Model Texts or Visual Prompts? Which Teaching Strategy Better Influences Students' Creative Writing?

نصوص نموذجية أو وسائل مرئية؟ ما هي استراتيجية التدريس التي تؤثر بشكل أفضل على الكتابة الإبداعية للطلاب؟

by

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ABSTRACT IN ENGLISH

Creative writing as a subgenre has been described as an emerging teaching discipline, and its teachability has been the concern of many academics. TESOL teachers face additional obstacles in this field since they deal with teaching the production of original and highly poetic pieces that are written in students' L2. The purpose of this study was to explore two different teaching methodologies, model texts and visual prompts, employed in the creative writing classroom to measure the effectiveness of each on influencing students' creativity. The embedded design of this study encompassed class observations, the rating and analysis of student samples through descriptive statistical scores and written feedback, and a post-production interview with selected students to explore the effect of the teaching methodology as well as external factors that may have influenced their writing choices. The preliminary results revealed that subjecting student writers to a model text prior to exposing them to a writing task results in more creative pieces. To deeper comprehend the influence of each teaching method on students' creativity, further class observations should be conducted, more samples must be analyzed, and external influences in addition to achievement level should be unified among participants to yield more rounded results.

ABSTRACT IN ARABIC

قد تم وصف الكتابة الإبداعية بأنها نظام تدريسي ناشئ ، وكان تدريسها هو مصدر إهتمام للعديد من الأكاديميين. يواجه معلمو التيسول عقبات إضافية في هذا المجال نظرًا لأنهم يعلمون تدريس كتابة القطع الابداعية والشعرية لطلاب لغتهم الاولى ليست الانجليزية. كان الهدف من هذه الدراسة هو المقارنة بين منهجي تدريس مختلفين (النصوص النموذجية) و(الوسائل المرئية) ، يتم استخدامها في فصول الكتابة الإبداعية لقياس فاعلية كل منها في التأثير على إبداع الطلاب. شمل التصميم المدمج لهذه الدراسة على الامشاهدات الصفية، وتقييم وتحليل عينات الطلاب من خلال الدرجات الإحصائية الوصفية والملاحظات المكتوبة ، ومقابلة الطلاب المختارون لاستكشاف تأثير منهجية التدريس وكذلك العوامل الخارجية التي قد يكون لها أثر على اختيارهم الكتابي. أوضحت النتائج الأولية أن إخضاع الطلاب لنص نموذجي قبل تعريضهم لمهمة الكتابة يؤدي إلى انتاج قطع اكثر إبداعية. من أجل فهم أعمق لتأثير كل طريقة تدريس على إبداع الطلاب ، يجب التكثيف من الامشاهدات الصفية ، و تحليل المزيد من العينات الكتابية ، ويجب توحيد المؤثرات الخارجية ومستوى إنجاز المشاركين للحصول على نتائج أكثر دقة.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my father who helped me in life through all the great and trivial situations, shaped my character, taught me valuable life lessons, bestowed upon me his wisdom and solidity, and most importantly believed in me.

To my mother, a strong woman whose strength, liveliness and energy are inspirational.

To my husband and better half, Ahmad, who encouraged me to pursue my dream and finish my dissertation, who was always there for our Yasmeen, who gave me the strength to write and research, and who believed in me more than I did in myself. Thank you for being you.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1 Introduction

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Framework

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.3 Literature Review-Empirical Studies

Chapter 3 Methodology

Chapter 4 Findings and Discussion

Chapter 5 Conclusion

Appendices

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Topic

Writing is a multifaceted task which should be explored in scrutiny as it involves several selective processes which are personal, subjective, and highly individual. Writing is both static and dynamic, for the *process* of writing itself is based on active selection whereas the product is stagnant, thus the process including the choices on behalf of writers is as significant as the product (Hunley and Peary 2015). According to Ryan (2014), writing requires that writers voice their own thoughts into words keeping in mind the purpose for writing, the intended audience, and the form used for this expression. Moreover, the feminist approach to writing developed in the 1980s is considered one of the contemporary writing pedagogies focusing on the empowerment and the strong expression and assertion of the writer's voice and on the *process* of composing the product itself (Hunley and Peary 2015).

Given that the writing process is influential and plays a major role in affecting the quality of the writing production, investigating the best circumstances, factors, and influences that generate creative writing pieces is highly necessary to elevate students' creativity. Akdal and Sahin (2014) stress on the fact that writing is essential as through the writing medium one can transfer cultural heritage and essential beliefs to upcoming generations.

Given the significance of the writing process as well as teaching writing as a skill, exploring different teaching strategies and several ways of enhancing creativity has been the concern of many theorists, academics, and prominent writers. Many have argued over the concept of whether creativity is teachable or not. If writing is teachable, then attention must be given to

the personality of the writer and the way he or she processes ideas, interacts with the context, and deciphers information to come out with the product. The writers' personality traits as well as acquired experiences have been found to play a significant role in the quality of their productions (Maslej et al. 2014 & Ryan 2014). Personality traits as well as personal preferences influence forms of expression and word choice thus creativity in general; Hains-Wesson (2013) emphasizes the importance of self-expression through firming one's use of imaginations and rich word choice when writing confessional pieces which serves as a significant element in building a well-rounded career.

In defining individual creativity, Temizkan (2011) explains creative writing as a discipline that involves several qualities such as unique thought, extraordinary and brilliant means in producing thoughts in ways that are not yet to be thought of by regular individuals. In other words, creativity is originality. In compliance to his argument, he suggests a shift in the educational system that caters to creativity and critical thinking:

> "Meeting the needs of today's society comprised of qualified individuals requires the application of an educational approach aiming to develop creativity, inquisitiveness and critical thinking instead of existing systems which discourage students form thinking for themselves" (Temizkan 2011, p. 938).

1.2 Significance of the Study

The purpose behind this study was to investigate through a scrutinized comparison of two different yet frequently implemented teaching methodologies which teachers adopt in classrooms when teaching Creative Writing classes. Creative Writing as a subject is described by many academics as a novel area of teaching that still bears implications and recommendations by

researchers and theorists. According to Earnshaw (2014) creative writing as a subgenre, subject, course, or even a university major is relatively "new" and innovative but essential:

"Creative writing as a distinct academic field – one with dedicated courses and programmes, with professors whose scholarship is entirely or primarily original creative work, and with professional journals and books devoted to reflections upon the field – is relatively new but has been rapidly expanding in the US, the UK, and elsewhere" (Earnshaw (2014), p. 11).

This study intended to qualitatively measure the success of relying on implementing model or mentor texts in teaching creative writing through comparing it to another teaching strategy, the integration of visual models or prompts, opting to find out which strategy better influences students to produce more creative pieces through conducting class observations, collecting and analyzing students' writing artifacts, and carrying out interviews with selected students to analyze their perspectives.

Since the creative writing discipline is somewhat novel, the purpose of this study was to provide insightful data for teachers and educators assisting them to choose a more facilitated teaching pedagogy through scrutinizing how students process their writing decisions based on what factors impact their writing decisions rather than only focusing on teaching the characteristics of the intended genre to be produced; hence, teaching solely for the end goal. The findings of this study aim to reshape curriculum reviews, period planning as well as teachers' perspective on how to teach creative writing.

Investigating the strengths and weaknesses of using model texts or visual prompts to evoke creativity and influence students' writing productions is significant in facilitating teaching instruction, enabling effective period planning, and allowing teachers and school stakeholders to review curriculum based on evidence or documented experiences rather than theoretical arguments.

This study is regarded as highly significant in terms of the context at which it was conducted, for the private school at which this study's research questions were investigated and explored has recently incorporated a creative writing class as an elective as part of its curriculum; the findings of this study are highly beneficial and exceedingly crucial in helping current teachers as well as ones recruited in the future to plan, execute, and teach creative writing.

1.3 Rationale

The rationale behind conducting this study is the outcome of a new academic structuring which took place in a segregated private school in Dubai which in return was the context where the qualitatively designed research investigation, data collection, and interviews took place. This private school's senior leadership team and management, situated in Dubai-UAE, decided to adopt a holistic American Curriculum at the beginning of this current academic year (2017-2018) to receive full accreditation by NEASC, an organization which grants accreditation to schools that maintain a high level of academic standards, as a result, the school was obliged to offer electives for high school students which should be varied, interesting, and of different disciplines.

One of the elective courses which were newly integrated into the curriculum was "Creative Writing"; therefore, given that the entire concept, be it for students or teachers, is novel, piloting a researched and well-planned study was regarded as very significant since the results can influence teachers' pedagogical strategies that would help increase students' success in the future.

The notion of offering elective courses is not one that has been solely observed or bound to this particular school, but one that has been occurring at several schools in Dubai which follow an American Curriculum thus the findings of this study can help give a more rounded and structured

insight to all teachers in Dubai who are undergoing academic changes influenced by direct stakeholders as well as the country's leaders' vision on education compiled in the National Agenda 2021.

1.4 Research Questions

In order to explore the effectiveness of the two different pedagogical strategies or teaching methodologies, this study intends to answer the following two main questions and three sub questions:

1) Which creative writing teaching method, model texts or visual prompts, is more effective in influencing students' writing productions?

    a) What is the impact of each method on high achievers?

    b) What is the impact of each method on medium achievers?

    c) What is the impact of each method on low achievers?

2) What are the students' perspectives towards each method?

1.5 Structure of Dissertation Chapters

The next chapter provides a more detailed overview of the different creative writing teaching methods as Chapter 2 presents the conceptual and theoretical frameworks that underlie this study. Also, it provides an analytical study of the literature of empirical studies done on creative writing and presents gaps that this study aims to answer. Chapter 3 presents the methodology and design structure that was adopted for this study. It also gives a well-rounded view of the participants, the setting, and the tools used that enabled data collection and facilitated the research. Chapter 4 reports the results of the study through a thorough presentation of data analysis and

detailed qualitative description of the findings and presents a solid argument and discussion based on the analysis of the findings which was based on a triangulation process: observation, data collection, interviews. Chapter 5 concludes the study and lists the several limitations faced throughout the research. It also provides recommendations for future research.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Framework

2.1.1 Creative Writing

Creativity as a skill is found in all daily activities whether cognitive, emotional, or social which is the base of human daily life and development of the individuals (Temizkan 2011 &Torrance 1998).

Temizkan (2011) defines creative writing as an activity that requires planning, brainstorming, organization accompanied by the discovery of ideas refraining from restrained thinking which are formulated into certain fictional elements such as characters, setting, point of view…etc. which is a reshaping of material based on real life situations that can be best expressed through certain mediums such as narratives, novels, and tales. Moreover, Akkaya (2014) defines creative writing as a process that is utterly based on subjective statements which prevails through one's creative thinking and imagination. Furthermore, Akdal and Sahin (2014) view the skill of creativity as the ability to build relationships between unrelated notions, expressing new experiences, ideas, and phenomena.

Laing (2014) defines creative writing as an activity that requires one to be "delighted" within the language as the writer seeks ways to find the most precise word, description, or feeling for a certain image which he or she wishes to create. Other researchers and linguists have given a more technical definition of creative writing as a discipline:

"Creative writing is the process of crafting text that is not specialized, editorial, theoretical, or procedural forms of writing; it is the craftsmanship of storytelling. It also employs characters, figures of speech, or even poetic form" (Iyengar & Smith 2016, p. 103).

Anae (2014) explores a subcategory of creative writing which is highly related to this research, autoethnography, which is creative writing influenced by delving into one's memory through self-reflection thus mediating the learning writer as a construction or reflection of his or her past. This notion is directly related to the writing which the subjects of this study were asked to produce as they were asked to dig into a moment of their past to evoke memories thus leading to expression.

On addressing the issue of the teachability of this discipline, Anae (2014) argues that teaching the craft of creativity itself is possible which will facilitate or enable the teaching of creative writing as a discipline. Furthermore, Chaiyadejkamjorn, Soonthonrojana, and Sangkhaphanthanon (2017) define creative writing pedagogy as instruction planned to help learning writers to express their imaginative abilities of expression in a different manner than when writing for other genre purposes. Adopting the latter argument, this study explored, observed, and analyzed planned teaching methodologies applied in the creative writing class.

2.1.2 Model Texts

The effect of model texts on creative writing learners whether L1 or L2 writers is scarce. In an earlier study conducted in 1984, it was found that the participants who were given model suspense stories were positively affected by analyzing and adopting devices and techniques from those models, for they were able to borrow some elements of language or content from the models (Bereiter and Scardamalia 1984). Other studies of this teaching methodology followed later reported positive findings and productive influences as well (Charney and Carlson 1995).

Abbuhl (2011) advocates for the usage of model texts by examining their organization, lexicon-grammar, and rhetoric to evoke creative writing asserting that their integration into the curriculum will give learning writers the access to the desirable conventions used by authors, the intended model of the genre to be produced, and simplification of the trepidation that the learning creative writer feels after encountering a true model; the study calls for the necessity to explore the effects and the process of the employment of model texts on the L2 writer which is a topic that is scarcely researched. Given that the participants of this study are all L2 speakers and learners of English, exploring the effect of a model text that is not in their L1 is very insightful and can pave the way for future more narrowed research.

Almost all the articles and books that were found in the literature and reviewed to serve the purpose of this study are about the usage of mentor or model texts to enhance creativity; therefore, more about model texts will follow in a more thorough and comprehensive manner in the empirical studies section (2.3).

2.1.3 Visual Prompts

There are very scarce studies done on the usage of visual media to evoke creativity; however, there are some articles that define, encourage, and call for adopting visual media in classrooms and education. Of the few of the studies that associated visual prompts and creative writing, Edwards-Groves (2011), calls for a multimodal approach for the writing pedagogy as students used multimodality to represent their curricular knowledge through writing using several "modes". Hence, multimodality is the product itself, but not part of the process unlike the approach

adopted to serve the investigation of this study where visual modes are used to influence the writing process and not required in the product.

The usage of visual images, media, and resources that are *not* book-based or text-based has been referred to by several terms: *multiliteracies, multimodality, visual literacy, and visual modes.* Sylvester and Greenidge (2009) define media literacy as a set of skills that a learner possesses which help in evaluating and creating messages in images, graphics, oral language, and audio. They call for the usage of such modes and argue how using visuals increases cognition:

"The example of a multimodal lesson using video, lends itself to identifying the modes used by teachers and students and how these correlate not only to contemporary society but to specific cognitive processes. This combination (use of multiple channels) allows for creativity and flexibility in teacher-student interaction and can enhance the learning environment" (Marchetti and Cullen n.d., p.40).

Tobolowsky (2007) justifies the usage of visuals in the classroom based on the belief that students learn through different styles thus educators should be able to identify the power of visual media which is considered a novel methodology which in return rouses critique, discussion, and personal connection since connecting to a movie clip comes more naturally to students that discussing a book; this type of learner is referred to as the "diverger"*,* a learner who is creative enough to observe a range of options that could potentially be discussed, connected to, and reflected upon, which is a phenomena that should be exploited by teachers for the sake of having more engaging classrooms. Hoffner, Baker, and Quinn (2008) found that teachers employ movie clips in their classroom since they complete the curriculum, for visual modes allow learners to utilize the same skills they employ while reading. Moreover, Krausz (2001) advocates for promoting visual media in the classroom and asks that educators teach students how to decipher and analyze images through the careful selection of images and movie clips that could potentially be used in classroom

discussions which can influence children to produce their own stories in visual modes. "The teacher's conscious decision in selecting and evaluating material is fundamental in the development of critical awareness of the visual media by both teachers and students alike" (Marchetti and Cullen n.d., p. 43). The teacher's selection of the clip to show is one way in which this study employs visual prompts, for the clip which the participants' watched evokes emotions of anger and disappointment which was tested through the participants' writings.

Marchetti, L. & Cullen, P. (n.d.). argue for applying the multimodal approach which can enhance learning experience as students associate the different modes that they are exposed to in order to challenge traditional communication mediums in the classroom to improve interaction within the classroom signaling that using a video encompasses both the visual and audio modes as well as the movement mode which also can be studied, discussed, and reflected upon. By the same token, Edwards-Groves (2011) states that multimodality enables creative possibilities within the classroom as learners construct and deconstruct meaning through various modes.

Flynt and Brozo (2010) call for adopting the use of visual media to become the end goal or the product of a students' learning experience, and not to be merely used as a methodology for teaching or influencing the product. In agreement, Sylvester and Greenidge (2009) investigated the usage of visual media to support struggling student writers by utilizing a model which encompasses all the elements of creative writing: point of view, conflict, emotional themes, word choice, pacing and rhythm of the narration, soundtrack, and voice designed to serve the purpose of helping those students to create "digital" stories. In another study done on struggling student writer, it has been found that by using described programing (descriptive video), a tool used to help learners understand images or visual literacies which they are subjected to, students' writing abilities were

enhanced which was evident through the usage of more descriptive words, adjectives, specific details, and concept vocabularies in their compositions (Hoffner, Baker, and Quinn 2008).

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Reflexivity Theory

When assessing how students or writers for this matter take decisions in order to shape or form their writing products, one should examine the reasons or justifications behind shaping a certain character, choosing a setting, creating a certain conflict, or settling for a description in a specific form. The process of writing is personal, cognitive, and cultural reflected within social encounters as well as social factors. Archer (2013), the theorist behind Reflexivity, defines reflexivity as a process of personal opinions that one takes or forms in order to shape an outcome; the formation of one's opinion is influenced by social factors. This theory is directly related to the research question which this paper intends to answer or explore, for studying the effect of two different teaching methods or strategies on evoking creativity in students' writing is directly connected to the process in which those students shape their thoughts, mark their word choices, and choose on what to write and how to share it to the audience. The selection of how to tell their story, and the technical choices they make when they write is tied up and can be measured based on the Reflexivity Theory.

2.2.2 Envisionment Theory

Coined, explained, and researched by Langer in 1995, Envisionment is simply the students' interpretation of any literary work or text being studied or subject for analysis at that particular moment of study or close reading. It is explained as the world of understanding or understandings

a person creates at a particular point of time which is dynamic, for it involves, response, imagination, inquiries, questions, agreement, and disagreement with one's own thoughts throughout the reader's or the writer's encounter with the text as he or she reads or writes. The teacher plays a major role in instilling the process of envisionment within learners as he or she are the ones to set an example for how the text is to be built on and the importance of interpreting textual features to elevate the reading experience by interacting with the world of the text, and the teacher is the one to encourage moments of "enchantment" which teaches learners, readers in this case, to propel and change his or her emotions or understanding of something in particular (Ştefanovici 2017). Understanding how students connect to the text, decipher its elements, and draw ideas from it is crucial for studying the effect of mentor texts on students' creative writing compositions. To answer both research questions, it is important to rely on the bases of this theory when examining the effect of the mentor text as well as students' perspectives of how they were affected after reading the mentor text.

Langer (2000) expresses her concern over how the role of literature has not yet been well developed within the curriculum or on how and when it should be taught. One purpose of this study is to determine whether it is necessary or not to infuse the usage of mentor texts within the creative writing curriculum. "Findings indicated that during reading, there were a series of relationships readers took toward the text, each adding a somewhat different dimension to the reader's growing understanding of the piece" (Langer 2000, p. 8). "From early on, readers establish their sense of the topic or the slant the author is taking and use this judgment to monitor their growing envisionments" (Langer 200, p.11). If student writers establish their own sense of the topic through reading and take post-reading decisions based on their own inference, understanding, and study of

the text, then it is necessary to understand their perspectives on how they were influenced by a mentor text which they read before answering to a creative writing task.

2.2.3 Rosenblatt's Transactional Theory (1988)

The Transactional Theory of Reading and Writing is the main and most essential framework that underlies this research. The theory relies on the idea that readers derive or withdraw their own understanding of a text and reflect it on a blank white paper to end up with a writing production or composition given that both reading and writing lack the nonverbal communication with an audience. The transactional relationship is built upon the notion that reading is a fundamental part of the writing process, for when selecting what part to read or what part to focus on throughout the reading, the reader makes sense and meaning of new interactions and transactions with texts based on his or her own bank or reservoir of personal and experiential linguistics.

The reader selects what he or she wishes to acquire from a text or focus based on the initial purpose. Readers make the choice of how they wish to decipher a text through either the efferent or the aesthetic approach. When students wish to reproduce a text or respond to it in poetry or prose, then the approach chosen will be an aesthetic one. The writer is always transacting with a social, personal, and cultural situation in order to draw out material to form a new composition or to inspire a new generated piece.

2.2.4 Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)

This essential theory about grammar developed by Halliday is centralized around the idea that any act of communication involves a choice on the behalf of the communicator. The choices

available for any communicator are represented through a system within the language used, system network: sets of choices that are abstract and have no psychological claims or "actual" choice.

The choices that a communicator, writer for the sake of this study, makes are based on experience whether outer observations or inner realizations and social relations, mainly interpersonal ones, which together shape the text or the wording which is the "metafunction" relevant to this study as this research sets to analyze the choices made by creative writers to describe a certain experience. "Halliday maintains that as we get older, not only do we physically and cognitively mature, but also the cultural contexts in which we interact expand and become more diverse. As a result, the ideational, interpersonal, and textual metafunctions realized through language and other semiotic means expand and become more syntagmatically and paradigmatically diverse, creating more meaning potential and choice within the system" (Gebhard et al. 2013, p.109). Furthermore, Gebhard et al. (2013) argue that the findings of their study suggest that using SFL in designing curriculum tools especially supports ESL teachers which helps students develop a deeper understanding of knowledge related to the discipline advocating the significance of "metalanguage" which enabled the participants of the study to generate their own texts *modelled* after the "choices" made by other literary authors. Moreover, Kilpert (2003) highlights several positive points of SFL one of which is the idea that when relying on this theory to analyze language, the emphasis on the individual is diminished and the meaning becomes social, intersubjective, and a conflict of inner negotiations which form the outcome of the spoken or written language.

The rubric which is used to assess the writings of the learners under study is made up of 3 major criteria one of which is "Language Use" which is explained or defined as the extent to which the assignment reveals an awareness of audience and purpose which in return is divided

into 2 categories: voice, description and word choice, and sentence variety. To assess the choices made on behalf of the student writers is necessary as it can reveal how students were influenced by each teaching strategy separately. "In SFL choice relations are posited not only at the micro level of individual grammatical categories such as definiteness or tense, but also at higher levels involving whole clauses (as in e.g. grammar of speech functions) and beyond" (Bache 2010, p. 2563).

2.3 Literature Review-Empirical Studies

Concerning research revolving around the topic of creative writing, most studies analyze the product or shed light on using mentor texts and modelling prominent writers' techniques. Not much research has been done on exploring the use of visual prompts, arts, role play or other non-literary methods and their effect on the creative writing production.

2.3.1 Model Texts

Disney (2014) states that recent educational discussions are centered around the fact that learning writers do not only gain knowledge from the classroom, but from other prominent writers whose works they study. Exploring this notion, Muhammad (2015) studied the effect of mentor or model texts on the writings produced by a group of participants and found that the subjects were highly impacted by the techniques used by the texts which they encountered. On the other hand, McDonald (2013), suggests several teaching strategies as well as purposeful prompts that can generate creativity based on what the learner is exposed to such as displaying images and pictures that can provoke expressive writing, modelling how to write with students, and discussing certain stories; however, the study argues that in exposing learners to written

work, learners might end up "adopting" or imitating other authors' voices. On the other hand, Akdal and Sahin (2014) conclude through their study that texts belong to writers up until the publishing stage, for afterwards, reader can interpret the texts according to their own perspectives and understandings which will not erase the "originality" element as they found the effectiveness of intertextual reading on the creative writing of their participants as their writings showed an increase in rich vocabulary as well as *original* ideas. Likewise, Broekkamp, Janssen, and Denbergh (2009) studied how originality can still exist and be the center of creative writing piece even when mentor texts are used if the designed tasks involve creative writing provocative thoughts and the reading of literature is interesting.

Other researchers expanded this strategy by digging deeper into the reinforcement of using anchor or mentor texts. Salibrici (2017) even suggests that student writers be exposed to journals or diaries of prominent authors, poets, and writers as they can serve as evidence on how the process of writing happens which in return would help students focus on and examine their own process rather than focusing solely on the product.

Humphrey & Feez (2016) stress on the importance of relying on "metalanguage" when students learn how to write and explore writing options and decision; they encourage teachers to adopt text-based pedagogies that would help students analyze features and patterns used by expert writing which would help them enhance their own productions. In promoting using literary texts to teach creative writing, Earnshaw (2014) argues that deciphering written texts through using literary theories provides learning writers with models, devices, and ideas for their own compositions as well as construction mechanisms. Additionally, Broekkamp, Janssen, and Denbergh (2009) found that through exposure to literature, students were familiarized with genre elements and features

which they internalized and applied in their writing tasks post to reading short stories and poems which also allowed the participants of their study to grow as literary critics, for the study concluded that the relationship between literary reading and creative writing is a positive and mutual one. In a deeper exploration, Abbuhl (2011) investigated the use of model texts by comparing the effects of their employment in teaching on both Native speakers and Non-native speakers, which is highly related to this study given that the participants are non-native speakers of English, and found that students who received model texts as well as instructions or discussion of the genre were able to apply the features and the organizational pattern of the genre effectively. In a study that also explores L2 learners, Arshavskaya (2015) found that L2 students proved that they were able to learn through model texts following an expressive and critical pedagogy incorporated with creative writing exercises which also increased class engagement, boosted confidence, and increased their writing fluency breaking the language barrier through ensuring critical reflection on real life situations as students responded during their interviews.

2.3.2 Teaching and Assessing Creative Writing

On another note, Harper (2010) found that three dimensions of certain creative writing characteristics which fall under the notion of aesthetic appeal which include beauty, balance, design, unity, and expressiveness are always found in the products of creative writing and creative writers are assessed according to those aspects. This statement is greatly tied to the fact that rubrics used to assess creative writing should encompass some if not all the aspects listed above. In accordance, the rubric, which is thoroughly explained in the methodology section, focuses on and gives way to interpreting aesthetic appeals. Norris (2013) deciphers and explains several features of creative writing which are very much related to the rubric that is used in this study; the chapter

about teaching "voice" guides teachers on how to teach students the techniques that would help them form and shape their voice through several suggested exercises concluding the importance of the writer's voice in the generated pieces. Following this suggestion, the writer's voice can also be explored through mentor texts.

Exploring different methodologies and approaches to teach creative writing, Flambard-Weisbart and Magnin (2007) studied an even deeper preface of model texts, visuals, or prompts in general as they explore an innovative and novel technique in teaching creative writing asking participants to pretend to be different characters who live in new places which, as a result, influenced their writing productions and in return, students read each other's work virtually and responded creatively. In exploring other methodologies for teaching creative writing, Horng et. al (2005) confirm that creativity indeed can be taught through manipulatives such as group discussions and interaction using multimedia resources, role play, drama and play presentations as well as group activities involving questions that reflect on real life experiences where the teacher is merely a facilitator thus helping students with individual self-reflection. Student interaction and self-reflection in this study is ensured through the observation tool artifact as well as the writing task topic.

In a somewhat opposite approach, Smith (2006) suggests a less creative approach for teaching creative writing where the study uses model texts, but explicitly guides students to produce their writing through a language-based approach and word associations used in the model text through systematization emphasizing on the opposing factors that the prompt or trigger based approach employs where the text itself can be used as a starting point which the study names as the referent-based approach. Such a teaching approach can hardly influence students' creativity and thus will

not be explored in this study. Likewise, in a more systematic manner, Nasir, Naqvi and Bhamani (2013) quantitively explored how explicitly teaching the "writing process" through using flashcards and word lists to influence "word choice" improved students' written expression which was evident through their efficiency at generating and organizing creative ideas; they argue that providing students with sufficient and different opportunities to participate in critical thinking and reading will motivate students to write creatively. This argument is explored and tested through this study by investigating the influence or effect of mentor texts by looking into which literary devices used by the author, whose work the students were exposed to, have they borrowed and applied in their own writing.

Since children have different learning styles, thus visual modality in teaching is necessary which was proven through a study where visual art was incorporated with teaching writing as it helped students in self-expression through individual interpretation of the visuals (Rumney, Buttress, and Kuksa 2016). In using creative writing methods to teach non-fiction writing, Dollins (2016) explored how participants' deciphered author's purpose and author's craft and style in creative non-fiction which enabled them to apply the same techniques in writing their own non-fictional informational scientific texts about animals.

2.3.3 External Factors Influencing Creativity

Explaining the notion of how writers are influenced by their environment and by the context at which they write, Disney (2014) elaborates that contextual factors as well as the interactive space in which a writer lives play a role in shaping the writer's perspective stressing on the fact that a writer cannot exist in total isolation from his or her surrounding, for any creative writer brings

along his or her roots, experiences, and contextual practices. Through this study, this concept was analyzed further as the research studied in scrutiny the effect of model texts and visual prompts on writers and whether the teaching methods were the *sole* influence or not by exploring if memories, social factors, or environmental experiences are embedded in students' generated pieces, for these external influences might have shaped the process and not the model text or the visual prompt solely. Furthermore, Jen (2015) emphasizes on how the mood, the style, and the voice of the writer affect the generated piece greatly given that these techniques are influenced by the writer's context as the writer gathers and researches thoughts and ideas based on his or her environment which is reflected in the productions.

Ryan (2014) studies writers' processing mechanisms and internalized decision making through analyzing their characters' response to social expectations, norms, and external considerations referring to Archer's Reflexivity theory. The findings of this research reveal the importance of the writing process and how exploring the process should be given the same significant weight as analyzing the product itself. As a result, exploring the factors that may influence the process of writing is crucial, and exploring the effect of different external factors as well as teaching methods by comparing the results of each should grant future teachers insightful information on pedagogy.

The exploration of all the factors mentioned above and stressed on by previous studies was done through the second interview question which participants of this study have answered, and the findings reported reveal the significance of understanding the psyche and mentality of the writer as well as his or her experiences which also influence how they process their own writing. In exploring the purpose as well as the outcomes of the writing experience, Luce-Kapler (1999) studies how when writers themselves are the topics of their own writing their stories about the self

are not quite solid for their "self" versions are revisions and evolving stories that carry troubled possibilities or subjunctive truths that one wishes are factual in real life.

On another note, Townsend and Nail (2011) through interviewing several teachers express their concern for individual processes involved in the writing production emphasizing that teachers must pay attention to their feedback and responses which should address the writing development and cater for personal differences; however, this study does not explore nor delves into the teacher's affect, influence, or contribution in shaping the creative writing productions.

In a more modern fashion, Twomey (2011) explores, supports and introduces how teachers can exploit and apply technology to help students who have a complex and advanced understanding of their identity to improve and redefine their relationship with literacies. This suggests that personality shapes the writing product itself as well as influences the students' perception of writing and literacy.
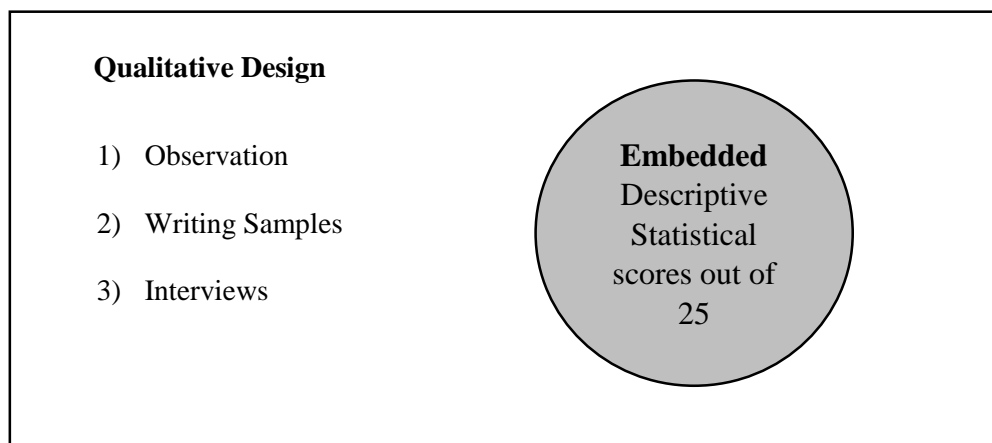
3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Approach and Design

The purpose behind this study was to compare through scrutiny the effectiveness of two pedagogical strategies through observing several Creative Writing classes by conducting an embedded design method as shown in figure 1 which depended mainly on the qualitative design research approach which was largely based on class observations, and the analysis of writing productions/artifacts through the precise description of their content as well as interview results with the participants with an embedment of descriptive statistics represented by a total score out of 25 which each student writer received on her paper by each rater separately based on the rubric descriptor . The study also relied on detailed interview results which were audio recorded to facilitate the coding and the thematic analysis procedure which validated the findings (Creswell 2009). One major reason for conducting a qualitative study is the mere factor that qualitative investigations examine the process as well as the product which is represented in this study through the examination of the methodology as well as the writing compositions (Creswell 2009).

The two pedagogical strategies that were explored are model texts and visual prompts/visual modes. Based on recommendations made by several researchers and theorists as found in the literature, the model text which students were exposed to is prose *not* poetry and of modern and contemporary literary genre not classic since classic renowned writers such as Charles Dickens or Jane Austen can be challenging and rather confusing for emerging writers (Walker 2012); successively, the mentor text which was used for this research is *The Lucky One* published in 2008 by Nicholas Sparks, a *New York Times* best-seller author, which revolves around universal themes

such as love, betrayal, loss, and trust. As for the visual prompt which is the second explored pedagogical strategy, the students watched a short clip which is an adaption of the same book released in 2012.

Figure 1: Research Design

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┌──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│   Qualitative Design                                               │
│                                        ┌──────────────┐            │
│   1)  Observation                      │   Embedded   │            │
│                                        │  Descriptive │            │
│   2)  Writing Samples                  │  Statistical │            │
│                                        │ scores out of│            │
│   3)  Interviews                       │      25      │            │
│                                        └──────────────┘            │
└──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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3.2 Sample and Setting

Purposive sampling was the most convenient and useful approach to selecting the participants of this study. Two groups of students were selected who are enrolled in Creative Writing class in the selected private school in Dubai-UAE, set 1 and set 2, and they were exposed to each teaching method separately to effectively measure the difference and the efficacy of both teaching methods. The two sets or classes are the only two classes offered in the girls' department and delivered and taught by the same instructor likewise there are two other Creative Writing classes that are offered in the boys' department but are taught by a different teacher. Choosing two sets which are of the same gender and taught by the same teacher was one way to validate the findings and unify factors or external influences.

Set 1 participants watched the movie clip which was around 5 minutes whereas Set 2 participants read chapter 28 from the Sparks' novel. Both the novel and the clip reflected the

climatic moment in the story where the main character, Beth, confronts her lover after she realized that she was lied to.

After being exposed to the chapter from the book or the movie clip, students from both classes/sets, where an almost even number of Grade 11 and Grade 12 *female* students are enrolled, were given the same writing task with the same directions, questions, and topic, but only some student writing samples were selected for the study. Following the recommendations presented by Broekkamp, Janssen, and Denbergh (2009) the writing task was designed to fulfil and evoke creativity and the content considered reliable assessment as well as relatability for all student participants. Due to the diversity of the students' backgrounds, the writing task and topic is global and of an international theme in order to ensure student engagement and connection (Arshavskaya 2015).

3.3 Rationale Behind Selecting the Sample

The classes in which the study took place are taught by the same teacher, a Native Speaker of English who is a CELTA certified educator. Even though the school does offer the same elective for male students too, the two classes whose students were the subjects of this study are segregated classes of female students only. The choice behind proposing to conduct the study on female students only is based on several factors:

It was found throughout the literature that male and female creative writing productions differ in expression of feelings, word choice, voice, and techniques used to generate their writing productions; girls were found to be more expressive in comparison to boys as they used stronger word choice and more literary devices (Almazroui 2010 & Moochi et al. 2013).

Another significant factor is the difference of the teachers' backgrounds as the teacher delivering the creative writing course for females is a CELTA certified Native speaker with global teaching experiences whereas the teacher who is teaching the elective course for the male students is a Non-native speaker with experience based solely in the UAE; therefore, in order to rule out gaps in the findings, and inconsistencies based on gender differences and teacher experiences, the study intended to observe the two female classes which are being taught by the same teacher in order to ensure the validity of the findings.

Another significant yet controversial factor for selecting to focus on female creative writing only is due to the following:

Gayle Elliot (1994) (cited in Maginnis 1996, p. 6) found that female creative writers are stigmatized as their writing is labelled based on the definition of the genre itself: creative writing is emotional, intuitional, and expressional which results in the negative notion that creative writing work is less valuable that scholarly work, thus ranking lower in the academic curriculum status.

3.4 Writing Tasks

3.4.1 Writing Task Set 1

After watching the short clip from *The Lucky One*, think about the following: Some people describe anger as a "secondary emotion" in response to a primary emotion such as fear, hurt, betrayal. Write about how you felt when someone betrayed you. Were you angry? Did you lash out? Or did you walk away in silence? Describe some images or moments that come to your mind when you remember that feeling of betrayal. Looking back on that moment of your life, how did it impact who you are today?

3.4.2 Writing Task Set 2

After watching a chapter from *The Lucky One* by Nicholas Sparks, think about the following: Some people describe anger as a "secondary emotion" in response to a primary emotion such as fear, hurt, betrayal. Write about how you felt when someone betrayed you. Were you angry? Did you lash out? Or did you walk away in silence? Describe some images or moments that come to your mind when you remember that feeling of betrayal. Looking back on that moment of your life, how did it impact who you are today?

3.5 Observation Tool

The observation plan was to monitor the interaction in both classes, set 1 and set 2, through using an observation tool, shown in Table 1, modified based on suggested observer's tables and forms created by Wajnryb (1992). Later, the observer's notes (refer to Appendix A) were used as artifacts for data analysis and findings. The observation tool recorded students' interaction with the teacher as they discuss either the chapter from the book or the short movie clip trying to look for creative elements and features in order to answer the writing task. This tool, presented in Table 1, served the purpose to collect findings that helped answer the first research question and its three sub-questions to explore which pedagogy evoked more creative productions whereas the second research question was answered through semi structured interviews conducted with selected students as shown in Table 2.

After the class discussion or interaction, students were asked to compose a creative piece of writing responding to the writing task/topic which is completely identical as well as directly related to the chapter and the visual short clip. Afterwards, their writing pieces were collected and samples

from both classes (set1 and set 2) were analyzed and graded in order to perform the comparison and analysis of the writing samples which was later followed by the interviews.

Table 1: Class Observation Tool

What Teacher Does	What is the Communicative Purpose	What Learners Do
Teacher Prompts/Ques	Wait Time	Student Responses

Table 2: Research Questions

Research Question	Method	Instrument	Sample
1)Which creative writing teaching method, model texts or visual prompts, is more effective in influencing students' writing productions? a) What is the impact of each method on high achievers? b) What is the impact of each method on medium achievers? c) What is the impact of each method on low achievers?	Embedded design	Observation tool Students' artifacts	Teacher Set 1 students (17) Set 2 students (20)
2) What are students' perspectives towards each method?	Qualitative	Interview questions and recordings	Set 1 (5 students) Set 2 (5 students)

3.6 Inter-rater Approach

In order to be concise and accurate with presenting the findings, the collected samples were assessed and rated by two qualified graders, another Creative writing teacher and an English high school teacher, for it is recommended to follow the inter-rater approach even in qualitative studies in order to conclude a homogenous result through having two graders/raters assess the same writing production separately (Armstrong et al. 1997).

This approach is both essential and significant as it provided the study with insight on how both raters found similar themes, notions, or gave similar constructive feedback and grades. Armstrong et al. (1997) argue that reliability and validity of studies conducted qualitatively are somewhat questionable thus they concluded through their study by analyzing their data by six different researchers that it was considered significant as well as gave more input to the study's findings since they all identified similar themes from the interviews; however, the differences in their analysis gave further interpretation to the discussion and findings which is an aspect that will be discussed in the data analysis chapter of this dissertation. More specifically, Broekkamp, Janssen, and Denbergh (2009) explored creative writing pieces and involved two experts to evaluate the first versions of participants' productions.

The samples that were chosen as artifacts for analysis are based on students' final averages in English Language from their previous academic year since the school's previous system (prior to adopting the American Curriculum) combined the four main English skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking under one subject or discipline, thus it is safe to presume that a student who scored a 95 which is an A is a student who is a superior writer.

Based on this foundation, five samples from each class (refer to Appendix B) was collected: three from students who scored 90 and above, one from an average student, and one from a student who has scored 70 or below based on the results of the previous academic year. This selection is designed in this manner in order to help answer the three sub-questions of the first research question. Table 3 summarizes the information of the selected participants.

Table 3: Selected Participants

	Low Achievers	Participants' Initials	Medium Achievers	Participants' Initials	High Achievers	Participants' Initials
Set 1 (visual)	1	A.A.	1	D.M.	3	R.A. R.Z. D.S.
Set 2 (mentor text)	1	R.M.	1	L.B.	3	A.D Z. K. J.Z.

The two raters were asked to grade a total of 10 samples, 5 from each set and were asked to use a holistic rubric (refer to Appendix C) which is designed by the English Department at the school for the purpose of applying it and using it to assess creative writing assignments, quizzes, midterms, and final assignments. Their constructive feedback as well as their estimated grade was taken into consideration when analyzing the effect of both pedagogies on students' creativeness.

Nowadays, rubrics are the main tools used for assessing writing, for they are composed of elements and characteristics of the genre to be evaluated; however, there is concern that some of the criteria that make up assessing rubrics can be vague and unclear which make some elements unmeasurable (Mozaffari 2013). The rubric used is designed to assess three major criteria: generated ideas, language used, and conventions applied by the writer, and for each criterion, there are several sub-criteria which are detailed in order to facilitate measuring the writing. The rubric generated by the English Department follows the recommendations made by Mozaffari (2013), for the assessment of imagery and voice is represented in a clear and measurable manner; however, the English Department still included a section for language usage "conventions" which is not directly related to creativity.

3.7 Interview Process

In order to answer the second research question, students whose samples were selected were asked to sit for an interview. The steps and structure of the interview is based on recommendations by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009). The interview set-up is a semi-structured one which starts by two basic structured questions but was later built upon based on the students' responses. Since students are in Grade 11 and 12, they were directly informed prior to the interview that their names will be kept anonymous and that the interview recordings will be used for academic purposes only which resulted in a unanimous consent for participation. The interview results were grouped into themes and were coded and analyzed accordingly which is reported in the findings of this study.

3.8 Ethics

Ethical consideration was taken prior to conducting the observation in both classes, asking for students' academic records from the previous year, using students' productions as artifacts, and audio recording the interviews with the students. The school's director was notified, and his permission was requested through an official letter (refer to Appendix D) sent via email by the researcher which was provided by the university. Students' anonymity was assured as well as the teacher's identity as all names are referred to using initials only, and interview recordings will be used only for coding, adding excerpts, and using direct quotations.

4 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

In pursuance of validating and strengthening the findings of this research and reaching authentic conclusions, the data collected and analyzed is considered holistic which yielded an all-inclusive interpretation of both investigated teaching methodologies as well as the research questions set for this study.

This study followed an accurate and precise triangulation process in order to study creative writing teaching methodologies in scrutiny. The triangular data collection method started off with the collection and recording of observation notes and moved on to the collection of selected artifacts, students' writing productions, which resulted in a thorough analysis of theses document conducted by two different raters, adopting the inter-rater approach, and finally ended with interviews with students in order to elicit information about their perspectives and thoughts on the two different teaching methodologies: visual prompts and model texts. The interviews were recorded and transcribed to find mutual themes and concepts that answer the research questions. Another aspect of this study that ensures validated results is the purposive sampling and selection of the setting and the participants who were selected based on clear guidelines.

4.2 Class Observation

With an aim to get a rounded picture of the writing process, two class observations were conducted. Each set or class was observed once in accordance to the teaching methodology chosen for that session. The two classes/sets involved in this study are chosen based on purposive sampling since these are the *only* two female creative writing classes that are offered in the school where the

study was conducted whose administration will benefit from the findings of this study since creative writing classes are considered pilot classes or a novel project and has been only offered recently as part of a newly modified American Curriculum.

Following the research questions and the conceptual framework which this study is based on, the observation criteria were predetermined prior to the actual observation. An observation tool was developed to scrutinize all the elements in the setting. The observation tool was developed based on recommendations and suggestions by Wajnryb (1992) made in her book *Classroom observations tasks*. The observation tool (refer to Appendix A) is a compilation of two different tables and checklists suggested in the book in order to better serve the purpose of the observation.

In accordance to the conceptual framework, when attending the classrooms and lessons of both set 1 and set 2, teacher prompts or ques as well as student responses were recorded whenever the discussion or dialogue purpose occurred to serve the purpose of the methodology. For visual prompts which was the teaching strategy implemented in set 1 classroom, ques by the teacher about the mood, the setting, the acting, the musical background…etc. were highly valuable to the observation as they highlighted the importance of using this method to provoke creativity whereas for model texts which was the teaching strategy implemented in set 2 classroom, ques by the teacher about author's voice, word choice, literary devices…etc. formed the main focus of the observation as such ques served the purpose of the teaching methodology in question thus affecting the writing productions yielded by students.

The observation tool was designed to focus on and record certain behaviors that were occurring within the learning environment. The table was divided into two sections:

1) What teacher does/ What is the communicative purpose/What learners do

2) Teacher prompts and ques/ Wait time/ Students responses

The two classes were attended/observed consecutively in order to ensure that the teacher's mindset is uninterrupted, and that students didn't get the chance to communicate or discuss the writing task which may influence their writing productions. The first observation, set 1 classroom, took place between 9:30 am and 10:20 am, and the second observation, set 2 classroom, occurred between 10:30 am and 11:10 am. In set 1 classroom, there were 17 students whereas in set 2 classroom, there were 21 students in total. In both classes the teacher was well aware of the subject matter and tried to deliver the content in a systematic manner as he tried to begin and move forward with the instruction in an almost similar manner in both classrooms aiming to only allow the methodology adopted, visual prompt or model text, affect the students' writings.

4.2.1 Observation of (Set 1) Classroom

As per the observation notes recorded for section 1 of the table, the class started off with the instructor setting clear learning outcomes and expectations with a smooth course of interaction based on teacher initiation and students' response with very minimal feedback by the teacher, for students used to respond to one another as a form of discussion or dialogue. The students were introduced to the grading rubric (refer to Appendix C) which will be used to assess their writing productions. The teacher mainly focused on explaining the criteria for receiving the highest score (4). When reading the assessment criteria for "Creativity", the teacher encouraged students to discuss how one can ensure to add refreshing ideas to one's writing piece which is related to the conceptual framework of this study and is in accordance to the several definitions, provided in the

Literature Review section, of creative writing as a genre. One student responded that in order to be "fresh" and creative, one must avoid mundane and cliché ideas that would bore the reader. The teacher also encouraged students to "take risks" and linked this notion to the "Word Choice" criteria in the rubric. He also referred to a metaphor that one of the students had written in an earlier assignment, "His guilt twirled around his neck like…etc.", stating how it is considered "refreshing" and non-cliché.

After discussing the rubric, the teacher brought up the term plot driven vs. character driven and asked students how do they usually brainstorm ideas. One student clarified that it depended on the story and how she chose to usually write a character driven story, for she usually bases her stories on dynamic characters that show "change" through growth relying on a bildungsroman theme.

To encourage students to adopt independence as well as ownership of their own writing, the teacher referred back to the "Voice" criteria in the rubric and asked students how they could assure that they bring out their voices through writing which led to students giving examples of renowned authors and books which they have read and how each author asserted and claimed an independent voice. The teacher's reference as well as focus on the "Creativity", "Word Choice", and "Voice" criteria in the rubric, guided students on what they should be focusing on when given the writing task.

After discussing all the major elements of the rubric, the teacher asked the students to watch the short clip that depicts a betrayed woman expressing her emotions confronting the man who betrayed her. The 5-minute clip is the parallel of chapter 28 from *The Lucky One* by Nicholas Sparks which set 2 were asked to read as the mentor text. The teacher asked students to discuss the

difference between a writer and a director and what decisions does each one of them get to make. Several students responded how the director's choice of the setting, nighttime, as well as the background cricket chirps have set the mood for the viewer. The teacher's purpose was to link what the students have watched to the main rubric elements which were discussed prior to watching the clip. The teacher's purpose was accomplished when students started using the terminology from the rubric as they referred to how the door between the two actors/characters was a "symbol" and how the zooming in and out on the female actor's lips was also symbolic. One student even identified the usage of a simile by one of the actors and directly linked it the rubric.

As per the notes recorded and gathered under section 2 of the observation tool, the teacher's ques and prompts were very specific and targeted that students are aware of the creative writing elements and factors of the rubric. The questions served the purpose of evoking creativity later. The question that brought about an active discussion was when the teacher asked students who is one writer that you like. The wait time to respond to this question was almost zero as students actively shared their preferences. In connection to how the teacher started the lesson by asking about "authors' voices", many students justified their preferences of certain authors based on the writing style or the author's prevailing voice. Two students mentioned how their favorite author is John Green agreeing that he became known for his endings and plot resolutions. Another student stated that Stephan King is her favorite writer due to the fact that his ideas are refreshing using the term "weird" to describe his writing choices whereas two other students referred to Arab and Persian writers, and the Persian writer was praised for her simple sentence structure and flow and the usage of fragment that actually made sense. One student mentioned how she prefers Nickolas

Sparks, the author of the mentor text used in this study, and how she can identify any of his stories only through his voice and writing style.

After watching the clip, the teacher asked the students about the significance of the opening of the clip with a child sitting and playing silently prior to the confrontation scene. One student responded that the director intended to "influence" the audience's emotions in order to make sure that the viewer shows bias towards the woman actor by acknowledging her misfortune and her unjust treatment.

The teacher ended his questions by introducing the students to the writing task focusing on the terms betrayal, reaction, long term influence, and encouraging the students to compare and contrast their own experiences with the woman from the movie clip. Before the students proceeded to write, one student declared how she can directly connect to the woman actor as her reaction was very similar, for they both "kept it in" meaning they could not let their anger out and remained silent for most of the confrontation. The students were given 15 minutes to begin writing and were asked to hand in their papers the next class.

4.2.2 Observation of (Set 2) classroom:

As per the observation notes recorded for section 1 of the table, the class started off with the teacher's clear explanation and reference to the rubric. The teacher alerted the students that this is how their work will be assessed, but this time, focused on the judgement criteria for (2) and (1) highlighting what students should avoid instead of what they should include. The teacher then moved on to reminding students of plot "devices" such as the employment of flashbacks vs. chronology inviting students to share their opinions on both. Paralleling the instructions for Set 1

students, students were encouraged to "take risks" and were asked to brainstorm the different approached to brainstorming and planning. Two students discussed their preference of open endings and cliff hangers. The teacher then moved on to discussing logical organization and the usage of transition words and connectors leading students to give examples of how they plan clear beginnings, middle, and endings of their stories.

Moving on from the general to the specific and in order to recap, the teacher asked students to provide an oral summary of Chapter 28, the climatic moment in *The Lucky One* where Beth confronts Logan about his betrayal, which they were assigned to read prior to the session. The teacher clearly stated his purpose of the question as he asked students to explain the effect of the "weather" depicted in the setting of the chapter. Some students responded that the weather has set a sad as well an angry mood. The teacher then referred to certain words used by the author such as "muddy puddles" and the car's "wipers" prompting students to depict foreshadowing, for two students concluded that these two descriptions or elements signified Beth's problems and how she was "psychologically" overloaded. The teacher also referred to the fragment usage and how the events were organized and asked students to justify the author's choice for that which resulted in one student analyzing that the fragmented organization to a clearer one mirrored Beth's shock, devastation, sadness, and internal anger and how her anger grew from internal to external ending with her "physical throw" of an object towards Logan during their confrontation. The teacher also asked students about literary devices which they have depicted in the chapter, students highlighted some similes, repletion features, and parallelism which they noticed.

As per the notes recorded under section 2 of the observation table, in parallel with the ques asked in Set 1 classroom, the teacher asked about how one's voice can prevail as a writer. Students

participated by answering that personal genres ensure that the author's voice prevails more than other genres, and they gave examples of journals, first person point of view, assertive tone, and using the reflexive pronoun "myself". They teacher specified the question further by asking how the students can infuse their voices within their writing. One student answered that through the enrichment of the story with dialogue, the author can infuse his or her own thoughts, voice. The teacher then asked if students can identify a certain writer's work only through their voice. One student gave the example of Edgar Allan Poe through his horrifying setting and how he gives the reader "the chills".

Then the teacher referred to another element in the rubric by asking students about the significance of using literary devices reminding them of the purpose of their employment and how they should refrain from writing cliché similes and metaphors. Unlike what was noted in Set 1 Classroom, the teacher didn't ask students to contribute or give their own examples of literary devices, instead he referred to two similes from the chapter and allowed students to thoroughly discuss their significance. Students shared how the one simile signifies her feeling of betrayal and how the other one indicates her changing emotional state. This discussion resulted in one student stating how she thought that this chapter is an excerpt from a horror book due to the gloomy setting and the emotional state of the main character, Beth.

The teacher finally introduced the task and guided students to focus on imagery referring to instances and images from the chapter such as "kaleidoscope", "wipers", "rain", and the "throwing of the vase" together with Beth's lashing out. Students were given 10 minutes to respond to the writing task and were asked to submit their assignment in the next class.

Linking the rubric to the actual mentor text, the teacher asked students to provide evidence of how Beth was portrayed as "angry". Students were not able to provide precise evidence from the text, instead they justified her anger by Logan's dishonesty, but surprisingly enough, one student stated her opinion of how she views Beth as "over dramatic" disagreeing with most of class.

4.3 Writing Samples

4.3.1 Introduction

The second part of the data analysis involves the purposeful selection of students' writing which they have generated based on the task below. Students' writing samples, the artifacts of this study, form the base or main component of this research since the independent, private, and symbolic written material which was analyzed by two self-regulating raters does not intrude or alter results, for unlike class observations and interviews, these artifacts are personal snapshot of students' thoughts that are represented in seclusion signifying their perspectives and inner thoughts.

4.3.2 Selection Process

The artifacts selection was a thorough and strategic process that was conducted to serve the three sub-questions of the first research question which is the building block of this research. The three sub-questions attempt to study through comparison the impact of mentor texts and visual prompts on students of different academic achievements.

a) What is the impact of each method on high achievers?

b) What is the impact of each method on medium achievers?

c) What is the impact of each method on low achievers?

Since Creative Writing as an elective class is a newly offered elective course and there are no official records or documents to track students' achievement for that course yet, in order to answer the three sub-questions, students' official final grades in English Language and Literature from the previous academic year were requested. To serve the purpose of this study, the most convenient approach was to employ and rely those grades which can be considered as significant enough, for this subject also assesses students' analysis, writing, and scripture.

Based on their previous academic grades, five papers were chosen to be analyzed and studied in scrutiny from each observed class. From each class or set, three high achievers' papers, one medium achiever's papers, and one low achiever's papers were selected in order to be able to reach a valid conclusion by answering the first research question and the three sub-questions.

4.3.3 Inter-rater Feedback and Consensus:

Selecting the two-raters who were asked to evaluate the artifacts was based on educated decisions. The first rater holds a master's degree in education whereas the second rater is a creative writing teacher who teaches in the school's boys' section. Both raters received all five writing artifacts from each set, a total of ten, and were asked to evaluate the writing samples through written feedback and comments as well as a detailed score out of 25 based on the rubric designed for Creative Writing classes.

4.3.4 Set 1 (Visual Prompting):

R.A. (High Achiever): Even though this student writer falls under the high achiever's criterion, both raters agreed that the piece lacks details with the second rater's more accurate feedback "brevity doesn't serve the purpose". This finding is highly noteworthy as this student

writer in precise was selected being considered as a high achiever as per her previous academic records, for she received a solid score of 94 (A) in English Language and literature, thus it can be argued that not all high achievers in academic writing or literary reading analysis can excel in "creative" writing; however, whether changing the teaching methodology and substituting it with a model text would have resulted in a different piece is a question to consider. Giving feedback on different criteria, the first rater commented that the piece lacks organization whereas the second rater commented that the piece displays "some" use of imagery which is only evident *once* throughout the writing piece when the student writer described the moment of when she grasped that she had been betrayed by referring to it by "I felt a rush of mixed emotions…" The paper received a score of 3 on "Creativity" based on the rubric descriptor from both raters, but a total score of 18/25 from the first rater, and a 20/25 from the second rater which are both considered "low" scores for a student who is a considerable high achiever.

R.Z. (High Achiever): Out of the five creative writing papers which were generated after the student writers were subjected to visual prompting, this paper showed the most creativity according to both raters' feedback as per the rubric's account. The student mirrored the short clip's betrayal revelation moment by copying the actress's reaction, silence, to describing her own reaction on paper: "I was dead silent." In analyzing this piece's creativity, the student writer employed literary devices several times throughout her work adding richness to her descriptions.

For example:

1) "The words that flew out of his mouth were white noise."
2) "My heart squeezed as his menacing laugh occupied the air between us."
3) "My vision bled crimson…"

Both raters commented on this piece stating that the writer employs rich sensory details and good word choice as well as being extremely engaging. Furthermore, this paper received the highest score among all five papers sampled from this set, for the first rater evaluated this paper by giving it a score of 22/25 likewise it received a 24/25 from the second rater where both raters agreed that this paper is worth a solid score of 4 on both "Creativity" and "Voice".

D.S. (High Achiever): The most notable common feedback that this paper received from raters was regarding conventions. The student writer used plenty of descriptive and accurate words to describe occurrences in her narration. For example: emotionless mess, recklessly, quite discrete, so blind, clueless, despise, burst out, and unheard. On the other hand, the writer did not use literary devices such as similes or metaphors, but she did use personification twice throughout her paper. The first rater noted mistakes in run-ons and sentence structure whereas the second rater commented that "spelling" should be improved. On "Creativity" and "Ideas", the second rater commented that the piece presented "an honest flow of emotions" which created relatability on behalf of the reader, thus rated this paper 21/25. Equally, the first rater also evaluated this paper as worthy of 21/25 with mutual agreement on full scores on both creativity and voice.

D.M. (Medium Achiever): Since this paper is written by a medium achiever, both raters commented on mistakes in conventions and misplaced modifiers and gave recommendations on proofreading and organization. On creativity, the student writer did employ some similes:

1) "I felt like a crack on the side of the road…"

2) "[a]nger boiled in my stomach…"

However, they were discredited by both raters leading the second rater to give feedback regarding ideas and voice stating that they are *cliché* and that "voice" is natural which entails that this writing piece lacks creativity. Both raters evaluated the "creativity" and the "Description and Word Choice" of this paper by giving it a score of 3 receiving a total of 19/25 by the first rater and 17/25 by the second rater.

A.A. (Low Achiever): This writing piece received an ample amount of recommendations and negative feedback, for the piece lacks the usage of any descriptive words or literary devices that would entail creativity. The student writer described the moment when she realized that she had been betrayed by writing "I felt really bad…" which in comparison to all other writing pieces generated in this set lacks depth, voice, or even the faintest of description, but the reaction which was expressed in writing mirrors that of "Beth" from the movie clip, for she, just like the actress, remained silent: " I was shocked, and I wasn't able to talk…" Both raters recommended that the student works on sentence structure and organization. As for feedback on creativity, the comments varied from "no flow of ideas" to a clear "lack of creativity" statement. Moreover, the first rater evaluated this paper as worthy of 16/25 whereas the second rater evaluated this paper by giving it a score of 19/25 as per the rubric descriptor which is the lowest score among all five samples chosen from the set subjected to visual prompting.

One common feature found in the writing artifacts of the students who were asked to generate a creative piece after using visual prompting to stimulate creativity is how two out of the five students mirrored the reaction of the actress in the movie clip as they both had written about how they remained silent. The difference however lies in the choice of words and descriptions that

each of the two students employed in her writing to describe the moment of their awareness of the betrayal.

Another notable phenomenon related to the samples chosen from this set is the fact that out of the five writing artifacts by student writers, only two received a full score, 4, from both raters on the "creativity" criterion based on the rubric descriptor. Fewer literary devices and less sophisticated or advanced word choice was used by writers in this set or classroom. This notion directly responds to the first research question as it affirms that exposing student writers to visual prompting does not highly influence the writer's word choice, voice, nor does it result in an exceedingly "creative" piece in comparison to the implantation of other teaching methods or strategies. Based on the two studies done by Sylvester and Greenidge (2009) and Hoffner, Baker, and Quinn (2008), their employment of visual prompts was always associated with struggling students and those who are *weaker* writers than others implying that this teaching method can support less literary students unlike the deciphering of mentor texts which needs a well-rounded knowledge of the language.

4.3.5 Set 2 (Model Texts)

A.D. (High Achiever): This writing piece received high praise by both raters, but surprisingly enough, none of the raters gave feedback on common features or the same criterion. The student writer employed a vivid metaphor to describe the exact moment of when she realized that she had been betrayed: "[a]nd anger had started to bubble to the surface of my thoughts…" The first rater commented on this paper by stating that it is full of intriguing ideas and catchy thoughts, but recommended that the writer adds more details whereas the second rater decided to

focus on the "organization" criteria as per the rubric's descriptions and commented on the coherence and logical structure of the paper; this paper was the only paper to receive an "error-free" description by the second rater. It was evaluated by the first rater as being the paper worthy of the highest grade from this set receiving a 23/25 scoring a solid 4 on all criteria in the rubric except for conventions likewise the second rater rated this paper as the most creative one within the five papers from this set as well as Set 1 granting it a score of 24/25 scoring a solid 4 on each criterion.

Z.K. (High Achiever): A prominent aspect or literary device used in this writing sample is the common usage of figurative language and imagery.

For example:

1) "So you can imagine the amount of exhilaration injected through my veins as I heard the faintest utter of the sentence."
2) 2) "[g]iving surreal excuses, mutating into a psychopath."

The evident usage of imagery and vivid descriptive words is due to the thorough discussion which took place in the classroom while discussing the chapter which students have read earlier. The discussion was focused on imagery and literary devices such as similes which was echoed in this student's work. Both raters praised the strong word choice and descriptive aspects employed in this paper and gave comments such as engaging ideas, good word choice, but the paper also received recommendation on improving conventions. Moreover, the first rater evaluated this paper highly by giving it a score of 23/25 by rating all the criteria related to creativity with a score of 4. Similarly, the second rater evaluated this paper as worthy of a score of 4 for all aspects involving

creativity, but in aspects related to language, sentences variety and conventions, the paper received a 2 and 3 resulting in a total of 22/25.

J.Z. (High Achiever): Mirroring the chapter which was read earlier and discussed during the class observation, this paper employed several similes and metaphors adopting the writing choices of Nicholas Sparks, the author of *The Lucky One*.

For example:

1) "Trusting someone is like getting a new pair of glasses."
2) "[y]our mind becomes a puzzle of turmoil and confusion, but also a boiling kettle of anger, overflowing."

Both raters highly commended and praised the creativity of this paper with direct comments such as rich vocabulary, profound thoughts, deep strong emotions, vivid imagery, on the other hand, they both suggested that the student writer must add more details by elaborating on and explaining the event itself. The assessment of this paper by the first grader resulted in a score of 20/25 with full scores of 4 on both "description and word choice" and "voice" which agrees with the assessment of the second rater for both criteria, but the second rater evaluated this paper by giving it a 21/25.

L.B. (Medium Achiever): This paper received by both raters several recommendations on improving sentence structure as well as conventions. The second rater commented that errors interfere with the readability of the piece. The writer didn't employ any literary devices lined up with creativity, but her strong voice was evident, for both the first and second raters gave the paper a score of 4 on voice but a total of 18/25 and 19/25 respectively.

R.M. (Low Achiever): Since this writing piece is by a low achiever, it didn't receive any commendations from any of the raters. Correspondingly, the writer didn't employ any literary devices that are considered "creative". Both raters gave feedback regarding punctuation errors, weak sentence structure, and run-ons. The first rater recommended that the writer works on word choice and adding details and gave the paper a total score of 17/25 whereas the second rater evaluated that the creative ideas employed as cliché ones judging the paper by a score of 18/25, the lowest in this set. In terms of "creativity" and "description and word choice", both raters agreed on the same scores, 3.

One common feature found in the writing artifacts of all three high achievers who were subjected to model texts is that they *all* used imagery, a simile, or a metaphor to describe the moment of when they found out that they had been betrayed which is similar to how the betrayal revelation was written in *The Lucky One,* the text they read and analyzed. It can be argued that this is due to the fact that a metalinguistic mode of instruction was evident during class observation which proves that explicit teaching of literary devices used in the mentor text greatly influenced high achievers' writing productions. The findings match the arguments suggested by Gebhard et al. (2013) and Kilpert (2003) who highlighted the importance of metalanguage in teaching and how the theory of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) should be taken into consideration when designing the curriculum.

Another notable factor that emerged based on the raters' assessment is the fact that each writing artifact received a solid score of (4) based on the rubric descriptor for the "voice" criterion by the first rater likewise the second rater evaluated all the writing artifacts as worthy of a score of (4) for "voice" except for one paper, the paper produced by the low achiever R.M.. It can be argued

that this occurrence is due to the discussion, ques, and question that took place during the session prior to the introduction of the writing task which in return confirms that being exposed to a model text can elevate students' voice of expression.

In analyzing the sensory details, imagery, word choice, and figurative language employed in the collected writing artifacts, "Set 1" writing productions present a higher quality and a more frequent usage of literary devices. Only *one* student writer from "Set 1" has applied literary devices in her writing which resulted in her receiving the highest score within her set, on the other hand, *three* students from "Set 2" have employed similes, imagery, and literary devices in high frequency.

In assessing the overall creativity of high achievers from both sets, the three highest scores within the same set, the high achievers in Set 2, model texts, received higher scores than those in Set 1, visual prompt, with two of them receiving a score of 22 or higher by both raters whereas in Set 1, only one paper, the paper produced by R.Z., received a 22/25 by the first rater and 24/25 by the second rater. Additionally, the three high achievers from set 1 did not all receive a score of 4 on creativity by both raters whereas the three achievers from set 2 received a full score of 4 on creativity by the second rater.

Regarding the creativity of medium and low achievers selected from both sets, model texts and visual prompt, the teaching method didn't influence or was of significant matter in terms of the scores they received, for medium achievers received average scores, and low achievers from both sets received the lowest grades among their groups; therefore, in regard to students' achievement levels, the teaching method does not play a direct influence regarding creativity, for the student who is not a high achiever is not eloquent or knowledgeable enough to employ literary and poetic devices that are considered artistic thus impacting the creativity of their piece.

4.4 Interviews Results

4.4.1 Introduction

In the interest of answering the second research question, what are the students' perspectives towards each method, and to explore the prewriting stage, a post production interview was steered with all ten students whose writing artifacts were sampled, collected, and graded by the two raters. The purpose of holding an interview was to elicit information of how and what the writer thinks before attempting to write. Carrying out structured interviews or purposive conversation with student writers was necessary in this case since students' insights, behaviors, and feelings are impossible to interpret through classroom observation or document analysis. As per the procedures recommended by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) and Merriam (2009), the interview was a semi structured one since students' perspectives and interpretations of the questions and answers generated further inquiries.

The questions asked were detailed and clear. The two main questions were *conceptual* as they encouraged students to answer "how" and "what" types of questions. The questions were predetermined and were asked in order, and specific answers were perused during the interview. The first question was altered to fit the teaching methodology that students were exposed to whereas the second question was mutual for both sets. Students were asked questions about their prewriting experience and whether factors other than the teaching methodology adopted influenced their writing productions.

4.4.2 Interview Questions

- Based on the visual that you watched, how did the actors' performances, the setting, the dialogue influence the piece of writing you generated? (Set 1)

- Based on the techniques (word choice, voice, figurative language…etc.) used by the author, how did reading his work influence the piece of writing you generated? (Set 2)

- What external influences such as past experiences, memories, real life situations played a role in shaping your writing? (Both Sets)

4.4.3 Themes for Question 1/Set 1

1)The Scene's Setting:

In four out of the five conducted interviews, student writers mentioned the effect of the rainy, gloomy, and dull weather which was portrayed in the scene, visual prompt, on the way they wrote or perceived the task. D.S showed the most relevant connection to the setting and its direct influence on her writing; R.Z. related to the setting and how it resembled her own setting of when and where she knew about her own betrayal, but she mentioned how the darkness didn't affect her writing nor her word choice instead other elements did. On the other hand, R.A. and D.M. mentioned the setting in the interview but didn't highlight its influence in their writing. D.M. revealed how the setting was counter to the setting of her own experience, but the gloomy setting helped her write honestly without "sugar coating" the truth whereas surprisingly R.A. stated that the setting precisely and the movie clip generally *did not* influence her writing whatsoever explaining that she hasn't watched the entire movie, thus her relation to it or elicitation of ideas from it is minimal; she elaborated by saying that the movie gave her an idea of how betrayal is

universal and how she isn't alone, but it still didn't influence her writing.   A.A. did not mention the setting during her interview, nor did she clearly state how the scene affected her creativity or word choice; her communication level and the voicing of her ideas were rather weak in comparison to her peers.

  ➢ R.A. (High Achiever):

R.A.: the setting was like it was night time and raining…this sort of gave the feeling of sadness and depression…because betrayal is unpleasant and the situation…

Interviewer: how did this affect your writing? What you saw…did it affect the way you wrote?

R.A.: ohhh ….it gave me some ideas like it showed me like the characters because they were so intricate and had different personalities….this showed me umm that there are different people in the world…

Interviewer: When you watched…did the video give you ideas when you started writing?

Student: no…umm…It gave me some ideas but not much…

Interviewer: ok like?

R.A: it gave me some ideas like the feeling of betrayal and how it affected both parties

Interviewer: how did this help you write? Did this help you write in any way?

R.A.: It didn't

2) Connection to the Woman Character:

Four out of the five interviewed student writers in this set mentioned their direct relation to the female betrayed character. R.Z. stated how the dialogue and the actress's words influenced her writing as she would have wanted to act like the character in the movie, understated confrontation yet honest, as she expressed her desire to be able to confront the person who betrayed her whereas D.M. revealed how her actions were parallel to that of the character's as she slightly portrayed her anger during her betrayal experience, but she didn't directly express that anger through her word choice as she only hinted to it by employing literary devices throughout her writing through the example of "my fists were clenched". On the other hand, both A.A. and D.S. showed complete assimilation with the character's actions as they themselves reacted just as "silently" as the character has, for the scene was an exact reminder of their own personal situations. D.S. even revealed how the actress's performance influenced her word choice and use of literary devices. Similarly, A.A. expressed how watching the actress's facial expressions helped her write. These findings support the argument presented by Tobolowsky (2007) that students who are able to connect to what they see are regarded as "diverger" students since they were able to reflect upon an image.

➢ D.S. (High Achiever):

D.S.: From the moment like I saw it I knew it was going to be sad because it was dark and I guess when you see someone not speak much but like through their eyes it like affects you more than when they say something……so for example when they were actually talking they had tears in their eyes and she wasn't saying much which says a lot and so when I was writing it put me in my emotions….

Interviewer: How did this silent mood affect your writing?

D.S: It gave me time to think…it gave me idea…it didn't push on certain subjects, so my mind went to extremes…umm…it's just when they perform something that's so simple it's just letting the viewer take it into their own hand

Interviewer: Did it influence your word choice figurative language?

D.S.: Umm…ya

Interviewer: How?

D.S. When she didn't say much I felt like she was somehow me I said *I don't lash out….* that's what I wrote

4.4.4 Themes for Question 1/Set 2

1)Reference to the Vase Image:

The three high achievers who were interviewed referred to the vase image when answering the first question. The vase image describes how the main female character, Beth, throws a vase at the man who betrayed her. The three student writers expressed their different connection to that image. A.D stated how the image made her remember her own experience.

➢ A.D. (High Achiever):

A.D: The image portrayed and transferred the anger which I felt too…this helped me describe the events that occurred, and I experienced

When asked about what specifically influenced her writing, Z.K. explained how she borrowed the vase image but twisted it to serve the purpose of her writing. She elaborated on how the image

itself helped her shape her writing by not being serious or dramatic adding that she "borrowed the image with a twist".

➢ Z.K. (High Achiever):

Z.K.: when he made Beth throw the vase…I took it as a way to make it kinda humorous and sarcastic like I didn't try to be very serious in my writing

On the other hand, J.Z. was reminded of her own opposite reaction during her experience of betrayal stating how she wished she could have "let it out" imitating the image.

➢ J.Z. (High Achiever):

J.Z.: how when she threw the vase maybe that showed the anger inside of me that I never let out but she showed it in a way that I would have

2) Reference to Literary Devices:

All Set 2 student writers who were interviewed referred to the writing style of the author and mentioned how Spraks's writing anchored their own. Three out of the five interviewed students referred to his diction and word choice. All the participants including the medium and the low achiever referred to similes mostly, metaphors, and rhetorical devices used in the chapter which they have read and highlighted how it affected their writing, but not all of them employed figurative or literary language in their writing. A.D., high achiever, replied to the first interview question with a detailed and very thorough response that portrayed the significance and success of the mentor text's ability to influence her creativity. Z.K., also a high achiever, admitted to borrowing an image from the chapter and then changed it to fit her purpose; she also explained how she likes to imagine herself writing in the same way as the author before she attempts to write her own work stating

how she was inspired by his use of metaphors, figurative language, and rhetorical devices. J.Z., high achiever, referred to how the author's figures of speech aided her to create her own. L.B., medium achiever, explained how the word choice helped her extend her diction and how she was inspired by the author's way of delivery, but she admitted that she didn't use extensive figurative language in her own work. R.M., low achiever, mentioned how she tried to copy the author's style and how she tried to use figurative language just like the author, but there was no specific or profound reference to specific techniques, word choice, or imagery created by the author; refuting her answer, there was no evidence from the sample collected of any use of literary devices as the paper received the lowest score within her set form both raters.

➢ A.D. (High Achiever):

A.D: so the diction he used and the vivid imagery he used influenced my way of thinking and ignited the emotions that I felt in the past and what I felt when I was betrayed

Interviewer: how so? can you give me a specific example?

A.D: when he was describing how she felt when she *threw the vase* at the person who took the picture that was meant for her brother I felt the anger through the words that he used and it allowed to feel the anger I felt before

Interviewer: what happened when you felt that anger?

A.D: I was able to describe the events that occurred, and I was able to remember everything that I went through before.

4.4.5 Themes for Question 2/Sets 1 and 2

Since the second interview question delves into memories and personal choices and experiences, many common themes, ideas, and phrases recurred among all responses by all ten interviewed students from both sets. This entails that the methodology or teaching approach adopted by the teacher is one of the many factors that may influence creativity. Delving into students' minds and being exposed to their insights and ample life experiences was beneficial as it shed light on their learning styles, analysis strategies, and how they congregate all their concepts to form one cohesive piece of writing.

1)Past Experiences

R.A. (set 1) referred to incidents that she has faced or been through at school; she explained how those triggered memories helped her generate ideas to write about all the sadness that she felt likewise D.M. (set 1) recalled the several fights that she had with her betrayer and stated that her writing was more realistic than she expected due to her memories due to how the clip triggered her reminiscences and emotional state. R.Z. (set 1) was not able to voice a specific external factor that influenced her writing; she only decided to think of the first memory "of several betrayals that followed" and to write about it. D.S. (set 1) gave the most insightful response, for she explained how she was deeply hurt by someone so dear to her elaborating on the idea that the writing task mirrored her current situation thus resulted in a genuine creative writing product.

➢ D.S. (High Achiever/Set 1):

D.S: the entire topic talks about betrayal so the first thing I thought of writing was a friend but somehow the friend was portrayed by my father…it wasn't really a friend but I didn't have the

audacity to write my father…umm…after everything that I've been through with my parents I feel like I've turned dark like my mood is dark I don't know how to write if its not depressing sad topic…it affected me when I was writing….its pouring my emotions onto my paper…I pick up the pen when I am sad

> ➢ Self Traits and Personal Qualities

Out of the ten student writers who were interviewed, only three students referred to notions other than memories, past experiences, or personal reflections concerning external factors that influenced their writing production. Two students from set 2, mentor texts, and one student from set 1, visual prompt, referred to self traits or innate qualities that influenced their own writing. To elaborate, A.A (low achiever) from set 1 declared how her own personality and how she usually gives other people chances reminded her that there should always be a limit or else she will end up hurt, and that influenced her expression. She also admitted trying to control everything by herself and to wanting to be indecent thus she hasn't spoken about her betrayal incident before; therefore, when she was given the chance to write about it, she was able to pour out her emotions. In a more technical description, A.D. (high achiever) from set 2 mentioned how she is a "bookworm" who is greatly influenced by the media and all the great works which has read or watched that entailed grief and sad emotions; she instantly referred to J.K. Rowling's description of Harry Potter's feelings about being an orphan and mentioned how she remembers how other authors describe or depict characters in their books and how this trait influenced her writing. Moreover, Z.K. (high achiever) from set 2 admitted that she is very emotional and sensitive and how she always overreacts. She explained that when reflecting on her moment of betrayal, she realized how she took a "very simple" situation to an extreme due to her personality explaining how she blows

59

"things" out of proportions. She concluded that reflecting on her own actions due to her personality traits helped shape her writing production.

To conclude, relying on the teachings of Archer's Reflexivity Theory, delving into students' processing mechanisms, analyzing their prewriting choices, and deciphering their pre-thoughts about a certain topic can be an insightful journey which teachers should embark on and plan future lessons accordingly.

5 CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary of the Study

Since creative writing is viewed as a novel course or subgenre of writing, it has been the concern of multiple researchers and theorists, and a plethora of studies have set to investigate this topic. Most studies focused on the effects of teaching the writing process, investigated its teachability as a skill, and observed several teaching methods adopted in teaching this subgenre; however, it hasn't been found in the literature that a study was conducted to reveal findings that compare the effectiveness of different teaching methods involved in creative writing. As a result, this study aimed to compare the effectiveness and the degree of positive influence that two different teaching methods, mentor texts and visual prompts, have on the creativity of students' writing production.

To achieve the goal of the current study which was to determine the influence of two different teaching methodologies, two classes were selected to be observed where each set of students was subjected to a different teaching method. To ensure validity and to eliminate discrepancies in the findings, set 1 watched a 5-minute movie clip of the same book/chapter that set 2 had to read and analyze; all the participants were females whose L1 was not English and were taught by the same teacher, a CELTA certified Native speaker of English.

After observing the classes of the two separate groups or sets, collecting and analyzing writing samples of only 5 students from each class due to purposive sampling, using the inter-rater approach to analyze the writing product, and conducting semi-structured interviews with student writers, the findings have revealed that adopting the teaching method that relies on the usage of

mentor texts in the classrooms resulted in a higher and more creative writing productions which was evident through the extended and analytical discussion held in the classroom as well as students' reference to the literary devices and creative elements of the model text or chapter in their interviews, in addition to the creative quality of their writing samples.

Student writing samples were collected and marked by two different raters, and their constructive feedback as well as their scoring of each criterion within the rubric descriptor were analyzed and taken into consideration when drawing the findings. More constructive feedback or written praise was given to the high achievers of set 2, mentor texts than those of set 1, visual prompts. Their writing samples complemented with their interview results showed a more well-rounded ability to write creatively and precise awareness and high metacognition of creative elements and creative writing devices.

Students who were exposed to a mentor text where the text or chapter was discussed thoroughly in class by the instructor have shown a more systematic knowledge of literary devices applied in creative writing due to the explicit reference by both the teacher and students, evident during class observation, to the author's style, word choice, employment of literary devices, and his tone. Supported by the various theories that underlie this study, exposing student writers to creative works by prominent authors will result in more creative, more expressive writing productions with assertive tones. The current findings add to the growing body of literature on the effectiveness of employing model texts in teaching creative elements thus impacting students' writing.

Based on the interview results which were held with the selected participants, students who were subjected to mentor texts referred to literary devices throughout the conversation or when

answering the interview question whereas those who were exposed to the visual prompt reflected on the image and were not able to connect what they saw to writing techniques or devices despite the fact that reference to literary devices was evident throughout the class observation; however, when asked about external factors that influenced their writing, other than the teaching method, most students from both sets had similar responses which are harsh memories, past experiences, and reflections upon the past. It is worthy to mention that students whose life experiences were harsh or who endured a severer childhood more than other were able to respond to the task more accurately and more creatively employing rich literary devices; they also were able to respond to the interview question and explain their choices more meticulously than other students.

5.2 Limitations of the Study

During the execution of this study, several struggles arose. The first and foremost limitation was the limited access to classes. Since the school where the study was conducted has just recently adopted the American Curriculum and has recently offered electives as part of its course plan, timetable schedules as well as number of classes per week was not systematic thus limiting the number of class observations. Another limitation which was faced in this study is the rather low number of students who are enrolled in the Creative Writing elective; had there been more students in each class, richer data would have been collected. The students whose writing samples were chosen and who were later interviewed were selected according to their previous academic year's achievement in English where they learned literary analysis and "academic" writing; as a result, some of those grades proved inaccurate or irrelevant in relation to assessing students' levels in "creative writing". If the Creative Writing class had not been a "pilot" project or a newly added elective, data findings might have been different.

5.3 Recommendations and Future Research

Several questions remain unanswered at present; one of those questions is the impact of each teaching methodology on low and medium achievers; therefore, a further study with more focus on teaching the creative elements is suggested. To investigate the impact of the teaching methodology on medium and low level achievers, a more thorough and detailed study should be conducted where the low achievers' and the medium achievers' knowledge of poetic devices, literary devices, and advanced word choice must be ensured prior to their enrollment in any creative writing class which will effectively result in a more accurate measure of comparing between different teaching methods that may or may not evoke creativity, for the results of this study show that medium and low achievers exposed to both teaching methods have received expected scores that reflect or match their achievement and ability which in return is problematic when trying to analyze whether the reason behind their scores was the teaching method that they were exposed, their level of achievement, or their lack or minimal knowledge of advanced poetic and literary devices.

Another phenomenon that was found throughout this study is how one *high achiever* who is a student in set 1 classroom did not write creatively and received a low score by both raters. This can be an essential research question that can underlie a future study to explore the relationship between high achievement in literary analysis and academic writing and creative writing.

Another recommendation would be to use a mixed teaching methodology where students can read a model text and be subjected to a visual mode simultaneously and then be asked to generate a creative writing piece attempting to evoke all creativity senses.

One final recommendation would be to unify all students' levels by conducting a pre-assessment to determine creativity as well as conduct pre-writing interviews to select participants with similar experiences or external factors that may influence their creativity in order to ensure that the creative writing teaching method is the sole factor that will shape their creative writing product.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A:

Observation Notes (Set 1: Visual Prompts):

Observation Notes (Set 2: Mentor Text):

Left page:

Date: Tues, Nov 14th
Time: 10:30 to 11:10
Session: 4th period
Teacher: Mr. Neil
Class: W. (Set 2)   *chapter*
Number of Students: 21

What Teacher Does	What is the Communicative Purpose	What Learners Do
* starts with rubric	→ clarifies their how work will be assessed	→ gave the opposite of / what 4 or 3 / to avoid
* reminds students with "plot devices" ① taking risks	→ give examples for planning	gave examples: → flashback vs. chronological → open endings / cliff hangers
transitions / connectors "logical organization"	→ Identify → usage	→ students gave examples → Planning (clear beg/mid/end)

Teacher Prompts/Ques	Wait Time	Student Responses
* which of the genres "voice" prevails most? (personal)	→ direct participation	journals
* How can we infuse our voice?		→ first person → myself
→ Do you feel like you can tell who the author is?	→ 2 answered	→ through dialogue ex: Edgar Allen Poe
→ w.c. / devices ↓ not cliché	* remind students of the purpose of using similes & metaphors	② "chill" setting - Casandra Claire → more vivid

Right page:

① one girl added → I thought it's a horror book → the setting → the feeling of the main character.

Date:
Time:
Session: task → focus on "images" → connected/relate to the text
Teacher: ① kaleidoscope
Class: ② wipers ② rain
Number of Students:

What Teacher Does	What is the Communicative Purpose	What Learners Do
Analyzing the chapter		
* Asked for a summary	→ refresh/recap	→ one students gives a detailed summary (2 mins)
* Weather?	→ effect	→ sadness/anger/
"muddy puddles" "wiper"	→ signify	→ problems/overloaded psychologically
* organization		→ devasted sad → shocked
* literary devices? (not many)	→ repetition parallelism	(internal) (angry) externally (throws)
some similes		

Teacher Prompts/Ques	Wait Time	Student Responses
* Why is she angry?	→ discussion	→ He wasn't honest!
* Give a specific line (evidence)	→ no one	→ one student said → she "Beth" is overdramatic
① He trapped her down like prey"		② signify her betrayal
② Kaleidoscope * infrequent similes → effective ones sight & sound & smell	→ how she is changing / emotional state	→ threatened writing task → quick ideas

Appendix B:

Writing Samples:

Set 1 (R.Z.) High Achiever:

Feedback by Rater 1:

Good word choice ②

The words that flew out of ʰⁱˢ mouth were white noise. He's lying to me① I kept reminding myself. My heart squeezed as ʰⁱˢ menacing laugh occupied the air between us; with fists balled at my sides, and tears threatening to spill from my eyes, I refused to believe my closest friends would say such a thing about me. ——— What's worse is that I was hearing this from a stranger, a face I used to pass by everyday whose smile never seemed more than a friendly gesture. The grin that had spread on his face dropped and something akin to concern painted his features: "Are you going to cry?", he obnoxiously said. My vision bled crimson, and I felt like I was going to hurt an innocent bystander who did no more than tell me what everyone? ⟨had⟩ been saying about me. I was dead silent, the calm before the storm. ① At that point, I was aware of the angry tears that streamed down my face I ——— marched my way home and sat in silence for hours. It's been 2 years since that incident. It was the first of the many betrayals that followed after. Sometimes the best thing you can do is get the people who make you miserable out of your life. It was in that slight period of time that I learned not to trust so easily...

Paneen 7. 11A

Divide the essay into paragraphs.

What they were saying about you?

what about them? (the fear!)

Cr. 4
Org. 3
Voice 4
Des. 4
Sent. v. 3
Conv. 4

2²/₂⁵

Set 1 (R.Z.) High Achiever:

Feedback by Rater 2:

The words that flew out of ^his mouth were white noise. He's lying to me, I kept reminding myself. My heart squeezed as ^his menacing laugh occupied the air between us; with fists balled at my sides, and tears threatening to spill from my eyes, I refused to believe my closest friends would say such a thing about me. _ _ _ _ _ What's worse is that I was hearing this from a stranger, a face I used to pass by everyday whose smile never seemed more than a friendly gesture. The grin that had spread on his face dropped and something akin to concern painted his features: "Are you going to cry?", he obnoxiously said. My vision bled crimson and I felt like I was going to hurt an innocent bystander who did no more than tell me what everyone's been saying about me. I was dead silent, the calm before the storm, at this point I was aware of the angry tears that streamed down my face I _ _ _ _ marched my way home and sat in silence for hours. It's been 2 years since that incident. It was the first of the many betrayals that followed after. Sometimes the best thing you can do is get the people who make you miserable out of your life. It was in that slight period of time that I learned not to trust so easily...

Raneem Z.) 11A

Extremely engaging! the confidence & sincerity flow ideas are with so catchy.

Cn. 4
org. 4
V. 4
De. 4
S.V. 4
Con. 4

very rich sensory details.

Error free

44/25

Set 2 (A.D.) High Achiever:

Feedback by Rater 1:

Error-free (1)

furthermore,

Anger is a very peculiar emotion. This abstract emotion has the ability to turn one of the nicest people you know into someone you don't recognize. Although I try to be the nicest person I can be, I have to admit that I do get affected by anger, as does most of the human population. However, I don't think a person who gets betrayed, for example, is to blame for feeling angry about what has been done to them.

One of the cruelest betrayals I have ever faced happened about two years ago when one of my closest friends spread rumors about me and my other friends. Not only did she create a rift between my best-friends and I, but she also acted the victim and cried at every chance she got. At the time, when I found out about what happened, I felt as though time had stopped, and anger had started to bubble up to the surface of my thoughts. My hands had started to shake and I couldn't pay attention to any of my surroundings. I wouldn't say I lashed out because whenever I was around her, I just acted cold and detatched. I'm sure she felt hurt by that, but at the time, I thought she deserved that.

logical & coherent structure, clear, appropriate theory & transition.

However, all problems were resolved, and her and I are friends again. I chose to forgive and forget because everyone makes mistakes. Nowadays, I don't confide in people as often because I'm afraid they'll twist my words, but I believe that everything happens for a reason. Moreover, I wouldn't be the person I am today if that didn't happen.

smooth & fluid sentences

Cn. 4
Org. 4
V. 4
Desc. 4
S.V. 4
Con. 4

24/25

74

Set 2 (A.D.) High Achiever:

Feedback by Rater 2:

①

Furthermore,

Amira Dakkak   Anger is a very peculiar emotion. ~~This~~ abstract emotion has
Set 2.   the ability to turn one of the nicest people you know into
               someone you don't recognize. Although I try to be the nicest
               person I can be, I have to admit that I do get affected by
               anger, as does most of the human population. However, I
               don't think a person who gets betrayed, ~~for example,~~ is to
               be blamed for feeling angry about what had been done to (them).
                                                                   him/her

Intriguing & pleasant idea to identify with! ✓✓

       One of the cruelest betrayals I have ever faced happened
       about two years ago when one of my closest friends spread
       rumors about me and my other friends. Not only did she create
       a rift between my best-friends and I, but she also acted
       the victim and cried at every chance she got. At the time,
       when I found out about what ^had happened, I felt as though time
       had stopped, and anger had started to bubble up to the
       surface of my thoughts. My hands had started to shake and
       I couldn't pay attention to any of my surroundings. I
       wouldn't say I lashed out because whenever I was around
       her, I just acted cold and detatched. I'm sure she felt
       hurt by that, but at the time, I thought she deserved that.

Please elaborate on what had happened! The reader is left with the problem; it still remains vague.

What had happened?

       However, all problems were resolved, and ^she her and I are friends
       again. I chose to forgive and forget because everyone makes
       mistakes. Nowadays, I don't confide in people as often because
       I'm afraid they'll^would twist my words, but I believe that everything
       happens for a reason. Moreover, I wouldn't be the person I am
       today if that didn't happen ~~ed~~.
                               hadn't

Add more details.

23/23

83/25

Gr. 4
Org. 4
Voice 4
Dev. 4×3
Conv 3

Appendix C

Holistic Rubric:

Creative Writing Rubric

Criteria	4	3	2	1
Ideas: the extent to which ideas are relevant, creative, and organized.				
Creativity	Writing is extremely creative. Ideas and style is refreshing and imaginative. Talented writing.	Writing is somewhat creative. Some new and imaginative ideas. Good writing.	Writing contains a few creative ideas, but style is mostly uninspired.	Writing contains many cliché ideas and an uninspired style.
Organization	Maintains a clear focus; exhibits a logical, coherent structure through appropriate transitions	Maintains a clear focus; exhibits a logical sequence of ideas through appropriate transitions	Establishes but does not always maintain an appropriate focus; some inconsistencies in sequence of ideas	Lacks an appropriate focus, but suggests some organization
Language Use: the extent to which the assignment reveals an awareness of audience and purpose				
Voice	Voice is confident and appropriate. Consistently engaging. Active, not passive voice. Natural. A strong sense of both authorship and audience.	The speaker sounds as if he or she cares too little or too much about the topic. Or the voice fades in and out. Occasionally passive.	Tone is okay. But the paper could have been written by anyone. Apathetic or artificial. Overly formal or informal.	"I just want to get this over with." Mechanical and cognitive problems so basic that tone doesn't even figure in. Student didn't write enough to judge.

Description and word choice	Creative, concrete language; uses literary devices and rich sensory detail	Assignment uses concrete language. literary devices and sensory detail	Some use of concrete language, literary devices, and sensory detail in assignment	Little use of concrete language, literary devices or sensory detail in assignment
Sentence Variety	Well-varied sentence structure throughout	Good sentence structure and variety	Occasional use of sentence variety	Little sentence variety

Conventions: the extent to which the assignments exhibit conventional grammar/spelling/word usage				
Grammar/ Punctuation	Smooth, fluid error-free punctuation/grammar	Mostly correct grammar; errors do not interfere with communication	Errors occasionally interfere with communication; verb tense errors	Grammatical errors are awkward and interfere with communication
Spelling and Word Usage	Correct spelling; error-free word usage	Mostly correct spelling and word usage	Errors in spelling and word usage	Misspelled and misused words throughout

Appendix D

Letter of Approval:

www.buid.ac.ae

9/30/2017

To whom it may concern

This is to certify that Ms.Farah Al Karaki with Student ID number 2015101063 is a registered part-time student in the Master Of Education offered by The British University in Dubai since September 2015.

Ms. Al Karaki is currently collecting data for her dissertation (Creative Writing Methods).

She is required to gather data through conducting face-to-face interviews that will help her in writing the final dissertation. Your permission to conduct her research in your organisation is hereby requested. Further support provided to her in this regard will be highly appreciated.

Any information given will be used solely for academic purposes.

This letter is issued on Ms.Al Karaki's request.

Yours sincerely,

Amer Alaya
Head of Student Administration

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