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In contemplating the role of writing in the lower-level foreign language (FL) classroom, instructors may question how learners with limited knowledge of lexicogrammatical structures and textual conventions in the FL can be expected to make meaning accurately in writing. Further, they may be uncertain of how this language modality should fit into instructional goals and objectives or how they should assess learners' writing development. In fact, in comparison with other language modalities, writing has historically played a lesser role in lower-level FL learning, seen as "something students will take up after having acquired the language through oral communication and reading" (Racelis & Matsuda, 2013, p. 384). Identifying the purposes and goals of writing for lower-level FL learners has also long been an open question, and we will delve into this issue further in the next section of this chapter.

Although long viewed as a secondary skill in the lower-level FL classroom, as Williams (2012) wrote, in recent years, this perception of writing has shifted, and it has "now come into focus as an activity that may promote as well as reflect [language] development" (p. 321). In fact, research has shown that writing facilitates overall FL acquisition, including acquisition of grammar, oral fluency, and knowledge of rhetorical forms for textual genres (Reichert, Lefkowitz, Rinnert, & Schultz, 2012). Consistent with these current views on the value of writing for FL development, instructional practices related to writing have also begun to shift. Writing-focused instruction is no longer seen merely as a vehicle for language practice based on controlled exercises intended to produce error-free language. Instead, an expanded understanding has emerged that focuses on writing as a purposeful act of meaning making for various purposes and audiences. As Byrnes (2013) explained, writing presents an "advantageous environment to observe and, more important, to foster an ability to mean on the part of [second language] learners" (p. 96). When learners use written language for meaning making in a substantive form, it affords instructors "the opportunity to interact with students' work in a manner quite unlike speaking, reading, and listening . . . [it] can be scrutinized and objectified before it is ultimately evaluated" (O'Donnell, 2007, p. 651).

This chapter explores how these emerging understandings of the value of writing can be aligned to reflect the multiliteracies framework, particularly for lower-level FL courses. As we have seen in Chapter 5 in relation to reading, even lower-level learners can develop language modalities often perceived as complex. Moreover, we have argued throughout that the primary purpose of instruction grounded in the multiliteracies approach is meaning design through interpretation and creation of FL texts. In many ways, this chapter serves as a continuation of the previous one, in the sense that in a multiliteracies approach, reading and writing are seen as complementary processes that are intrinsically linked (Kern, 2000). In the "Conceptual Background" section, we review the treatment of FL writing in previous research and explore how, in a multiliteracies approach, writing, like reading, is understood as an act of meaning design with linguistic, cognitive, and sociocultural dimensions. Next, in the "Pedagogical Applications" section, we outline how writing instruction can be organized in a manner consistent with the multiliteracies framework, highlighting several previous models as well as proposing an instructional sequence for writing-focused activities and assessment based on the four pedagogical acts. By the end of this chapter, you will have a better understanding of the role of writing within the multiliteracies approach and how to design writing-focused FL instruction consistent with this approach. Before reading the "Conceptual Background" section, complete Learning Activity 6.1, which focuses on your current ideas about learning to write in a FL and teaching FL writing.

### LEARNING ACTIVITY 6.1

#### My Ideas About Learning and Teaching FL Writing

Indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding writing in a FL. In addition, provide an explanation or justification of your stance on each.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Agree / Disagree</th>
<th>Explanation / Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Writing in a FL is primarily an act of translation involving learning new vocabulary and grammar.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. First language (L1) writing expertise has a positive impact on FL writing proficiency.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As stated in the introduction to this chapter, it was long assumed in FL teaching and learning that writing was secondary to other skills, including oral communication and reading. This view was, in part, an extension of the notion that writing was nothing more than speech written down (Hall, 2001). As such, writing was typically limited to controlled exercises to reinforce learning orthography, grammar, or vocabulary (Reichelt et al., 2012), or guided composition wherein students completed sentences or paragraphs that their teacher had begun to write (Racelis & Matsuda, 2013). This idea of writing as primarily a vehicle for language practice has been called the writing-to-learn perspective. At the other end of the spectrum lies the learning-to-write perspective, in which FL learners have a need to write for academic or professional purposes (Manchón, 2009). As (Reichelt et al. 2012) explained, consistent with this view, “students are taught to write for different purposes and audiences, to address levels of formality, and to be sensitive to discipline- and culture-specific styles, guidelines and prescribed norms” (p. 29). In tandem with this perspective, instruction for lower-level FL learners may not include an explicit focus on writing, based on the assumption that it can be effectively taught only at later stages once students are well along their language-learning trajectory (Williams, 2012). That lower-level FL curricula continue to be dominated by communicative language teaching (CLT) and its emphasis on functional oral language skills further supports a lesser role for writing instruction in the early semesters of language learning. As a result, two different cultures of writing instruction may co-exist in undergraduate FL courses: writing focused on knowledge-telling (i.e., personal experience, description, and language exercise) at lower levels, and writing focused on knowledge-transforming (i.e., analysis, interpretive skills, and critical thinking) at advanced levels (Schultz, 2001). In addition, for some researchers, a meaningful difference exists between writing, or the simple encoding of words on paper (or on the computer screen), with the purpose of language practice, versus composing, or writing for the purpose of communicating meaning (Williams, 2012). This conception of writing-versus-composing further highlights the fact that uses of writing in FL instruction do not necessarily involve a simultaneous focus on the act of writing and writing as a way of purposefully conveying meaning.

Though the stark contrast between the writing-to-learn and learning-to-write perspectives may be a reductionist manner of representing what is, in reality, a more nuanced state of affairs, it reflects what Reichelt (2001) criticized as a general “lack of a unified sense of purpose of writing within the FL curriculum” (p. 578). She elaborated on this issue by asking:

> Is [the purpose of writing] to work on accuracy in orthography and morphology? to practice various syntactic structures? to provide further experience in purposive use of the TL [target language] through interaction and creating of meaning? to learn to create compositions appropriate for some particular audience or purpose? to learn and communicate about aspects of the TL, including literature and culture? to support acquisition of speaking, reading, and listening skills? (p. 579)

These questions should make clear from the outset that unlike a linguistic modality such as speaking, whose primacy for language learners is nearly

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Agree / Disagree</th>
<th>Explanation / Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3  Writing should take place primarily outside of the FL classroom so that class time can be dedicated to oral communicative practice and learning about grammar and culture.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4  In order to make progress as FL writers, learners must abandon the personal in favor of an impersonal, objective stance in their writing.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5  Responding to errors in FL learners’ writing is of questionable value in improving accuracy.</td>
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</table>

When you have read this chapter, you will write a reflection that will require that you come back to this table and think about whether your ideas about each statement were confirmed or not.

## 1. CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

This section provides an overview of research and models related to FL writing. We begin with an exploration of the definition of writing as evidenced in two differing perspectives on its role in FL learning. Understanding these two perspectives serves as the foundation for discussion of factors that influence FL writing development, approaches to FL writing instruction, and assessment of learners’ written texts. In the final part of this section, we delve into the definition and role of writing within the multiliteracies framework, focusing in particular on meaning design and the goals of writing-focused instruction.

### 1.1 Why Write in a Foreign Language?

As stated in the introduction to this chapter, it was long assumed in FL teaching and learning that writing was secondary to other skills, including oral communication and reading. This view was, in part, an extension of the notion that...
unquestionable, the purposes for writing and goals for writing instruction in the FL curriculum, particularly for lower-level learners, is far less obvious.

In addition to the question of the purposes and goals for FL writing raised by the writing-to-learn and learning-to-write perspectives, the learning experiences associated with each of these perspectives (e.g., writing as part of grammatical practice as a lower-level learner versus brainstorming, paraphrasing, or synthesizing in writing to become a more proficient writer as an advanced-level learner) lead us to consider a critical issue for how students learn to write in a FL: Engaging in writing-to-learn types of activities does not necessarily prepare them to communicate meaningfully and appropriately for specific audiences and purposes or to produce extended written discourse (Racelis & Matsuda, 2013). For Kern (2000), this shortcoming represents the most significant weakness of collegiate FL programs characterized by CLT, which have been more successful in promoting students’ interactive speaking abilities than they have been in developing their extended discourse competence and writing skills, both essential in academic settings. How, then, can FL instructors help learners develop extended discourse competence in writing? To begin to address this question, we turn our attention to factors involved in learning to write in a FL and what research has revealed concerning those elements that positively impact FL writing development.

1.2 Factors in Foreign Language Writing Development

In this chapter’s introduction, we described some of the benefits of writing for FL development, including acquisition of grammar, oral fluency, and knowledge of rhetorical forms for creating and interpreting textual genres. According to Williams (2012), several features of writing distinguish it from other linguistic modalities and lead to its facilitative role in FL development, including its slower pace, the enduring record left by writing, and the need for greater precision in language use. As O’Donnell (2007) explained, the concreteness of writing offers both students and instructors the opportunity to scrutinize and objectify it prior to evaluating it, unlike speaking, reading, or listening. Yet whereas the benefits of engaging FL writing for learners may seem to be a straightforward matter, understanding the factors involved in learning to write well in a FL is decidedly more complicated.

Manchón (2009) described FL writing as “a true problem-solving task that . . . entails the solution of numerous linguistic problems and creates a tension in attentional demands” (p. 12). This characterization of FL writing as problem solving captures its complexity well. Whereas many students have the impression that writing well in the FL involves learning new vocabulary and grammar and applying them to composition formats from their own language and culture, this is an erroneous oversimplification of what is, in fact, a multidimensional process of learning to think in another language (Reichelt et al., 2012). According to Hyland (2011), learning to write in another language entails five kinds of knowledge:

1. content knowledge of topical concepts and ideas addressed in the text;
2. context knowledge of reader expectations and cultural preferences;
3. genre knowledge of the communicative purposes of a given text type and its value in a particular context;
4. process knowledge of how to carry out a writing task; and
5. system knowledge of lexis, syntax, and formal conventions of writing.

Developing these varied forms of knowledge and applying them to writing tasks can be a tremendous challenge for FL learners. Unlike English as a second language (ESL) learners who typically have access to authentic language use and native speakers outside the classroom, immersion for FL learners is usually limited to an artificial instructional context and supplemental assignments that may or may not focus on writing (Reichelt et al., 2012).

Although opinions vary as to what social, cognitive, and linguistic elements contribute most to second language (L2) writing development, in broad terms, L1 writing proficiency and overall L2 proficiency are two factors often mentioned in the literature as critical to learners’ growing L2 writing expertise (Reichelt et al., 2012; Williams, 2005). However, the notion of transfer of L1 writing skills to L2 writing performance (i.e., that these skills would be mapped from the L1 to the L2 automatically and easily) should not be oversimplified, as most researchers support some version of the Language Threshold Hypothesis, which holds that a certain level of L2 knowledge is needed for learners to tap into related L1 skills (Williams, 2005). In other words, L1 writing expertise appears to transfer more in advanced L2 learners, in particular in relation to composing strategies, than in less-advanced learners (Williams, 2005). It is also important to remember, as Shrum and Gilsan (2010) have pointed out, that composing in a L1 is a different process than composing in a L2:

In L1, writers begin by organizing their ideas and putting them into suitable language. They decide which aspects they will consciously attend to—for example, grammar, spelling, and organization. This process differs from the process typically used by L2 writers, which is to collect and organize words and phrases they will need to express ideas; for L2 writers, more time is spent in creating a word inventory and putting phrases and sentences together in the L2 with the help of some thinking in the L1. (p. 302)

Moreover, transfer of L1 writing expertise can represent both a benefit and a drawback for L2 learners. On one hand, this can be a benefit inasmuch that in a group of learners with a largely homogenous cultural and educational background, even at lower levels of L2 proficiency, certain assumptions and practices related to writing may be capitalized on in instruction. On the other hand, learners (and teachers) may automatically adhere to the assumptions and practices grounded in their L1 and native culture rather than trying out new formats for writing based on L2 writing norms (Reichelt et al., 2012). Recent work on L2 writing has also emphasized the bidirectional nature of transfer or, as Manchón (2009) explained, “it includes transfer of knowledge, skills, and, very importantly, the use of the writer’s total linguistic repertoire at product and process levels” (p. 12). Research has suggested, for example, that experienced FL writers possess merged or hybrid portions of their writing knowledge.
repertoires that they can draw upon when constructing texts regardless of the language being used (L1 or L2) (Reichelt et al., 2012).

Beyond individual learner factors, another formative element in the development of FL writing expertise is the instructional context in which students learn to write. Manchéon (2009) described this influence:

[Context shapes] their metacognitive knowledge about composing and textual conventions, their conception of writing, motives for writing, and, consequently, their approach to writing. Some educational factors that appear to mediate the development of writing ability include the kinds and amounts of instruction received, as well as the type and amount of writing practice engaged in. (p. 11)

The impact of this influence, according to Hall (2001), extends to both students’ conceptions of writing (i.e., as a transcription tool versus an activity for making and discovering meaning) and the kinds of writers they become beyond the classroom. In summary, learning to write well in a FL goes far beyond learning new vocabulary and grammar and overlaying it on familiar text formats from one’s own culture and L1. In addition to factors relating to learners themselves, instructional practices play a crucial role in writing development. Next, we will explore dominant orientations to FL writing instruction and assessment.

1.3. Approaches to Foreign Language Writing Instruction

In the previous section, you were introduced to the notions of writing-to-learn versus learning-to-write, which represent two divergent perspectives on the purposes for FL writing. Those perspectives can be imagined as two ends of a continuum, with the dominant approaches to FL writing instruction (product based, process based, and genre based) occupying points along that continuum, in the sense that the focus of each one reflects certain assumptions associated with either or both perspectives.

Until CLT became the dominant pedagogical approach to FL instruction, the product-based approach was long the prevalent orientation to FL writing, emphasizing the grammatical and syntactic accuracy of texts or, more simply, textual form. Above all else, this approach put value on the structural well-formedness of learners’ writing while de-emphasizing elements such as addressing an audience or fulfilling a communicative purpose (Kern, 2000). According to Lefkovitz’s (2009) study of collegiate FL professors whose teaching practices were consistent with this approach, typical elements of instruction included assigning artificial topics before any writing instruction occurred and designing assignments to elicit grammar points. Given the absence of explicit attention to assisting students in becoming FL writers or focusing on their communicative intent in writing, the product-based approach can be viewed as aligning with the writing-to-learn perspective (Reichelt et al., 2012).

Particularly favored in the United Kingdom and North America, the process-based approach to FL writing took hold as CLT became the prevalent instructional paradigm in the 1990s (Kern, 2000). In contrast with the product-based approach and arising in part out of its weaknesses (e.g., empirical research, such as Truscott, 1996, demonstrating that focusing on grammatical accuracy does not in and of itself improve student writing ability), the process-based approach focuses not just on the product of writing (i.e., the text itself), but also on the processes needed to produce a meaningful text (Kern, 2000). These processes include expressions of individuality through writing, participation in problem-solving writing-focused activities, and inclusion of the collaborative, social nature of writing and writing critiques (Racelis & Matsuda, 2013).

Early instantiations of the process-based approach tended to view the writing process as linear, moving from planning to drafting to revising to editing, and focused on helping individual learners participate in each step of the process (Racelis & Matsuda, 2013). However, later interpretations of this approach have come to understand the writing process in a more nuanced, sophisticated way: It is seen as exploratory and recursive as learners generate ideas in writing and later refine and edit those ideas as they receive feedback from their peers and teacher (Williams, 2005). Thus, the teacher’s task involves helping learners develop their writing processes for specific writing situations rather than prescribing a generalized writing process (Racelis & Matsuda, 2013). Given the process-based approach’s explicit focus on helping students become skilled writers in the FL, it can be viewed as aligning with the learning-to-write perspective.

Like the product-based approach, the process-based approach has not been without criticism. Although it has been credited with enabling researchers and teachers to understand how good writers compose and how instructional practices can shape the process of FL writing (Shrum & Glisan, 2010), one concern relates to the role of accuracy and textual form, with some detractors of the approach claiming it “ignore[s] formal accuracy” (Williams, 2005, p. 33). An assumption of this approach is that learners will attend to the form of their writing naturally as they revise their ideas during the drafting and editing process (Kern, 2000). This expectation may or may not be met by learners who may not possess grammatical or syntactic knowledge needed to produce comprehensible and accurate texts. Furthermore, it cannot be assumed that addressing issues of form will transfer to other learning contexts (e.g., timed writing assignment). A second criticism of the process-based approach is that some teachers have appropriated only its surface features, meaning that the often-mentioned stages of pre-writing, drafting, revising, and editing are seen as a rigid, idealized sequence (Williams, 2005).

According to Kern (2000), a final criticism of this approach is its tendency to favor students already familiar with culturally appropriate academic genres. For those who are not, the approach’s lack of textual models can make it challenging to discover the expectations associated with different written genres. Put simply, because the process-based approach attempts to foster learner creativity and individual participation in effective writing practices rather than impose prescribed patterns for FL writing, it may be easier to navigate for students who are already aware of stylistic and linguistic conventions relevant to a given context of use than for students who may need more explicit textual
models (Kern, 2000). Lacking those models, students may display an overreliance on L1 textual genres and writing practices, which may result in writing that is not consistent or appropriate for specific contexts of use of the FL.

Responding directly to the need to sensitize FL learners to the social context of writing, or how meaning is constructed within socially determined constraints or parameters, is the *genre-based approach*, which has been dominant in Australia and New Zealand (Kern, 2000). According to Reichelt et al. (2012), FL educators in the United States have been slow to embrace this approach, choosing instead to retain the process-based approach. The rationale for the genre-based approach is based on the notion that students bring different identities and habits of meaning making to FL learning and that teachers cannot assume that their previous learning experiences will provide appropriate writing schemata (Hyland, 2007). For example, in the United States, L1 writing instruction at the high school level typically targets modes and formats of writing, such as five-paragraph essays, reports, and expository texts (Reichelt et al., 2012). As a result, American students are strongest with recalling and reproducing factual content in straightforward informative writing tasks, whereas they are weakest with persuasive and imaginative ones (Kern, 2000). Thus, a U.S. collegiate student of Italian as a FL studying the language for the first time would need to learn the moves and conventions involved in producing specific textual genres of writing in Italian to make meaning in ways that would be considered appropriate by Italian discourse communities. In a genre-based approach, value is not placed on individualistic self-expression; instead, learners are sensitized to the fact that their creative freedom is not limitless, but exists within certain parameters (Maxim, 2005). As Hyland (2007) explained, genre-based writing instruction entails going beyond a focus on syntactic structures, vocabulary, and composing strategies:

[This approach] offers students an explicit understanding of how target texts are structured and why they are written in the ways they are. This explicitness gives teachers and learners something to shoot for making writing outcomes clear rather than relying on hit or miss inductive methods whereby learners are expected to acquire the genres they need from repeated writing experiences or the teacher’s notes in the margins of their essays. (p. 151)

Given the genre-based approach’s dual focus on both form and meaning—that is, on how certain structures and conventions are used to make meaning in situated, culturally determined ways—it can be viewed as occupying a middle ground on the continuum of the learning-to-write and the writing-to-learn perspectives.

As with the other approaches to FL writing instruction, the genre-based approach also has its detractors. As Kern (2000) pointed out, a possible drawback of focusing on textual models as the basis of FL writing is that genres “can be easily reduced to static formal recipes, taught in prescriptive fashion, reminiscent of traditional product-based teaching” (p. 183). In addition, other scholars have questioned whether exposure and practice in particular genres is truly empowering or whether, instead, it might be oppressive (Cope & Kalantzis, 1993).

In recent years, some have called for reconciling the various approaches to FL writing instruction by weaving together their complementary elements. For example, Racelis and Matsuda (2013) suggested that process- and genre-based approaches could be integrated in the sense that genre analysis of textual features and functions could function as “one of the strategies for learning and writing in the writing process” (p. 389). Similarly, Kern (2000) advocated integrating elements of product-, process-, and genre-based approaches into instruction that attends to the relationships and dependencies among texts, cognitive processing, social factors, and cultural contexts. In Learning Activity 6.2, we ask you to review the three approaches to FL writing instruction that you have just read about and to reflect on each one.

### LEARNING ACTIVITY 6.2

**Evaluation of Approaches to Foreign Language Writing Instruction**

**Part 1.** Now that you have read an overview of the three major approaches to FL writing instruction, synthesize the features, benefits, and weaknesses of each in the following table, taking the time to reread the preceding section to find needed information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Key Features</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Product-based</td>
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<tr>
<td>Process-based</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genre-based</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Part 2.** Now consider your orientation to these three approaches to FL writing instruction: Which one(s) did you experience in your FL learning and, in your opinion, how effective was it/were they in your development as a FL writer? As a teacher, do you favor one approach over the others, or perhaps a combined approach? Why? Jot down your responses to these questions before discussing them with your classmates and instructor.

### 1.4 Assessment of FL Writing Development

Questions of how to respond to learners’ attempts at FL writing and what in their writing merits response have garnered much attention and disagreement, both in published research and classroom practice. This reflects the reality that
differing approaches to FL instruction exist, with each prioritizing certain elements of writing and the writing process while de-emphasizing others. The following sub-questions relate to larger issues of how teachers should respond to learners’ FL writing and what in learners’ texts merits response (Williams, 2005):

1. Should responses address form, content/organization, or both?
2. With multi-draft writing, when is the best time to respond (i.e., on which draft) and should all aspects of writing be addressed on all drafts?
3. How should responses be provided (e.g., in writing, electronically, or face-to-face) and what form should the comments take?
4. Should a grade be attached to teacher response on all drafts?

In addition, we might also add the question of who should respond to FL writing, since the process of obtaining feedback can be envisioned as extending not just to teachers, but also to the students’ peers.

These questions deal with matters of both assessment and evaluation, which, as you recall from Chapter 2, entail gathering information on student learning and performance and assigning a value, interpreting, and judging the results of assessment. Although it is beyond the scope of this chapter to give responses to each of the questions listed here, they are provided to highlight that assessing and evaluating FL writing are complicated matters, and opinions differ as to how they ought to be carried out. That stated, research on the teaching of writing offers a number of insights into best practices that are salient to our discussion of FL writing.

Teachers’ corrective feedback on student writing and, in particular, written corrective feedback (WCF) is the subject of a growing body of research; however, results from empirical studies of the impact of WCF on student writing are varied and inconclusive (Vyatkina, 2011). Although few would dispute that surface-level grammatical and linguistic errors have historically been and continue to be the primary focus of instructors’ WCF, some researchers claim that it is of limited value or even harmful, whereas others contend it has a positive influence on students’ accuracy in writing (O’Donnell, 2007; Vyatkina, 2011).

Researchers tend to agree on two recommended WCF practices: first, that it is more beneficial to focus on error patterns rather than isolated, random errors; and, second, that indirect correction (i.e., pointing out the location of errors with or without coding the type of error) rather than providing the corrected forms is preferable (O’Donnell, 2007). That said, based on Vyatkina’s (2011) survey of WCF practices in university FL programs, indirect correction should be used only with errors that students can realistically be expected to self-correct at their current stage of linguistic development; for other errors, the teachers’ direct suggestions can be more beneficial. Students are most likely to correct problems in their texts that are easily resolved (e.g., straightforward editing changes), whereas they tend to ignore WCF that is general and contains suggestions that are difficult to follow. Just as grappling with indirect correction puts students in the role of active problem solvers as they attempt to understand the nature of their writing errors and correct them based on WCF, students can also contribute to the feedback process by annotating their writing, or pointing out places where they have experienced difficulty while producing their text (Williams, 2005).

Best practices in FL writing instruction include the establishment of clear criteria for assessing students’ texts so that consistent standards are used to judge performance fairly and communicate criteria transparently to students (Hyland, 2007). Two options for evaluating student writing are holistic rubrics, which use multiple criteria to produce an overall score, and analytic rubrics, which isolate specific features and use criteria for evaluating and scoring each feature (Hall, 2001). According to O’Donnell (2007), the use of analytic scales may be preferable since they provide more reliability in scoring and give students more detailed information on the strengths and weaknesses of their writing.

1.5 Writing and the Multiliteracies Framework

As you are aware, varying conceptions exist regarding the role of writing in FL learning and the approach used to teach it. Whereas for some, writing is seen as straightforward information transfer—mobilizing one’s linguistic resources by finding the right words to convey a message—this is not the case for the multiliteracies perspective. Instead, writing is viewed as a communicative act wherein meaning is mediated and transformed rather than merely transferred from one individual or group to another (Kern, 2000). Thus, writing is understood not only as an act of meaning design based on the use of linguistic Available Designs (e.g., grammar, vocabulary, writing systems), but also one that entails cognitive and sociocultural dimensions. The cognitive dimension of writing promotes the development of deliberate thinking about language use and the mental processes involved in writing, such as strategies for planning and organizing a text (Hall, 2001). The sociocultural dimension of writing is of particular importance in relation to the multiliteracies perspective for several reasons. First, the knowledge of when and how to use L2 schematic Available Designs (e.g., genre and style) is essential for learners to write in ways that would be considered appropriate by users of the language in L2 communities. Second, various cultural elements, including one’s background knowledge and the classroom culture, are influential in shaping writing practices and related ideologies, assumptions, and values. Both of these points underscore the notion that writing is an individual, personal act that involves creativity, emotions, and imagination, as well as a collaborative activity that involves shared assumptions, relationships, and conventions (Kern, 2000).

From a multiliteracies perspective, writing is viewed not as a distinct language skill, but as a modality closely intertwined with reading. Not only are writers readers of their own work (Kern, 2000), writing and reading share a number of characteristics that lend to their complementary nature. As Swaffar and Arens (2005) pointed out, unlike speaking and listening, which demand immediacy, writing and reading entail similar cognitive processes as recursive acts that allow attention to linguistic detail and use of the text as “an accessible, reviewable language source” (p. 35). Further, writing and reading both involve knowledge of Available Designs in meaning making, or, as Kern explained,
the residual voices and language forms we have internalized, our knowledge of rhetorical and stylistic devices, genres, formatting conventions, and so on—as resources in a dialogic negotiation between internal and external representations of meaning” (p. 171).

Beyond their numerous shared characteristics, reading and writing differentiate themselves as the former involves representing meaning to oneself, whereas the latter entails representing meaning to others (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009). This act of representing meaning to others offers learners a number of benefits, whether or not FL writing is part of their future plans. According to Kern, these include: organizing and expressing feelings, ideas, and thoughts in ways that align with envisioned readers’ expectations; creating and reshaping meaning by manipulating forms and reflecting on the effect that such manipulation has on meaning; taking the time to process meaning free of constraints such as turn taking or pronunciation; and engaging in language use that goes beyond functional communication “to create imagined worlds of [learners’] own design” (2000, p. 172). As such, these elements enrich learners’ communicative repertoire, facilitating more effective writing practices, including in the L1, in other academic and professional contexts.

Now that you have begun to familiarize yourself with a literacy-oriented view of FL writing, complete Learning Activity 6.3, which requires you to apply this new knowledge to an analysis of two sample writing activities.

LEARNING ACTIVITY 6.3

The Three Dimensions of Foreign Language Writing

In the preceding section, you learned that based on the multiliteracies perspective, writing is an act of meaning design that includes linguistic, cognitive, and sociocultural dimensions. To complete this Learning Activity, reflect on the role that each of these dimensions might play in two sample FL writing activities. First, review in the previous section what the three dimensions of writing entail and then read the description of the activity prompts below. Brainstorm what students would need to know about each dimension to complete the assignment successfully.

Prompt #1: How did you spend your summer vacation? For this writing assignment, describe what you did, where you were, and who you spent the vacation with, and include one specific anecdote that relates something fun or interesting that happened to you last summer. Be sure to use past tenses correctly in context, distinguishing between narration and description.

Prompt #2: Imagine that you have decided to join an online social networking site. For your writing assignment, create a personal ad to increase your popularity ranking on the site. Your ad should contain information on your appearance, personality, origins, interests, and the type of people who interest you.

After completing your reflection on the roles of the three dimensions of writing in the sample activities, discuss the following question with your classmates: Which writing activity do you think is more reflective of the multiliteracies approach and why?

2. PEDAGOGICAL APPLICATIONS

Based on the multiliteracies-oriented conceptions of writing outlined above, what does a parallel pedagogy of FL writing instruction entail? Above all else, the focus of instruction is on meaning making and helping learners develop the ability to become competent, multilingual creators of written texts (Byrnes, 2013). In addition, as Maxim (2005) explained, beyond learning how to design meaning in culturally and situationally appropriate ways, learners also “reflect on and critique how the real world itself makes meaning” (p. 86). Hall (2001) explained that this process, which she compared to an apprenticeship, involves coming to understand what is considered appropriate and accurate in a given context of writing, including rhetorical and structural forms and strategic processes, and developing a sense of what make writing effective and interesting. This apprenticeship incorporates elements of all three approaches to writing instruction overviewed earlier in this chapter: product based, process based, and genre based. Kern (2000) described this literacy-based orientation as a holistic, student-centered approach that not only develops students’ understandings of grammar, vocabulary, textual organization, and so on, but also of the relationships among texts, cognitive processes, social factors, and cultural context and how they work together to make meaning. In other words, this approach recognizes the necessity for teaching linguistic Available Designs, such as vocabulary and grammar, which are of particular importance for learners with limited experience using the FL; schematic Available Designs like genre conventions; and the act of meaning design itself, or writing processes. This approach to writing targets the linguistic, sociocultural, and cognitive dimensions of literacy. It also addresses the types of knowledge involved in the process of learning to write, including context knowledge of reader expectations and cultural preferences, genre knowledge, process knowledge of how to carry out a writing task, and system knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, and formal conventions of writing (Hyland, 2011). That stated, this does not mean that every writing-focused activity in which learners engage entails equal emphasis on all of these elements; rather, instruction includes a continuum of activities, ranging from those that focus on formal accuracy (e.g., dictation, translation) to those that emphasize content and ideas (e.g., creative writing, letter writing, journal writing) (Kern, 2000).

Another parallel between how writing is conceived of in a multiliteracies framework and how it is taught relates to the complementarity of reading and writing. As Kern (2000) explained, traditionally, reading and writing were conceived of as activities completed by students on their own outside the classroom so that class time could be dedicated to oral communication. The typical linear sequence of instruction included reading before class, discussion in class,
and writing about what was read and discussed after class. However, as you learned in Chapter 5, in a multiliteracies approach, reading is viewed as both an individual and a collaborative act of meaning design, and, as such, takes place in class so that students can both engage in joint negotiation of meaning about texts and receive direct help in reading from their instructor. The same can also be said of writing: It is brought into the classroom as both an individual and a social act that takes place in a context wherein students can profit from instructor assistance and peer feedback as they construct texts. Therefore, in a multiliteracies approach, reading, writing, and speaking are integrated and often overlap within the same activity, following no linear sequence.

As previously mentioned, FL writing instruction from a multiliteracies perspective entails a continuum of activities, some focusing on formal accuracy, others focusing on the communication of ideas, and some incorporating elements of both of these ends of the spectrum. Table 6.1 summarizes the role of the four pedagogical acts in writing-focused instruction and activities reflective of each (based on Kern, 2000).

This summary of multiliteracies-based instructional activities includes numerous uses for writing, ranging from some that focus primarily on the personal expression of ideas (e.g., letter writing) to others that emphasize the writing process (e.g., peer editing) or the linguistic or schematic properties of written texts (e.g., genre reformulation). In addition, the sample activities listed in Table 6.1 highlight the notion that writing is not seen as a stand-alone activity, but rather as a means of communication interwoven with both reading and speaking, as existing texts serve as a point of departure for new meaning making through or about writing. Transformed practice sample activities also underscore the notion introduced in Chapter 2 that in multiliteracies-based teaching, instruction and assessment are tightly interwoven: Reading and analyzing FL texts helps to familiarize learners with linguistic and schematic Available Designs used in specific contexts before they are asked to create their own written texts in activities such as genre or stylistic reformulation. Before proceeding to the next section, which summarizes several literacy-oriented models of FL writing instruction and assessment, complete Learning Activity 6.4, which asks you to synthesize your current knowledge of multiliteracies-based writing instruction.

### LEARNING ACTIVITY 6.4

**Idea Map of Multiliteracies-Based FL Writing**

Use a graphic organizer to map your understanding of the concepts that undergird multiliteracies-based FL writing instruction and how they relate to one another (google the phrase graphic organizer to get an idea of what one looks like and how it is constructed). Your graphic organizer, entitled “Multiliteracies-based FL writing” should include all of the concepts listed below plus any other concept or concepts you view as relevant. Once you have completed your graphic organizer, you will have the opportunity to compare and discuss it with your colleagues and instructor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>pedagogical acts</th>
<th>available designs</th>
<th>dimensions of writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>apprenticeship</td>
<td>meaning design</td>
<td>reading-writing interface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 pedagogical acts</td>
<td>3 dimensions of writing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*For these concepts, tease out individual sub-concepts as necessary for mapping purposes (e.g., schematic Available Designs, overt instruction).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2.1 Literacy-Oriented Models of Writing Instruction and Assessment

In this section, we outline three models for writing-focused FL instruction and assessment consistent with the multiliteracies framework. First, we present Schultz’s (2001) model for creative writing, wherein the author makes a strong case for using elements of both genre- and process-based approaches combined with creative writing to advance learners’ development as both readers and writers. Next, we summarize Maxim’s (2009) approach to reading and writing development, which proposes textual borrowing as the key element in learner appropriation of textual features in their written production. Finally, we describe Kern’s (2000) model for writing-focused instruction, which highlights the integration of reading, writing, and speaking, and the important role that collaboration and oral communication among learners and between learners and their teacher play in scaffolding a reading-to-writing sequence of instruction. You may notice as you begin to read about these writing-focused models...
that in comparison to those introduced in Chapters 3, 4, and 5 for speaking- and reading-oriented instruction, they may appear to be more complex. In fact, the writing-focused models share many common features with other literacy-based models for FL instruction, including introductory activities to familiarize learners with linguistic and schematic Available Designs germane to the lesson’s focus and integration of reading, writing, and speaking throughout the instructional sequence. What distinguishes writing-focused models from others in this book is that they include a detailed treatment of the steps involved in creating a written text; thus, they tend to break transformed practice activities, for example, into more stages than models focused on other language modalities.

The first writing-focused model (Schultz, 2001) is designed in light of the practice in university-level FL curricula of privileging academic forms of writing over creative ones, particularly as learners move into context-focused courses. As Schultz wrote, “there is a deep-seated belief...that progress cannot be made without an eventual abandonment of the personal in favor of a rigorous attention to the detached, impersonal, and the objective” (2001, p. 94). She holds a different view, however, arguing that “creative writing can feed positively into the language learning experience in multiple ways” (p. 95). The author names a number of benefits of creative writing in a FL, including its focus, which encourages students to “form and shape the raw material of experience into an artistic and compellingly executed format”; its liberating effect, which lowers learner anxiety and fosters an atmosphere conducive to language acquisition; and the personal commitment required, which necessitates making progress toward mastering lexico-grammatical structures “most appropriate to their authorial intentions and goals” (pp. 95, 96).

The approach to creative writing Schultz (2001) describes is based on three precepts common to many forms of artistic expression: (1) studying textual models representative of specific genres; (2) analyzing narrative techniques illustrated in literary models; and (3) practicing these techniques through a well-defined series of activities. As students analyze and discuss textual models, they focus on “the ways in which authors create the effects that their texts produce” (p. 99). Although they are not constrained to follow these models rigidly in their writing, students draw inspiration from them in shaping their texts. Schultz (2001) provides a sample instructional sequence for a course on French short stories. As students read and analyze a text by Flaubert, they engage in activities to help them incorporate indirect free style (i.e., a direct representation of a character’s thoughts without a narrator’s mediation) into their writing. First, they present a physical description of a fictional character they have imagined, focusing on details of his or her appearance and their relation to the character’s personality. Next, students participate in several activities that move them from presenting the character’s thoughts in an internal and external monologue and then telling the character’s story as first-person narrator and retelling it from the perspective of an observer. These activities culminate with students using the third-person omniscient narrator and indirect free style technique. This progression, according to Schultz, involves a constant recycling of the same core material of the story but “from different angles and with increasingly sophisticated elaboration” (p. 100), providing students the opportunity to perfect linguistic aspects of their writing.

Schultz’s (2001) model also incorporates process-based writing. For example, activities include small-group peer review of initial drafts of creative writing texts and a read-aloud activity wherein all students respond in writing to a student’s finished text. As such, students’ writing does not “move unidirectionally from author to teacher/reader, falling into a readership void” (p.103). Instead, peers become an essential part of students’ readership, transforming the nature of audience. Representative of this notion is the fact that students collectively compile their best creative writing at term’s end into a class anthology, whose preparation they oversee themselves, making choices such as format, cover art, and text order. This model potentially incorporates elements of both formative and summative assessment—the former in relation to practicing a narrative technique activity and peer review, and the latter in relation to the drafts and revisions of the creative writing text. Whereas Schultz (2001) did not provide specific assessment criteria for this model, consistent with literacy-based instruction, a holistic rubric might be used to evaluate students’ writing with criteria related to content and form, including, for instance, whether the texts produced reflected indirect free style and other conventions associated with the textual model studied.

In the next model, Maxim (2009) presents an approach to reading and writing development used in a genre-based, literacy-oriented German curriculum. Broadly, this curriculum’s aim is “exposing learners to a range of textual environments...making them aware of how these environments use language to respond to particular contexts...and encouraging their appropriation of others’ language for their own purposes” (p. 102). Thus, texts play a critical role in writing development, as they are viewed not as individual instances of language production, but as “genres that represent a socially situated and culturally embedded use of language in a specific context...from which learners can borrow and appropriate language for their own use” (p. 99). Maxim calls this link between reading and writing textual borrowing, or “the appropriate integration and documentation of other texts into one’s own language use” (p. 100). This borrowing, which the author views as an essential element of FL learning, does not entail the appropriation of textual content per se, but of “particular language features that provide for opportunities to foster the construction of thought” (p. 103). Maxim is careful to point out that learners are encouraged to appropriate language that suits the meanings they wish to make in the FL while, at the same time, recognizing the “limits placed on borrowing by generic conventions” (p. 103).

Maxim describes several examples of his model in the context of an intensive advanced German course organized into four thematic units on modern German history as reflected in personal and public stories. Students read four to six texts per unit as “carriers of content and models of language use” (p. 103), with emphasis on thematically marked lexico-grammatical structures in the texts. Each unit culminates in two summative assessments—writing and speaking tasks that allow students to use the “generic, content, and language
knowledge” (p. 104) acquired during the unit. For the first unit on immediate post-war Germany, for instance, students read four personal narratives of Germans’ experiences at the end of the war and one descriptive text about care packages, after which they write their own letter to the giver of a care package using the same historical context from the readings.

The steps in Maxim’s instructional sequence include: (1) reading each text to identify key events and themes, which are subsequently discussed in class; (2) retelling the story’s chronology; (3) searching the text for salient lexical structures that correspond to semantic fields developed in class; and (4) discussing the text’s cultural significance. As students retell the story and work to develop a set of useful words and expressions on the topic of war’s end, they are guided to incorporate two language features into their work to link events causally or temporally. Next, students move toward creating their own text based on a task sheet that specifies the genre, content focus, and language features to be incorporated at discourse, sentence, and lexico-grammatical levels. Students are explicitly encouraged to borrow specific textual elements (e.g., temporal and causal constructions) as they draft and, later, revise their thank-you letter. The three areas specified in the task sheet serve as criteria for evaluation.

Particularly compelling in Maxim’s (2009) model is that beyond a description of its use, the author conducted an empirical study of its implementation in four writing tasks for six students of German. Based on classroom observations, learner interviews, and writing data, he investigated participants’ approach toward text type, degree, and development of textual borrowing. His results indicated that learner comprehension of textual models was primarily content oriented rather than language related, bolstering the case for genre-based writing tasks and a carefully scaffolded reading-to-writing instructional sequence. As Maxim concluded, exposure to textual models alone is insufficient for learner appropriation of linguistic features specific to particular genres of writing, instead, “students need explicit guidance in identifying important items to borrow and in understanding how to use them” (2009, p. 116). An additional attractive element of this model is its applicability to a range of curricular levels, including lower-level courses. For example, in Maxim (2005), the author describes a writing assignment in a module called “The Place You Call Home,” in which students prepare an article on their hometown after reading several descriptive texts from a German newspaper (p. 92). Despite differences in curricular level between this example and the one previously described, the pedagogy is identical, as is the way that the writing task is structured and evaluated.

In the final writing-focused model, Kern (2000) reinterprets a pedagogical sequence originally designed for English native speakers reading Tennyson’s poem “Mariana” and writing an essay on setting as a reflection of character. He uses the four pedagogical acts to structure activities with the goal of developing students’ ability to collaboratively construct meaning from texts and, eventually, to read and write more independently. Of particular interest in this approach are the roles of collaboration and problem solving and the ways that reading, writing, and speaking overlap and recur.

Kern’s (2000) instructional sequence begins with two situated practice activities to sensitize students to the notions of setting and protagonist and the relationship between them. In the first activity, linked to the television show Magnum, P.I., while the teacher asks guiding questions, students collaboratively create a map of relationships among elements of the show’s setting, the protagonist’s characteristics, and students’ associations with both the setting and main character. In the second activity, students focus on how setting reflects character in their respective lives and homes by preparing a written list of household items and what the items say about them before passing the list to several classmates, each of whom interprets the significance of the first student’s items without seeing others’ interpretations. Afterwards, each student reads classmates’ interpretations of their items before engaging in a related discussion.

Next, students engage in an activity involving both situated practice and transformed practice as they rewrite a simple descriptive statement as a more elaborated descriptive narrative that expresses the same ideas directly (Kern, 2000). To do so, they use verbal description to show but not tell the following: “The state of her house made it clear that she had long since stopped caring about herself” (p. 215). After a 15-minute period of individual in-class writing, students share their descriptive narratives aloud so they can observe the diversity of their classmates’ responses.

Students participate next in several situated practice and critical framing activities related to the Tennyson poem about isolation. First, the teacher reads the text aloud while students follow along on a printed copy, underlining elements describing the setting and the protagonist’s psychological state. Students then move to paraphrasing the poem and identifying its themes, using a chart to summarize relationships between elements of the setting, its relationship to the main character, and interpretations of the author’s intent in choosing certain details of the poem. To complete the sequence, students take part in transformed practice and critical framing activities as they plan and draft their analytical essays. First, each student develops a thesis statement and three potential introductions, which are read aloud and discussed, with a focus on the potential effects on the reader. Next, students draft their essays. Finally, they engage in peer editing, revise their drafts, and submit a final essay. Although the author does not provide specific assessment criteria, the two drafts of the essay could be evaluated using an analytic rubric that would include equal emphasis on meaning and form.

Kern’s (2000) model for FL writing typifies several elements of effective multiliteracies-based instruction. First, it illustrates how writing functions as both a social and individual act of meaning design. For example, the lesson’s second situated practice activity includes both individual and collaborative writing. In addition, this model provides an example of how the traditional read-discuss-write sequence can be rethought in favor of activities in which linguistic modalities overlap and recur. For instance, prior to drafting their essays, students reread the summary chart they made in relation to the poem, write and then read aloud to their classmates several potential introductions to their texts, and discuss their readers’ responses to those introductions. Finally, Kern’s model demonstrates how writing-focused activities can be adapted to fit the
goals of different pedagogical acts. For example, mapping ideas can be used in overt instruction to brainstorm and organize words and phrases as a pre-writing activity or, as described in relation to this model, in situated practice as a pre-speaking activity. This is also the case with many of the sample activities listed in Table 6.1, including creative writing, journal writing, and peer editing.

The three writing models described above are summarized in Table 6.2. As you can see, they share several similarities. First, all three incorporate text-based activities as a precursor to writing, whether the texts that students ultimately create reflect the same genre as that previously read, as in Schultz’s (2001) and Maxim’s (2009) models, or whether the text read serves as content for written interpretation in a text of a different genre, as in Kern’s (2000) model. Second, each model includes in-class pre-writing activities with a targeted focus on one or more specific writing elements prior to students drafting a complete text, so that they receive direct assistance while practicing specific writing techniques. During these activities, teachers provide explicit strategies for FL writing rather than relying on students’ own intuitions about how a written text should be constructed. Finally, the three models use process-based writing activities to allow students multiple opportunities for feedback and refinement of their texts. These commonalities suggest a general format for writing-focused lessons that we detail in the next subsection.

### 2.2 A Template for Organizing Multiliteracies-Based Writing Instruction and Assessment

Based on the common elements of the three models summarized above and other principles of the multiliteracies approach related to writing summarized at the end of the “Conceptual Background” section, we propose the following four-step model for writing-focused FL instruction:

1. **Introduction to model texts** to sensitize students to the context or content of texts representing a specific textual genre;
2. **Textual comparison** to immerse students in genre by exposing them to more than one instantiation of a textual genre and helping them establish comprehension of those texts’ major events;
3. **Textual interpretation** to facilitate learner awareness of specific linguistic and schematic Available Designs used to design meaning in the model texts and form-meaning connections; and
4. **Textual creation** to provide learners with opportunities to use their new Available Designs in transformation activities.

The activities implemented in each stage of this model should reflect the four pedagogical acts of the multiliteracies framework and engage learners in the processes of interpretation, collaboration, problem solving, and reflection and self-reflection. To review, situated practice activities immerse learners in communicative activities and meaning design that focuses on the expression of personal thoughts and ideas; overt instruction activities provide direct instruction aimed at helping learners to generate, organize, or express ideas effectively; critical framing activities sensitize learners to the relationships between linguistic forms and the social contexts and purposes of texts; and transformed practice activities allow students to apply what they have learned by creating new texts or adapting existing ones to new contextual parameters (see Chapter 1 for a detailed discussion).

This model approximates the one described in Allen (2009) and Allen and Paesani (in press), in which reading and analyzing a specific literary genre served as a precursor to creative writing, based on a four-stage instructional sequence that culminated in advanced-level learners writing their own short story (Allen, 2009) and prose poem (Allen & Paesani, in press). However, different from those examples, the sample lesson plan we describe in the next subsection is adapted for use with a non-literary textual genre and lower-level FL learners. Indeed, one appealing aspect of this lesson plan template is its applicability to a range of courses and instructional goals and objectives.

Examples of learning activities that might be used in each stage of the pedagogy are provided in Table 6.3. Note that in some cases, the learning activity corresponds to more than one pedagogical act.
TABLE 6.3 Suggested Learning Activities for Writing Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Stage</th>
<th>Suggested Learning Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Introduction to model texts</td>
<td>Think-pair-share ( Situated practice / Critical framing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instructional conversations ( Situated practice / Critical framing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Predicting ( Situated practice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Textual comparison</td>
<td>Summary writing ( Situated practice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading matrix, Part 1 ( Situated practice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instructional conversations ( Situated practice / Critical framing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Textual interpretation</td>
<td>Reading matrix, Part 2 (Overt instruction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Focusing on relationships (Overt instruction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Practicing writing techniques (Overt instruction/Situated practice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Textual creation</td>
<td>Mapping (Situated practice/Transformed practice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drafting (Situated practice/Transformed practice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peer review (Critical framing/Overt instruction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Revising and editing (Overt instruction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reflecting on the writing process (Critical framing)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2.1 INTRODUCTION TO MODEL TEXTS. Think-pair-share, participation in instructional conversations, and predicting activate learners' existing knowledge about the textual model to be read and, eventually, created by them. These activities also provide new information (linguistic, schematic, or cultural) to prepare students to understand texts that they will encounter in the next stage of instruction. Common to these activities is two-way communication, both among learners and between learners (collectively) and their teacher, rather than one-way transfer of background information about texts from the teacher to the students.

To engage in a think-pair-share activity (Lyman, 1981), students individually think about and take notes on a question from their teacher designed to target the textual genre or thematic focus of the text, then collaborate with a peer to compare their ideas while using their written notes to facilitate oral communication, and finally share and synthesize ideas orally and in writing with a larger peer group or the entire class. An instructional conversation, as presented in Chapters 4 and 5, is useful for providing learners with unknown content schemata through an interactive, teacher-led conversation, structured in a manner that minimizes initiation-response-evaluation (IRE) discourse patterns in favor of fewer known-answer questions and more turn-taking on the part of learners. Predicting, which you read about in Chapter 5, involves giving clues about information in a text such as its title, key words or expressions, or associated images to activate learners' related Available Designs and facilitate sharing and comparing of their ideas about the text with those of their peers.

2.2.2 TEXTUAL COMPARISON. The activities in the second stage of the model involve comparison of pairs of texts on a common topic or theme to help students identify what characterizes a given genre (Kern, 2000). Providing more than one textual model is also helpful to illustrate variation within a genre, giving students more potential choices for textual borrowing in later redesign of meaning when they create their own text. Summary writing, completing a reading matrix, and participating in a second instructional conversation all engage students in reading-focused activities and concentrating on global comprehension of the main events or chronology of texts.

In summary writing, teachers guide students to participate first in an oral collaborative summary of each text before moving on to a written collaborative summary and, finally, written summaries created by each student. In this way, students are assisted in simplifying textual language and gradually work up to a written paraphrase based on their own point of view. Completing a reading matrix (Swaffar & Arens, 2005), an activity you were introduced to in Chapter 5, facilitates students “joining” syntax and general (macro-) propositions with supporting details or micropropositions that elaborate them in the text” (p. 87). In this way, students move from a general comprehension activity to one that focuses on both main ideas and details. Both of these activities can be followed up with an instructional conversation concentrating on interpretation of textual meaning, which is the design of new meanings based on learners' personal readings of the texts.

2.2.3 TEXTUAL INTERPRETATION. The third stage of the model requires learners to analyze the model texts anew, targeting specific linguistic and schematic Available Designs through completing a second part of the reading matrix, focusing on relationships, and practicing writing techniques. Common to these activities is the objective of helping students gain a vocabulary for meta-language to talk about the process of meaning making as well as new Available Designs for creating their own texts (Kern, 2000).

Returning to the reading matrix tool can be useful to locate specific linguistic and stylistic features of the model texts and compare them across texts to find commonalities and differences in how form is used to express meaning. In addition, to concentrate even more closely on form-meaning connections, a focusing-on-relationships activity can be used to examine word relationships, syntactic relationships, or how discourse is organized within a text. Such an activity involves close analysis of textual language through a series of targeted questions (e.g., What are the connotations associated with the word . . . ?). A last activity in this stage begins to move learners from a reading to a writing focus, as they engage in practicing writing techniques, using the model texts as examples of how a specific element of writing is instantiated (e.g., narration in the past or reported speech) before practicing those same techniques themselves.

2.2.4 TEXTUAL CREATION. Following learners' exposure to and analysis of textual models and their embedded linguistic and schematic Available Designs,
they now begin the work of creating a new text. After the teacher provides an instruction sheet on the writing assignment and criteria for evaluation, students complete a mapping activity to brainstorm initial ideas for their texts in a non-linear fashion by clustering them in the way that makes the most intuitive sense. Depending on the level and focus of the course, the teacher might provide categories or themes as a starting point for this activity. A second, optional component of this activity, also dependent on learner level, can entail students exchanging initial ideas for their texts and offering suggestions to one another using their idea maps. The remainder of this stage is dedicated to a recursive cycle of students drafting their texts, participating in structured peer review activities in class and revising and editing their texts based on WCF from their teacher and suggestions from their peers. At the completion of this cycle, along with their final draft, students can also turn in a reflection (in either their native language or the FL, depending on their level) on their perceptions of participating in this writing assignment, the challenges they faced, and the aspects of their writing that they felt were strongest.

### 2.2.5 ASSESSMENT.

The four-stage writing model summarized here provides opportunities for a variety of assessment types. Evidently, transformed practice activities in the textual creation stage culminate with summative assessment of students' written texts. Evaluation would be conducted using an analytic rubric with criteria related to both form (i.e., linguistic Available Designs such as vocabulary and grammar and schematic Available Designs such as adherence to genre-specific conventions) and meaning, or the thematic content communicated through the text. Alternative assessment is incorporated through students' reflections at the end of this last stage of the lesson plan template and could take on an expanded role if students' written texts, reflections, and other forms of assessment from the instructional sequence were to be compiled as part of a writing portfolio. Finally, several written artifacts from the first three stages of the model could serve as formative assessments (e.g., reading matrix or idea maps) and evaluated using a simple holistic rubric for task completion and appropriateness of information included.

### 2.3 Sample Writing-Focused Lesson Plan

The lesson plan template for FL writing presented here, grounded in activities reflecting the four pedagogical acts, makes it possible for lower-level FL learners to create a written text based on analysis of both meaning and form in existing textual models. It moves from reading-focused to writing-focused activities and from a primary focus on critical framing and situated practice to activities that concentrate on overt instruction (i.e., raising awareness of text-based linguistic and schematic Available Designs) and, finally, transformed practice as learners draft, edit, and revise their texts.

In Table 6.4, we present a sample lesson plan organized according to the model instructional sequence above. Activities implemented in the lesson represent one of the illustrative activity types presented in Table 6.3 for each stage of reflection (i.e., description in the past) and rewrite the introductions of both articles to reflect the childhood place article they will create in the next stage; they then read both introductions aloud to a peer and listen to his or her feedback before changing roles and providing feedback on the peer's introductions. (Overt instruction / Situated practice / Critical framing)

(Continued)
TABLE 6.4 Sample Instructional Sequence, Writing-Focused Lesson: My Childhood Place

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Stage</th>
<th>Learning Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 4 Textual creation   | a. Students complete a mapping activity, using a graphic organizer to visually represent the what, where, with whom, and when of their “Childhood Place” and to brainstorm key vocabulary and structures necessary for what they want to communicate in their text. (Transformed practice / Situated practice)
|                     | b. Using their maps, students draft a text that describes their childhood place in detail, its significance for them as a child, and its continued importance in their current life, making appropriate use of past and present tenses in context. (Transformed practice)
|                     | c. Students take part in a structured peer-review activity, in which they read a peer’s text and complete a written summary report on it before engaging in a discussion structured by their summary report to give and receive oral feedback on the texts. (Situated practice / Critical framing)
|                     | d. Based on peer feedback and written corrective feedback from their instructor, students revise and edit their texts. (Situated practice / Overt instruction)
|                     | e. Students reflect in writing in the L1 about their participation in this assignment and turn in their reflection with the final draft of their text. (Critical framing) |

The model. This lesson is intended for use in a second-semester introductory-level French course during an instructional unit on childhood and narration in the past. The goals of this lesson are to enable students to understand and use vocabulary related to childhood memories, to recognize how the passé composé ‘preterit’ and imparfait ‘imperfect’ are used in past-tense narration and description, to collaboratively construct meaning from two journalistic texts, and to write their own article based on the textual models. The texts that serve as models for student writing and the basis for reading-focused activities in stages 2 and 3 of the instructional sequence are two short articles from a French weekly magazine entitled Telerama that were part of a four-part series called “Mon lieu d’enfance” “My childhood place,” wherein well-known personalities from French culture describe a place that was special to them when they were young and that continues to play a role in their personal or professional identity. The first text, “Pour Olivia Ruiz, c’était chocolat-tartines au compoir” (published on July 12, 2008), deals with a singer’s memories of her family’s café (Text A). The second text, “Bertrand Tavernier habitait au 4, rue Chambovet, à Lyon” (published on July 19, 2008), presents a filmmaker’s memories of his childhood home (Text B). Because the subject matter of these texts is concrete, visual, and therefore accessible to students, the fact that they include some sophisticated vocabulary and cultural references that are most likely unknown to learners should not impede students’ ability to construct meaning. (To find these texts online, google the terms “telerama” and “mon lieu d’enfance” or go to www.telerama.fr and search using the article titles.)

The activities in this four-stage lesson plan facilitate meaning design through both reading- and writing-focused activities, incorporate the seven principles of literacy (Kem, 2000), and develop learner awareness of the three dimensions of writing (linguistic, sociocultural, and cognitive). Before engaging in reading activities, learners use language to access and share existing Available Designs on the lesson’s theme and to predict the content of the model texts, tapping into previous personal experience and cultural knowledge. Next, learners interact with the Available Designs of the two texts, beginning with a focus on meaning and moving to form-meaning connections and why certain linguistic and schematic resources are used in this textual genre. In so doing, they interpret the themes of the texts and how those themes are related to language forms; they collaborate by interacting with the texts and with other learners to design meaning; and they solve problems by figuring out relationships between words in the text and overall textual meaning. They then move from reading-focused to writing-focused activities, using the texts they have analyzed as models for the types of linguistic (e.g., use of certain verb tenses to narrate and describe in the past) and schematic (e.g., conventions such as alternating between the third-person and first-person narrative mode to describe place as well as the narrator’s relation to place) Available Designs they should use in their text. Pre-writing activities include practicing one specific writing technique and mapping initial ideas for the text’s content in a nonlinear manner, further instantiations of language use and problem solving that facilitate a gradual process of constructing a text. After learners have created a first draft of their text, collaboration takes place as they become readers of others’ texts, providing feedback to their peers on their writing. Finally, at the conclusion of the writing process, when they have produced a revised text, students reflect on what they have learned through participation in this reading-to-writing instructional sequence.

The organization of this writing-focused lesson around the four pedagogical acts also facilitates a multimodal approach to constructing meaning from written texts. Students interact with texts through both reading and listening to the text read aloud (e.g., the practicing a writing technique activity) and participate in numerous structured oral activities. Moreover, this instructional sequence engages students in all three modes of communication (interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational), all grounded in text-oriented activities.

To help you reflect on this sample writing-focused lesson plan, read through it a second time and find answers to the following questions:

1. What are the objectives of this lesson and how do they fit within the course curriculum?
2. Are the selected texts appropriate to meet these objectives? What elements of these texts might be challenging for FL learners to understand?
3. In what ways are students designing meaning through the various activities in this lesson?
4. Why are the different lesson plan activities labeled as situated practice, overt instruction, critical framing, or transformed practice?
5. Are the basic elements of instruction, or the what of multiliteracies pedagogy—conventions, cultural knowledge, and language use—represented in the lesson?
6. Are the learning processes of interpretation, collaboration, problem solving, and reflection and self-reflection (i.e., the how of multiliteracies pedagogy) represented in the lesson?

As you think about planning your own writing-focused lesson plans and assessments using the template above, come back to these questions as a way to help you to organize your ideas and apply your understanding of multiliteracies-based writing pedagogy. Learning Activity 6.5 will help you get started.

LEARNING ACTIVITY 6.5
Design of a Multiliteracies-Based Reading-to-Writing Activity Sequence

Create an instructional sequence based on an existing writing activity from your FL textbook that culminates in a summative, genre-based writing assignment. This instructional sequence should be based on the four-step model described here and linked to the themes and lexico-grammatical and cultural objectives of your course. Before beginning this task, review the themes and objectives you need to keep in mind for the unit or chapter for which you will design your instructional sequence. Next, select a textual genre and two model texts on which you will build your activities that are consistent with the themes and objectives of the unit. Once you have selected the texts, design the instructional sequence using the four-stage model and suggested learning activities in Tables 6.3 and 6.4. When the lesson plan is finished, ask yourself the questions above as a way to help you justify your pedagogical choices.

3. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In this chapter, we have established a conceptual base for considering FL writing instruction within the multiliteracies framework. Essential to this base is the notion that writing is more than speech written down and thus involves more than saying it with the right words. In addition to the linguistic dimension of writing, which is undoubtedly an area for which FL learners need significant assistance, the multiliteracies framework recognizes the critical role of the sociocultural and cognitive dimensions of writing as learners grapple with understanding the conventionalized nature of written texts and how they function within a discourse community and use various cognitive processes to design meaning in the FL.

We further established that teaching FL learners to write following the multiliteracies framework should reflect an integrated approach, incorporating elements of product-, process-, and genre-based instruction. The related pedagogy we developed in this chapter has as its main goal to facilitate FL writing development through a text-based reading-to-writing model and engagement in literacy-based instructional activities and learning processes. Thus, we have highlighted the importance of using authentic FL texts as a starting point for teaching learners to use linguistic and schematic Available Designs accurately and appropriately in their writing. As Kern (2000) explained, studying these Available Designs through textual models allows learners to recognize how their use is constrained in a particular genre and also how they allow for new ways of creative personal expression. This pedagogy is further grounded in existing instructional models intended to foster academic literacy and in the four pedagogical acts essential to multiliteracies instruction: situated practice, overt instruction, critical framing, and transformed practice.

To conclude, as previously noted, writing was long considered a secondary skill, particularly in the lower-level FL curriculum, wherein it was traditionally used as a vehicle for language practice. However, in recent years, researchers have recognized the role of writing in facilitating FL development. The pedagogy for FL writing that you have learned about in this chapter is, in fact, intended to go beyond practicing lexico-grammatical structures or even expressing personal thoughts and opinions. Instead, in line with the definition of literacy that we have laid out in this book, writing instruction serves as a means of teaching both language and culture as students learn new meaning-making practices based on existing textual models. As such, we hope that you have come to view writing as a language modality of primary importance in your students’ language-learning experience.

4. TRANSFORMING KNOWLEDGE

4.1 Reflective Journal Entry

How did this chapter build on your previous understandings of the multiliteracies framework? How did this chapter build on your previous views about writing and FL writing instruction? Did these change after reading this chapter and, if so, how? What specific ideas from the chapter can you apply to your own teaching context? Before completing this journal entry, return to Learning Activity 6.1 and review your responses to it.

4.2 Researching Writing: Personal Action Plan

Identify a goal or problem area related to teaching writing in your instructional context and create a personal action plan. Use the table below to lay out your plan, then implement the plan in your teaching and use your performance measures to collect information that helps determine whether you have met your goal or solved your stated problem. If you have achieved your goal, what are the implications for your approach to teaching writing? If you have not achieved your goal, how can you modify your action plan to help you move forward in this area of your teaching? You can find a description of the parts of a personal action plan in the “Pedagogical Applications” section of Chapter 4.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal or Problem</th>
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<tr>
<td>Action Step 1</td>
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<td>Action Step 4</td>
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<td>Resources and Support</td>
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<td>Possible Barriers</td>
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<td>Performance Measures</td>
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**Key Resources**


This chapter focuses on the notion of textual borrowing, or the appropriation of textual language into writing and speaking at the lexicogrammatical, sentential, and textual level. Maxim argues for a comprehensive reconsideration of textual borrowing’s role in language learning, locating it within the "gradual appropriation by all learners of a range of L2 textual features into their language use" (p. 97). In addition to outlining a pedagogical sequence for reading and writing development that includes textual borrowing, the chapter also presents data from a study of textual borrowing practices by six advanced FL learners.


In this review article, four L2 writing specialists representing varied backgrounds address several questions on writing instruction related to the following topics: differences between FL and ESL writing; the sociolinguistic role of a given FL and its influence in the writing curriculum; the role that writing should play in the FL classroom; and the possible purposes for students writing in FLs. The authors argue that methods for teaching English and ESL cannot be overlaid in FL writing contexts and that specific training should be provided to FL teachers in writing instruction. They further argue for a focus on teaching writing in the FL classroom to facilitate overall language acquisition.

**For Further Reading**


Chapter 6


