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inspired by Japanese Culture and Language

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Vera Kloimwider



## Abstract

The thesis aims at creating and analyzing new creative writing activities for the EFL classroom that can be used as complementary class material to the standard writing tasks. Five new creative writing concepts have been conceived, namely ‘interlinguality’, ‘interculturality’, ‘intertextuality’, ‘intermediality’ and ‘intersensuality’. Each ‘inter’-concept represents a creativity-enhancing approach to creative writing teaching and was inspired by the extensive literature review undertaken on creativity, creative pedagogy and creative writing. To test the theoretical insights and personal reflections, a poetry book writing project inspired by Japanese culture and language was launched in an upper secondary school located in Vienna, Austria. The two concepts ‘interlinguality’ and ‘interculturality’ were chosen as leads to inspire the design of creative writing material. The aim of the project was to fuse creative writing pedagogies with the objectives of the *CEFR – Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* and the *curriculum for living foreign languages in Austrian upper secondary schools* for the language level B1 and the language competence ‘writing’. A short questionnaire and the final creative product in the form of a printed-out poetry book written by the students served as basis for evaluation and discussion of applied creative teaching methods, implemented creative writing material as well as the two introduced ‘inter’-concepts ‘interlinguality’ and ‘interculturality’.



## German Abstract/Zusammenfassung

Die vorliegende Diplomarbeit setzt sich mit der Erstellung und Analyse neuer Formen von Unterrichtsmaterialien für das Lehren und Lernen kreativen Schreibens im englischen Fremdsprachenunterricht auseinander. Ziel ist es kreative Unterrichtsmethoden und -materialien im Sinne des *GERS – Gemeinsamen Europäischen Referenzrahmens für Sprachen* und des *Lehrplans für lebende Fremdsprachen (erste, zweite) für die Oberstufe der allgemein bildenden höheren Schulen (AHS)* zu gestalten. In diesem Sinne wurden fünf neue Konzepte ausgearbeitet: ‚Interlingualität‘, ‚Interkulturalität‘, ‚Intertextualität‘, ‚Intermedialität‘ und ‚Intersensualität‘. Jedes dieser ‚Inter‘-Konzepte wurde im Laufe der intensiven Literaturrecherche über Kreativität, kreative Pädagogik und kreatives Schreiben inspiriert. Um die theoretischen Erkenntnisse und persönlichen Reflexionen zu testen wurde ein Poesieprojekt mit dem Thema „Japanische Kultur und Sprache“ ins Leben gerufen und gemeinsam mit den Oberstufen-Schüler\*Innen einer Wiener Privatschule mit Öffentlichkeitsrecht umgesetzt. Dieses vereint eine Vielfalt kreativitätsfördernder Methoden mit den zwei ‚Inter‘-Konzepten ‚Interlingualität‘ und ‚Interkulturalität‘. Ein kurzer Fragebogen und die kreative, lyrische Arbeit der Schüler\*Innen, welche in Form eines gedruckten und gebunden Poesiebuches vollendet wurde, dienen einer Evaluierung der gewählten kreativen Unterrichtsmethoden und -materialien.





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## List of Abbreviations

CEFR – Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

CLIL - content and language integrated learning

CW – creative writing

ELT – English language teaching

EFL – English as a foreign language

GERS – Gemeinsamer Europäischer Referenzrahmen für Sprachen

IT – improvisational theater

NFCW – new forms of creative writing

PBWP – poetry book writing project

PWA – pre-writing activity

S – student

Ss – students

S+S – pair work

S+S+S – group work

T – teacher

T-> S – teacher explains something to a single student

T->S, S, S – teacher explains something to the whole class

T<->S,S,S – work/discussion in plenary



## Introduction

Creative writing has received increasing attention in ELT. Overall, the scientific interest in creativity, creative pedagogy and other related fields has substantially been growing over the past decades and with that its body of literature. In order to become (more) creative teachers and to teach learners how to discover, cultivate and act out their own creative potential, a thorough understanding of creativity and its related concepts is paramount. Judging from the reviewed literature, ELT has already incorporated many insights on creativity into teaching methods. Also, various approaches to enhance creativity in the language competence 'writing' have been formulated. However, the extensive literature review has shown that there is no consensus of the role creative writing should play in the EFL classroom. Some scholars promote a creative writing pedagogy which emphasizes the students' development as writers, others advocate a usage of creating writing material to inculcate language forms and conventions. The latter might be confirmed through language frameworks, syllabuses and school curricula which generally endorse standardized and testable language teaching and acquisition. In view of these two paradigms, the following research question was formulated:

'Which type of activities may be used in the EFL classroom that foster creativity and meet the set requirements of the *CEFR* and the *curriculum for living foreign languages in Austrian upper secondary schools*?'

Hence, this thesis aims at creating new activities of creative writing for the EFL classroom that can be used as complementary class material to the standard writing tasks. It attempts to fuse creative writing pedagogies with the demands of the frameworks *CEFR* – *The Common European Framework of References for Languages* for the language level B1 and the *Curriculum for Living Foreign Languages in Austrian Upper Secondary Schools*. Moreover, new concepts to enhance creativity in creative writing have been devised, notably the 'New Forms of Creative Writing'. The poetry book writing project (PBWP) with the topic 'Japanese Culture and Language' is based on two of these concepts, namely 'interlinguality' and 'interculturality'. The project was conducted in an upper secondary school in Vienna, Austria and allowed to try the diverse material collection. The creative product, in the form of a printed-out poetry book, and the feedback received through a

short questionnaire, permitted an evaluation of the designed material and implemented creativity-enhancing methods.

The first chapter 'Creativity and School' looks into various definitions, aspects and theories of creativity as well as their implications at school. The body of literature on creativity has shown rich, therefore, a detailed presentation and analysis of the various notions and theories will be provided. The second chapter 'Writing as a Productive Competence' offers an elaborate analysis of the *CEFR – The Common European Framework of References for Languages* of the language level B1 and the *Curriculum for Living Foreign Languages in Austrian Upper Secondary Schools*. After a general introduction and summary of the two frameworks, the focus will be directed to the representation and formulation of 'creativity' and the language competence 'writing'. The third chapter 'Implications of Teaching Creative Writing in the EFL Classroom' examines creative writing activities and their manifold characteristics, how they may assist learners in becoming writers and finally how creative writing texts may be shared and assessed. The findings presented in this part of the thesis inspired the design of the creative writing material used in the PBWP. The fourth chapter 'Teaching Poetry in the EFL Classroom' looks more closely into the teaching of creative writing, namely using the genre 'poetry' as an example. The fifth chapter 'Principles of New Forms of Creative Writing' outlines five newly conceived 'inter'-concepts which aim at promoting creativity in creative writing activities. These are notably 'interlinguality', 'interculturality', 'intertextuality', 'intermediality' and 'intersensuality'. Each concept will be defined and overall examples for creative writing activities will be given. The last chapter 'The Poetry Book Writing Project' deals with the practical part of this thesis and presents the creative writing material collection and its implementation in an upper Austrian secondary school located in Vienna, Austria. In this section, the planning phase, aims and objectives of the project as well as the lessons and activities will be discussed. At the end, the project will be evaluated through personal reflections and the feedback gained through a questionnaire, limitations will be explicated and ideas for improvements and further research highlighted.

# 1. Creativity and School

The major objective of the first chapter is to provide an understanding of creativity to form a basis for its conceptualization and implementation in the educational context, especially in ELT. The chapter has been further divided into three sub-chapters. In the first one, the meaning of creativity will be briefly analyzed in a historical context and definitions of contemporary English dictionaries will be presented. Moreover, the connection of some research fields related with creativity, such as giftedness and intelligence, will be looked into. The second sub-chapter will define and amplify the concepts of the 'creative product', the 'creative process' and the 'creative personality'. Building on this, the third sub-chapter will cover four theories of creativity, which are namely the 'Systems Model', the 'Investment Theory', the 'Four C Model' and the 'Concept of Flow'. Finally, some of the gained insights about creativity and of its aspects will be linked to education and ELT in the last part.

## 1.1. Defining Creativity

### 1.1.1. A Historical Glimpse

The existence of creativity might be as old as humanity itself. Csikszentmihalyi (1997: 8f) points out that creativity is a necessary characteristic for human self-preservation, as it benefits adaptation in an ever-changing environment. He explains that the creative capacity is one of the traits that distinguishes humans from animals (ibid. 1996: 2). Thus, it is not surprising to find evidence of reflections on creativity and its origin in earlier times.

In Greek mythology, for example, the source of creativity was thought to be a muse who whispers ideas into the artist's ear. Muses were considered goddesses at whose will the creator may be blessed with or withheld from artistic inspiration (Rothenberg and Hausman 1976: 306f). The word 'inspiration' derives from the Latin word *inspirationem* and means "immediate influence of God or a god"<sup>1</sup>. Similarly, 'inspire' originates from the Latin word *inspirare*, which translates as "blow into, breathe upon"<sup>2</sup>. This evokes the image of a spiritual being breathing creative ideas of songs, poems or inventions into the

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.etymonline.com/word/inspiration> (04/20/2018)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.etymonline.com/word/inspiration> (04/20/2018)

recipient's mind. Contemporary Western society and science, however, generally imputes creativity fully to the human being and distances itself from the idea that creativity may be an act of divine intervention (Dawson 2005: 22).

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, famous scholars such as Freud, Einstein, Vygotsky or C.G. Jung (Kaufman 2012: 8) reflected deeply on the creative process and broached the issue of creativity and related concepts in their works. Freud composed an essay titled "Creative writers and day-dreaming" in which he considers "from what sources that strange being, the creative writer, draws his material" (1908: 420). In 1958, Nelson edited and published a book compiling a number of papers composed by Freud, called "On Creativity and the Unconscious: Papers on the Psychology of Art, Literature, Love, Religion" (Freud and Nelson 1958). Another example of scientific contemplations on creativity are Einstein's correspondences which show various thoughts on the creative process, creative thinking and imagination (cf. Pais 1982). Also, C.G. Jung and the Soviet psychologist Vygotsky both dedicated several essays to topics related to creativity. Vygotsky, for instance, conducted extensive research on the relationship between imagination and creativity and childhood creativity in general. Even though only a small number of his papers have been translated into English, they considerably complement the growing body of literature on creativity.

The first serious discussions and analyses among researchers started with the convention of the *American Psychological Association* of 1950. In his presidential address, Joy P. Guilford made a plea for increasing the inquiry into creativity (Guilford 1950; Simonton 2000: 151; Kaufman and Beghetto 2009: 1; Kaufman 2012: 9). He considered creativity to be a critical human trait which bears great potential worthy of far deeper research than was carried out at the time. This landmark decision galvanized the research of creativity and many psychologists answered his appeal. Well-known scientists of psychology, such as Guilford, Torrance, Sternberg or Barron, significantly contributed to the understanding of this formerly mystified subject. Up until today, their findings and definitions are recognized, referred to and cited (Simonton 2000: 151; Kaufman 2012: 8f).

In some articles it is claimed that defining creativity still proves a difficult undertaking. Yet, there are definitions which consistently reoccur and which have been referred back to over several decades already (Kaufman 2016: 4f). Nevertheless, to facilitate the understanding of creativity, Runco (2014: 132) suggests to employ the adjective 'creative',

as in creative potential, creative work, creative individual or creative achievements instead of using the umbrella term creativity to refer to the many different concepts of creativity. Researching and defining aspects of creativity instead of the overall concept of creativity might prove easier and offer more concrete results, he argues (ibid.).

### 1.1.2. Some Etymological Insights

In the case of creativity, words such as the ‘creator’ or ‘create’ existed long before the coining of the word ‘creative’ or ‘creativity’. Depending on one’s cultural and religious background, the term ‘creator’ might evoke the beginning of Genesis, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth...”<sup>3</sup>. From an etymological point of view, the English noun ‘creator’ refers to “the Supreme Being, God considered as the creator of the universe”<sup>4</sup>. Likewise, the noun ‘creature’ was first known as “anything created, hence, a thing in general, animate or not, but most commonly a living being”<sup>5</sup>. Delving further, one finds out that both words derive from Latin *creatura*, which stands for “a thing created; the creation; a creation”<sup>6</sup>. The verb ‘create’ derives further from *creates*, the Latin past participle of *creare*, which means “to make, bring forth, produce, beget”<sup>7</sup> and is related to the verb *crescere* which can be translated as “arise, grow”<sup>8</sup>. Following the evolution and connection of these various terms, it becomes clear that creativity is not only an old phenomenon, but also that it comprises an agent – the creator, an object – the creature, and a process – the creation. Today, these terms are rarely used in the field of psychological research on creativity as they have been replaced by the notions ‘creative person(ality)’, ‘creative product’, and ‘creative process’. These three concepts will be given more consideration in following chapters.

As regards contemporary English dictionaries, such as the *Merriam Webster* online dictionary and the *Oxford* online dictionary, more may be learned about qualities and the common understanding of the noun ‘creativity’ and the adjective ‘creative’. These two referred to online dictionaries define ‘**creativity**’ as

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<sup>3</sup> <https://bible.org/download/netbible/ondemand/bybook/gen.pdf> (2/6/2018)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.etymonline.com/word/creator> (2/6/2018)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.etymonline.com/word/creator> (2/6/2018)

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.etymonline.com/search?q=creature> (2/6/2018)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.etymonline.com/word/creature> (2/6/2018)

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=create> (04/18/2017)

- (1) “the quality of being creative”<sup>9</sup>
- (2) “the ability to create”<sup>10</sup> and
- (3) “the ability to use skill and imagination to produce something new or to produce art; the act of doing this”<sup>11</sup>.

The corresponding definitions of the adjective ‘**creative**’ are as follows:

- (1) “marked by the ability or power to create”<sup>12</sup>,
- (2) “having the quality of something created rather than imitated”<sup>13</sup>,
- (3) “involving the use of skill and the imagination to produce something new or a work of art”<sup>14</sup> and
- (4) “having the skill and ability to produce something new, especially a work of art; showing this ability”<sup>15</sup>.

Summing up the above-listed findings of two renowned dictionaries, creativity may be described as the ability to produce something of quality that is new as opposed to imitated, especially a work of art, and the using of one’s skill and imagination.

These definitions reflect the common understanding of creativity, of what it means to be creative, and the common misunderstanding that creativity is mostly related to the arts. Boden (2004 as cited in Davidson and Gregory 2006: 21) and Cremin (as cited in Burnard and Murphy 2013: viii) strongly criticize the viewpoint that only artists have special talents and are imbued with creative ideas, whereas “normal people” have to live without these blessings. They argue that this assumption has held true for a considerable amount of time already, however, it has become obsolete owing to substantial investigations in the respective field. Due to the growing body of research on creativity and related fields, such as intelligence or genius, many contemporary scientists have come to the agreement that creativity is much more complex and omnipresent than it was estimated some decades ago (cf. Kaufman 2016). For this reason, deeper insight into its concepts will be given in the subsequent chapters.

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/creativity> (11/29/2016)

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/creativity> (11/29/2016)

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/creativity?q=creativity> (11/29/2016)

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/creative> (11/29/2016)

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/creative> (11/29/2016)

<sup>14</sup> [http://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/creative\\_1?q=creative](http://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/creative_1?q=creative) (11/29/2016)

<sup>15</sup> [http://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/creative\\_1?q=creative](http://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/creative_1?q=creative) (11/29/2016)



Building on this, the chapter 'Aspects of Creativity' will look more closely into the meaning of creativity through the discussion of three of its main features: the 'creative product', the 'creative person' and the 'creative process'.

### **1.1.3. Creativity and Related Concepts**

Several studies have been undertaken on similar topics to creativity, such as intelligence, giftedness, talent, genius or divergent thinking (Kaufman 2016: 8f). In fact, up until today, more research has been dedicated to these related concepts than to creativity itself (ibid. 2012: 10f).

Even though many studies show a correlation between intelligence and creativity, there is no implication that less intelligent people are less creative. Kaufman (2016: 23) assumes that one reason might be that the intelligence tests mainly examine divergent thinking, which denotes "the ability to generate many different solutions to an open-ended problem" as opposed to "convergent thinking [which describes] the ability to select the best solution out of many potential ideas" (ibid.). Divergent thinking represents a trait for both intelligence and creativity (Kaufman 2012: 10f). Guilford stresses that "the components of divergent thinking, namely originality, flexibility, and elaboration comprise the core of creativity. Guilford (1956, as cited in Reuter 2007: 79) stresses that for new inventions to be conceived all cognitive capacities are necessary: divergent thinking which is the core feature of creativity as well as convergent thinking which is the core feature of intelligence. In the context of education, it is hence important to acknowledge the difference between these two concepts, and to promote both. Children need to be encouraged to develop divergent and convergent thinking, as it is their combination which may lead to developable and realizable ideas and inventions.

Further, Csikszentmihalyi (1996: 26) argues that being talented does not mean the same as being creative, even though these terms are sometimes used interchangeably. The same accounts for being a genius, which refers to a person that is brilliant or highly eminent. Their work often involves leadership qualities, outstanding achievements or make proof of distinguished performance (Kaufman 2016: 11). Nonetheless, brilliance does not necessarily indicate creativity (Csikszentmihalyi 1996: 26). Thus, it can be said that general consensus agrees that creativity cannot be equated with giftedness, talent or

intelligence (Runco 2004: 21). Finally, through the research on related fields the path for studying and conceptualizing creativity was initiated.

In this chapter, a brief insight into the historical context of creativity was given as well as an etymological elaboration and a conceptual delineation of related notions presented. This offered a rudimentary understanding of creativity from a historical, etymological and everyday point of view. The next part will focus on three aspects of creativity, notably the 'creative product', the 'creative person' and the 'creative process'.

## **1.2. Aspects of Creativity**

### **1.2.1. The Creative Product**

Many contemporary researchers who discuss creativity claim that no clear and steady-over-the-years definition exists. Yet, this is not the case (Kaufman 2016: 4f). There is general agreement on two core components to describe creativity, which are (1) 'novel' (also 'unusual', 'original', 'innovative', 'new') and (2) 'useful' (also 'practical', 'appropriate') (Boden 2001: 95; Sternberg, Kaufman and Pretz 2002: 1; Kaufman and Baer 2004: 4; Dawson 2005: 22; Težak 2015: 162; cf. Cropley 2001). Hutchinson, Barron and Stein were among the first scholars to pin down these concepts (Stein 1953: 311; Barron 1955: 479; Runco and Jaeger 2012: 93) which have been recited and extended over several decades already (Kaufman 2012: 5).

The first core concept of creativity is '**novelty**' (also 'innovation' or 'originality') (Guilford 1950: 452; Stein 1953: 311; Barron 1955 as cited in Kaufman 2012: 5). A "creative person has novel ideas" (Guilford 1950: 452) and thinks in unusual ways (Sternberg 2006: 88). An original idea or work is new, and therefore goes beyond a mere copy or replication of something that already exists. One way to define novelty, for example, is through statistical infrequency. If something rarely comes about or has never been thought of before, it is a unique idea or work and therefore original and novel (Runco 2004: 21; Sternberg 2006: 88). This may be a solution to a problem, a new method of painting or an innovative technological advancement. Finally, the aspect of novelty (or originality) may

vary to a considerable extent: it might be novel (or original) for an individual's personal life, a certain social group or even for the entirety of humankind (Sternberg 2006: 88).

The second concept is **'usability'** ('practicality', 'task appropriateness') (Boden 2001: 95; Sternberg, Kaufman and Pretz 2002: 1; Kaufman and Baer 2004: 4; Kaufman 2016: 5; Dawson 2005: 22; Težak 2015: 162). Hutchinson (1931: 393 as cited in Runco and Jaeger 2012: 93) argues that a novel idea needs to be practical and Barron (1955: 479) wrote that an invention "must be to some extent adaptive to reality" and show usability. Hence, a creative idea or product is only creative if a practical implementation is possible. If the lock of an entrance door is broken and somebody suggests to simply remove the whole door and replace it with a curtain, the idea was certainly creative, however not appropriate and useful to the task in question (cf. Kaufman 2016: 5). This example portrays the need for an idea or newly invented object to be "realistic or useful in or for our lives" (Runco and Jaeger 2012: 92).

Next to 'novelty' and 'utility', further components to define creativity have been suggested, such as 'high quality' (also 'value') or 'surprise'. The first is only mentioned by some scholars, as it proves difficult to determine the definition of **'high quality'** (Kaufman and Baer 2004: 4). The creativity of an individual whose work has had a substantial impact on our life is easily regarded as one of high quality (Tardif and Sternberg 1988; Simonton 1994; Weisberg 1999). But what about the creativity of a houseman who frequently invents delicious recipes for his family or an adolescent who creatively decorates the walls of her room? The quality of these creative products might be high for the creative individuals, but not relevant for their extended environment or for humanity. As mentioned before, next to the component 'high quality', **'surprise'** was suggested as further criterion (Boden 2004 as cited in Kaufman 2012: 6; Simonton 2012: 98). Kaufman (2012: 6) argues that if something is truly new and original, it has to be unplanned and both the individual and the environment should be surprised, i.e. "there should be an "Aha!" moment".

It is relevant to add that the discussed components to characterize creativity refer to the creative product and not to the creative process or person. Briskman (as cited in Hausman 2009: 3) points out that "a person or a process can only be identified as creative if the actual product is considered creative. Judging from its novelty, quality and utility,

conclusions about the person and process are drawn". He claims that without a creative outcome, creativity cannot be acknowledged.

However, a creative product does not have to be material but may instead be an idea or behavior (Barron 1969). For instance, a solution to a verbal conflict or a change of perspective in order to overcome emotional issues are also creative outcomes. Vygotsky (1967/ 2014: 7) writes that

[a]ny human act that gives rise to something new is referred to as a creative act, regardless of whether what is created is a physical object or some mental or emotional construct that lives within the person who created it and is known only to him.

In other words, internal processes may be considered to be just as creative as the manufacture of an object, regardless of whether they are expressed to others or not. Likewise, Runco (2004: 24) claims that "products are unimportant for personal creativity", since creativity takes place with or without (creative) results.

Taylor (1959 as cited in Caspari 1994: 56) identified five categories to classify creative products in which he included "immaterial" emergences of creativity. The first four categories were translated into the context of school by Facaoaru (1988: 21f as cited in Caspari 1994: 56f):

- (1) '**expressive creativity**' represents spontaneity in actions
- (2) '**reproductive creativity**' refers to the acquisition of techniques and capacities and their implementation in various contexts
- (3) '**innovative creativity**' relates to the ability to create new and reinterpret existing relationships and to make discoveries and inventions
- (4) '**revolving creativity**' denotes the new understanding of a subject area which leads to the creation of novel and valuable products
- (5) '**emergent creativity**' concerns the restructuring of vast knowledge and the conception of new theories and systems

The evolving nature of these concepts demonstrates the importance of acknowledging and encouraging any instance of creative behavior in children. Moreover, these categories relate to the characteristics discussed in 'The Four C Model of Creativity', where smaller instances of creativity are equally given attention (cf. chapter 'The Four C Model of Creativity').

To summarize, it can be stated that creativity comprises two core concepts, notably 'novel' and 'original'. Some researchers add the characteristic 'high quality' in order to refer to outstanding creativity or a creative product that is highly valuable to the domain, the culture or a group of people (Sternberg 2006: 88). 'Surprise' is another factor that has been identified, but which was rarely found in the reviewed literature (Kaufman 2012: 6). Further, several types of creativity were highlighted. The given definitions mainly serve to refer to a 'creative product', which, however, only constitutes a part of the conceptual framework of creativity that exists today. The following two sub-chapters will deal with the 'creative person' and the 'creative process', respectively.

### **1.2.2. The Creative Person**

When learning more about what creativity is and which qualities a creative product exhibits, the question arises of whether there is such a thing as a creative personality. Are certain creativity proving character traits inherent to only some people? Or are all humans creative? Barron (1955: 478) ascertains as early as 1955 that "some people tend to regularly come up with something original, [w]hile there are other individuals who never depart from the stereotyped and the conventional in their thinking". Several decades later, Csikszentmihalyi (1997: 8f) made similar observations, claiming that in the majority of individuals entropy, "the urge to relax and calm down one's mind", seems to be more prominent than the wish to experience the intrinsic rewards of discovering something new. Yet, the evolution of a culture depends on individuals who are open towards discoveries, new experiences and exploration. Without these characteristics, humankind may not be able to adapt to an ever-changing world as a whole (ibid.).

Stein (1953: 312) elaborates further on the personality of a creative person, whom he considers as someone with a higher sensitivity and flexibility towards the environment. Due to the greater sensitivity, the creative person is more prone to discern possible pieces that are missing and that could benefit the environment. Stein (ibid.) does not regard creative persons to be more emotional or empathic, he rather considers that some may exhibit creativity in the emotional or intellectual sphere, depending on their personal traits.

According to Csikszentmihalyi (1996: 25f), three phenomena can be distinguished as regards creative personalities: These are,

- (1) “persons who express unusual thoughts, who are interesting and stimulating”,
- (2) “people who experience the world in novel and original ways [i.e.] individuals whose perceptions are fresh, whose judgments are insightful, who may make important discoveries that only they know about”.

This type (2) shows a creative character trait as well, however, it is only acted out on a small scale in one’s personal life (ibid.). And finally, there are people who

- (3) “have changed our culture in some important respect”.

Furthermore, he states that even though creative individuals differ in many ways, they have one thing in common, which is that they all love their work. Their drive to explore and invent is not sparked by any extrinsic factors, such as fame, money or success, but by the possibility of doing what they love (ibid. 1997: 8f).

Moreover, many factors interplay in the creativity of an individual. Barron (1955: 478 as cited in Weisberg 1986: 69) assumed that some relatively enduring factors may have a considerable impact on whether an individual exhibits creative behavior or not. Likewise, Runco (2004: 23) asserts that mere creativity is not enough and that other factors such as personal effort, invested time, interest and motivation play a significant role in its occurrence. Overall, however, he is convinced that every person has creative potential, and depending on the several intrinsic and extrinsic factors it might channel into creative thinking, leading to creative products (ibid.: 21f). Finally, their point of view allows the assumption that creativity is intrinsic to all human beings and depending on personal, social and cultural circumstances this trait may be acted out or not. This is why the social component of creativity should not be forgotten (Gruber 1981: xx as cited in Weisberg 1986: 69f) and an environment that is creativity-friendly and open to new ideas should be encouraged. This equally accounts for society as for schools. The importance of the environment to enhance creativity will be discussed in more detail in the chapter ‘The Systems Model’.

### **1.2.3. The Creative Process**

Another aspect of creativity is the creative process. Traditionally, five phases have been ascribed to it (Wallas 1926 as cited in Maley and Bolitho 2015: 434; Csikszentmihalyi 1996: 79f; Kaufman 2016: 20f), which are notably

- (1) **'preparation'**: learning about a problem
- (2) **'incubation'**: when the unconscious continues to work on the problem
- (3) **'insight'**: sometimes compared to a light bulb that switches on where all of a sudden a solution presents itself
- (4) **'evaluation'**: the time where a person reflects on the value of the idea and decides whether it is worth pursuing
- (5) **'elaboration'/'verification'**: when the insights are explored, tested and verified

Furthermore, the creative process shows four key characteristics, as described by Guilford (1967 as cited in Constantinides 2015: 116):

- (1) **'fluency'**: producing lots of ideas
- (2) **'flexibility'**: producing ideas of various types
- (3) **'elaboration'**: building on and embellishing existing ideas
- (4) **'originality'**: producing clever and original ideas

As can be taken from the five-stage model and the four key characteristics of the creative process, time plays a crucial role in finding solutions and creative answers. There needs to be time for constructing a problem and learning about it, generating ideas and possible solutions and evaluating and exploring them (Kaufman 2016: 22).

It is questionable whether typical school lessons of 50 minutes are sufficient to allow students to begin and end their creative process in a satisfying manner. More likely, their process is "divided" and "spread over" several lessons. This probably accounts for every subject, which means that the learners deal with different stages of various creative processes at the same time. Given Csikszentmihalyi's (1996: 139) argumentation, this compartmentalization of time and subjects seems problematic: He stresses that depending on the stage of the creative process a person is at, different settings are required. During the period of 'preparation' and 'idea generation', a stimulating environment is valuable, while during the phase where insights occur, silence and solitude might be more conducive.

In this chapter 'Aspects of Creativity', three core features of creativity were designated and explicated: the creative product with its two commonly used criteria 'novel' and 'practical', the creative person and finally the creative process. The next chapter is dedicated to four theories of creativity, notably the 'Systems Model' by Csikszentmihalyi (cf. 1996), the 'Investment Theory' by Sternberg (cf. 2006) the 'Four C Model of Creativity' by Kaufman and Beghetto (cf. 2009) and the 'Concept of Flow' by Csikszentmihalyi (cf. 1996; 1997; 2013).

### **1.3. Theories of Creativity**

In the latest decades of creativity research, numerous theories have been conceived with the goal of facilitating this complex subject. Some have been successfully accepted by the scientific community, such as the 'Four C Model' and the 'Concept of Flow', whereas the 'Investment Theory' has met less echo. The reason why the 'Investment Theory' has been nevertheless included into this paper is that it exemplifies the need for an interplay of several internal and external factors for creativity to spark and manifest itself.

#### **1.3.1. The Systems Model**

In his 'Systems Model', Csikszentmihalyi (1996: 27f) identifies an interplay of the three components 'domain', 'field' and 'person'. The **'domain'** "consists of a set of symbolic rules and procedures" that are "nested in what we usually call culture, or the symbolic knowledge shared by a particular society, or by humanity as a whole" (ibid.). A domain can be as large as music or psychology or as narrow as creative diary writing or Georgian polyphone folk music. The more a culture evolves, the more complex domains become which leads to the division into subdomains (Csikszentmihalyi 2013: 9). In Renaissance, it was still possible to be an expert in all sciences. Today, each scientific field has several subdomains and understanding a single one is highly time-consuming and complex (ibid.). Furthermore, some researchers question whether creativity is domain-specific or domain-general, i.e. a creative person might outstand in just one domain or in several domains provided the given time to reach a certain level of proficiency (Weisberg 1999: 233; Kaufman and Baer 2004: 5). The essence of this dichotomy essentially reflects the question of whether creativity emerges due to "differences in skills, traits, or modes of



thinking, or of more happenstance factors such as environments” (Kaufman and Baer 2004: 5). According to Tardif and Sternberg (1988: 433f), the displaying of creativity is restricted to limited domains. Kaufman and Baer (2004: 5) share the same view and contend that at least ten years of intensive dedication to a subject is needed in order to exhibit domain-relevant creativity.

The second component of the ‘Systems Model’ is **‘field’**. Field represents all people that function as “gatekeepers” to the domain or to the next levels within a domain. Gatekeepers may be superiors, professors, teachers, editors, art critics, asf. (Kaufman 2016: 28). Their opinion is paramount to whether a new idea is accepted into the respective domain or not (Csikszentmihalyi 1996: 28). Consequently, creativity may also be defined as “any act, idea, or product that changes an existing domain, or that transforms an existing domain into a new one” (ibid.; Sternberg, Kaufman & Pretz 2002).

The **‘person’** represents an individual who makes use of the symbols typical for a domain. If s/he identifies new patterns they might be included provided the field greenlights their creativity and the change of the domain (Csikszentmihalyi 1996: 28).

The ‘Systems Model’ demonstrates the relationship of creativity with its environment and the impact the latter has on the acceptance and success of a creative product, idea or behavior. This entails the consideration of whether creativity is a personal or a social phenomenon (Mayer 1999; Kaufman and Baer 2004: 6). The ‘Systems Model’ fails to include smaller instances of creativity which might not be relevant to a domain or a culture but to an individual’s personal experiences and life. These types of creativity will be explicated in the sub-chapter ‘The Four C Model of Creativity”, but first, the ‘Investment Theory’ will be given attention.

### **1.3.2. The Investment Theory**

According to Sternberg (2006: 88),

creative people are those who are willing and able to “buy low and sell high” in the realm of ideas [...] Buying low means pursuing ideas that are unknown or out of favor but that have growth potential. Often, when these ideas are first presented, they encounter resistance.

Even though this approach resembles entrepreneurship, it essentially describes an individual’s open attitude towards unfavored and discarded ideas. This open attitude

reflects a certain “creativity [that] requires a confluence of six distinct but interrelated resources: intellectual abilities, knowledge, styles of thinking, personality, motivation, and environment” (Sternberg 2006: 88). Sternberg’s definitions of the characteristics of creativity in the context of the ‘Investment Theory’ are very detailed. Here, brief descriptions will be included as it is only the essence of the theory which is relevant for this thesis.

(1) **‘Intellectual skills’** refer to the ability to look at problems in unconventional ways and to differentiate between ideas which are worth investing more time and effort or not (Sternberg 2006: 88). (2) **‘Knowledge’** relates to everything the individual has learned and experienced in a field. This may help or hamper creativity (ibid.: 89). Csikszentmihalyi (2012: 24) notes that “[k]nowledge plus creativity [are important], one without the other does not lead humanity anywhere [as] it is the combination of both that makes us evolve” (ibid.). (3) **‘Thinking styles’** are the “preferred ways of using one’s skills”. It is important to being able to distinguish relevant questions from irrelevant ones (Sternberg 2006: 89). As far as (4) **‘personality’** is concerned, Sternberg (ibid.) argues that creative people tend to oppose common ways of thinking. “Intrinsic, task-focused” (5) **‘motivation’** is another important factor for creativity to flourish. He points out that “people rarely do truly creative work in an area unless they love what they are doing and focus on the work rather than the potential rewards. Motivation is not something inherent in a person: One *decides* to be motivated by one thing or another” (ibid.). Also, the (6) **‘environment’** plays a crucial role. Ideally, it is “supportive and rewarding of creative ideas”. This is, however, often not the case; one reason could be that it is perceived as a threat to reality and the status quo (ibid.). In contrast, if a novel idea finds immediate support of many people this might be an indicator of a conventional idea and not a creative one (ibid.: 90). Finally, Sternberg (ibid.: 97) concludes that society’s reaction towards novel ideas seems to play a significant role in its emergence and exploration.

In addition, Sternberg (ibid.: 90) highlights his point of view that being creative is mainly a decision, and taking this decision can be learned. In the context of school, he further adds that students often only need to be encouraged to be creative, signaling that original ideas and behavior are punished but welcomed (Sternberg 2006: 90; cf. O’Hara and

Sternberg 2000, 2001). I.e. if the environment – the school – is open to novel ideas instead of opposing and punishing them, students are likely to be more creative.

### **1.3.3. The Four C Model of Creativity**

The 'Four C Model' discerns four types of creativity: 'Big-C', 'pro-c', 'small-c' and 'mini-c'. The first two concepts have been part of the literary body for several years already, especially the 'Big-C' category. The latter has been under close investigation through the studies on genius, giftedness and talent, serving as a basis for several theories on creativity (among other the concept of 'flow'). In contrast, Kaufman and Beghetto's (2009) 'Four C Model' aims to include other forms of creativity into the focus of study.

**'Big-C'** creativity refers to "truly great, history-making instances of creative breakthroughs among eminent individuals" (Kozbelt 2011: 474) "whose works have lasted centuries" (Kaufman and Beghetto 2009: 2). Examples for 'Big-C' creativity are world-known composers, such as Mozart or Haydn, Nobel laureates such as Marie Curie or Albert Einstein, or groundbreaking psychologists such as Sigmund Freud or C.D. Jung; they unanimously have in common that their creations left lasting footprints in history, as their work usually had an abiding impact on the respective domain (Kozbelt et al 2010: 23).

In contrast, **'little-c'**, or also called 'small-c' creativity, stands for "private minor insight[s] or realization[s] in an ordinary person" (Kozbelt 2011: 474) which are "accessible to almost anyone" (Kozbelt et al 2010: 23). The way we humans improvise when gardening, cooking or repairing a broken lampshade at home, when we are creating something new and original for our own small world, these are instances of 'little-c' creativity.

Kaufman and Beghetto (2009), on the other hand, criticize the dichotomous quality of classifying creativity into only these two groups ('Big-C' and 'little-c'). Their argumentation is based on the exclusive quality a two C creativity model entails. This exclusivity holds especially true as the majority of investigations are conducted on 'Big-C' creative individuals (Kozbelt 2011: 474), giving the impression that if one does not reach eminence ('Big-C'), the manifested creativity is not more than common everyday creativity ('little-c'). This is of course not true, as many creative achievements are still highly valuable to the respective domain (Kaufman and Beghetto 2009: 3). Similarly, smaller insights and personal reflections that happen while learning something new are not valued as creative

acts either, as they do not pass as 'small-c' creativity whose instances are usually more visible and tangible. Therefore, Kaufman and Beghetto (ibid.) conceived a more differentiated model called the 'Four C Model of Creativity', in which they added the notions of 'pro-c' and 'mini-c' creativity to supplement the definitions of 'Big-C' and 'little-c' creativity.

They emphasize the fact that very few creative people reach an eminent status and if they do this rarely happens during their lifetime. Nevertheless, many outstanding individuals often considerably contribute to the respective domain and culture with their creative accomplishments. These achievements, however, are not valued unless they receive 'Big-C' status through, for instance, the winning of prestigious prizes such as the *Nobel Prize* (Kozbelt 2011: 474; Kaufman and Beghetto 2009: 2). In contrast, their creativity is more than 'little-c' or 'mini-c' creativity, i.e. the everyday creativity of common people which is not related to a professional context. This is why Kaufman and Beghetto (2009: 5) devised 'pro-c' creativity which "represents the developmental and effortful progression beyond 'little-c' [without having] attained Big-C status". In order to reach 'pro-c' creativity in one's domain, about ten-plus years of experience is needed (Ericsson 1996 as cited in Beghetto and Kaufman 2009: 5). Hence, 'pro-c' highlights the professional efforts of a creative individual. Lastly, having discussed 'Big-C' and 'pro-c' creativity, it is noteworthy to add that not everyone who has success and fame may automatically be considered as a creative person, and in return, not every creative person is successful and famous. Sometimes it goes hand in hand, sometimes it does not (Runco 2014: 131; Kaufman and Beghetto 2009: 5).

The definition of '**mini-c**' creativity is inspired by the various findings of other researchers, such as Runco's notion of personal creativity (1996 as cited in Kaufman and Beghetto 2009: 3) or Niu and Sternberg's definition of individual creativity (2006 as cited in Kaufman and Beghetto 2009: 3). Runco (1996: 4; 2004: 22f) highlights that personal creativity is "manifested in the intentions and motivation to transform the objective world into original interpretations, coupled with the ability to decide when this is useful and when it is not". According to the definitions of Beghetto and Kaufman (2007 as cited in Beghetto and Kaufman 2009: 3) 'mini-c' creativity can be described "as the novel and personally meaningful interpretation of experiences, actions, and events" and its "dynamic,

interpretive process of constructing personal knowledge and understanding within a particular sociocultural context” (Beghetto and Kaufman 2009: 3). In addition, any mental or emotional constructs and discoveries may be considered as creative acts, regardless of how small they are (ibid., Kozbelt 2011: 474; cf. Vygotsky 1976/2004). Hence, ‘mini-c’ creativity stands for the recognition of “intrapersonal insights and interpretations” of any individual as being part of creativity (Beghetto and Kaufman 2009: 4). These intrapersonal processes include “aspects of creativity [, such as], openness to new experiences, active observation, and willingness to be surprised and explore the unknown” (Richards 2007). The recognition of ‘mini-c’ and ‘small-c’ creativity seems particularly important in the context of school as it can be assumed that the instances of these types prevail.

Drawing from the ‘Four C Model of Creativity’, the putative creative and professional development of a creative individual may be traced: First, ‘mini-c’ creativity may develop into ‘little-c’ creativity. Then, after several years of dedicated work in the same field, one might reach the level of ‘pro-c’ creativity, and finally, the creative work of very few will be recognized as ‘Big-C’ creativity. This chain of natural creative progression illustrates the possibilities of individuals regarding their creative endeavors.

Yet, as Runco (2014: 132) insists, instead of differentiating creativity into ever smaller categories, it would be more relevant to find out its commonalities. On the one hand because “the processes involved in personal, everyday creativity are the same as those involved in high-level creative achievements” (ibid.: 131), on the other hand in order to assist people in developing their creativity so that they may achieve ‘pro-c’ or ‘Big-C’ qualities (ibid.: 132).

To sum up, creativity defined by the ‘Four C Model of Creativity’ can be categorized into four groups, namely ‘mini-c’, ‘little-c’, ‘pro-c’ and ‘Big-C’ creativity. ‘Mini-c’ reflects the beginnings of creative acts in the form of mental and emotional insights and reflections. ‘Small-c’ creativity refers to already visible and tangible creative products. ‘Pro-c’ defines creative accomplishments on a professional scale and ‘Big-C’ is concerned with eminent creativity that has had a lasting impact on a domain and a culture. In this paper, ‘mini-c’ and ‘small-c’ creativity will be given most attention to as the creative potential present in children and adolescents is most likely to be located at these two levels. The chapter ‘Creativity and School’ will therefore relate the findings of creativity and its concepts to

the educational context. Prior to that, however, the 'Concept of Flow' will be presented in the next chapter.

#### **1.3.4. The Concept of Flow**

Another theory on creativity is the 'Concept of Flow', which was conceived by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. In the 90s, he conducted a longitudinal study of five years, interviewing one hundred extraordinary creative individuals (cf. 'Big-C' creativity) in order to find out more about the creative process. Each interviewee has made an impact on our lives with their work as successful artists and writers, *Nobel prize*-winning scientists of various fields, ranging from astrology to technology. Some people spend a considerable part of their time following their avocations, often without gaining money or having any particular public success. Csikszentmihalyi (1997: 9) wanted to learn why these people would still engage in these activities and what it is that drives and motivates them. Drawing from his extensive research, he concludes that the experience itself is rewarding and the fact that it is very often accompanied by risk, difficulties or other problems does not eclipse the strong zest and drive for experiencing the positive feelings of creation and discovery. Furthermore, he remarks that all interviewees seem to describe a similar phenomenon, which he calls 'flow'. This concept of 'flow' refers to a mental state where the individual experiencing it completely immerses into her/his work, "an almost effortless yet highly focused state of consciousness" that does "not vary much by culture, gender, or age" (ibid.). There are certain elements that were described by the majority of interviewees, and which describe 'flow' (ibid.: 10f):

- (1) "There are clear goals every step of the way"
- (2) "There is immediate feedback to one's actions"
- (3) "There is a balance between challenges and skills"
- (4) "Action and awareness are merged"
- (5) "Distractions are excluded from consciousness"
- (6) "There is no worry of failure"
- (7) "Self-consciousness disappears"
- (8) "The sense of time becomes distorted"
- (9) "The activity becomes an end in itself"

As can be taken from the above-enlisted experienced characteristics, 'flow' seems to be a fulfilling state of doing where trust in one's competences and joy replaces the feelings of anxiety and fear of failure. Thinking of school in a humanistic light, this type of learning should prevail. This entails several questions: How is it possible to provide an educational environment where every individual may feel secure, guided and valued and where distractions (breaks? noise?) and worry of failure may be avoided or organized in a different manner?

Csikszentmihalyi has written numerous books and research papers on 'flow', and his reflections are intriguing and insightful as regards the process of creativity and the characteristics of creative persons. His findings, as well as the ones of other scholars, bear great potential in inspiring change in the education system and might be able to answer some arising questions. Several researchers of ELT have already incorporated these recent views into the conception of teaching methods, material design and the definition of the role of learners, teachers and the educational environment. In the following chapter, a general overview will be provided of these new paradigms.

## **1.4. Implications of Fostering Creativity in Schools**

This last part of the first chapter 'Creativity and School' deals with the implementation of creativity in the educational context. First, several reasons why the fostering of creativity in schools are given. Then, the 'triangle model of creative pedagogy' will be analyzed which highlights the interrelatedness of the three concepts 'creative teaching', 'teaching for creativity' and 'creative learning'. The third section will discuss creativity and its implications in ELT.

### **1.4.1. Creativity in Schools**

#### ***The Importance of Creativity***

Given the social, environmental, technological and economic challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, being creative and coming up with creative ideas might play a vital role for the future of subsequent generations (Csikszentmihalyi 1997: 8; Parkhurst 1999 as cited in Shaheen 2010: 166; Lin 2011: 150; Selkrig and Keamy 2017: 1, cf. Bauman 2014). Paradoxically, as Csikszentmihalyi (1997: 8) points out, one reason for humanity's current

problems are results of utmost creativity. Nevertheless, the solution to these challenges lies too in the creative minds of humans. He continues that creativity by itself is neutral and that it depends on our intentions. Hence, our great creative potential needs to be withdrawn from its destructive side and posed to benefit the world, its environment and population (Csikszentmihalyi 1996: 10f; O'Connor 2006: 86-90). According to Richards (2007: 10f), many positive effects and impacts of creativity can already be observed in the realizations of 'cultural creatives', a subpopulation who by expressing their personal creativity influences the world in various positive aspects. Their characteristics are marked by "social conscience, rejecting materialism, [interest] in green values and sustainability, and [a quest] for new ways to live". Moreover, she identifies a further subgroup who practices personal and spiritual growth (Richards 2007: 10; cf. Ray and Anderson 2000). Richards (2007: 10) estimates that the 'cultural creatives' may inspire other people around the world with their alternative lifestyles and may have a positive influence on a social, environmental and spiritual level.

Such positive changes are the reasons for why we need children to cultivate skills which help them to lead a fulfilling life and contribute to the greater good of humankind (Walberg 1988 as cited in Shaheen 2010: 166; Csikszentmihalyi 2012: 24). Similarly, Selkrig and Keamy (2017: 1) underline the necessity for schools to teach enabling skills – "critical thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity" combined with knowledge in various subject areas to prepare the next generations for the fast-paced digital world (cf. Parkhurst 1999 as cited in Shaheen 2010: 166). They need to be equipped with problem-solving skills, trained in divergent thinking, engaged in collaboration rather than competition in order to tackle the general uncertainty of the future with improvisational skills and flexibility (Stepanek 2015: 99). Schools represent an ideal place to nourish these skills while fusing the development of creativity and the acquisition of knowledge (Walberg 1988 as cited in Shaheen 2010: 166).

### ***Benefits of Creativity***

Moreover, creativity has far-reaching psychological, social and spiritual benefits on a personal as well as global level. Several scholars (Csikszentmihalyi 1996: 2; Richards 2007: 9; Yachina and Fahrutdinova 2015: 14) promote the recognition of the importance of everyday creativity (cf. 'mini-c' and 'small-c' creativity, chapter 'The Four C Model of



Creativity'), as living a creative life makes people happier and content. Richards (2007: 9; cf. Smith and van der Meer 1990 as cited in Richards 2007: 9) observed "that older people who think more divergently and innovatively and remain interested, open and curious, tend to be more comfortable with aging, illness, and death". Further on, she identifies a generally increasing interest in globally relevant themes. She provides an example of a "troubled young person [who] is writing creatively about conflict at home, and empathizing broadly with a similarly disaffected teenage cohort" (Richards 2007: 9; cf. Runco and Richards 1998). Through self-actualizing creativity, Richards (2007: 9; cf. Zauser 2007) claims, individuals help themselves to heal and stay healthy while inspiring and sympathizing with others who face similar challenges (cf. Beghetto and Kaufman 2009: 3). In addition, "expanded states of consciousness, peak experiences, an oceanic awareness, and other transpersonal states" (Richards 2007: 10; cf. Miller and Cook-Greuter 2000; Rogers 1993) are often described of individuals expressing themselves with self-actualizing creativity.

Furthermore, Liebnau (1995: 6) claims that the integration of creative methods into teaching are indispensable for they address the left hemisphere of the brain, allowing for more holistic results in problem-finding, idea-generation and exploration and overall thinking processes. By mainly relying on the right hemisphere for dealing with tasks and challenges, creativity, phantasy, flexibility and spontaneity in thinking are not appealed to. The neglect of the left hemisphere may lead to "symptoms" such as daydreaming, chatting or other forms of disturbance in class. Therefore, it is vital to engage both hemispheres, challenging the full capacity and potential of the brain and allowing for holistic thinking which is more versatile, lively and therefore more human.

### ***Two Major Trends: Standardization vs. Creativity***

Even though an increasing number of education systems have started to address creativity in their curricula in one way or another (Craft 2005; Lin 2014: 43), schooling is presently still defined and carried out through fact-based learning and training of convergent thinking. This is reflected in one of the two major trends that can be recognized in the overall education system, which is the striving towards more standardization, testing and assessment, skills and competences. The other trend, on the contrary, aspires towards

creativity, imagination, collaboration and the development of social and emotional skills (Fehér 2015: 74).

According to Fehér (2015: 74), foreign language teaching, for instance, should not be reduced to the implementation of a rigid curriculum with creativity playing a minor role. Attributing too much importance to language performance within predefined categories as promoted by the *CEFR* may restrict the possibilities of creativity and imagination in language acquisition (Fehér 2015: 74). As Maley and Bolitho (2015: 436) specify, the focus on competences and skills, examinations and box-ticking may curb creativity even though the *CEFR* is generally praised for its standardization of language levels.

### ***Implementing Creativity in Schools***

Naturally, the question arises as to how the insights gained on creativity can be implemented into the context of school. First, according to several scholars, two key assumptions should form the basis: (1) every human being has creative potential (Craft 2001 and NACCCE 1999 as cited in Lin 2011: 150; Constantinides 2015: 116; Stepanek 2015: 98; Runco 2004: 21f), (2) creativity can be developed (Torrance 1963 as cited in Lin 2011: 150). The creative potential might be ‘blocked’ for individual or social reasons (Constantinides 2015: 116), but given the close relationship of creativity to other cognitive processes, such as problem-solving, divergent thinking or memory use, there is no reason why the creative potential should not be able to be fostered to a certain degree in every pupil, just like any other behavior (Guilford 1952 as cited in Lin 2011: 149).

Second, as Pommerin (1996: 50) states, the integration of creativity into every subject at school should be advocated, since creativity should be regarded as a general educational goal. Likewise, Roth (1976: 150 as cited in Caspari 1994: 78) writes that creativity should transcend learning objectives and not become the main goal of teaching. His argumentation is based on his conviction that “science, art, culture and life cannot exclusively exist in and of creativity, as they are rather transmission, tradition, panache, custom and experience”<sup>16</sup> (free translation of Roth 1976: 150 as cited in Caspari 1994: 78).

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<sup>16</sup> „Wissenschaft, Kunst, Kultur und Leben können nicht allein in und aus Kreativität bestehen, sie sind weit mehr Überlieferung, Tradition, Stil, Sitte, Erfahrung“ (Roth 1976: 150 as cited in Caspari 1994: 78)

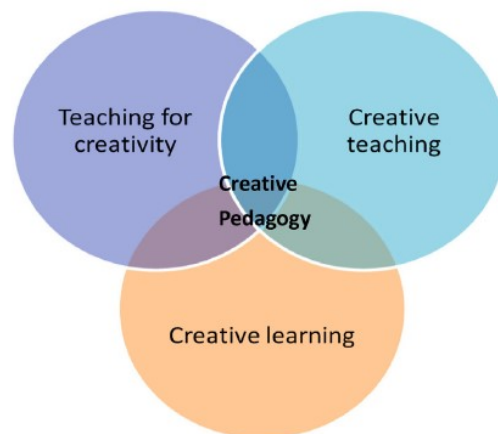
Third, society, schools and especially classrooms have to value and welcome creativity in all its aspects. Especially the classroom atmosphere seems to significantly contribute to the success or failure of creative methods at school (Tomlinson 2015: 24f; Gilbert 2016: 261; cf. Holmes and Moulton 2001; Stillar 2013; Read 2015). In addition, the personal relationships in the classroom – the student-teacher relationship and the student-student relationships – play a vital role in the success of creative teaching and learning (Read 2015: 29). Without the necessary basis of trust and the feeling of security, students might hesitate to open up in fear of exposing themselves. Being creative allows for the exploration and expression of personal, emotional and unusual ideas which may lead to beautiful and unique creative outcomes. However, it also involves risk-taking, making mistakes and deviating from the “norm” and the “usually expected” (cf. Caspari 1994: 72f). Finally, Read (2015: 29) adds, praise and constructive feedback assist students in becoming curious, creative and self-directed learners.

To sum up, fostering creativity in schools seems to be paramount facing the changes and challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It might be a remedy for many problems humankind is already confronted with and might face in the future. Also, it bears many social and psychological benefits for the individual as well as for the global community. As regards the actual implementation of creativity in schools, two major trends can be identified: a move towards standardization and another one towards creativity. Finally, general insights were provided of how to include creative methods in the context of school. The next two sections will go deeper into the matter, looking into several approaches and providing concrete guidelines.

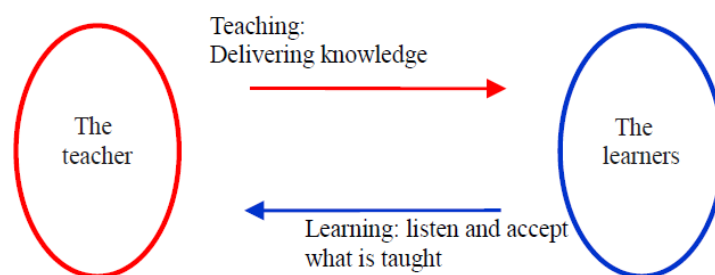
#### **1.4.2. The Triangular Model of Creative Pedagogy**

An increasing number of both Western and Eastern countries have been progressively integrating creativity into their education policies (Craft 2005; Lin 2014: 43). The framework of creative pedagogy offers a holistic inclusion of elements of creativity as well as of pedagogy. Its main goal is to foster everyday creativity in pupils while ensuring effective teaching.

Creative pedagogy comprises three interrelated concepts, namely creative learning, creative teaching, and teaching for creativity (Lin 2011: 152f; Lin 2014: 43f; Selkrig and Keamy 2017: 5), as portrayed in figure 1 “The triangular model of creative pedagogy” (Lin 2014: 2). Figure 2 “Conventional teaching and learning process” (Lin 2009 as cited in Lin 2011: 152) illustrates traditional pedagogy to allow illustrative comparison.



*Figure 1: The triangular model of creative pedagogy*



*Figure 2: The conventional teaching and learning process*

In the following, the three elements of creative pedagogy will be explained:

**Creative teaching** describes the teacher’s ability to make learning an exciting and interesting endeavor for pupils while using imagination, creativity and improvisation to design materials and conduct engaging lessons (NACCCE 1999: 102 as cited in Lin 2011: 152; Lin 2014: 44). This concept evolves around the role of the teacher as creative practitioner (Xerri and Vasallo 2016: 3f).

**Teaching for creativity** highlights the developing of the learners' creative potentials through the provision of a creativity-enhancing environment and the inclusion of their creative insights and contributions. This implies a number of teaching strategies, such as profiling learner-centered teaching, encouraging divergent thinking and offering opportunities of self-responsible learning (Lin 2011: 152; Lin 2014: 44f).

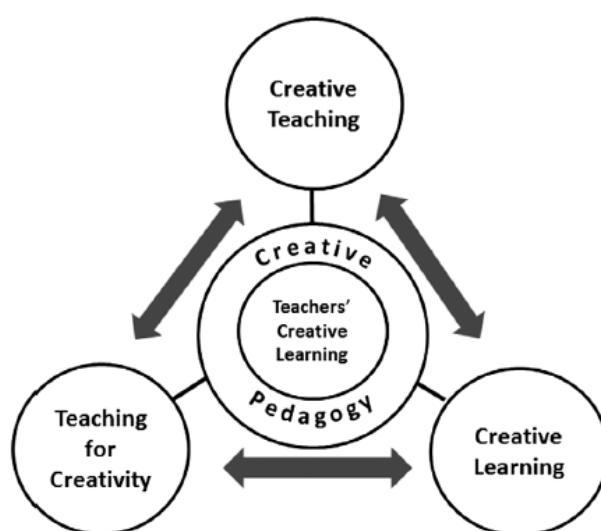
**Creative learning**, on the other hand, entirely focuses on the learner as creative discoverer. Instead of a passive, authoritative and fact-based learning, spontaneous and active participation in the process of learning is encouraged (Torrance 1963 as cited in Lin 2014: 45; Lin 2014: 45). The learners should have the possibility to ask questions, inquire, critic and experiment with knowledge (Lin 2011: 152).

All three characteristics put together demonstrate the interconnectedness of the teaching and learning process which may be regarded as an improvisational performance (Lin 2011: 152). In creative pedagogy, teachers' and learners' engagement are equally important.

Lin (2014) provides an interesting example of the contrasting reactions towards creative teaching methods. In a study on creative pedagogy, she launched a teaching project in two primary schools in Taiwan where she taught twenty drama lessons on a curriculum-relevant topic. Traditionally, she adds, Taiwanese teachers value authoritative, teacher-centered and fact-based teaching, which forms a sharp contrast to the principles of creative pedagogy. This might be the reason why the reaction of the habitual English teachers to the new teaching methods which were implemented in the teaching project was rather unfavorable. They expressed doubt over the effectiveness of playful and "unorderly" teaching, especially as regards the passing of exams. By contrast, the overall feedback she received from students was highly positive. They claimed to have enjoyed the playful character of learning, the possibility to create something on their own and give room to their own ideas, to find solutions for problems by themselves while using their imagination and collaborating with peers. Hence, the outcome of this survey portrays how the learners in this study welcomed a creative pedagogy in their learning process while

teachers were more critical.

As Constantinides (2015: 115) and Selkrig and Keamy (2017: 10f) argue, a reason for this prepossession could be that teachers are very often under-informed and under-equipped to creatively teach their students. A possible explanation for this is that they usually have not received any specific training to become creative pedagogues. Yet, the new paradigm of creativity urges all teachers to “creatify” their teaching methods, lessons and material. As a result, the teachers might feel overwhelmed and take refuge in their traditional methods. This is why both advocate in their writings for conceding teachers to be creative learners as well with the possibility of creatively exploring their teaching methods. Only in becoming creative learners themselves, may teachers master techniques to teach creatively and to teach for creativity. Further, Constantinides (2015: 115) argues that developing one’s own creative potential is not only beneficial for the learners, but also for the teacher. Instead of being dependent on coursebooks, specific methodologies or opinions about teaching, the creative teacher may become a self-directed and autonomous language teacher. Thus, teachers’ professional training ought to include material about creativity and how to be creative in their personal and professional life. Figure 3 “The reimagined concept of creative pedagogy” (Selkrig and Keamy 2017: 11) epitomizes their concept in relation to creative pedagogy as conceived by Lin (2014: 2).



*Figure 3: The reimagined concept of creative pedagogy*

Furthermore, on becoming a creative practitioner, Caspari (1994: 83) highlights the importance of offering students of teacher training programs possibilities to develop their

own creativity for themselves. Later at school, they should have the courage to try out and experiment with innovative teaching material and creative impulses in order to nurture their creative teaching styles in practice.

The ‘triangular model of creative pedagogy’ portrayed the importance of including several aspects of creativity into teaching and learning. Its three major concepts were analyzed, notably ‘creative teaching’, ‘teaching for creativity’ and ‘creative learning’. The model addresses the need for teachers to become creative practitioners and to receive training in developing creative material and in teaching creatively.

### **1.4.3. Pillars of Creativity in ELT**

In the field of ELT, creativity has gained considerable attention in the past decades and an increasing amount of articles have focused on finding effective ways to implement creativity into (English) language classes (Maley and Bolitho 2015: 435). This chapter is therefore concerned with the role creativity may play in language use and language instruction and how creative lessons may be effectuated. To corroborate the vital part that forms creativity in ELT, the ‘seven pillars of creativity’, as conceived by Read (2015), are outlined in a structured manner. They are further complemented with useful findings from other research articles.

The constantly growing body of literature on creativity and its implications in language teaching requires a definition that relates aspects of both fields. The C-Group (2015 as cited in Maley and Bolitho 2015: 435) recently suggested the definition of creativity as “thinking and activity in language education that is novel, valuable, and open-ended, and that helps to enrich learning in our students and ourselves”. As we have discussed in earlier chapters, it is difficult to pinpoint what the attributes ‘novel’ and ‘valuable’ exactly mean (Maley and Bolitho 2015: 435). In the process of language acquisition, it will be assumed that everything that is ‘novel’ and ‘valuable’ from the learner’s viewpoint may be considered creative. This stance is related to the formerly discussed concept of ‘mini-c’ and ‘small-c’ creativity (cf. chapter ‘The Four C Model of Creativity’) where personal reflections and insights as well as small creative realizations are taken into account.

One reason why creativity can be closely linked to language learning is the fact that every communicative act may be considered as a creative act, no matter if we are expressing

ourselves in our native tongue or a foreign language. The communicative moment and context are unique when we use a word, a phrase or a sentence (Fehér 2015: 64), even if the spoken or written text may be reproduced, complemented, adapted or paraphrased in one way or another (Stepanek 2015: 98). Linguistic creativity is hence a characteristic of every human being who uses language and not only of a creative few (Carter 2004: 13 as cited in Maley and Bolitho 2015: 435). On top of that, creativity is not bound to a certain language level as far as foreign language learning is concerned, quite the opposite. Even with very limited language abilities, original combinations of words and phrases may be created (Maley and Bolitho 2015: 435). As a matter of fact, language learners especially need to make use of their creative capacities given their narrow knowledge of grammar and vocabulary (Tomlinson 2015: 24) as they do not have the full linguistic repertoire of the target language at disposal. They might use pre-fabricated phrases, but still have to face unique and unpredictable communicative events in real life as well as in the classroom. This naturally entails the need for improvisation, risk-taking and making mistakes in order to convey the desired meaning. This is why teachers need to encourage creative behavior in the foreign language classroom through creativity enhancing material and teaching methods (Tomlinson 2015: 24). With that, students may be accustomed to exploring and experimenting with language, to taking risks and to learning the new language through trial and error, which helps them in becoming effective language learners (ibid.).

There are many ways to foster creativity in ELT of which a general overview has been given in the previous chapter on creative pedagogy. Language instruction, however, is more particular as it is not a content-focused subject in school, as history or geography. Language classes have the considerable advantage to build their lessons around many different topics that might interest the learners (Fehér 2015: 74). Political facts, artwork or environmental issues, for example, may equally serve as themes to train language skills. This allows for an extensive variety of sources that may be exploited to prepare creative lessons.

Read (2015) has formulated **seven pillars of creativity** which describe important components enabling creative learning and teaching to take place. The seven pillars were



conceived for primary ELT, however, they may also be used in higher levels of language learning. The seven pillars were replenished by some further comments.

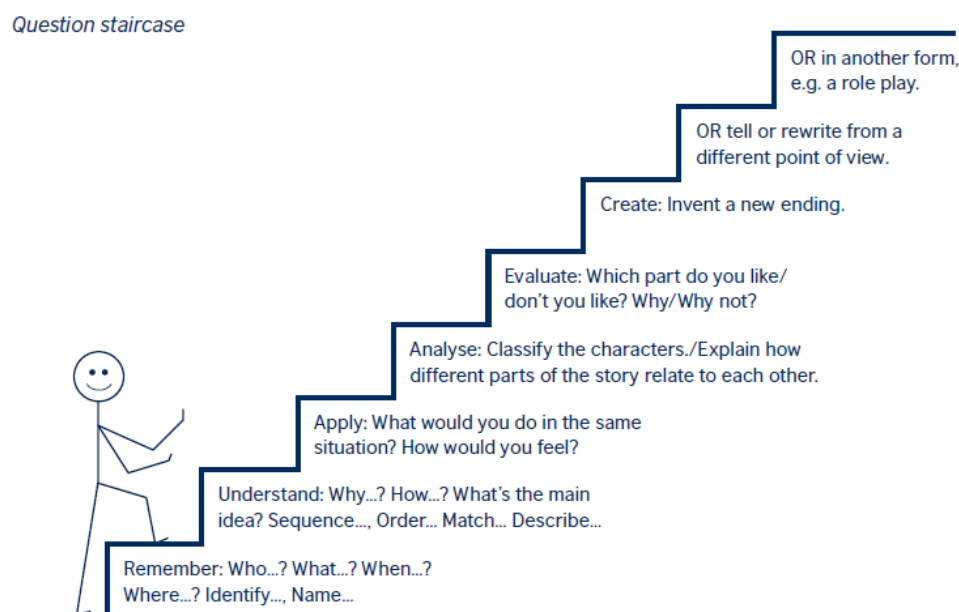
(1) **'Building up positive self-esteem'**: Learners need to feel secure and comfortable in their learning environment. If they are scared of making mistakes or of being criticized, this might have a negative impact on their willingness on original thinking or risk-taking. It is also important to value their personal interests, contributions and talents, which equally makes them feel at ease.

(2) **'Modeling creativity'**: A teacher should not expect the students to engage creatively in the lessons if the teacher does not show any creativity her-/himself. Creativity in the language classroom involves personal characteristics of the teacher, teaching styles as well as teaching material. Each element should foster divergent thinking, flexibility, originality, open-mindedness or improvisational skills in one way or another (Read 2015: 30f). Jeffrey (2006: 406) stresses that if teachers do not model creativity, meaning that they improvise during their lessons, are open to creative student responses, offer creative materials or show original thinking, learners are unlikely to feel encouraged to contribute creatively.

(3) **'Offering choice'**: The more personalized an activity or lesson is, the more the learners feel involved and motivated. Through offering choice, the learners are able to develop autonomy and self-directed learning, which relates to the concept of life-long learning.

(4) **'Using questions effectively'**: There are different types of questions, some encourage further thinking whereas some close it down. There is a fundamental difference between a Right-and-Wrong and an open-ended question that fosters imagination and creative thinking. Moreover, Read cites Anderson and Krathwohl's (2001 as cited in Read 2015: 33) "taxonomy of thinking skills [which] is divided into lower order thinking skills (LOTS) [and] higher order thinking skills (HOTS)". The LOTS comprise "remembering, understanding and applying" and the HOTS include "analyzing, evaluating and creating". Through

questions, LOTS or HOTS may be addressed, see the question staircase in figure 4 “The question staircase” (Read 2015: 33).



*Figure 4: The question staircase*

Generally, both LOTS and HOTS question types may be used for any language learning level. Additionally, learners should be given enough time to formulate interesting and original answers and come up with engaging questions themselves.

(5) **‘Making connections’**: Recognizing relationships and making connections between ideas and different areas encourage divergent and creative thinking. For instance, connections can be made between different subjects, media, languages, or experiences. This helps to establish a stronger overall understanding of the world and the treated topic.

(6) **‘Exploring ideas’**: In order for learners to come up with original ideas, a certain framework and activities that encourage experimentation, playfulness and exploration are needed. Mind maps, brainstorming or critical observations and role play, among other, may serve as idea-generating activities.

(7) **‘Encouraging critical reflection’**: Finally, Read concludes, critical reflection ought to form an integral part of creative language learning. Through developing the ability to critically examine one’s own performance, overall cognitive skills are enabled and students are assisted in becoming autonomous and self-responsible learners. This

ongoing and thorough reflection on and assessment of one's own ideas and actions eventually leads to an improvement of divergent thinking and problem-solving skills, and with that to creative thinking and acting (Read 2015: 30f).

Next to the seven pillars of creativity as conceived by Read (2015: 30f), other suggestions to nurture creativity in ELT were found. Fehér (2015: 75) highlights the importance to foster improvisation through establishing spontaneous and flexible oral interaction where learners may experiment with and stretch their current language knowledge in unpredictable communicative events. Jeffrey (2006: 405f) found that a creative use of space is conducive to language learning. This refers to the changing or adapting of physical places to facilitate learning. For instance, a visit in a museum, a project conducted in nature, or the appropriation of the immediate surrounding in class or school contribute to creative thinking. Another idea is to arrange 'critical events', which are in- or out-of-class meetings with people who are not teachers. During these meetings, the students learn about various professions and specific topics first hand, are permitted to ask questions and consequently exploit what they have previously learned in the form of writing a report, a translation of the interview, a summary, asf.

Moreover, Papalazarou (2015: 37) enlists several components that make for a creative lesson. Next to some similarities to what Read (2015) discussed, 'not jumping into judgement quickly', 'thinking about thinking (metacognition)', 'building explanations and interpretations' and 'reasoning with evidence' may be added (Ritchhart et al. 2011 and Tishman 2000 as cited in Papalazarou 2015: 37) to complement the findings on what makes an ELT lesson creative. If teachers strive for creativity in their language classes, she claims that it is paramount to make thinking visible through brainstorming activities and share it with others through discussions. Finally, Woodward (2015: 150) holds the view that a mixture of creative qualities, such as spontaneity, variety or unpredictability, creative input, as in art, music and colors, and emotional factors like personal meaning, fun and "a balance between challenge and security, relaxation and tension" make for a successful creative lesson.

This first chapter offered a thorough overview and discussion of creativity as well as aspects and theories of creativity. At the end of the chapter, implications of fostering creativity in schools were examined. This exploration allowed an understanding of the significance of creativity in our societies and education system. Also, it was demonstrated that creativity is not related to certain fields but rather transcends every subject area. The reason for this is the assumption of several scholars that creativity is an inherent human trait which may be developed and cultivated. The 'triangular model of creative pedagogy' portrays the crucial constituents of creativity in schools. Finally, more concrete approaches of how to foster creativity in the EFL classroom were formulated in the last chapter 'The Pillars of Creativity in ELT'. These insights form one aspect of the teaching of creative writing, as teaching creatively is just as important as teaching for creativity. In this light, the chapter 'Implications of Teaching Creative Writing in the EFL Classroom' will elaborate on various teaching methods and activities in more detail. First, however, the language skill 'writing' will be illuminated.

## 2. Writing as a Productive Competence

In the previous section, creativity, aspects of creativity and their relevance and implications for education and ELT were discussed. Now, before the central topic creative writing may be approached, it is necessary to examine the *CEFR* and the *Austrian curriculum for living foreign languages in Austrian upper secondary schools* in order to contextualize the small-scale creative writing project that was undertaken within the scope of this thesis. The project was carried out in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade of an upper secondary school in Vienna, Austria, and is called “Poetry Book Writing Project inspired by Japanese Culture and Language”. The target group has language level B1, the language skill to be trained is ‘writing’, the overall topic is poetry and the sub-theme called ‘Japanese Culture and Language’. These elements will be supported in the light of both frameworks. Hence, an overall understanding of the *CEFR* and its goals, structures and scales will be provided, complemented by several illustrative figures. Following this, the focus will be directed to the language skill ‘writing’ and the descriptors for the language level B1, followed by an overview of the *curriculum of living foreign languages in Austrian upper secondary schools*.

### 2.1. The CEFR – The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

The *CEFR – Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*<sup>17</sup> is an instrument of reference for foreign language acquisition. It was published by the *Council of Europe* in 2001 and is the result of the collaboration of many teaching professionals from around world. The *CEFR* may be applied to any foreign language. Its main purposes are to serve as a comprehensive basis for designing language curricula and syllabuses, developing materials for language learning and teaching, and providing orientation for language assessment and certification. Further objectives are to promote self-directed and life-long learning, enhance cooperation between the parties involved in the process of language acquisition (learners, teachers, curriculum and syllabus designers, assessors, etc.) and with that advocate international mobility and

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<sup>17</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/?> (11/09/2017)

plurilinguality in Europe. To achieve the set goals, the framework offers guidance on methods, content and approaches to assist language teaching, learning and assessing. It is organized in an extensive and clearly structured way, making use of six language levels, four language skills and “Can do” statements to classify language acquisition.

The framework describes three broad groups of language proficiency, each of them encompassing two further language levels: ‘Basic User’ (with the sub-levels A1 and A2) refers to the beginner level of language learning, ‘Independent User’ (with the sub-levels B1 and B2) to an intermediate level of competence, and ‘Proficient User’ (with the sub-levels C1 and C2) to a proficient level of language mastery. I.e., the six language levels are graded from A1 to C2. Figure 5 “The six language levels according to the *CEFR*” (Council of Europe 2001: 23) demonstrates the branching principle of the three overall groups and six language learning levels:

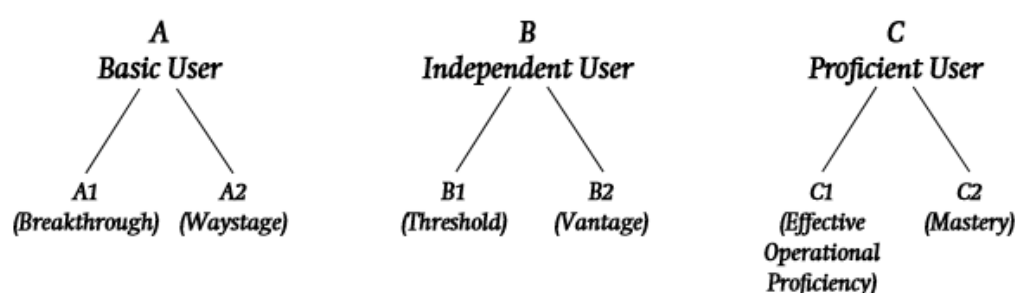


Figure 5: The six language levels according to the *CEFR*

Further on, the *CEFR* adopts an action-oriented approach where the learner is considered as a social agent who needs to fulfill communicative tasks in specific situations. This method addresses the emotional, cognitive as well as volitional abilities of the learners as an individual as well as a part of society. With this, the *CEFR* employs “Can do” statements, taking on the view of the learner and her/his needs. These “Can do” statements reflect the language user’s current language ability within a language level and a specific skill. The further division into the four language skills ‘reading’, ‘listening’, ‘writing’ and ‘speaking’ (further subdivided into ‘spoken production’ and ‘spoken interaction’) is another instrument to partition language acquisition.

With the help of the “Can do” descriptors and the four language skills, the ‘global scale’, the ‘illustrative scales’ and the ‘self-assessment grid for learners’, a thorough

categorization is provided. As shown in figure 6 “The ‘global scale’ according to the *CEFR*” (Council of Europe 2001: 24), the ‘**global scale**’ gives a broad overview of the abilities a learner has at each of the according six language levels. It serves as a comprehensive point of reference without catering to the four language skills in detail.

<b>Proficient User</b>	<b>C2</b>	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
	<b>C1</b>	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
<b>Independent User</b>	<b>B2</b>	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
	<b>B1</b>	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics, which are familiar, or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
<b>Basic User</b>	<b>A2</b>	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
	<b>A1</b>	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

**Figure 6: The ‘global scale’ according to the *CEFR***

	Reception		Interaction		Production	
	Listening	Reading	Spoken Interaction	Written Interaction	Spoken Production	Written Production
<b>C2</b>	I have no difficulty in understanding any kind of spoken language, whether live or broadcast, even when delivered at fast native speed, provided I have some time to get familiar with the accent.	I can read with ease virtually all forms of the written language, including abstract, structurally or linguistically complex texts such as manuals, specialised articles and literary works.	I can take part effortlessly in any conversation or discussion and have a good familiarity with idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms. I can express myself fluently and convey finer shades of meaning precisely. If I do have a problem I can backtrack and restructure around the difficulty so smoothly that other people are hardly aware of it.	I can express myself with clarity and precision, relating to the addressee	I can present a clear, smoothly-flowing description or argument in a style appropriate to the context and with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.	I can write clear, smoothly flowing text in an appropriate style. I can write complex letters, reports or articles, which present a case with an effective logical structure, which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points. I can write summaries and reviews of professional or literary works.
<b>C1</b>	I can understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signalled explicitly. I can understand television programmes and films without too much effort.	I can understand long and complex factual and literary texts, appreciating distinctions of style. I can understand specialised articles and longer technical instructions, even when they do not relate to my field.	I can express myself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. I can use language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes. I can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate my contribution skillfully to those of other speakers	I can express myself flexibly and effectively in an assured, personal, style.	I can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion	I can express myself in clear, well-structured text, expressing points of view at some length. I can write detailed expositions of complex subjects in an essay or a report, underlining what I consider to be the salient issues. I can write different kinds of texts in a style appropriate to the reader in mind.
<b>B2</b>	I can understand extended speech and lectures and follow even complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar. I can understand most TV news and current affairs programmes. I can understand the majority of films in standard dialect.	I can read articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular stances or viewpoints. I can understand contemporary literary prose.	I can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible. I can take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts, accounting for and sustaining my views.	I can write letters highlighting the personal significance of events and experiences.	I can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to my field of interest. I can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.	I can write clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects related to my interests. I can write an essay or report, passing on information or giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view.
<b>B1</b>	I can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. I can understand the main point of many radio or TV programmes on current affairs or topics of personal or professional interest when the delivery is relatively slow and clear.	I can understand texts that consist mainly of high frequency everyday or job-related language. I can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters	I can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. I can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).	I can write personal letters describing experiences and impressions.	I can connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe experiences and events, my dreams, hopes & ambitions. I can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. I can narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions.	I can write straightforward connected text on topics, which are familiar, or of personal interest.
<b>A2</b>	I can understand phrases and the highest frequency vocabulary related to areas of most immediate personal relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). I can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements	I can read very short, simple texts. I can find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, prospectuses, menus and timetables and I can understand short simple personal letters	I can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities. I can handle very short social exchanges, even though I can't usually understand enough to keep the conversation going myself.	I can write short, simple notes and messages relating to matters in areas of immediate need. I can write a very simple personal letter, for example thanking someone for something.	I can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms my family and other people, living conditions, my educational background and my present or most recent job	I can write a series of simple phrases and sentences linked with simple connectors like „and“, „but“ and „because“.
<b>A1</b>	I can recognise familiar words and very basic phrases concerning myself, my family and immediate concrete surroundings when people speak slowly and clearly.	I can understand familiar names, words and very simple sentences, for example on notices and posters or in catalogues.	I can interact in a simple way provided the other person is prepared to repeat or rephrase things at a slower rate of speech and help me formulate what I'm trying to say. I can ask and answer simple questions in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.	I can write a short, simple postcard, for examples sending holiday greetings. I can fill in forms with personal details, for example entering my name, nationality and address on a hotel registration form.	I can use simple phrases and sentences to describe where I live and people I know.	I can write simple isolated phrases and sentences.

Figure 7: The 'self-assessment grid' according to the CEFR

The 'self-assessment grid' ranges from A1 to C2 and elaborates on the language abilities, considering all four skills ('reading', 'writing', 'listening', 'speaking'). This offers a more



differentiated view of each level and skill, as can be taken from figure 7 “The ‘self-assessment grid according to the *CEFR*”<sup>18</sup>.

Finally, the ‘**illustrative scales**’ portray a more in-depth description of each language skill. The overall language skill ‘writing’, for instance, is further differentiated into three sub-skills depicted in scales, which are notably ‘overall written production’, ‘creative writing’ and ‘reports and essays’. Each illustrative scale is made up of “Can do” descriptors which represent the respective writing abilities of the language learner from the language level A1 to C2 (Council of Europe 2001: 61). The figures 8 “The scale for ‘overall written production’ according to the *CEFR*” (Council of Europe 2001: 61) and 9 “The scale for ‘creative writing’ according to the *CEFR*” (ibid.: 62) visualize the scales of ‘overall written production’ and ‘creative writing’.

	OVERALL WRITTEN PRODUCTION
<b>C2</b>	<i>Can write clear, smoothly flowing, complex texts in an appropriate and effective style and a logical structure which helps the reader to find significant points.</i>
<b>C1</b>	<i>Can write clear, well-structured texts of complex subjects, underlining the relevant salient issues, expanding and supporting points of view at some length with subsidiary points, reasons and relevant examples, and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.</i>
<b>B2</b>	<i>Can write clear, detailed texts on a variety of subjects related to his/her field of interest, synthesising and evaluating information and arguments from a number of sources.</i>
<b>B1</b>	<i>Can write straightforward connected texts on a range of familiar subjects within his field of interest, by linking a series of shorter discrete elements into a linear sequence.</i>
<b>A2</b>	<i>Can write a series of simple phrases and sentences linked with simple connectors like ‘and’, ‘but’ and ‘because’.</i>
<b>A1</b>	<i>Can write simple isolated phrases and sentences.</i>

**Figure 8: The scale for ‘overall written production’ according to the *CEFR***

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/portfolio/self-assessment-grid> (3/28/2018)

	<b>CREATIVE WRITING</b>
<b>C2</b>	<i>Can write clear, smoothly flowing, and fully engrossing stories and descriptions of experience in a style appropriate to the genre adopted.</i>
<b>C1</b>	<i>Can write clear, detailed, well-structured and developed descriptions and imaginative texts in an assured, personal, natural style appropriate to the reader in mind.</i>
<b>B2</b>	<i>Can write clear, detailed descriptions of real or imaginary events and experiences, marking the relationship between ideas in clear connected text, and following established conventions of the genre concerned.</i>
	<i>Can write clear, detailed descriptions on a variety of subjects related to his/her field of interest. Can write a review of a film, book or play.</i>
<b>B1</b>	<i>Can write straightforward, detailed descriptions on a range of familiar subjects within his/her field of interest. Can write accounts of experiences, describing feelings and reactions in simple connected text. Can write a description of an event, a recent trip – real or imagined. Can narrate a story.</i>
	<i>Can write about everyday aspects of his/her environment, e.g. people, places, a job or study experience in linked sentences. Can write very short, basic descriptions of events, past activities and personal experiences.</i>
<b>A2</b>	<i>Can write a series of simple phrases and sentences about their family, living conditions, educational background, present or most recent job. Can write short, simple imaginary biographies and simple poems about people.</i>
	<i>Can write simple phrases and sentences about themselves and imaginary people, where they live and what they do.</i>
<b>A1</b>	<i>Can write simple phrases and sentences about themselves and imaginary people, where they live and what they do.</i>

**Figure 9: The scale for ‘creative writing’ according to the CEFR**

The B1 descriptors of all aforementioned scales inspired the design of the creative writing activities of the conducted PBWP (cf. chapter ‘The Poetry Book Writing Project’). The main emphasis was placed on the B1 descriptors of the depicted illustrative scales ‘overall written production’ and ‘creative writing’. Below, these B1 descriptors are summarized:

... of the ‘global scale’:

- Can understand the main point of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc.
- Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken
- Can produce simple connected text on topics, which are familiar, or of personal interest
- Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans (Council of Europe 2001: 24)

... of the 'self-assessment grid':

- I can write straightforward connected text on topics, which are familiar, or of personal interest<sup>19</sup>

... of the illustrative scale 'overall written production':

- Can write straightforward connected texts on a range of familiar subjects within his field of interest, by linking a series of shorter discrete elements into a linear sequence (Council of Europe 2001: 61)

... and of the illustrative scale 'creative writing':

- Can write straightforward, detailed descriptions on a range of familiar subjects within his/her field of interest
- Can write accounts of experiences, describing feelings and reactions in simple connected text
- Can write a description of an event, a recent trip – real or imagined
- Can narrate a story (Council of Europe 2001: 62)

To conclude, a language user of the language level B1 is able to write simple, yet detailed texts about subjects that are familiar and relevant to her/him of both real and imagined nature. The learner is able to elaborate on experiences, feelings and reactions. Both is relevant for the composing of the poems for the PBWP.

Furthermore, the *CEFR* includes information on '**writing strategies**' and '**writing tasks**'. Promoting an action-oriented and communicative approach to language learning, the framework highlights the importance of socially relevant writing tasks as well as the contextual audience. Bearing this in mind, a variety of relevant writing activities are provided which serve as guidelines:

- completing forms and questionnaires
- writing articles for magazines, newspapers, newsletters, etc.
- producing posters for display
- writing reports, memoranda, etc.
- making notes for future reference
- taking down messages from dictation, etc.
- creative and imaginative writing
- writing personal or business letters, etc. (Council of Europe 2001: 61)

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<sup>19</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/portfolio/self-assessment-grid> (3/28/2018)

In addition, 'writing strategies' are addressed to enlighten the writing process of the language user. They are grouped into four overall stages, namely 'planning', 'execution', 'evaluation' and 'repair':

- **'Planning'**: rehearsing, locating resources, considering audience, task adjustment, message adjustment
- **'Execution'**: compensating, building on previous knowledge, trying out
- **'Evaluation'**: monitoring success
- **'Repair'**: self-correction (Council of Europe 2001: 63f).

The first stage **'planning'** involves the mobilization of one's linguistic resources ('rehearsing'), the choice of style, form and vocabulary ('considering audience') and the searching for assistance when facing deficits ('locating resources'). Depending on the linguistic support available, the learner may choose for a more modest or ambitious version of task completion ('task adjustment'). Analogically, the expression of thoughts and ideas is adjusted to the linguistic means at hand ('message adjustment') (Council of Europe 2001: 63f). The second stage **'execution'** deals with avoidance and achievement strategies used depending on the resources at the learner's disposal. This includes overgeneralization, paraphrasing or relapsing to the mother tongue ('compensating'). Further, every previous knowledge that can be accessed is activated ('building on previous knowledge') and/or risks are taken with partially remembered structures and words ('trying out') (ibid.). The **'evaluation'** phase refers to the language user's strategy of monitoring the communicative success ('monitoring success'). In spoken language, this is easier as gestures and facial expressions of the interlocutor may be analyzed and reacted to. By contrast, in written language feedback of readers is needed which usually happens with a time delay (ibid.). Finally, the fourth stage **'repair'** is concerned with the learner's conscious self-monitoring and self-emending of communicative and linguistic "mistakes" or "slips" ('self-correction') (ibid.).

In addition, the *CEFR* outlines **'aesthetic uses of language'** and advocates their educational, intellectual, linguistic, cultural, emotional and moral relevance in language acquisition. This viewpoint calls for an incorporation of an artistic and imaginative language use through "productive, receptive, interactive or mediating [activities, both] oral or written" (Council of Europe 2001: 56). Such activities may be:

- singing (nursery rhymes, folk songs, pop songs, etc.)
- retelling and rewriting stories, etc.
- listening to, reading, writing and speaking imaginative texts (stories, rhymes, etc.) including audio-visual texts, cartoons, picture stories, etc.
- performing scripted or unscripted plays, etc.
- the production, reception and performance of literary texts, e.g.: reading and writing texts (short stories, novels, poetry, etc.) and performing and watching/listening to recitals, drama, opera, etc.

As was discussed in this chapter, the *CEFR* represents a comprehensive framework of reference for language learning, teaching and assessing. The basic tools of categorization were presented, notably the ‘global scale’, the ‘self-assessment grid’ and the two ‘illustrative scales’ for ‘overall written production’ and ‘creative writing’. A summary of B1 descriptors was provided, as they were used as scaffolding for the modeling of the creative writing activities within the practical part of this thesis. Additionally, an overview of writing strategies as well as general and aesthetic writing tasks, as discussed in the *CEFR*, was sketched. Turning now to the next chapter in which foreign language learning in Austrian schools, with an emphasis on upper secondary schools, will be looked into.

## 2.2. Curriculum for Living Foreign Languages in Austrian Upper Secondary Schools

Today, pupils in Austria officially start learning English as early as **primary school level**. The focus of language learning, however, is limited to the oral skills ‘listening’ and ‘speaking’. As stated in the curriculum, the first foreign language taught at school may be one of the following: English, French, Italian, Croatian, Slovak, Slovenian, Czech or Hungarian<sup>20</sup>. Generally, English is chosen as first foreign language. The curriculum of living foreign languages of the **lower secondary school** prescribes English as an obligatory subject from the first year on. Depending on the type of school and the emphasis placed

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<sup>20</sup> [https://bildung.bmbwf.gv.at/schulen/unterricht/lp/vs\\_lp\\_8\\_lebende\\_fremdsprache\\_14053.pdf?61ec06](https://bildung.bmbwf.gv.at/schulen/unterricht/lp/vs_lp_8_lebende_fremdsprache_14053.pdf?61ec06) (05/31/2018)

on foreign language learning, some schools may autonomously decide to include additional foreign languages as regular subjects or as electives.

As regards Austria's **upper secondary school** system, a great choice between many differently specialized educational institutions is offered. Two general distinctions can be made: the *BHS – Berufsbildende Höhere Schule*, a vocational school which lasts five years, and the *Gymnasium*, which lasts four years to graduation. In both school types, (living) foreign languages are taught, with the overall accent set on English. Depending on the region where a school is located, more importance may be attributed to other languages. The schools situated close to borders, for instance, might choose to encourage the learning of the neighboring country's language. The aforementioned choice of foreign languages usually remains the same. In general, however, the vast majority of schools offers English as the first living foreign language, Latin, French, Spanish or Russian as the second and sometimes also third (living) foreign language<sup>21</sup>.

The curriculum for the teaching of the first and second living foreign languages in upper secondary schools is based on the *CEFR*<sup>22</sup>. It is split into three major parts: (1) 'educational and teaching objectives', (2) 'didactic principles' and (3) 'content of the curriculum'.<sup>23</sup>

**(1) 'Educational and Teaching Objectives':** In the first section, it is clearly stated that the main aim of language learning is to fulfill the communicative purpose in all four language skills – 'listening', 'reading', 'speaking' and 'writing'. Moreover, "the development of social skills in multicultural environments ought to be given special attention". Students shall be sensitized for the cultural and linguistic diversity in Austria, Europe and around the world. Awareness and knowledge of the languages spoken in the neighboring countries, of minorities and migrants living in Austria shall be attained with the help of intercultural topics treated in class. Further, if there are students in class who speak foreign languages, their additional language competences ought to be included in the learning process. Another important goal of foreign language instruction that is explicated in the curriculum is the importance in assisting students in becoming autonomous language learners who are open-minded and able to deal with conflicts, who think and work in a solution-

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<sup>21</sup> [http://www.oesz.at/download/publikationen/Schulischer\\_FSU\\_in\\_OE\\_2007.pdf](http://www.oesz.at/download/publikationen/Schulischer_FSU_in_OE_2007.pdf) (05/31/2018)

<sup>22</sup> [https://bildung.bmbwf.gv.at/schulen/unterricht/lp/lp\\_ahs\\_os\\_lebende\\_fs\\_11854.pdf?61ebyg](https://bildung.bmbwf.gv.at/schulen/unterricht/lp/lp_ahs_os_lebende_fs_11854.pdf?61ebyg) (05/31/2018)

<sup>23</sup> In German: (1) Bildungs- und Lehraufgabe, (2) Didaktische Grundsätze, (3) Lehrstoff

oriented manner and who strive for peace. Also, the implementation of creative activities to enhance foreign language learning is emphasized, such as theater plays, games, or creative writing.

**(2) 'Didactic Principles':** In the second part of the curriculum, several didactic principles are specified: The communicative competence is defined as the main goal of language learning, while accounting for all four language skills. Further, the use of the target language as language of instruction and a critical comparison of languages is strongly encouraged. It is stated that a critical comparison between languages (language of instruction, native tongue/s, languages of the neighboring countries, of minority groups and other foreign languages) ought to be fostered in class, in order to deepen students' metalinguistic awareness and with that strengthen their general language learning ability. Two other didactic principles, mentioned in the curriculum and relevant for this thesis, are the introduction of a variety of learning methods, learning strategies and modes of working and the treatment of manifold topics and text types. The first describes student-centered, process- and product-oriented teaching methods and the using of various modes of working, such as class presentations, projects, diaries, portfolios, etc. The second asks for the implementation of a great mixture of text types, among the classical ones, such as reports and essays, also fairy tales, songs and poems. Through the different texts a high number of relevant topics, such as for instance processes of globalization, the arts, literature, music, economics, political developments, intercultural communication and interaction, asf., may be covered. In addition, it is noted that within a humanistic general education literary oeuvres may be given special attention.

**(3) 'Content of the Curriculum':** Finally, the third part of the curriculum treats the content of the lessons. This content is entirely based on the *CEFR* and the four skills ('reading', 'writing', 'listening', 'speaking'). At the time of graduation, students ought to have B2 in their first living foreign language (which is usually English) and B1<sup>24</sup> in their second living foreign language (which is usually either French, Spanish or Russian).

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<sup>24</sup> If the teaching of the second living foreign language already starts in lower secondary school and is continued in upper secondary school, then the students have to have B2 in the competence 'reading'.

It can be seen that both the *CEFR* as well as the *curriculum for living foreign languages for upper secondary schools in Austria* include intercultural and metalinguistic/plurilingual learning into their agenda. They also address the importance of teaching various text types, among which poetry is explicitly mentioned. Further, the relevance of adopting creative methods and student-centered methods, such as the implementation of projects, is underlined. Therefore, a PBWP with 'Japanese Culture and Language' as its overall topic meets the set requirements of both discussed frameworks in terms of content (foreign culture and language), text type (poetry) and approach to train the language skill 'writing' (creative writing). In the next section, implications of teaching creative writing in the EFL classroom will be elaborated on.



### **3. Implications of Teaching Creative Writing in the EFL Classroom**

In the last section of the chapter ‘Implications of Fostering Creativity in School’, it was argued that creativity should not be viewed as an individual subject but rather take precedence in education and the teaching of foreign languages. The ‘triangular model of creative pedagogy’ (Lin 2011: 152f; Lin 2014: 43f; Selkrig and Keamy 2017: 5) was illuminated and creative principles in ELT discussed. Using the gained insights as a basis, creative writing in ELT shall be elaborated on in the next section. Firstly, an attempt to define creative writing will be undertaken through the comparison of creative writing with other styles of writing, the portrayal of the two stages of creative writing tasks and highlighting the contrast between communicative and creative tasks. A thorough discussion will follow concerning how creative writing may be practically included into the EFL classroom in the form of pre-writing activities, creative writing tasks or co-creative writing, among others.

#### **3.1. What is Creative Writing?**

As discussed in earlier chapters, creativity has many characteristics and touches on several cognitive thinking abilities. These insights are addressed in creative writing methods and tasks. Liebnau (1995: 6f) affirms that creative writing methods enhance fantasy, divergent and productive thinking (cf. Scheller 1979 as cited in Pommerin 1996: 60) and lead to more authenticity, openness for cooperation, a higher tolerance for ambiguity and frustration, and a skill for remodeling (Liebnau 1995: 7). It also means to discover and cultivate a “sense for possibilities” (ibid.: 34).

Pommerin (1996: 52f) insists that creative writing should not be considered as a new subject or an isolated type of activity to offer a break in the otherwise demanding foreign language class. Rather, it should be considered an integral part of oral and written communication, reflection on language, language use and literature. Moreover, creative writing should not be confused with personal writing or therapeutic writing, even if some creative writing activities and techniques share some of their elements. She remarks that in personal writing, the expression of the inner world of feelings and thoughts is of central

interest. Similarly, in therapeutic writing, subconscious needs, feelings and fears or traumatic experiences are expressed through writing as part of the healing process (ibid.). Both writing methods help to express something that is already there, while creative writing, by contrast, guides the writer along an unknown path of imagination to create something new that did not exist before (Spinner 1993 as cited in Pommerin 1996: 57). Even though creative writing does include feelings and thoughts, the central focus lies in imagination and the creation of something new. This new creation might be novel to the writer only, to a group of writers or even to the genre of creative writing.

Another way to define creative writing is by analyzing creative writing tasks. Tin (2013: 395f) differentiates between **'communicative'** and **'creative tasks'**. She explains that in **'communicative tasks'** known meaning is activated and practiced, usually by thematizing familiar topics and using known writing genres. Through an information gap, learners feel the desire to communicate and fill it. There are two stages involved, first a controlled phase and subsequently a free phase. By contrast, in **'creative tasks'**, learners are pushed towards the "unknown", allowing them to extend their knowledge of language with the help of new constraints. Instead of a communicative desire, a creative desire is provoked owing to which learners produce new meanings. Finally, Tin (2013: 395f) compares **'communicative tasks'** to monocultural and **'creative tasks'** to multicultural settings. The created environment is familiar and safe or unfamiliar and risky, respectively. She believes that experiencing culture shock "in multicultural encounters can generate opportunities for creativity, allowing one to see new perspectives on familiar things" (ibid.: 388).

As mentioned above, the creative writing task can be further divided into two stages, notably the **'idea-generation phase'** and the **'idea-exploration phase'** (Finke, War, and Smith 1992 as cited in Tin 2013: 391). In the former, the learners are confronted with a "problem" or a question and asked to generate as many ideas as possible, however, they are given neither the goal of the task nor the outcome. This could be, for instance, a group brainstorm focusing on a specific topic or a freewriting exercise inspired by a hint. In the **'idea-exploration'** phase, the learners are confronted with a new constraint and asked to interpret the previously gathered ideas according to the task-specifications. Then, they start writing a text towards an unknown goal, constructing new meaning as they go. Tin (2013: 391) adds that the **'idea-exploration phase'** should have formal and/or linguistic

restrictions in order to guide the learners through their creative process and towards their creative outcome. Otherwise they might feel overwhelmed.

Moreover, Tin (2013: 385, 396) argues that the promotion of communication (through ‘communicative tasks’) and creativity (through ‘creative tasks’) are equally important in the language learning classroom. As epitomized in figure 10 “Communicative tasks vs. creative tasks” (ibid.: 395), ‘communicative tasks’ allow students to practice the communication of prescribed and known meaning, while ‘creative tasks’ encourage the expression of new meaning. When combining both types of task, they may complement each other: At the beginning, it is crucial to offer the learners a secure starting point from which they can activate and retrieve their already existing language knowledge and build up confidence before preceding into unknown terrain. Building on that, they may create new meaning (‘new meaning to self’) (ibid.: 385, 396).

Features	A communicative task	A creative task
Types of meaning focused on	Communicating known meaning (meaning known to self) to others.	Constructing unknown meaning (meaning new to self).
Conditions created	Promoting a communicative desire through information gap.	Promoting a creative desire to explore and transform language through adding/finding new constraints.
Cultural experiences created	Using familiar topics to compensate for lack of language (creating an environment of monocultural experiences or familiar setting).	Making the familiar unfamiliar to extend language (exposure to multicultural experiences: little ‘M’ and big ‘M’).
Stages involved	Controlled phase; free phase.	Idea-generation phase; idea-exploration phase.

**Figure 10: Communicative tasks vs. creative tasks**

Finally, creative writing pedagogies encourage an atmosphere of trust that is usually free of fear where the learners may experiment with grammar, vocabulary and style. Teachers play a crucial role in establishing this environment (Gilbert 2016: 261). Most importantly, it allows trial and error, taking a lot of pressure away from the writer (Pommerin 1996: 54). This particularly assists learners who tend to be more insecure or unmotivated writers to stretch their boundaries in a playful way.

Drawing from the insights discussed in the chapter ‘Creativity and School’, the following implications about the requirements of the creative writing classroom can be identified:

- establishing an environment of trust
- establishing a feedback culture
- guiding instead of judging
- encouraging divergences
- allowing for an extensive pre-writing phase for idea-generation
- using creative prompts to elicit creative answers
- including learners in the creation of prompts
- providing useful task restrictions
- modeling creative writing processes
- encouraging individual writing as well as writing in groups
- sharing creative writing products

If the above-mentioned criteria were included in teaching creative writing in ELT, the learners may benefit in several ways. According to Read (2015: 29f) their implementation

- “increases children’s engagement and motivation in studying a foreign language
- makes language learning enjoyable and memorable
- gives children a sense of ownership and a feeling of success
- allows for divergent responses and, for children who may be strong in other areas of the curriculum, e.g. art, music or dance, to use these to support their learning
- promotes children’s ability to think in a flexible way
- provides a personalised challenge
- develops qualities such as patience, persistence and resourcefulness
- provides a basis for the development of more sophisticated, conceptual and abstract creative thinking in future” (Read 2015: 29)

As can be seen from the two lists above, creative writing does not only concern the design of writing tasks, it is more about the inclusion of aspects of creative pedagogy, channeled into the teaching of writing. Creative pedagogy fused with EFL teaching holds significant advantages for the learners. Furthermore, with the help of creative writing tasks, several cognitive abilities can be fostered which push the learners into previously unexplored

terrain in which new meaning can be constructed. In short, creative writing tasks may be divided into two phases: 'idea-generation' and 'idea-exploration'. In the following chapter, characteristics of the creative writing classroom in the context of ELT will be discussed in further detail.

### **3.1.1. Creative Pre-Writing Activities**

As mentioned in earlier chapters, creativity implies divergent thinking and the conception of original ideas, among other things. In order to engage into creative writing, writers need to gather ideas as well. This may be facilitated with the help of pre-writing activities which will be illuminated in this part.

Anderson (2006: 19) points out that "inspiration will not reliably hunt you down", but that through making ourselves available, ideas will certainly come. For professional writers, a work place, regular work hours or going on trips equipped with a notepad and the intention of writing help with the processes of relaxation, inspiration and the generation of new ideas. In the context of school, some of these suggestions are commonplace, however, they might not suffice to motivate learners to write and to generate creative ideas. To tackle this issue, pre-writing activities can be introduced before the actual writing task. Three different types of activity will be focused on: meditation and meditative activities, improvisational theater and activities to gather ideas.

#### ***Meditation and Meditative Activities***

Several articles thematize the positive effect of meditation on creativity (cf. Müller, Gerasimova and Ritter 2016; Lippelt, Hommel and Colzato 2014; Wiranti and Inten 2012). Through stress reduction, heightening of mindfulness and attention the general cognitive abilities are enhanced, together with creative abilities. Additionally, some writers claim that writing is a meditative activity, as they lose track of time while working on a text. While they are "pouring out" their ideas onto a page, they are experiencing a state of meditation which they describe as cleansing and liberating (Armstrong 2014<sup>2</sup>: 39). Indeed, meditation has several benefits for the writer: it clears and calms the mind, helps to sort through emotions and experiences and sharpens the senses. If the writer meditates prior to writing, the meditation creates the sense of an emotional and cognitive void that allows for new thoughts and feelings to be processed (ibid.). Hence, implementing short

meditations or meditative activities into the creative writing classroom nourishes creativity. A short meditation at the beginning of the lesson may help the learners to calm down, let go of their worries, put aside the content of the last lessons, free them from everyday thoughts and help them to focus on idea-generation and writing. Apart from short meditations, freewriting or mind-traveling may be used as meditative activities:

**Freewriting** allows the writer to follow their trains of thought without judging them. After some minutes of freewriting where the students are asked to write down every thought that comes to their mind without paying any attention to spelling, grammar or word choice, the students may feel freer, calmer and more open to new activities (for further explanation cf. 'Gathering Ideas'). The other activity is called **mind-traveling**. Inspired by my personal experience in meditation and Neale's (2006: 50) suggestions to explore one's senses, I have come up with this meditative activity. Essentially, mind-traveling is a guided meditation, where the teacher or a student guides the rest of the class to an imagined place. The source of inspiration can be drawn from a prompt that facilitates the creation of a mental picture in front of the inner eye, for example a photograph, a drawing or a short description. Together, the class may travel to distant countries and exotic places. The "tour guide" may evoke certain pictures and feelings through the inclusion of the senses into the description. This also strengthens perception skills and the art of switching perspective. This visualization activity may be a helpful tool if there are limited teaching resources.

### ***Improvitational Theater***

Improvitational theater is drama without the use of a script or learned text. The creational process and content during the time of acting are improvised and therefore not planned in advance (Andersen 1996: 7). They may be employed as ice-breakers in new groups, complements or extensions to other tasks or prompts for creative writing. Fehér (2015: 75) points out that communicative events are unpredictable and that any speaker generally improvises her/his language use in the given communicative situation. By introducing improvisational theater games, the learners may not only train their overall linguistic competences, but also engage into improvised communicative events where they cannot predict the outcome. Improvisational theater games may be divided into two different approaches: 'story' and 'role play' (Lin 2010: 109). The first is concerned with the

creation of a story (a poem, a fairy tale, a song, an interview, ect.), the latter relates to the development of the roles and its enactment. Through both approaches, learners may exert their spontaneity, originality and imagination as they improvise text and movements together with their peers (ibid.: 108f). The generated stories and enacted roles may be used as source for inspiration or concrete prompts for creative writing.

### ***Gathering Ideas***

Idea-generation is a crucial aspect of the general creative process as well as for the creative writing process (cf. chapter 'Creative Process'). To briefly recapitulate, the first phase of the (general) creative process is called 'preparation' and is essentially concerned with encountering a problem or question. During this stage, the key characteristic 'fluency' is of prime importance. It involves gathering many ideas and solutions through divergent and original thinking. For writers, the generated outcome consists of vocabulary, phrases, topics and sub-themes which subsequently serve as resources for the construction of their text(s). Techniques for collecting ideas may be used for working with small groups or with the class as a whole. Through gathering ideas collaboratively students may enhance each other's creativity with the result of a richer repertoire of items to draw from in the next writing phases. This may especially support weak or hesitant writers and add a playful and joyful character to the lesson. Other benefits of implementing brainstorming techniques in the EFL creative writing classroom are that students may outline their ideas without judgement, brainstorm together with their peers, receive an overview of their thoughts, collect and expand their known vocabulary to a specific topic and gain confidence through visualization of what they already know. The pre-writing techniques explained in the following are freewriting, directed freewriting, brainstorming, clustering and journal writing:

In **freewriting**, the learners start to write for a given amount of time without a choice of topic or style. The idea is to freely scribble down whatever comes to mind, without auto-correcting, changing or embellishing anything and without paying attention to orthography. They may be asked to start with the first word or sentence that pops up, continuing with one train of thought and then following the next. If during the process of writing a student runs out of ideas, they should be encouraged to continue writing down every word or sentence that comes to her/his mind. Every thought is welcomed as long

as they do not stop writing. This might be “I don’t know what to write”, “I am tired”, or the like. After a certain amount of time (five, ten or fifteen minutes, for example), they may stop. The written texts may be discarded or used as material for further purpose.

This technique helps to free the students’ mind of every day thoughts and worries, opening free mental space for creative work. An additional benefit is that some original ideas which are worth pursuing might have already found their way onto the white page. Anderson (2006: 23f) stresses that

[f]reewriting will often take you into your deepest ideas, feelings and memories. It enables you to amass material, some of which can be used and developed in your work. Writing in this way also trains you to be able to write breezily and with confidence as soon as you sit down to do it

Also, freewriting takes a lot of pressure off the learners as they are explicitly asked to disregard spelling and grammar mistakes because the activity is above all considered a warm-up.

**Directed freewriting** is a form of freewriting, with the difference that a topical, grammatical or formal restriction is added. Yates (2015: 51f) provides an example for directed freewriting with a formal constraint when teaching poetry. He states that just as with ordinary freewriting, the students should write whatever comes to mind, should not worry about punctuation, grammar or wanting to “get it right straightaway”. However, they should introduce line breaks whenever they feel like doing so. This gives them the feeling of writing poetry, as the text looks like a poem due to its line breaks (Yates 2007: 15f). If the students encounter difficulties starting, he offers another guideline in providing some simple opening lines. To him, “free writing demonstrates how a poem can be written quickly”, regardless of how imperfect the first draft happens to be. This takes away anxiety and perfectionism – two well-known writing blockades. Anderson (2006: 25) calls this technique “focused freewrite”.

**Brainstorming** is a well-known technique to collect ideas around a certain topic. Just as with free-writing, the inner censor is bypassed through the noting of every idea that comes to one’s mind. In contrast to freewriting, a certain theme, phrase or word is chosen as a lead. Then, each and every association is written down in a list-like manner, until no further ideas emerge. As a next step, the jotted down ideas may be grouped into related topics (Lin 2011: 149).



**Clustering** is a more concrete form of brainstorming but also assists in “rous[ing] a generous flow of connected images and ideas and to bypass the ordering, analytical functions of the brain which might constrain writing at the outset” (Anderson 2006: 24). Instead of writing the associations into a list, however, a more visual approach is employed. The nucleus theme is noted in the middle of the page and each new word must be connected with a line and circled, just like the branches and leaves of a tree. Every new word may lead to another chain of ideas (ibid.: 24). The advantage of the clustering method over a regular brainstorm in the form of a list is that each subcategory is given an equal amount of attention and room to expand. In addition, a “cluster gives you a visual map of your thought. It helps you to organize your writing organically rather than sequentially” (ibid.: 25). This offers a very broad covering of the nucleus idea and may sometimes lead to entirely new reflections (Pommerin 1996: 64f). For beginner writers, the clustering technique is ideal for organizing thoughts and for planning and structuring a text.

**Keeping a journal** or notepad is another useful writing technique although it does not explicitly function as a pre-writing activity. It is not only a record of the past day but may also provide a valuable “repository for thoughts, feelings and ideas”. Graham (2014<sup>2</sup>: 24f) formulated a detailed list of the advantages of diary writing, which goes as follows:

- “Recording dreams – also daydreams
- spontaneous writing
- note-making
- recording overheard dialogue
- descriptive writing
- overcoming writer’s block
- creative project journal
- diary (record of daily events, etc.)
- paste in photos, clippings, letters, quotes, drawings, doodles, dried flowers, business cards, labels
- exaggerate
- pray
- express love, anger, sorrow, grief, ecstasy, joy, conflict, etc.

- write to your future self, your past self
- a place for the writer to work out” (Graham 2014<sup>2</sup>: 24f)

A diary might be what a notepad represents for other writers: a room for thoughts, feelings and ideas and a place to collect words, phrases and ideas for texts. Both, a diary and a notepad, give room and refuge for writers who seek to act out their creative inspirations. EFL learners may be encouraged to start writing a journal or notepad where they may write their personal ideas in English, interesting or funny expressions they have heard in movies or songs or found in books. Students may use their notes anytime they engage in creative writing activities.

Overall, the discussed pre-writing activities are highly valuable for fostering creativity in ELT creative writing as they form a basis for the further phases of the creative (writing) process. Meditation and meditative activities help learners to relax, calm their mind and access their unconscious which enhances creative thinking and imagination. With the help of various idea gathering techniques, students may develop their divergent thinking skills, collect and expand their lexical knowledge and create a provisory structure for their text. Improvisational theater fosters improvisational skills, original behavior and responses, communicative competence and social learning. Finally, the described activities may increase motivation and help to establish a positive classroom atmosphere due to their playful character.

### **3.1.2. Creative Writing Activities**

In addition to the implementation of creativity-enhancing pre-writing activities, creativity should be elicited through explicitly asking students to be creative or through creative prompts (Read 2015: 29). These prompts may be created by the teacher or by the learner: Tomlinson (2015: 25f) encourages teachers to extend closed activities taken from coursebooks into open-ended activities. Rosenberg (2015: 123f) suggests inviting the learners to create their own creative writing prompts at the beginning of the lesson or at home, for example through making modern art, drawing faces or creating colorful personae. The teacher may also ask the learners to bring along an object, a poem, a song or piece of writing they find engaging and interesting. Generally, any object, text, sound, image or question may trigger creative thinking (ibid.).

### ***“Creatifying” Coursebooks***

Tomlinson (2015: 25) examined several ELT coursebooks and attested that many of them still consist predominantly of closed activities, which means that there is only one correct response to a given task. He blames the excessive emphasis on examinations on the favoring of closed activities to semi-open or open-ended activities, as their results are easier to evaluate. Unfortunately, however, closed activities make it difficult to foster creative responses, whereas open-ended activities “encourage [...] personal response to meaning, language discovery by the learners, authentic communication, the taking of risks, affective engagement, cognitive engagement [and] being different” (ibid.) (cf. HOTS and LOTS question types, chapter ‘Pillars of Creativity in ELT’). He holds the view that closed activities may easily be turned into open-ended activities: For instance, after reading a text, students may enact or interview the characters of the text, develop their own text in response making use of different text types (letter, inner monologue, different beginning/ending, summary, etc.) or create answering questions and other activities related to the initial text for their peers themselves (ibid.: 26f). In general, before creating class material, it is helpful to inquire about the students’ interests and preferences (Stepanek 2015: 100).

### ***Material Created by Learners***

As an alternative, the learners may be engaged to create class material themselves (Rosenberg 2015: 123f). As homework, they may look for interesting texts or photographs, an engaging podcast or TV series, a beautiful song or poem and bring them into class – anything may serve as a source for comparisons, discussions or writing prompts. There are several advantages to including the learners in the creation of class material: the teacher may spend the saved time on correcting or processing the creative products, the material are more diverse and directly reflect the students’ interests, all classroom participants learn something new about their peers, and finally, integrating the learners into the creative process of material design forms an integral part of self-directed and creative language learning. The reason for this is that each individual choice allows for flexibility, improvisation as well as diversity which are all characteristics of creativity (Stepanek 2015: 100).

## **Modeling**

Moreover, to ensure creative responses, a framework is needed to serve as a model and give orientation. Either the teacher offers (1) a ready example or (2) creates one together with the whole class (Read 2015: 29f). (1) When using a **ready example** to demonstrate a possible creative outcome to a given task, the teacher may choose creative texts of other writers or personal writing. Texts of published writers or other EFL students assist in showing learners the many personal and creative possibilities of responding to a given task. However, the creative process towards the final text cannot be traced. Hence, as an alternative, teachers may share some of their own brainstorming, notes, reflections, drafts and finished pieces of writing with their students (Vanderslice 2006: 154; Gilbert 2016: 259). Students can learn effectively from edited passages in notes and revised and rewritten drafts, as they reconstruct the coming-into-being process of the final text. They may get an idea of the thought processes of their teacher and realize that writing is composed of several writing phases, and that during these phases exploring several ideas, taking risks in language use and exploring original ideas are welcomed. The learners might be motivated to try out a step-by-step approach to writing for themselves and think, “If s/he knows how to do it, I may do it as well!” (Dougherty 2011: 61 as cited in Geok-Lin Lim 2015: 340). Finally, if a teacher decides to share her/his personal writing with the class, “the classroom becomes more democratic and much more of a community of learning” (Stillar 2013: 164).

(2) The other way of modeling is to write a short text, part of a text or poem together in class. This method is called **‘interactive modeling’** and is a social form of learning. The teacher writes the ideas, the drafts, the corrections and notes directly onto the blackboard while verbalizing the thinking process (Holmes and Moulton 2001: 5f). Holmes and Moulton (ibid.) specify that “[b]y thinking aloud with the students while writing their words on the board, teachers can demonstrate how writers decide what to write about, which words to use, where to place words on the page, and when revision is needed”. With the help of ‘interactive modeling’, learners gain instantaneous insight into the creative writing process. They experience the phases of writing first hand: brainstorming/clustering, drafting, rereading and rewriting as well as finishing the final draft. Also, the learners take less risks when writing in a big group (the whole class). As a

result, they may be less intimidated by exploring unknown terrain and feel motivated and encouraged to express their original ideas.

### ***Helpful Constraints***

Further, a creative writing activity needs to have certain limitations, since task restrictions represent important guidance during the writing process towards a creative product (Coe 2015: 65). As discussed at an earlier stage, one may distinguish between ‘communicative’ and ‘creative tasks’ (Tin 2013: 390). Restrictions advantageous for ‘communicative tasks’ are different from those conducive to creative writing tasks. ‘Communicative tasks’ allow learners to work with previously understood knowledge, whereas ‘creative tasks’ elicit new and original responses (ibid.). For instance, the general restrictions of a writing activity may be a word limitation or certain text format. This allows learners to focus on their use of language without having to consider the form of the outcome. Limitations that are more specific are, for instance, the choice of a certain poem, the use of grammatical structures or a particular semantic field. Too many restrictions, on the other hand, may achieve the contrary. Asking the learners to adhere to formal, topical as well as linguistic constraints within one task impedes their liberty to explore and follow their own original ideas while curtailing their overall creative writing abilities (ibid.).

Finally, a common general restriction is the unwritten rule of “show, don’t tell” within the creative writing paradigms. Geok-Lin Lim (2015: 341f) distances herself from this traditional suggestion of creative writing instructors and instead employs a “show and tell” philosophy in her teachings. She accuses the first mantra of implicitly pushing the writers to eschew expressing the whole richness of their creative ideas. This especially holds true for EFL learners, who should, on the contrary, be strongly encouraged to fully exploit their linguistic resources in their writings and not be confronted with yet another limitation. Firstly, students should be emboldened by beginning with the description of “concrete, clear, definable things/objects/memories” (‘show’) and then encouraged to continue from there with more abstract elaborations (‘tell’). Therefore, it can be said that a balance between restrictions on the one side and constraints on the other should be found. Limitations should guide the learners in exploring possibilities and not overwhelm them with demands.

## **Games**

Liebnau (1995: 9) highly values the inclusion of games in lessons. A playful approach to a task includes the work of both hemispheres and an exaggerated goal-oriented thinking is balanced by creative thinking. Further, learners generally show a positive attitude towards games, are more open to experimenting as compared to “serious” language tasks and are thereby less worrisome about making mistakes. With the help of games and game-like writing tasks, the students may explore the new language and its sounds, structures and words in a playful, safe and creative manner (ibid.). Allowing students to play with language and to make mistakes helps them to free themselves of their high expectations. Instead, they may deliberately enjoy the act and the process of creation. This can be very liberating and motivating.

### **3.1.3. Co-creative Writing**

Some might think that writing is a rather solitary endeavor until the final text, once published, is presented to an audience (Vanderslice 2006: 149). This might be the case for or the choice of many professional (creative) writers, but it does not have to be. Especially in the context of ELT, social forms can be highly beneficial for learners. “One assumption of the social learning theory is that students learn from observation and interaction with others in their immediate environment” (Holmes and Moulton 2001: 5). When writing in pairs or groups, students may learn to overcome difficulties together with others, share their views and receive feedback on their ideas. They may also realize that their input and engagement is important for the advancement of the whole group, and learn how to balance the needs of the individual, the group and the task in order to successfully fulfill the set requirements (Liebnau 1995: 9).

There are several ways to include social forms in the creative writing classroom: through (1) ‘interactive modeling’, (2) ‘cooperative groups’ and (3) ‘collaborative groups’ (Holmes and Moulton 2001: 5f). (1) **‘Interactive modeling’**, as discussed in the previous paragraph, is the interactive writing of a model text between the teacher and the whole class. In a (2) **‘collaborative group’**, a text or a part of a text is written together instead of individually. The learners may inspire each other and the individual creative process becomes a co-creative process where new meaning is co-constructed. The group members verbalize their thinking processes, discuss which words and phrases to use best and negotiate the

direction towards a final text. Through promoting their ideas and backing up their opinions with explanations and arguments, students can train their communicative competence and social skills (ibid.). Moreover, through writing a text in a group, responsibility is shared which minimizes the pressure to perform and risk-taking seems less “risky”. Depending on the classroom environment and feedback culture established by the teacher as well as the motivation of the peers, ‘collaborative writing’ may also motivate weaker writers to come forth and share their ideas (ibid.). Finally, in (3) **‘cooperative groups’**, individually written texts are shared and discussed with peers. The learners may help each other with brainstorming, drafting and structuring thoughts. The continuous feedback reinforces audience awareness as the writers receive immediate responses to their texts. They might be asked to explain their choice of words or intended meaning (ibid.), rework certain expressions and review minor spelling or grammar mistakes. Receiving on-going feedback also encourages the learners to share their writing with a bigger audience once the text is finished.

To conclude, creative writing in EFL learning may not only be defined through a creative, novel idea channeled into a text. Rather, it refers to an interplay of several techniques that enhances creative thinking. With the help of various pre-writing techniques, creative prompts and co-creative writing, interest and motivation to create original texts may be sparked and elaborated. Apart from the cultivation of creative ideas in writing, EFL writers may also improve their overall writing skills. This will be of central attention in the following part.

### **3.2. Learning How to Write through Creative Writing**

Through creative writing techniques and activities, not only creativity is addressed and enhanced, but also other skills which are relevant for the constructing of texts, such as cultivating perception, developing voice, rereading and rewriting, linguistic creativity and audience awareness.

### 3.2.1. Cultivating Perception

One's perception encompasses the five senses taste, sight, smell, touch and sound as well as the ability of putting oneself into somebody's or something's place. Neale (2006: 45) holds the view that "[w]riting is a perceptual art, one in which images are created via language in order for the reader to make meaning. It is therefore imperative that the writer's powers of perception are alert". As a matter of fact, involving the senses in one's writing offers a more distinguished and profound approach to the environment which will be ultimately reflected in every written text (ibid.: 49).

Yet, describing one's senses seems at times an overwhelming task, as they are complex and sometimes inextricably convoluted with one another and the memory itself. Metaphors and similes are a typical way of putting intense feelings and perceptions into words (Neale 2006: 50). Before the learners may channel their senses and ideas onto paper, Neale (ibid.: 49) suggests to have them create an image of a real location, a memory in the past or an imagined situation in their mind. Then, they should focus on one sense after the other. With this simple activity, a writer easily learns how to separately focus on each sense and how to vividly describe it (ibid.).

Cultivating one's perception also includes a certain flexibility towards reality. One may step into the shoes of any other person of a different gender, age, cultural background, or impersonate an animal or object. The ability to change perception significantly broadens the horizon and understanding of the world and with that enriches one's writings (Liebnau 1995: 9). As Armstrong (2014<sup>2</sup>: 38) phrases it, "it's not what you see but how you see it". Stillar (2013: 164f) emphasizes the importance of having learners switch perspective in their writings from time to time. It allows them to develop their critical consciousness through stepping back from their own prejudices and seeing the world from other viewpoints (Thornton 2006: 5). In addition, the experience of stepping into somebody else's shoes is particularly effective if the impersonated individual's worldview and background form a significant contrast to the one of the learner. Stillar (2013: 292) explains that in his EFL classrooms, he generally asks his students to write personal letters and diary entries from the perspective of a minority group member of their dominant culture. In order to fit into their new role, learners have to research their character, look up facts, read newspaper articles, think about how their life would look like from a



different perspective and how they would think, feel and act. This intensifies the experience and enhances political and social awareness (ibid.: 166). Finally, Stillar (ibid.: 171) adds, all students generally build up a profound knowledge of content and vocabulary related to the specific social issue in the follow-up discussions due to their intensive research and personal reflections on the given topic.

### **3.2.2. Linguistic Creativity**

Writing and speaking are both productive skills where learners use their language knowledge in order to communicate meaning. In general, writing holds the advantage that the writer has more time to reflect on the text (in the digital age, instant messaging and voice mails may form exceptions). Through creative writing activities, learners may strengthen their lexical and grammatical knowledge, experiment with new expressions to convey meaning, and find their personal voice in the foreign language. Further, the “cognitive fixation tendency” where students might overuse pre-fabricated language or words may be loosened (cf. Tin 2011).

### **3.2.3. Developing Voice**

Every person has her/his particular way of using language, this is called ‘idiolect’. Mannerisms, speech patterns or vocal tics of our past and present environment influence our daily speech (Herbert 2006: 195). Especially in writing poetry, Herbert (ibid.) argues, there is no “right” or “wrong”, no “proper” or “improper” speech. The chosen expressions and structures either feel natural in the poem or not. Likewise, every writer is believed to have her/his particular style of writing – his personal voice: the way meaning is expressed, the length and complexity of sentences, the choice of words, style, preferred topics, etc. differ from one writer to another. As Anderson (2006: 28) phrases it, the writer’s voice is “a distinctive personal style or ‘signature’ [which] takes time and confidence to emerge”. In the creative writing classroom, learners have the possibility to develop their own voice through prompts that elicit the expression of their thoughts, feelings and beliefs as well as through instances of reflections and discussions (Perkins and Carter 2011: 22). The voice in the foreign language possibly differs from the voice in their native tongue. It might be more direct, funny, ironic or dramatic. Learners may play around with ways of expressing meaning and enjoy the finding and exploring of their EFL voice.

### **3.2.4. Writing for an Audience**

When writing a text, the writer may think of the readers' needs when considering style and content. Similarly, the reader will try to interpret the author's intentions when reading the text. Samway (2006: 108) and Feuer (2011: 126) explain that "[i]n a symbiotic relationship, writers take into consideration the needs of their readers, and readers take into account the author's intentions". Written communication is an indirect dialogue between the reader and the writer, one trying to anticipate the reaction, the other trying to reconstruct the action. It is interactive and social. Therefore, the writer should know the potential readership as it allows appropriate choices of style, topic and lexis depending on the putative reader's age, gender, preferences, and any other assumptions the writer might have. Taking a readership into account, the writer ceases to write for mere self-expression and starts to communicate to a potential reader (Vanderslice 2006: 149). Writing for an audience provides another resourceful and guiding limitation (cf. 'Helpful Constraints', chapter 'Creative Writing Activities'), as it assists the learner in word choice, style and genre.

### **3.2.5. Critical-Creative Rewriting**

Unexperienced writers might not be aware of the importance of rereading and rewriting their texts and that often several drafts are needed until a written piece is finished. The cyclic process of rereading and rewriting bears the advantage that students may learn how to auto-correct some of their errors and refine their expressions through the consulting of dictionaries, the internet or peers for feedback. Also, it takes away the pressure to instantly produce a faultless and coherent text with the first draft (Pope 2006: 130f; Herbert 2006: 211; Anderson 2006: 21).

Anderson (2006: 21) argues that perfectionism and wanting to get it right with the first draft chokes creativity and good writing. He suggests to simply "postpone perfection" as it is much more important to produce a first draft, no matter how rough and messy it is. Depending on the day, this first draft may need lots of improvement afterwards or might be close to the envisioned final version. Further, he reminds his readers that "[t]he gift of writing is a power that flickers – everyone has mediocre days as well as magical ones" (ibid.). What is important to acknowledge is that the writing of several drafts is crucial to the writing process as they offer cycles of (re)reading and (re)writing. Even if learners have

difficulties in rereading their own written work, the symbiosis of the critical passive reader and the productive active writer can be very fruitful. This demands a lot of perseverance from the side of the (student) writer (Herbert 2006: 211). Not shying away from the cyclic process of writing and re-writing is just as important as inspiration, creativity, knowing the craft, talent, having ideas for writing or any other element related to creative writing (Anderson 2006: 21). Moreover, Pope (2006: 130) refers to the stage of rereading and rewriting as “critical-creative reading”. She holds the view that generally in the educational context, students have to learn how to critically read texts and reflect on them. Similarly, writers need to look at their own writing from a certain distance and with a critical eye. After the critical reading, the creative rewriting begins which forms a crucial part of the writing process (ibid.).

The entire writing process bears possibilities to improve one’s general writing competence. Especially if the process and the craft are regarded as a whole: from the initial idea onwards, through the inclusion of the senses and one’s observation and perception skills, the development of one’s voice, the consideration of creative linguistic possibilities, the consideration of an audience and finally, the creative product and its sharing. The latter two are the topic of the next section.

### **3.3. Sharing and Assessing Creative Writing Texts**

#### **3.3.1. Sharing the Final Product**

With the help of creative writing, the “feared final product” is turned into a text that may serve further purposes in the classroom, such as interviews, critical responses, letters, asf. (Pommerin 1996: 50) or the sharing with a real audience (Hedge 2000: 311; Holmes and Moulton 2001: 6; Vanderslice 2006: 149). In the digital age, sharing one’s writing has become significantly easier, for instance through blogs, online anthologies, creative writing websites or the school website. In the “real” world (as opposed to the “digital” world), creative writing readings may be organized, a collection of short texts published or a class magazine launched (Hedge 2000: 311). Poetry in particular is easy to share due to its concise form. Poetry readings, anthologies, calendars, greeting cards or bookmarks

are some examples to engage with a real-life audience (Holmes and Moulton 2001: 6) (cf. chapter 'Teaching Poetry Writing in the EFL Classroom').

### **3.3.2. Assessing Creative Writing**

Pommerin (1996: 51f) finds that creative texts should be assessed as any other written text. Otherwise, students might not take the writing tasks seriously and regard creative writing as a relaxing break to the usually demanding English lesson. Encouraging playfulness and creativity in the classroom should not be mistaken with leisure activities. On the one hand, it is important to maintain the authenticity of the learners' writing, on the other hand, too many mistakes might be embarrassing. Depending on the objectives of the activity or project, Holmes and Moulton (2001: 8f) suggest asking the learners to edit their work as well as they can and only to correct "spelling, word-form errors, and minor grammatical mistakes such as subject-verb agreement". Other mistakes, such as "[w]ord order, word choice, or any "mistake" that would alter the students' creations" may be kept.

To summarize, the implementation of creative writing techniques and activities in ELT enrich the process of foreign language learning for learners of all levels. Lexical and grammatical knowledge may be applied and broadened, communicative as well as creative writing skills trained and social learning integrated while general creative abilities are enhanced. The overall opinion about creative writing in ELT was found to be positive. Yet, there were also a few scholars who voiced critique. These arguments will be briefly outlined in the following chapter.

### **3.4. Critical Voices of Creative Writing Pedagogy**

The major concerns found on the topic of creative writing in ELT were

- the exaggerated focus on inculcating vocabulary or grammar,
- the negligence of valuing foreign language learners as writers,
- the ignorance about EFL students' expectations and needs in the creative writing context and
- the lack of proper teacher formation in the field of creative writing.

Geok-Lin Lim (2015: 337) critiques that research on creative writing for EFL students is generally based on ELT premises and rarely on creative writing pedagogies. Generally, the main interest of including creative writing into the school curriculum is to serve the interests of ELT. Hence, creative writing activities are often reduced to the purpose of teaching vocabulary acquisition, syntactical structures and grammar (ibid.). Disregarding the need for EFL students to learn the craft of creative writing just as native speakers have to, deprives them of realizing their full creative writing potential. Foregrounding the mastering of the creative writing craft challenges the strong emphasis on practicing linguistic correctness, proper usage and conformity. Geok-Lin Lim (ibid.) advocates a more playful attitude in creative writing, with language forms and conventions assuming a secondary role. In other words, the chief objective of ELT creative writing should be creative expression with all of its facets, including imagination, divergent and original thinking, idea-generation and exploration, while fostering the “social, ethical, psychological, emotional and intellectual development” of the learners (ibid.: 340).

She (ibid.: 336) bases her argumentation on the importance of the numerous valuable literary oeuvres written in the second or third foreign language of the respective writer. Writing in a foreign language offers a different viewpoint on the language in question as well as on the culture. The writer might experience her/his voice in a different way and might be more daring (and creative) in trying out new structures, coining new words, making use of a word, citation or concept of her/his native tongue and translating and explaining it in the following lines. With that, the reader receives glimpses into a second world. The diversity of voices, languages and cultures in literature is a treasure and should therefore be shared as model texts in the classroom as well as encouraged through a creative writing pedagogy where creative expression, style and content are equally addressed as language learning.

Another critique on creative writing in ELT is voiced by Zhao (2014: 454). He deplores the lack of scientific attention that has been given to the personal importance of creative writing for students. Their motivation for and interest in expressing themselves creatively in a foreign language should be explored and discussed (Zaho 2014: 454). Redirecting the focal point to the students’ personal needs and interests instead of prescribing creative

writing tasks that primarily aim at inculcating language structures would tremendously enrich research on creative writing in the EFL classroom.

Finally, teachers need to understand the craft of writing as well as the uncertain personal processes that come with it. This is why teacher novices need opportunities to practice their creative writing skills within their teacher formation before teaching creative writing in class. They cannot act as role models of creative writing if they have never engaged in creative writing themselves (Smith and Wrigley 2012: 80 as cited in Pommerin 1996: 81).

In this chapter,

- multiple aspects which define creative writing were provided,
- several creativity-enhancing pre-writing activities presented,
- characteristics of creative writing tasks explicated,
- benefits for learners concerning overall writing skills highlighted and
- a number of concerns for creative writing in ELT were given attention.

The detailed elaboration of characteristics of creative writing showed that creative writing is not a collection of original tasks, but a fusion of creative pedagogy and teaching writing. Furthermore, creative (pre-)writing activities may be used to have learners improve their overall foreign language competence and/or to develop their communicative and creative writing skills. Ideally, their teachers manage to find a way to establish a balance between the interests of ELT as well as of creative writing pedagogies, as the students may benefit the most from a combination of both approaches.

## 4. Teaching Poetry Writing in the EFL Classroom

This chapter evolves around poetry and the teaching of writing poetry in the EFL classroom. When designing creative writing material for the practical part of this thesis, several text types were implemented at initial stages. After restructuring the project, the genre 'poetry' was chosen as only text type to be focused on. Therefore, its general characteristics and relevance in the EFL classroom will be discussed in the following part.

### 4.1. General Characteristics of Poetry

Poetry is one of the three big literary genres 'poetry, prose and drama'. *The Merriam Webster* online dictionary defines poetry as "writing that formulates a concentrated imaginative awareness of experience in language chosen and arranged to create a specific emotional response through meaning, sound, and rhythm"<sup>25</sup>. Described in more detail, poetry is made up of elements such as line breaks, rhythm and meter, literary devices, the power of imagery, perception and observation, verse, shape and layout (Barrs 2015: 99) and conveys feelings and thoughts through imagery (Wright 2015: 17). Especially traditional poetry (e.g. cinquain, sonnet) is known for its recursive patterns, strong metaphors and literary devices. Due to its condensed and often complex nature, especially traditional poetry forms need to be read several times in order to be understood which requires patience (Herbert 2006: 222). This might be one of the reasons why poetry receives less echo than novels or short stories, as the reader has to invest more effort into less text (Herbert 2006: 222). Further, there are common misapprehensions about poetry, as Sheppard and Thurston (2014<sup>2</sup>: 194f) specify:

- (1) poetry must be about strong feelings drawn from personal experiences
- (2) poetry is only "real" poetry if it is organized in meters and has rhyming endings
- (3) poetry is the expression of complex thoughts through sententious vocabulary

Even though traditional poetry often shows the given elements, other styles of poetry do not. Many modern forms have been conceived that allow the poet to deliberately and creatively play with rhyme, rhythm and line, such as visual poetry, concrete poetry,

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<sup>25</sup> <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/poetry> (5/27/2018)

acrostic poetry, black-out poetry or free verse, among others. Even though the way poetry is understood today has changed, there are still general qualities that are commonly used to refer to a poem.

One of these main characteristics of poetry is the **line** and the **line break**. Through cutting the natural flow of language, the reader is forced to pause before moving on to the next line. If the line does not form a complete sentence, the dramatic effect is even more amplified, as the content to follow is suspended (Herbert 2006: 179f; Sheppard and Thurston 2014<sup>2</sup>: 200). A special form of line break is the 'enjambement', where it is not a sentence which is divided for poetic effect, but a phrase (Sheppard and Thurstan 2014<sup>2</sup>: 200). Herbert points out that "[i]f we break within a phrase, then we introduce a sense of incompleteness which can pull us forward through the poem, almost demanding that we make sense of the line by reading on" (Herbert 2006: 181).

**Rhyme and meter** are two further common elements of poetry. Obermeier et al. (2013: 2) define rhymes as representation of "pairs of words that are phonologically identical from the last accented vowel to the end of a word". Usually, they mark the end of a line and give the poem a recursive pattern. Traditional poetry has a fixed rhyme scheme (e.g. Shakespearean sonnet: ABAB CDCD EFEF GG), whereas free verse does not have any preset scheme. Furthermore, meter "refers to the perception of alternating accented (strong) or unaccented (weak) syllables" (Obermeier et al. 2013: 2). According to Sheppard and Thurston (2014<sup>2</sup>: 194f), the iambic beat, which alternates strong and weak syllables, is the most common pattern.

Furthermore, poems are often written from the perspective of a **persona**. The persona might use 'I' to describe feelings or thoughts, however, it does not have to reflect the writer's personal view. Rather, it shows a powerful tool of switching perception to convey feelings and thoughts from a different perspective (Herbert 2006: 211).

Poetry is also known for its powerful **imagery**. Comparisons, figurative expressions or metaphors often connect unusual phenomena, enabling the reader to see the world with different eyes (ibid.: 214). In order to create strong images, a refined observation and an original way of perceiving the environment are necessary. Every sense has its unique value, as each represents a channel to decode and understand the world (ibid.: 207f). Sheppard and Thruston (2014<sup>2</sup>: 196) propose the example of *haiku* to demonstrate a



strong sense of observation condensed in few words: “The writer, preferably standing before the object, enters into the object, sharing its delicate life and feeling”.

Finally, especially in poetry, many **literary devices** are often used to play with the sound and rhythm of the language. Common literary devices are alliteration, assonance, onomatopoeia, metaphor, simile and personification.

## 4.2. Creative Poetry Writing in the EFL Classroom

Teaching poetry writing in the EFL classroom holds many advantages, especially due to its concise form. Further, every language has its rhythm and patterns, and through poetry students may discover them (Barrs 2015: 99). “Poetry teaches children to listen, develop vocabulary, learn to read and write, and think creatively. Poetry takes the structure and beauty of language and provides a personal world to explore” (Holmes and Moulton 2001: 3). Its concise forms may give learners the feeling of security while allowing for the focus on single words, sounds and linguistic effects. Indeed, writing poetry offers many advantages to EFL learners. In their book *Writing Simple Poems*, Holmes and Moulton (2001: 1f) assembled a list to portray the **benefits of writing poetry in a foreign language**:

- “play with words [...]
- create a polished piece of writing in a relatively short period, thereby experiencing “instant gratification”
- rehearse correct spelling
- use familiar vocabulary
- discover new vocabulary [...]
- practice specific language structures such as phrases, word order, and verb tense
- develop confidence in their ability to share ideas in writing
- nurture creativity by giving their imaginations free reign
- cultivate logical and sequential thinking skills through storytelling
- refine summarizing skills”

Similar to general creative writing activities, students need models, patterns and **constraints** to support their poetry writing process, especially when they are not familiar

with this specific genre. Barrs (2015: 102) argues that inexperienced writers may need open structures or structures that provide some constraints without taking away too much freedom at the same time. Too many limitations might be overwhelming, as having to focus on meter, rhythm, literary devices and shape all at the same time proves demanding.

Further, when introducing poetry, several considerations regarding **timing** need to be taken into account. Holmes and Moulton (2001: 10f) suggest always to cover content first and only afterwards to start with poetry writing activities, as learning content through poetry has been found to be confusing for the learners. Moreover, only one poem per lesson (of 50 minutes) should be introduced. They argue that the learners need time to experiment with language, find out what intrigues them, what they would like to write about and how they would like to express that. Pre-writing activities to enhance creative thinking, pair and group work to exchange ideas as well as (peer) feedback to accompany the writing process are equally time-consuming, although worth the share (cf. chapter 'What is Creative Writing?'). Thus, one full lesson should be dedicated to the writing of one poem, not taking into consideration rereading, rewriting and editing (ibid.). As regards revision, it can be said that proficient EFL learners generally need more time to revise and edit their poems, just as with other writings, as their linguistic repertoire is more extensive than that of beginners. Overall, the time needed for the editing of poems depends on the interest, motivation and love for detail (/perfectionism) of the students (ibid.).

During the writing process, students may receive **assistance** in the form of provided constraints, creative prompts, (interactive) modeling, extensive pre-writing activities which foster creativity, the (co-)creation of word banks, co-creative writing in pairs or small groups, (peer) feedback, dictionaries, the teacher reminding them to put spelling and grammar second and the writing of many drafts (Holmes and Moulton 2001: 11) (cf. chapter 'What is Creative Writing?').

From the perspective of **creative writing pedagogy**, where the craft is foregrounded, instead of foreign language learning, students may learn to

- think out of the box,

- play with language – with its sounds, words, grammar and intonation,
- invent new words and concepts,
- cultivate a powerful observation,
- easily switch perception,
- paint a picture with only few words,
- create a mood with only few words,
- condense information,
- consciously use every word and expression and
- powerfully express feelings and thoughts

by embracing the role of a poet. These skills trained in the context of poetry writing may further assist the students in the writing of any other text types.

Not only writing poetry, but also **sharing** the creative products bears many advantages for EFL learning: students may inspire and learn from their peers, develop audience awareness, practice their pronunciation and presentation skills in poetry readings (Bluett 2015: 89) and feel joy and pride through receiving feedback in the form of applause and comments (Holmes and Moulton 2001: 7). There are many ways in which poems can be shared, for instance through anthologies, posters, collages, greeting cards, bookmarks, poetry readings (Holmes and Moulton 2001: 6) or self-made books. They might also be enacted in the form of a drama, turned into a song (Leach 2014<sup>2</sup>: 206) or a rap, or as Spiro (2014<sup>4</sup>: 11) suggests, accompanied with a dance or a mime or stuck into a photograph album or diary. Moreover, as regards sharing the poetry of beginners in class reading, the poems can be written on the black-/whiteboard, a flip chart or projected onto the wall in order to bypass the probability of misunderstandings due to a strong accent (Holmes and Moulton 2001: 13).

Finally, as Davidson and Gregory (2006: 21) phrase it, writing poetry can be compared to dancing:

All the formal dance moves, once internalized, come freely to the dancer performing on stage. One learns in order to unlearn. One internalizes in order to call forth one's knowledge without having to think about it. One naturalizes, embodies, enacts.

The first four chapters of this thesis reflected the thorough examination of the body of literature available on the discussed fields. In the following part, personal reflections and considerations on creative writing teaching in the form of five creativity-enhancing categories will be explained.

## 5. Principles of New Forms of Creative Writing

In the course of writing this thesis and designing diverse creative writing material, five main principles of 'New Forms of Creative Writing', namely 'interlinguality', 'interculturality', 'intertextuality', 'intermediality' and 'intersensuality' have been conceived. As can be seen at first glance, each principle starts with the prefix 'inter-', which means "between, among, in the midst", "located, occurring or existing between" or "shared by, involving, or derived from two or more"<sup>26</sup>. It is hence an in-between space of two or more entities. In one of his books on flow, Csikszentmihalyi (1996: 8) points out that centers of creativity tend to occur where different domains cross. He remarks, for instance, that "at the intersection of different cultures, where beliefs, lifestyles, and knowledge mingle[,] individuals [may] see new combinations of ideas with greater ease". Thus, boundaries become fuzzy and new concepts are conceived. I believe that in these crossings of domains where differences and diversity meet, a "creative void" opens. In this "creative void", new meaning may be negotiated and constructed. The framework of NFCW aims at allowing such creative voids to open in the EFL classroom through the provision and discussion of material inspired by one or more of the given principles. Within the context of creative writing, the learners are asked to "fill" the gap in the form of texts, channeling their creative ideas into words and phrases.

The idea of including texts, music, visual art, other subjects or languages in creative writing is not a new concept, neither is the sharing of learners' writing through various media. Pommerin (1996: 78f), for instance, describes how she had her students include words of their native tongue into their writing. Bluett (2015: 90) writes about how a physics student used a mathematical formula as a creative writing prompt. What is new to these concepts, however, is the focus on the 'inter'-space, the "creative void", their formulation and elaboration as well as their conscious combination. In addition, the definition of categories allows a more concrete view on creative writing, guidance in designing creative writing material and in the further processing of students' texts.

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<sup>26</sup> <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/void> (06/14/2018)

In the following sub-chapters, the five principles of NFCW will be presented. First, a basic understanding will be provided through the provision of a theoretical background. Then, the concepts will be linked to creative writing.

### **5.1. A Preliminary Note on Interlinguality and Interculturality**

Given the fact that language is *the* cultural trait, “but also a means of access to cultural manifestations” (CEFR 2001: 6), the principles ‘interlinguality’ and ‘interculturality’ will be discussed in the same light.

In a globalized world, learning of and about other cultures and languages has become not only a prerequisite in the professional sphere, but also in our everyday lives. Meandering in any capital of the world, one may encounter people from almost any corner of the globe. How to embrace this linguistic and cultural diversity and wealth is one of the central questions of 21<sup>st</sup> century education. Even more so, since this diversity bears great potential in becoming a source of creativity (cf. Csikszentmihalyi 1996: 8). Maddux et al. (2009: 157), for instance, reviewed several articles on the positive influence of multicultural experiences on creativity and state “both little m multicultural experience (e.g., cognitively juxtaposing ideas from different cultures in the lab, having foreign friends, listening to foreign music) and Big M multicultural experience (e.g., spending years living abroad) can affect creativity”. However, the passive and unreflected experience of other cultures is not enough, an active comparison and discussion is necessary (ibid.).

Furthermore, in many cultural intersections, English plays the role of a lingua franca. The reason why EFL learning has become one of the primary aims of education world-wide is that it offers participation in the international arena. It serves to communicate with people from all around the world and not only from English-speaking countries. Therefore, thematizing other languages and cultures in EFL learning seems equally important to gaining insight into the linguistic and cultural habits and customs of English-speaking nations. Finally, knowing of or speaking various languages and understanding the different values and beliefs of other cultures leads to an intercultural awareness (Council of Europe

2001: 103) which may further help to minimize cultural misunderstandings, culture shock and conflicts (Neuliep 2009<sup>4</sup>: 1).

The *European Union* currently has 28 member states and recognizes 24 official languages and 60 indigenous regional or minority languages. One of the European Union's fundamental principle is to be "united in diversity", encouraging its citizens to become plurilingual and intercultural<sup>27</sup>. To make this happen, many international programs have been funded to enhance cultural exchange and language learning. The *CEFR* and the *FREPA*, for instance, are two frameworks that were conceived to assist the member states in their communication and collaboration. Especially the *CEFR* has found recognition and implementation around the globe. Similar to the framework *CEFR* which systematized language learning, teaching and assessment, a concept to categorize plurilingualism and interculturality was created, namely the *FREPA – The Framework of Reference for Pluralistic Approaches to Languages and Cultures*. It has not received as much attention as the *CEFR*, but holds interesting aspects relevant for the NFCW principles 'interlinguality' and 'interculturality'. Next to fostering creativity, it can be said that interlingual and intercultural creative writing activities assist learners in becoming plurilingual and intercultural learners. Therefore, the *FREPA* will be presented in the following lines.

### **The FREPA – The Framework of Reference for Pluralistic Approaches to Languages and Cultures**

The framework of reference *FREPA* is a project of the *European Centre of Modern Languages* and serves as a complementary tool to the *CEFR*, focusing on plurilingual and intercultural competences. It was announced in 2004 and since then several rationales have been identified (Candelier et al. 2012: 243f). The cornerstone of this program is "the move towards an overall concept of language education, integrating the teaching and learning of all languages in order to make use of potential synergies" (ECML 2003). As stated on the official website of the *European Centre of Modern Languages*,

[p]luralistic approaches to languages and cultures (Language awareness, Integrated didactic approaches, Intercomprehension between related languages, Intercultural approaches) are based on activities that include several linguistic and cultural varieties.

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<sup>27</sup> [http://www.oesz.at/download/spol/LeppProfil\\_Final.pdf](http://www.oesz.at/download/spol/LeppProfil_Final.pdf) (06/05/2018)

They develop a concrete concept of the multilingual and multicultural competence promoted by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.<sup>28</sup>

Even though the concept of *plurilingual and intercultural competence* forms the basis for the *FREPA*, a similar notion first emerged in 1997 as *plurilingual and pluricultural competence* and soon after became a basic concept of the *CEFR* (Council of Europe 2001: 168):

Plurilingual and pluricultural competence refers to the ability to use languages for the purposes of communication and to take part in intercultural interaction, where a person, viewed as a social agent has proficiency, of varying degrees, in several languages and experience of several cultures. This is not seen as the superposition or juxtaposition of distinct competences, but rather as the existence of a complex or even composite competence on which the user may draw.

### The four pluralistic approaches

The pluralistic didactic approaches aim at using “more than one [or] several varieties of languages or cultures simultaneously during the teaching process”<sup>29</sup>. In the past thirty years, four pluralistic approaches to teaching languages and culture have been developed, namely (1) ‘awakening to languages’, (2) ‘intercomprehension between related languages’, (3) ‘intercultural approach’ and (4) ‘integrated didactic approach to different languages studied’ (FREPA, Candelier et al. 2012: 245f).

The first approach called (1) **‘awakening of languages’** is concerned with the familiarization of students with the linguistic diversity that surrounds them. The idea is to primarily include languages that are not taught in their schools, but also languages that are already learned, that are spoken in the students’ environment (family, school, city, etc.) or anywhere else in the world. This extreme form of pluralistic language teaching was created for young pupils as introductory courses, however, it may as well be used as a complementary language learning support for learners of any age. The second approach (2) **‘intercomprehension between related languages’** encourages the discovering of similarities between “two or more languages of the same linguistic family (Romance, Germanic, Slavic languages, etc.) in parallel”<sup>30</sup>. The pre-requisite for this approach is the knowledge of one of these languages as a native tongue, educational language or any other previously learned language, so that comparisons and contrasts may be made (cf.

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<sup>28</sup> <http://carap.ecml.at/Keyconcepts/tabid/2681/language/en-GB/Default.aspx> (07/06/2018)

<sup>29</sup> <http://carap.ecml.at/> (07/06/2018)

<sup>30</sup> <http://carap.ecml.at/Keyconcepts/tabid/2681/language/en-GB/Default.aspx> (06/07/2018)



Meißner 2011 as cited in FREPA, Candelier et al. 2012: 245f). The focus mainly lies on receptive skills, as the knowledge of a related language helps in understanding the target language. The (3) '**intercultural approach**' shows "many variants [that] are all based on didactic principles which recommend relying on phenomena from one or more cultural area(s) [...] as a basis for understanding others from one or more other area(s)"<sup>31</sup>. This approach includes the acquiring of strategies to successfully deal with intercultural (communicative) situations. Finally, the (4) '**integrated didactic approach**' aims at "helping learners to establish links between a limited number of languages, which are taught within the school curriculum". This approach emphasizes the "mutual support between languages"<sup>32</sup>, i.e. the learners learn how to build on their already existing linguistic knowledge to tackle a new language.

Furthermore, the *FREPA* includes several descriptors which concretize the three plurilingual and intercultural competences 'knowledge', 'attitudes' and 'skills'. A more detailed exploration will not be provided due to the limitations of this thesis.

Overall, the *FREPA* project contributes to the paradigm shift to epitomize "the development of a global view of language education which would include the teaching and learning of ALL languages, in order to profit from their potential for synergy" (FREPA 2012: 8). This view point includes "the abandoning of a "compartmentalized" view of an individual's linguistic and cultural competence(s)" and embodies "a plurilingual and pluricultural competence encompassing the full range of the languages available to" the learner (Council of Europe 2001: 168). As the 'inter'-concept 'interlinguality' does include the rudimentary teaching about and of other languages, it may be regarded as a creative instrument to complement plurilingual learning. However, its core idea is to enhance creativity through the usage of elements of another language. Likewise, 'interculturality' includes other cultures into the creative writing classroom in order to foster creative responses. Creative writing prompts with intercultural elements foster intercultural learning, but again, their primary aim is to trigger creativity in the learners. In the following sub-chapters, each 'inter'-concept will be given more attention.

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<sup>31</sup> <http://carap.ecml.at/Keyconcepts/tabid/2681/language/en-GB/Default.aspx> (06/07/2018)

<sup>32</sup> <http://carap.ecml.at/Keyconcepts/tabid/2681/language/en-GB/Default.aspx> (06/07/2018)

## 5.2. Interlinguality

‘Interlinguality’ was the first ‘inter’-concept which was conceived. In the following, a definition will be provided and general examples of interlingual creative writing activities given. As stated before, it includes elements of plurilingual learning (cf. ‘The FREPA’), but the activities rather focus on their creativity-enhancing potential.

### 5.2.1. Pluri-, Multi- and Interlinguality<sup>33</sup>

First, the terms ‘multilinguality’ and ‘plurilinguality’ will be defined in order to pinpoint the meaning of ‘interlinguality’. According to the *European Commission* (2007: 6), ‘multilinguality’ “is understood as the ability of societies, institutions, groups and individuals to engage, on a regular basis, with more than one language in their day-to-day lives” (European Commission 2007: 6; cf. CEFR 2001: 5)”. This engagement involves “regional languages, dialects and sign languages” (European Commission 2007: 6)”. Some sources interchangeably use ‘multi-’ and ‘plurilingual’, while others employ the term ‘multilinguality’ to describe societies and nations where more than two languages are present, and ‘plurilinguality’ for individuals who know more than two languages (cf. Jessner 2008). In an article of the *Council of Europe*, Byram (2009: 6) states that “[p]lurilingual individuals belong to and identify with complex groupings, some of which are temporary, resembling interconnecting networks more than the stable and named groups such as professions, nationalities or minorities”. Finally, no concrete definition of the term ‘interlinguality’ could be found, only of the adjective ‘interlingual’, which means “of, relating to, or existing between two or more languages”<sup>34</sup>. Hence, it could be said that ‘interlinguality’ is the interplay of two or more languages.

### 5.2.2. Interlingual Creative Writing

In the light of this definition, interlingual creative writing activities integrate one or more foreign languages to serve as prompts for creative writing. While the process and the product will be predominantly in English (in EFL learning), the source is in another language. Prompts for creative writing activities may be any written or oral text of any language other than English. Written texts include single words, phrases, sentences,

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<sup>33</sup> Some articles differentiate between ‘multilinguality’ and ‘multilingualism’, and ‘plurilinguality’ and ‘plurilingualism’. Due to the limited scope of this thesis, these minor terminal differences will not be discussed.

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/interlingual> (06/07/2018)

citations, letters, postcards, (extracts of) a newspaper, a magazine, a blog entry or (parts of) a literary text, such as poetry, prose or drama, asf. Oral texts encompass songs, interviews, theater plays, movies, radio dramas, documentaries, recordings, telenovelas, asf. Essentially, every text and any genre may be used as a prompt. The prompt may be translated into English and both versions made available to the learners. If it is a matter of a different script, such as for Japanese, Chinese, Bulgarian, Hindu, Georgian, Hebrew, etc., a transcription helps to read out the words. Further, depending on the creative writing activity, the learners may also include words or thematize concepts of other languages in their writing, turning them into a bilingual or multilingual patchwork. Further, bi-/multilingual learners may be asked to include their other languages and dialects and create their own prompts. Also, students may be encouraged to search for loan words in their native tongue(s), in their neighborhood (in restaurants, libraries, etc.) or online through search engines. While the input – the prompt – is in a foreign language, the output – the text to be written – is in English. Through this method, awareness of other languages may be risen and English learned.

The primary goals of interlingual creative writing prompts are to:

- enhance creativity through the introduction of foreign concepts
- create a void where learners feel the need to say something new

Secondary goals or relevant “side effects” which may be interesting to exploit are to:

- give learners insight into different structures, scripts and sounds of other languages
- familiarize learners with minority, dead and modern languages and various scripts
- show that language and culture are closely connected
- offer a means to plurilingual competence and intercultural learning<sup>35</sup> (cf. ‘The FREPA’)
- foster interest in different languages

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<sup>35</sup> [https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Source/Resources/PR\\_material/2012\\_Compendium\\_Intercultural\\_Learning\\_text\\_en.pdf](https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Source/Resources/PR_material/2012_Compendium_Intercultural_Learning_text_en.pdf) (4/8/2017)

- help discover the linguistic diversity of the world

Examples for interlingual creative writing prompts and texts will be provided in the last chapter ‘The Poetry Book Writing Project’).

### **5.3. Interculturality**

The next ‘inter’-concept which will be discussed is ‘interculturality’. The main idea is to use two or more cultures as prompts. First, it will be attempted to define the concept of culture. Building on that, ‘pluri-’, ‘multi-’ and ‘interculturality’ will be explicated. Then, intercultural creative writing will be elaborated on.

#### **5.3.1. Defining Culture**

According to Raymond Williams, culture may be defined as “a general process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development” (1983: 90), “a particular way of life, whether of a people, a period, or a group” (ibid.) and “the works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity”. These three definitions encompass all practices of people that produce meaning. Similarly, Bueno (1996: 362) offers a distinction between two types of culture, culture with a small ‘c’ and culture with a capitalized ‘C’. The first definition refers to “facts having to do with custom, manners, way of life or life-style” and the latter to “the geography, history, literature and great achievements of a country and its people”. This idea of two different types of culture is also referred to with the terms ‘popular culture’ and ‘high culture’. Next to the distinction of these two types of culture, another way of looking into the matter exists, namely the categorization of culture according to its (in)visible and (un)conscious fragments. Schein (1984: 4) distinguishes between three levels of culture, namely (1) ‘artifacts and creations’, which are visible and audible behavior, (2) ‘values’, which people are aware of, and finally (3) ‘basic assumptions’, such as the relationship with the environment, nature, time and people. In contrast to the first level, ‘values’ and ‘basic assumptions’ are not visible, as they manifest themselves in the behavior and beliefs of the respective people. Especially the latter is regarded as normality by the members of a given culture.

Leggewie and Cho-Polizzi (2013: 2) argue that the idea of promoting a “Leitkultur” and insisting of one dominant national culture is far outdated in a globalized world. They view

the concept of interculturality as the coming together of several cultures into one dominant culture, where the “new arrivals” need to assimilate to the culture already present. From this point of view, the way the interspace is created is dictated mainly by one group, instead of being negotiated by all participants. Obviously, the coming together of several cultures destabilizes power relationships and by recognizing other cultures, the dominant culture would have to share power. In earlier times, the notion of ‘the other’ had a more negative connotation than it has today. However, talking of the European Union, one sees the potential of a multicultural supranation, “*without* a concrete, cultural center” (Leggewie and Cho-Polizzi 2013: 2).

### 5.3.2. Pluri-, Multi- and Interculturality

Surprisingly, it has shown difficult to find a definition for ‘multiculturality’, even though several articles have been reviewed. Since the definition of this term plays a minor role in this thesis, a common English dictionary was chosen to “stand in”. The *Merriam Webster* online dictionary offers the definition “of, relating to, reflecting, or adapted to diverse cultures”<sup>36</sup> for the adjective ‘multicultural’; there was no entry for ‘multiculturality’. Furthermore, the *Council of Europe* (Council of Europe, Byram 2009: 6) suggests the following definitions of ‘pluriculturality’ and ‘interculturality’:

‘**Pluriculturality**’ “refers to the capacity to identify with and participate in multiple cultures. [It] does not involve identifying with another cultural group or adopting the cultural practices of the other group” (Council of Europe, Byram 2009: 6)

‘**Interculturality**’ “is the ability to experience another culture and analyse that experience. The intercultural competence acquired from doing this helps individuals to understand cultural difference better, establish cognitive and affective links between past and future experiences of that difference, mediate between members of two (or more) social groups and their cultures, and question the assumptions of their own cultural group and milieu” (Council of Europe: Beacco 2011)

‘Interculturality’, as defined by the *Council of Europe*, can be seen as an active understanding of foreign cultures through reflection. In the context of the NFCW principles, ‘interculturality’ is interpreted differently. Similarly to ‘interlinguality’, ‘interculturality’ represents the interplay of two or more cultures in the context of NFCW.

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<sup>36</sup> <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/multiculturalism> (06/15/2018)

### 5.3.3. Intercultural Creative Writing

Intercultural creative writing employs one or more different cultures as creative writing prompts. As discussed in the sub-chapter 'Defining Culture', many definitions exist to pinpoint this complex concept. In the context of NFCW, the definitions offered by Schein (1984: 4), as mentioned before, will serve as guiding terms.

To design intercultural creative writing prompts, mainly visible, tangible and audible instances of culture are used as source which are called (1) 'artifacts and creations' by Schein (1984: 4). Photographs, books, magazines, art, such as paintings, sculptures, asf., music, instruments, food, clothes, games, asf. – anything that has a material representation of a culture may serve as source of inspiration to create a new text. The list of interlingual creative writing sources may be added. Of course, also the other two levels of culture, namely (2) 'values' and (3) 'basic assumptions' may be turned into creative prompts, however, this might be more complex and time-consuming to do. For instance, a prompt could consist of a story about a person who comes from a certain region or culture, and who finds her-/himself in a specific situation. This situation might be "positive", "neutral" or "negative". The learners may be asked to switch position with the described person and write texts from their perspective (cf. Stillar 2013 in the chapter 'Cultivating Perception'), considering other values and beliefs about life. Especially the latter two levels of culture ((2) 'values' and (3) 'basic assumptions') should be accompanied by awareness-raising activities and critical discussions. This ties in with intercultural learning, as promoted by the *FREPA* (cf. 'The FREPA').

The main objectives of intercultural creative writing prompts are to:

- enhance creativity through the introduction of foreign concepts
- create a void where learners feel the need to say something new

Further goals or relevant "side effects" which may be interesting to look into are to:

- give learners insight into different cultures
- offer a means to plurilingual competence and intercultural learning<sup>37</sup> (cf. 'The FREPA')

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<sup>37</sup> [https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Source/Resources/PR\\_material/2012\\_Compndium\\_Intercultural\\_Learning\\_text\\_en.pdf](https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Source/Resources/PR_material/2012_Compndium_Intercultural_Learning_text_en.pdf) (4/8/2017)

- foster interest in different cultures
- help discover the cultural diversity of the world.

## 5.4. Intertextuality

The next concept of NFCW is 'intertextuality' and focusses on the inclusion of the different types of texts and textual relationships in the creative writing classroom. Beforehand, the general term 'intertextuality' and its various sub-categories will be illuminated. Then, intertextual creative writing will be looked into.

### 5.4.1. Defining Intertextuality

The word 'text' derives from the latin word *textus* which means "style or texture of a work" and "thing woven", similarly, *texere* can be translated as "to weave, to join, fit together, braid, interweave, construct, fabricate, build"<sup>38</sup>. Thus, a text may be seen as a woven fabric, existing of different threads that give the text its unique texture. Each thread contributes to the final tissue, just as each word does to the final text. This imagery illustrates the creation of a text through the interplay of sounds, words and meanings.

According to Grabovszki (2011: 113), intertextuality describes the interrelationship between texts, especially literary texts. It was Julia Kristeva who conceived this term in the 1960s. She states that every (literary) text that is created echoes, imitates, refers to or cites previously written texts in one way or another. This may happen intentionally or unintentionally and implicitly or explicitly. The idea of the original creator of a literary masterpiece is strongly contested by literary studies. Further, as Pope (2006: 131) argues, the majority of texts went through several drafts, and each draft represents a text of its own. Even if new genres and stories are born, the way something is told or described is new and the mosaic of the chosen words is unique, nonetheless, the writers draw from an existing culture and language with a repertoire of genres and texts that have inspired the writer in one way or another (ibid.). Moreover, Grabovszki (2011: 114) adds, texts cross and transcend other texts. Therefore, he argues that world literature is a fabric consisting of all texts that have ever been written. The single oeuvre of an author and the

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<sup>38</sup> <https://www.etymonline.com/word/text> (06/09/2018)

author her-/himself disappears in the network of everything that has ever been said and written.

In his book *Palimpsestes. Literature in the second degree*, Gérard Genette (1982) widened the concepts of 'intertextuality' and defined five types of textual relationships. These five subcategories are denoted with the umbrella term 'transtextuality' (instead of 'intertextuality') and may be defined as the following:

- (1) '**Intertextuality**' describes the presence of a text in another text.
- (2) '**Paratextuality**' includes every text that accompanies the main text, such as title and subtitle, foreword, afterword, etc.
- (3) '**Metatextuality**' is the implicit or explicit commenting of another text.
- (4) '**Hypertextuality**' denotes texts that were created out of another text, the so-called hypotext.
- (5) '**Architextuality**' refers to the relationship between a text and its genre of text.

Usually these five categories do not exist separately from each another. A poetry book, for instance, shows the architextual quality of the genre 'poetry', the paratexts of title, subtitle, foreword, acknowledgments, table of content, blurb, details about the author and imprint. Depending on the subject of the poetry book and the poems, there might be (a) hypotext(s) to which they refer to (cf. Grabovszki 2011: 116; Mirenayat and Soofastaei 2015: 534f).

To conclude, it can be stated that texts are generally interrelated with one another on several possible layers, and that the creation of a genre or text is therefore only partially original. Relating these assumptions to the findings on creativity, one might wonder whether a literary oeuvre may then be considered as creative. Disregarding the interconnectedness with other texts and focusing on the originality of combined words and of newly created meaning in the given writing instead, one may indeed attribute creative qualities to the writer's creation.

#### **5.4.2. Intertextual Creative Writing**

Intertextual creative writing activities focus on the usage of other texts to inspire learners to create new texts. Pommerin (1996: 83), for instance, lists several ideas:

- finding new beginnings, new endings,



- transforming into another text type,
- fragmenting,
- extracting words, phrases or sentences,
- adding drawings, texts or
- creating a collage.

However, in the light of the ‘inter’-concept ‘intertextuality’, not only the inclusion and processing of other texts is encouraged, as specified by Pommerin (ibid.), but also the integration of all forms of ‘transtextuality’, which includes the writing of

- ‘hypertexts’ (e.g. black-out poems, transforming a text into another one)
- ‘metatexts’ (e.g. writing reviews or blog comments of their peers’ writings)
- ‘paratexts’ (e.g. writing a foreword, a blurb, etc. for an anthology)
- ‘intertexts’ (e.g. extracting fragments).

Exploring and trying out various forms of ‘intertextuality’ and text types, students may learn how to effectively use other texts as sources for their creative endeavors as well as write possible complements for their primary creative text. The learners may react to each other’s texts in a creative way, reuse parts of each other’s writing to create a new text or work together on a book writing project. I.e. students do not produce separate pieces of writing but engage into the creation of a woven fabric of interrelated texts.

## **5.5. Intermediality**

The forth ‘inter’-concept is ‘intermediality’ and generally refers to the integration of various media into the creative writing classroom. First, however, a definition of the term ‘intermediality’ will be given as well as an elaboration on various categories of mediality. The findings will then be used to pinpoint the meaning of ‘intermediality’ as employed in the context of NFCW. The last part is dedicated to intermedial creative writing.

### **5.5.1. Defining Intermediality**

Initially, the term ‘intermediality’ was part of ‘intertextuality’, denoting literature that interacts with other media. Grabovski (2011: 157) points out that ‘intermediality’ is the extension of ‘intertextuality’, as the relationship between words and texts is exceeded, or

as Lehtonen (2017:76) phrases it, “intermediality is intertextuality that transgresses media borders”. Nevertheless, due to the many possibilities of combining text with sound and image, especially after the invention of computers and the internet, new concepts were conceived and defined.

Today, the term ‘intermediality’ is used to refer to various phenomena which all involve several media. But what is *inter-media-lity* about and what are these various phenomena? Looking up the meaning of *medium*, one learns that it concerns “a means of effecting or conveying something”, “a mode of artistic expression or communication”, or, used in plural, it refers to “a channel or system of communication, information, or entertainment”<sup>39</sup>. In other words, a medium similarly refers to the signifier’s text, sound and image, as to literature, music and painting (Grabovski 2011: 155). The prefix ‘inter-’, as we have already seen before, denotes the space in-between. Hence, in the context of ‘intermediality’, this represents the interplay of more than one medium, as in, for example, music and literature, dance and film, computer and literature or radio and text (ibid.). To give a practical example, one may think of an artist who may choose several forms of conveying her/his ideas and inspirations to the public. This might be through the medium of a book, a song or a canvas. If the artist opts for several media to channel her/his creativity, for instance by adding photographs to the book, or by creating a dance to accompany the song, this is called ‘intermediality’ – the relationship between different media.

### **5.5.2. Categorizing Mediality**

Furthermore, when more media are chosen, they influence each other due to their different characteristics. The interplay of several media creates a “creative void” and allows for new conceptualizations. Grabovski (2011: 156, free translation) calls this a “fruitful interrelation of the arts”. This creative coalescence may be the result of various ways of how media interrelate. Next to ‘intermediality’, Kattenbelt (2008: 20f) identifies two other concepts, namely ‘multimediality’ and ‘transmediality’. His detailed and thorough definitions are depicted as follows (Kattenbelt 2008: 20f):

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<sup>39</sup> <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/medium> (2/18/2018)

**‘Intermediality’** “refers to the co-relation of media in the sense of mutual influences between media. [It] assumes an in-between space – “an inter” – from which or within which the mutual affects take place”

**‘Transmediality’** “refers to the transfer [transposition, translation, etc.] from one medium to another medium (media change). [...] This transfer may apply to the content (to what is represented, the story) or to the form (in formalistic terms[:] the principles of construction, stylistic procedures and aesthetic conventions)”

**‘Multimediality’** “refers to the occurrence where there are many media in one and the same object. [It] is used at two different levels: the level of sign systems (word, image, sound) and [...] the level of different disciplines as distinguished as different (institutionalized) cultural action domains or practices (literature, visual arts, music, theatre, film, television, video, internet etc)”

Consequently, ‘intermediality’ is not a simple interplay of several media, but a complex interrelation of media in several layers. Furthermore, this type of categorization as portrayed by Kattenbelt (2008: 20f) is not the only one: Zemanek (2012: 168f), for example, distinguishes ‘intermediality’ from ‘transmediality’ in a different way. He believes that ‘intermediality’ is concerned with media alluding to and engaging with one another, while ‘transmediality’ refers to the similarities of characteristics that overarch different media without imitating or thematizing each other, for example in style or form of expression. The prefix ‘trans-’ describes the commonalities that go “across, beyond, through”<sup>40</sup>. In addition, Zemanek (2012: 168) employs the term ‘plurimediality’ instead of ‘multimediality’, however, it refers to the same concept – the usage of several media within one oeuvre.

Apart from the differing definitions, Zemanek (2012: 168f) identifies three subcategories of ‘intermediality’, independent from the two other concepts ‘transmediality’ and ‘plurimediality’. The definitions overlap with the ones provided by Kattenbelt (2008: 20f) for ‘trans-’ and ‘multimediality’. The three subcategories are

(1) **‘intermedial references’**, the thematizing or imitation of another media with only one media being “tangible”,

(2) **‘intermedial change’** where one phenomena present in one medium is translated into another medium, and

(3) **‘intermedial combination’**, where two distinct media are merged, sometimes creating a new genre. For instance, comic, song or opera, or more recently a blog or a vlog (video blog) (Zemanek 2012: 168f).

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<sup>40</sup> <https://www.etymonline.com/word/trans-> (1/17/2018)

These concepts complement and transgress rather than exclude each other. As can be taken from the above explanations, the definitions of 'intermediality', 'transmediality' and 'multi-'/plurimediality' vary and their boundaries are blurred. As a matter of fact, given the pervasive character of 'intermediality' and its adjacent and further explicating terms, "some of the later research of intermediality argues that intermediality may be omnipresent, questioning the existence of boundaries between single media" (free translation of Zemanek 2012: 167f). Assuming this, "all texts are intermedial and intertextual" (free translation of Zemanek 2012: 167f).

Indeed, discussing media and intermediality has become increasingly important in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the age of digital media, where the contemporary culture has become highly mediatized (Kattenbelt 2008: 20). Raessens (2001 as cited in Kattenbelt 2008: 20) says that it is multimodality that "in interaction with the features of virtuality, interactivity and connectivity constitute[s] the specificity of digital media". According to Tötösy de Zepetnek et al. (2011: 5), "intermediality [on a global digital scale] raises a number of issues that include social and cultural practices, education, aspects of globalization and the cultural industries". This is why, they argue, 'intermediality' of today cannot be separated from critical media analysis/critical literacy, which constitutes the ability "to read and write critically across varied symbol systems" (ibid.). The reason for this is that all information which is put online might already be or will be at some point in its existence in the web related to other sources. Once a text, a song or a video, asf. is shared online, a wave of reactions and responses is triggered with no controllable outcome. In this vast sea of information, sources easily get lost or intentionally hidden. The issues of "copyright, open access publishing, media literacy, knowledge management, the preservation of heritage and national objectives of cultural co-operation" hence arise (Chappel 2008: 10; Tötösy de Zepetnek et al. 2011: 10). There have been several attempts to tackle these new challenges, as for instance peer-reviewed online articles in academia, but an overall global solution has not been found yet. Facing these changes, the question ultimately arises of how schools can adapt to prepare the next generation for the digital age. López-Varela and Törösy (2008: 75) find that curriculum changes in education systems around the world are inevitable, as the concept of learning and teaching has radically changed. Given the fact that digital media and 'intermediality' do not only entail the interplay of

various (new) media, but also the co-existence, mixing and merging of different cultures and languages, the integration of subjects on 'intermediality' and media literacy complements intercultural learning and the learning of and about other languages (cf. the previous two chapters).

### **5.5.3. Intermedial Creative Writing**

Taking the many categories of intermediality into account, 'intermediality' in the light of NFCW acknowledges the interplay of various media in the arts and the digital age and aims at integrating other media in the creative writing classroom. This may be as a source for prompts, as a complement to the creative text or a means to share and distribute the creative work of the learners.

Intermedial creative writing thus focusses on

- (enhancing creativity through) the integration of various media into the creative writing classroom
- the usage of different media as prompts for creative writing
- the combination of two or more media to create a multimedial oeuvre
- the distribution of written texts through various media, e.g. books, blogs, internet, photocollages with texts, documentaries, radio drama, etc.
- critical media literacy

Each medium appeals to one or more senses in a different way. The gained impressions and triggered reflections may be channeled into creative texts. The media used may be a theater play, a documentary, a dance performance, a photocollage, a radio drama, asf. The final texts of students may be enacted, turned into a video clip or a song, for instance. Learners shall realize that the creative process does not have to end with the final draft of a text, as the text may refer to, be translated into or combined with other media (cf. Zemanek 2012: 168f) in many creative ways. Also, through the integration of media into creative writing, students may learn how to translate medial expressions into written words and vice versa.

## 5.6. Intersensuality

The fifth principle of NFCW is ‘intersensuality’. As explained in earlier chapters (‘What is Creative Writing?’, ‘Teaching Poetry Writing in the EFL Classroom’), the craft of writing also involves perception skills, the expressing of feelings and thoughts and the describing of experiences. The concept of ‘intersensuality’, thus, concerns the inclusion of the five human senses hearing, sight, touch, smell and taste, as well as feelings and perceptions into creative writing.

The focus on the aforementioned notions seems even more critical in an era of digitalization. As a matter of fact, hours per day spent in front of a screen have increased, smartphones have become constant companions and social media a popular means of communication for many people. Even though the new media are a valuable tool to connect people from around the globe, facilitate the distribution of and access to knowledge, organize various events, share creative ideas and personal experiences, it seems important to *re-learn* the value of experiences which are not instantly mediatized, documented and shared.

Through focusing on our senses, we experience our self and the present moment in a richer and deeper way. Therefore, I believe that the concept of ‘intersensuality’ forms a relevant approach to creative writing, as all five senses are given attention and are used as sources of inspiration. The idea of addressing the senses and cultivate one’s perception to write creatively is not new. What is novel, however, is the importance attributed to their exploration and integration into creative writing.

### 5.6.1. Intersensual Creative Writing

Intersensual creative writing activities aim at fostering creativity and at having learners

- reconnect with their body and their self
- experience each of their five senses in a conscious way
- refine perception skills
- experience the present moment
- explore their inner world
- discover the outer world

- redirect their attention from the state of 'doing' to the state of 'being' and 'feeling'

Intersensual prompts may include beverages, food, scents, sculptures, music or any type of objects. Everything that may be looked at, listened to, tasted, smelled or felt may trigger feelings, memories, mental pictures and ideas which may be translated into a creative text. It is not enough, however, to merely present the prompts to the learners, they need to be guided with the help of pre-writing activities (cf. chapter 'Pre-Writing Activities').

## 5.7. Summarizing Words

To briefly summarize the five chosen principles, one might say that 'interlinguality' concerns the usage of instances of different languages as writing prompts or part of the text. 'Interculturality' deals with the inclusion of other cultures into the writing. 'Intertextuality' primarily concerns the inspiration that is drawn from other texts which might serve as prompts or might be "recycled" in new texts. 'Intermediality' refers to the implementation of various media into the creative writing classroom and 'intersensuality' aims at addressing and including the senses into the writing of texts. Even though it was attempted to give a thorough understanding of these five 'inter'-concepts, there is definitely room for further exploration. Especially as regards creative writing material, it would be interesting to come up with more concrete ideas and try them out with learners.

There are also other 'inter'-concepts I have thought of including, namely 'intergenerationality', 'interdisciplinarity' and 'interreligiousness'. The term 'intergenerationality' would have discussed how fruitful crossing points are when people of a different age meet and exchange thoughts, ideas, feelings and experiences. In creative writing, learners may write texts together with people of various age groups, switch perception and imagine being older or younger, or fantasize about how their life might be or could have been ten, twenty or thirty years from today. 'Interdisciplinarity' would have dealt with the creative exchange between different disciplines, and 'interreligiousness' with the insights and inspirations other beliefs have to offer to our understanding of the world. Due to the limiting scope of this thesis, however, they had to be dismissed. Nevertheless, I think their exploration bears just as much potential to enrich

creative writing pedagogy as the presented five principles. The concepts of 'interreligiousness' and 'multi-/interculturality' are celebrated in the school (although not in the context of creative writing) where the creative writing project was launched. Their pedagogical implementation will be described in detail in the practical part of the thesis.

In general, it is important to emphasize that the 'inter'-concepts ought to be combined rather than employed separately. Ideally, one or two principles are chosen as leads, and the others are used to complement them. In the following and last part of this thesis, the PBWP will be presented and discussed. 'Interculturality' and 'interlinguality' were used as the guiding principles with the overall topic 'Japanese Culture and Language', while the other three principles were integrated in a less dominant way.



## **6. The Poetry Book Writing Project**

In this last section of the thesis, I will present and discuss the PBWP which was launched in an upper secondary school located in Vienna, Austria. First, I will outline the planning process, followed by an explanation of the objectives of the project. Then, I will give a description of the school and the participants, followed by an explication of the four lessons and the designed creative writing activities. Finally, I will present and discuss the results and offer ideas for improvements.

### **6.1. Planning the Project**

At early planning stages, my main concern was to try as many different writing activities as possible. Especially because the NFCW principles had strongly inspired me in the creation of diverse prompts. These prompts included various languages, scripts, cultures, text types and media. Therefore, I had envisaged the launching of a one- or two-days creative writing workshop to put into practice the vast panoply of material. Yet, the idea of a workshop had to quickly be abandoned due to organizational challenges, such as finding participants with a similar language level and age, as well as an affordable and suitable location. After having considered various options, I eventually settled with the offer of a student colleague of mine who was already teaching at the time. She generously made four hours available for my writing project in one of her classes. Furthermore, in order to have an additional group and a greater variety of outcomes, I was trying to reach out to international schools located in Vienna. Unfortunately, my attempts were in vain. I thus decided to concentrate on the school from which I had received a positive answer.

Having found a concrete target group and four school lessons of 50 minutes at my disposal, a more detailed planning of the lessons and activities became possible. As stated before, the material designed for the workshop was highly diverse in its variety of languages, cultures, texts, media and involved senses, as I had included all five principles of NFCW. However, this rich assortment had to be downsized to fit the time frame of the four school lessons which meant that some NFCW principles as well as activities had to be eliminated. This proved difficult as I was still looking for an overarching topic for the project to run through all activities and lessons as a central thread at this stage. I therefore

decided to schedule an appointment with the colleague teacher to briefly acquaint myself with the students, with the aim of finding an idea for the central topic. I observed one English lesson and talked with the class during the last five minutes. I found out that sometime after the scheduled creative writing lessons, a collaborative project with a twinned Japanese school was going to take place. This meant that they were going to meet Japanese (native) speakers: exchange students and teachers from Japan. This piece of information, the fact that none of the students knew Japanese and that I had studied Japanese for one year at the *University of Vienna* inspired me to appoint 'Japanese Culture and Language' as a book writing topic.

With this choice, the project began to form a coherent whole. Still, when redefining the objectives of the lessons and selecting the writing activities, I faced another issue: the one of genre. Four lessons are not a lot of time to begin with, especially when it comes to (creative) writing. Initially, I had planned several activities which included the writing of two poems, a song, a letter and a script for a TV series. However, I soon realized that introducing too many different text types would be time-consuming, confusing and less productive. It seemed better to focus on one text type rather than having students write many different ones. Hence, I chose to focus on poetry as it has many advantages when teaching creative writing (cf. 'Teaching Poetry Writing in the EFL Classroom'). Finally, I write poetry myself.

Retrospectively, the choice of topic and genre seems obvious. However, many weeks, several drafts and various resolutions were needed. Multiple times, objectives had to be redefined and reformulated and lesson plans revised and adapted, the latter to the point of complete renewal. Further, the amount of activities had to be drastically downsized and modified to suit the topic 'Japanese Culture and Language'.

Finally, the reason why I decided to conduct a project instead of teaching three or four independent lessons is that projects have several advantages. According to Sciamarelli (2015: 104), they are

- cooperative, motivating and student-centered
- allow for collaboration as well as individual learning
- have real-world subject matter

- have an end-product that can be shared
- stimulate creativity and cognitive abilities
- enhance autonomy
- are personally meaningful to the learners

These characteristics strongly align with creativity-enhancing elements (cf. ‘Implications of Fostering Creativity in Schools’).

To sum up, the PBWP has

- poetry as its text type,
- ‘interlinguality’ and ‘interculturality’ as its two guiding ‘inter’-concepts of NFCW,
- ‘Japanese Culture and Language’ as its central topic,
- the project approach as its overall structure and
- four school lessons of 50 minutes available.

## 6.2. Aims and Objectives of the Project

The overall goal of the PBWP is to implement the theoretical insights gained through the extensive literature review on creativity and creative writing while trying out some of the NFCW concepts. The overall objectives of the project concerns EFL (language), creativity (approach), writing (language competence), poetry (form) and ‘Japanese Culture and Language’ (topic).

The main goals relate to the implementation of creativity-enhancing activities and methods, as discussed in the chapters ‘Pillars of Creativity in ELT’ and ‘Implications of Teaching Creative Writing in the EFL Classroom’: In order to establish an **environment of trust** and learn the names of the students, ice-breaking activities and **improvisational theater games** will be used at the beginning and at the ending of the project. I find this particularly important given the fact that the learners neither know me as a person nor the way I am going to teach. It is highly valuable to create a positive atmosphere as students feel more secure to give original responses, try out new things, play with language and make ‘mistakes’ (cf. Gilbert 2016: 261). Additionally, **inspirational content**

about Japanese culture and language will be provided through power point slides (cf. appendix B: 'Power Point Slides', attached CD) to serve as creative context (cf. Csikszentmihalyi 1996: 27f). This topic as well as the genre 'poetry' will form the necessary **constraints** to inspire and guide the learners (cf. Coe 2015: 65). No further grammatical restrictions will be introduced as I rather have the learners focus on fluency and creativity. By implementing the NFCW principles '**interlinguality**' and '**interculturality**' into the creation of the creative writing activities, the students also learn something about Japanese language, its three writing scripts (*hiragana*, *katakana*, *kanji*), its sounds and appearance. They will experience Japanese poetry (*haiku*, *tanka*, *renku*), learn about the well-known Japanese writer *Haruki Murakami* and discover some beautiful places typical for Japan (*sakura* – cherry blossoming, hot springs – *onsen*, the mountain *fuji-san* and *Tokyo* by night). The experience will be reinforced through the usage of the medium music, a literary text, and the inclusion of the five senses (cf. 'intertextuality', 'intermediality' and 'intersensuality'). Subsequently, before the students will be given the creative prompts, each poem will be **modeled** by an uncomplicated, short self-written text and projected on the wall. The poems to be used as model texts are intentionally simple to not discourage the learners with too complex poetic language or style given the fact that they are "beginner poets". I will also include in-between steps to demonstrate the several drafts a final text usually requires (cf. Anderson 2006: 21; Pope 2006: 130). This gives learners further guidance and confidence to creatively express their own thoughts. After modeling the poems, I will introduce the creative writing prompts and will make sure to provide **extensive pre-writing phases** where learners will be given the possibility to generate many ideas and exchange thoughts with their peers. The gathered ideas will serve as a rich basis to draw from in their writing (cf. Gilbert 2016: 259; Smith and Wrigley 2012: 80). Another objective is to encourage **social learning and co-creative writing** through the alternation of individual, pair and group work during both the pre-writing as well as the writing phases. Through collaborative idea-generation and writing, students share their knowledge, train their communicative competence, expand their creative thinking abilities and receive instant feedback from their peers (cf. Liebnau 1995: 9). At the end of the project, students will be given the opportunity to share their creative products with their peers in the poetry reading and through the printed book (cf. Holmes and Moulton 2001: 6; Vanderslice 2006: 149). This provides a **real audience and real-life**

**purpose.** Due to the limited scope of this project, the final phases of writing, namely creative rewriting, correction and assessment have to be neglected.

Other objectives concern the teaching of poetry. Students shall learn three basic **literary devices**, namely alliteration, assonance and repetition. Also, they will be acquainted with **various types of poetry**, among others traditional Japanese poetry, visual poetry, interlingual poetry, Gibberish poetry and song writing. In order to assist them in **writing** their first poems, creative pre-writing activities, such as brainstorming, improvisational theater and mind-traveling, will be used.

As far as the **content** is concerned, students will be familiarized with the three Japanese writing scripts, one famous Japanese song, the book of a well-known Japanese author, symbols and beautiful places of Japan and some untranslatable Japanese words. Hence, the overall objective is to give the learners some basic insights into Japanese culture and language and include basics of plurilingual and intercultural learning into the creative writing classroom through the implementation of the two concepts ‘interlinguality’ and ‘interculturality’.

Finally, the creative poetry writing prompts ought to encourage the students to creatively **explore their (poetry) writing abilities** in English and train their **fluency** according to the level B1. There are no objectives neither for learning any language items nor for accuracy.

Since the *CEFR* and the *curriculum for living foreign languages in Austrian upper secondary schools* highlight the relevance and importance of creativity, creative writing, intercultural learning and learning of various text types, among others also poetry, it can be stated that the objectives of the PBWP align with the given frameworks in several aspects (cf. chapter ‘Writing as a Productive Competence’).

## 6.3. The Setting

### 6.3.1. The School

The project was carried out in the *Schulzentrum Friesgasse*<sup>41</sup> located in the 15<sup>th</sup> district of Vienna, Austria, a Catholic private educational institution with public status. The *School*

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<sup>41</sup> <http://www.schulefriesgasse.ac.at/> (05/02/2018)

*Sisters of Notre Dame* are the financial providers<sup>42</sup>. The institution comprises a kindergarten, a primary school, a secondary school, a gymnasium, a three-year business school and an after-school care center. The institution is currently attended by approximately 1400 children.

As stated on their official website, religious education is highly valued. Even though the *Schulzentrum Friesgasse* is a Catholic school and the emphasis therefore is on the teaching of Catholicism, any other religious belief is equally welcome. All students, however, are obliged to attend religious courses in their respective religion. Along the corridors of the school building, the word 'peace' is written in many different languages. This highlights the school's positive and open-minded attitude towards cultural, religious and linguistic diversity. At the beginning and end of the year, a multicultural ceremony to solemnly start and end the given school year is held, and once a year, a seminar about peace is organized and carried out across school types and classes. Indeed, peace is a central value of the institution, which is also portrayed in the mission statement of the school:

The pedagogy of peace is one of the focal points of our school. We consider internationality and diversity as enrichment and value exchange with people of other countries and cultures.<sup>43</sup>

Mag.<sup>a</sup> Maria Schelkshorn-Magas, the head of the educational institution Friesgasse, underlines this aspect during a telephone call, where she speaks up for a school environment where "everybody is welcome just the way she or he is"<sup>44</sup>.

What is noteworthy at this point is the fact that the fifteenth district in Vienna is known as one of the particularly culturally and linguistically diverse districts. Approximately a third of Vienna's population has a migration background<sup>45</sup>, and according to a data collection conducted by the Austrian government, this applies for 47% of the people living

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<sup>42</sup> As cited on their website: „Schulerhalter ist der Verein Schulverbund SSND Österreich/Schulschwestern Notre Dame“, <http://ahs.schulefriesgasse.ac.at/schulprofil-0> (05/02/2018)

<sup>43</sup> As cited on their website: "Ein Schwerpunkt unserer Schulentwicklung ist die Friedenspädagogik. Wir sehen Internationalität und Verschiedenheit als Bereicherung an und schätzen den Austausch mit Menschen aus anderen Ländern und Kulturen", <http://ahs.schulefriesgasse.ac.at/schulprofil-0> (05/04/2018)

<sup>44</sup> As mentioned by Mag.<sup>a</sup> Maria Schelkshorn-Magas in the telephone call of May 2, 2018: "Jeder hat das recht hier zu sein, so wie sie oder er eben ist" (05/02/2018)

<sup>45</sup> According to "Vienna – Focus on Districts – Statistics and Operating Figures" ("Wien – Bezirke im Fokus – Statistiken und Kennzahlen"), statistical data provided by the Austrian government. <https://www.wien.gv.at/statistik/pdf/bezirke-im-fokus-1-23.pdf> (05/02/2018)

in the fifteenth district<sup>46</sup>. After a significant decrease of 31% of the population in the aforesaid district between 1961 and 2001, a continuous increase has been measured until today. In the school year 2017/18, 49 different native tongues were represented in the educational institution Friesgasse. This cultural and linguistic diversity portrays the relevance of addressing and discussing other cultures and languages in school.

On their webpage<sup>47</sup>, one may find detailed information on how they promote peace in a culturally, linguistically and ethnically highly diverse environment, which may be found under the umbrella term *make:peace!*. A buddy system called *be:buddy* assists newcomers in orienting themselves in their new school, peer-mentoring and peer-teaching allow students to rely on each other for help, and the elective subject 'conflict management', where students receive theoretical and practical anti-violence trainings. The students who participate in mediation trainings subsequently take on the role of mediators in their class and immediate surrounding in case of conflict. Naturally, severe conflicts are taken to the respective teachers, also trained in mediation. The overall idea behind these various peer trainings is to foster a community where regardless of age, gender, religion, language or ethnicity students assist each other in learning and growing. In addition to the focus on peace-enhancing pedagogy, international student exchange and numerous festivals, projects and workshops dedicated to religious and cultural diversity are organized. A number of years ago, for instance, the project called "Culture of Recognition"<sup>48</sup> was organized in collaboration with the *University of Vienna*. Pupils worked together with university students and put themselves into the role of scientists, researching the manifold cultural backgrounds of their peers at school. Moreover, the institution encourages language holidays and student exchange, mainly to Russia, France and the U.S., where twinned *SSND (School Sisters of Notre Dame)* schools<sup>49</sup> are situated. This year, a class of a twinned school located in Kyoto, Japan, visited the gymnasium Friesgasse. The students of both respective schools discussed several UN topics in small

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<sup>46</sup> According to "Annual Book of Statistics – Migration and Integration 2017" (Statistisches Jahrbuch – Migration und Integration 2017"), provided by "Statistics Austria" ("Statistik Austria").

file:///C:/Users/Vera%20Privat/Desktop/Statistisches\_Jahrbuch\_migration\_integration\_2017.pdf (05/02/2018)

<sup>47</sup> [http://www.schulefriesgasse.ac.at/lernunterstuetzung-hak\(05/02/2018\)](http://www.schulefriesgasse.ac.at/lernunterstuetzung-hak(05/02/2018))

<sup>48</sup> As mentioned by Mag.<sup>a</sup> Maria Schelkshorn-Magas in the telephone call of May 2, 2018: "Kultur der Anerkennung"

<sup>49</sup> In the gymnasium, the languages English, French and Russian are offered as foreign languages.

groups and formulated twelve concrete steps on “How to save the planet”<sup>50</sup>. It was also this Japanese students’ visit that inspired the topic of the PBWP.

As can be taken from above, the educational institution Friesgasse offers rich educational opportunities to respond to the cultural and religious diversity reigning at its schools. Yet, when inquiring about projects dealing with the linguistic diversity of students, there was only the annually celebrated “Day of Language Diversity”<sup>51</sup>. Within this event, some volunteering students prepare so-called language crash courses in their native tongues. Their peers and regular teachers function as their students and receive rudimentary knowledge about the given language. However, this feast is only celebrated in one school, the three-year vocational school HAS, and not a collaboration of all schools, as it is the case with the annual peace project, for example. Finally, a library provides students with about 11.000 media options including several magazines in the taught languages, namely *Spotlight* for English, *Adesso* for Italian, *Écoute* for French, *Po Swetu* and *Wostok* for Russian. There are no magazines or books in other foreign languages.

As far as the gymnasium is concerned (where I held the PBWP), hardly any special attention is paid to the students’ linguistic diversity. Next to English as a first foreign language, French, Russian and Latin as second and third foreign languages and Italian as elective subject are offered. However, no other languages that are spoken by students are included in the curriculum (for instance, Bosnian/Serbian/Croatian, Turkish or Arabic). When asking the headmaster of the gymnasium Mag.<sup>a</sup> Weindl<sup>52</sup> for information about subjects, programs or projects dealing with the pupils’ linguistic plurality, she explained that the potential was obvious but no further budget was available to cover emerging costs. She argued in favor of the multicultural and multireligious projects and the peace-enhancing pedagogy which are all highly promoted by the institution. These programs are considered to be more significant for the overarching goal of living in a peaceful community (and society) than learning each other’s languages. Furthermore, the speaking of already two (or sometimes three) native tongues, she added, would frequently bring about challenges in text comprehension, especially concerning mathematics. This is why

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<sup>50</sup> <http://ahs.schulefriesgasse.ac.at/once-lifetime-experience> (05/04/2018)

<sup>51</sup> As mentioned by Mag.<sup>a</sup> Maria Schelkshorn-Magas in the telephone call of May 2, 2018: “Tag der Sprachenvielfalt”

<sup>52</sup> As stated by Mag.<sup>a</sup> Weindl in the telephone call of May 2, 2018



several teachers had been schooled in teaching text comprehension to assist students with difficulties in understanding texts in German. The learning of other languages than the ones already included in the curriculum were neither intended nor budgeted.

In general, the institution's efforts to include every student regardless of her/his social, cultural, religious or linguistic background are considerable and exemplary. The fact that there are almost no activities or facilities offered to the students to explore, learn and teach their second (or third) mother tongue(s) seems like underused potential. Interlingual and/or intercultural creative writing might be one possibility to address the need for the inclusion of cultural and linguistic diversity.

### **6.3.2. The Participants**

The PBWP was held in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade of the gymnasium. I taught half of the class, which means thirteen students of the whole class of 27<sup>53</sup>. Of these 13 students, ten had a second native language, two had "only" German as their native tongue and one was an exchange student from Great Britain whose native language was English. One of the students had lived until recently in London, Great Britain, and another student's family had lived in several countries due to the father's international profession. The other native languages spoken by the students were, among others, Bosnian, Turkish, English, Chinese and Urdu. As regards the age, all students were either 16 or 17 years old, except for one who was 20 due to having repeated a year four times. Their regular English teacher described the students as fairly good English users and rather calm during the lessons.

### **6.4. Lessons and Activities<sup>54</sup>**

This part discusses the four lessons and the respective activities. For more detail, the lesson plan, power point slides and handouts may be consulted (see appendix A: 'Lesson Plans and Handouts' and appendix B: Power Point Presentations'/attached CD).

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<sup>53</sup> In Austrian public schools, classes comprised of more than ~25 students are divided into two groups for the language courses; living languages maximum 25 students, dead languages maximum 28 as a rule of thumb. <http://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=10009511&ShowPrintPreview=True> (05/04/2018)

<sup>54</sup> see appendix A: 'Lesson Plans and Handouts', and appendix B: 'Power Point Presentations'/attached CD

### 6.4.1. Overview

1 <sup>st</sup> lesson		
Type of Activity	Name of Activity	Handouts
PWA	“Creation of a Pseudonym”	X
IT	“Picking Up Game – Creation of a Pseudonym”	X
IT	“Pfterkartulu?frij - Talking Gibberish”	X
CW	Interlingual Poetry – “Japanese Gibberish Poem”	“Hiragana Chart”
2 <sup>nd</sup> lesson		
Type of Activity	Name of Activity	Handouts
PWA	Guiding Questions	“Interlingual Song Writing – Guiding Questions”
CW	Interlingual Song Writing – “Kyu Sakamoto rewritten”	“Interlingual Song Writing”
PWA	Mind-traveling	“Perception Training”
CW	Photograph Poetry – “Pretty Pictures and Precious Poems”	“Photograph Poem”
3 <sup>rd</sup> lesson		
Type of Activity	Name of Activity	Handout
CW	Black-out Poetry – “Black-out Murakami”	“Extract for black-out poetry” “Black-out poem”
CW	Shape Poetry – “Shapeshifting Japan”	“Shape poem”
CW	Interlingual Poetry/Acrostic Poetry – “Beautiful Japanese Words”	“Beautiful Japanese Words” “Acrostic Poem”
4 <sup>th</sup> lesson		
Type of Activity	Type of Activity	Handouts
IT	Oral Poetry – “ImpRenku”	X
	Poetry Reading	X

*Figure 11: Overview of lessons and activities*

### 6.4.2. 1<sup>st</sup> Lesson

The first lesson consists of two parts: first, three getting-to-know-each-other games called **“Creation of a Pseudonym”**, (IT) **“Pick Up Game”** and (IT) **“Pfterkartulu?frij – Talking Gibberish”** and second, the creative writing part with the activity called (CW) **“Japanese Gibberish Poem”**. The getting-to-know-each-other games serve as ice-breakers and

warm-up activities. This is also the phase where I have the chance to quickly and effortlessly learn the students' names. I consider knowing the names of the students as an important sign of interest and respect. Additionally, it helps to establish a relationship no matter how short the time spent together may be.

The first activity **(IT) "Creation of a Pseudonym"** adds to the atmosphere of writing a book, as some authors use a pen name rather than their real name. The pseudonyms will be created with a literary device – an alliteration. This will be their first stylistic device to be used in class. I tell them to think of a positive adjective that alliterates with their first name, for instance, "Hilarious Helene" or "Dazzling Dimitry".

The follow-up activity is an improvisational theater game called **(IT) "Pick Up Game"**. This serves the purpose of getting to know each other's (pen) names and of breaking the ice between the students and me, their guest teacher. Especially if the group does not know each other, this type of improvisational theater game helps to bring people closer through physical movement and joking. Before the game starts, everyone says aloud one's pseudonyms so that the others can hear it. Then, the students call out each other's pen name and swap places.

A short while later, about three to four minutes, I stop the activity and announce the new improvisational theater game called **(IT) "Pferkartulu?frij – Talking Gibberish"**. I say, for example, "Turkish" and start to imitate Turkish speech: the melody of the language, the sounds that occur very often, like /ø/ or /y/ (German 'ö' or 'ü') and the body language. I tell the students to walk around in class, "greet" each other and "make small talk" in the announced language. Thereon, I call out the first language and walk around with them in class, "greeting" and "meeting" the students in Gibberish for approximately 30 seconds. This is repeated about four to five times with different languages. The languages could be ones some of the students might know or speak, or ones that seem more "exotic", like Malagasy, Berber or Khmer.

After the game (IT) “Pfterkartulu?frij – Talking Gibberish”, I tell the students to get back to their seats. What follows is “**Japan Intro**”, an introduction to Japanese language and Japanese culture. Before showing them some power point slides, I inquire about their already existing knowledge and encourage them to share the stereotypes they possibly have about Japan. Then, the students will discover the three Japanese writing scripts *hiragana*, *katakana* and *kanji*. The first two are syllabic scripts which means that one sign represents one syllable, for instance す /su/. Subsequently, I introduce the two famous Japanese poetry forms *haiku* and *tanka* (see figure 12 “Example of a *tanka*”).

### PRINCESS SHIKISHI NAISHINNŌ (?-1201)

いにしへも	inishie mo	As in ancient times,
斯かりき心	kakariki kokoro	my heart in pain
いたむとき	itamu toki	becomes a huge white bird
大白鳥と	ōshiratori to	and mounts the sky
なりて空行く	narite sora yuku	

Figure 12: Example of a *tanka*

After the introduction, the students will write their first poem (CW) “**Japanese Gibberish Poem**”, using the **handout “Hiragana Chart”** as prompt (see figure 13 “Hiragana chart”).

Hiragana Chart

ん	わ	ら	や	ま	は	な	た	さ	か	あ
n	wa	ra	ya	ma	ha	na	ta	sa	ka	a
		り		み	ひ	に	ち	し	き	い
		ri		mi	hi	ni	chi	shi	ki	i
		る	ゆ	む	ふ	ぬ	つ	す	く	う
		ru	yu	mu	fu	nu	tsu	su	ku	u
		れ		め	へ	ね	て	せ	け	え
		re		me	he	ne	te	se	ke	e
	を	ろ	よ	も	ほ	の	と	そ	こ	お
	(w)o	ro	yo	mo	ho	no	to	so	ko	o

Figure 13: Hiragana chart

The students are asked to write a *tanka* poem with Japanese syllables. The aim of this activity is to raise awareness of and sensitize them for the effects language has on its reader, speaker and listener. Poetry powerfully plays with the use of sounds and words to

create a certain image or feeling. As the students do not speak Japanese, they can experiment with language in a playful way while fully focusing on the forms, videlicet the poetry form *tanka*, the foreign writing script *hiragana*, the Japanese “syllables” called *morae*, and the specific sounds and literary devices (here alliteration, assonance and repetition).

First, I model the activity through reading aloud a self-written *Japanese Gibberish poem* and through showing the poem on a slide on which I added further instructions for the writing activity. I point out two other literary devices, namely assonance and repetition, each presented with a colored example in the *Japanese Gibberish poem*. Then, I prompt the students to form pairs or groups of three. The reason for not having them write the poem on their own is in order to have them utter the *Hiragana morae* aloud, so that they speak and listen to the sounds of the syllables and how they rhyme instead of reading them in silence.

Finally, I ask the students to read aloud their poems and listen to the created patterns and rhythms. At home, the students may “translate” their Gibberish poem, interpreting the mood that was created with the sounds. They may also translate the poem with the help of an online translation website and see the surprising outcome, as in Japanese, one *mora* has many different meanings and stringing together random *morae* may create meaningful words and phrases.

#### 6.4.3. 2<sup>nd</sup> Lesson

In the second lesson the students write lyrics to the song *Ue o muite arukou* 上を向いて歩こう of *Kyu Sakamoto* 坂本九. The name of the activity is **(CW) “Interlingual Song Writing”**. The song was an internationally best-selling single produced in the early 60s and served as a political statement against a security treaty stipulated between the U.S. and Japan. The melody of the song is joyful and lighthearted, whereas the text is sad and melancholic. The first lines of the lyrics translate as follows:

*“I look up when I walk  
So the tears won’t fall down  
Remembering those spring days  
But tonight I’m all alone”*

JAPANESE LYRICS:	TRANSCRIPTED:	YOUR TEXT
上を向いて歩こう	Ue o muite arukou	.....
涙がこぼれないように	Namida ga kobore nai you ni	.....
思い出す春の日	Omoi dasu haru no hi	.....
一人ぼっちの夜	Hitoribotchi no yoru	.....
上を向いて歩こう	Ue o muite arukou	.....
にじんだ星を数えて	Nijinda hoshi o kazoete	.....
思い出す夏の日	Omoidasu natsu no hi	.....
一人ぼっちの夜	Hitoribotchi no yoru	.....
幸せは雲の上に	Shiawase wa kumo no ue ni	.....
幸せは空の上に	Shiawase wa sora no ue ni	.....

Figure 15: Extract of the song 'Ue o muite arukou' of Kyu Sakamoto

Before listening to the song, I distribute the **handout “Interlingual Song Writing”**. As can be taken from figure 14 “Extract of the song *Ue o muite arukou* of *Kyu Sakamoto*”, I included two versions of the lyrics: the Japanese original as well as a transcribed version. Through the original script the students see how Japanese language and its three scripts look like, and through the transcribed version they are able to read the lyrics. They discover that one sign does not represent one *mora*. I ask the learners to skim through the texts and highlight alliterations, assonances and repetitions in the transcribed version of the original. After briefly comparing the results, I invite the students to close their eyes and relax, and start playing the song on *youtube*. In the meantime, I distribute the **handout “Interlingual Song Writing – Guiding Questions”**, see figure 15 “Interlingual Song Writing – Guiding Questions”.

#### Interlingual Song Writing

1. How does the **music/singer/language** sound like?
2. Which **mood** does the song convey?
3. How does the song make you **feel**?
4. What does the song make you **think of**?

Figure 14: Interlingual Song Writing – Guiding Questions

The guiding questions shall help the learners focus on their perception – what the song makes them feel like and what it triggers (e.g. memories, inner pictures, feelings, etc.). These questions are a form of guided brainstorming which assists them in gathering first impressions and ideas. Subsequently, they are asked to get together in pairs or groups of three and discuss their findings. In these small groups, the students are asked to co-creatively write a new text for the song. Once they have finished at least four lines (which is the obligatory amount), volunteers may share their final creative product in class.

The last ten minutes of the lesson serve as preparation for their homework which is to write a poem inspired by a photograph **(CW) “Photograph Poetry – Pretty Pictures & Precious Poems”**. After showing the students some examples of photograph poems, I will project a photograph of a park full of blossoming cherry trees located in Japan. The *sakura* – cherry blossom – is one of Japan’s symbols and traditionally celebrated in cherry blossom festivals called *hanami*.

I let the students absorb the colors and forms of the photograph and then ask them to close their eyes. What follows is the pre-writing activity called **(PWA) “Mind-traveling”** where I take them to this park through imagination. In my descriptions I strongly appeal to their senses. After two or three minutes, the students may reopen their eyes and start to scribble down their impressions onto the **handout “Perception Training”** (adapted from Gail Pittaway), see figure 17 “Small version of the handout “Perception Training””. Essentially, one filled-out blank may be turned into a verse. With the help of the photograph, the handout and their personal notes, the students will have sufficient guidance to successfully write a poem on their own at home. However, if they want, they may choose other photographs, provided they are related to Japan and the source is added.

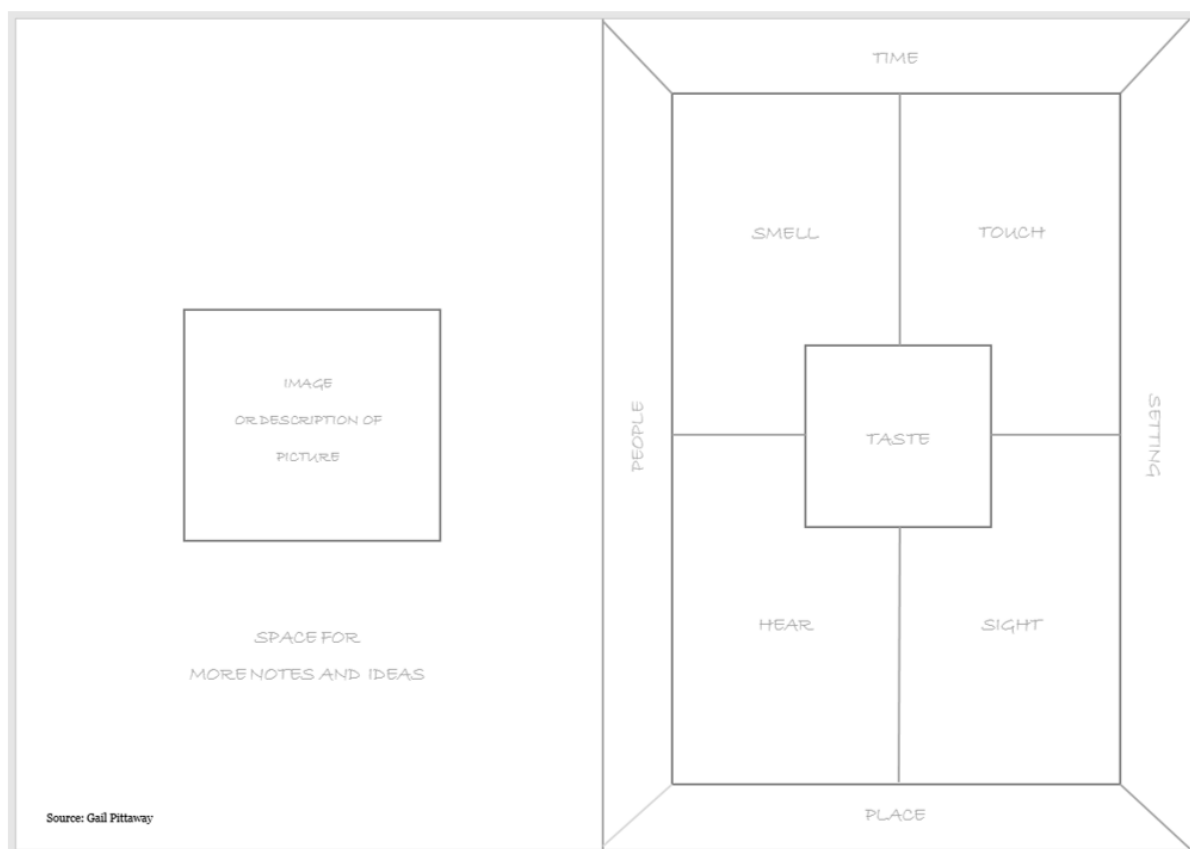


Figure 16: Small version of the handout “Perception Training”

#### 6.4.4. 3<sup>rd</sup> lesson

The third lesson is dedicated to visual poetry: black-out poetry and shape poetry, and one interlingual poem in the form of an acrostic poem as optional homework.

The first activity (CW) **“Black-out Poetry – Black-out Murakami”** is a visual and an intertextual poem. Photocopies of the short novel *The Strange Library* of the Japanese international best-selling author *Haruki Murakami* serve as prompts. The reason why I used this particular novel was that it was the shortest one of *Haruki Murakami* (or any other Japanese author) translated into English and available at the local library. Its storyline is quite morbid, but since each student only received a part of the whole novel I chose to use it nonetheless. The goal of this activity is to create a new poem out of the given extract. Each learner receives a photocopy of one page of the novel, reads through it, circles interesting and appealing words and starts to write a new poem out of the “old” text. At the end, the students black out the rest of the unused words. The ones who like to draw may complement the meaning of the poem with a drawing that covers the rest



of the text. This artistic finalization is exemplified in figure 18 “Examples of black-out poetry”.

Depending on the time the learners need for the creation of the black-out poem and their motivation in artistic embellishments, a second visual poem will be written in class, **(CW) Shape Poetry – “Shapeshifting Japan”**. The idea is to either use a shape that is inspired by Japanese culture or language, for instance, a triangle to represent *fuji-san*, or, conversely, pick any random shape and relate it to something Japanese during the brainstorming process. An example for the latter may be the shape of the sun which inspires the story of a girl gazing at the sunset in a temple garden in Kyoto.

The last poem is an interlingual poem in the form of an acrostic poem. Japanese words which do not have an exact one word translation into English are used as prompts. The following six concepts are given as examples:

irusu 居留守 – “pretending that nobody is at home”

komorebi 木漏れ日 – “sunlight filtered through tree leaves”

shinrinyoku 森林浴 – “forest bath: taking a walk in the forest for its restorative benefits”

kintsugi 金継ぎ – “mending broken pottery with gold or silver lacquer”

kuidaore 食い倒れ – “eating yourself into bankruptcy”

tsundoku 積ん読 – “buying books and letting them pile up unread” <sup>55</sup>

The translation and explanation of each word offer an unusual and intriguing starting point to be developed into a creative poem.

#### 6.4.5. 4<sup>th</sup> Lesson

The fourth lesson is dedicated to a short improvisational theater game, the final poetry reading and the questionnaire. The first activity **(IT) “ImpRenku”** is a Japanese oral poem, called *renku*, turned into an improvisational theater game. In its traditional form, it is a collaborative oral poem where several poets extemporize alternating verses of 14 and 17 *morae*. To simplify the matter, the students do not have to count the syllables. First, the learners are asked to form a circle. Then, one student comes up with the first line and any student may answer with the next line. There are no constraints regarding the meter,

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<sup>55</sup> [www.teamjapanese.com](http://www.teamjapanese.com) (02/02/2018)

topic or ending. This activity takes about five minutes and should help the students to loosen up, gain confidence and create an atmosphere of trust before they read out their poetry in front of their peers. At the end of the poetry reading is the final presentation of the learners' creative products.

## 6.5. Evaluation of the Project

### 6.5.1. Teaching Impressions and First Reflections

At the beginning of the **first lesson**, I briefly introduced myself and talked about the project and what we were going to do in the following four lessons. To my surprise, all students were calm and listened attentively. After the introduction, I started with the first activity **(IT) "Creation of a Pseudonym"**. Many of the students picked various adjectives which may be considered as less common, such as 'majestic' or 'peaceful', whereas I had expected more common and frequently-used adjectives such as funny, happy, etc. Then, we started with the other two improvisational theater games. All learners cooperated, however, a lot of them seemed to be quite shy. Most of them mumbled rather than talked and were therefore hard to understand. I needed to encourage them several times to speak louder. I had the impression that the students enjoyed the games, as they did not hesitate to act out the instructions and were also laughing a lot. At the end of the game **(IT) "Pfterkartulu?frij - Talking Gibberish"**, I asked the learners to think of a language themselves. Their suggestions included the language "African" (not Afrikaans) and the language "Indian", which both obviously do not exist as such. This made me realize how important learning about languages is. In general, all three warm-up activities turned out to be very good ice-breakers and allowed me to successfully learn all their names. This proved my assumption that the time spent getting to know each other is crucial for establishing an environment of trust. Retrospectively, the connection created in the first lesson helped me throughout the whole project.

Then, I started the introductory part about Japanese language. They did not know anything about the language, but were eager to guess and answer some of my questions. All students seemed interested to find out more. After having provided basic information about Japanese and the two Japanese poetry forms *haiku* and *tanka*, the students started

to write their first poem. Even though the learners discussed their writing process in English, the time spent on writing in Japanese seemed a bit too long. Once they had finished their *tanka*, I invited volunteers to read their Gibberish poem. After each reading, I asked the students which mood the pronounced syllables and voice of the respective reader conveyed. Interestingly, they agreed that the tone of the poems seemed “philosophical”, “light-hearted” or “serious”. I told the students to “translate” this mood into an English version of the poem and also, translate the poem with the help of a translation website. Unfortunately, all of them merely translated the poem with the help of a translation website and no group handed in their own version with “real”, meaningful English at the end of the project. The result was a collection of poems in Gibberish English. Even though it was interesting for the students to see that one “syllable” in Japanese or the combination of several “syllables” may form a complicated word or phrase in English, they did not learn to write a *tanka* in English. The first exercise is relevant in terms of plurilingual and intercultural learning (cf. ‘The FREPA’) and creativity, the second exercise would have been important for their English fluency and training of (creative) writing skills. Given the fact that none of the students handed in a poem in “proper” English, I assume that my instructions were not clear. Generally, I think that it would be better to have the students write the poem in English during the lesson instead of at home. Not only to receive guidance, but also to have the feeling of success during the same lesson. When I asked the learners how they enjoyed “writing” in Japanese, the general answer was that they liked it and found it interesting. Finally, the students seemed captivated and motivated, as they were very communicative and often raised their hands. Some made the impression of being shy and did not come forward without being asked.

In the **second lesson**, the students were asked to write song lyrics to the Japanese song *Ue o muite arukou* 上を向いて歩こう by *Kyu Sakamoto* 坂本九. When I distributed the **handout “Interlingual Song Writing – Kyu Sakamoto rewritten”** and asked the learners to skim through and highlight literary devices, they seemed eager to detect the alliterations, assonances and repetitions. It took them about five minutes to finish the activity and another two to compare the findings. From the perspective of plurilingual and intercultural learning as well as of poetry, this task seemed relevant and useful. Yet, from the perspective of ELT, it seemed to be using up precious time for teaching English. As

regards the learning of poetry, this task helped to raise awareness of literary devices and offered a useful guideline to substitute the original lyrics with one's own lyrics. Depending on the importance given to plurilingual and intercultural learning, and on whether this activity is taught in the form of CLIL (content and language integrated learning) or not, students may skip this activity and immediately proceed to the following task. Then, I distributed the **handout "Interlingual Song Writing – Guiding Questions"** and started the first listening of the song. The learners took notes and exchanged their impressions with their neighbors and subsequently in plenary. It seemed that each student had something to share. After showing them simple lyrics I had written myself, the learners started to write lyrics in pairs and small groups while I played the song in the background. Once every group had written at least the first four verses of their song, I asked them to share their lyrics with the rest of the class if they wanted to. I was surprised, moved and proud when I listened to the texts they had written in such a short period of time. One group turned the song into a poetry slam, making use of many literary devices and rhyming patterns within each verse. Another student sang the song. The lyrics of the other groups were just as creative, diverse and rich as the performed ones. Unfortunately, the texts of the poetry slam and the song sung by the other student were not handed in.

After the song text writing, the last ten minutes of the lesson were dedicated to the preparation for their homework **"Photograph Poetry – Beautiful Pictures and Precious Poems"**. I started the meditative activity (PWA) **"Mind-traveling"** and it turned instantly silent in the classroom. I could feel how the students relaxed. Their eyes were closed as I vividly described the park with the blossoming cherry trees in much detail. My voice was calm and I talked slowly and clearly. After some minutes, I asked the students to fill out the **handout "Perception Training"**. Walking through the aisles, I could see that most of them had many impressions to jot down. When we reached the end of the lesson, I could perceive a sense of dissatisfaction among the students due to not continuing with the writing. We ended the lesson in the middle of a flow of inspiration. Fortunately, looking at the results of the photograph poems, it seems that they took this inspiration and guidance back home and channeled them into the writing of beautiful poems. Still, I think it would have been better to dedicate a full lesson to photograph poetry and have the

students continue writing after such a strong inspirational activity. Overall, this lesson was a success from each perspective.

The **third lesson** had visual poetry as its content, namely the activities **(CW) “Black-out Poetry – Black-out Murakami”** and **(CW) “Shape Poetry – Shapeshifting Japan”**. After defining what black-out poetry is, briefly telling them about *Haruki Murakami* (none of the students knew the writer) and showing them some examples of black-out poetry, I handed out the extracts of the novel *The Strange Library*. The learners read through the text and started to circle some words and phrases. After a while, some of the students used their mobile phone to look up unknown vocabulary. Some wrote poems on the other side of the page, others colored parts of the text. Every student was occupied creating their black-out poem. It was very calm, nobody spoke. After a while, the majority of the students had finished writing their poem and were drawing and blackening-out parts of the text. For a while, I was not sure whether to let them continue and finish their black-out poem, or whether to stop them, have them share what they had done so far and finish the artistic embellishments of the poem at home. Eventually, I settled with the second option, as the time seemed too precious to dedicate it to drawing in the English lesson. If the project had been carried out in collaboration with other teachers and subjects (cf. CLIL), the students could have continued with their artistic endeavors. However, this was not the case. Therefore, I decided to interrupt their creative process and move to the next activity.

We started with the activity **(CW) “Shape Poetry – Shapeshifting Japan”**. Together we defined what shape poetry was and how it was created. I explained how to go about with shape poetry and how to relate a shape to Japanese language or culture. With the beamer, I projected a simple self-written model text, so that the students could see the coming-into-being of the poem. Then, I offered them some sample shapes (a star, a sun, etc.), but also encouraged them to choose their own shape depending on their ideas. This activity proved very difficult for the learners. I suppose my instructions were not clear or the activity was too complicated, as they did not understand what I expected them to do. They had difficulties in imagining how to relate the shapes with Japanese culture or language. In the end, as can be taken from the results in the poetry book, the students

wrote poems inspired by the shape, but not related with anything Japanese. Their writing may still be considered as creative, even if the outcome is different than expected.

At the end of the lesson, I wanted to provide them with an additional prompt for a voluntary homework – **(CW) “Interlingual Poetry – Beautiful Japanese Words”**. They almost unanimously stated that it was too much and that they were still busy finishing the other poems at home. Therefore, I told them to focus on the other poems and disregard the last one. One learner, however, used the prompt and wrote an interlingual poem at home. The student did not turn the poem into an acrostic poem but into free verse.

The **fourth and last lesson** held a surprise: When I arrived in class, half of the pupils were about to leave for confession. About ten minutes passed during which I tried to find out how long it would take and whether it was possible for them to return at all to our English lesson. However, nobody knew how long they were going to be missing. It took me a while to reorganize my plans. I decided to skip the improvisational theater game **(IT) “ImpRenku”** and their regular teacher agreed to have the students answer the questionnaire during the next English lesson. I asked them whether they needed assistance with any of their poems and explained the next steps of the poetry book. What was left to do was to send me the final poems via e-mail. When we almost reached the middle of the lesson, the students started to come back one by one. Since I could not foresee when and if the rest of the class would come back or estimate how long the poetry reading was going to take, I told the pupils that we would start with the poems they had written individually. The poetry reading went very well, and I had the impression that the learners enjoyed sharing their creative texts. I had to encourage several students to speak louder so that the rest could better understand what they were saying. Some had also difficulties with pronunciation. After fierce encouragements from his peers, the student who had already sung his self-written lyrics to the melody of *Ue o muite arukou*, sang the song again. This little “show act” enriched the reading and the whole class was obviously delighted to listen to his singing and so was I. The last missing student arrived ten minutes before the end of the lesson. At the end of the lesson, their regular teacher took a photograph of the class and me together which was then used as the cover of the poetry book.

### 6.5.2. The Questionnaire<sup>56</sup>

In order to evaluate the project, a short questionnaire consisting of three questions was designed (see appendix D: 'Questionnaire'). At first, a more extensive survey to appraise the students' linguistic background, the liking of the single creative writing activities as well as the chosen interaction formats was planned. However, due to the fact that the general time available for the whole project was rather short and the answering of the questionnaire had to take place within the four lessons, the questionnaire was downsized to its very essence. Its final version consists of three open questions, each one allowing room for reflection and expression of personal thoughts and impressions as well as critic:

- 1.) Do you think it is relevant to learn about different languages and writing scripts at school?  
Why?
- 2.) Which activity did you like best and why?
- 3.) What else would you like to tell me?

The aim of the first question is to find out whether students consider learning *about* foreign languages relevant or not. The idea is to inquire about the general attitude of the students towards the subject matter. This is a relevant question, as the majority (eleven out of thirteen) of the participating students have two native tongues (German plus another one). The second question is straightforward as it simply asks for the personal liking of a certain activity. The reason for this question is to find out personal preferences. The third question offers room for critic and suggestions.

### 6.5.3. Feedback

The completion of the questionnaire was planned for the end of the fourth lesson. Yet, at the said day almost half of the students were called for confession and therefore excused from the lesson. This was unforeseen and caused several changes in the procedures of the lesson, among others the postponement of the answering of the questionnaire. The regular English teacher agreed to take care of the matter the following week and to send the results via e-mail. Even though there was a rescheduling of several days, all students returned the questionnaire fully completed. The three questions were unanimously

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<sup>56</sup> see appendix D: 'Questionnaire'

answered in English (they were given the option to use German if they wanted). The length of the responses was generally concise rather than elaborative.

As regards the first question **“Do you think it is relevant to learn about different languages and writing scripts at school? Why?”**, the majority of the students stated that they do find learning about different languages and writing scripts interesting and useful:

*“Yes, in that way you get to know the world a little better”,*

*“The language is a very important factor of the land”,*

*“Languages are very important for communication and understanding a culture”.*

Some added that learning about other cultures is equally important, especially for their future. Two students seemed indifferent towards the question. Only one student indicated that it was not relevant at school.

The second question **“Which activity did you like best and why?”** showed diverse responses:

(4 Ss) black-out poetry

(3 Ss) Gibberish poetry

(2 Ss) photograph poetry

(2 Ss) sharing poetry/poetry reading

(2 Ss) improvisational theater games

(1 S) song writing

One student listed two favorite activities, namely photograph poetry and improvisational theater games. Shape poetry was not mentioned by any of the students.

In respect to the last question **“What else would you like to tell me?”**, a great variety of perspectives were expressed. Almost all the students wrote that they enjoyed the project:

*“It was a really interesting and funny workshop”,*

*“It was a good project and I think it was funny”,*

and that they found it creative:

*“It was a very creative process”,*

*“I am a creative person”.*



Several students reported that the workload of the project was too demanding considering their general school obligations. They felt that there was not sufficient time to do the homework. Further, two students deplored the fact that only Japanese culture and language had been addressed in the project, as they would have enjoyed to learn more about other languages and cultures, too:

*“One thing I didn’t like so much was that the only country we talked about was Japan”,*

*“I would’ve loved some other languages too”.*

Finally, many students thanked me for the creative writing project.

Overall, the feedback of the students was constructive and positive. They enjoyed being creative and engaging with various poetry forms. The fact that the number of students per favorite activity were evenly distributed speaks for a diverse material that addresses each student’s interest. Similarly, shape poetry was not mentioned by anyone as favorite activity. This may give rise to the interpretation that the presentation of the activity could be improved. In general, however, it seems that the project had a positive impact.

#### **6.5.4. General Reflection**

##### ***Creativity-enhancing Methods and Activities***

As regards the implementation of creativity-enhancing methods and activities, it seems that all of them were successful. The students enjoyed the improvisational theater games, loosened up, and I could feel that the **atmosphere in the class** and the relationship between them and me was relaxed. The guided **brainstorm activities** seemed to be helpful as well. When walking through the aisles, I could see that the handouts were generally filled out, and when discussing their ideas and findings in a collaborative brainstorm, every student had something to contribute. I noticed several times that the learners translated their thoughts and impressions from their handouts into verses, which was the objective of the handouts and brainstorms. Some poems reflected parts of my **model texts**, however, I did not have the impression that any of the students or groups had intentionally copied words or ideas and therefore I assume it happened either by accident or through “unconscious inspiration”. Another objective was to have the students work individually, in pairs, in groups and also in plenary. Every **form of**

**interaction** was accepted by the students. Yet, it is noteworthy that I never imposed a group structure on them and always left the decision with whom to write to them. In terms of **audience-awareness and real-life purpose**, which I tried to foster through the poetry reading and the printing of the poetry book, it looked as if some of the students were motivated to create something beautiful, whereas others might have been indifferent towards this final sharing. The reason for my assumption is that some texts were not turned in at all even though I had read and/or heard them at the end of the respective lesson. This could indicate anxiety or indifference to share one's creative product with one's peers.

### ***The Content***

During the informative parts of the lessons and the subsequent brief discussions, the students conveyed the impression of being interested in learning more about Japanese culture and language. After every lesson, I asked them how they found the content and the poetry writing, and several students responded that they found it intriguing, especially the facts about the Japanese scripts. As mentioned in the sub-chapter 'Feedback', the majority of the learners stated that they found learning about other cultures relevant and interesting. Several times, I gained the impression that the students were amazed by the information provided about Japanese culture and language and were in the process of understanding something new about the world. These instances of understanding could be interpreted as 'mini-s' creativity, and their implementation in the form of a poem as 'small-c'/'little-c' creativity. In general, it can be stated that the goals of teaching plurilingual and intercultural content were reached.

The project in the context of the given content may of course be extended with further ideas, also involving other text types, if wanted. Three will be given in the following paragraphs:

- (1) The Japanese *anime* as an example of 'intermediality' could be added. *Anime* アニメ is an abbreviation of the English loan word animation, アニメーション (animēshon), and refers to "a style of animation that was created in Japan and that uses colorful images, strong characters, and action-filled plots"<sup>57</sup>. It is worldly

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<sup>57</sup> <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/anime> (05/18/2018)

known and appreciated for its vivid and unique making-up. A sequence of an *anime* could be shown to the students who are then asked to interpret the content and subsequently write a script. The texts may be read out together with the muted video sequence or enacted. Students may write the scripts together in small groups.

(2) In order to enhance perception skills and critical consciousness, well-known and storied Japanese personae may be used as inspiration and creative writing prompt. Such personae include *samurai* 侍, *sumo* 相撲 or *geisha* 芸者, for instance. The learners may conduct research on one of them, gather information, photographs, and then tell a story, write a poem or a song, slip into the role of their persona and hold a speech, asf., from their perspective.

(3) *Origami* 折り紙 is the art of folding paper, whether classic cranes, complicated dinosaurs or simple flowers – seemingly everything can be folded and turned into an *origami*. For the lesson, the teacher may provide a few *origami* folding instructions or ask the learners to look for one they find compelling online. Squared paper, ideally with traditional *origami*/Japanese print, are needed. The students follow the instructions and fold their *origami*. Once they are finished, they use the shape as prompt: either they enliven their object or they write a story about it. This activity also lends itself for co-creative writing where each folded *origami* represents a role in a play or in a short novel, for instance.

### **Presentation of Content**

As regards the presentation of the content, mainly power point slides (cf. appendix B: ‘Power Point Slides’/attached CD) were introduced and a few books (Japanese dictionaries and grammar books, *The Strange Library* of Haruki Murakami) throughout the lessons. Even though I am familiar with and in favor of jigsaw teaching techniques, the lack of experience in teaching school classes within the conventional rigidly clocked time frame and in teaching poetry made me retreat to a putative “safety structure” in the form of an overuse of power point slides containing information, modeling texts and instructions. As a possible improvement, I would suggest to print out the modeling texts, have the students discuss them in small groups instead and only project instructions and general information. When turning away from the projected slides towards an implementation of

printed-out material available to each group, a greater variety of poems could be written. For instance, the first group writes a photograph poem, the second group a black-out poem and the third one a shape poem.

### ***The Poetry Book*<sup>58</sup>**

Due to the limited time available for the project, the results of the creative writing activities – the poems – should mainly be regarded as first drafts, depending on the students' personal efforts. As can be taken from the poetry book (cf. appendix C: 'The Poetry Book of the PBWP'/attached CD), some texts were "ready for print", whereas others would have needed more feedback and guidance.

According to the five different poetry forms that were written in class, the poetry book was divided into the following five chapters:

1. Japanese Gibberish Poems
2. Kyu Sakamoto – rewritten
3. Pretty Pictures & Precious Poems
4. Black-out Murakami
5. Shapeshifting Japan

The formatting and layout, the adding of the pictures for embellishment and the writing of the paratexts was my part of the project. In consideration of the amount of time available, it would have been too time-consuming for me to coordinate the extra work parallel to the taught lessons, and too overwhelming for the students to cope with an additional workload of something they had not done before. When formatting the document, I refrained from changing the layout of the individual poems the learners had sent me. I felt that it was important to keep their spark of personality and value their efforts.

Judging from the poetry book and the students' poems, the photograph poem (cf. chapter 3. 'Pretty Pictures & Precious Poems' of the poetry book) and the black-out poem (cf. chapter 4. 'Black-out Murakami' of the poetry book) were the most successful poetry

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<sup>58</sup> see appendix C: 'The Poetry Book of the PBWP'/attached CD

types. Almost all created poems were handed in. Interestingly, these two were individual work while the other three poems had pair or group work as social form.

The **Japanese Gibberish poems** (cf. chapter 1. 'Japanese Gibberish Poems' of the poetry book) seemed to be fascinating for the learners as they were confronted with a foreign script, however, they may not be considered valuable from the perspective of ELT. As stated before, my instructions were probably not clear, which is the reason why the learners only translated the poem with an online translation dictionary instead of writing a *tanka* by themselves in English. Five of six groups turned in the poem and all of them without an English version.

The **song writing** (cf. chapter 2. 'Kyu Sakamoto – rewritten' of the poetry book) was turned in by only three of five groups. As mentioned in the sub-chapter 'Teaching Impressions and First Reflections', the text which was sung at the end of the lesson and the one which was rapped were not handed in, even though the whole class, including myself, immensely enjoyed their performance. One reason might be "artistic mindfulness" with one's own creations. The three texts, which form now part of the poetry book, were not performed but may be considered equally creative.

The **photograph poem** (cf. chapter 3. 'Pretty Pictures & Precious Poems' of the poetry book) was written by almost all students – twelve out of thirteen sent me their writing. Even though the students were offered to use the same photograph prompt with the already filled-out and discussed handout for the creation of their poem at home, almost all opted for a different picture. In addition, the majority of the poems count several verses. I interpret this choice as motivation and interest, as they did not shy away from making an additional effort. Also, I would consider the two pre-writing activities ("mind-traveling" and "perception training") as valuable support for creative writing and valuable for ELT.

The **black-out poem** (cf. chapter 4. 'Black-out Murakami' of the poetry book) was handed in by twelve out of thirteen students. Some dedicated more time into an artful finalization, others less. The intertextual poems created out of the extract of the novel *The Strange Library* were at times a one-to-one transfer and at times a rearrangement of the highlighted words. It can be taken from the poetry book that some of the poems seem unfinished and/or grammatically strange (I suppose this was not intended given the title

of the novel). Apparently, it would have been necessary to emphasize the importance of grammatical correctness, as some students seem to have not sufficiently paid attention to this fact. Finally, the majority of the learners rewrote the poem and added the text to the copied extract of the novel, which was part of the task.

The last poem, the **shape poem** (cf. chapter 5. 'Shapeshifting Japan' of the poetry book), was written by only five students. None of the poems had been related to Japanese culture or language in any way. As noted in the sub-chapter 'Teaching Impressions and First Reflections', I reckon that the reason for this misunderstanding is either due to the complexity of the task, to unclear instructions or the combination of both. Notwithstanding the lack of reference to anything Japanese, the poems seem to have inspired personal reflections. This made me realize that by providing constraint with regard to content, students might have fewer opportunities to express their own thoughts and feelings. This should be kept in mind when designing creative writing material.

Generally, I find that the learners went to great lengths to fulfill the tasks, considering the novelty of the content, the genre, and the short amount of time. Additional lessons and time for rereading and rewriting their poems would have enormously contributed to the poetry book as a final result.

### ***Time***

Indeed, the main problem that occurred during the project was the lack of time: (1) the lessons were too short (and/or the introduced content too long) for the students to finish a poem, (2) the four lessons were scheduled within one week (Friday, Monday, Tuesday and again Friday) and did not allow enough time for rereading and rewriting at home between the lessons, and (3) writing a poetry book in only four lessons was very ambitious.

(1) Getting to know each other, establishing an environment of trust, introducing new content, addressing organizational issues regarding the project and making space for creative writing proved difficult to reconcile all within only four lessons. Talking about Japan, Japanese language, Japanese culture, the Japanese writer *Haruki Murakami*, asf. was more time-consuming than initially planned. Moreover, it seemed that the selection of poems was too much, although I had significantly downsized its number during the

planning phase. Even if poems are short, the act of creation takes more than 50 minutes. Especially if prior to the actual writing activity content is taught, brainstorming activities are used, and organizational issues need to be addressed. As a matter of fact, the time needed for organizational explanations and project coordination should not be underestimated, notably if the students have never participated in any similar project before.

Furthermore, writing a book in collaboration includes many steps: ensuring that all poems are finished, collecting the word documents, formatting and layout, presenting the writers, taking a photograph of the class, finding a title, asf. If students wrote the other necessary texts (cf. 'intertextuality') themselves and took care of the additional work needed, they could learn how to write different text types and improve their IT-skills and organizational competences at the same time.

Finally, thinking of the insights gained about creativity, the concept of flow and the process of writing, the structure of 50-minutes-lessons generally seems absurd. It goes beyond the scope of this thesis to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the traditional schooling system. Yet, it seems clear that in order to allow creative processes to flourish, more time and less disturbances (such as breaks or frequent subject changes) are needed.

(2) Instead of holding all four lessons consecutively, it seems to be better to either hold one lesson per week, leaving enough time for creative homework to be done where students may finish and perfect their poems they have started in school, or to have a full day dedicated to writing poetry without any breaks.

(3) This project would be ideal for CLIL lessons, where several subjects work together. In this particular creative writing book project, the geography teacher, the history teacher, and the art teacher could have collaborated in a very fruitful way. The students could learn more about the geography, history and demographics of Japan and Japanese people and create the cover of the book. Due to the fact that I am neither a teacher of this class nor in this school, I did not ask other teachers to collaborate.

To summarize, to tackle the issue of time within the structure of the current system, the project could be conducted

- within one or more full days without the interruptions of breaks or other subjects
- or, if the latter possibility is not feasible, in creative writing lessons which are spread over a longer period of time with bigger breaks in-between, for instance, one lesson every two weeks
- in collaboration with other teachers, especially of the subjects history, geography and art (cf. CLIL)

Allowing the students more time to think, brainstorm, discuss, plan, create, write and rewrite implicates more time for the teacher to give feedback, adapt the following lessons, involve the students in the creation of the prompts and delegate responsibility for the final product to the students.

### ***ELT***

From the perspective of ELT, it can be said that learners had many possibilities to train their creative writing expression. They were acquainted with traditional and modern poetry forms. All four language skills were involved in the four lessons, with the main emphasis set on 'writing'. During two of the three improvisational theater games, the students improvised in English (with the game IT "ImpRenku" which had to be discarded, it would have been three). The learners discussed their impressions of the content and prompts and the coming-into-being of their texts in English. At the end of every lesson, volunteers were invited to read out their poem, and at the end of the forth lesson all students were given the opportunity to share their writing. Finally, students would need time for drafting and receiving more feedback in order to improve their spelling, grammar or vocabulary.

To sum up, the creativity-enhancing methods were successful and well-accepted by the students. The content caught their interest and they seemed motivated to find out more about Japanese culture and language. The poetry book includes many of the poems the students wrote, however, some did not turn in their poems. The layout and formatting were my work, yet, it would be highly beneficial for the students to take over this part. Furthermore, the organization and availability of time proved to be the main obstacle and



had several consequences on the quality of the lessons and the learners' writing. Possible improvements could be CLIL or extended periods dedicated to a creative writing project. Nevertheless and most importantly, the students enjoyed the creative poetry writing and the insights gained are valuable and informative for further creative writing projects.

## 7. Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to understand the concept of creative writing in EFL classrooms and to design material which fosters creativity and integrates the *CEFR – The Common European Framework of References for Languages* for the language level B1 and the *Curriculum for Living Foreign Languages in Austrian Upper Secondary Schools*. Therefore, a thorough outline of creativity and related notions, as well as a presentation of creative (writing) pedagogies, was provided. The *CEFR* for the language level B1 and the *Curriculum for Living Foreign Languages in Austrian Upper Secondary Schools* were examined, with the primary focus set on the language level B1, creativity, writing and creative writing. Furthermore, characteristics and benefits of creative writing activities were discussed, as well as the importance of pre-writing activities and sharing of the creative texts. This comprehensive analysis was followed by the examination of the genre poetry and the implications of creatively teaching this text type in the EFL classroom. The reviewed literature was complemented by the creation of five ‘inter’-concepts which main goal is to enhance creativity in creative writing. Finally, the P was presented, analyzed and discussed.

Overall, it can be stated that the discussed literature has shown that the teaching of creative writing consists of many aspects and that it is interrelated with the adoption of a creative pedagogy in class. Moreover, creative writing may not only serve the teaching and training of grammar and vocabulary, but should be regarded as a craft which needs to be learned in addition to language forms. In order to help students develop their writing skills and creativity, creative pre-writing activities, co-creative writing and sharing of their creative products should be implemented, among other methods. In addition, as *CEFR* for the language level B1 and the *Curriculum for Living Foreign Languages in Austrian Upper Secondary Schools* both explicitly promote creativity and creative writing, it is possible to integrate creative writing activities which integrate with both frameworks.

The design of creative writing material and its implementation in the form of the poetry book writing project helped to test creativity-enhancing methods and the validity of two of the ‘inter’-concepts, namely ‘interlinguality’ and ‘interculturality’. The feedback of the students was very positive, still, several improvements in terms of time management,

choice of prompts and overall teaching methods can be made. Further projects similar to the one presented in this thesis could calculate more time for the lessons and the project as a whole, collaborate with other teachers, include rereading and rewriting phases into the lessons and delegate the formatting and layout to the students.

Finally, due to the limitations of this thesis, the exploration of the 'inter'-concepts had to be minimized. Likewise, it was only possible to include two of the concepts into the design of the creative writing material. Further research could focus on their elaboration and the design and testing of creative writing material inspired by the various 'inter'-concepts. In general, NFCW seems to enrich creative writing approaches and show developable potential.

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## **Appendices**

**Appendix A:** Lesson Plans and Handouts

**Appendix B:** Power Point Presentations, see attached CD

**Appendix C:** Poetry Book of the PBWP, see attached CD

**Appendix D:** Questionnaire

**Appendix E:** Curriculum Vitae

## Appendix A: Lessons Plans and Handouts

### Lesson Plan 1: Getting-to-know-each-other, Japan Intro, Japanese Gibberish Poem

Rough time frame	Name of activity and procedure	Inter-action format	Skills	Materials	Notes
3'	<b>Beginning the project</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I present myself and the project</li> <li>I write down my name on the black board</li> <li>Then, I briefly explain what we will do in today's lesson</li> </ul>	T -> Ss	Listening	Black board, chalk	
7'	<b>"Creation of a Pseudonym"</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I ask the Ss if they know any literary devices and encourage them to provide examples</li> <li>I ask the Ss to think of an adjective that starts with the same letter as her/his first name</li> <li>I write my name together with an adjective starting with a "v" on the blackboard (e.g. vigorous Vera) and tell the Ss that this is an alliteration</li> <li>I tell the Ss to think of an adjective that starts with the same sound as their first name</li> <li>I declare that these names are going to be our pseudonyms as writers</li> </ul> <b>IT "Pick Up Game"</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I ask the Ss to form a circle in class</li> <li>Then everyone says out aloud her/his adjective and name (Hilarious Helene, Awesome Alen, Dazzling Dimitry,...)</li> <li>Then I explain the game:</li> <li><i>A calls out B. B walks over to A and stops in front of A. C (any S or me) calls out A's name. A walks over to C and stops in front of C. B takes the place of A. A waits until somebody calls out C's name. ...</i></li> <li><i>E.g. Hilarious Helene calls Dazzling Dimitry. Funny Franz walks over to Hilarious Helene and stops in front of her. Awesome Alen calls out Hilarious Helene's name. Hilarious Helene walks over to Awesome Alen and stops in front of him. Dazzling Dimitry takes the place of Hilarious Helene. Hilarious Helene waits until somebody calls out Awesome Alen's name.</i></li> </ul>	T <-> Ss	Listening, speaking		This activity helps the T to get to know the names of the Ss. It also serves as an ice-breaker.
5'	<b>IT "Pferkartulu?frij - Talking Gibberish"</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I explain the Ss how the IT game works and give an example:</li> </ul>	T+S,S,S	Listening, speaking		Just as the IT "Pick Up Game" this IT

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I say, for example, “Turkish” and start to imitate Turkish speech (melody of the language, sounds that occur very often, maybe body language)</li> <li>• I ask the Ss to start walking around in class</li> <li>• I name any kind of language (Hungarian, Malaysian, Korean, French, etc.) and the Ss imitate this language with sounds and intonation, talking Gibberish, a nonsense language. While they are talking, they may walk around in class, “saying hi” to their classmates, “chatting” and laughing in the given “language”</li> <li>• After about 30 seconds, I call out another language, and the Ss immediately switch to the next “language”</li> <li>• I name about five languages throughout the game</li> </ul>				game too serves as an ice-breaker and a pre-activity to the interlingual writing tasks.
12'	<b>PPP Japan Intro</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I start the power point presentation and tell the Ss that we are going to write a Japanese Gibberish poem</li> <li>• The first power point slide shows a page of a manga</li> <li>• I ask the Ss what difference they can detect between the signs</li> <li>• Then, I briefly explain Japanese scripts (<i>Kanji</i>, <i>Hiragana</i> and <i>Katakana</i>) showing charts of the three writing systems on slides</li> <li>• I give an example of the usage of all three scripts in one simple sentence:</li> <li>• 私はべうです。(My name is Vera.)</li> <li>• I show the Ss some Japanese repetitive words</li> <li>• Then I introduce two famous Japanese poetry styles – <i>Haiku</i> and <i>Tanka</i></li> </ul>	T<->S, S, S	Writing, speaking	PPP	
20'	<b>CW “Interlingual Poetry – Japanese Gibberish Poem”</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I read out loud a self-written Japanese Gibberish poem and ask the Ss what they think/feel/interpret by hearing the sounds</li> <li>• I tell the Ss to get together in pairs or groups of three, explain the next activity and then distribute the handout “Hiragana Chart” and little yellow cards with lines</li> <li>• Ss begin to play with the sounds and write their poem</li> <li>• I walk through class and assist the Ss if they need any help</li> </ul>	S+S; S+S+S	<b>Writing</b>	Handout “Hiragana Chart” and little yellow cards	Awareness raising of sounds and literary devices (alliteration, assonance and repetition). As the Ss do not speak Japanese, they can fully focus on the form ( <i>Tanka</i> ,



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When the Ss have finished, I ask two or three Ss to volunteer and read aloud their poem.</li> <li>• I ask the Ss how the sounds of the poem made them feel and what the poem could be about</li> <li>• I show the Ss the self-written <i>Tanka</i> and what happened when one “translates” it in <a href="https://translate.google.com">translate.google.com</a></li> </ul>				syllables, sounds, literary devices) and experiment with language in a joyful way.
3'	<b>“Homepleasure” (homework)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ss are asked to finalize the poem ant</li> <li>• to write a <i>Tanka</i> poem in English</li> </ul>	S; S; ..	<b>Writing</b>		

## Hiragana Chart

あ a	い i	う u	え e	お o
か ka	き ki	く ku	け ke	こ ko
さ sa	し shi	す su	せ se	そ so
た ta	ち chi	つ tsu	て te	と to
な na	に ni	ぬ nu	ね ne	の no
は ha	ひ hi	ふ fu	へ he	ほ ho
ま ma	み mi	む mu	め me	も mo
や ya		ゆ yu		よ yo
ら ra	り ri	る ru	れ re	ろ ro
わ wa				を (w)o
ん n				

## Lesson Plan 2: Interlingual Song Writing, Photograph Poetry

Rough time frame	Name of activity and procedure	Inter-action format	Skills	Materials	Notes
5'	<b>Recapitulation</b> of 1 <sup>st</sup> lesson <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I revise together with the Ss their adjectives + names (mainly for myself)</li> <li>I ask the Ss what they remember of the last lesson and whether they “translated” their Japanese Gibberish poem into English</li> <li>I briefly explain what we are going to do in today’s lesson</li> </ul>	T<->Ss; T->Ss	Listening, speaking	PPP	
35'	<b>CW “Interlingual Song Writing – Kyu Sakamoto - rewritten”</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I tell the students that we are going to write English lyrics for a Japanese song</li> <li>I ask the Ss what the commonalities and differences are of poems and songs</li> </ul> <p><u>Japanese Song Lyrics</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I distribute the song lyrics in Japanese and Japanese transcription</li> <li>I ask them to skim through the text and highlight alliterations, assonances and repetitions in Japanese transcription</li> <li>In plenary we discuss the findings</li> <li>I then project the highlighted literary devices</li> </ul> <p><u>PWA Guided Questions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I ask the Ss to close their eyes and relax</li> <li>Then I start playing the song of <i>Kyu Sakamoto</i> 坂本九 – <i>Ue o muite arukou</i> 上を向いて歩こう on youtube:</li> <li><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C35DrtPIUbc">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C35DrtPIUbc</a></li> <li>I distribute the <b>handout</b> “Interlingual Song Writing – Guiding Questions” while they are listening to the song</li> <li>After the listening of the song, I ask the Ss what impressions they have, and what the song could be about</li> <li>I ask them to read through the guiding questions and answer them while the song is being played in the background with low volume</li> <li>After about 2-3min I ask the Ss to get together in groups of three/four and</li> </ul>	T->Ss; Ss<-> Ss	Listening, writing	PPP; handout “Interlingual Song Writing – Guiding Questions”; handout “Interlingual Song Writing – Kyu Sakamoto - rewritten”	

	<p>exchange their impressions about the song</p> <p><u>Song Writing</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I show the Ss an example of lyrics I have written myself</li> <li>• I refer to the <b>handout</b> “Interlingual Song Writing – Kyu Sakamoto - rewritten” and tell them to use the three literary devices alliteration, assonance, repetition in their text</li> <li>• The Ss begin to discuss and write the lyrics with their peers</li> <li>• I walk through the class to see whether they need some help</li> </ul> <p><u>Listening to the Songs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ss read out aloud or sing their lyrics</li> <li>• We look at the translation of the original song if time allows it</li> </ul>				
10'	<p><b>CW Visual Poetry: “Photograph Poetry – Pretty Pictures &amp; Precious Poems”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I show them two photograph poems to give them an idea of how one may look like</li> <li>• I comment on <i>Shirin Neshat’s</i> art</li> <li>• I share a self-written photograph poem with them</li> </ul> <p><u>PWA “Mind-traveling”</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I project a photograph of a park located in Japan with cherry trees blossoming</li> <li>• I let the Ss have a close look and then invite them to close their eyes</li> <li>• I start to describe the place and the perceptions of a person who is right there</li> <li>• E.g. “You take a deep breath”, “Slowly, you walk around and watch people passing by” “You can smell the sweetness of the flowers”, “The sounds of distant laughter fill you with joy”, etc.</li> <li>• After a while, I ask them to reopen their eyes</li> <li>• I ask them to discuss their perceptions and feelings with their neighbors</li> <li>• I project the <b>handout</b> “perception training” (inspired by Gail Pittaway)</li> <li>• In plenary we exchange some ideas of how to fill in the handout</li> </ul>	T->S,S,S	Listening	Handout “perception training” (inspired by Gail Pittaway)	This guided mind-traveling helps the Ss to explore their senses and develop richer associations with what they see on the photograph.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I show them a possible way of writing a poem inspired by the <i>sakura</i> photograph</li> </ul>				
1'	<b>"Homepleasure" (homework)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalize your song lyrics if necessary</li> <li>Write a photograph poem</li> </ul>	S; S; S	Writing		

## Interlingual Song Writing – Guiding Questions

<u>Interlingual Song Writing</u>	<u>Interlingual Song Writing</u>	<u>Interlingual Song Writing</u>
1. How does the <b>music/singer/language</b> sound like?	1. How does the <b>music/singer/language</b> sound like?	5. How does the <b>music/singer/language</b> sound like?
2. Which <b>mood</b> does the song convey?	2. Which <b>mood</b> does the song convey?	6. Which <b>mood</b> does the song convey?
3. How does the song make you <b>feel</b> ?	3. How does the song make you <b>feel</b> ?	7. How does the song make you <b>feel</b> ?
4. What does the song make you <b>think of</b> ?	4. What does the song make you <b>think of</b> ?	8. What does the song make you <b>think of</b> ?
<u>Interlingual Song Writing</u>	<u>Interlingual Song Writing</u>	<u>Interlingual Song Writing</u>
1. How does the <b>music/singer/language</b> sound like?	1. How does the <b>music/singer/language</b> sound like?	5. How does the <b>music/singer/language</b> sound like?
2. Which <b>mood</b> does the song convey?	2. Which <b>mood</b> does the song convey?	6. Which <b>mood</b> does the song convey?
3. How does the song make you <b>feel</b> ?	3. How does the song make you <b>feel</b> ?	7. How does the song make you <b>feel</b> ?
4. What does the song make you <b>think of</b> ?	4. What does the song make you <b>think of</b> ?	8. What does the song make you <b>think of</b> ?

## Interlingual Song Writing

Original: 坂本九 – Kyu Sakamoto 上を向いて歩こう – Ue o muite arukou

Name of your song: .....

JAPANESE LYRICS: <sup>59</sup>	TRANSCRIPTED: <sup>60</sup>	YOUR TEXT
上を向いて歩こう	Ue o muite arukou	.....
涙がこぼれないように	Namida ga kobore nai you ni	.....
思い出す春の日	Omoi dasu haru no hi	.....
一人ぼっちの夜	Hitoribotchi no yoru	.....
上を向いて歩こう	Ue o muite arukou	.....
にじんだ星を数えて	Nijinda hoshi o kazoete	.....
思い出す夏の日	Omoidasu natsu no hi	.....
一人ぼっちの夜	Hitoribotchi no yoru	.....
幸せは雲の上に	Shiawase wa kumo no ue ni	.....
幸せは空の上に	Shiawase wa sora no ue ni	.....
上を向いて歩こう	Ue o muite arukou	.....
涙がこぼれないように	Namida ga kobore nai you ni	.....
泣きながら歩く	Nakinagara aruku	.....
一人ぼっちの夜	Hitoribotchi no yoru	.....
思い出す秋の日	Omoidasu aki no hi	.....
一人ぼっちの夜	Hitoribotchi no yoru	.....
悲しみは月のかげに	Kanashimi wa hoshi no kage ni	.....
悲しみは星のかげに	Kanashimi wa tsuki no kage ni	.....
上を向いて歩こう	Ue o muite arukou	.....
涙がこぼれないように	Namidaga kobore nai you ni	.....
泣きながら歩く	Nakinagara aruku	.....
一人ぼっちの夜	Hitoribotchi no yoru	.....
一人ぼっちの夜	Hitoribotchi no yoru	.....

<sup>59</sup> [http://lyrics.wikia.com/wiki/%E5%9D%82%E6%9C%AC%E4%B9%9D\\_\(Kyu\\_Sakamoto\):%E4%B8%8A%E3%82%92%E5%90%91%E3%81%84%E3%81%A6%E6%AD%A9%E3%81%93%E3%81%86](http://lyrics.wikia.com/wiki/%E5%9D%82%E6%9C%AC%E4%B9%9D_(Kyu_Sakamoto):%E4%B8%8A%E3%82%92%E5%90%91%E3%81%84%E3%81%A6%E6%AD%A9%E3%81%93%E3%81%86) (3/5/2017)



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## 坂本九 – Kyu Sakamoto

### 上を向いて歩こう – Ue o muitearukou

#### JAPANESE LYRICS: <sup>62</sup>

#### TRANSCRIPTED: <sup>63</sup>

#### ENGLISH TRANSLATION: <sup>64</sup>

上を向いて歩こう 涙がこぼれないように 思い出す春の日 一人ぼっちの夜	Ue o muite arukou Namida ga kobore nai you ni Omoi dasu haru no hi Hitoribotchi no yoru	I look up when I walk So the tears won't fall down Remembering those spring days But tonight I'm all alone
上を向いて歩こう にじんだ星を数えて 思い出す夏の日 一人ぼっちの夜	Ue o muite arukou Nijinda hoshi o kazoete Omoi dasu natsu no hi Hitoribotchi no yoru	I look up when I walk Counting stars with tearful eyes Remembering those summer days But tonight I'm all alone
幸せは雲の上に 幸せは空の上に	Shiawase wa kumo no ue ni Shiawase wa sora no ue ni	Happiness lies beyond the clouds Happiness lies above the sky
上を向いて歩こう 涙がこぼれないように 泣きながら歩く 一人ぼっちの夜	Ue o muite arukou Namida ga kobore nai yooni Nakinaga ra aruku Hitoribotchi no yoru	I look up when I walk So the tears won't fall down I walk while I'm crying But tonight I'm all alone
思い出す秋の日 一人ぼっちの夜	Omoidasu aki no hi Hitoribotchi no yoru	Remembering those autumn days But tonight I'm all alone
悲しみは月のかげに 悲しみは星のかげに	Kanashimi wa hoshi no kage ni Kanashimi wa tsuki no kage ni	Sadness lies in the shadow of the moon Sadness lies in the shadow of the stars
上を向いて歩こう 涙がこぼれないように 泣きながら歩く 一人ぼっちの夜 一人ぼっちの夜	Ue o muite arukou Namida ga kobore nai you ni Nakinagara aruku Hitoribotchi no yoru Hitoribotchi no yoru	I look up when I walk So the tears won't fall down I walk while I'm crying But tonight I'm all alone But tonight I'm all alone

<sup>61</sup> <http://www.rocknroll-schallplatten-forum.de/viewtopic.php?p=69593&sid=691fc8a17bd50ad730682588be2898cd> (3/5/2017)

<sup>62</sup> [http://lyrics.wikia.com/wiki/%E5%9D%82%E6%9C%AC%E4%B9%9D\\_\(Kyu\\_Sakamoto\):%E4%B8%8A%E3%82%92%E5%90%91%E3%81%84%E3%81%A6%E6%AD%A9%E3%81%93%E3%81%86](http://lyrics.wikia.com/wiki/%E5%9D%82%E6%9C%AC%E4%B9%9D_(Kyu_Sakamoto):%E4%B8%8A%E3%82%92%E5%90%91%E3%81%84%E3%81%A6%E6%AD%A9%E3%81%93%E3%81%86) (3/5/2017)

<sup>63</sup> [http://www.jpopasia.com/lyrics/23105/kyu\\_sakamoto/sukiyaki-ue-wo-muite-arukou/](http://www.jpopasia.com/lyrics/23105/kyu_sakamoto/sukiyaki-ue-wo-muite-arukou/) (3/5/2017)

<sup>64</sup> <http://lyricstranslate.com/de/ue-o-muite-aruk%C5%8D-sukiyaki-i-look-when-i-walk.html> (3/5/2017)



# PHOTOGRAPH POEM

1. **Google** “photograph free download” (e.g. [www.unsplash.com](http://www.unsplash.com))
2. Look for a **photograph** you like that is related with Japan, Japanese language and/or Japanese culture, **download** it and note the **name of the photographer** underneath the photograph
  - e.g. Onsen, Sakura, Samurai, Sumo, Ikebana, Fujisan, Tokyo, any other city or island, etc.
3. **Print** it out and place it on the left side of your **handout** or describe it in a few words
4. **Look** at it closely
5. **Imagine** you were there....
6. What would you **SEE/SMELL/HEAR/..?** What does it make you **THINK** of? How does it make you **FEEL**? What kind of **MEMORIES** arise? etc.
7. **Brainstorm** everything that comes to your mind and write it on your handout
8. Now **start** writing **your poem** on an extra sheet of paper (you may choose length and form; but at least five lines) inspired by your notes
9. Use at least three **literary devices**:
  - **alliteration** (lovely lady),
  - **assonance** (super duper, great Katie),
  - **repetition** (I can see a big house, I can smell roses, I can hear birds twittering)
  - **metaphor** – comparison that uses IS (My life **is** an open book)
  - **simile** – comparison that uses LIKE or AS (Life is **like** a box of chocolates)
  - **If you want look online and discover more literary devices**
  -
10. Have fun!! 😊😊

# Perception Training

TIME

SETTING

PEOPLE

PLACE

TOUCH

SMELL

TASTE

HEAR

SIGHT

IMAGE  
OR DESCRIPTION OF  
PICTURE

SPACE FOR  
MORE NOTES AND IDEAS

Source: Gail Pittaway

### Lesson Plan 3: Visual Poetry: Black-Out Poetry, Shape Poetry, Acrostic Poetry

Rough time frame	Procedure	Inter-action format	Skills	Materials	Notes
3'	<b>Introduction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I welcome the Ss to our third poetry writing lesson and ask them whether they have any questions regarding homework, the poetry reading or the poetry book</li> </ul>	T -> Ss	Listening		
20-45'	<b>CW: Black-out Poetry – “Black-out Murakami”</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I ask the Ss whether they have ever heard about black-out poetry and let them guess what it could be</li> <li>I show them some PP slides with scans of black-out poems</li> <li>Together we define what black-out poetry is and how it is created</li> <li>Then, I try to find out whether they have heard about or read any books of <i>Haruki Murakami</i> 村上春樹, an internationally famous Japanese best-selling author, while projecting a photograph of the man</li> <li>I explain that each one of them is going to create black-out poems with photocopies of the translated version of the short novel “The Strange Library”</li> <li>I project the instructions and distribute the two exemplars of the same photocopied page</li> <li>I encourage the Ss to choose words they like and/or find interesting, regardless of whether they know their meaning or not</li> <li>I add that the artistical finalization of the poem, as in drawings, etc., may be done at home</li> </ul>	T->Ss; S, S, S	Listening, writing	Handout: “The Strange Library” (2 photocopies per person)	The Strange Library is a very short novel of about 60 pages. The book does not only consist of words, but also drawings which emphasize the written content.
20'	<b>CW: Shape Poetry – “Shapeshifting Japan”</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I project some shape poems and ask the Ss what they perceive and think</li> <li>I ask them how one may go about to write a shape poem</li> <li>I show them the in-between steps of the creation of a shape poem I have written myself</li> </ul>	T<->S,S,S	Listening, writing	Handout: “Shape poetry – Forms”, handout: “Shape Poetry - Instructions”	I give them insight into the process of creation of a poem I have written myself so that they may see: A poem starts with one idea, and only

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Together we come up with an instruction to write a shape poem</li> <li>• Then, I distribute a number of different shapes, but tell them to be free to draw/create one themselves</li> </ul>				<p>step by step it becomes a finished poem. In addition, it is important for them to see average work, and not only accomplished oeuvres done by artists and poets. I created this simple shape poem in about fifteen minutes and it beautifully shows how one idea inspired the next.</p>
3'	<p><b>“Homepleasure”: Acrostic Poem– “Beautiful Japanese Words”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I ask the Ss to think together with their neighbors of some German words which might not have an equivalent term in English</li> <li>• E.g. Angsthase, Weltschmerz, Heimweh, Dreikäsehoch, asf.</li> <li>• I encourage the Ss to think of words in other languages which might not have an equivalent term in German or English</li> <li>• E.g. savoir-vivre (french), l’abbioco (italian), merkat (serbian), gluggaveður (icelandic), gumusservi (turkish), asf.</li> <li>• Then, I show them some Japanese words with no German or English equivalent</li> <li>• I ask the Ss whether they have an idea what an acrostic poem could be</li> <li>• Together we look at the following power point slides and discover the making of of a simple acrostic poem inspired by a Japanese concept</li> <li>• I distribute the handout “Acrostic Poetry - Instructions”</li> </ul>	<p>T&lt;-&gt;Ss; S+S; S+S+S</p>	<p>Listening, speaking</p>	<p>Handout “Acrostic Poetry – Instructions”</p>	<p>The example poem was written by myself as well. Again, I try to give the Ss an insight into the process of creation.</p>

## BLACK-OUT POEM

1. Skim through the text
  2. Underline the words you like, sound nice or look pretty/interesting/curious to you with a PENCIL
  3. Read the words you have underlined like a poem and see whether you like it. Underline or erase more words if you want.
  4. Write down your poem. Choose the arrangement of the sentences and the adding of punctuation marks.
  5. Color the words you kept for your own poem.
  6. Black out the words you do not need for your poem.
  7. If you want you may draw a picture instead of blackening-out the rest of the text (google for more ideas).
  8. Give your poem a title!
- 

## BLACK-OUT POEM

1. Skim through the text
2. Underline the words you like, sound nice or look pretty/interesting/curious to you with a PENCIL
3. Read the words you have underlined like a poem and see whether you like it. Underline or erase more words if you want.
4. Write down your poem. Choose the arrangement of the sentences and the adding of punctuation marks.
5. Color the words you kept for your own poem.
6. Black out the words you do not need for your poem.
7. If you want you may draw a picture instead of blackening-out the rest of the text (google for more ideas).
8. Give your poem a title!

## Extract for black-out poetry

It was early morning, and the library was deserted. We raced up the stairs and across the main hall to the Reading Room, forced open a window, and tumbled out. Then we ran as fast as we could to the park, where we collapsed on the lawn. We lay there, gasping for air with our eyes closed. I didn't open mine for quite some time.

When I did, the sheep man was gone. I stood up and looked around. I called his name at the top of my lungs. But there was no reply. The morning sun was casting its first rays against the leaves of the trees. The sheep man had disappeared without a word to me. Just as the morning dew had evaporated.

(26)

My mother had set a hot breakfast on the table and was waiting for me when I got home. She didn't ask me a thing. Not about why I hadn't come home from school, or where I had spent the last three nights, or why I was shoeless—not a single question or complaint. It wasn't like her at all.

My pet starling was gone. Only its empty cage remained. I didn't ask what happened. It seemed best to avoid that topic altogether. My mother's profile seemed to have darkened very slightly, as if shadows were gathering around her. But that may have been no more than my impression.

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## Shape poem



1. Think of a concept related to Japan, Japanese culture and/or Japanese language
2. Pick a shape that inspires you and/or that reflects your chosen concept
3. You may also draw a sketch yourself
4. Write down everything that comes to your mind that you relate with this concept
5. You may also impersonate the concept and write the poem from its point of view
6. Write at least five lines
7. Give your poem a title!



## Shape poem

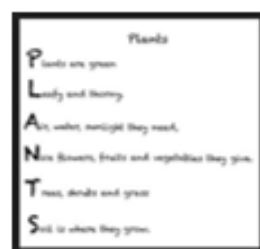


1. Think of a concept related to Japan, Japanese culture and/or Japanese language
2. Pick a shape that inspires you and/or that reflects your chosen concept
3. You may also draw a sketch yourself
4. Write down everything that comes to your mind that you relate with this concept
5. You may also impersonate the concept and write the poem from its point of view
6. Write at least five lines
7. Give your poem a title!



## Acrostic poem

1. Write down a noun vertically so that each letter stands in one line
2. Write a word or sentence down that starts with the letter at the beginning of the line
3. Do this with each letter. The words/sentences may form a coherent text but do not have to
4. You may change the words/sentences at the end to make them rhyme
5. Give your poem a title



.....

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## Lesson Plan 4: Oral Poetry and Poetry Reading

rough time frame	procedure	inter-action format	skills	materials	notes
7'	<b>Introduction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I tell the Ss what we are going to do today</li> </ul> <b>Organizational issues</b> regarding the <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>formatting and sending of poems via mail</li> <li>printing and receiving of the poetry book</li> </ul> <b>Official ending</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I thank the Ss for their work and effort</li> </ul>	T -> Ss	Listening		At the beginning of the lesson I have all their attention, which is the reason why I chose to start the lesson going through the last organizational issues.
10'	<b>IT “ImpRenku 連句”</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I invite the Ss to form a circle in class and explain what a <i>renku</i> 連句 is.</li> <li>One S may start with a sentence, the S standing next to her/him continues with a fitting verse.</li> <li>This activity is finished when the improvised poem finds its natural end, or when no more time is left.</li> </ul>	S, S, S	Speaking		As I do not know whether they are going to be shy when it comes to presenting their personal writings, I prepared a warm- up activity. Students need to improvise a Japanese oral poem together.
3'	<b>Photo session</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I ask the Ss to gather in front of the black board with me and ask my colleague to take some pictures for the poetry book</li> </ul>		Speaking	Camera	
~20'	<b>Poetry reading</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One by one the Ss come forward to read out their poems.</li> </ul>	S/Ss->Ss, T			The poetry reading is voluntary
~10'	<b>Questionnaire</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I encourage the Ss to give me constructive feedback, i.e. to tell me honestly what they liked and did not like, however providing a reason and a suggestion of how to improve</li> <li>I tell them that it is an anonymous questionnaire</li> <li>and that they may answer in English as well as in German.</li> </ul>	S, S, S	Writing	Ques.	The questionnaire consists of three short and easy-to-understand questions.
	<b>THANK YOU!</b>				

## **Appendix B: Power Point Presentations**

see attached CD

## **Appendix C: Poetry Book of the PBWP**

see attached CD

## Appendix D: Questionnaire

### Questionnaire – New Forms of Creative Writing

1.) Do you think it is relevant to learn about different languages and writing scripts at school?

Why?

2.) Which activity did you like best and why?

3.) What else would you like to tell me?

## Appendix E: Curriculum Vitae

### VERA KLOIMWIDER

**E-Mail Address:** vera.kloimwider@gmail.com

**Date of Birth:** 10.09.1988

**Nationality:** Austrian

#### EDUCATION

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| 2010 – 2018 | <b>Education and Teacher Training</b> , University of Vienna, Austria<br><i>Program of studies: English and French</i> |
| 2014 – 2015 | <b>Exchange Year</b> , University of Novi Sad, Serbia  |
| 2013 – 2014 | <b>Exchange Semester</b> , State University of Saint Petersburg, Russia  |
| 2008 – 2010 | <b>Cross-cultural Communication</b> , University of Vienna, Austria<br><i>Program of studies: French and Japanese</i>  |
| 2007 – 2008 | <b>French Language Course</b> , University of Sorbonne, Paris IV, France   |

#### ADDITIONAL FORMATION

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| 2018        | <b>First Aid Course</b><br><i>at Red Cross Austria</i>  |
| 2007 - 2016 | <b>Extensive Language Courses and Language Tandem Training</b><br><i>in French, Spanish, Russian and Serbian</i>      |
| Jan 2016    | <b>Improvisational Theater Workshop</b> in Vienna, Austria<br><i>Supervisor: Mag. Markus Czerwenka</i>                |
| July 2014   | <b>Teacher Training Summer School</b> in Aveiro, Portugal<br><i>HOWBET – How To Become A European Teacher</i>         |
| 2010 – 2014 | <b>Self-awareness Coaching</b> in Reichenau and Vienna, Austria<br><i>Coaches: Birgit Hofmann and Andrea Hovenier</i> |

#### WORK EXPERIENCE

- |                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Feb 2018 – present       | <b>Self-employed</b> as “Poet, Lyricist & Language Teacher”<br><i>Current Book Project: “Der Schöpfungsattem”</i> |
| 2007 – 2018              | <b>German, English and French Tutor</b><br><i>References on request</i>   |
| July 2015 – July 2016    | <b>Book Writing Assistant</b> in Vienna, Austria<br><i>Bernadette Orth: “Aurora. Die sprechenden Auren.”</i>      |
| Aug 2014                 | <b>Writing Intern</b> in Vienna, Austria<br><i>Reise Aktuell, travel magazine</i>                                 |
| Aug – Sept 2011 and 2012 | <b>English Teacher</b> in Niksar and Çorlu, Turkey<br><i>EDIT association – Development through Interaction</i>   |
| Apr – June 2012          | <b>English Tutor</b> in Vienna, Austria<br><i>Ute Bock, Association for refugees</i>                              |

2005 – 2014     **Further professional experience** as waitress, harvester and personal assistance in geriatric care  
*References on request*

## LANGUAGE SKILLS

		Speaking	Writing	Listening	Reading
German	<b>Mother tongue</b>				
English	<b>Proficiency</b>	C1/C2	C1/C2	C2	C2
French	<b>Proficiency</b>	C1	C1	C2	C2
Serbian	<b>Intermediate</b>	A2	A2	B1	B1
Russian	<b>Intermediate</b>	B1	A2	B1	B1
Spanish	<b>Intermediate</b>	A2	B1	B1	B1
Turkish	<b>Beginner</b>	A1	-	A1	A1
Japanese	<b>Beginner</b>	-	Hiragana, Katakana	A1	Hiragana, Katakana
<i>Language levels according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)</i>					

**IT SKILLS**     Microsoft Office 2011

**DRIVING LICENCES**     A, B, C, C1, E, F