, level 5, is pursuing a degree in English education and has lived in the U.S. for 18 months.
3. Omella, a female, age 18, from Burundi, level 4, is majoring in finance; she has lived in the U.S. for 3 months.
4. Karam, a female, age 26, from Saudi Arabia, level 5, is majoring in mass communications. She has lived in the U.S. for 1½ years.
5. Saba, a female, age 18 from Bangladesh, level 4, is pursuing a degree in accounting; she has lived in the U.S. for 6 months.
6. Ming, a male, age 23, from China, level 4 is majoring in education; he has been in the U.S. for 2 months.

The complete transcriptions of these interviews are found in Appendix D and are meant to provide full context of the interviews. Their significance is to provide information about student experiences and to illuminate their literary views and

understanding. Extracts from these transcriptions revealed several themes developing from these student/researcher conversations, 1) their personal attitudes of literature in their country, 2) literature in English language development, 3) their perception of poetry, 4) their perception of music—the discussion is organized on these themes. The question about their native literary experience is to establish a basis of attitudes and motivation—if a student appreciates his/her native literature, he/she might appreciate learning second language literature. Furthermore, awareness of their background and previous knowledge enables a teacher to build on their cultural and linguistic heritage. What becomes evident in the interviews is an awareness of not only their own culture but a development and awareness of other cultures through literature.

Literature in Their Own Country

Discussions about students' literary experiences in their respective countries revealed sophisticated genres in poetry, plays, biographies, and novels from around the world. Ming from China shares several titles that he has read from Nicolai Oshetrovsky's "*How the Steel Was Tempered*" (China did adapt this novel of Russian Civil War for television that may have influenced this student to read the book) to Victor Hugo's *Les Miserables*. Referring to *Les Miserables*, he expresses his passion for reading:

It's a great book. But uh, it's not we must uh, learn—it is my habit to uh, read books. My teacher did not ask me to read book. I like it. I love to read books...

This is uniquely significant because he is stating that he reads independently and not only from teacher assignments. It is an example of intrinsic motivation behavior in which Ming achieves personal satisfaction through reading. “Students are motivated when they are exposed to what they enjoy,” (Khatib, 2011b, p. 202). He further says that he has read Romain Roland’s *Jean-Christophe*—a ten-volume work that won the Nobel Prize for Literature. This insight not only reveals his interest in social matters and humanist and pacifist ideology, but he explores cross-cultural contexts through literature. Although these are Chinese translations from the French, is his enthusiasm expressed when he encounters an English literature text? This question is answered later in the discussion.

Another example from Saba from Bangladesh talked about her classroom experience and unlike the Chinese student who read translations, this Bengali student read in English. This should come as no surprise because historically Bangladesh was heavily influenced by British colonialism and culture where English literature was introduced into the curriculum. Recollecting she says,

Umm, I can remember some of those one is from *Around the World in Eighty Days*... yeah, Shakespeare’s *As You Like This*, uh, *As You Like It* by Shakespeare... *Wuthering Heights*, I don’t remember the writer.

When asked if she liked these stories and what she liked about them she replied, “Yeah, uh, the characters, their climax, settings and locations.” Her significant literary experience in a classroom setting progressed with various texts at different class levels. She liked the stories for a variety of reasons but perhaps it was in part the

classroom structure—every student participated by paragraph reading meaning a less teacher-centered class, which suggests it was an active class. Classroom structure, arrangements, and teacher attitudes are important factors that are substantiated in the literature review.

Karam from Saudi Arabia had less a literary exposure or has vague memories of her classroom because she enrolled in a different educational track that focused more on science, physics, and math. Also her parents are deceased and did not have a traditional family upbringing, she says:

Okay, for me my experience is different. Because um, my parents—they died—and I live alone, my brother my little brother its um, we don't talk about school a lot. Okay, but I think in some families, yeah, absolutely. But for me its, in school you have choice like literature and this stuff in Arabic just like um, two option for your, I took another option specialize in science...Like mathematics, physics, and this stuff not like, um, a lot of literature just...

By sharing a bit of her personal history, she felt she was not contributing to the purpose of the interview about the topic of literature however the researcher assured her that she made a significant contribution to the diversity of student conversation.

Maya's, from Nepal, literary experience was varied and less important to her classroom experience. She says, "Yeah, I'm from different background so there might not be experience about the class but I know about literature, about my country."

Although her education track led her to computer science, she is familiar with many authors and poets of her country. Her father influenced her the most— a religious man, who wrote many poems and collected a gallery of books, and she recollects a moment on her family life:

And I don't know, yeah, because my father, we were three siblings, and he used to, when we used to have dinner and when we used to have free time we used to just sit around and talk gossip. Our gossip would be 'Oh these things—oh this happened here, or this thing would happen, this song was composed by a king or Queen Aishwarya. This poem—what does this poem mean?' If I asked my father, then my father was so pleased, that he'll, if I ask him, then he used to explain from history something that he'll, 'oh this was from that and that was from that.' That way I knew, I think.

Maya's sister, whose undergraduate degree was in literature, also imparted knowledge about various authors. This example gives insight on how familial social relations contribute to a student's education reinforcing positive experiences and building confidence. Queen Aishwarya was a member of the royal family and a famous song composer who was murdered along with her family in the royal palace of which left an impression on her when she was young. She mentioned several of Nepal's poets and writers such as Laxmi Prasad, B. P. Koirala, and Parijat whose writings are used throughout Nepal's education system. Prasad is considered to be Nepal's national poet whose works her father introduced her to. Parijat a female writer who worked for social justice and whose writings are translated into English are adapted to U.S. college literature curriculum. B. P. Koirala was a prime minister and prolific writer who wrote about Hitler and the Jews that probably influenced her choice of historical biographical readings. Furthermore she says, "Nepalese writers think a lot because of the nature, because of the mountain area...and the tropical areas because of that also the mind is different and their novels are still famous everywhere." This reflection on the idea that environment plays a role in forming a

nation's literary ethos is enlightening, which in turn has formed her views and understanding.

Omella from Burundi experienced a rich literary education. Her mother tongue is Kirundi but French is what she spoke and studied in school therefore French writers such as Rimaud, Baudelaire, Ronsard, and Moliere, to name a few, were very influential in her literary development. When asked about Kirundi literature, she replied,

All those poetry, literature, songs, all of those things, but we also have the Kirundi class and we studied poetry in Kirundi literature, but it's not too much because the Kirundi is so difficult to study those kinds of things. You must take a major in a university because it's too difficult, but it was easy for me to study it in French.

This is a very interesting statement. Her mother tongue is Kirundi but says studying Kirundi is very difficult. Perhaps this is because the orality of Kirundi that she spoke at home is challenging in its written orthography and formal context. She expressed enthusiasm for French literature—she participates in plays, enjoys poetic metaphor, keeps a journal, and writes poetry. One American author she was familiar with was W. E. B. DuBois; she liked his socio-political writings on race and other issues on social justice.

Literature in Language Development

As seen from these preceding discussions, family life and educational curricula are influential factors on a learner's attitude and appreciation of literature. How important is literature on language learning? Edmondson (1995) would argue that it is

not essential, but what do students say about this? The student interviews offer a better or clearer understanding of this experience—they all expressed that it is very challenging, frustrating, and even humbling.

When asked if reading stories helps in learning the language, Ali says,

It helps a lot specifically when we read the story we found it interesting like nowadays I study the Adventures of Sherlock Holmes. And I when I started reading the first chapter I found this kind of old style English its never going to be help my English. Actually, when I moved to the second chapter and I read it seriously I confessed myself 'I have to read everything and I have to understand everything'—I found it very interesting. Yeah it gives me idea and makes me live in the old English style. I find myself uh I am in living in England 200 years ago.

According to him, reading English literature is difficult but it has helped him learn a lot about the language. He made a breakthrough discovery in the second chapter—motivating himself to read and understanding the text allowed him to be transported to England during the time of Sherlock Holmes. His strong motivation grounded in positive attitudes toward L2 allowed him to have and enjoy a literary and contextual experience.

Other students confessed that it is very hard to read because 1) they think the text won't help them in their careers, that it is not beneficial in a utilitarian, or pragmatic way, and 2) they must continually refer to the dictionary. Vocabulary size is an issue worth mentioning here regarding second language reading. Recognition of words figure between 2,000-7,000 words in an L2 language, whereas first language fluency can range from 10,000-100,000 words and transfer effects from their L1 can create difficulties (Ebrahimi, 2012). Transfer effects is the interaction of between the

learner's L1 and the target language and vice-versa; it can occur language skills such as grammar, vocabulary, and reading. Laufer (1996) refers to this as the lexical plight, where a lexical threshold of 3,000 word families is necessary for comprehensive reading. Second language reading is more demanding than first language reading: bottom up and top down processing is slower, automaticity is lessened, and therefore achieving "advanced first language reading is never fully manifested" (Hanauer, 2010, p. 34). One of the advantages of poetry is the compactness of a complete context—"from a small language input one can generate a large and varied output" (Maley & Duff, 1989 p. 12). Furthering this notion, Maxim (2006, p. 251) states "poetry, because of a variety of factors such as brevity, universality, and rhythm, has been seen as a particularly well-suited device for introducing beginning adult language learners to literary conventions."

Maya shared her thoughts about reading English literature:

Yeah, I like English literature too, but I, now we are in our literature class we are reading Sherlock Holmes. Yeah. And the story is interesting, the theme is interesting but the words are of old English and too tough and we have to put the dictionary every time near for us to understand the words so that is sometimes annoying because we have to imagine something and we have to again look after this dictionary.

And when asked further if it helped her vocabulary, Maya replied,

That might be a good possibility but uh somehow it's old English so that type or words I cannot use in my daily life, but when I read the biography of Obama and Osama bin Laden the words are good because there were some different words but I can I knew the meaning and realize I can use them in daily life."

In these remarks her frustrations are not so much the story line but the continual reliance on the dictionary needing words she felt to be of no pragmatic use. She has read biographies of Obama, Osama bin Laden, and Hitler in English but discovered dictionary usage reading those texts were advantageous because they were relevant and she can apply those words to daily life.

Karam from Saudi Arabia has a very hard time with the reading, it was not important in her L1 so the task is especially demanding. When asked if the reading was challenging she replied,

Hard, but you know it's kind of challenging because there are a lot of words. We learned not like other classes. I like it but it sometimes hard to understand, to read more, to understand, it's British and other stories you can...that's why I see the movie it makes...

Here she remarks about vocabulary that are not like other classes such as grammar, composition, etc. Digital media, especially text communication, should be mentioned here because every student today is engaged in digital media. She uses film or video to help comprehend the text and probably is not enjoying reading as thoroughly as the other Saudi student: in fact she expressed little to no interest in literature on the survey. She is of a new digital generation that consumes social and multi-media for her communication and learning. Students today look at screens and send messages continually—poetry lends itself perfectly to this medium because of its brevity. The British poet laureate Carol Ann Duffy is reported by the Guardian saying, “poetry is a form of texting” (Moorhead, 2011) and can introduce digital users to new forms of literature. Duffy asserts that “poetry is the literary form of the 21st century” and using

text messaging is a form of language play (Moorhead, 2011). Melin (2010) writes: “poetry needs to be brought into classes on a regular basis...[and] teachers need to rise to the challenge of analyzing the function of literature in the digital age by embracing multi-media tools” (p. 36). Perhaps this student could benefit from poetic exercises using digital platforms or at least, because of poetic brevity, it may stimulate her interest in developing stronger reading skills.

Ming shares his humiliating experience and yet maintains enthusiasm reading English literature. As previously mentioned, this student is self-motivating and enjoys reading and at the time to the interview, he had been in the U.S. for only 2-3 months.

When asked how he liked literature class he gave a long reply:

We reading Maniac Magee it's about black children it uh describing white children living in a black town, black people town uh actually when I first read this book I was a little bit upset because I can't understand some words of the book—some words I never seen it before. At that time I was really upset because I think I have been learning English for about thirteen years, but now I still can't understand the meaning and, uh, as I know the American book is for the children maybe for the primary school for kids, well the book is a written just for the kids—uh, so, I think I'm not good as a kid yes really upset but, uh, but my teacher teaching me structure is she also come from China, she said don't worry about it she same situation as me. She says the American most difficult things is to learn the literature, the most difficult class. It is not my English problem it's just uh, maybe their traditional style, yeah, their written style, maybe can't get use to it. I think maybe uh, three months ago if you can get used to reading it, get used to this style, yeah.

In this discussion he is confronted with the reality that no matter the length time you attempt language development in the classroom, encountering the target culture where the language usage is considerably more challenging, leaves him feeling dispirited.

There is an emotional inferior feeling—“I’m not as good as a kid” he conveys but gains confidence from his teacher. He further remarked about the English dictionary:

Yeah, some words I can’t even find in the dictionary, the dictionary also can’t choose the meaning of the words! I’m really shocked! Yeah, I think is good for me to improve my English skills, yeah and uh, maybe I can carry the dictionary all the time. Yeah, by that time I can open the book, read some chapters, yeah and find some vocabularies I don’t understand, I can use a dictionary. I think yeah about three months ago now I am getting used to it—to the style of the literature, yeah.

Because Ming spent thirteen years learning English in China, he felt he had a good grasp of the language. However, he encountered many new words in a literature book that was written for a younger American audience—he felt humiliated and very upset about his situation. Furthermore he discovers there are words that the dictionary “can’t choose” and is quite shocked. This discovery is an indication of how English vocabulary words have many meanings and the meanings are derived from the context. Later in the exchange he still thinks the experience is good and will improve his English skills as he is getting acquainted with the style of the literature.

Omella from Burundi tells of a similar experience:

Many words I don’t know but the teacher say you must overcome, don’t worry about the words you don’t know, just continue read and when the word is in the context it will be really easy for you to guess the meaning of the words. So now, yeah it’s not too easy but...

This statement demonstrates how effective teaching can build confidence in a student who finds a literature class challenging. Because she is a French speaker of which thousands of words English is derived and the obstacle of orthography is not an issue and yet she too is challenged with vocabulary.

Poetic Perceptions

So far it has been established that these students have had an educational background regarding literature, some more than others, and although challenging it does play a role in vocabulary acquisition and cultural orientation, so the question now is how has poetry played a role in their lives? What is their perception of the genre in their language and in their second language?

Ali articulates the significance of poetry from his perspective: “Yes, we do have a lot and, uh, the novels in Arabic it’s considered less interesting than the poetry...Also what we find most interesting in most of the Arabic poems that’s the rhythm or rhyme...” Although poems are significant, all forms of literature are valued, novels included. In the heart of Arabic expression is language; Arabs are passionate about “poetry, imagery, metaphor, and symbolism...the elixir of language” (Barakat, 1993). Remarks about Arabs has been stated that, “no other people in the world, perhaps, manifest such enthusiastic admiration for literary expression and are so moved by the word spoken or written, as the Arabs” (Barakat, 1993). This student also says that poems are used to teach grammar and as the children mature, more sophisticated poems are introduced. But they barely understand it and “without explanation from the teacher we will understand nothing.” The poetry he was exposed to portrays history to describe the battles of tribal Arabia. When asked about contemporary poetry, he was not familiar with contemporary poets however he was familiar with the Palestinian poet, Mahmoud Darwish. One interesting note about poetry in Saudi Arabia is ‘flirt

poetry.’ Ali described it as when a boy writes about his love for a woman and describes the woman. In Arabic they actually use the word ‘flirt’ but the education ministry says this type of poetry is not appropriate in classes.

It is worth mentioning here about what is meant by Arabic literature and poetry. Arabic literature meant poetry and the Arabic world is transitioning into new realms—where poetry was an art form to describe intense battles—a new form is emerging to express human anxiety and a transition from dominant patriarchal, religious, and dogmatic world view, to the quest for human identity (Barakat, 1993). Arabic poetry may have freed itself from the restrictions of rigid prosody and adapted westernized modern techniques but it still holds to traditional meters and phrasing, or *fus’ha*. “Free verse” in English is non-metered and unrhymed called *shi’r nathr* in Arabic that means prose poetry. However free verse in Arabic, *shi’r hurr*, is a variant on classical meters and rhyme (Levin, 2006). Arab children are raised “with two semi-independent linguistic systems: one spoken to a particular region...and the other written, rooted in the Qur’ran” (Levin, 2006, pp. *xvi-xvii*). Most texts such as newspapers, novels, poetry, etc. are written in *fus’ha* and anything written colloquially is seen as deviant and corrupt and therefore it is difficult to publish alternative forms because of Arab prescriptive hierarchy.

Ming talks about poetry in school, he is very knowledgeable about T’ang and Sung poets such as: Tu Fu, Li Pai, Meng Hao-Jan, and Wei Ying-Wu. According to him all students must memorize these classic poets: “Yeah, must learn.

Must learn. We must learn. We should read it by, uh, not look at book. You should keep it your memory. We must know it.” The emphasis on ‘must’ times four is especially significant—he not only is stressing the urgency of knowing the subject but in turn the school curricula placing importance on these poets maintaining an important cultural ethos. What is interesting too is the emphasis on this dynasty and the classical anthology as if no literary occurrence happened since then. Further inquiry about the status of contemporary poetry revealed this exchange from a young man echoing the wisdom of a mountain poet:

Yeah, so things are different and, uh, so I like or prefer the ancient authors like Li Pai. But nowadays the literature is, uh, different types than the olden days. Now literature is being more practical, more useful for our daily but like the ancient literature is more about your uh, your uh, can I say encouraging you to do something the ancient literature but nowadays many magazines how to become a [inaudible] or how to become a cooker such as something. Yeah, the ancient literature I’m refreshed but uh nowadays I read magazines oh that’s useful but nothing else, yeah, but I think is now very popular in China. It also have some good literature but I prefer to read the ancient so I can’t give you more information about the modern literature.

In essence he is saying that in China today the focus is on practicality and utilitarian articles—literature that will give you information to do and to become something. He prefers the ancient words because he is, for no practical reasons, “refreshed.” He is not as familiar with literary currents today.

Xi Chuan a contemporary Chinese poet explains that there are three groups of poets. One group, the largest group, continues to write according to the classical poetic forms. The second group, the mainstream writers write in vernacular Chinese and are approved by the state. The third group is the young poets born in the 1970s, 1980s,

and 1990s during an era of the new or modern China transitioning internally—politically and socio-economically. This group publishes their works in small editions with no state support thereby having little means for distribution, and furthermore there is the issue of state censorship (Library of Congress, 2011). This historical backdrop provides a possible explanation for this Chinese student's limited exposure to contemporary poetry and his appreciation for classical poetry.

Omella talked about her passion and familiarity with 19th and 20th century poets such as Rimbaud and Baudelaire, but one of her favorite French poets is 16th century Pierre Ronsard because he writes love poems. She also expressed interest and knowledge of a contemporary performance poet Fabien Marsaud, sobriquet Le Grand Corps Malade, a slam poet whose work can be seen on the inter-net. Slam genre draws on hip-hop music and traditional dub poetry that is found in black culture and West Indian culture. In African prose and narrations music is not a feature; however, in poetry music or song is what differentiates poetry from prose (Finnegan, 2012).

Many students have read sophisticated literary works. These exchanges reveal that students read poetry in school but most of the poets they study are classical or ancient and they have little to no exposure to contemporary poets in the formal sense and this may explain why they are in general, unfamiliar with current poetry. Three students have written poetry and one has been published.

Saba talks about her experience in Bangladesh:

Uhhh, yeah, actually recently I wrote a poem, but is in my country like in my language, and it was published on book fair...and it is published this last

month. Yeah, actually I have written stories but those did or they're not published. But this is my first poem, I wrote it and it was published, like we have one month February, last month book fair and it was published last month.

When asked what kind of a poem it was she described it as a love poem and that it meant many things such as “love about our country, love about environment...it means many things—or it could be girlfriend boyfriend.” So she is familiar with the use of metaphor and creating a work that is multi-layered with meaning. She went on to say that her mother is very proud of her and that the publisher wanted her to write some more for upcoming editions giving her further impetus (extrinsic motivations) to create more works. She discussed her familiarity with Kazi Nazrul Islam and Robindranath Tagor, both poets of significant national importance, but did not mention contemporary poets.

When asked if she wrote poetry and what she likes about poetry, Omella from Burundi replied,

Not lately, because I want to stop, I don't know why...but the things I really like is when the poem, the author writes something and at the first reading you don't get what he say, I really love those kinds of poems. I can guess what he writes, I can say he write about his life and the other say he write about these things, and I really like this kind.

Here she is saying she wants to stop writing, whether temporarily or indefinitely it is not clear—creativity runs in cycles. She describes how a poem can have different interpretations and is open to the idea that others can view the poem in a different way—she really likes this aspect on where a poem can lead. This is parallel to Saba's statements whose poem about love displays different kinds of love whether it's

romance or country or nature—it is open for interpretation. The kind of poetry Omella wrote was personal and she shared her apprehensions about reciting poems. Because she had left her journal home she was unable to accurately recite one, but she recollected and recited in French one that she wrote. It too had different meanings about passengers and love and a journey on a train. Poetry with multiple meanings is prevalent in African cultures—in Kirundi, riddles and word games are often employed by children and are used for reading comprehension in school as in her statement, “I’m green and I can walk—those kinds of questions—and you try to guess what it is.” Riddles play a significant part in African culture and language; they are considered a part of their oral literacy because riddles include metaphor or poetic content (Finnegan, 2012). Furthermore riddles have close connections to other forms of expression such as mystery, satire, witticisms, and story-telling dilemmas (Finnegan, 2012). And it is for this reason the survey includes statements about word games and puzzles.

Maya says poetry writing was something she did with a group of friends who created a writing environment, but that was just a passing phase in her life. She says that her father taught her to sing poems and “I like the rhyme of those poems.” As she grew up she came to understand the meaning of the words but “it was just the rhyme” that caught her attention when she was young. After high school, before attending college, she had a group of three or four friends and they used to write and eventually published a small book. Nowadays she doesn’t write and looks at it this way,

“...maybe that was competition with friends surrounding me a circle that was a time of poetry, a poetry environment, and I used to write poems.” For her writing poetry created a social circle with her friends.

It is within these dialogues where the answer to the research question can be found: How do international students perceive poetry? The Greek word for poetry is *poiesis* (ποίησις). It implies the actual making or doing of poems—poetry as an act of performance. The Chinese word for poetry is *shih*—words from the heart. In essence Maya, Saba, and Omella were making poems or words from the heart. These students perceive poetry as making a creative expression in language; they are intrinsically motivated in the genre of poetry for personal gratification. They are extrinsically motivated through rewards received such as getting published or developing a social network of friends and exchanging ideas. They perceive poetry as part of a socio-cultural and socio-historical form of production that is passed down through familial structures and educational organizations. Maya’s discussion of how she discovered poetry from her father is one familial example. Formal culture, such as classic poetry found in China and Saudi Arabia for example, is a cultural production that continues through established institutions such as governmental or educational policies. It is another way, which through this historical context, that culture shapes perceptions about poetry and this may be why Ming and Ali are most familiar the classic representations. However, they both expressed interest in creating their own poetry but this motivation is discouraged by their formal institutions—poetry is not as practical

or as sophisticated as prose and “flirt” poetry is not appropriate in school curricula. Formal institutions discourage students to create a language that is meaningful to them. Karam, who shared that she is not familiar with the literary arts, did express interest in music for language purposes and, on the survey, liked listening to poetry. This suggests that she is open to explore poetic genres, as did all of these students, through the medium of music.

Perception of Music

Questions on music and song were included in the survey and interviews because many songs are related to lyric poetry, in fact lyric poetry is a common form used for self-expression. Another reason for including music in the survey and in the interview questions was to see if there were any attitudes favoring song over poetry. If a participant didn't like poetry but favored song, would suggest that introducing poetry through song could change or heighten perceptions. Furthermore, musical and linguistic processing appears in the same brain region (Hijazi & Al-natour, 2012). When asked if they liked music or what kind of music they listened to, they all responded positively, an observation Edmondson (1995) noted in his German classes. The reasons for listening to English music, mostly popular, were not just for the beat and rhythm, but to sharpen language skills, for encouragement and enthusiasm, and for emotional reasons, and not just for fun but for serious learning—as the Chinese student remarks, “Oh, it encourage people to have a positive attitude, to face

everything. And also to practice your listening. I not just listening to English music for fun—it also can improve your listening.”

Maya says as her listening skills have improved over time:

Yeah, now for my English as well I will listen to the lyrics and this I am feeling quite comfortable listening to English music because previously I used to listen to soft so that I can understand the lyrics and with the music I—it was quite hard for me to understand but nowadays I can catch them.

Ali from Saudi Arabia says, “ I listen to American music because I want to learn the language, because I love music, it helps. Do you know what I mean?” This remark suggests that for someone who finds reading literature challenging, lyric poetry may be a tool for learning and exploring language. Ali says he likes hip-hop because he “find[s] it interesting...I follow the rhyme.” The export of American music influences other cultures but he further adds that they mix the music with Arabic and English making it their own. This statement is an example of how cross-cultural influences can change cultural norms and develop into a hybrid of their own making. Students are also making contextual connections through the lyrics—gender, social, cultural, and political relationships. Most students listen to popular music such as hip-hop and even country and western. Omella sees it as a “quick poem” and uses the genre to learn new vocabulary. Hijazi & Al-natour (2012) point out that popular music “contain many personal pronouns; common short words; conversational language; and repetition” (p. 296) which help language learners, and “music can...process new stimuli and infer rules of language” (p. 301).

Chapter 6

PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Literature suggests that using poetic structures in the classroom can have positive and negative outcomes on language learning (Cetinaevci, 2012; Edmonson, 1995; Khatib, 2011b; Zyngier, 2010). Negative outcomes occur when selection of material is not appropriate for language level, classroom structure is prohibitive, or the teacher lacks confidence and is not prepared. For positive outcomes to occur students must be motivated and this is achieved when they are exposed to what they enjoy and if they are exposed to texts for language learning practices (Cetinaevci, 2012). Positive outcomes also occur when student voices inform teaching strategies, when the teacher acts as a mediator, when the class is not teacher-centered and students are invited to suggest changes, reducing hierarchical strata (Dornyei, 1994; Khatib 2011a; Zyngier, 2010).

How to implement these practices in a class is exemplified through this abbreviated example. In Hanauer's (2010) 9-week lesson plan, *The Book of Poetry Assignment*, international students are asked to write a poetry book on the topic "studying abroad". Students are always shocked and overwhelmed at such a task because they have never done it before. This is a recurring theme observed in the interviews—students have had little opportunity to analyze and/or write poetic

structures. Hanauer's class explores the genre of poetry, experience library and internet research, present poetry, explore autobiographic memories, revise, redraft, critique, and publish a group book. This lesson plan allows students to express themselves, explore the language creatively, and develop cultural awareness. It also provides a framework for teachers to structure such activities in their classroom.

What this model demonstrates is how to use poetry to develop the four language skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. There appears to be a gap historically when it comes to understanding and using poetry—most students study ancient or classical poetry of their respective institutions in a hierarchical setting resulting in unenthused students. Students in this study, however, are sincerely appreciative and enthusiastic for music as a learning language instrument and if music is a form of poetry, what better way to introduce topics and themes that are relative to language learners. Themes such as love were common throughout the interviews, but also critical literacy themes of social justice, environment, family life, gender issues, etc. are themes found in poetic forms of popular music, reggae, ska, dub, country and western, hip-hop, blues, and rock. This is where they perceive poetry and yet may not actually realize that it is poetry. Furthermore, as literature has suggested, teachers are not aware of what poetry is or have confidence to integrate it into lesson plans. Online poetry resources maintain banks of contemporary poetry worldwide with offerings of explanations and performances that can remove apprehension. Websites such as: lyrikline.org, poetryfoundation.org, poetrytranslation.org, and poets.org provide

histories, anthologies, orthographies, and oral readings for classroom support. Further research could benefit from implementing these models and online resources into classroom research and longitudinal studies.

Melin (2010) offers a holistic approach to classroom poetry instruction by stating that teachers “must take into account writerly perspective, readership issues, and performance aspects” (p. 360). She proposes ten curricular and pedagogical recommendations to incorporate throughout the curriculum such as: a) emphasize language and literature relationship, b) vary lesson plans by using poetry, c) select works of significance, d) explain literary convention, e) define teacher roles by using tasks that focus on discovery and negotiation of meaning, f) elicit learner response through reading aloud/writing poems, g) use digital technology resources, h) practice creative writing, i) explore culture, and j) reflect on reading/functions of literature. This holistic approach highlights that “literature is a part of, not separate, from other domains of culture” (p. 362) giving literature a significant capacity in the curriculum.

The results from this study reveal that international students have a strong positive attitude learning target language skills and the interviews provide a deeper understanding of their passions and anxieties learning the English language within a literature-reading context. Most have experience reading/writing poetry in their own language but have little exposure to the English genre except for music. These results also demonstrate that students are open to English poetic forms. So is literature non-essential for language learners as Edmondson (1995) would suggest? It would appear

so in this increasingly utilitarian world. To learn a language for career opportunities, negotiating business contracts, understanding rental agreements, deciphering bank statements, passing exams, and reading restaurant and computer menus, literature is probably not essential. Ming explained this pragmatic reasoning. He says he never wrote poetry, even in his language, only articles and essays because “we don’t have the assignment”. Furthermore, he says:

...teacher thinks poetry is very easy to write and actually it’s not...because it just require a feel words, because you can make, uh written about one hundred words—you are finished now—the assignment. But when you write an essay you use maybe 2,000 words. Yeah, 2,000 words and 100 words. So the teacher thinks that write essay or article is uh, more difficult than write poetry. But uh to write really good poetry is very difficult but the teacher don’t ask us to do that and we don’t have the examinations to take our skills—because the examination doesn’t take in our skills of writing poetry.

Ming sums up the academic debate of using literature and poetry in the classroom—that there is a misunderstanding of how poetry can be used, what it can mean to students, and how it can communicate emotions. Students aren’t tested on poetry because examinations do not require it; poetry is about “feel words”. It is what Edmondson (1995) describes as the “business of language learning” (p. 42) and students are “products...mass educational consumers” (p. 43).

When Ming was asked if a class assignment that helped you to express yourself in a poetic form in English, would you be interested in something like that? Ming replied with an emphatic yes and paused—he thought it would “require very good English skills”. When assured that wouldn’t necessarily be the case, the barrier of inhibition fell from his face.

Not all students will eagerly respond to poetry but if they see it as a way to develop and experiment with their new language, they will associate with poetry in a way that aids in their language acquisition. The importance of literary genres, including poetry, can develop habits of inquiry, creativity, curiosity, understand social powers, develop cultural awareness, and develop understanding of our human existence. It is an open invitation to explore poetry in second language classrooms.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

English Learner Questionnaire

English Learner Questionnaire

This survey is conducted through an Intensive English Program at a state university in the Upper-Midwest. This questionnaire has four parts. Please read each instruction and write your answer. This is NOT a test and there are no “right” or “wrong” answers. Your grade will NOT be affected. The results of this survey will only be for research purposes so please answer truthfully. Thank you very much for your help.

Part I

In this part, tell us if you agree or disagree with the following statements by circling a number from 1 to 6. Please do not leave out any items.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5	6

Example: If you strongly agree with the following statement, write this:

I like travelling very much. 1 2 3 4 5 6

1. I would like to study English even if I were not required to do so.	1 2 3 4 5 6
2. I can imagine myself studying in a university where all my courses are in English	1 2 3 4 5 6
3. Whenever I think of my future career, I imagine myself using English.	1 2 3 4 5 6
4. I can imagine myself writing English e-mails/letters fluently.	1 2 3 4 5 6
5. I believe that I will be capable of reading and understanding most texts in English if I keep studying it.	1 2 3 4 5 6
6. I enjoy reading literature from my own country.	1 2 3 4 5 6
7. Studying English is important to me because it offers a new challenge in my life.	1 2 3 4 5 6
8. I have to study English; otherwise, I think I cannot be successful in my career.	1 2 3 4 5 6
9. I always look forward to English classes.	1 2 3 4 5 6
10. I am very interested in the values and customs of other cultures.	1 2 3 4 5 6
11. I feel excited when hearing English spoken.	1 2 3 4 5 6
12. Other cultures should learn more from my culture.	1 2 3 4 5 6
13. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my English class.	1 2 3 4 5 6
14. I am prepared to spend a lot of time and effort to learn English.	1 2 3 4 5 6
15. When I was growing up, reading was important in school.	1 2 3 4 5 6
16. I like to listen to English songs and music.	1 2 3 4 5 6
17. Studying English is important to me because it is necessary for promotion in the future.	1 2 3 4 5 6
18. I find learning English very interesting.	1 2 3 4 5 6
19. I like the rhythm of English.	1 2 3 4 5 6

Part II

Please answer all questions by circling a number from 1 to 6.

Not at all	Not so much	So-so	A little	Quite a lot	Very much
1	2	3	4	5	6

Example: If you like pizza very much, write this:

Do you like pizza?

1 2 3 4 5 6

20. I like playing with word games or puzzles.	1 2 3 4 5 6
21. I like songs from English-speaking countries.	1 2 3 4 5 6
22. I enjoy reading in my native language for pleasure	1 2 3 4 5 6
23. I enjoy listening to stories in my native language.	1 2 3 4 5 6
24. I enjoy writing in my native language.	1 2 3 4 5 6
25. I like English films.	1 2 3 4 5 6
26. I like poetry.	1 2 3 4 5 6
27. I would like to know more about literature from around the world.	1 2 3 4 5 6
28. I think it is important to learn more about other cultures.	1 2 3 4 5 6
29. I enjoy reading poetry from my country.	1 2 3 4 5 6
30. I enjoy listening to poetry from my country.	1 2 3 4 5 6
31. I enjoy knowing more about people from English-speaking countries.	1 2 3 4 5 6

Part III

Answer the following items as in Part I.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5	6

32. I have good memories of literature class in school.	1 2 3 4 5 6
33. I respect the values and customs of other cultures.	1 2 3 4 5 6
34. I am interested in the way English is used in conversation.	1 2 3 4 5 6
35. I can imagine a situation where I am speaking English with foreigners.	1 2 3 4 5 6
36. It will have a bad impact on my life if I do not learn English.	1 2 3 4 5 6
37. Growing up, writing was important in school.	1 2 3 4 5 6
38. I like to read short stories in English.	1 2 3 4 5 6
39. I have favorite authors from school.	1 2 3 4 5 6
40. I am sure I will be able to write in English comfortably if I continue studying.	1 2 3 4 5 6
41. It is difficult to work together with people who have different customs and values.	1 2 3 4 5 6

42. I really enjoy learning English.	1	2	3	4	5	6
43. I have read English poems in class.	1	2	3	4	5	6
44. I like to read English magazines and newspapers.	1	2	3	4	5	6
45. I like to write in my own language.	1	2	3	4	5	6

¹ Questions 1-19 & 38-51 are taken from Zoltan Dornyei 2002 *Questionnaires in Second Language Research*, pages 139-148. These questions are designed for language learners and have been proven to be effective items.

Part IV

Please provide the following information by writing your response in the space provided or marking an X on the line.

Name _____ Age: _____ years

Gender:

- M
 F

Nationality: _____

Year of study: _____

Major: _____

Please check the level you are in at the IEC

- Pre-level 1
 Level 1
 Level 2
 Level 3
 Level 4
 Level 5

What languages do you speak?

Your first language _____

Other languages _____

How long have you lived in the U.S.? (or other English speaking countries)

Years _____ months _____

Open question:

Is there anything you would like to say about literature (stories, books, poems, songs) of your native language?

If you would like to be interviewed for this research project please provide a contact email: _____

Thank-you for your cooperation! It is very much appreciated.

APPENDIX B

Arabic Translation

Arabic Translation

استفتاء طلاب اللغة الانكليزية

هذا الاستفتاء يشرف عليه معهد اللغة الانكليزية التابع لجامعة ساينت كلاود. هذا الاستفتاء مؤلف من 4 أجزاء. من فضلك اقرأ التعليمات ثم اكتب الجواب. هذا الاستفتاء ليس بامتحان و ليس هناك جواب خطأ أو صواب, و بالتالي لن تتأثر درجتك العلمية . نتائج هذا الاستفتاء ستكون للابحاث فقط لذا نرجو الاجابة بصدق. شكرا جزيلا على مشاركتك.

الجزء الاول

في هذا الجزء نرجو اخبارنا اذا كنت توافق او لا توافق على الآراء التالية بأن تضع دائرة حول رقم من 1 الى 6 . الرجاء عدم اهمال اي بند.

لا اوافق ابدا	لا اوافق	لا اوافق نوعا ما	اوافق نوعا ما	اوافق	أوافق بشدة
1	2	3	4	5	6

مثلا: اذا كنت توافق كثيرا على التعبير التالي , فاكتب: _____

احب السفر كثيرا: _____ 6 5 4 3 2 1

6 5 4 3 2 1	1-أحب دراسة اللغة الانكليزية و لو لم يطلب مني ذلك
6 5 4 3 2 1	2- ممكن ان اتخيل اني ادرس في جامعة حيث تدرس فيها كل المواد باللغة الانكليزية
6 5 4 3 2 1	3- عندما افكر بمستقبلي (في وظيفتي) اتخيل نفسي و انا استعمل اللغة الانكليزية
6 5 4 3 2 1	4- ممكن ان اتخيل اني اكتب رسائل باللغة الانكليزية بطلاقة
6 5 4 3 2 1	5- اعتقد اني ساكون قادرا على قراءة و فهم اي نص باللغة الانكليزية ان تابعت دراستي للغة
6 5 4 3 2 1	6- استمتع بقراءة الادب من بلدي
6 5 4 3 2 1	7- دراسة اللغة الانكليزية مهمة بالنسبة لي لانها توفر لي فرصة جيدة في حياتي
6 5 4 3 2 1	8- يجب ان ادرس اللغة الانكليزية و الاقلن اكون ناجحا في تخصصي
6 5 4 3 2 1	9- انتظر دائما الى حصة اللغة الانكليزية
6 5 4 3 2 1	10- انا مهتم جدا بعبادات و قيم الثقافات الاخرى
6 5 4 3 2 1	11- اسر عند سماع اللغة الانكليزية

6 5 4 3 2 1	12- يجب على الثقافات الاخرى ان تتعلم من ثقافتنا
6 5 4 3 2 1	13- اشعر بالارتباك و القلق عندما اتحدث اللغة الانكليزية في الصف
6 5 4 3 2 1	14- انا مستعد لبذل الوقت و الجهد في سبيل تعلم اللغة الانكليزية
6 5 4 3 2 1	15- منذ صغري , كانت المطالعة شئى مهم في المدرسة
6 5 4 3 2 1	16- احب سماع الموسيقى و الاغاني الانكليزية
6 5 4 3 2 1	17- دراسة اللغة الانكليزية امر مهم لي لانها ضرورية لارتقي في عملي في المستقبل
6 5 4 3 2 1	18- اجد ان دراسة اللغة الانكليزية مشوقة
6 5 4 3 2 1	19- تعجبني نغمة اللغة الانكليزية

الجزء الثاني

الرجاء الاجابة بوضع دائرة حول رقم من 1 الى 6

دائما	غالبا	احيانا	بين بين	قليلًا	ابدا
6	5	4	3	2	1

مثلا : اذا كنت تحب اكل البتزا فاكتب: 6 5 4 3 2 1

6 5 4 3 2 1	20- استمتع واتسلى بحل الكلمات المتقاطعة
6 5 4 3 2 1	21- احب سماع اغاني من بلدان انكليزية
6 5 4 3 2 1	22- استمتع بالمطالعة بلغتي الام
6 5 4 3 2 1	23- اسر لسماع القصص بلغتي الام
6 5 4 3 2 1	24- استمتع بالكتابة بلغتي الام
6 5 4 3 2 1	25- تعجبني الافلام الانكليزية
6 5 4 3 2 1	26- احب الشعر
6 5 4 3 2 1	27- احب ان اعرف اكثر عن ادب بلدان مختلفة حول العالم
6 5 4 3 2 1	28- اعتقد انه من المهم التعرف على ثقافات الغير
6 5 4 3 2 1	29- استمتع بقراءة الشعر من وطني
6 5 4 3 2 1	30- استمتع لسماع الشعر من وطني
6 5 4 3 2 1	31- اسر لمعرفة المزيد عن احوال اشخاص من بلدان ناطقة باللغة الانكليزية

الجزء الثالث

اجب عن التالي كما في الجزء الاول.

أوافق بشدة	أوافق	أوافق نوعا ما	لا اوافق نوعا ما	لا اوافق	لا اوافق أبدا
------------	-------	---------------	------------------	----------	---------------

6	5	4	3	2	1
6 5 4 3 2 1					32- اتذكر جيدا حصة الادب في المدرسة
6 5 4 3 2 1					33- احترم عادات و قيم الثقافات الاخرى
6 5 4 3 2 1					34- انا مهتم لطريقة استعمال اللغة الانكليزية في المحادثة
6 5 4 3 2 1					35- ممكن ان اتخيل اني اتحدث اللغة الانكليزية مع اجانب اخرين
6 5 4 3 2 1					36- سيكون هناك تاثير سلبي على حياتي ان لم اتعلم اللغة الانكليزية
6 5 4 3 2 1					37- كانت الكتابة جزء مهم في المدرسة
6 5 4 3 2 1					38- احب قراءة قصص قصيرة باللغة الانكليزية
6 5 4 3 2 1					39- لدي مؤلفون كتب مفضلون منذ ايام المدرسة
6 5 4 3 2 1					40- انا متأكد اني سأجيد القراءة و الكتابة بسهولة ان تابعت دراستي
6 5 4 3 2 1					41- من الصعب العمل سويا مع اشخاص لديهم عادات و قيم مختلفة
6 5 4 3 2 1					42- أستمتع جدا بتعلم اللغة الانكليزية
6 5 4 3 2 1					43- لقد قرأت أشعار بالانكليزية في الصف
6 5 4 3 2 1					44- احب قراءة المجلات و الصحف النكليزية
6 5 4 3 2 1					45- احب الكتابة بلغتي الام

الجزء الرابع

الرجاء اعطاء المعلومات التالية بكتابة الجواب في المكان المخصص.

الجنس: _____ الجنسية: _____

أنثى
مذكر

العمر: _____

السنة الدراسية: _____

التخصص العلمي: _____

في اي صف تدرس حاليا:

Pre-level 1

Level 1

Level 2

Level 3

Level 4

Level 5

ماهي اللغات التي تجيدها؟

لغتك الأم: _____

لغات أخرى: _____

منذ متى وأنت تقيم في الولايات المتحدة؟ (أو أي دولة أخرى ناطقة باللغة الانكليزية)

سنوات: _____ أشهر: _____

سؤال عام:
هل تحب أن تضيف أي آراء أخرى عن الأدب (القصص, الكتب, الشعر و الأغاني) في لغتك الأم؟

إذا رغبت المشاركة في هذا الاستفتاء, الرجاء كتابة عنوان بريدك الإلكتروني:
شكرا لمشاركتك!

APPENDIX C

Participant Survey Open-ended Responses

Participant Survey Open-ended Responses

Question: Is there anything you would like to say about literature (stories, books, poems, songs) of your native language?	
Country	Question Responses
Bangladesh	“I like modern songs and dance. Also, I like to wear my traditional dress.”
Brazil	—“I’d like to recommend Machado de Assis.” —“Songs, poems, books and stories in my own language are really interesting and exciting. The authors are really smart and sometimes, even though I am a native speaker [Portuguese], I can’t understand the meaning because of different cultures and ways to say the same thing using different words. Portuguese is a beautiful and exciting language to learn about.”
Burkina Faso	—“I think literature is very important for someone who wants to learn very well a new language. It doesn’t matter if this literature isn’t in English. With literature you can learn more about other cultures.” —“The literature of my native language is very rich and has a custom value in my country I appreciate the literature because it is related most of the time in the daily routines of people.” —“I think in books or stories, words and exclamations are not very different. But songs theme is so different.”
Burundi	—“Storie[s] from my country are wonderful, if you begin to read you can’t stop. Poems and songs are mor[e] difficult because you find there many metaphor, proverbs...” —“There should another way of making it more interesting because big books bore me.”
China	“Yes, America literature is a little bit difficult to understand. Especially poems.”
Korea	“The literature is very significant to learn any languages. Plus when someone is learning second language, it is very important for him to be choosed to adequate degree.”
Nepal	“Back home in Nepal, there are many writers and among those I like few. Our literature is more about psychological thought in which our native culture is also included.”
Saudi Arabia	—“I think stories, poem, and songs of my native language are more interesting than English, because they have almost one rhythm and variety of themes.” —“We have the most amazing poems in the world.” —“I like pomes very motch.” —“I just do not like to read stories about people when they did stories that is make me confuse about there stories.” —“I like to write short stories in my native language.” —“I like this story (Great Expectations) and basically I don’t like reading at all but this time I am very exciting to complete it.” —“I’m not that much reader but I listened to some Arabic songs, most of the songs that I listened is in English.”
Yemen	“I love to read a lot of books.”

APPENDIX D

Complete Student Interview Transcriptions

Complete Student Interview Transcriptions

R: Researcher

S: Student

Student 1, Ali, Saudi Arabian Student, male, age 25, Major: English Education.

01 R: Could you tell me about your experiences or memories of literature growing up in your country?

02 S: Yeah, literature in my country Arabic literature has a variety of style, like we have a lot of styles, like, we have, uh, poems; we have a lot of poets.

03 R: Poets?

04 S: Poets

05 R: Yes, you do have a lot of poets

06 S: Yes, we do have a lot and uh the novels in Arabic it's considered less interesting than the poetry

07 R: Listening? It's more oral?

08 S: Novels, novels

09 R: Oh, Novels?

10 S: Yes, novels for Arab people is less interesting

11 R: Ah, alright, okay, ohh.

12 S: You know.

13 S: Also what we find most interesting in most of the Arabic poems that's the rhythm or rhyme, I'm not sure about this word, I do not know which is correct—for example you know the first line in the poem what we call the first line and the second line and the third line what we call them?

14 R: What do you call them?

15 S: I don't know—in English what do you call them?

16 R: Oh, in English, it depends on the kind of poem it is

17 S: Yeah

18 R: There's, well, we would have couplets, whereas maybe in Arabic you would have ghazals...[spells out] g-h-a-z-a-l-s. it's a type of poem—

19 S: And we don't have line by line, we have one line with two sentences.

20 R: Hmm, uhmm.

21 S: And also in its sentences it line ends with the same letters.

22 R: Okay so it's the rhyme at the end.

23 S: Yeah, the rhyme at the end and the rhythm also it makes it more interesting the Arabic.

24 R: Ahh, rhyme and rhythm

25 S: You know, like the first line ends with the word 'infliction', second word 'injection' and 'description'

26 R: Sure

27 S: Stuff like that

28 R: So what about your memories in literature classes, what kind of classes did you have?

29 S: In English? In level five you mean?

30 R: No, no, no in your own country. Memories in your own classes, how was it taught, did you write your own poetry? Or did you write any of your own...?

31 S: No actually in general school I mean primary and middle, and high school we have to study Arabic literature, study first, yeah, classic but we in primary school we are taught simple literature, simple literature poems

32 R: Sure

33 S: Yeah, poems and after that in middle school we start taking more sophisticated and uh in high school we took something; barely we do not understand it, we do not understand this kind of poem because it's old poems more than fourteen, uh fourteen hundred years ago. Without explanation from the teacher we will understand nothing.

34 R: Sure, well that's just like in English as well.

35 S: Yeah.

36 R: The history changes

37 S: And they use it for some words

38 R: Right, right, yeah.

39 S: And also we, I think as in English, and Arabic as we have the same variety in what kind of poems like flirt or for sad I have learned all for also to write history in Arabic literature so a lot of poems talks about history to describe the battles. Yea that's it.

40 R: Okay um, so you studied mostly poetry, literature and novels it's not as big in Arabic. Okay. Uhum. So do you know any authors, any authors or stories you read

41 S: Stories?

42 R: Yeah, or—

43 S: In Arabic?

44 R: Yeah in Arabic authors or Arabic stories like you know for example the one big translation that we have in English is the um the 1001 Arabian Nights.

45 S: 1001?—

46 R: Yeah, 1001 Arabian Nights its about there was a woman Scheherazade

47 S: Scheherazade

48 R: And she had to—who tells stories all the time in order to save her life.

49 S: I don't know I'm not familiar with these types of stories but I can't remember uh a famous names for a story like stuff like that.

50 R: Okay

- 51 S: We know, I know many stories in Arabic but I do not know who is the author or somebody just make it up or...just make it up or else...
- 52 R: Sure, well sometimes we have myths, we have myths that didn't necessarily happen but they have truths and morals to them. Right?
- 53 S: Yes
- 54 R: So what are some of those do you know what some of those are? Off the top of your head.
- 55 S: No, most of the stories that uh I have heard from my great grandma yeah
- 56 R: So some things were passed down orally through your family.
- 57 S: Yeah.
- 58 R: That's wonderful!
- 59 S: Everyone can tell you this story but they do no know who created this story, yeah.
- 60 R: Okay, Can you give me an example of a kind of a story?
- 61 S: Yes, for example a kind of story that starts in childhood between uh a girl and boy and the love get grow with their, with them, and in the end they decided to get married but someone has a problem with them or their parents prevent tell him or her to get married. This kind from love stories. From love stories and some stories for the fighting between two nations or two tribes because you know tribes has a big meaning in Arabic culture.
- 62 R: Hmm, exactly, I think so yes.
- 63 S: Also I forget to tell about something, we use poems to learn, in especially in grammar, Arabic as grammar, Arabic as past grammar, Arabic grammar we use poems uhh to give us instruction how to use this way if this word can after follows what should we do but also in the rhythm and rhyme, yeah.
- 64 R: Okay yeah. So have you come across any English stories or poems? Have you ever been exposed to much of that?
- 65 S: No, to be honest no, but I heard about Shakespeare and uh he's the second famous in England I forget his name
- 67 R: Oh Milton
- 68 S: No
- 69 R: Chaucer
- 70 S: Charles Dickens
- 71 R: Oh Charles Dickens, yes, there's a level class—in another class they are reading Great Expectations
- 78 S: Yes we talk we study a little bit about him in my high school.
- 79 R: Oh cool
- 80 S: Yeah. Uh the scholars of literature in old English.
- 81 R: And do you think now that you know English, you're speaking well, do you think like literature reading stories that you're doing in level five does that help in your learning the language?
- 82 S: Learning?

- 83 R: Yes.
- 84 S: Yeah yeah it helps—you mean poem or literature?
- 85 R: Well poems—well I'm using literature in a broad sense and it includes many genres, so...
- 86 S: It helps a lot specifically when we read the story we found it interesting like nowadays I study the Adventures of Sherlock Holmes. When I...
- 87 R: Adventures of?
- 88 S: Adventures of Sherlock Holmes.
- 89 R: Oh Sherlock Holmes.
- 90 S: And I when I started reading the first chapter I found this kind of old style English its never going to be help my English.
- 91 R: No.
- 92 S: Yeah
- 93 R: It's even hard for some American students to read those kinds of things, because language changes it's alive so it's nice to have more contemporary writing.
- 94 S: Yeah
- 95 S: Actually, when I moved to the second chapter and I read it seriously I confessed myself 'I have to read everything and I have to understand everything'—I found it very interesting.
- 96 R: Ahh
- 97 S: Yeah it gives me idea and makes me live in the old English style. I find myself uh I am in living in England 200 years ago.
- 98 R: It takes you to that place.
- 99 S: Yeah
- 100 R: It takes you to that place. It transports you, oh yes, um
- 101 S: Yeah.
- 102 R: So do you like to do certain kinds of writing? What kind of writing do you like to do?
- 103 S: Mostly essays
- 104 R: Essays?
- 105 S: Yeah, for my classes, but I would love to learn how I can write stories with the same in the same rhyme. I mean these sentences end with the same association, like uh, I told you before.
- 106 R: Like a writing a poem and making a rhyme?
- 107 S: Yes
- 108 R: Meters and all that?
- 109 S: Yes
- 110 R: Okay what do you think about when you listen to poems? Do you think about what does it mean to you or ?
- 112 S: Yeah it reminds me with Arabic poems when I learned it from the my teachers or when I read it uh literature books, it makes me like I'm watching a

movie I can describe everything in the poems especially if it moves perfectly from the beginning to the end with...order or cyclical sequences from and to the end.

113 R: I want to go back to, let me see, the classrooms, what were your literature classrooms interactions like, in a literature class, did you, was it just the teacher talking all the time or were able to talk amongst yourselves about...

114 S: We have circular literature—we have this one teacher give us homework to read at home and we came to the next class with combination questions and with discussion questions and the new vocabulary so we can discuss it together into groups.

115 R: Okay, cool

116 R: So now most of it was historical poetry

117 S: Yeah.

118 R: Do you read any contemporary poets?

119 S: No.

120 R: Okay, because there are, there are some of lot of modern contemporary Arab poets. I went Wikipedia to see what poets are in your nation—there's a lot of them.

121 S: Yes a lot of them, what I like, I don't know what they call 'flirt poetry'

122 R: Flirt?

123 S: Yeah

124 R: Flirt [spells out] f-l-i-r-t.

125 S: Yeah in English what they call this type of literature, I mean this type of poems, in that uh when uh the when the boys write about his love and describe the woman.

126 R: Oh, romantic poetry maybe.

127 S: You can say that.

128 R: Flirt poetry that's interesting, because you flirt with the ladies.

129 S: Yeah it is the exact word we use in Arabic, there is a kind of poem that's called 'flirt'.

130 R: Interesting, wow.

131 S: And also some, some of them uh, it's the education ministry the curriculum writer or who create the curricula for the students this kind of poem its not appropriate to teach it for classes.

132 R: Oh I see, I see, huh. Do you like music?

133 S: Yeah, I like music.

134 R: How about English music, American music.

135 S: I like hip-hop.

136 R: Ahh.

137 S: Yeah.

138 R: So you know do you ever listen to words of hip-hop? Is it hard for you to decipher some of that?

- 140 S: Uh, no it's not hard, I find it is interesting because I follow the rhyme.
- 141 R: Right there is a lot of rhyme in hip-hop and did you know there is a place, it's a website called AtoZlyrics.com like the alphabet A to Z and you can call up any band from the Rolling Stones, Beatles to any modern LL Cool J or whoever and you can type in that and you can get lyrics to all the songs. So actually that is a form of poetry isn't?
- 142 S: Yes.
- 143 R: So you like hip-hop the rhyme—it's got great rhyming in it.
- 144 S: Yes and in Arabic I like the classic ones
- 145 R: Now you have contemporary—do you have hip-hop in Saudi Arabia?
- 146 S: Yeah, we have it—oh but we mix it with Arabic and English
- 147 R: Cool. Okay, well I think that's all I have to question right now. Is there anything else you would like to add?
- 148 S: I am mostly interested in rhyme. And Arabic poems use lots of rhyme.
- 149 R: I have uh, I have some collections of Arabic poetry, most, well one is, his name is Mahmoud Darwish
- 150 S: [correcting my pronunciation] Mahmoud Darwish.
- 151 R: Mahmoud Darwish—he was Palestinian.
- 152 S: Palestinian.
- 153 R: Yeah, and I like his poems are really more political, yeah, but he writes passionately about his homeland.
- 154 S: Yeah.
- 155 R: They're beautiful poems.
- 156 S: Yeah, I have one of my, I have one of my assistant professor in my school in my uh, I have my bachelor degree in English Education and one of my professor, assistant professor, he, uh, he writes a lot of poems if you need to take a look for this book, I can give it to you or I can give you my assistant professor his email—he's very helpful.
- 159 R: Oh, okay, I'll keep that in mind. Uh, let's see, oh another poet that I have because I've been to Morocco that's as far as I've been in the Arab world well there's Istanbul, but that's not really Arabic, but Morocco, I discovered a poet his name is Abdulatif Laabii and it's in French because of the French there and he talks a lot about the political things, and he is still living...
- 160 S: Yeah.
- 161 R: But there is a lot of poetry around.
- 162 S: Yeah.
- 163 R: Have you ever though about writing a poem? Do you keep a journal?
- 164 S: No, but I started to write a journal when I was 9—I wrote 5 or 6 lines about the history of how Saudi Arabia gets union, yeah, but in Arabic language.
- 165 R: Because Saudi Arabia at one time was tribal and then it became unified—when did that take place? Not a long time ago.
- 166 S: Uhh, 120 years ago.

- 167 R: Yeah. Okay, you have given me a lot of information.
 168 S: If you need more you just email me.
 169 R: Alright [student's name].
 170 S: Okay.
 171 R: Thank you so much for your time.

Student 2, Maya, Nepali Student, female, Major: Computer Science.

- 01 R: Hi [student name] thank-you for coming.
 02 S: Give me two minutes and I'll be right back.
 03 R: I'm interested in people's use of literature in their own country and seeing how that might work in English as well, so could you tell me about your experiences or memories of a literature class in Nepal? You are from Nepal?
 04 S: Yeah, I'm from different background so there might not be such experience about the class but I know about literature, about my country.
 05 R: Good, yeah, okay.
 06 S: Literature about my country the people personally write about their own things making them in their character, themselves in the character and I...
 07 R: So it's personal.
 08 S: Yeah, it's personal, basically, and um few people write about other biography and as far as I remember the most famous literature in our country are mostly all from personal experience putting them in the character, lives in the character of the story and uh, making novels...
 09 R: So novels are about themselves—uh, in a fictitious way?
 10 S: The literature would be more about the fiction.
 11 R: The fiction? Okay, fiction, I get it, fiction. So how did you learn these things though—when you grew up, how did you know about literature?
 12 S: Literature?
 13 R: Yeah, stories, and poems, stories, and novels.
 14 S: From our childhood there would be one book of our own language particularly like we use grammar. There used to be one book of grammar and in my childhood as far as I remember there would be some stories that as I recall today they are mostly of literature but that was based on the child psychology and as far as um, in, um the upper grade the story uh, the story was more dense.
 15 R: Yes okay it was more dense—meaning it was more difficult.
 16 S: Yes, difficult.
 17 R: Yes, even more sophisticated—
 18 S: Yes, it was, even though it was of our language, to get in through the meaning, it was quite difficult for us because uh, the parts of the writers and ours would be different and they just think by their mind imaginary

existence—that was different. And in our story in high school, I remember that we read literature, there was one subject and we used to read literature basically in our language.

- 19 R: Uhmm, now your language would it be like a Sanskrit?
- 20 S: Yeah.
- 21 R: Is it similar to Sanskrit?
- 22 S: Yeah. I have to say a modified version of Sanskrit.
- 23 R: So it would be Nepali.
- 24 S: But Hindi and Nepali are the same—they are the origin of Sanskrit...
- 25 R: That's right.
- 26 S: So the written is the same thing, and grammar is almost ninety-nine percent the same.
- 27 R: Oh.
- 28 S: Indian grammar and Nepalese grammar is ninety-nine percent same.
- 29 And um, in literature I am from different field but I know my sister was and did her masters in major English but her literature was from our culture and our country associated in major English and her literature was mainly focused on the someone's experience about something and there ? and the poems also used to be ? describing nature, uh someone describing someone's psychology.
- 30 R: Uh, okay, so tell me the poems you're saying describe...
- 31 S: Describing nature
- 32 R: Description of nature and psychology, yeah, wow, things that would go on their mind
- 33 S: Yeah,
- 34 R: Okay
- 35 S: But that are not real, that are unreal.
- 36 R: Sure, dreamlike, maybe dreamlike, do you think?
- 37 S: Yeah, maybe dreamlike, or they are creating a new world in mind.
- 38 R: Uhuh.
- 39 S: Someone is there to fulfill that story are the same and we are forced to think that oh this was the real and they were presenting in the real way but that are not real.
- 40 R: Okay.
- 41 S: Hypothetically real.
- 42 R: So it's written in a real way but it is not real.
- 43 S: Yeah.
- 44 R: Yeah.
- 45 S: Because environment its part of the atmosphere and the, the surrounding geography, they talk around seems like we are there but the story would be different.
- 46 R: Okay, do you have a, do you know, could you give an example of that or could you, or the name of the story, or?

- 47 S: Yeah, there was one, uhm, that maybe not in your world, it's like umm, false glass, or I mean false spectacles, it was, I'm translating in English, false spectacles and that was the story between a king and the servant. And the story was like the servant, the king came in the servant area and the servant's glass was broken so he couldn't recognize there was a king and he was unable to greet him, and the king just pass away [meaning not death but passing through the area] and uh, and he, the servant realized that was the king, his king, and he could not greet him and the different types of feeling that comes from the mind of the servant that uh, but he was like he was his guard and he could not greet him; what he may think like I am the servant, his being not greeting, not disobeying, not being dishonest like that type of feeling and at last when he talked to the king by just asking him to forgive him, at last the king did not see him because the king was in the house and he was down...At last the king did not saw him for but the different types of things it was a maybe small book of forty pages but the things were so long, the story was so long.
- 48 R: Ahh. And this is one you read in school? the story or?
- 49 S: This is the famous story of one of our politicians who has, it got prizes, for best book of the year.
- 50 R: Wait what kind of prize?
- 51 S: Best literature of the year.
- 52 R: Okay. When was this?
- 53 S: It was maybe two decades ago.
- 54 R: Oh, okay. And do you know the name of the author?
- 55 S: B. P. Koirala
- 56 R: B. ?
- 57 S: B dot P dot Koirala K-o-i-r-a-l-a.
- 58 R: Interesting, I'll look that up.
- 59 S: You can look this up, I can say the spelling Dossi—the novel D-o-s-s-i and it's spell C-h-a-s-m-a.
- 60 R: C- 8?
- 61 S: C as in cat, H as in hat.
- 62 R: C-8-a-s
- 63 S: C-h [emphasizing h] sorry, sorry—
- 64 R: Heh, heh, here I'll let you write this
- 65 S: [writing it out] C-h-a...
- 66 R: Oh, ache [H]! Ahh.
- 67 S: This book name of the is [writes it out] B. P. Koirala
- 68 R: B. P. Koirala, oh, okay.
- 69 S: I remember you can write, you can search B. P. Koirala he is the one of the famous and um, the greatest like we call Shakespeare here for the Nepalese he is Shakespeare of our nation.
- 70 R: Oh wonderful.

- 71 S: And uh the kind of poems, the kind of story, and the kind of novel he presented they are still translated into different, I think thirty different languages.
- 72 R: Hmm.
- 73 S: The one that was ? that is in thirty different languages and studying in the U.S. I remember in one of the universities they teach that literature.
- 74 R: Wow, you're just a plethora of information. Uhm, so getting back I want to try to understand this now how did you learn about some of these stories, you seem like, I think you really love literature and poems.
- 75 S: Yeah.
- 76 R: And, and so how did you come across this, was it through school or through friends or was it through family? How did you learn, who exposed you to these authors?
- 77 S: When I was my family was quite religious and my father is a composer too, he composed religious poems you have to say one that reflects god but in his own way...
- 78 R: Sure.
- 79 S: So from my childhood he used to teach me to sing that poem.
- 80 R: So your father was a big influence.
- 81 S: Yeah, and I like the rhyme of those poems.
- 82 R: Huh
- 83 S: And when I grew up, and I begin to understand the words and because it was just the rhyme to influence me.
- 84 R: Yes, and then later on as you grew you became to understand what that meant.
- 85 S: And uh I wrote a few poems too.
- 86 R: Oh you do?
- 87 S: Yes.
- 88 R: Do you still write today?
- 89 S: It was a time I had but after my high school in between my undergrad program that with my friends, I remember that with three or four we were in a group and we, we used to write, that was type of competition just to say I used to write, she used to write, he used to write. And we used to say those things and we published a small book I do have that book still with me.
- 90 R: Ahh.
- 91 S: But nowadays, I don't know what I.
- 92 R: So nowadays you don't write at all? You don't write poems.
- 93 S: Yeah, I don't, but that was...maybe that was competition with friends surrounding me a circle that was a time of poetry, a poetry environment, and I used to write poems.
- 94 R: Hmmm.

- 95 S: And before I came here I, er after I read I was focused on my career and that after my undergrad I, it was, I took a gap of two years before coming here and I used to read different books of, uh, and that maybe a love story book or maybe of some of the biography. I read biography of Osama bin Laden, Obama, and of Hitler.
- 96 R: Wow, okay. Biographies. Hitler. Osama bin Laden?
- 97 S: Yeah. And also I am quite interested in the history, though I know my history everything about my country from the past, maybe a hundred years ago I have read all the books because my father has just a gallery of books.
- 98 R: So he had a big collection at home?
- 99 S: Yes, but not much nowadays he is quite busy and he doesn't collect, but I think that collection and all his interest will be of the age, I think. It was his age when he collected, but nowadays he does not do that much and it was at my age when I wrote the poems now I don't do, maybe because I don't choose to do literature as my profession that might be the reason.
- 100R: Sure, yes, right. Okay. So have you been exposed to English poems?
- 101S: Yeah. From my childhood we used to read English book because one or two subjects would be in English. But um, English I used to understand but not at once, I had to read twice or thrice for the English poems so I was not quite as interested in the English poems but English literature like this biography of Hitler, Obama, Osama bin Laden these all were in English and I read all those.
- 102R: So you gravitate or you come more close to or you prefer a biography as opposed to poems to read.
- 103S: Because poems has to rhythm and the rhyme just in the word the same thing and um difficult words and we don't know the meaning even then we cannot realize and what ideas in that poem at once.
- 104R: Hmmm, yeah, so, well poems can be many, many, many things I think. Some of them can be very hard and some of them can be fun. So sometimes you know like I uh. Do you like music?
- 105S: Yeah.
- 106R: Do you like American or English music?
- 107S: American music I listen.
- 108R: Contemporary? What kind of music do you listen to?
- 109S: Pop. Pop.
- 110R: Pop music?
- 111S: Yeah.
- 112R: What do you like about it?
- 113S: I like, I have to say I like waltzes but if I look at the back maybe five or six years ago I used to like soft song.
- 114R: Oh, yeah, softer songs.
- 115S: Yeah. But nowadays I like the music of rock dit-dit-dit—Miley Cyrus
- 116R: Miley Cyrus?

- 117S: Yeah and Lady Gaga.
- 118R: Oh Lady Gaga?
- 119S: Yes I like this.
- 120R: Do you listen to the lyrics?
- 121S: Yeah now for my English as well I will listen to the lyrics and this I am feeling quite comfortable listening to English music because previously I used to listen to soft so that I can understand the lyrics and with the music I—it was quite hard for me to understand but nowadays I can catch them.
- 122R: Uhmm. I was telling [student name] he likes music too, he likes hip-hop, I told him about a website called AtoZlyrics.com and you can type in the band name or the person singing or whatever and it will have all their songs; and then you can click on the song and it would have all the lyrics to the song.
- 123S: ...and we used to do a project I remember, I am from the ? field about the song's lyrics and uh there will be a song but its lyrics would be from a different website and we just copy and we just flow the words according to the rhythm if we—there is a program software and if we do that, if we describe the words and that it will just flow into the rhythm it will flow the word but if someone slows down it will stop and we can only listen to the lyrics—that was a project that I remember.
- 124R: Oh, is this a program on the computer?
- 125S: Yeah, a computer program.
- 126R: Interesting. So let me see, you used to write but you don't write as you used to... oh in your country what are some authors that are revered, you mentioned one?
- 127S: Yeah, but if you, Laxmi Prasad...
- 128R: Laxmi, yes I have heard of that name.
- 129S: Yeah, Laxmi his book is taught in one of the universities in the U.S.
- 130R: Hmmm.
- 131S: Laxmi Prasad, he is the greatest poet and B.P. Koirala is famous because he is the famous politician this his literature is still famous today and...
- 132R: He lives where today?
- 133S: He died.
- 134R: Oh, he died.
- 135S: Laxmi Prasad also died, and Parijat she was a disabled lady and her poems and that is also translated in different languages. Nepalese writer they think a lot and because of the nature, because of the mountain area and hilly area and the tropical areas because of that also the mind is different and their novels are still famous everywhere.
- 136R: The mind is different. Yes, I've seen a lot of photos of Nepal, it's a beautiful country, there's a restaurant it's called Everest on Grand it's in St. Paul where I live. And they're from Nepal; and it's a wonderful restaurant and they have pictures of the mountains and the villagers.

- 137S: You can write Parijat—she was the disabled lady.
- 138R: Parijat?
- 139S: P-a-r-i-j-a-t
- 140R: Yeah, Parijat. I'll look that up too.
- 141S: There are many different poets, writers but uh, these I always remember they maybe remember or more I think after a hundred years too these writers because of their novels and their poems. That Laxmi Prasad from one to maybe even a masters to Ph.D in our country his novels his poems are based on every class will be one novel maybe two or three.
- 142R: In every village?
- 143S: No in every class.
- 144R: In every class, oh.
- 145S: In the education system and they use Prasad and Parijat literature a lot.
- 146R: Okay.
- 147S: And one of our queen was also famous for writing songs.
- 148R: Oh, yeah. Who wrote songs?
- 149S: Queen. It was Aishwarya
- 150R: Aishwarya, is that with an A?
- 151S: A-i-s-h-w-a-r-y-a. She died but her, her compositions is still alive. She used to write a lot of songs. And if I remember now I'm just recalling because her husband father was King Mahendra—he has a great history and...
- 152R: She was a queen?
- 153S: She was a queen. She was the former queen. I was alive in her period but King Mahendra I was not alive but his composition and from King Mahendra when we knew that the King cannot write. We just think king are king, they are just to rule, but from King Mahendra king can also think like individual people, the king also have that touch.
- 154R: What kind of a touch does he have with the people?
- 155S: He used to change his face, I mean he used to put beard and he used to put ordinary dress and he used to go in the public.
- 156R: Oh, I see, under disguise. Disguise himself as a regular person.
- 157S: Yeah and he used to go ask and and be a guest in someone's house and eat the same rice or same food that other eat and he used to write about them.
- 158R: Oh, ahh.
- 159S: So we knew that...
- 160R: I love this, he's a wonderful man.
- 161S: Yeah.
- 162R: Very wonderful.
- 163S: Because as we know powerful people just remain in their palace, just remain in their own status but this king was different. And he used to in our Nepal, if you have seen the pictures, eighty per cent of the people have no transportation we have to walk, in the hills, cross the rivers...

- 164R: It's hard to get around.
- 165S: Cross the rivers just by walking and big rivers.
- 166R: Yes, because the mountains and the snow melt.
- 167S: And big rivers just by walking or by the wooden boat and the king suffered all those ways to go into people's houses.
- 168R: What was the name of this king again?
- 169S: King M-a-h-e-n-d-r-e
- 170R: Well this is very interesting, well I can tell you really are engulfed in literature and poems; a lot of it comes from your father who influenced you and...
- 171S: And I don't know, yeah, because my father, we were three siblings, and he used to, when we used to have dinner and when we used to have free time we used to just sit around and talk gossip. Our gossip would be 'Oh these things—oh this happened here, or this thing would happen, this song was composed by a king or Queen Aishwarya.' This poem—what does this poem mean? If I asked my father then my father was so pleased, that he'll, if I ask him then he used to explain from history something that he'll, 'oh this was from that and that was from that.' That way I knew, I think.
- 172R: Wow, this is really incredible information. I really appreciate you sharing all this with me—it's very special.
- 173S: I was recollecting those moments.
- 174R: Yeah, that's very special. Sit around the table with the family and talk about that—that's wonderful. Well thank-you for this—uh do you like English literature?
- 175S: Yeah, I like English literature too, but I now we are in our literature class we are reading Sherlock Holmes.
- 176R: Sherlock Holmes?
- 177S: Yeah. And the story is interesting, the theme is interesting but the words are of old English and too tough and we have to put the dictionary every time near for us to understand the words so that is sometimes annoying because we have to imagine something and we have to again look after this dictionary.
- 178R: Oh I see, but do you think that helps you learn vocabulary?
- 179S: Yeah.
- 180R: Do you think that is a good possibility?
- 181S: That might be a good possibility but uh somehow it's old English so that type or words I cannot use in my daily life, but when I read the biography of Obama and Osama bin Laden the words are good because there were some different words but I can I knew the meaning and realize I can use them in daily life.
- 182R: Yes, okay, yes. Good point. That's really a good insight. All right that about wraps it up for me. What class do you have next?
- 183S: Now we have...literature class.

184R: Oh, literature—Sherlock Holmes! Well good luck and thank-you so much for this opportunity to talk with you.

Student 3, Ming, Chinese Student, male, age 23, Major: Education.

- 01 R: Can you tell me about some of your experiences or memories of a literary class that you had when you were growing up? When did you begin to learn about stories, poetry,...
- 02 S: Since when we were kids, we started learning poetry and uh stories and uh many books written by famous person of course using Chinese.
- 03 R: Of course, yes.
- 04 S: Also when I reading American literature I have a little bit difficult because some words I never seen before because we, in China, we started learning English since we were about nine years old. Yeah, so, but we just learn some regular normal vocabularies that include some literature vocabularies, yeah, so in my memory we read many books and uh we started learning in the Chinese learning, we have three mostly modern lessons—Chinese, math, and English.
- 05 R: So those are the three main classes you take?
- 06 S: When we grew up to until uh eighteen when we enter university in China.
- 07 R: So you have Chinese, English, and math up until you are eighteen.
- 08 S: Because we take very serious examinations, is for national examinations and if you get better grades you can enter better universities. Three mostly important lessons. Mainly three main lessons yeah. Chinese, math, and English.
- 09 R: Sure, of course. You talked about famous authors so when did you start reading poetry or listening to poetry or literature like a story?
- 10 S: About ten years old.
- 11 R: Ten years old—do you know some of the names of some of those authors?
- 12 S: Uh, Victor Hugo.
- 13 R: Wow, Victor Hugo—he's a French author. He wrote *Les Miserables*.
- 14 S: Yeah, uh-huh, *Miserable Worlds*.
- 15 R: Yes, huh...
- 16 S: It's a great book. But uh it's not we must uh learn—it is my habit to uh read books. My teacher did not ask me to read book. I like it. I love to read books. And also the uh *Romain Roland*.
- 17 R: The what?
- 18 S: *Romain Roland*. Uh he's also French and uh he wrote a book called uh, *Johan Christophe*—it's also...[he's referring to *Jean-Christophe* a ten volume work which won the Nobel Prize for Literature].
- 19 R: *Christophe*, I don't know that one.
- 20 S: It is also a famous book.

- 21 R: Could you spell that name?
- 22 S: We use dictionary, we read it by the Chinese version
- 23 R: Sure.
- 24 S: And also the Russian author called...Osh...?
- 25 R: Tolstoy?
- 26 S: Uh the Chinese version is How to uh Make with Iron [looking up precise wording on his smart phone]... do you know that book? [shows titles in English].
- 27 R: How the Steel was Made or How the Steel was Tempered or How to make Steel...
- 28 S: You know that's by Russian author.
- 29 R: Wow, How the Steel was Tempered, by Ostrovsky.
- 30 S: Yeah, here...[shows the name Romain Rolland] he's also French.
- 31 R: Oh, Romain Rolland. Hmm. So what about Chinese authors like Tu Fu, and Li Pai, and Meng Hao-Jan?
- 32 S: And Wei Ying-Wu?
- 33 R: Yes! These are the classic Chinese poets.
- 34 S: I read many of it.
- 35 R: Yeah, so does everyone in China in school learn about and read these poets?
- 36 S: Yeah, must learn. Must learn. We must learn. We should read it by uh not look at book. You should keep it your memory. We must know it.
- 37 R: Oh, you memorize
- 38 S: Yeah I also can, can, yeah.
- 39 R: Okay so when you go to school you're learning Chinese, you're learning math and you're learning English so when you read Victor Hugo it's in Chinese not reading in English then.
- 40 S: Yeah.
- 41 R: Okay, I just want to be clear okay, so back to some Chinese authors, some contemporary authors—so you read these guys: Tu Fu, Li Pai, Meng Hao-Jan these were ancient writings from the T'ang Dynasty—so do you read contemporary writers in school?
- 42 S: Do you mean...?
- 43 R: So do you read modern writers in school?
- 44 S: Yes I read many literatures by the current but the uh poetry today is not very classical...
- 45 R: Yeah, right.
- 46 S: Their topic about poetry is mainly about love and nothing more important these things—the love is most important.
- 47 R: What is more important—the love? In a modern poem?
- 48 S: Yeah, modern poem.
- 49 R: In modern day poems...

- 50 S: Yeah even more important for maybe uh teenagers—they don't focus on any other things just want to keep some relationship. Yeah, but in ancient China the author like Li Pai, they don't just focus on the love, they focus on the country, and the human
- 51 R: Like the nature, like the mountains and the rivers, and those are symbols, yeah...
- 52 S: Yeah, so things are different and uh so I like or prefer the ancient authors like Li Pai. But nowadays the literature is uh, different types than the olden days. Now literature is being more practical, more useful for our daily but life the ancient literature is more about your uh, your uh, can I say encouraging you to do something the ancient literature but nowadays many magazines how to become a ---- or how to become a cooker such as something.
- 53 R: Oh sure, hmm...so it's more practical it has nothing to do with uh, it's not focused on emotion and things from the heart, it is more for up here [points to the head] kind of practical than here [points to the heart].
- 54 S: Yeah, the ancient literature I'm refreshed but uh nowadays I read magazines oh that's useful but nothing else, yeah, but I think is now very popular in China. It also have some good literature but I prefer to read the ancient so I can't give you more information about the modern literature.
- 55 R: [clarifying] You can or you can't?
- 56 S: I can't. Because I prefer ancient.
- 57 R: No, that's fine I just want to know where you're coming from.
- 58 S: You know the book The Legend of Three Kingdoms?
- 59 R: The Legend of Three Kingdoms? No.
- 60 S: Do you know a guy named Cao-Cao? [Cao-cao is Emperor of Wei].
- 61 R: Cao-cao?
- 62 S: C-A-O-C-A-O
- 63 R: Like this? [shows spelling on paper].
- 64 S: He's ancient emperor.
- 65 R: Now he's an ancient author?
- 66 S: He's a character in the book the Legend of Three Kingdoms.
- 67 R: Oh, okay, he's a character.
- 68 S: He's a character but he's a real man. He exists in Chinese history.
- 69 R: A real man.
- 70 S: He also uh writes poetries—he's emperor but he also writes poetries.
- 71 R: When was this book written?
- 72 S: It's about one thousand, uh one thousand years ago.
- 73 R: One thousand years ago.
- 74 S: Yeah, one thousand years ago, but uh the stories happened at two hundred year—the stories have uh two hundred years.

- 75 R: Okay so you studied ancient poets and you studied Victor Hugo “Les Miserables”—“The Miserable Worlds,” and other western writers—did you read any American stories or authors?
- 76 S: Hmm. Let me think...uh we read a book describe about Steven Jobs.
- 77 R: Oh, Steven Jobs, a biography of Steven Jobs—the guy who created Apple?
- 78 S: Yeah, but we had to read the book to describe his whole life.
- 79 R: Hmm. Did you like that book?
- 80 S: Yes, it encourages us to uh work hard, but not encourage us to take marijuana.
- 81 R: Oh, ha-ha-ha. Is that what comes out in that book—that he smokes marijuana?
- 82 S: Yes, smokes marijuana. It’s illegal in China.
- 83 R: Yes, it’s ill—well they’re trying to make legal in this country now, it is slowly working its way...
- 84 S: It’s progressing here.
- 85 R: Yeah.
- 86 R: So describe some of these classrooms. Go back in time and describe some of these classrooms in China. Did you work in groups or was the teacher always lecturing?
- 87 S: A class about forty students
- 88 R: Forty students.
- 89 S: It’s a huge class and we all sit there and listen to teacher. And uh when teacher write questions on blackboard and we discuss it but not as a group as, uh, in same position.
- 90 R: Oh the whole class.
- 91 S: Yes but we sometime—we just thinking by ourself. We have opinions we can raise our hands and ask us to uh answer and the teacher will make a final conclusion about the true answer, some can’t answer right so at the end of the class teacher will make a conclusion about the story, and meaning but uh he will make some homework ---yea and maybe let us search something on the internet to find some evidence to improve our opinion and uh bring that to tomorrow, to classroom tomorrow and continue to discuss it. Maybe uh one topic lasting, uh, three classes, yeah,...
- 92 R: Yeah, sure it can take more than one class to cover a topic.
- 93 S: America makes us like, uh, group, but in China it’s just us sit there and listen to the teacher, I think the uh, American education system is uh more advanced
- 94 R: Well that’s interesting but, we have problems too, but do you like working in groups having assignments and working with classmates and finding out...
- 95 S: Yes, I think groups let everyone share their opinion, but in huge class many people just play their cell phone and don’t pay attention to class because the class is so huge the teacher can’t focus on everyone, he can focus on one, two,

three or back he can't focus on the back because their so many children, so many students. Yeah, I think so the Chinese population is so large the students don't have choice.

96 R: So you really like literature; you like to read.

97 S: Yeah.

98 R: The English though, now you are learning English how do you like reading...

99 S: American literature?

100R: Yeah, you're reading something about in literature class...?

101S: We reading Maniac Magee it's about black children it uh describing white children living in a black town, black people town uh actually when I first read this book I was a little bit upset because I can't understand some words of the book—some words I never seen it before. At that time I was really upset because I think I have been learning English for about thirteen years, but now I still can't understand the meaning and, uh, as I know the American book is for the children maybe for the primary school for kids, well the book is a written just for the kids—uh, so, I think I'm not good as a kid yes really upset but, uh, but my teacher teaching me structure is she also come from China, she said don't worry about it she same situation as me. She says the American most difficult things is to learn the literature, the most difficult class. It is not my English problem it's just uh, maybe their traditional style, yeah, their written style, maybe can't get use to it. I think maybe uh, three months ago if you can get used to reading it, get used to this style, yeah.

102R: There are many styles of writing and also there are 900,000 English words—that's a lot of words so even I, I am always learning some new words; old archaic words so I have to refer to the dictionary and see what that word is, so you shouldn't feel bad.

103S: Yeah, some words I can't even find in the dictionary, the dictionary also can't choose the meaning of the words! I'm really shocked!

104R: [laughing] Ha-ha-ha, hee-hee, yeah, there's a lot, there's a lot. But aside from that are you learning to like the story, or are you getting to...

105S: Yeah, I think is good for me to improve my English skills, yeah and uh, maybe I can carry the dictionary all the time. Yeah, by that time I can open the book, read some chapters, yeah and find some vocabularies I don't understand, I can use a dictionary. I think yeah about three months ago now I am getting used to it—to the style of the literature, yeah.

106R: So have you ever read any American poems?

107S: Yeah, but the poem is more difficult.

108R: Is it?

109S: Because the poem I understand their meaning, but I can't understand what the author want to talk about, what to show.

110R: Oh.

- 111S: Yeah, maybe they want to show hope—hopeless or show some thinking about the social, maybe it has some, uh, maybe it is dark. There is some words in the poetry—dark, in my regular thinking is it is like night, like after dawn it is getting dark—the meaning of the poetry is death.
- 112R: Hmmm, what is the poem, the author? Do you remember the poet, his name or her name?
- 113S: Uhhh, we just read it at the literature lessons; I can't...
- 114R: Literature lesson here in the United States...?
- 115S: The teacher give us some paper, uh some written poetries, some poems, and they say something dark, sad, yeah, and I saw these words—the weather is getting black—but the truth is the author want to mean death. The dark is death.
- 116R: Hmm—hmm.
- 117S: So I needed some explanation, the teacher explained it to us. So we read it—I think we need some times.
- 118R: Well, have you ever written any poetry, either in Chinese or in English?
- 119S: Uh, written by Chinese or English?
- 120R: No, have you written Chinese poems?
- 121S: No, I just write some essay or some articles.
- 122R: Okay, and then in English, same thing, you've only written...?
- 123S: Just essays and articles—not include poetry.
- 124R: So you never wrote any poetry in Chinese—Mandarin.
- 125S: No I never wrote poetry because we don't have the assignment.
- 126R: Oh, okay, I see.
- 127S: We just need to write some essay. Or some articles.
- 128R: Right, more, hmmm...
- 129S: Because teacher thinks poetry is very easy to write and actually it's not...
- 130R: Right, yeah.
- 131S: But, uh, actually it's not—because it just require a feel words, because you can make uh written about one hundred words—you are finished now—the assignment. But when you write an essay you use maybe 2,000 words. Yeah, 2,000 words and 100 words. So the teacher thinks that write essay or article is uh more difficult than write poetry. But uh to write really good poetry is very difficult but the teacher don't ask us to do that and we don't have the examinations to take our skills—because the examination doesn't take in our skills of writing poetry.
- 132R: Hmmm—if there was a class assignment that helped you to express yourself in a poetic form in English, would you be interested in something like that?
- 133S: Yeeeahh!!, but I think it require a very good English skills.
- 134R: Ehhhh, you'd be surprised, maybe not.

- 135S: Maybe not!? But we don't know some, if we want to, uh, show something maybe it's hard for us to written it by English. We just write it the real meaning, the use of, uh, metaphor?
- 136R: Metaphor.
- 137S: Yeah, metaphor yeah.
- 138R: Like you were saying that the dark is...
- 139S: Dark is death
- 140R: Represents death.
- 141S: Yeah, represents death.
- 142R: Hmm.
- 143S: Yeah, but I think it is just new times. Uhh, because we uh, most of our international students come from China as learn English for work and so I think we have basics, we have the ability to learn some things quickly especially English. If uh these kind of class I think we are very interested in it, in this kind to improve English skills and to recognize uh, American literature better.
- 144R: Hmmm, fascinating.
- 145S: Yeah.
- 146R: Okay.
- 147S: We come here for study, not for fun.
- 148R: Ohh, you should have fun too!
- 149S: Uhhh, yeah.
- 150R: Fun and study, that's what I'm getting at a little bit. Anyway, umm, let me see, oh, do you like music?
- 151S: Yeah.
- 152R: What kind of music do you like?
- 153S: Classical music.
- 154R: Classical music. So that would be what? Chinese classical music?
- 155S: Uhh, European.
- 156R: Oh, European. German like Bach, Beethoven.
- 157S: Beethoven, yeah, Chopin, yeah piano is my favorite.
- 158R: Ohh, piano, do you play piano?
- 159S: No, but I like to listen to it.
- 160R: Yeah, there's a famous Chinese pianist—Ling-ling...
- 161S: Yeah.
- 162R: He's, ooh he's good. Do you know Ling-ling?
- 163S: Yeah.
- 164R: Yeah, okay, so do you ever listen to, hmmm, popular music?
- 165S: Yeah, uh, I also listening to some popular music.
- 166R: Yeah, like what would that be?
- 167S: Uhhh, Avril?
- 168R: Pardon?

- 169S: This singer, Avril Lavigne?
170R: [clarification is needed as to pronunciation] I don't know. Do you want to write...?
171S: Let—me—check [smart phone consultation].
172R: We can write that down here. [presents a paper and pen]
173S: A-V-R-I-L, A-V-R-I-L.
174R: Oh, yes, Avril! [After realizing what he is saying] Oh, yes I know this. She might be Swedish, though.
175S: Swedish!?
176R: I think so, well she sings English but there are a lot of Swedish people that are doing that, they're singing in English language. [note: she's actually Canadian—she comes from Ontario]. Now what do you like about Avril?
177S: Uh a song called 'Never say Never'.
178R: 'Never say Never'?
179S: Uh, another song, [increasing in excitement] I don't know the singer's name but I know the song's name, 'Apologize'.
180R: 'Apologize'. I wonder who wrote that.
181S: Yeah. Do you know that? I think it is famous song in China. And, uh, 'Burning.'
182R: Burning?
183S: 'Burning'. Is also uh, American song, yeah.
184R: And what...
185S: And uh, Linkin Park, yeah.
186R: Linkin Park, oh yes...now that's a...
187S: American...
188R: That's an American group, Linkin Park. What is it that you like about these particular songs?
189S: Uh, I like their style...
190R: The style?
191S: Uh, it is, uh positive attitude...
192R: Hmmm.
193S: Oh, it encourage people to have a positive attitude, to face everything.
194R: Okay, do you listen to the lyrics, the words?
195S: Uh, yeah.
196R: Do you like those words?
197S: Yeah.
198R: Yeah, and they are encouraging, is that what you're saying? They're positive.
199S: Yeah.
200R: Okay.
201S: And also to practice your listening.
202R: Oh, good, yes.

- 203S: I not just listening to English music for fun; it also can improve your listening.
- 204R: Yes, so see, fun things like that can be beneficial. You're having fun and still learning at the same time.
- 205S: Yeah, yeah you got fun and studying at the same time.
- 206R: Yeah, that's what I like to impart in students. You know, we can have fun, so. Well, let me see, I just don't know what else to..., I think we've covered everything so well.
- 207S: I have many English songs in my cell phone like...
- 208R: Is this your list of songs? [shows his smart phone with song titles, we peruse the list together]
- 209S: Far Away From Home, Every Time, Ever Sleeping, Complicated, and As Long as You Love Me, Arise is a song written by, uh, black people, is very encourage.
- 210R: That could be like rhythm and blues, maybe.
- 211S: Yeah.
- 212R: Rhythm and blues, do you know rhythm and blues?
- 213S: Yeah, I know.
- 214R: Oh what is this here? 'Pretty Boy' oh, that's by Lana Del Rey [actually it's by Young Galaxy], I know her. Do you know her?
- 215S: Yeah, I know her.
- 216R: Okay, yes, interesting.
- 217R: So how long have you lived in the United States?
- 218S: About two months.
- 219R: Two months, so it's a culture shock, were you kind of shocked by the way...
- 220S: Yeah...
- 221R: So this book you're reading in Jonathon's class about a white family living in a black city, a black neighborhood—that's about culture, so you're not just learning English word you're learning about a culture and that is what I think is very important as well.
- 222S: I think literature represent the countries
- 223R: Yeah because in the United States there are all kinds of cultures
- 224S: Different races in the U.S.A.
- 225R: Pardon?
- 226S: Different races.
- 227R: Yes, there are a lot of different races.
- 228S: Also, it's experience, yeah, it's also a different experience. Your whole life—you just can't live in a city to die. You should live in some different places with some different people, yeah, and realize some different opinions, some values. I think it's good.

- 229R: Well thank-you for your time, do you have anything else that you would like to share with me?
- 230S: We still have literature class in the undergraduate lessons or just IEC lessons?
- 231R: Oh, I think it depends on your major, you will probably not get much literature.
- 232S: If I choose education as my major?
- 233R: Is that your major, education? English education?
- 234S: Yeah, English education yeah, to teach English.
- 235R: Oh, well you'll probably get literature.
- 236S: Okay, I think is good.

Student 4, Karam, Saudi Arabian Student, female, age 26, Major: Mass Communication.

- 01 R: So tell me about your experiences or memories of a literature class in your country?
- 02 S: Literature?
- 03 R: Yeah, what kind of literature classes did you have? Like poetry or stories...?
- 04 S: Yeah we have stories and poems we study that, but not all the classes because we have some classes, if you want like to specialize in the literature there's more classes—it's up to you.
- 05 R: So it's open, you don't have to take a literature class if you don't want to. Is that right?
- 06 S: Umm, in high school you have to take.
- 07 R: Yeah, okay that's what I mean high school and primary school.
- 08 S: Uh, primary, no just high school.
- 09 R: Hmm, and what were they, describe some of those classes, literature classes.
- 10 S: Just stories.
- 11 R: Stories—what kind of stories?
- 12 S: Hmm,—[long pause] I, uh, don't actually remember, 'cause long time.
- 13 R: Hmm.
- 14 S: Long time, and they change everything now.
- 15 R: What are they changing?
- 16 S: Like, umm, they change the way of the literature, it's not like before I think. But I don't know how is it now, not like before. Before I used to take like poem or story and the author you have to write about the author, what you know about him...like research.
- 17 R: Like research.

- 18 S: Yeah.
- 19 R: An essay or a biography.
- 20 S: Kind of, it depends on the school or teacher how she or he, the way, it depends.
- 21 R: Okay.
- 22 S: Not like every school. Public school different.
- 23 R: Uh, alright, so do you remember any authors?
- 24 S: Except in Arabic?
- 25 R: In Arabic, yeah.
- 26 S: Can I, let me check?...[looks at cell phone]
- 27 R: Sure, yes.
- 28 S: Yeah, Mutanabbi.
- 29 R: Mutanabbi?
- 30 S: [shows the spelling on her cell phone]
- 31 R: Ah, yes, Al M-U-T-A-N-A-B-B-I, okay, What did he write? Was he an ancient author?
- 32 S: Poems—anci...what's that mean?
- 33 R: Ancient—very, very old, old history.
- 34 S: This like in English, this translate in English, you want to, like, some of them
- 35 R: Yeah, the ones that you have.
- 36 S: [shows translated poem in English]
- 37 R: [reads poem out loud] So that translates pretty well in English. So these would be very old poems?
- 38 S: Yes.
- 39 R: Okay, I'm going to look this author up. Mutanabbi.
- 40 S: Do you want another one?
- 41 R: Yeah do you refer to some of these every now and then?
- 42 S: Yeah. [looks through cell phone files]
- 43 R: Isn't it amazing that we have these? What would we do without these? [referring to cell phone]
- 44 S: I can't live without it.
- 45 R: Oh you have called up Arabic literature.
- 46 S: I can find. [searches files]
- 47 R: Well, I can find, I'm more interested in your experiences, though. Experiences in literature. How about at home, did you talk about anything at home? Did your mother or siblings or brothers and sisters—did you talk about school work or...?
- 48 S: Okay, for me my experience is different.
- 49 R: Yes.
- 50 S: Because um, my parents—um, they died—and I live alone, my brother my little brother its um, we don't talk about school a lot.

- 51 R: Sure.
- 52 S: Okay, but I think in some families, okay, yeah, absolutely. But for me its, in school you have choice like literature and this stuff in Arabic just like um, two option for your, I took another option and just specialize in science...
- 53 R: Okay, so you specialized in science.
- 54 S: Like mathematics, and physics, and this stuff not like, um, a lot of literature just...
- 55 R: Okay, no that's good, I like to get your experiences and perspective on things. So now here, your studying here, in English and you have a literature class—is that challenging?
- 56 S: Yes, it's very hard.
- 57 R: Very hard.
- 58 S: Very hard, but you know it's kind of challenging because there are a lot of words.
- 59 R: Yes.
- 60 S: We learned not like other classes.
- 61 R: Different words
- 62 S: But literature is difference.
- 63 R: Okay, aside from the words, how are you or do you appreciate, do you like how the story unfolds—what are you doing, are you doing Sherlock Holmes?
- 64 S: Sherlock Holmes.
- 65 R: Do you like that story?
- 66 S: Yeah, I like it but um, it sometimes hard to understand, you have to read, to read more, to understand, it's British and not like other stories you can...
- 67 R: It's from another era, it was written a hundred years ago I think, 19th century.
- 68 S: It's kind of hard. That's why I see the movie it make it easy...
- 69 R: It comes alive.
- 70 S: That what's makes it about.
- 71 R: Yeah.
- 72 S: It helps.
- 73 R: It's hard because you're living in a present day and it's hard to go back into a period of English time—its culture is very different, it's very, very different so I can understand that. Hmm, let's see, well, uh. How about music—do you like music?
- 74 S: I love music.
- 75 R: You love music. Now what kind of music do you like?
- 76 S: It depends for the music, sometimes I love classic
- 77 R: Classic, like classical music, classical Arabic music?
- 78 S: No.
- 79 R: No, like the oud, the beautiful oud and the nay? Or do you like European classical music like Beethoven and Mozart?

- 80 S: Oh, no, no, no not that one.
- 81 R: Okay, uh, about American music, popular music?
- 82 S: Popular, yes.
- 83 R: Do you listen to that? What kind of popular music?
- 84 S: I listen to American music because I want to learn the language, because I love music, it helps. Do you know what I mean?
- 85 R: Yes.
- 86 S: Uh, I love to listen to, umm, I don't know, do you know Hannah?
- 87 R: Hannah? Hannah Montana?
- 88 S: Not Hannah, Riannah [emphasizing the 'R'].
- 89 R: Rianna, oh Rianna, yes.
- 90 S: What she's music?
- 91 R: That would be pop I guess.
- 92 S: Pop?
- 93 R: Not quite hip-hop, no.
- 94 S: Hip-hop, no?
- 95 R: I think it would be pop.
- 96 S: I love that kind of music. It's interesting.
- 97 R: Yeah, and hip-hop, do you know hip-hop?
- 98 S: Hip-hop, yeah.
- 99 R: Who else do you have on your phone? Who else are you listening to? It tells me a lot.
- 100S: Hmmm [scans song titles and musicians]
- 101R: Jake Bugg? You like Jake Bugg?
- 102S: Life House.
- 103R: Life House, that's the name of a group?
- 104S: Hmmm.
- 105R: Oh, and Enrique Inglesias, he's uh Spanish.
- 106S: Yeah. And I love French.
- 107R: French music?
- 108S: This one.
- 109R: Charley Bell. Now is that sung in French?
- 110S: Hmmm-hmm.
- 111R: Do you speak French?
- 112S: No, I used to listen to them a lot.
- 113R: My wife speaks French.
- 114S: Do you?
- 115R: No, I speak Spanish.
- 116S: My sister, because she lived in Spain for ten years...
- 117R: Oh. She lived in Spain for ten years. I love Spain, it's a fun country.
- 118S: Katy Perry.
- 119R: Hmmm. Katy Perry, oh, sure. So you listen to some of these lyrics?

- 120S: Yeah.
- 121R: [explains a website that provides lyrics to the songs]
- 122S: Yeah, I don't always know what they are saying.
- 123R: Yeah, even I don't always know what they are saying.
- 124S: This makes sense a lot I know it's English, it's difficult to
- 125R: Songs are a form of poetry.
- 126S: I agree. Oh, I like your handwriting.
- 127R: Oh, I scribbling—it's messy.
- 128S: It's not messy it's beautiful.
- 129R: Oh, well thanks, thank-you.
- 130S: It's like a draw.
- 131R: Do you like to draw?
- 132S: No. But my handwrite it's kind of like you, I love to put the letters together.
- 133R: Oh, connect them.
- 134S: Yes, I love to connect them.
- 135R: Okay, [student name] thank you so much for your time.
- 136S: Thank you I hope I have helped. I don't have literature background so I hope I help.
- 137R: You have, thank-you.

Student 5, Saba, Bangladesh Student, female, age 18, Major: Accounting.

01. R: Tell me about your experiences or memories in a literature class in your country.
02. S: Umm, basically when I used to go to elementary school or high school, uh, usually, like class like here, we read the stories, book, then teacher makes some questions about those stories then we answer those questions according to story, from the story.
03. R: Okay, so when did you start reading stories and poems?
04. S: When I was in class one.
05. R: Oh, class one, first level? Do you remember some of those stories? What were they about?
06. S: Umm, I can remember some of those one is from 'Around the World in Eighty Days'
07. R: Oh you read that one, 'Around the World in Eighty Days'.
08. S: Yeah, Shakespeare's 'As You Like This' uh, 'As You Like It' by Shakespeare
09. R: When did you...
10. S: 'Wuthering Heights', I don't remember the writer.
11. R: Hmmm, wow, 'Wuthering Heights', well that's by one of the Bronte sisters. Was this in high school?

12. S: Uhh, 'Around the World in Eighty Days' was in class five...
13. R: Hmmm.
14. S: And 'As You Like It' it was in class seven, and 'Wuthering Heights' was in class eight.
15. R: I see, so you have a different scale. Would this be a primary school, middle school, high school?
16. S: Yeah.
17. R: These classes, these are more in the higher...
18. S: Basically we don't have any middle school; we have only primary school, elementary school, and high school.
19. R: Oh, okay so...
20. S: So from like play group to—uh, preliminary from five is elementary school and from six to ten is high school. And easily call eleven and twelve—we easily call college.
21. R: Okay, I get it—eleven and twelve is college. So now these were translated—you weren't reading in English or this was in your own native language.
22. S: No, actually we read it in English.
23. R: Oh, you read it in English, oh okay. Now did you like these stories?
24. S: Yeah.
25. R: What did you like about them?
26. S: Uh the characters, their climax, settings and locations.
27. R: So you have had a lot of literature reading in growing up, so could describe the classrooms you were in—what was that like, uh, did the teacher just lecture or did you work in groups?
28. S: Oh, like, in my school we usually, is like reading, I mean just read through the books like examples like we would who wants to read like this paragraph...
29. R: Go around.
30. S: Yes, go around and then, like, and then after we finish chapters then teacher makes questions then we find out answer those questions from the story, I mean from the chapter.
31. R: Oh, okay, so you told me of some authors or stories, did you do any kind of writing, did you write your own story? Did you ever write a poem?
32. S: Uhhh, yeah, actually recently I wrote a poem, but is in my country like in my language, and it was published on book fair.
33. R: Wow! What is the Bangladesh language?
34. S: Bengali.
35. R: Bengali, yeah, okay, Bengali.
36. S: And it is published this last month.
37. R: And it was poem?

38. S: Yeah, actually I have written stories but those did or they're not published. But this is my first poem, I wrote it and it was published, like we have one month book and it's on February, last month, so it was published last month.
39. R: Wow, that's really marvelous. How does that make you feel?
40. S: Yeah, I was so excited, actually my mom is so happy!
41. R: That's wonderful. Do you think you are going to continue to write
42. S: Like recently they contacted with me, we are going to publish the second, like the second version of our book, so can you write a poem, or stories whatever you want for us? So they like want me to write a story or a poem, anything for their magazines.
43. R: And what kind of poem is this that was published?
44. S: It was about love.
45. R: Ahh, love poem.
46. S: So it could be like love about our country, love about environment.
47. R: Country, environment, nature.
48. S: Yeah, like it means many things—[long pause] or it could be girlfriend boyfriend.
49. R: Sure.
50. S: So it means many things.
51. R: That's how poems are. So that was in Bengali, have you ever thought about writing in English?
52. S: I haven't thought but if, maybe, I wrote it in Bengali I could translate it into English.
53. R: Yeah, you can translate your poems into English, you'd probably be the best person for that. So in Bangladesh are there any authors not from the western world, what about in Bangladesh are there authors and poets that are revered there in that country?
54. S: We have national poet Kazi Nazrul Islam
55. R: I'll look for that name, so he's the national poet?
56. S: Yeah.
57. R: Is he still living today?
58. S: Uh, no.
59. R: So, he is deceased. Kazi Nazrul Islam.
60. S: Uh, we have world poet.
61. R: World poet?
62. S: World poet. Robindranath Tagor—R-O-B-I-N-D-R-A-N-A-T-H then space then T-A-G-O-R
63. R: Robindranath Tagor—beautiful name, now is it that a woman?
64. S: No.
65. R: Now is he alive?
66. S: No.
67. R: Okay, interesting.

68. S: And they are poet and we have writer, yeah we have two writers, very famous, basically their books is what sell more and more and every year. So one is—and they are two brothers actually—so one name is Humayun Ahmed, H-U-M-A-Y-U-N then A-H-M-E-D. Another one is [and she spells out Mohammed Zafar Iqbal]. So they are very, very famous writers. They easily write stories.
69. R: Now are they living today?
70. S: He is still alive and uh he died two years ago. [points to corresponding name]
71. R: Oh, okay. So what do you think about, uh, have you ever been exposed to English poets? Or American poetry?
72. S: No, we only read literature, like stories.
73. R: So, do you like music?
74. S: Yeah.
75. R: What kind of music do you like?
76. S: Any kind of music.
77. R: Any kind of music, do you like classical?
78. S: Yeah.
79. R: Like music in Bangladesh, similar classical music of India with sitar, and tabla, and ragas?
80. S: Yeah. I used to sing.
81. R: You used to sing?
82. S: I sing basically, like I can play instrument.
83. R: What instrument do you play?
84. S: Do you know harmonium?
85. R: Harmonium, yes I think so.
86. S: I can play harmonium.
87. R: Wow.
88. S: And I have been singing since when I was seven or eight years old.
89. R: Cool really cool. Uh, so let me see, so you like all kinds of music so I take it that you listen to American music like pop music.
90. S: I listen to American music like Michael Jackson, Backstreet Boys, Linkin Park...
91. R: Linkin Park, everyone likes Linkin Park.
92. S: Coldplay.
93. R: What do you like about that music? Because it so different from traditional Indian classical music.
94. S: But I like all [with emphasis] kinds of music!
95. R: What do you like about this particular genre of music?
96. S: I don't know they are my favorite musicians.
97. R: [writes list of musicians] Sure yeah, okay. It's probably the rhythm, uh, do you ever listen to some of the lyrics to know what the song is about?

98. S: I like the lyrics and tunes, yeah.
99. R: Well you've given me an awful lot of information and you said you weren't good in literature.
100. S: Yeah, but it's all about my country.
101. R: Yeah, well that's what I'm interested. What book are you reading in IEC right now?
102. S: Uh, Maniac Magee.
103. R: Ah, yes, how do you like that book?
104. S: Yeah, it's about little kids and he did lots of things he's very brave, even when he was homeless but not now—he got a home, he started living with his friend's family, yeah I like this book. It is interesting.
105. R: Do you find it hard, do you find it challenging?
106. S: Yeah, it's challenging.
107. R: Because of a lot of new words?
108. S: Yeah.
109. R: Do you think it shows a bit of American culture that you might not have been familiar with?
110. S: Yeah.
111. R: Wow, you've done a lot, I really appreciate this so thank you for the time.

Student 6, Omella, Burundi Student, female, age 18, Major: Finance.

- 01 R: Could you tell me some of your experiences or memories of literature classes in your country?
- 02 S: In my country we uh, study the French.
- 03 R: Right, that's your main language—you speak French don't you?
- 04 S: French and my native language, Kirundi.
- 05 R: Kirundi, yes.
- 06 S: So we used to have French class and we studied like the literature from France.
- 07 R: Yes.
- 08 S: All those poetry, literature, songs, all of those things, but we also have the Kirundi class and we studied poetry in Kirundi literature, but it's not too much because the Kirundi is so difficult to study those kinds of things. You must take a major in a university because it's too difficult, but it was easy for me to study it in French. I like poetry. I used to write some poems.
- 09 R: You used to write some poems. Well could you tell me some of the French literature or authors, or could you name some of them for me?
- 10 S: Charles Baudelaire.
- 11 R: Charles Baudelaire.
- 12 S: C-H-A-R-L-E-S and B-...

- 13 R: Oh, yes, Baudelaire.
14 S: Arthur Rimbaud.
15 R: Rimbaud, yes, I know Arthur Rimbaud.
16 S: Also, Ronsard, in French you know it's Ronsard.
17 R: Yes
18 S: Moliere.
19 R: Moliere, he's a good play write, I like his plays, aren't they...
20 S: Me too, I used to play some of his scenario in theater. We play also, like,...
I know the title but I don't remember the author, he's a you say Rousseau...
21 R: Rousseau?
22 S: Jean Jacques Rousseau.
23 R: Uh, Social Contract, The Social Contract by Jean Jacques Rousseau?
24 S: Yeah. Yes, also Montaigne.
25 R: Oh, yes.
26 S: It's difficult to say because I only know the name in French.
27 R: Yes, but you say it in French and I can spell it a little bit, I am familiar with
Baudelaire and Rimbaud and Moliere.
28 S: Yeah, that's some of...
29 R: Okay, tell me something about the Burundi poetry or Kirundi rather.
30 S: Kirundi it's kind of difficult because we don't know the author. Just we
learn it and uh,...
31 R: That's okay.
32 S: Some of them are unknown because...
33 R: Right.
34 S: The poem in Burundi you go when you walk, when you walk you feel lazy
you want to give up so you must say some poem and create your own word
when you start to create, you will be strong, and those kind of poem, when
someone tell that you write it and it's like...
35 R: So you create, did you say, road?
36 S: Yeah word.
37 R: Oh create your own word. Yes, okay, so Kirundi, when you were born and
raised, is that what your mother and father spoke? Kirundi, so that is your
mother tongue? That's your first tongue, right?
38 S: Right.
39 R: And you probably learned some songs and stories in Kirundi.
40 S: Yeah.
41 R: So it's an oral literature.
42 S: Right. Oral literature.
43 R: Okay so can you describe some of the classrooms that you attended. What
was it like?
44 S: Classrooms, here?

- 45 R: No, not here in primary school and high school. You know when you had a literary class did your teacher just give a lecture, or did you talk amongst yourselves about it, or...
- 46 S: In primary we have some textbooks so the teacher read it and students also read and uh, when you want to pass an exam you go in front and read it, this is in the primary. But in secondary, it's a comprehension reading—they give you a text, you read, and you answer some questions. That's it.
- 47 R: Okay, so that would be in secondary school.
- 48 S: Yeah this is for only for English and French but in Kirundi there are other kinds like they ask you questions of course like for the reading comprehension but also for also when I ask a question like, um, I'm green and I can walk those kind of questions and you try to guess what it is. The name in Kirundi is [sokunosay?] is like uh, when I can say I am taller, um, I'm black and many kind of descriptions yourself and I ask "who I am".
- 49 R: Oh, so it would be like an "I poem" or I am this or I am that, so it's kind of a list of 'I's.
- 50 S: Yes, who am I? Trying to guess this is the kind of questions we have in Kirundi tests.
- 51 R: What was that word you said about describing something...?
- 52 S: That's only like you can describe a computer, you don't know what I'm going to describe say it's a black thing, it has a screen, maybe it's touch or not, what is it? You try to guess what it is.
- 53 R: Oh, okay, so they are guessing games.
- 54 S: Yeah.
- 55 R: Do you have any favorite authors? Or poets?
- 56 S: Uh, in French?
- 57 R: In any language.
- 58 S: In any language, yeah I love Ronsard in French.
- 59 R: Who was that again?
- 60 S: Ronsard R-O-N-S-A-R-D
- 61 R: So he's one of your favorites.
- 62 S: Yeah, because he writes like love poems.
- 63 R: Oh, love poems.
- 64 S: But I also he's too old, he died, the new one is a French man Le Grande Corps Malade it's not poem but it's uh slam.
- 65 R: Slam?
- 66 S: Yeah.
- 67 R: Like slam and hip-hop, slam poetry? So what was his name?
- 68 S: Le Grande Corps Malade—C-O-R-P-S and M-A-L-A-D-E.
- 69 R: Le Grande Corps Malade, so he's a slam poet. Yeah, cool.
- 70 S: Yeah.

- 71 R: So is he published? Would I be able to find some of his work online somewhere?
- 72 S: Yeah, Romeo and Juliet, he write something on Romeo and Juliet also this is the most popular, I think.
- 73 R: How about English authors or poets, have you ever been exposed to much that?
- 74 S: Yeah, I know WEB, we used to call him WEB, his name is William Edward Du Bois
- 75 R: Oh, yes, William E. B. Du Bois, so you're familiar with him?
- 76 S: No, it's just in class we learn about him and I really love what he writes. It's about, uh, I think segregation.
- 77 R: Hmmm, oh, yeah he really worked for equal rights and uh equality for everyone.
- 78 S: And it interests me.
- 79 R: So let me see you are in, what level are you in? Four?
- 80 S: Four-A.
- 81 R: What's the book are you reading in that class?
- 82 S: Maniac Magee
- 83 R: How do like that book?
- 84 S: It's really interesting.
- 85 R: It's a good story. Do you find reading English literature challenging? Because there might be different words that you don't know.
- 86 S: Many words I don't know but the teacher say that you must overcome, don't worry about the words you don't know, just continue read and when the word is in the context it will be really easy for you to guess the meaning of the words. So now, yeah it's not too easy but...
- 87 R: So you say you write poems, do you still write poetry today?
- 88 S: Not lately, because I want to stop, I don't know why.
- 89 R: Did you write them in French or Kirundi?
- 90 S: French. I wrote many poems in French
- 91 R: Neat. Did you publish them? No, they're kind of personal, they're private. So what is your favorite kind of poems? You know, you mentioned love poetry.
- 92 S: Kinds of poems? I don't guess what you say.
- 93 R: Oh, you know, like poems about nature, natural world, the environment, poems about, I don't know, epic poems.
- 94 S: I don't like those poems about personality and something about nature.
- 95 R: Hmm.
- 96 S: But the things I really like in the poem, is when the author writes something and at the first reading you don't get what he say, I really love those kinds of poems.

- 97 R: Oh, so you like the mystery, yeah, and then even if you don't understand it—there's something about this part [places hand on chest and heart] not so much here [points to the head]
- 98 S: I can guess what he writes, I can say he write about his life and the other say he write about these things, and I really like this kind.
- 99 R: Yeah, like metaphor.
- 100S: Yeah.
- 101R: Do you know any American or English poets?
- 102S: No.
- 103R: Have you ever heard of Walt Whitman? He's kind of considered the father of American poetry. Walt Whitman—he talks about all these things, he celebrates life, love, environment, nature.
- 104S: I don't know if he's a poet, his name is Wright.
- 105R: Wright. Oh, Frank Lloyd Wright. No, he's an architect
- 106S: Oh.
- 107R: He's a wonderful architect. He designed beautiful buildings, and homes, he did amazing homes. So it sounds like you have a really good background in literature, you really like it.
- 108S: Yeah, I really like it.
- 109R: So, what are you going to do in your profession, uh, what is your?
- 110S: Finance.
- 111R: Finance. Oh cool. So, I always ask people this too, Do you like music?
- 112S: Yeah, I like music.
- 113R: Yeah, what kind of music do you like?
- 114S: Uh, I'm ever-open person, so every kind of music I like uh, you know, like, do you know the group F-U-N?
- 115R: Yes, Fun.
- 116S: Yes, Fun. And also, I don't know his name, like country music.
- 117R: Country music.
- 118S: And slow music. Music that I can guess the words.
- 119R: You can listen to the lyrics.
- 120S: So I can understand what they say.
- 121R: So you like to listen to American music so you can understand the words.
- 122S: The words, yeah.
- 123R: And get the meaning from that. Does that help you in your language learning?
- 124S: It helps me so much, because when I heard the words and I don't know the meaning, I take my dictionary and search the meaning.
- 125R: [shares with her the AZlyrics.com] Some people say they don't like poetry but then they like music and music is a form of poetry.
- 126S: Yeah, it's a quick poem.

127R: It's a quick poem. Quick poem. I like how you put that. A lot of people that

I talk to the like hip-hop—they like the rhyming, when things rhyme.

128S: It's also good. It's not too bad.

129R: Do you have anything else you want to share with me?

130S: Something that I want to share with you?

131R: Yeah, anything else you want to say about...

132S: Yeah, like, I write a poem but I don't remember it, but it is in French. I

forgot my book where I write my poem. I can say like some kind of rhymes in

French. I can try like: [Recalls from memory a poem she wrote in French].

133R: Oh, that's marvelous! Bravo! Very good, no, I like that.

134S: Thank-you