Korean English Teachers' Perceptions about Teaching and Assessing Multimodal Composition: A New Direction for Writing Instruction and Assessment in the 21st Century

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KOREAN ENGLISH TEACHERS’ PERCEPTIONS ABOUT TEACHING AND ASSESSING MULTIMODAL COMPOSITION: A NEW DIRECTION FOR WRITING INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT IN THE 21ST CENTURY

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ABSTRACT

Literacy in the 21st century is not confined to communication based on reading and writing only print texts. New literacies include multimedia projects and multimodal texts, which include visual, audio, and technological elements to produce all types of products. The writing classroom, in particular, should reflect these social and technological changes in communication. It is critical for writing teachers to understand that literacies are historically, socially, culturally, and developmentally situated and to adapt as they change. By teaching multimodal composition, they may help students learn about effective writing that can appeal to various audiences and serve specific practical purposes and specific real-world contexts.

The theoretical background of the study is a social semiotic theory that concerns how people communicate using semiotic resources in a particular setting. The semiotic resources, which are actions, artifacts, and materials, are not fixed but are transformed by the sign-makers’ choices. Aligned with this social semiotic theory, multimodal composition draws on diverse semiotic resources such as image, music, actions, and so forth. The use of these resources is always influenced not only by personal interests but also by interpersonal and institutional power relations. Teaching multimodal composition is a response to needs in an age of digital communication and to changing semiotic environments.

The purpose of the dissertation is to determine how Korean secondary English teachers understand and assess multimodal composition in the era of new communication. Framing the study are questions that ask teachers what they think and say about teaching and assessing multimodal composition in their writing classrooms, and about barriers or challenges to their doing so.

Six Korean secondary English teachers working in public schools in metropolitan areas were recruited for this multiple case study to examine their attitudes toward and understanding of multimodal composition in the test-oriented culture of Korea. Semi-structured interviews and classroom observations were conducted, and documents were collected to triangulate interview findings. The findings of the study indicated that teaching of multimodal composition is linked to affective engagement, increased understanding, and focus on communication. However, some participants expressed concerns about teaching multimodal composition due to external barriers (e.g., tests) or internal barriers (e.g., low confidence). In order to overcome the obstacles, targeted additional professional development is needed.
South Korea was chosen as the research site because schools prioritize high-stakes standardized tests, and teachers (also students and parents) gauge success by test scores. As a result, teachers primarily rely on direct instructions via lecture to provide skills and knowledge to ensure that students will succeed in the high-stakes tests. However, ongoing technology outside of school has transformed ways young people generate, communicate, and negotiate meanings via diverse texts. If the primary goal of education is to teach students life-long skills needed in society, it is a responsibility that the schools and teachers recognize social changes and promote individual learning needs. Therefore, this study explores teaching and assessment practices in the context of Korean English classrooms and suggests a new direction reflecting social changes and changing student needs for the era of new communication in the 21st century.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

English has been taught in secondary schools in South Korea since 1883 (Kim, 2008). It was not an important subject at first, but it has become one of the major subjects along with Korean and math (Oryang, 2003). Since English became a mandatory school subject in 1997, the focus has been on teaching grammar (Fouser, 2011). Most class activities involved translating passages from English to the native language, memorizing vocabulary in isolated contexts, and drilling grammatical rules (Oryang, 2003). Teachers did not need good oral skills in English because explanations were done in the native language, and the focus was not on facilitating communication (Brown, 2007). Generally speaking, teachers perceived English as a tool for understanding a foreign language for academic purposes rather than as a vehicle to communicate with people around the world (Richards, 2001). This view is consistent with Krashen’s (1982) distinction between language learning and language acquisition: In a second language setting, a language is consciously learned (not acquired), leading to more attention to form than to communication.

As English has taken hold as an international language, English teachers are encouraged to focus on teaching communicative abilities (Brown, 2007). The increasing communication between countries via the Internet makes geographic boundaries insignificant. As a result of the needs of a fast changing society, new insights on “texts, new models of learning, and new national needs” are required in the 21st century (Myers, 1996). In spite of the importance of communicative competence in English education, Korean English teachers are likely to have far less motivation to teach writing compared to other areas such as reading and listening because of the continuing test-driven orientation and a lack of teacher training in teaching writing (Yang & Son, 2009).

Although the English curriculum does not emphasize writing, students now have more opportunities to read and write outside of school. Online communities such as Facebook, MySpace, tweets, and blogs enable students to read what others write and to write their own ideas. Many students who do not show any interest in writing participate actively and competently in these types of activities without realizing they are writing (Park & Selfe, 2011; Witte, 2007). This illustrates the gap between the school curriculum and networked
environments where students use English for interacting with people globally. It also points to the need to support improved writing instruction for students, and to encourage teachers to expand their definition of literacy and learn ways to combine digital technology with traditional writing instruction (NCTE, 2008). The purpose of this study is to examine teachers’ perceptions toward such changed environments and to suggest practical guidelines to support writing instructions.

Background of Study

Literacy and Multiliteracies

According to the definition of literacy approved by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE, 2008), “literacy is a collection of cultural and communicative practices shared by a group of people” (n.p.). By such a definition, literacy is unstable, dynamic, and flexible as it reflects ever-changing social values, attitudes, and interests. For example, literacy is traditionally defined as an ability to read and write. Students passively respond to teachers’ instructions and polish basic skills involving individual activities (Myers, 1996).

In the 21st century, individuals need a wide range of abilities to respond to changing social needs (Myers, 1996), and multiple and multimodal literacies, using the tools of technology, are challenging the traditional form of literacy. As a result, the English Language Arts curriculum must change. As the Internet and digital technology make us reconsider the definitions of text and of writing pedagogy (Froehlich, 2013), new media literacies demand that students master three skills: (1) functional skill to enhance students’ understanding about managing technology; (2) critical skill to help students to regard digital technology as a tool to understand social and political contexts; and (3) rhetorical skill to help students choose the best way to convey their ideas (DeVoss, 2010).

The new literacies are not confined to communication through reading and writing using only print texts. Rather, literacy now includes multimedia and multimodal texts – visual, audio, and technological – to produce all types of products (Grabill, 2005). In other words, multimodal aspects of texts challenge the concept of language (Kress, 2000). Kress (2000) used an example of a science classroom where students were asked to write and to draw what they had done. They
did not just reproduce what they had learned, but transformed their understanding by using different modes such as speech, images, and writing.

The New London Group (1996) expanded the definitions of literacy and literacy pedagogy. They introduced the notion of multiliteracies to show that modes of representation are far broader than language. The importance of modes may differ, depending on various contexts; for example, some cultures put more emphasis on visual or aural modes rather than print. Even so, new communication media, with rapidly evolving technologies, have reshaped the ways people globally understand and use language today.

The key emphasis of multiliteracies is on encompassing a variety of representational modes as communication channels (Mills, 2009). The verbal or linguistic mode is regarded as one of the integral parts of communication (perhaps even the basic mode), but it is not sufficient to account for multimodal text designs. For example, rather than formal language, computer users generate more spoken-like, informal texts, and even use symbols as new standard terms (Mills, 2009). In response to such a fast-changing textual environment, literacy education supporting multiliteracies attempts to move from a formal, standard, mono-modal mode toward informal, regional, and multimodal forms of communication (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000). Texts such as emails, websites, databases, and pictures cannot be overlooked in relation to print literature (Mills, 2009). The New London Group (1996) notes many types of literacies as forms of communication that should be recognized in the classroom. The list is as follows:

- school literacy vs. home or local literacy
- formal language vs. informal, colloquial, vernacular, and conversational language
- written communication vs. graphic, projected, spoken, or enacted communication
- literacy (the school subject) vs. mathematics, science, history, geography, etc.
- official national languages vs. regional, aboriginal, immigrant, and foreign language (as cited in Rowsell et al., 2008).

The acceptance of multiliteracies has profound implications for English education in Korea. Such linguistic and cultural diversity requires teachers to change their views on teaching writing skills and standards. That is, teachers should not force students to accept only one standard or set of skills, but should teach them to be flexible by using “multiple languages,
multiple Englishes, and communication patterns” (New London Group, 1996, p. 64). Teachers as active agents must reconceptualize literacy and literacy pedagogy and help students to participate in meaning-making processes for a changing society.

**Teachers’ Readiness to Teach and Assess New Literacies**

A key aspect in the practice of new literacies is understanding that they are more self-generated than literacy supported by formal institutions (Barton & Lee, 2012). Barton and Lee defined these multiliteracies as vernacular literacies compared with the dominant literacy most appreciated in a school setting. Vernacular literacies are not valued and are often used outside educational institutions, where people use technological advancements to engage in literacy activities by exchanging emails or text messages and responding to posts or writing stories (Barton & Lee, 2012). In other words, to understand new literacies is to reframe literacy to consider social and cultural contexts that people sustain or reinforce in specific ways (Cervetti et al., 2006; Hill, 2010).

To respond to these dramatic changes in literacy, English language arts teachers must help students acquire the new skills, which are critical to individual and community success (NCTE, 2008). As multimodality challenges students to expand their learning, teachers are challenged to respond to and assess this type of student work. The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE, 2008) addresses that students in the 21st century should

- develop proficiency and fluency with the tools of technology;
- build intentional cross-cultural connections and relationships with others so as to pose and solve problems collaboratively and strengthen independent thought;
- design and share information for global communities to meet a variety of purposes;
- manage, analyze, and synthesize multiple streams of simultaneous information;
- create, critique, analyze, and evaluate multimedia text; and
- attend to the ethical responsibilities required by these complex environments.

Because multimodality brings a variety of forms of communication and modes to the learning process, it does not mean that teachers must abandon traditional skills to teach multimodal literacy. A pedagogy of multiliteracies is meant to supplement traditional literacy rather than
replace it (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000; New London Group, 1996; Rowsell et al., 2008), as traditional strategies and skills can be used in enhancing students’ digital competency. Theories and practices used in traditional writing classes can help students develop knowledge and extend their ideas (Zumbrunn & Krause, 2012). Graham and Perin (2007) point out that students move along from knowledge-telling to knowledge-transformation when they use skills to become proficient writers. Multimodality can support their learning so that students who develop traditional literacy skills can become knowledge-transformers (Kress, 2000; Ranker, 2007). Graupner, Nickoson-Massey, and Blair (2009) related students’ participating in multimodal projects to knowledge-making processes. For example, creating class blogs provided students with an opportunity to converse and do research from multiple positions (e.g., participants, writers, and researchers) by responding to images and visual differences between linguistic and non-linguistic signs. By so doing, they can “produce, represent, and interpret writing research” (p. 18) while developing reflective pedagogies.

Teachers continue to play a crucial role in facilitating student learning (Bruce, 2009; Hill, 2010; Ryan, 2010). They can encourage students’ participation in classroom activities by providing a student-centered atmosphere, for example. The focus of multimodal instruction is to help students make meanings in a variety of concrete social contexts and collaborate through various activities such as media productions (Husbye et al., 2012). When students have opportunities to practice autonomy, team building, and cooperation by engaging in interpersonal interactions, they are learning lifelong skills (Husbye et al., 2012).

Multimodality helps students become keenly aware of audiences (readers) and encourages them to choose the most effective tools to convey their thoughts (Stornaiuolo et al., 2009). Students consider the visual effects of color, boldness, and layout to make their readers focus on specific content (Hills, 2010). When integrating performance elements into the writing process, students review their own writing as well as their peers’ from an audience perspective. In this case, using voice, gesture, and movement to communicate with audiences about their topic becomes an act of literacy (Jones, 2010). Thus, as writers move among different modes, the available modes and multiple semiotic systems orchestrate meanings for representation as well as communication (Stornaiuolo et al., 2009).

In spite of positive aspects of multimodality, quite a number of teachers are reluctant to integrate multimodality into the classroom because of various barriers or challenges. Since
multimodality usually involves using a computer, lack of computer availability or lack of teacher training in using technology present obvious barriers (Albirini, 2006). Other identified barriers are the lack of knowledge of learner-centered instruction (An & Reigeluth, 2011) or how to integrate multimodality into learner-centered classrooms (Edwards-Grves, 2010).

Assessment of multimodal products is another challenge. Traditional assessment criteria are not appropriate because these typically assess linguistic elements; however, considering the complexity of multimodality, teachers can integrate different criteria to assess nontraditional texts. As Lankshear and Knobel (2006) indicate, new literacies differ from old literacies in that while the latter emphasizes primarily form and content, the former emphasizes and evaluates “participatory,” “collaborative,” and “distributed” aspects. New literacies require students to participate and even collaborate with others to produce meanings using a wide range of modes. Understanding new literacies as ongoing processes to construct identities and form valued activities with a range of intertextuality is critical to their assessment (Hammett, 2007). Hammett’s holistic rubric (2007) is an example that current curricula can employ to encapsulate activities and skills associated with new literacy.

Teachers are encouraged to develop new skills and attitudes required in teaching new literacies. They can transform school practices by moving beyond a narrowly defined view of literacy to new literacies, which are more flexibly situated in personal, social, and historical contexts (Cervetti et al., 2006). To be creative, responsive, and knowledgeable, teachers can participate in extensive professional programs (Kennedy & Shiel, 2010). Professional development provides teachers with resources and materials not only to acquire general knowledge and apply it in the classroom, but also to transform teaching and learning (Boykin et al., 2004). Professional development varies from formal institutes (e.g., National Writing Project [NWP] affiliated with universities to serve teachers) to informal meetings with other people in the same profession. Either way, when groups of teachers identify a common problem and engage with other teachers to solve it, they play the role of leaders (Lieberman & Friedrich, 2010) in transforming writing practices and the culture of writing in their schools.

The main purpose of professional development for teachers is to expand their knowledge and cultivate their own teaching practices (Lieberman & Friedrich, 2010) through collaborative learning. In Sonia Nieto’s keynote speech delivered at NWP’s 2008 meeting, she addressed the need for professional development to sustain teachers in challenging situations and in the
changing culture of schools. A statement presented by NCTE (2006) is consistent with Nieto’s point. Professional development is a critical factor that affects not only teachers themselves but also their students because it supports teachers at all levels of expertise and provides best practice models to enhance teachers’ classroom practices.

**English Language Instruction in Korea**

There is a strong connection between language learning and new literacies in that both the language learner and the literate person are required to be sensitive to literate environments and to know that literacies are dynamic and situated in social trajectories (NCTE, 2008). With this in mind, the Korean government\(^1\) has emphasized that more resources should be directed toward improving students’ communicative competence in English instead of just toward their learning the written language (Oryang, 2003). As a result, teacher education now focuses on improving teachers’ communication skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and on adopting communicative language teaching (CLT) approaches for use in the classroom (Park & Son, 2009). CLT emphasizes goals focusing on elements such as grammar, discourse, functions, and strategies within authentic contexts. The ultimate goal of language learning is thus to encourage students to communicate in unrehearsed contexts in the target language (Brown, 2007), as well as to improve language competencies.

Although English is not an official language in Korea, it is taught in schools; however, students have few opportunities to practice the target language (e.g., English) outside of school (Brown, 2007). English as a foreign language (EFL) has been limited to academic settings, so English learners do not have much opportunity to communicate with native English speakers (Celce-Murcia, 2002). Also, despite the mandate for CLT, the test-driven environment and standardized curriculum present challenges for Korean English teachers wanting to use CLT approaches. High stakes tests have a tremendous effect on learning and teaching practice in Korea (Yook, 2010). The College Scholastic Ability Test (CSAT) exemplifies what drives teachers to use mostly teacher-centered lectures in the classroom. As CSAT is conducted only once a year for 12\(^{th}\) grade students or high school graduates, the students must make their best

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\(^1\) The direction of English education began to shift in 1997, when English became a mandatory subject, and to date the English curriculum has changed six times, reflecting social changes and needs (Korean Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, 2007).
efforts to obtain the best possible results. Teachers are charged with helping students achieve
good scores in this high stakes test because CSAT scores play a major role in determining which
universities students may qualify to enter, affecting their future careers. Most high school
students prepare for this standardized test over at least three years. The assumption that more and
earlier preparation gives students an advantage and increases the possibility of their learning a
wider range of knowledge results in parents’ pushing their children to start studying at an early
age. There is much pressure on teachers as well, since students’ scores also are used to determine
teacher effectiveness.

The CSAT is divided into five areas (“College Scholastic Ability Test”, n.d.): Korean,
Mathematics, English, Social Studies/Science, and Foreign Languages, all of which have a
multiple choice format. Specifically, English has 45 questions, including 17 listening and 28
reading items. Students are required to finish the section in 70 minutes. Since all questions
require choosing the best answer after reading or listening to passages, much class time is given
over to drill and practice using previous tests. Because the test materials and passages generally
are not relevant to student life, they do not engage the students in further learning (Kilickaya,
2004).

CLT and 21st century literacies are a logical fit for the broad goals of Korean language
education, despite the major challenge of an overemphasis on the entrance examination for
university. The conceptual framework lies in understanding the social and cultural dynamics
surrounding the teaching and learning environment. If students are no longer passive learners
(Hill, 2010) who absorb knowledge transmitted from teachers, language instructions tied to
traditional forms of literacy, mainly focusing on translating and memorizing passages (language
learning vs. language acquisition [Krashen, 1982]), may not work for them in an age when new
technologies and fast-growing information are transforming society.

Some teachers provide alternative ways to improve their students’ language proficiency
in the classroom. For example, in an EFL setting where students lack opportunities to meet
native English speakers and to access a wide variety of authentic materials, the teachers suggest
using digital technology and multimedia to help students experience the target language in and
outside of school (Park & Son, 2009). Such tools provide a variety of language inputs
represented by multiple modes of forms and contexts that school curricula and textbooks cannot.
The communicative contexts enable learners to read and use “socially, contextually, and
culturally appropriate language” forms (Park & Son, 2009, p. 80), and offer opportunities to develop 21st-century literacy skills.

**Multimodality and Writing Instruction in Korea**

Visual literacy and communication modes have an impact on educational settings (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996). Different modes complement each other to construct new meanings and contribute to making coherent multimodal texts. Specifically, the multimodal approach is believed to be beneficial to English language learners with limited English in that it helps them engage in multiple reading and writing activities. In other words, shifting modes from visual to verbal or vice versa help students better understand, appreciate, and interpret complex concepts written in English (Early & Marshall, 2008). Britsch (2009) addressed the importance of nonlinguistic representations as central to English language development. As several researchers (Coggins, Kravin, Coates & Carroll, 2007; Gerlic & Jausovec, 1999) have indicated, interactions of verbal and nonverbal communication are likely to promote understanding about contents because of the positive relation between brain activity and use of nonlinguistic representations.

Another benefit of multimodality is its emphasis on recognizing marginalized voices. This approach is closely related to critical analysis in that this view allows students to become aware of the political and dominant forms of literacy (Rowsell et al., 2008). By understanding the nature of literacies as being conditioned in a situation where they develop (Bomer et al., 2010; Heath, 1982; Scribner & Cole, 1981), students foster an insight that literacy extends beyond learning only standard English and print-based representational modes (Mills, 2009).

However, multimodality represents a complex set of challenges for Korean teachers and schools. English teachers rarely integrate multimodal aspects into their writing instruction because of the emphasis on form-focused instructions (e.g., error correction) (Vasilopoulos, 2008). They may provide video clips or images to entertain students between lessons, but in many cases, the integration or sponsorship of multimodality may not be relevant to instruction and does not complement traditional literacies (Han & Kinzer, 2008). The mismatch is explained by an imbalance in teaching content. As noted, despite recognition of the benefits of CLT, the main focus of English education in Korea is still on teaching more receptive skills such as reading and listening rather than productive skills such as speaking and writing (Monaghan & Saul, 1987). Teachers continue to spend most of their instructional time teaching reading
comprehension to prepare students for tests, with writing instruction of secondary importance. Mostly, teachers’ use of multimodal instruction limits writing activities to a one-time reward before or after reading instruction. In a culture where the results of high-stakes tests are most important, teaching writing not grounded in social, cultural, and political contexts cannot connect students to understand communities beyond printed texts (Shin & Cimasko, 2008). The qualitative study conducted by Shin and Cimasko (2008) also found that such a test-oriented culture affects students’ perceptions about multimodal composition, and that they interpret non-linguistic elements as less valuable resources compared to academic texts whose modes mainly depend on language. According to Ajayi’s (2008) quantitative research, ESL teachers experience constraints between what diverse students bring (e.g., values, attitudes, expectations, etc.) and what authorities do to enact language teaching policy. One of the important findings of the study was that policymakers who did not pay attention to cultural, social, and political contexts brought unintentional consequences to teachers and students. As a result of polices specifying skills for English language proficiency enacted by No Child Left Behind (NCLB), Hispanic children came to have the perceptions that school is an English-only zone and that their native language and culture needed to be removed. In the same vein, the specific contexts in Korea construe the role of school as an institution to develop language skills in an isolated situation where people negate human interactions or learning in a broader social and cultural context.

External barriers prevent teachers from employing student-centered, collaborative, and open-ended approaches supported by features of multimodality. For example, the student-centered approach that is frequently used in multimodal composition poses a challenge for teachers. In this approach, teachers have an obligation to consider students’ diverse needs and uniqueness in order to provide students with personally meaningful, personalized learning opportunities (An & Reigeluth, 2011). However, conditions such as class size and teachers’ tight daily schedules discourage teachers in Korea from being sensitive to individual students’ needs. In many instances, the teachers’ insufficient training (e.g., in pedagogy and effective use of student-centered approaches) as well as a lack of confidence present additional barriers in implementing multimodal composition. Also threatening to non-native English-language teachers is that the ideal English teacher is defined as having perfect pronunciation rather than good teacher preparation (Huang, 2014). This misconception has a tremendous impact on teachers’ (and students’) perceptions and their level of confidence in using English; non-native
English teachers regard themselves as having linguistic deficiency and develop conflicted views as both a teacher and learner (Medgyes, 1983).

**Statement of the Problem**

It is reported that integrating multimodality is beneficial to language classrooms. In particular, English Language Learners (ELLs) can develop language skills for effective communications by using different modes (Royce, 2002; Walker et al., 2005) such as visual and verbal modes, while learning how to communicate and negotiate meanings with culturally and linguistically diverse peers (Black, 2009). Mastery of these skills or abilities is connected to being a 21st century learner who collaborates with others to deal with problems in complex environments (NCTE, 2008). Integrating multimodality can provide both teachers and students with opportunities to ask critical questions and explore possible answers in more diverse contexts (Ryan et al., 2010).

Although they may not be familiar with the term *multimodality*, Korean educators recognize the importance of multiple modes used by teachers to facilitate students’ understanding of and interest in content (Korean Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, 2007). Tables, graphs, and pictures are typically used in the classroom to explain concepts or central aspects of meanings. In digital environments, teachers may also select digital resources and make different choices so that their students develop various competencies (Chang & Lehman, 2002). In Korea, the national curriculum prescribes that instruction should include multimodal aspects to increase students’ comprehension (2007) because communication using digital technology expands opportunities for learners to communicate using a variety of texts, including audio, video, and images, for creating meaning (Kress, 2000).

Some teachers are reluctant to give instructions on using multimodality because of difficulties such as the prevalence of collaboration in the multimodal composition classroom (An & Reigeluth, 2011). Average secondary class size in Korea is more than 34 students, which is far above the average number of students in OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) countries (OECD, 2012). The competitive academic environment presents an additional challenge for teachers to implement collaborative tasks because, generally speaking, students are rewarded for their individual accomplishments (Roger & Johnson, 1992). Taken
together, large classes and the competitive academic culture make classroom teachers skeptical about the value of group work (Cramer, 1994).

Assessing multimodal elements is another concern because the criteria used to assess paper-based compositions do not always apply. Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996) comment that using print literacy conventions only in assessing multimodal compositions can undermine the potential of the curriculum and the importance of multimodality. Since multimodal compositions assume that texts are juxtaposed along with various semiotic modes (Sorapure, 2006), the focus of assessing these types of texts should be on relationships between modes. That is, dealing with diverse texts can provide an opportunity for teachers to teach how multimodal texts create coherence and to assess how students combine different resources to convey meanings effectively (Yancey, 2004).

Assessing collaborative work varies from assessing individual work because individuals’ efforts and commitments are different (Selfe, 2007). Tharp (2010) suggests that a rubric can be a source to assess students’ collaborative works. Individual participants can be objectively evaluated based on their contributions as well as on the quality of their comments. Such an assessment practice emphasizing process leads teachers to help students to internalize the criteria for effective writing (Isaacson, 1999). As a consequence, students are able to engage in constructive and reflective processes (Flower, 1991) by participating in collaborative projects. That is, students are aware of the purposes or key points listed in the rubric, and can attempt to negotiate meanings with peers to reflect the rhetorical situations and readers’ expectations. Flower (1991) called the nature of the writing process constructive and collaborative because writers should solve problematic situations where they need to interpret, negotiate, and reflect in order to understand different expectations, stances, or knowledge.

To date, there has been very little research on multimodal composition practice or teachers’ attitudes and perceptions on multimodality in Korea. Academic Research Information Service (Research Information Sharing Service, RISS), operated by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in South Korea, has provided a large scale database for distribution of academic information since 1988. In spite of strong recommendations by the government, little research has been done on new literacies or studies of multimodal composition. RISS has two articles about fostering multiliteracies, and five articles dealing with multimodality in reading instruction. Four articles are related to multimodal composition, but none of these includes cases
of Korean secondary English language arts classrooms. However, a gap exists between what the government pursues and what teachers really adopt for teaching practices. Despite the government’s strong recommendation on using multimodality for effective teaching, the test-oriented culture continues to encourage teachers to depend on verbal explanations that can be delivered quickly and students to feel the need to memorize material to prepare for their test. Students memorize knowledge without assessing and transferring skills to unfamiliar contexts, which, according to Ravitch (2011), is typical of a classroom where meaningful learning does not occur. The end result is that higher-order skills of analyzing, evaluating, and synthesizing knowledge (Bloom, 1956) that promote learning may be less likely to be taught because of the emphasis on the recall of factual information.

The Korea Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (2012) reported that 40.8% of parents are not satisfied with English education in public schools. The situation has led to a significant degree of distrust by parents and students toward the Korean public educational system. According to Samsung Economic Research Institute (2006), each year Koreans spend a substantial amount of time and money on private English lessons and testing to evaluate their English, up to 14.3 trillion won, which accounted for 1.9% of Korea’s GDP in 2006.

In order to improve English education in Korea, teachers feel they may have to adopt new attitudes and mindsets about pedagogy to reflect social changes and changing needs. Restructuring the definition of literacy (Han, 2000) and, in particular, writing instruction, is one example. Yancey’s (2009) comments about challenges facing today’s writing teachers can be applied to the Korean context. Yancey (2009) identifies three challenges in a report from NCTE that today’s writing teachers face as “developing new models of writing, designing a new curriculum supporting the models, and creating models for teaching that curriculum” (p. 8). Because the new models for writing in the English classroom have not yet been established in Korea, teachers there can play a role in designing and developing the new models that will ultimately help their students learn to write well.

The purpose of literacy education, as defined by NCTE for 21st century literacies, includes producing and evaluating a variety of multimedia texts using evolving technology (DeVoss et al., 2010). Korea must not be an exception in preparing teachers and students for the new age of communications. By receiving effective writing instruction, students may increase
possibilities to acquire these important skills and mindsets needed to succeed in the digital age and regain trust in their public education system.

**Significance of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to explore Korean English teachers’ attitudes and perceptions about integrating multimodality into writing instruction. Understanding the attitudes and perceptions of in-service teachers is a necessary step in changing the implementation of such tools to support writing instruction in Korea. Attitudes and perceptions are critical factors in that they provide guidelines for evaluating and establishing new knowledge to integrate in their classrooms. To date, no empirical studies have examined teachers’ perspectives on multimodality in the writing classroom, in spite of the growing importance of multimodal composition. Therefore, this study will provide some insight into Korean English teachers’ attitudes and perceptions about new literacies and multimodal composition.

The significance of this study lies in exploring whether not multimodal composition and related assessment practices are in use by Korean English teachers in their classrooms and why. This is a new area in Korean public education, where the language classroom typically has teachers teaching content and then testing students on that content. Essentially, teachers transmit knowledge, while students receive it to increase the probability of academic success. Testing is not used as a learning opportunity, but as a (sometimes punitive) judgment.

It is widely accepted that student progress is accelerated when students receive substantive feedback on their work and reassurance about their learning goals during this instructional time (Kubiszyn, & Borich, 2010). As a finding from a nationwide study of teaching writing at Canadian middle schools by Peterson and McClay (2010), teachers’ sustaining and quality feedback not only improved students’ writing via assistance and scaffolding but also nurtured their self-confidence by focusing on the students’ development as writers. However, when writing practice separates instruction and assessment, the writing classroom can become a place where creative ideas and diverse values are underestimated because of an imbalance in emphasis between teaching and assessment. Evaluations aim to test knowledge rather than to teach or provide feedback for improving learning. Writing activities are limited to testing grammar proficiency, filling in blanks with appropriate words, and writing a few sentences, regardless of context. Generating grammatically correct sentences is more important than
generating ideas, which is the opposite of the idea that writing should be more than just enumerating words on paper. Murray (1972) describes writing as a process to use language to learn about the world, to evaluate our knowledge, and to communicate with the world. Multimodal composition is process-oriented, in that each stage provides some learning opportunity. Writers can pass through three stages, from pre-writing to writing to rewriting. During each stage, which is actually recursive and simultaneous, they will consider multiple resources weighing the respective and cumulative contribution to their message.

In sum, the findings of this study sheds light on classroom practices and thereby suggests pathways toward embracing a new model of teaching multimodal composition. At the same time, practices based on the model may guide classroom teachers to teach writing more effectively and to contribute to the development of English education in Korea. The findings will help generate ideas and suggestions and help English teachers and curriculum designers establish theoretical and practical guidelines to formulate and improve strategies in teaching writing. Finally, this study may support the call for professional development programs to equip teachers with content and pedagogical knowledge needed to cope with barriers to implementing lessons of multimodal composition.

Research Questions

This study presents an exploratory overview of Korean English teachers’ understanding about multimodal composition and practices. In particular, it examined how teachers implement and evaluate multimodal composition in a school culture, which privileges standardized test scores. The guiding questions are as follows:

1. What attitudes and perceptions do Korean secondary English teachers articulate regarding teaching multimodal composition?

2. How do Korean secondary English teachers articulate their understanding of assessment of multimodal composition?

3. What are Korean secondary English teachers’ perceived challenges or barriers in teaching and assessing multimodal composition?
In order to answer these questions, this study attempted to describe in detail how teachers conceptualize multimodal composition, their attitudes toward teaching multimodal composition, and how they recognize summative assessment or formative assessment as a part of the instructional process. Finally, challenges or barriers to creating lessons of multimodal composition and ideas of how to cope with the barriers will be discussed.

**Summary**

A substantial number of studies of composition have been conducted in Korea to explore effective English writing instruction, but most have focused on language use. However, traditional literacy curricula do not include a wide range of new literacy practices or incorporate evolving technology, media, and social contexts. This study attends to multimodal composition because it is a type of writing that may help students convey meaning more effectively via different modes such as images, sounds, and so on. In the age of new media and technology, teachers’ attitudes, perceptions and understanding of multimodal composition in the classroom will be explored.

**Definition of Terms**

English as a Foreign Language (EFL): Teaching English when learners are not native English speakers. This is used to describe English taught in a place where English is not an official language (Brown, 2007).

English as a Second Language (ESL): Teaching English in countries where English is an official or a major language for business and education. Students can be exposed to English in and outside classroom (Brown, 2007).

English Language Learners (ELLs): People learning English along with their native language. They have usually limited English proficiency and need to receive language instructions (NCTE, 2008). For this dissertation, ELLs include the all groups of students who are learning English as a second or foreign language.
Literacy: The ability not only to read and write, but also analyze and think critically about the written word. Literacies are historically, socially, and culturally situated in relation to power relationships, forms of knowledge, and identities (Jewitt, 2008). They also include multiple sign systems or modalities along with the traditional print-based sign systems.

Multiliteracies: A pedagogy of multiliteracies focusing on multiple modes of representation as ways of communication (New London Group, 1996).

Multimodality: A mixture of linguistic, audio, spatial, gestural, and visual modes to create meanings. Multiple modes are shaped and carried by historical, cultural, and social orientations. With the development of digital media, the central modes of representation are not only linguistic, but nonlinguistic modes such as visual, aural, gestural, and spatial (New London Group, 1996).

Multimodal composition: A form of writing including a mixture of linguistic, audio, spatial, gestural, and visual modes. It is also situated and shaped by context, audience, time, and place (Lutkewitte, 2014).

Professional Development: A wide variety of specialized training, formal education, or advanced professional learning intended to help educators improve their professional knowledge, competence, skill, and effectiveness (Glossary of Education Reform, 2013).
CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE

Cultural changes and technology have affected how literacy is redefined, teachers’ and learners’ attitudes and interests, and even classroom instruction. Jewitt and Kress (2003) explained that transitioning from written hard copies to electronic pages has made learners interact with a variety of texts including images, music, and electronic texts. As screen texts become increasingly dominant, meanings are not located in one mode but in many types of modes and texts. Teachers, therefore, need to teach students new ways of expressing their ideas using multiple modes and interpreting texts in relation to each mode, which may represent multiple meanings.

A substantial amount of literature recognizes multimodality as a powerful and engaging tool that facilitates students’ learning not only in the Language Arts but also in other subject areas (Miller, 2008). Students attending to multimodal projects commonly respond that these are both educational and recreational (Moynihan, 2007). The production of multimodal texts enables students to develop cognitive and literacy skills required for reading and writing traditional texts by engaging them in a variety of activities such as blogging, texting, and on-line communication (Walsh, 2010). Wolsey and Grisham’s (2007) three-year longitudinal mixed method study showed that students are more likely to engage in writing via electronic discussion boards than in paper journals in that positive peer pressure gives them a sense of responsibility that they should respond to their peers. Also, online discussions encourage students to think and respond more deeply to the literature because they can focus their attention and have more time to respond than in the classroom.

Tensions exist between traditional literacy and new literacies (Matthewman, Blight, & Davies, 2004; Shanahan, 2013). In school, the linguistic mode is still preferred over other modes. Although technological development and software programs make the production of multimodal modes or texts easier and popular, multimodal representations have played a secondary role as a complement to linguistic signs (Shin & Cimasko, 2008). However, all signs have potential as psychological tools to promote high levels of thinking (Vygotsky, 1978), and society, culture, and history tend to emphasize multiple sign systems (Shanahan, 2013).
Multiple modes and the production of multimodal texts should be properly recognized to understand complex classroom contexts where social and cultural practices influence academic discourses (Shanahan, 2013). Also, teacher education programs should include flexible and alternative approaches in the language arts classrooms in order to prepare students for the 21st century literacy and help students adjust to new literacies (McLean & Rowsell, 2013). For example, teachers may incorporate dynamic and interactive teaching and use various resources for specific purposes and products (McLean & Rowsell, 2013).

In accordance with new forms of literacies, the ways of assessing students’ writing in new media and providing feedback on their multimodal products also need to be changed because of the differences between digital and print composition. Callow (2008) addresses new aspects of visual literacy that enable teachers to discuss what they see. Yancey (2004) mentions the need to assign different values when using the frameworks and processes of different mediums.

Based on these issues of multimodality and multimodal composition, this chapter will constitute a review of socially situated literacy practice in the classroom. Specifically, the review of literature includes multimodal social-semiotic theory, multimodality and multimodal composition as a form of communication, tensions between traditional forms of literacy and new literacies, assessing multimodal composition, and perceptions of barriers to teaching multiliteracies and multimodality.

**Social-Semiotic Theory of Multimodality**

Michael Halliday (1978) introduced “social semiotics” as opposed to the traditional approach where language exists independent from society. Language as a medium enables human beings to form a personality in a society and to perform social roles. Using language is an ongoing process to exchange meanings with others. Halliday notes that language serves three metafunctions: ideational, interpersonal, and textual. The ideational component refers to ideas of the world and consciousness. Through it, language conveys cultural experiences. Speakers also express their own experiences as members of a culture. The interpersonal component makes speakers’ social and interpersonal interactions possible. This represents the participatory nature of language. By intruding into a context or situation, speakers convey their attitudes and judgments to others. Interpersonal meanings occur while they use language. Lastly, the textual
component shows speakers’ potential to connect ideas into meaningful contexts. Its relation to language is represented both in the verbal and the nonverbal environment.

Based upon Halliday’s social semiotics, Kress (2010) developed a general framework to explain communication as a meaning-making process in a social context. Although language is mainly served as a means to make and convey meanings, it is insufficient to account for domains beyond language. Kress argues that social semiotic theory can provide benefits to people with different preferences “for the temporal, or the spatial, for image or speech, and so on.” That is, it focuses on all types of meaning-making processes or possible channels, whether they are visual, aural, or verbal. In contemporary communication, multiple modes offer the potential to achieve complex representational and communication tasks (Kress, 2010). Semiotic modes such as visual, verbal, written, and gestural become resources for communication practice.

Social semiotics assumes that social, cultural, economic, and technological developments affect practices, resources, and interests of members of a social group within socially acceptable boundaries (Hodge & Kress, 1998; Kress, 2010). It also includes how people understand or interpret meanings and texts and how they change their perceptions of communication resources as society changes (Hodge & Kress, 1998). In this way, sign-making processes for communication depend on ongoing transformation, since people continue to connect forms to meanings in accordance with particular contexts and needs (Mavers, 2009). In this sense, signs and messages represent the interest of sign-makers (Kress, 2010).

According to Kress (2010), the sign as one entity combined with forms and meanings is not used but made by sign-makers. They select signs to make or remake knowledge using cultural resources. Kress argues that arbitrariness and convention are actually socially motivated by the decisions and interests of the sign-makers. Thus, the focus of social semiotics is not on unchanging semiotic structures, but on new social identities and changing historic circumstances that allow sign-makers to change usages and design (Hodge & Kress, 1998).

All signs have their own motivations (Kress, 2010). The new meanings are formed whenever people use them. Kress (1993) gives an example of a three-year old boy’s drawing to explain how signs work. A car represented on paper as a circle indicates that the use of signs is based upon a “double metaphor.” The boy selects an object of his interest. The object (the car) becomes the first metaphor. Then, he draws a circle to indicate wheels. In this case, the wheels become the second metaphor. In other words, the boy chooses the circle because it is regarded as
“an apt signifier” to represent the car (Kress, 1993; Skarr, 2009). All signs are produced through this metaphoric process (Skarr, 2009). Kress also notes that signs are created as a result of interplay between the sign-makers’ intention and available semiotic resources.

Mode is a semiotic resource that is socially and culturally shaped to make meanings (Bezemer & Kress, 2008; Kress, 2010). According to Kress (2010), modes including “image, writing, layout, music, gesture, speech, moving image, soundtrack, and 3D objects (p. 15)” can be used to represent and communicate in different cultural environments. Each mode serving different purposes and uses in various contexts may have different priorities. For instance, writing can be organized through grammar and syntax. Visual and spatial resources such as color, space, and punctuation marks can also contribute to making meaning as much as linguistic modes do. All these modes are significant whether they are linguistic or nonlinguistic since they have different potentials for meanings (Kress, 2010).

Along with mode, the medium is of importance in that meanings are instantiated through it and become available to others (Bezemer & Kress, 2008). Print, book, screen, and other technological devices are examples of the medium. In the age of new media, web-based learning resources function as the medium, replacing traditional textbooks. Such change reflects social environments moving from composition toward design (Bezemer & Kress, 2008). The focus is on the designers who make signs as text in accordance with their interests. Kress (2010) comments that multimodal designers present social positions and knowledge to appeal to specific audiences using image, writing, color, and layout. From this perspective, they attend to the process to explore tasks, purposes, and audiences, and to contextualize these relations with available resources (Bezemer & Kress, 2008).

In sum, social semiotics includes the study of how people choose appropriate grammar and vocabulary and use them to suit their purpose, audience, and mode (Ryan, 2011). In teaching writing, the focus of social semiotics includes instructions to make students choose different social purposes and contexts through a shared language.

**New Literacy Studies, Multiliteracies and Multimodality**

New literacies typically expand the boundaries of literacy that we take for granted (Cervetti et al., 2006). Literacy is not just an ability to read and write a particular type of text, but to know how to apply knowledge in a specific context (Scribner & Cole, 1981). Lankshear and
Knobel (2006) defined literacy as ways to communicate and negotiate meanings through the medium of encoded texts in socially accepted ways. Gee (2000) used the term “discourse” instead of literacies because it can better explain ways of using words or other semiotic codes and ways to think, feel, and believe as a member of social group. In fact, contextual factors are critical to understanding how people use language to communicate with others.

Mills (2010) pointed out that the textual practice of New Literacy Studies usually includes multimodal texts combining words with visual, audio, spatial, and gestural modes. In the same vein, the New London Group (1996) indicated that multiliteracies includes modes of representation far broader than written language. Because literacy is a practice that can be linguistically, technologically, and socially situated, teachers and students as active agents of social change need to learn that multiliteracies can be regarded as a response to the remaking of literacy by attending to multimodal texts and practices (Jewitt, 2008).

Like multiliteracies, multimodality responds to the socially and culturally changing society. The basic assumption of multimodality is that meanings are made, interpreted, and distributed through multiple communication sources (Jewitt, 2008). Different modes interact with each other for communication because each mode, including linguistic, visual, audio, gestural, and spatial elements (Kress, 2003; Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996), counts on its own affordances (Dalton, 2012). Mixed modes based on textual productions which are non-linear, hypertextual, and interactive (Lauer, 2009) can be influential tools to facilitate writing production and appeal to audiences.

As Kress (2003) indicated about multimodality, one mode is no more prominent over other modes because individual modes interrelate to generate a text. Scholars commonly address language as one of many modes to contribute to making meaning (Anderson et al., 2013), despite the historical emphasis on the written words (Mills, 2010). However, in some cultures visual modes can be more powerful representations, for example, in an Aboriginal community or a digital environment (The New London Group, 1996) where concepts or examples developed by insiders provide clues to understanding how people live (Lanshear & Knobel, 2006).

Mitchell (1994) describes our attention to non-linguistic symbols, images, and imagination as “the pictorial turn.” Visual language including a chart or diagram can be manifested on a page as a powerful means to convey meaning. Kostelinick (1994) provides an example of how printed books contain visual cues to provide practical information for lay
people. In this case, visual and verbal elements complement and compensate each other to create meaning within a document. Meanings in such books or multimedia, however, do not mean words plus images. Mills’s (2010) review of New Literary Studies indicates that meanings are transformed when words are combined with images.

Murray (2009) suggests several elements such as image, unity, layering, juxtaposition, and perspective to compose multimodality. Image is the key to multimodal text production. Although images including photographs, web texts, and advertisement are ubiquitous, students need to know how they are rhetorically constructed and can be used for effective communication. Images can represent content (Kress, 2000) or can be used as prompts for essay writing (George, 2002). Either way, images can be a powerful tool to substitute for and elaborate on language. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) point out that image has a complementary relationship with text, and that the image-text relationship can be mutated, relying on the semiotic choices to fit the messages. Just as in traditional composition, multimodal composition needs unity, an element necessary to clarify the focus. By keeping in mind their audience, writers set clear goals and contexts. Yancey (2004) said that relationships between and among multimodal elements such as contexts and visual and aural aspects create coherence in multimodal writing by repetitive patterns. Layers are also important in multimodal composition in that they are non-discursive. Unlike discursive texts depending on sequence, non-discursive texts do not have a specific order in layering the contents. Hypertext is one example of how text is displayed on a computer or electric device. Readers can use hyperlinks to access information immediately. They can read and select a text by taking nonlinear pathways, depending on their individual interests (Ranker, 2007). Aligning two different modes can create tensions and resolutions. Juxtaposition is critical to make multimodal composition persuasive. When we juxtapose two different types of text, it can add complexity as well as nuance. When two images combine, they can be more persuasive and effective than monomodality provides. Lastly, perspective, or point of view, deserves special consideration. Multimodal texts need multiple perspectives because they may not depend on sequence. Therefore, students need to learn 1) to be sensitive, that audiences can influence authors’ experience and writing; and 2) not to miss any sense that perspectives have a goal. In sum, the value of multimodality is that all elements (image, unity, layering, juxtaposition, and perspective) contribute to constructing meaning and
offer various options from which authors may choose what is of particular importance. This value becomes more significant in conjunction with learning objectives.

According to the New London Group (1996), the process of creating meaning is possible by transforming old materials for new uses. They introduce three elements which emphasize the dynamic process of making meaning. The first element, available designs, includes language use, and use of semiotic systems such as film, photography, and gesture. Also included are the “orders of discourse” as a set of conventions in a particular society. The second element is designing, relating to using design to create new meanings. Available resources continue to be transformed, and, as a result, transform knowledge to brings new constructions and representations of reality. The third element is the redesigned, the finished product of the work. Available resources are reproduced through designing. These three elements, as a result of complex systems, continue to adjust and readjust to reflect new social contracts.

Ranker’s (2009) study shows how young students redesigned writing practices when they imported multimodal composing resources. The qualitative study was conducted to examine three bilingual students’ literacy event, including a composing event. After the students aged six and seven years old read a nonfiction book, Inside the Titanic (Brewster, 1997), they discussed the popular movie Titanic and created their own multimodal composition about the ship. The findings of this study indicated that three students imported three composing practices using multimodal dimensions: using space to structure the writing event, drawing a car, and using published books as a source of verbal and visual modes. The first finding showed that students structured their writing activities by using separate papers and numbering them. This activity helped them clearly define the writing tasks and view writing as a social act. Also, students drew and wrote about cars while they composed “The Titanic.” In other words, the boys redesigned the car to make it an unofficial activity of their composing. They imported multimodal practices using the book, Inside the Titanic. They referred to specific drawings and scenes in the book as a source of information and discussed together how they would write in their own book. The implication of the study is that writing is a process to redesign or transform available designs. Scaffolding and supporting writers are necessary to making decisions about how and what modes students will use.
Collaboration and the Student-Centered Classroom

As the definition of literacy expands, several critical components are added in new writing. The nature of multimodal composition is social, recursive, and responsive (Grabill & Hicks, 2005), not limited to private writing. Since knowledge is social, constructed in situational contexts, literacy activities can occur anywhere. Network environments enable students to “write, share, socialize, play, and organize their lives” (Grabill & Hicks, 2005, p.306). Acquiring effective communication skills using word processing, desktop publishing, and image manipulation is necessary because literacy means not only knowing proper usages, but also a variety of different usages to communicate with others in diverse contexts (Kalantzis et al., 2003).

Although instruction in multimodal composition can be done in non-digital environments, Selfe (2007) proposes that teachers take responsibility for preparing students to communicate on digitally networked environments. She points out that teaching multimodality is a way to realize a vision outlined in John Dewey’s (1938) *Experience and Education*. Teachers and students accomplish progressive education by forming mutually satisfying relationships. Learning occurs when teachers invite the active cooperation of the students.

Herrington and Morgan (2009) point out that as technology allows multiple readers or writers to communicate with each other online, collaboration becomes possible in writing class. For instance, students can discuss issues online and exchange emails with each other. Students who are reluctant to speak in class make their voices heard using a form of written communication. In other words, technology provides a possibility to move away from a teacher-centered to a more student-centered classroom.

Instruction Using Multimodality

Multiliteracies are ways for literacy educators to respond to the changing social paradigm. The designs of multiliteracies include linguistic, visual, audio, gestural, spatial, and multimodal design (New London Group, 1996). The linguistic and cultural diversity in the global economy calls for expanding the ideas and scope of literacy, and to invite students’ active engagement, literacy educators need to account for a variety of texts related to information and multimedia technologies (Jewitt, 2008).
Four components proposed by the New London Group (1996) provide useful frameworks that can be applied to the classroom. First, “situate practice” focuses on meaning-making practices based on experience and background, because literacy means interactions of situation and learners’ backgrounds (Walsh, 2010). Learners are motivated when they have an interest in something and can use what they are learning. Lo and Hyland’s (2007) action research indicated that new writing programs providing topics of relevance and interest had impact on students’ engagement as well as motivation. That is, students had more opportunities to express their thoughts and feelings as shown in an increase in the number of words in the findings.

Second, “overt instruction” implies not to transmit knowledge but to allow learners to get explicit information by teachers’ active interventions or scaffolding activities. Miller (2008) supports explicit instructions as a process that helps learners explore their thinking and create understanding. Third, “critical framing” provides an opportunity for learners to distance themselves from what they learn and make a critical judgment to apply the learning. Critical framing can lead to transformative teaching and learning. Lastly, “transformed practice” means that meaning-making practices can be transferred to other contexts. Miller shows how students’ experiences and identities can be reshaped or reframed in the curriculum through multimodal literacy activities in the classroom.

Tools used in multimodal literacy instruction should be varied so as to align with students’ interests and needs. Skill-and-drill instructions may not be effective in teaching 21st century literacies. Rather, efforts are needed to help students develop the ability to write for diverse audiences and to use technology in creating meanings. According to a policy brief produced by the National Council of Teachers of English [NCTE] (Gere et al., 2007), instructions should enable students to gather information from multiple sources and evaluate the reliability of that information. Explicit instructions can be aimed at helping students develop strategies to accomplish these essential tasks. Teachers also incorporate technology to motivate students and engage students in writing in and outside school. By remixing and customizing writing instructions to suit various contexts (Dalton, 2012), teachers develop or design new curriculum supporting all forms of literacy.

Tensions and Compatibility: School-based Literacy and New Literacies, and School Culture

The process of traditional learning is represented by the “three Rs”—reading, writing, and arithmetic. Kalantizis et al. (2003) addresses the basics of this form of “old learning” to include learning by rote to pass exams. Students were required to follow the textbook and curriculum packed with information without applying it to new contexts. Therefore, knowledge that was abstract, fragmented, and decontextualized was imparted to students so that they learned it passively. With changes caused by the new economy and technology came questions about the nature of knowledge. Knowledge does not support the absolute value or perspective. Instead, it is more important to know how to solve problems and to be flexible in using knowledge. In the new literacies, knowledge is constructed in accordance with contexts; literacy is learning not only conventional knowledge but also skills for effective communication in diverse settings. (Kalantizis et al., 2003).

The basics of old learning differ from those of new learning, and multimodal composition differs from traditional composition because of its complexities and use of multiple modes. According to Wyatt-Smith and Kimber (2009), notions of traditional composition do not transfer well to the complex digital environment of the 21st century. Their research suggests that
composition be redefined and that multimodal texts and multimedia\(^2\) be included in the curriculum (Wyatt-Smith & Kimber, 2009). Teachers must be cautious about using frameworks and processes developed for one medium to interpret works of a different medium (Yancey, 2004). Assessment also may require reformulation to consider multiple contexts and circumstances, changing needs of students and teachers, and affordances of modes used in different types of writing (Sorapure, 2006).

Print-based writing and multimodal composition have been regarded as binaries because of their different emphasis on affordance of modes (Kress, 2005). Prior (2005) questioned Kress’s use of binary oppositions in explaining each mode and its affordance. According to Kress, all modes are mutually exclusive and follow their own grammars to create meanings. For example, the distinctive features of words are “finite, sequential, vague, conventional, authored, narrative and/or causal, and open to critique,” whereas pictures have features such as “infinite, spatial, specific, natural, transparent, viewed, and available for design” (Kress, 2005). Prior opposes these binaries, saying that pictures in film can be sequential and images follow conventions such as iconographies and international signage. For Prior, modes and their affordances are rather relational and fuzzy, urging people to reconsider their use in rapidly changing social, economic, cultural, and technical contexts.

Therefore, to separate old literacy primarily based on a mono-mode and new literacies incorporating multiple modes is artificial and impossible since all communication and writing practices are already based on affordance of multimodality. Since the 4\(^{th}\) century, rhetoricians have emphasized voice, gesture, and expressions to convey messages effectively to the public (Wysocki, 2002), though the term *multimodality* was not defined until the 20\(^{th}\) century (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2010). The way to distinguish school-based literacy from multimodality is to recognize not only different affordance of modes, but also different perceptions of different values of literacies. Certain types of texts have been recognized as canonical and valued in formal educational institutes, with other types of texts such as picture books and magazines being excluded (Mills, 2009). However, the binary of quality literature and low literature

\(^2\) All multimodal and multimedia texts are not created equal for all learners whose mental capacities to perform a task are different. However, the focus of this dissertation is not on online learning, but on student creation and interpretation of these texts.
becomes blurred with changes in the creation and distribution of literacy driven by technology (Cervetti et al., 2006; Mill, 2009).

Whether it is used for print-based old literacy or new literacies, writing is a process by which people learn through a conscious and committed act (Emig, 1977). As we commit to working harder for successful learning, writing entails active participation and a process of meaning-making. Murray (1972) emphasizes writing as a process that needs to be included in the curriculum in order to encourage students to explore self and create their own writing, and multimodal writing assigns more value to the process than to the product. Sewell and Denton (2011) show an example of how a multimodal classroom creates a learning environment where learning is motivating, meaningful, and useful by making students engage in the process. They implemented anchored instruction through media formats where teachers did not depend on lectures but provided a realistic context in which students could find solutions. Projects are interactive in nature because students engage in a variety of texts.

A focus on either traditional literacy or on new literacies depends on the school culture. As Kisumo, Osman, and Ongeti (2013) indicated, school is viewed as a learning community where teachers, administrators, students, and parents share beliefs, values, and norms. Although school is regarded as a formal organization, it should be more “nourished, nurtured, and supported through the cultural development” (Kisumo, Osman, & Ongeti, 2013, p. 95). The school culture is also affected by cultural and legal contexts, further influencing teaching and learning practices (Bernstein, 2004). In a case study, Bernstein (2004) described how legislature-mandated assessment affected a school, curriculum, teacher, and students in Texas. In order to fulfill test objectives mandated by the state, the curriculum encouraged students to produce one error-free writing sample or to select only one correct answer from multiple choice items. From a story of an English language learner, the researcher discovered that Noah, a participant, had difficulty in college in reading longer texts and interpreting them because the focus of learning in public high school had been on finding the answer rather than on reading and writing to foster critical or analytical thinking. In other words, one writing sample on a standardized test did not necessarily represent student ability or inability in writing. Contrary to the negative school culture whose focus was passively accepting norms or rules, positive school culture can be fostered by creating and instilling a clear vision and core values for administrators, teachers, and students. Rhodes, Stevens, and Hemmings (2011) suggested one way to support positive school
culture is to promote teacher communities through professional development activities. By so doing, both teachers and students are able to increase opportunities to produce and learn knowledge and skills and, at the same time, promote student achievement.

**Multimodality in ESL/EFL**

English language learners develop language and social skills in an online, global social setting as they communicate and negotiate meaning with counterparts in other countries using technological tools and semiotic forms (Black, 2009). Visuals, in particular, help English Language Learners (ELLs) to extract the linguistic aspect of meanings. Using Halliday’s (1978) framework (ideational, interpersonal, and textual/compositional), Unsworth (2006) explains image and language relations. An ideational function entails the relation of both image and language by “concurrence,” “complementarity,” and “connection.” Concurrence means the equal integration of image and language for ideational meaning. For example, two modes can indicate the same information, although the presentation methods are different. Complementarity is another way to explain the image-language relationship, in that one mode supports the other mode by providing additional meanings. Finally, connection involves additions, or projections, to address time, place, and purpose.

Language learners can develop multimodal communicative competence by understanding that image and language can coexist in a text (Royce, 2002). Royce saw that language teachers can develop methodological suggestions using multimodality, and that instructions involving activities based on multimodality can be beneficial for ELLs, considering their limited English competency. For instance, activities using multimodality can be implemented in the writing classroom, where students participate in the meaning-making process by using a sequence of pictures and writing a story. The image and story production leads students not only to understand various genres (e.g., narrative writing), but also to recall stories associated with a visual representation.

Nelson (2006) examined four undergraduates’ multimedia texts by applying Kress’s (2003) notions of synaesthesia related to psychological processes, when ideas shift from one mode to the other. Four English language learners enrolled in Multimedia Writing at UC Berkeley were selected for the qualitative study, conducted over an eleven-week period. The one-hour writing course was designed to involve creating multimedia writing via computer.
Using topics related to language, culture, and identity, individual students wrote a personal statement in the form of digital storytelling. A variety of data including the students’ journals, interviews, and essay drafts were collected and analyzed.

The findings were consistent with previous research on using multimodality to teach English language learners. A multimodal element such as an image provides alternative ways for these students to understand authorial expression. Images as well as verbal expressions came to enable a deeper and clearer meaning through the synaesthetic process of shifting modals. For example, one student, for her story dealing with her experience of living in different countries, created visual representations with a collage of photos. She represented her cultural identity by showing not one but many photos to mean that her identity was not with one culture only but with several cultures. In this way, combining words and images can help language learners become creative writers, which is the essence of synaesthesia (Kress, 2003).

Shin and Cimasko (2008) conducted a qualitative study in a college ESL (English as a Second Language) class to examine how students use available modes to create multimodal argumentative essays. Using Kress’s synaesthetic semiosis, the multimodal writing projects and assignments of fourteen undergraduates were analyzed. After being instructed how to make a simple web page, their first assignment was to create personal web sites using Dreamweaver and Microsoft Word. Next, the students worked on writing traditional print-based texts to post on the web site. For this activity, the instructor encouraged students to consider including all useful elements regardless of linguistic or nonlinguistic mode.

By comparing and contrasting traditional argumentative essays and multimodal texts, the students had opportunities to discuss how modes such as images, audio, video, and hyperlinks could contribute to forming a unified argument. All of the participants placed a priority on the linguistic over other modes, even if the instructor introduced multimodal elements to make writing effective. In many cases, the synthesizing process showed an unequal relationship between the linguistic and other available modes. For example, one student was reluctant to integrate different modes because inserting an image into the academic text seemed inappropriate. The students’ limited use of multimodal elements was because the lessons emphasized traditional elements of argument rather than how to use multimodality.

Multimodality has been used to teach language and contents simultaneously for high school students with limited English. A case study conducted by Early and Marshall (2008)
investigated how ESL students appreciated literacy texts containing multimodal elements. One teacher (with over 30 years’ teaching experience) and 28 students with various native languages participated in the study over a four-week period. The research site was a secondary school located on the west side of Vancouver, Canada. Multiple sources of data including observations, interviews, students’ written reflections, students’ self-evaluations, and the teachers’ evaluations of students’ essays were collected.

In the study (Early & Marshall, 2008), the teacher used a visual aid as a mediating tool to help students understand and interpret linguistically complex and abstract concepts in a short story. She used a visual representation called a mandala, which is rooted in Buddhism, as a non-linguistic symbol to represent complicated concepts. Students were required to have their mandala contain symbols and quotes from the text to illustrate the essence of characters, styles, and themes. When given visual aids, students tended to engage in multiple readings by working between two modes. As a final project, students chose their own topic from among three elements (characterization, style, and theme), and then wrote an essay about the short story based on analysis of the group. Students’ written reflections as well as interviews reported that they seemed to read the text more carefully and critically.

**Assessing and Reassessing Multimodal Composition; Integrating Writing Instruction into Writing Assessment**

Mono-modal verbal skills are most often taught because they are easily measured (Vincent, 2006). Scores are compared with those of other students’ and ranked in order to be interpreted and placed. Test results reflect word skills entirely. Such high-stake summative assessments conducted in most classrooms to test students’ verbal skills have been criticized because these types of assessment evaluate certain aspects of learning only. For instance, summative assessment favors final products (e.g., final papers or semester tests) over the process of completing a project (Kubiszyn & Borich, 2009). It is reported that summative assessments narrow curriculum and further prevent effective writing instruction that can lead to students’ high quality writing (DeVoss et al., 2010).

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3 Summative assessment has been criticized because of its negative consequences. However, it has benefits in that teachers set performance goals and focus on curriculum so that students achieve the goals (Faulkner et al., 2006).
As curricula continue to include expanded literacy practices and emphasize digital literacy, there has been a surge of interest in how we assess new literacies (Hammett, 2007; NCTE, 2008). When teachers assess multimodal compositions there needs to be a different emphasis, since the nature of print-based writing and multimodal writing is different (DeVoss et al., 2010). For example, DeVoss et al. emphasize that the writing process and different skills such as “brainstorming, drafting, and revising” are more important in multimodal composition than in the traditional writing classroom where the focus is on a final product. Accordingly, teachers cannot use the same assessment tools or rubrics used for print-based writing to assess multimodal products.

Huot (2002) suggests using alternative language and practice to assess students’ writing. The assumption here is the need to create a new discourse that helps us to understand assessment as a positive force in teaching writing: not so much to find students’ weaknesses and to punish them as to find ways to communicate with students. The purpose of assessing writing is to promote writing well and to help students learn how. Research advocates incorporating multiple types of assessment and using assessment as a part of instructional practice (Hammett, 2007; Adsanatham, 2012; Lee et al., 2013).

Formative assessment, for example, can be used to help teachers combine instruction with assessment (Bloom et al., 1971). Contrary to summative assessment, formative assessment includes both formal and informal assessment procedures. It is a process to collect data about learning (Heritage, 2007) in order to identify strengths and areas for improvement (Keen, 2005). After identifying gaps, teachers provide feedback at multiple levels, during which students engage in learning. Students collaborate not only with teachers but also with peers to develop a shared understanding and move forward. The ultimate goal of formative assessment is to lead teachers and students to progress toward established criteria or standards (Heritage, 2007).

From a case study where a teacher uses performance assessment, Fuchs (1994) lists the advantages of integrating writing instructions into writing assessment. First, feedback enhances students’ motivation as well as involvement. Second, teachers monitor students’ difficulties and progress. Third, teachers’ instructional methods can be accurately evaluated. Finally, teachers adjust their instructions in accordance with individual students’ needs. Isaacson (2011) notes that performance assessment is strongly aligned with instruction focusing on meaningful,
multidimensional projects. Its scoring method, which includes both process and product, helps teachers look at the pattern of students’ thinking.

Standards created by teachers also are critical in that they help determine what to teach and what to evaluate. These site-based and locally driven assessments reflect a new pedagogy where students’ individual energies are valued (Huot, 1996). Isaacson’s (1999) study shows how he developed his own assessment criteria based on a formative evaluation system and attempted to link instruction to assessment. He created assessment tools having five components: fluency, content, conventions, syntax, and vocabulary. During five-week summer sessions, he revised the writing criteria to reflect writing performance more accurately and sensitively. These helped teachers to inform students’ performance and students to internalize standards by enlisting criteria as explicit as possible.

Lee et al. (2013) emphasize that the focus of assessment should be on assessment for learning (AFL), not on assessment of learning (AOL). The priority of AFL is to use assessment to promote students’ learning through formative feedback. By so doing, teachers know students’ strengths and weaknesses and adjust their teaching to narrow the gap between what students can and cannot do. Lee et al. (2007) conducted a mixed method study to investigate how teachers implemented AFL in a secondary writing classroom in Hong Kong, where examination-driven AOL is widespread. The findings of the study indicate that teachers are positive about integrating more innovative writing practices such as linking assessment to instruction, although they would stick to traditional assessment practices in their test-oriented culture. Students’ responses about writing were positive in that they were more engaged in writing activities through the instructional cycle. By the end of the study, students’ writing performance showed improvement, based on pre- and posttest data.

Unlike traditional assessment techniques, the new learning and assessment require students to collaborate, or share knowledge, with others (DeVoss et al., 2010; Kalantzis et al., 2003) because real world learning demands such a skill. Also, constant self-autonomy as well as self-determination (Kalantzis et al., 2003) are more necessary than with passive learning. Kalantzis et al. (2003) suggests four assessment techniques relevant to values required in the new literacy era: project assessment, performance assessment, group assessment and portfolio assessment.
Project assessment involves a task plan measuring knowledge and solutions. Teachers assess not only the process of a project in-depth, but also the group’s final products and presentation. Chang and Tseng (2011) note that project-based assessment emphasizes knowledge integration and problem-solving capacities. Since it includes multi-dimensional aspects of projects, it can adopt ways used in portfolio assessment. Students can also participate in developing the assessment criteria; for example, a group of four students negotiated with an instructor by analyzing rhetorical contexts of project products (Odell & Katz, 2009). Their participation in developing criteria helped the students to reflect about effective language use and to internalize the assessment process (Adsanatham, 2012).

Performance assessment as a direct measure of learning (Kubiszyn & Borich, 2009) is concerned with planning, processing, and producing final products. Students receiving performance assessments tend to work collaboratively and synthesize knowledge instead of choosing the best answer from multiple choices on their own. According to O’Neil (1992), students in grades 4, 8, and 12 who took part in performance assessments in English, science, social studies, and math, showed improvement. The new performance tests required teachers to refocus on classroom instruction and to use authentic tasks to show students’ mastery of contents.

Group assessment measures the collaborative work of group members. Tharp (2010) designed an online-writing project to understand how students learn by dealing with conflicts or by collaborating with peers. Groups of three to four students read a book of their own choice and created items such as digital storybooks or bookmarks to sell the book to audiences. The final products were assessed not only based on individual contributions, counted by time spent and comments on the projects, but also by combining self-and peer assessment forms. Students can benefit from group assessment in that they can learn from peers in an unthreatening environment (Goodfellow & Lea, 2010). The perspective of group assessment is aligned with social constructivist views about language learning; students’ knowledge is situated and constructed by participating in meaning-making processes via collaboration and interaction (Bonk & King, 1998; Garrison & Anderson, 2003; Jonassen et al., 1993; Vygotsky, 1986).

Portfolio assessment measures individual work, effort, reflection and growth (Kubiszyn & Borich, 2009) by documenting a body of work throughout a semester or year. The focus of the portfolio assessment is on process over product and on the enhancement of students’ writing.
through evaluative feedback and reflection (Nicolaidou, 2013). Gearhart and Wolf (1997) listed a multi-level rubric for assessing students’ writing portfolios: prewriting strategies, draft to explore and shape ideas, conference to refine writing, the use of revision. The findings of their study indicate that students could benefit from keeping a writing portfolio. First, students could use processes and standards to improve their writing. Second, they could have an opportunity to keep hard copies to show their progress. Finally, they could analyze their writing process by reviewing their works.

Assessing of multimodal compositions need not be entirely different from that of print texts. Yancey (2004) emphasizes that coherence, which is a core concept in print texts, can play an important role in multimodal writing. Just as print texts achieve coherence through words and contexts, multimodal texts should be organized through words and images in a variety of contexts. Writers can create coherence 1) with/in a text/by a reader/contextually; 2) directly/associatively/spatially; 3) reiteratively; 4) verbally/visually (Yancey, 2004). Teachers need to look at all these elements when assessing multimodal writing.

Group assessment and portfolio assessment are similar in that assessment of the new literacy emphasizes that students should be at the center of the classroom (DeVoss et al., 2010). Inoue (2005) created a classroom where students could control their own writing and teachers encouraged them to assess their writing. He called it community-based assessment. In this pedagogy, students not only participate in evaluating their work but also learn that the assessment process is beneficial to becoming a good writer because they should be more self-conscious and critical when reflecting on a class-constructed rubric. As Huot (2002) points out, we should not separate assessment from teaching and exclude reflection from the process of writing because effective assessment should be done within the community by the community members.

New models suggested by Huot (2002) move classroom focus from the teacher to the students, so that the students themselves have more authority over their work and put more effort into making meanings. Students may not be familiar with assessing their work because they may not have a clear understanding of assessment and do not have experience. Therefore, the teacher requires that students rethink and assess their own writing and relate writing quality to the writing process. During this kind of instructive evaluation, students may become more aware of
what they are trying to create and the rhetorical targets they are trying to use. That is, the purpose of formative assessment is to involve students in all stages of their assessment.

For an alternative way to assess students’ writing, Elbow (2006) suggests teachers adopt contract grading. Instead of setting one goal as Inoue (2005) did, students compare and negotiate to reach agreement. They attempt to do all tasks based on contracts with instructors. Multiple criteria are created by group members, and students are allowed to evaluate whether they reach their goals. In this system, students are supposed to receive feedback and evaluation throughout the semester from peers and an instructor without talking about grades.

In this model, feedback can function as dialogue (Hatzipanagos & Warburton, 2009) between a teacher and students, and between students. Emerging technologies such as blogs and wikis make ongoing assessment easier by promoting feedback dialogue. In particular, asynchronous communication facilitates communication even outside of the classroom (Gikandi et al., 2011) and helps students become self-regulated learners, since repeated feedback allows students not only to respond to the teacher’s comments but also to set goals and to adjust their behavior to reach the goals (Wingate, 2010).

Formative assessments make ongoing assessment possible by providing important learning purposes at the students’ current level along the assessment continuum (Heritage, 2007). Several types of formative assessments are shown below.

**Informal on-the fly assessment.** On-the-Fly assessment is a kind of formative assessment that occurs unexpectedly in the classroom. While reviewing students’ writing, a teacher can challenge students with questions so that they can explore ideas. Indirect feedback such as asking questions to help students find errors on their own and correct them is helpful in improving students’ language accuracy.

**Planned-for-interaction assessment.** Teachers can assess students’ progress both informally and formally. During formative assessment, they monitor how students are doing and provide feedback (Stern & Solomon, 2006) based on their current understanding of the subjects. Stern and Solomon point out that formative assessment is a way of communication between a teacher and students in that the teacher, taking the roles of reader, coach, and mentor, inspires students to make further inquiries and helps them to not only reflect on their errors but also to expand on their ideas.
**Planned embedded assessment.** Instructions as well as assessments can be integrated to improve students’ multimodal composition. Quizzes, presentations, discussions, and peer or self-assessments can be provided during the teachers’ instructional time. Setting clear expectations before instruction and assessment is critical because they can be used as roadmaps for students to follow. When students write, a teacher can encourage them to facilitate their self or peer assessment along with providing high quality information and feedback. Research shows students’ motivation and desired performance can be achieved (Peterson & McClay, 2010) when “specific, accurate, and process-oriented” feedback is provided (McTigue & Liew, 2011). As a consequence, assessment is a process to monitor and provide feedback to scaffold students’ achievement. A mixed method study conducted by Ferguson (2011) advocates the importance of feedback. According to the findings, students, consisting of 566 undergraduate and graduate students at a major Australian university, perceived that feedback on the progress of work can be more beneficial when it is “timely, personalized and constructive” (p. 60) than when given in the form of a summary.

The focus of assessing multimodal composition is not on production and evaluation of final products but on various elements including “texts, technologies, and rhetorical activities” (Shipka, 2009). Paying attention to these elements, both the teacher and students talk about the strengths and weaknesses of their products. Instructions also include boosting the students’ responsibility to describe and evaluate their own work. In other words, the instructor’s role is to encourage students to share the potential and limitations of their works, not to point out their problems.

VanKooten (2013) proposed an assessment model for new media compositions, combining frameworks of Allison (2009), Bearne (2009), and Neal (2011), whose models present ways to assess student-authored digital texts. Focusing on the composition process, Allison categorized four stages: participating (responding), producing (drafting), perfecting (revising), and publishing. Students going through these stages become major assessors of their own work by monitoring their own progress. Bearne’s framework includes emphasis on reflection from composition process to final product, detailing four areas: the selection of mode and content based on specific purposes and audiences; the structuring of texts; the use of technical features for effect; and reflection. Bearne’s model also includes technical features aligned with the purpose and audiences. Considering technical aspects is helpful to
understanding how multimodal texts achieve desired effects. Neal’s models present both holistic and specific elements when assessing students’ writing. The holistic elements include “depth of content, persuasiveness, relationship between modes and media and to traditional conventions, organization and attention to audience and context.” Specific elements are “pace, selection of image, clarity of content and audio components, the editing of words, visuals, and technology.” The strength of these three models is in linking instruction to assessment and paying attention to technical aspects.

VanKooten’s model (2013) emphasizes both processes and products of new media compositions and includes students’ assessing their own works during the processes. This model is composed of two circles: The inner circle, a multimodal product, is assessed by audience, a multifaceted logic, and rhetorical and technical features. The elements, including participate, produce, revise, publish, and reflect, also affect how the product is assessed. The bi-directional arrows between the elements represent that the process of writing is recursive and students can move between stages. In this model, students are required to reflect on and assess their writing by setting functional and rhetorical goals.

Teacher Perceptions, Attitudes, and Knowledge of Multiliteracies and Multimodality

Perceptions are shaped by historical, political, social, and cultural contexts (Holloway, 2012). So it is with perceptions of literacy, which, according to Gee (2000), is situated in a social context, a view that differs from traditional approaches that regard language as a closed system. Use of language and meanings are closely related to experiences that people make in the material world (Gee, 2001); and, therefore, literacy practices are complex social acts whereby participants interact and interpret an occasion (Reder & Davila, 2005).

Many students already are using new technologies that transform traditional print, form multiple identities, and use different forms of expressions (Luke, 1998). Students “read” a variety of textual forms such as video games, films, graphics, and visual images on a daily basis (Ajayi, 2011). They live in a complex environment where the mediation of new literacies enables them to generate identities (Reder & Davila, 2005). Luke (1998) suggests that teachers take the opportunity to have a critical dialog with students about how new culture and media affect them, and how contexts and knowledge continue to change.

Roswell et al. (2008) emphasizes several points that may affect teachers’ attitudes and perceptions regarding teaching multiliteracies: 1) Students recognize cultural, ethical, and social changes in the classroom; 2) Students brings a range of diverse representational resources into the classroom and integrate them to make intercultural texts; 3) Teachers recognize linguistic and cultural diversity, and use them as teaching resources; 4) Teachers recognize students’ different interests, preferences, and dialects, and use them as opportunities to teach and learn; and 5) Literacy practices provide chances for negotiating, contesting, and refiguring attitudes and mindsets. Teachers could ensure that students’ personal and cultural resources are rooted locally and socially, and that the school is not isolated from their communities (Holloway, 2012).

Teachers’ perceptions and attitudes about multimodality can be both positive and negative. Antonietti et al. (2006) analyzed the psychological correlates of multimedia computer-supported instructional tools using a questionnaire. The study, which included 272 teachers working in kindergartens and primary and secondary schools, examined “motivational & emotional aspects (attraction, involvement, boredom, and tiredness), activation states (participation and effort), mental abilities (attention, language, and logical reasoning), cognitive
benefits and learning benefits (better understanding, memorization, application, and overall view), and metacognition (planning)” (p. 273). Teachers responded that features of multimedia to facilitate comprehension, memorization and learning are very positive. Association with visual thinking and providing a global view are also appreciated. However, some factors such as confusion, tiredness, and excessive involvement negatively affect teachers’ attitudes towards using multimedia. Personal characteristics and gender were not statistically significant. The outcome of this study was consistent with previous studies in that a new tool helps students achieve their desired goals.

Teacher knowledge of subject matter is one of the most important factors affecting the classroom and students’ performance (Dierking & Fox, 2012). Teachers’ ideas about their subject and about how to teach it also contribute to significant changes in students’ learning (Goldschmidt & Phelps, 2010; Tchoshanov, 2011). Rohaan et al.’s (2010) study visualizes four domains of teacher knowledge: subject matter knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, attitude, and self-efficacy, which correlate with each other. The findings of the study indicate that both pedagogical content knowledge and self-efficacy are based on subject matter knowledge, and that self-efficacy when it enhances confidence and increases frequency of technology use can allow teachers to have positive attitudes in adopting innovative teaching tools (e.g., technology). In other words, the development of teachers’ subject matter knowledge increases pedagogical content knowledge and self-efficacy to enact positive attitudes.

The theorists who influence The National Writing Project regard teacher knowledge as an ability to make choices in that teachers have choices in controlling their classroom practices (Dierking & Fox, 2012). Empowered teachers tend to have more confidence professionally and personally, affecting their belief that they can make a difference, and further leading to positive interactions with students. Dierking and Fox state that teachers with self-efficacy, or confidence, are more likely to listen to and experiment with new ideas. Mosenthal and Ball (1992) also emphasized the importance of subject matter knowledge in teacher education. Subject matter knowledge is not only concepts or material to be presented, but also an ability to inquire and to use logic to solve problems. Therefore, teachers’ role is to teach knowledge and to facilitate students to explore issues presented by such knowledge.
Teachers are most effective when they are learning and teaching knowledge that responds to the social and cultural contexts. Ajayi (2011) argues that teachers have been challenged to narrow the gap between traditional schooling and society, and to equip themselves with knowledge to reflect more complex and richer learning experiences. But how can teachers conceptualize and update this knowledge? Research indicates that professional development profoundly affects teacher knowledge (Goldschmidt & Phelps, 2010). According to the quantitative study conducted by Goldschmidt and Phelps in 2010, English Language Arts teachers attending the California Professional Development Institutes demonstrated significant growth in comprehension of content and teaching knowledge, word analysis content knowledge, and Spanish language during the training session.

There are several ways that teachers can improve the critical aspect of teacher quality. First of all, teacher education institutes can provide updated content and pedagogical knowledge. Putnam and Borko (1997) summarize the essential features of effective teacher education. These features are based on understanding teachers as active learners who construct their own understanding of both teaching as a profession with an empowering voice and teaching subjects situated in classroom practice. For example, Ajayi (2011) argues that teacher education is under pressure to teach multiple literacies associated with new communication technologies and, as a result, to reduce the gap between traditional literacy and multiliteracies. Knowledge and skills gained at the institute enabled pre-service teachers to (a) understand new media as a new medium of communication, (b) develop pedagogical strategies to integrate new literacies into old ones, and (c) understand social practices in relation to the new media (Ajayi, 2011).

Second, teacher quality may be maintained and improved by attending workshops or conferences. The National Writing Project provides teachers with intensive and classroom-based programs to increase knowledge and improve teaching practices. In-service teachers in NWP are encouraged to perceive themselves as learners and facilitate students to write. Thus, teachers attending the writing workshop do not receive lectures because the workshop is premised on the notion that learning is a process of personal construction. Teachers as facilitators are encouraged to respond to and support students to generate and select ideas for their own development (Mosenthal & Ball, 1992).
Online professional development (OPD) is the alternative way to deliver a high quality training opportunity to in-service teachers (Kramer et al., 2012). OPD has the potential to overcome some challenges of traditional, face-to-face professional development by removing social and physical boundaries with low costs. Kramer et al.’s study explores the effect of OPD using a randomized controlled trial. In the study employed during three semesters from 2007 to 2009, 35 teachers in the treatment group participated in three workshops, totaling 100 hours of OPD, whereas 45 teachers in the control group did not receive OPD. During online training, the treatment group learned best practices for vocabulary instruction and methods for teaching writing for middle school students. Each workshop consisted of reading, activities and discussions about given topics each week. The findings indicate the three workshops had a statistically significant effect on teachers’ vocabulary, overall English language content knowledge and writing instruction. The implication of the study is that OPD can provide an option for a low-cost high-quality teacher training program.

Professional development programs offer teachers a variety of learning and teaching experiences to help them adjust to more complex learning environments. Although the range of professional development can vary depending on purpose, formality, and cost, programs are similar in that they attempt to stimulate teachers to reflect on their own teaching practices and increase content and pedagogical knowledge (Masuda & Ebersole, 2012). For example, literacy teachers through interactive dialogue with peer teachers have opportunities to gain a broader understanding of literacy beyond print-based materials and to develop new mindsets about teaching multiliteracies.

Summary

A socio-semiotic framework provides an understanding of how people make meanings to communicate with others. The assumption is that technology, production, and dissemination are affected by social, cultural, and economic conditions. Practices and choices are also mediated by interests of group members under certain circumstances. Socio-semiotics includes interests of the socially contextualized signs and its process of meaning making. In this framework, all modes including linguistic and nonlinguistic modes are available sources in sign-making for communication. In accordance with their intentions, speakers and writers may combine and deploy different modes and create new potentials afforded by such modes.
Multiliteracies and multimodality respond to social framings and attitudes related to the socio-semiotic landscape. Many representational resources can contribute to creating meanings and, therefore, language becomes just one of many modes to express and convey meanings. Many modes including image, gesture, gaze, sound, text, music, and so on are semiotic resources to construct meanings in different ways. Such multiple literacies and multimodality challenge the traditional notion of literacy. Traditional schooling, as practiced in Korean English classes, which emphasizes exclusively a linguistic mode may not provide appropriate instructions suited to a digitalized society. If teachers are to implement classroom instructions in multiliteracies and multimodality, they also will need to use different assessment criteria, in that compositions depending on multiple modes differ from mono-modal text-based compositions.

In order to respond to their new contexts, teachers need to develop positive attitudes and increased knowledge of high-quality writing instruction to provide locally based instruction. Professional development, either formal (e.g., graduate school or professional training) or informal (e.g., exchanging ideas with peer teachers), is critical to maintain and update knowledge.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents a procedure using a qualitative design to examine Korean English teachers’ attitudes and perceptions on teaching and assessing multimodal composition. To address these issues, a multiple case study of Korean English teachers who teach writing was conducted. The research questions guiding this study were as follows.

1. What attitudes and perceptions do Korean secondary English teachers articulate regarding teaching multimodal composition?

2. How do Korean secondary English teachers articulate their understanding of assessment of multimodal composition?

3. What are Korean secondary English teachers’ perceived challenges or barriers in teaching and assessing multimodal composition?

Research Design

Rational for Qualitative Study

Qualitative research is “naturalistic” in that researchers do not have to manipulate the phenomenon that they are interested in (Patton, 2002). The purpose of the qualitative design is to explore in-depth understanding of interests (Palinkas, et al., 2010) in a natural setting, and to interpret meanings that people construct (Merriam, 1998). Therefore, no predetermined theories or variables are used. The qualitative method is flexible in that it allows researchers to interact with participants and respond to discoveries as patterns of themes emerge (Patton, 2002).

The multiple case study is employed to generate detailed descriptions and to explore ways to explain the phenomenon. Data comes from multiple sources of information (Creswell, 2007) such as interviews, observations, teaching materials, and lesson plans, and the researchers examine the data carefully and deal with it in accordance with research protocol. Based on the data, they attempt to understand, interpret and evaluate experience from their own perspectives (Gall et al., 2006).

According to Patton, this approach allows researchers to understand “both externally observable
behaviors, and internal states” (p. 48). Therefore, this qualitative design provides a useful tool to understand not only teachers’ behavior in the classroom but also their perceptions, attitudes and values.

This study examined attitudes and instructional practices regarding multimodal composition as conducted by one middle school teacher and five high school teachers in South Korea. Information about the person, social setting, and experience (Berg, 2007) from each case was systematically collected in order to understand how these teachers perceive teaching and assessing multimodal composition within the context of their Korean schools. Each case and themes within the cases can offer detailed descriptions of teaching practices used for writing instruction. In addition, cross-case analysis across teachers was presented to compare how teacher-participants are different or similar on these issues. Following Strauss and Corbin’s (1998) method of constant comparative analysis, each case was constantly compared until reliable interpretations emerged.

In sum, a qualitative design is an appropriate method for this study because it helps to develop a possible explanation of the phenomenon in real life contexts. The importance of the study is not in explaining causal relationships between what is observed and what researchers hypothesize (Creswell, 2008) but in understanding the phenomenon holistically, such as how Korean English teachers respond to social changes (contexts) and how their attitudes and perceptions may affect their teaching of writing.

**Research Sites**

Research sites located in a metropolitan area in South Korea were purposefully selected, based on several factors such as type of school (e.g., high school for academic focused school, and vocational school) and teachers’ use of multimodality. The metropolitan area is home to 48 percent of the national population and has the greatest number of schools in South Korea. However, the characteristics of schools vary greatly within this large area. For example, schools in more affluent sections may be well equipped with technology to aid English language classes. In schools with small class sizes, student-centered activities are more likely to be implemented, compared to conventional classrooms where the average classroom has 35-40 students. Also, students in a metropolitan area can be more exposed to multimodal texts compared to their counterparts in rural areas. Sources of information such as television, text media, and advertisements (even on the street) provide students with more opportunities to access and produce multimodal texts in the city. In accordance with the increasing interest in
multimodal texts, some teachers may have considered the possibility of bringing these literacy activities into the classroom.

The general atmosphere of a Korean high school emphasizes students’ academic performance. Classes typically begin at 9:00 a.m. and end at 5:00 p.m., followed by supplementary classes to study contents in-depth or review what students already learned. Intensive “self-study” sessions continue until late at night. Variations of high schools, except vocational school, rarely exist because the primary emphasis is on sending students to higher education institutes such as colleges or universities. As a consequence, both teachers and students are fully occupied with teaching and studying core subjects (e.g., Korean, mathematics, English, and science) and with achieving high scores. In the case of middle school, academic performance may be less emphasized compared to high school. However, students take schoolwork seriously and receive private lessons, or attend a “cram school” to prepare for exams. Parents are interested in their children’s education at every level, believing that academic success is closely related to their getting lucrative jobs in the future (Kwon, 2003).

**Teacher-Participants**

When it comes to sample size, there is no rule in qualitative design. Rather, it depends on purpose, resources, and time (Patton, 2002). For this study, six cases were studied to explore a phenomenon and to examine variations on attitudes and perceptions among cases. The participants in this study were six Korean English teachers whose nationalities were all Korean. One teaches at middle school, and five at high schools. Their classroom teaching experience varied from four to sixteen years.

In order to access potential subjects, initial contact was made through gatekeepers such as principals and manager teachers. These gatekeepers helped me enter the sites and identify teachers for my study because it is crucial to receive trust and support from the gatekeepers (Creswell, 2008). Discussions with them were provided information such as the importance of the site, the purpose of study, the duration of research, and potential benefits or risks. After receiving authorization from gatekeepers, I searched for individual teachers who were interested in the study. A call was made to teachers via their school directory. Because the initial interest in participation was low, I made further contact by visiting each school in person. Twenty teachers volunteered to participate in the study. I planned to randomly choose two novice teachers from middle schools and two veteran teachers from high schools and to schedule classroom visits to be preceded by interviews. Fourteen teachers appeared to construe multimodal instruction as impossible due to external barriers, whereas six teachers...
expressed cautiously hopeful views about the possibility of improving student learning through multimodality. I decided to follow these six teachers, one from a middle school and five from high schools, who said they were using multimodality, and to conduct additional 30 minute follow-up interviews with these teachers.

Most teacher-participants were selected from this pool of teachers. This is called “purposeful sampling.” Unlike random sampling used in quantitative studies (Rossman & Rallis, 2003), purposeful sampling strategies are employed to collect information from specific participants or processes where the researcher stands to gain a great deal of information about each case (Patton, 2002). In other words, the aim of using purposeful sampling is not to generalize, but to understand the phenomenon that the researcher is interested in. Specifically, in order to examine Korean teachers’ attitudes and perceptions on multimodal composition, teachers currently teaching English writing and using multimodality in a middle and high schools were selected. Additionally, chain sampling was used for this study. This type of sampling strategy is used when a person is recommended because he/she is likely to provide valuable resources (Patton, 2002) regarding this topic of multimodal composition. During the interview, Teacher 5 mentioned about a teacher several times and I requested Teacher 5 to introduce the teacher. Teacher 4 was referred by Teacher 5 because he was believed to provide rich information about instructional practices of teaching writing.

Table 3.1.
Teacher-Participants in This Study by Gender and School Type

<table>
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<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Types of School</th>
<th>Note</th>
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<tr>
<td>T1</td>
<td>Teacher 1</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Middle school</td>
<td>Coed school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2</td>
<td>Teacher 2</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>Coed school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T3</td>
<td>Teacher 3</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>Boys’ school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T4</td>
<td>Teacher 4</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>Girls’ school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T5</td>
<td>Teacher 5</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>Girls’ school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T6</td>
<td>Teacher 6</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>Coed school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on a demographic survey and interview, I identified two groups of teachers with positive perceptions and with neutral perceptions in teaching multimodal composition. Three groups were identified from teachers emphasizing summative or formative assessment, or both. Also, all teachers addressed challenges or barriers from their perspectives. The selection of cases for this study enabled
me to discern themes in how these teachers perceived multimodal composition in different contexts and helped me identify similarities or differences between cases.

Subjectivities Statement

My Experience as a Teacher and a Learner

Prior to pursuing my Ph.D. degree in English education, I taught English in a public high school for four years in Gyeonggi, just outside of Seoul. Since my college major was literature, I did not have much theoretical and practical knowledge about education and educational pedagogies. As a novice teacher, I just followed what other teachers did without much reflection or thought about teaching philosophies. I did not question the role of school or the teacher, believing school should be a place to teach students basic skills without pressure from the outside world. Eventually, I came to realize my lack of knowledge about teaching practice, and I developed an interest in effective teaching and learning of English.

Since pursuing higher education in the U.S., my perceptions of the roles of teaching and school have shifted from focusing on providing students with concrete skills in isolation to connecting learning to the outside world. Through reading educational journals, doing research, and observing in classrooms, I have had the opportunity to reflect on my previous teaching and to obtain information about teaching practices as conducted by other teachers. I saw firsthand how different types of instruction could be effectively applied with various groups of students to improve different language skills. Although all teaching methods have some advantages, I found that instruction using a student-centered approach and the framework of new literacies became those I most strongly supported. During this time, my identity shifted from that of teacher to learner and vice-versa, which helped me see my classroom from a different perspective when I returned to teaching in Korean after five years in the U.S.

Insider vs. Outsider in Relation to the Research

Back in Korea, I resumed working as a high school English teacher but also now took on the role of researcher, to learn about Korean English teachers’ perceptions about teaching and assessing multimodal composition. My first interviewee was a colleague in my school. As an “insider,” I knew the culture of the school and classroom and the role of administrators, but in order to maintain
objectivity, I recorded my interviews and classroom visits to be analyzed. In particular, I was cautious not to force my colleague to do what I wanted to see. Because of my previous experiences in teaching, however, I had a better understanding of the conflicts caused by the demands of the communicative language teaching method and grammar-translation method, and the different expectations of teachers, administrators, and parents. Besides, I could build rapport with the teacher-participants with relative ease because we shared similar experiences in school. At the same time, as a researcher—an objective “outsider”—I tried not to judge teacher-participants, while hoping they might not fear talking to someone who was not a stranger. I could voice teaching and learning philosophies from an objective point of view, and also give myself room to reflect on these. However, my identities as both insider and outsider were not static, but somewhat flexible and interactive.

Data Collection Method

Demographic Survey and Interview

Before the study began, a demographic survey (Appendix B) was given to all participants to complete. The demographic survey consisted of open-ended questions about the teachers’ backgrounds. This information helped identify the characteristics of the population (Patton, 2002) and narrowed down interview questions afterwards. The questionnaire items included: gender, teaching experience, education, and information about their writing classroom. Most of the data were collected via interviews. An in-depth interview is a useful way to collect rich data because it uses open-ended questions to explore participants’ feelings and perspectives (Guion et al., 2001). In this way, a deeper understanding can be developed as the interviewer and interviewee co-construct meanings (Rossman & Rallis, 2003).

To ensure that conversations were consistent and well-organized, Kvale’s (1996) seven stages for conducting interviews were followed:

Stage 1: Thematizing. The purpose of the interviews was to explore how Korean English teachers perceived teaching and assessing multimodal composition. Although teachers already used multimodal components such as images, music and video, the term multimodality might not be familiar to them. As a consequence, an in-depth interview provided an opportunity to clarify and make teachers familiar with the term. I organized interview questions into three categories: teaching multimodal
composition, assessing multimodal composition, and challenges or barriers in integrating and assessing multimodality in the writing classroom.

**Stage 2: Designing.** In this stage, ways to elicit information were determined. A combination of a priori and emergent coding categories was used. Using inductive and priori codes, I used a set of codes based on New Literacies (New London Group, 1996). The interview protocol I followed (Appendix C) allowed me not only to focus on questions and themes to follow, but also to maintain consistency across interviews. In addition to priori coding, emergent categories were based on multiple readings of data and recurring themes teachers cited as factors in their instructional choices. Themes included: group work, individual work, testing, management, engagement, motivation, professional development, culture, parents’ interest, questioning, praise, quizzes, pressure, language difficulty, lecture, technology, teacher knowledge, and communication. I began with an informal conversational approach, called “unstructured interviewing,” and then moved to a general interview guided approach. These types of interviews function as casual dialog between interviewer and interviewee. Most of the questions were spontaneous, coming from immediate contexts, even where the general interview guided approach used a checklist to cover topics and limit depth. Once interviewees felt comfortable with the interviewing process, a standardized open-ended interview was conducted. All questions were carefully worded and asked, based on interview protocol

**Stage 3: Interviewing.** All participants were given a verbal explanation of the purpose of the study, procedures, and any potential benefits and risks related to the study. Participation was voluntary, and after consent was granted, interviewing was administered for about one hour at the school where each participant worked. All interviews were recorded, and I could ask follow-up questions to clarify interviewees’ answers. Teachers were ensured that their identity would be concealed by an ID number and the results would be confidential to the extent allowed by law. The goal of interviewing these teachers working with different groups of students was to investigate how attitudes, perceptions, and literacy practices varied across different contexts. Interview protocol could be revised because participants might have responded differently depending on their teaching experiences and their students’ levels, their knowledge about multimodality, and their school environment.

**Stage 4: Transcribing and translating.** Before each interview, language preference was asked and honored. Interviews were conducted in Korean if participants were anxious and lacked confidence in their ability to speak English, which would result in limiting conversation. It is less likely that “trusting relations” develop between the researcher and participants (Rossman & Rallis, 2003) when
they feel judged by their language skills. All teachers preferred using Korean when conversing with the interviewer. All interviews were transcribed in Korean immediately by me, but were not translated by a trained translator until they were needed. Interview notes were useful to record the researcher’s thoughts and reflections while interviewing and were written in a separate column for later use.

**Stage 5: Analyzing.** Analysis is an ongoing process in qualitative studies. Patton (2002) describes the process of data analysis as: transformation, conversion, synthesis, whole from parts, and sense-making. Despite the challenges of transforming a massive amount of data into meaningful information (Patton, 2002), reading and re-reading interview transcripts help the researcher find patterns and identify emerging themes (Patton, 2002; Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Using topics and questions are ways to make data manageable for classification and coding (Patton, 2002). Also, I went back to an interviewee to clarify or to examine issues when an interview raised more questions.

**Stage 6: Verifying.** During this stage, it is necessary to check credibility to examine if information is valid. Research questions can be answered and analyzed from multiple perspectives. For example, in-depth interviews are conducted not just with middle and high school teachers but with teachers working for different types of school, to explore how they perceive the same topic. The goal of triangulation is generally reported to achieve consistency across data, but it can also be regarded as an opportunity for the researcher to uncover deeper meanings (Patton, 2002). To increase credibility, my colleague, who teaches and is a Ph.D. candidate in statistics, reviewed and analyzed two or three sample sets of interview transcripts and compared findings. Discussion sessions continued until we reached agreement on a same issue.

**Stage 7: Reporting.** Interview results were shared with teacher-participants through an oral or written report. Reporting interview results serves an important purpose. It can be used to validate data, since the interview involves processes of transcribing and translating and interviewees’ intentions can be distorted during these processes. Both Korean and English versions were presented to check if transcribed and translated interview answers preserve their intended meanings.

**Observation**

Based on a demographic survey and short conversation, six cases from each teacher were selected for observation. Since the purpose of observation in this study was not to become immersed in a culture or context, the researcher became a direct observer who watched and was as unobtrusive as possible (Patton, 2002). The focus of the observation was whether and how teachers use multimodality
in their writing classroom, what modes they were using, what types of activities they were using, and what types of assessment they were employing. A classroom observation checklist (Appendix D) was used to assure consistency in observations of different classes. It served as a tool to explain to what degree characteristics of multimodality were observed during each classroom observation. The classroom visit was done at a time that participants and I agreed on, and I stayed for 45 minutes in middle school and 50 minutes in high school classrooms. The checklist was completed while I watched the teacher’s class.

Notes

In addition to recording of the interviews, notes were taken during each interview and classroom observation. Key terms or phrases appearing in my notes could serve as cues not only to facilitate dialog during the interview but also to remember noteworthy points afterwards. Patton (2002) summarizes four important roles of taking notes: 1) note-taking allows an interviewer to formulate new questions while checking out understanding of what an interviewee says; 2) notes serve as reminders of early insights which can appear in subsequent interviews; 3) note-taking can facilitate later analysis by locating important quotes; and 4) notes may be used as a back-up in case the recorder does not function.

Documents

There is a wealth of data related to teachers’ daily classroom activities. Two types of documents were requested after the interviews and were examined. First were official documents, including the curriculum used to shape teachers’ attitudes and guide their behaviors. Second were official and unofficial documents teachers tailor for their personal use, which demonstrate the degree to which they emphasize aspects of the curriculum. For example, lesson plans, and teaching materials such as textbooks, workbooks, handouts, web-sites, power-point slides, photographs, and rubrics are valuable sources that provide insight about how teachers use pedagogical knowledge. These data also were used to triangulate findings.

Data Analysis

Pre-interviews with all teachers were used to explore their general attitudes and perceptions about multimodal composition. The pre-interviews were more likely to be informal conversations with the subjects, and the interview questions were spontaneously formulated to be specific to the teachers’
individual interests and situations. Most data were collected during the semi-structured and structured interviews. Documents collected and the researcher’s notes also were used to help the researcher to investigate how the teachers use multimodal designs to teach writing effectively, how they perceived multimodal composition, and what multimodal elements they used. An Observation Checklist was used to collect information during a classroom visit and to correlate between the interviews and teachers’ actual behaviors. I checked their classroom practices using a scale of 1, 2, and 3, with 1 being not observed, 2 being rarely observed, and 3 being observed most of the time. These data sources along with the interviews were considered together to increase credibility and accuracy (Patton, 1996). In other words, multiple sources of data, or multiple perspectives, were used to check and interpret the same event by means of triangulation.

All data were recorded and immediately transcribed and translated if necessary. The preliminary analysis began with reading the researcher’s notes and verbatim transcripts several times. By using within-case analysis (teachers with similar perceptions), cross-case analysis (teachers working at different types of schools), and constant comparative analysis, the researcher broke down the raw data and synthesized it to find patterns. During this process, conceptual categories or themes were identified. The process of analyzing data was recursive. The researcher compared data against the data corpus, and constantly went back to research questions and findings. In this way, each question were answered by using the constant comparative analysis technique. (Patton, 1996)

Dimensions of Multimodal Composition

**Linguistic design.** Linguistic design has been used and favored in academic composition. Traditional persuasive and argumentative essays or reports belong to this category (Shin & Cimasko, 2008). The components of the linguistic design include vocabulary, metaphor, structure, and delivery (New London Group, 1996). This is operationalized by all data sources that include what teachers say and write to teach and assess.

**Visual design.** Visual elements such as images, color, and screen formats contribute to meaning-making. Visuals often convey a writer’s emotions associated with topics better than linguistic texts (Shin & Cimasko, 2008). As the New London Group (1996) indicates, as more attention is paid to visual images and their relation to written texts as information, multimedia technologies help to create multiple forms of communication. This is operationalized by all data
sources that include what or how teachers demonstrate or present to teach and assess.

**Spatial design.** Spatial design refers to geographical and architectural elements that contribute to creating meanings. For example, shopping malls or casinos do not have a clock to make customers insensitive about time passing (New London Group, 1996). In composition, spatial design is observed on a computer monitor (Shin & Cimasko, 2008), where all components, including the layout of writing, images and hyperlink, are arranged so that writers convey messages effectively. This is operationalized by all data sources that include how teachers arrange texts to teach and assess.

**Audio design.** Audio design includes voice, music, and sound effects (Hill, 2010). Audio components not only serve a secondary role to linguistic modes but also play independently. For instance, music can help readers explore themes, moods, and characters. Also, audio files such as news clips or recorded interviews (Shin & Cimasko, 2008) are complete texts without a linguistic text. This is operationalized by all data sources that include use of equipment or media used to teach and assess.

**Dimensions of Assessment for Multimodal Composition**

**Summative assessment.** This is used to evaluate learning. It typically assesses the outcome of student performance, as exemplified by a final examination and final papers at the end of a semester (Airasian, 1996). Therefore, all information in the summative scores represents a student’s final status or understanding about instruction at a particular point (Marzano, 2010). Summative assessment is called official assessment because it is documented in report cards, saved in school record folders, or used to select students (Airasian, 1996).

Summative assessment provides teachers with criteria to determine the content and level of students’ performance, and this type of large-scale writing assessment serves as a guide to teaching and improving teaching method. The results of high-stakes writing assessment also help to reshape curriculum in accordance with students’ needs and interests, as students’ scores can be an indicator of whether or not they achieve grade-level tasks and learning objectives stated in the curriculum. This is operationalized by all data sources that include all types of examinations, quizzes, and final products to assess.
Formative assessment. This is used to monitor learning. Formative assessment has been primarily used to improve classroom activities or processes (Airasian, 1996). Unlike summative assessment occurring at the end of a semester, formative assessments are employed during instruction throughout the semester (Marzano, 2010). The primary goal is to collect data about progress to help students improve their learning and performance. Various procedures such as observation and feedback are used to monitor students and to adjust instructions. The formative assessment is ongoing from observation to feedback to instruction, which is interactive and recursive occurring any time during learning. In order to make formative assessment effective, McMillan (2007) notes, 1) assessment should be integrated into instruction, 2) additional instructional strategies are necessary, and 3) students should be engaged in learning.

In teaching multimodal composition, a key strategy in formative assessment is to establish clear goals (McMillan, 2007). The first process goal is to set the direction of learning (Where the learner is going). Teachers clarify criteria for writing, while students understand and internalize the criteria. The next step is to identify the current position of learners in the process (Where the learner is right now). Teachers provide a model essay to demonstrate how the use of multiple modes serves rhetorical purposes and further helps the writer achieve a specific purpose. Finally, teachers provide feedback as well as instruction to move forward (How to get there). This is operationalized by all data sources that include informal quizzes, feedback, questions, and activities to teach and assess.

Criteria for Assessing Multimodal Composition

Criteria for assessing multimodal composition were divided into four domains: content, structure, convention, and multimodality. These are operationalized by coding passages that include current practices teachers prioritize in teaching and assessing and related discussions.

Content domain. Content domain includes “purpose and audience, idea development and support” (Herrington et al., 2009, p.114). When writing about an issue, a writer may have multiple purposes, for example, to express one’s ideas or emotions or to persuade others to take the writer’s position. In order to achieve one’s purpose regarding a particular issue, it is necessary to understand the intended audience. Good writers develop ideas logically and provide reasonable evidence to support their main ideas. Writers composing multimodal texts also must
consider these aspects of domain, even though multimodal texts may have more significant
effects on the audience with increasingly interactive texts.

**Structure domain.** Structure domain refers to “organization, unity, and coherence, and
sentences” (Herrington et al., 2009, p.114). These elements in traditional writing help writers
connect ideas logically, and help readers move from idea to idea without difficulty. However, the
structural unity of multimodal composition is achieved differently. Yancey (2004) gives an
example of coherence in multimodal composition. In emails, repetition creates coherence when a
receiver refers to the previous text in order to reply to the sender. Another example is a power-
point template that provides repeated background images and words. These repeated patterns
contribute to creating coherence.

**Convention domain.** This domain includes “language choice, grammar and usage, word
choice, and correctness in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, abbreviation and documentation”
(Herrington et al., 2009, p.115). When the conventions of language are violated, it is likely to
blur the writer’s messages, resulting in miscommunication between the writer and readers.
Grammatically correct formatting and proper word choice can increase credibility, readability,
and clarity (Donovan, 2012). Although the number of mistakes may be dramatically decreased
due to grammar and spelling checkers in word processing programs, language teachers cannot
underestimate teaching linguistic conventions, given that multimodal composition does not
necessarily involve using technology.

**Domain of multimodality.** All modes (linguistic, visual, spatial, and audio design) are
dynamically related (New London Group). The assumption of multimodality is that
communication and representation are dependent on multiple modes. Theoretically, all individual
modes contribute to making meanings, although their importance may vary socially, culturally,
and personally. That is, people select and configure modes using semiotic resources of linguistic,
space, voice, and visual communication, to name a few. To explore the mutual relationship
between and across modes is crucial in understanding multimodal composition.

**Dimensions of Barriers of Teaching Multimodal Composition**

**External barriers.** Resources: In order for teachers to conduct instruction in multimodal
composition, it is critical that they have the resources to support this practice, and without them,
a barrier exists. First, creating the environment called the digital ecology (DeVoss et al., 2010) is needed to support these teaching practices because multimodal composition involves writing combined with images, music, sound, graphics, photography, and film (Walsh, 2010). Computer labs can provide an environment where teachers and students try to create multiple texts using technology. Along with the physical environment, textbooks, workbooks, and references are resources that facilitate teaching and learning.

Lack of in-service training can be a barrier in fostering multiliteracies and integrating multimodality in the writing classroom. For instance, because Korean English teachers spend a great deal of time dealing with official documents handed out by the government, it is reported that teachers do not have enough time to prepare for reviewing teaching materials, not to mention for attending in-service trainings. In addition, attending professional development programs does not affect promotion or bring any monetary benefit.

School Culture: This refers to the beliefs, attitudes, perceptions, and written and unwritten rules that influence individuals and functions of the particular school. School culture can be consciously and unconsciously affected not only by students, parents, and administrators, but also by community and politics. In a school culture where academic success is valued, the linguistic mode is often more appreciated than any other modes. On the other hand, the visual mode is valued where creativity as well as artistic talent is recognized and celebrated. An external barrier is operationalized by coding passages that include discussions of the physical environment, classroom setting, and contexts of teaching and learning.

**Internal barriers.** Attitudes: Research addresses that positive attitudes usually lead to teachers’ trying to adopt specific teaching practices and strategies, even if they may not have sufficient knowledge to implement them successfully (Akpinar & Bayramoglu, 2008). On the contrary, teachers may develop fear and negative attitudes when they have to confront challenging situations caused by the adoption of new pedagogies. For this study, three aspects of teachers’ attitudes toward multimodal composition were explored: positive, neutral, and negative attitudes. Teachers with positive attitudes tend to be open-minded and have actually implemented lessons on multimodal composition. Teachers with negative attitudes are reluctant to try integrating multimodality into writing class because of lack of resources, issues of classroom management, the challenges of assessing multimodal composition, or a personal
preference toward a specific mode. Teachers who are neutral may hold a judgment toward multimodal composition and may or may not show interest in teaching about multimodality.

Knowledge: In following Shulman’s (1986) framework, two types of knowledge are essential to maintain teacher quality: content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge. Content knowledge refers to the knowledge and skills that teachers should master in each subject they will teach. The more knowledgeable teachers are, the more likely they will present a variety of contexts that facilitate students’ understanding and connect previous knowledge to new knowledge. Pedagogical knowledge is defined as what teachers know about teaching and how they organize their ideas for teaching. Pedagogical knowledge includes gathering conceptions and preconceptions about students’ levels or backgrounds and knowing how much time to spend for instruction and for transitioning from one activity to the next. An internal barrier is operationalized by coding passages that include discussions of knowledge of teaching and learning, willingness to teach new literacies, and confidence about teaching new literacies.

Assuring Rigor

Lincoln and Guba (1985) explained that a series of techniques can be used in conducting qualitative research to make findings more credible. Credibility corresponds to internal validity in quantitative studies, and Lincoln and Guba took it as the most important criterion to establish trustworthiness. It can be obtained by triangulation to enhance the accuracy of findings. To triangulate, multiple sources from different individuals (e.g., teachers working for different schools), different types of data (e.g., notes and interviews), or different method of data collection (e.g., documents and interviews) can be used (Creswell, 2008). These sources enable researchers to have a deeper understanding of the collected information. Also, cross-checking will be used to establish credibility (Creswell, 2008). The transcript interviews and findings will be reported to each participant, both to check accuracy and to add any missing information.

Transferability in qualitative research is similar to external validity in quantitative studies (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Although the purpose of qualitative studies does not generalize findings to other settings, this type of external validity can be achieved by providing a complete description of an inquiry. Such a detailed account of the field experience allows researchers to get interested in the topic and make a transfer to other situations or settings. In order to enhance transferability, several types of information should be included (Shenton, 2004),
the data collection methods that were employed;
the number and length of the data collection sessions; and
the time period over which the data was collected.

Findings accumulated from multiple environments also can increase transferability, even if the results may not be consistent. Inconsistency does not necessarily mean the study is not reliable, but reflects multiple realities (Shenton, 2004).

Dependability corresponds with reliability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), which refers to techniques to show that similar results can be gained if a study is conducted using the same methods and same participants. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), credibility and dependability are strongly related in that establishing credibility ensures an increase in dependability to some degree. In order to enhance dependability, all processes should be thoroughly described and reported so that future researchers may have similar results when conducting subsequent studies on the same topic. Shenton (2004) indicates the study should include the research design and its implementation on a strategic level, the detailed process of data collection, and reflection on the effectiveness of research processes.

Finally, confirmability is a substitute for objectivity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Objectivity in science is achieved when researchers attempt not to use human skills and perceptions to reduce biases (Shenton, 2004). However, it is inevitable that researchers’ propositions and ideas affect their understanding and interpreting data. The key strategy to ensure confirmability is to recognize researchers’ own limits in adopting methods and to address a rationale for favoring one approach. In addition, detailed descriptions of method are critical (Shenton, 2004), whereby themes or findings emerge from the rich data.

**Ethics Issues**

Ethics issues are complex because qualitative studies usually involve human relationships between researchers and participants. Extra attention must be paid to protect individuals and their rights. There are several ways to protect participants in qualitative research. Researchers must promise and ensure confidentiality to keep individual privacy. Informed consent (Appendix A) indicated that their names or identities would not be revealed, which is essential to protect the teacher participants. For example, regarding classroom observation, a teacher might be reported to use a variety of class materials such as video clips, songs, and magazines to motivate students. In a strongly academic school culture where instructional focus is primarily on preparing tests, that teacher may be criticized for
laziness if his or her name is disclosed. Teacher-participants were also informed that they could withdraw their participation even in the middle of study and that their decision would not affect their relationship with their school.

The principles of justice were ensured for all participants. This means treating every participant fairly and withholding judgment about them. Neither their attitudes nor their effectiveness or ineffectiveness regarding integrating multimodality can be a criterion for the study. The key principle is not to exploit or abuse participants or to recognize their vulnerabilities. Keeping in mind this principle, all documents given to teachers were translated; although they were teaching English, the project was explained in their native language to reduce any possibility of misunderstanding.

Summary

A multimodal case study was conducted through semi-structured interviews, classroom observation, and examining documents to explore teachers’ attitudes and perceptions on teaching and assessing practices of multimodal composition and perceived challenges or barriers. Following The New London Group’s framework, the dimensions of teaching multimodal composition were divided as linguistic, visual, spatial, and audio design. The dimensions of assessment of multimodal composition were categorized as summative and formative assessment. Finally, external and internal barriers are explored to examine why teachers may be either more willing or more reluctant to integrate multimodality into their writing classes. Data analysis as an ongoing and recursive process continued until I reached a stage of saturation. Ways to assure rigor were followed.
CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

In this chapter, six cases are analyzed and reported to answer the three main research questions by means of qualitative methods. The chapter begins with a summary of the research sites and participants’ demographic information.

Research Contexts and Participants’ Demographic Information

Understanding the research sites and participants’ background information is critical in a qualitative inquiry in that the researcher must select individuals and sites in line with the study’s intention. Thus, selected samples allow the researcher to learn about a central phenomenon through a detailed understanding of the sites and the participants’ answers as formulated during the research process (Creswell, 2008).

Table 4.1. The Summary of Research Sites and Participants’ Demographic Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Sites (Participants)</th>
<th>school 1 (teacher 1)</th>
<th>school 2 (teacher 2)</th>
<th>school 3 (teacher 3)</th>
<th>school 4 (teacher 4)</th>
<th>school 5 (teacher 5)</th>
<th>school 6 (teacher 6)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level of school</td>
<td>middle school</td>
<td>high school</td>
<td>high school</td>
<td>high school</td>
<td>high school</td>
<td>high school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of school</td>
<td>general</td>
<td>general</td>
<td>general</td>
<td>vocational</td>
<td>general</td>
<td>foreign language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class size</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher’s gender</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students’ gender</td>
<td>boys and girls</td>
<td>boys and girls</td>
<td>only boys</td>
<td>only girls</td>
<td>only girls</td>
<td>boys and girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching experience</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>16 years</td>
<td>7 years</td>
<td>6 years</td>
<td>9 years</td>
<td>11 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students’ level of English</td>
<td>advanced</td>
<td>low to medium</td>
<td>medium</td>
<td>low</td>
<td>medium to advanced</td>
<td>advanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English (per week)</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
<td>4 hrs</td>
<td>4 hrs</td>
<td>4 hrs</td>
<td>4 hrs</td>
<td>8 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing (per week)</td>
<td>less than 30 min</td>
<td>30 min - 1 hour</td>
<td>less than 30 min</td>
<td>30 min - 1 hour</td>
<td>less than 30 min</td>
<td>more than 1 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using multimodality</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. S=School; T=Teacher.
General information first was obtained through a demographic survey from which I then selected individuals that indicated they used multimodality in their classroom. Such “purposive sampling” helped me select participants using writing practices that I am interested in (Silverman & Marvasti, 2008). Pseudonyms replace school and participants’ names to protect confidentiality. The schools are referred as school 1, school 2, school 3, school 4, school 5, and school 6. Likewise, the teacher participants are called teacher 1, teacher 2, teacher 3, teacher 4, teacher 5, and teacher 6. The complete summary of research sites and participants’ demographic information is shown in Table 4.1.

The above table contains research sites and participants’ demographic information. The research site information includes type of school, class size, students’ gender, and students’ level of English. The information on teacher participants consists of teacher’s gender, years of teaching experience, hours each teaches English per week, and so on. The six participants from six schools were carefully selected because they reported in the demographic survey that they encouraged students to use multiple modalities to create texts.

Table 4.2.  
Observational Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Multimodality</th>
<th>T1</th>
<th>T2</th>
<th>T3</th>
<th>T4</th>
<th>T5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Linguistic design</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
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T = Teacher; 1 = not observed; 2 = rarely; 3 = most of the time
Note: Classroom 6 was not observed.
Using the observation checklist, I tried to determine if they were actually teaching or assessing multimodality by encouraging individuals or through group work. Table 4.2. shows the frequency of using multimodality, teaching rhetoric, use of assessments, and the types of work compiled from Teachers 1 through 5. Teacher 6’s classroom was not observed because the principal did not allow any guests in the classroom. Observed teaching behavior was checked using rating scales on a continuum according to a 3-point scale of observable teaching practices.

Since the classroom visits were limited to one time, it was not unusual to find mismatches between what teachers said in their interview and their teaching practices on the observation day. Below is information about Teachers 1–6, the participants in the study, and their schools.

Teacher 1 is a female teacher working for school 1, a middle school. School 1 was founded in 1983, and is located in Seoul. It has a large number of students, up to 1,515, and is located in an area where parents’ incomes are far above average compared to other areas of the city. Any student can be accepted to the school, based on proximity of their home. Although the school does not have a native-speaking English teacher, the students’ English proficiency is above average compared with their peers in other schools. School 1 has consistently sent more than 20 students to special purpose high schools every year, such as science high schools and foreign language high schools. These numbers greatly exceed those of other middle schools in that only eight of 380 middle schools in Seoul sent students to these highly competitive special purpose highs schools in 2014. Most students at school 1 receive private lessons, or attend a “cram school” to prepare for exams. The parents are interested in their children’s education, believing that academic success is closely related to getting lucrative jobs in the future.

Teacher 1 agreed to participate in my research project when I contacted a head teacher at her middle school. She reported she was using multimodality, although she did not invest much time in teaching writing. Teacher 1 did not always want to be a teacher but made a dramatic change in professions after having worked several years in urban planning, related to her first degree. She reentered university to become a teacher, and spent four years to prepare for the teacher examination. As a result, she appreciates her job and shows passion in her teaching. When I interviewed her, she asked more questions about qualities and conditions of effective teachers than I did. Her four years of experience in teaching English in a middle school enabled her to improve her management and teaching skills, and, at the same time, made her join an ongoing learning community in order to develop her knowledge and expertise.
School 2 is a high school located in Gyeonggi-do, which is a 30-minute drive from Seoul. Because students in this area apply for schools based on their grades obtained from middle schools, typically, low performing students are enrolled in school 2, which is located near low-income neighborhoods. The school is surrounded by an industrial area, and, as a result, pollution is a serious issue. In addition, lack of cultural and educational facilities not only affect the quality of life, but also accelerate local families’ mobility to a better neighborhood. Parents rely on resources and information that the school provides as most cannot afford to send their children to private institutes. Students prefer staying at the school to take advantage of available resources to depending on their parents, most of whom work to support their families. Teachers know the parents’ as well as the students’ expectations and try to do their best to provide students with the best possible education.

Teacher 2 has been working in the school 2 for five years, although she had 11 years of teaching experience before moving to the school. Because of her experience, she served as a mentor to many young novice teachers. When I first contacted her, she was humble, saying that she was still nervous in the classroom and constantly thinking about how she would teach. She organized a weekly meeting every Thursday with four other English teachers who taught the same grade. She called it a casual meeting, during lunch hours, but the teachers actually exchanged ideas about teaching skills, information, and teaching plans. She was also an active member of a consulting team that belonged to a local educational department. At the request of a school via the local educational department, she was sent to the school to provide consulting on teaching and evaluation systems. She said her efforts contributed to improving the public education system in Korea, although her life became busier with this extra work.

School 3 was an all-male high school located in Gyeonggi-do. The school was proud of having high performing students around 10 years ago, but it has not continued the glory of the past since the school switched from a policy of test-based entrance examination to recruit high performing students to a lottery system to give equal opportunities for admission. This school selects students based on geographical proximity, and as a consequence, there is a wide range of ability from high performing to low performing students. The culture of school 3 is, however, academically oriented. Classes begin at 9:00 a.m. and end at 5:00 p.m. Most of the students also participate in supplementary classes after the school day to study academic content in-depth or review what they already had learned. Intensive “self-study” sessions continue until late night. This school creates its own educational database compiled from individual student’s records over the past three years to provide systematic educational guidance.
to students. A mentoring program helps students learn effective study strategies as well as receive information about majors and future careers from school alumni.

Teacher 3 was selected because he showed interest in teaching new literacies. He said he used to teach writing and used digital technologies as writing activities when teaching 10th grade, but did less teaching of writing in his 12th grade classroom. At this level, his students were expected to prepare for high-stake tests, and there was greater emphasis placed on teaching reading skills to help students prepare for exams necessary for college. He was frustrated to teach only skills that students needed to acquire to gain higher scores on multiple choice questions. He mentioned that he preferred teaching 10th or 11th graders instead of 12th grade students so that he could teach what was of importance, and not only what the school emphasized. However, he did not have much choice in the school setting, where teachers are required to follow the principal’s or vice-principal’s decisions.

School 4 was the only school that emphasized practical knowledge, unlike the other five schools that were most heavily focused on academic achievement. The purpose of education in this school was to send students into the business world instead of to universities right after graduation. The students of this vocational school could choose their majors, such as finance information, Internet business, and international trade, when they entered 11th grade. They learned skills and received special training to perform specific tasks. The school provided a variety of vocational courses as well as internship opportunities. Most students invested their time to earn certificates related to specific types of jobs and to learn skills necessary for the information age. It was reported that the school was well equipped with technology to meet labor market demands. Because of increased emphasis on vocational courses, core subjects such as Korean, math, science, and English were less likely to be stressed.

Teacher 4 was introduced to this study by teacher 5, both of whom had worked in the same (another) school several years ago. Teacher 4 reported that digital technology was a useful tool to facilitate classroom management and to improve students’ comprehension. He appreciated the value of technology in education and attempted to keep updating his technology skills to increase the efficiency of his teaching. He said “Like other regular teachers, I taught reading skills to increase the percentage of right answers in reading comprehension exams in my previous schools, but I do not do that since I moved to this vocational school. English is not a mainstream subject, and students aren’t preparing for the Korean SAT to enter university. It’s good in some ways, because I can do different things in my classroom.” However, he said he is still more focused on teaching reading rather than writing because students’ productive skills were not well developed and there was not enough time for teaching writing.
School 5 is an all-female school located in Seoul, and like its all-male counterpart, school 3, it is academic oriented. Both schools were operated very similarly following national curriculum and methods. School 5 was open to all girls who lived in the school district. Students attending the school could take advantage of individualized classes as an afterschool program. The school provided students with many options to choose in accordance with their interests and needs. For example, students could select classes specifically focusing on grammar or listening, instead of general English. Students in Korea usually stay in their classroom, while the teacher moves around; however, students in school 5 were more likely to have autonomy in terms of their choice of subjects.

Teacher 5 was selected because he was teaching writing and integrating multimodality. Most of all, he himself liked to write and frequently wrote his daily reflections on Facebook. He knew how to use up-to-date technology as an instructional tool. He believed technology helped increase his creativity as well as productivity because he could create worksheets or teaching materials to fit his students’ needs. As a result, he spent his time developing customized worksheets as opposed to using textbooks. Teacher 5 also shared information with teacher 4 on making use of new technology and methodologies. However, he used caution in incorporating technology in the classroom, saying, “Technology does not cure all.” He mentioned several times during interviews that technology does not only support students’ language learning, but also allow learners to access a variety of interesting sources. Although technology integration offers advantages, he said these do not necessarily ensure their effective use in educational settings.

School 6 was categorized as a high performing high school with a focus on teaching foreign language, and was the one of the best performing high schools in Gyeonggi-do. This prestigious school selects its students based on middle school grades, an entrance examination, and interview. Their students’ motivation to study is relatively higher than that of their peers in other schools, given that their performance in middle school is in the top 10th percentile. In 2013, the school ranked high among 360 high schools in the national achievement test conducted by the Korea Institute for Curriculum and Evaluation. The national achievement test is not used as a college entrance exam but is important to measure students’ learning. The school, in particular, was popular among parents because not only does it rank high in the national achievement test scores but also has a high college entrance rate.

The last participant, teacher 6, had worked for school 6 for three years out of a total of 11 years of teaching experience. She was interested in innovative ways of teaching English, and she actively participated in workshops and professional development training on a regular basis. She believed that
teacher quality has a tremendous impact on student learning. She was also a guest speaker in several workshops to talk about student-centered approaches that she theoretically supported and actually used. She showed a high satisfaction with her school and students, saying, “This school is very supportive so that teachers work in a safe learning environment, I mean, where teachers and teachers, and teachers and students work together pleasantly. I feel I am learning everyday, even if I am a teacher.”

**Results**

All participants were interviewed in their native Korean language. The recordings of the interviews were transcribed immediately but were not translated from Korean to English right away. Instead, transcripts were read over and over again seeking responses related to the research questions. The full transcripts were sent to an independent translator who was asked to translate underlined parts. The reason for sending the complete transcripts was that if the translator did not know the full context, she might distort interviewees’ intentions.

The guiding questions for this study were:

1. What attitudes and perceptions do Korean secondary English teachers articulate regarding teaching multimodal composition?
2. How do Korean English teachers articulate their understanding of assessment of multimodal composition?
3. What are Korean secondary English teachers’ perceived challenges or barriers in teaching and assessing multimodal composition?

The responses were articulated via face-to-face interviews with six teachers from six different schools. All teacher participants were selected because they answered that they were teaching writing and incorporating multimodality. However, their perceptions and attitudes about teaching and assessing multimodal compositions were different. Based on a demographic survey, two groups of teachers with positive perceptions and with neutral perceptions/somewhat cautious about multimodal composition were identified. In other words, within-case and cross-case comparisons were conducted to see how teachers with similar or different perceptions responded to these research questions.
Research Question One: What attitudes and perceptions do Korean secondary English teachers articulate regarding teaching multimodal composition?

Within-Case Comparison – Cases of Teachers 2, 4, 6 and Cases of Teachers 1, 3, 5

Positive perceptions about teaching multimodal composition; cases of teachers 2, 4, and 6. The teachers from schools 2, 4, and 6 had positive perceptions and attitudes about teaching multimodal composition. They were enthusiastic to accept new media and technology into the school curriculum as society demanded such skills. Teacher 2 said, “The school should teach new skills and knowledge that are critical to survive in the society, you know. As you know, students exchange text messages or write on SNS. It would be fun if they could perform this writing activity in English.” Teachers 4 and 6 had similar attitudes toward teaching writing using a variety of modes. They believed that using different texts with the development of new multimedia technology was unavoidable in a new media age. Also, both teachers thought the school curriculum should include using technology because students were already using and consuming hypermedia incorporating images, sounds, and other non-linguistic features outside of school.

Teacher 6 showed a very positive attitude toward teaching multimodal composition in that her students liked and wrote more using technology. When asked about how her students write more, she stated,

My students’ English proficiency is great. I think their English is better than adults. They are highly motivated and know reasons why they should study English. In fact, a lot of students have experienced living in foreign countries when they were younger. I know their starting points are different because they learned a foreign language at a critical age, I mean, so they learned a different language in the same way that kids in the U.S.A. acquire their mother tongue. However, students who have never been to a foreign country are also good at English. They are diligent, and work so hard. Both groups of students commonly are not afraid of English. They frequently visit websites written in all English and send emails if they have any questions. Some who have friends living in other countries email or chat during weekends. In particular, they seem to use non-linguistic signs to express their emotions. Not many students do that, but it is interesting to see how these students enjoy writing outside the classroom.

Teacher 6 also said that exchanging emails across countries would not be possible without the help of technology. Twenty years ago when she was a student, she could not imagine writing a letter to a foreign friend because of the cost and delivery time involved in long distance communication. She said
that students today, unlike during her school years, could use messenger apps provided by smart phones for recreation and correspondence. They communicate by writing (texting) without paying extra charges if there is Wi-Fi. She added, “I know, they may not communicate in English when sending messages to peers. At least, they write and respond to their friends.” She was clear that by doing these literacy activities on their own, whether in Korean or in English, students could have a positive experience of writing that was enjoyable, easy, and practical.

All three teachers pointed out that multimodal composition facilitated students’ engagement with learning. Teacher 4 felt “students seem to listen to me when I use a variety of technology. Actually, they are not interested in studying English at all because their goal is not entering university, but getting a job after graduation.” As a result, he made use of lesson plans that integrate multiple modes to motivate students. He said, “Students are busy with studying contents related to finance and business. I should explain why English is important as much as these subjects.” He thought multimodal projects may need a little direction at first, but they could make students work more because they require their active participation. “I think students get bored when they have to sit and listen quietly.” Teacher 4 designed worksheets for his writing classroom for students to complete on their own. For example, the worksheets included tables or summary charts for the students to fill in. Such graphic organizers seemed to allow his students to increase opportunities to engage during class time because they had to complete tasks as their teacher requested. However, he minimized chances for students to speak in class afterward because “students are reluctant to stand in front of the class. They think their English is not good, so they don’t want to speak English to their friends.” In order to check the answers for the tables or charts on the worksheets, teacher 4 demonstrated possible answers from PPT slides or asked students to volunteer to answer the questions.

Teachers said that they constructed multimodal teaching as an effective means of managing behavior and maintaining student attention. Teacher 4 reported that keeping the students’ interested and engaged had an impact on their behavior. He frequently observed that students with interest in a subject engaged in class activities by asking more questions or by responding actively to his questions. He stated, “I don’t know if interest affects their engagement, or vice versa. Maybe, both interact and influence each other.” In his students’ case, the majority of students reacted strongly to specific topics such as travelling and dream jobs. From a pedagogical perspective, his students preferred activity-based types of lessons to lectures mostly done by him.
Also, students’ engagement is a critical factor in maintaining classroom discipline. Teacher 4 said if a classroom is noisy, it meant he could not control the situation. “Actually, I do not give lecture lessons during in-class time. I upload a video ahead of class that students can watch. In the classroom the following day, students are required to complete worksheets based on the video. They do not have time to wander or misbehave, I guess.” That is, teaching materials filled with a dynamic interaction of images and sounds provided students a way to learn topics in an interesting manner. Explicit explanations with verbal formats on the following day helped students to better understand their reading assignments and produce a new version of the reading either in imagery or in written texts. Teacher 2 also believed that multimodal composition could create a student-centered classroom, which would keep students involved, thus resulting in effective classroom management. A book project, a lesson she created, was successful in that:

Students were really involved in making their own book. They read a book of their own choice first, and then made their own book of 10 pages or less. They drew a picture, not to mention writing. In a typical English class, I would wake up students to make them focus on the lesson, but while doing this project, I did not have to speak up or wake them up. Although I did it only once, after the final examination, I would like to increase this type of project. They voluntarily worked. Yes, I can be kind of a witch in the classroom, but I was not during this time.

In the book project, she broke up the activities every 10 to 20 minutes. For example, her students did not stay in one activity very long; instead, she planned several small activities that comprised the big lesson. Students were asked to finish reading a short story, discuss it, and then they were requested that they make a drawing from what they read. Although it was the same information, it was presented in different modes (linguistic, auditory, and visual). These three different modes helped students complete the small tasks by breaking up the monotony.

According to a 2012 Ministry of Education Science and Technology report, 49.2% of total students in 2011 had private lessons to learn English. The main purpose of having the private lessons is to keep up with the regular curriculum, but the side effect is that students lose interest in class because they already have learned the content at the private institutes. In order to manage the classroom effectively, teachers must keep the class interested. However, students are less likely to show much interest in this situation and their attention may not be focused on the lessons or the materials. As teacher 2 mentioned, the book project allowed students to concentrate on what they were doing by making their own learning materials.
All three teachers (2, 4, and 6) recognized that some students have well developed verbal skills, while some think better using images and pictures. From these teachers’ perspectives, their students who are traditionally defined as low performing seemed to have more confidence in a multimodal classroom. While carrying out the book project, teacher 2 said, “I asked students to choose their modes.” Some students drew a picture and some found quotes or wrote sentences based on their reading. They chose their modes based on their own strengths or talents which they believed they possessed. Teacher 6 created four roles for the students to choose, including speaker, writer, captain, and illustrator. In her classroom, the outspoken students usually chose speaker or captain, students with strong verbal intelligence took the role of writer, and those who were good at drawing chose illustrator. According to teachers 2 and 6, these students carried out the different tasks that required different mindsets and skills, and, as a result, all students had feelings of accomplishment in the way that they contributed to their projects.

Teacher 4 also made students use a wide range of abilities, from linguistic to visual. In demonstrating comprehension, his students preferred drawing to writing in English. He stated, “Some of my students quit studying English since they graduated from middle school. They prefer drawing because they don’t have an ability to express in English what they think.” Therefore, visual modes were typically used since they could not explain with words or language. By looking at their products, which usually had visual formats, he assumed that students understood the reading passages. Teacher 4 said, “It is important to keep students going forward. They do not care about their English scores. So making them draw is the only way in which I encourage them, because they like it.”

Neutral perceptions/ somewhat cautious about multimodal composition- cases of teacher 1, 3, and 5. Teachers 1, 3, and 5 agreed on the necessity to involve new literacies in instruction because they recognized schools should reflect social changes. They were cautious when it came to accepting new forms of literacies; however, classroom observation checklists showed they were using a variety of modes, much as those teachers with more positive views on multimodal composition. Even so, all three teachers were opposed to the idea that all modes should be equally treated because of their different roles. They believed the purpose of EFL foreign language education is to master the language, and the verbal mode includes a process of gathering, analyzing, and evaluating information to develop knowledge of the subject. They thought students could not develop such thinking and interpretive skills unless they master language.
Teacher 1 thought of multimodal composition as one of many ways to write. Although she acknowledged that various semiotic resources as well as systems were increasingly used in online environments, these were valuable only when “pieces of good writing” were included. She said, “It sounds interesting to learn and to teach [multimodal composition], but I think traditional ways of teaching are the best way in the long run.” Although she used multiple modes, she did not think they were equally important. Teacher 1 said:

You may notice my classroom, yes, actually I use a lot of modes when I teach. For example, sounds, pictures, images, body movements, and languages for sure. But these have secondary importance. My priority is how students develop language skills. Without having these skills, how can they succeed in the academic world? When they graduate, how can they survive in the business world? Will you draw a picture in a business letter or will you attach a music file to help readers’ comprehension? No, I think students should foster the ability to understand and solve problems using language. So, multiple modes are resources that I use to help students develop language skills.

To illustrate that the linguistic mode was most salient in the language classroom, she used the example of her students placing different values on different modes. One of her high performing students did not like group work that was frequently used in a multimodal composition classroom. Her students would complete a worksheet with group members as an after-reading activity. To draw a picture was a relatively easy task from the students’ perspective. Lazy or low performing students who were reluctant to create sentences took the role of painter, leaving the important tasks to the best (or powerless) students. According to Teacher 1, this student complained that she would spend a lot of time to write a piece while other students idled away time after coloring a picture. Along these lines, the teacher faulted what she perceived as multimodal instruction for allowing students involved in either painting or writing received the same grades if they contributed to the group project in any way.

In an EFL setting, students’ language development focuses on four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Teacher 1 indicated that the focus should be on improving these language skills. She explained that English language learners have different ways to acquire foreign language (L2). Since languages they are trying to learn are not available as much as their mother tongue or first language (L1), she believed the classroom setting was of great importance as the primary site of L2 learning. “I don’t want to add pressure to students to write with multiple modes. It is my job to provide interesting materials and multimodal composing tasks. The student’s job is to be a good writer, using English.”
Teacher 3 also was open-minded regarding adopting innovative teaching skills. Multiple modes and lessons using multimodality were frequently observed in his classroom. He was a member of a teacher community that was voluntarily managed and supported by local teachers on a regional level, and his level of comfort in using digital technology was high. According to the demographic survey, however, he showed a neutral attitude toward teaching multimodal composition. He said, “I enthusiastically focused on multimodality in a writing class a few years ago. Now, I don’t. Rather, I returned to teaching traditional forms of writing.” He felt the time he could spend teaching writing was not enough, and if he helped students acquire basic strategies to write, it would be fine. Once students mastered language skills, they could apply these into developing other skills. One big problem he felt was the difficulty in managing classroom:

We have a computer lab at school. There are enough computers for all students, but the computer lab is usually unavailable because it is mainly for computer class. I checked out the classroom when there was no class. Students were very excited to move their classroom. I informed them they should study harder here, but they would not listen to me. Students were speaking loudly, chatting to each other, and surfing the internet. They were supposed to complete a web poster called ‘Glogster’ but only two groups out of seven completed the task. My class was chaotic, and I decided not to use the computer lab next time.

Another problem was the physical setup of the classroom. His lessons involved group activities and collaborations with group members; however, the classroom setting made group work difficult. All desks were facing one direction like a traditional classroom, which is appropriate for individual work. As a result, group members could not brainstorm or discuss effectively due to a lack of space. Teacher 3’s movement was restricted, so he stood facing the students. In this way, the traditional classroom layout which allows teachers to maintain eye contact with all students provided the optimum environment for delivering lectures, or for “teacher-centered” teaching. The physical space seemed inappropriate for the teacher to implement student-centered activities that are frequently used in multimodal composition classrooms.

Even so, multimodal composition that is facilitated by technology does not automatically create a student-centered classroom. Teacher 5, who was highly motivated to adopt innovation and had the nickname “The Technician” in his school, tried to use a variety of new technologies to gain students’ attention. He was a copywriter in his previous job, and he attributed this prior experience to an awareness of how combining modes—for example, adding images to a text—could increase the
effectiveness of a message. Contrary to my expectation, he was a bit concerned about teaching
multimodal composition. Most of all, he believed that the computer tied a teacher down, saying “I can’t
walk around in my classroom when I use my computer. I only stare at my monitor, being busy with
flipping pages to show and tell.” Technology assists teachers, but reinforces the teacher-centered role.
He was not sure if technology shifted the paradigm from teacher-centered to student-centered. Rather,
he said, “An educational program transmits contents that allow students to acquire knowledge more
efficiently.” In his opinion, students are still passive recipients of knowledge in a traditional classroom,
and interactions between teacher and students rarely take place.

**Cross-case comparison – cases of teachers 1 – 6**

**Case 1 – Teacher 1**

Teacher 1 had four years of teaching experience in middle school. She had about 40 students in
her classroom and taught 9th graders. She indicated in the demographic survey that she taught writing
less than 30 minutes per week. She said she could not spend more time per week because of the class
size and the huge gap between high- and low-performing students. At least 10 students had experienced
study abroad, and many students had private tutors to learn English. On the other hand, a small number
of students did not even know how to read the English alphabet or basic English. The figure below
demonstrates the teacher’s response about the modes she used.

![Figure 4.1. Teacher 1’s Use of Mode](image)

**Figure 4.1.** Teacher 1’s Use of Mode

She depended heavily on the linguistic mode, as the figure indicates. At the beginning of each
class, she presented vocabulary on a blackboard and explained word meanings as well as usage. Visual
mode is also frequently used, followed by gestural, audio and spatial modes. She stated, “Nowadays,
kids are used to understanding written messages visually. A picture is worth a thousand words.” For example, in order to elicit students’ responses, she showed a cover of Time magazine titled “The Truth about Tiger Moms,” where an Asian girl is playing the violin facing her mom. She asked students to guess the cover story with vocabulary they already knew after looking at the cover photo. Groups of four students brainstormed together for about five minutes, and then wrote how they would feel if they were the little girl in the picture.

Teacher 1 made a worksheet with two types of activities, one aimed at high performing students and one for low performing students. The first asked students to write an essay, while the second required filling in blanks with one or two words. She did not mention about the high or low performing students. All questions from simply fill-in-the-blank type questions to complicated questions were included on the same worksheet. Because groups of students worked together to complete the worksheet, they naturally divided their roles on the basis of demonstrated ability. The observation checklist based on New London Group (1996) confirmed that Teacher 1 incorporated linguistic, visual, gestural, and audio modes into a pre-writing activity.

She used gestural and audio modes moderately in her English class. She said,

I’m teaching middle school kids. Their concentration span is pretty short, and also I have an average of 40 students in class. I used to exaggerate my gestures to get their attentions. I used my fingers to point out important points, or put my index finger on my lip to make them quiet. When kids get bored, I turn on audio cassettes or a CD Rom. Native English speakers’ voices are louder and clearer than mine. Besides, their pronunciation is far better than mine, you know.

**Case 2 – Teacher 2**

Teacher 2 is a veteran teacher having 16 years of teaching experience in several public schools. The goals of teaching for her were to prepare students for high-stake tests and to have them master basic language skills before they graduate. She confessed, however, it was hard to achieve both goals in school because the school curriculum only focused on test prep and test outcomes. She thought that, theoretically, she should provide balanced lesson plans so that students could develop all four skills, but realistically it was not easy to include all during the given number of hours. In spite of the heavy focus on teaching reading for high-stake exams, she tried to include writing instruction for about 30 to 60 minutes per week. She created lessons to connect reading and writing activities. She indicated she used
almost similar percentages of visual, audio, and linguistic modes, considering students’ English proficiency.

![Figure 4.2. Teacher 2’s Use of Mode]

Her students did not do well on overall English tests, so she presented pictures or tables along with written texts to enhance their understanding. When students read passages written chronologically, for example, she showed a summary table with a PowerPoint demonstration. She stated, “It takes time to prepare all these pictures, and to create graphic organizers, but my students may not understand reading passages without visual aids. Along with visual modes, I am able to explain contents more effectively.” She made use of short (5–10 minute) video clips as supplementary material to promote students’ writing. In her view, the video clips seemed to be powerful tools that had an impact on students’ learning as well as their emotional state. Whether pictures or videos, visual aids helped stimulate the flow of ideas by inspiring students before writing. She described her purpose in showing the short video clips:

I wish students can be creative and thoughtful. I don’t usually prepare longer ones. I don’t want my students to sit back and to become couch potatoes. I prepare short, fun, and educational video clips if possible, but they should make them uncomfortable as well. Something not familiar, something beyond common sense, I believe students are able to think and connect or disconnect lessons from the materials I provide. It does not matter whether the video is designed for English speaking people. Sometimes, different languages they may not comprehend can simulate their imagination. Therefore, these materials may be appropriate at the beginning stage of writing to help my kids generate ideas.
Her use of visual or audio cues presented students with opportunities to explore a variety of ways to make meaning in more creative and fun ways. Contrary to what she said in the interview, the use of audio mode (e.g. music, audio files) was not observed during the classroom visit and therefore was not checked on the observation checklist. On the observation day, students worked in groups and participated in a book project.

She indicated that at first, the students typically tried to imitate what they saw, but later they tended to make their own products. On the other hand, she used a low degree of gestural and spatial modes, saying “I don’t think I use a lot of gestures, but I may use them unconsciously. This may be my personal style not to use hand or facial gestures. Also, I don’t think these have much effect on students’ learning. Same with spatial mode.”

Case 3 – Teacher 3

Teacher 3 works at a single-sex, male-only school, where the culture emphasizes students’ academic performance. In spite of their academic achievements, students have attitudes like students in school 1, challenging teachers to develop teaching skills and materials to motivate them. As a result of private tutoring, many students prefer sleeping or studying other unrelated materials in class. Teacher 3 said, “The disciplinary problem is always an important issue in a male-only school.” Although he was a male teacher, it still was tough to teach a group of male students. However, he said, “When an attachment relationship is well formed between the teacher and students, it seems to go well. Next, teachers should be effective teachers.” Teacher 3 saw a conflict between what the school emphasized and how students behaved in class. In order to create an effective academic environment, the teacher frequently had to “stipulate their extrinsic motivation by explaining the strong correlation between high scores and prestigious universities.” All his students were preparing for standardized tests, making him focus on improving the students’ reading skills. As the figure below indicates, he depended heavily on the linguistic mode, which is a major tool to translate and explain reading passages. Figure 4.3 below indicates Teacher 3’s incorporation of the visual mode, which he used as a way of increasing the effectiveness of language use. The observation checklist, based on New London Group (1996), confirmed that he mostly used linguistic and visual modes on the observation day. His class began with playing “Pictionary,” a game of combining pictures and words. Vocabulary plays a critical role to not only understand whole contexts, but also promote analogical inference. Therefore, the vocabulary activity using “Pictionary” helps students learn vocabulary, up to 10–15 words per day.
The way he presented vocabulary was simple and straightforward. He threw out a question, “What is this boy’s face saying? How does he look? Why do you think the boy is yelling? Are there any words that you can think of?” Students responded by saying words such as angry, upset, outraged, or annoyed. On the next slide, students would see the word “resentment” along with the boy’s angry picture. In this way, students internalized a vocabulary word and its meaning with the help of pictures on PPT slides. He felt that,

Boys of this school are logical thinkers rather than artists. When I ask them to draw something, they are distracted, but they like writing activities such as debating pros and cons. Teaching writing rarely takes place, though, I do it once or twice a semester to assess students’ performance. I will talk about one example. When tables of pros and cons were visually presented, students were supposed to determine their position and to write some supporting ideas. In the writing activity, a general statement was “GMOs should be banned.”

In this instance, tables containing the pros and cons of GMOs (genetically modified organisms) helped students organize their ideas, and evaluate the short or long term effects of eating GM food. “When it comes to technology, I rarely use it. Sometimes, I use it when it is necessary, like, when I show the Pictionary in the beginning of class. But, you know, I usually teach reading. I only need a textbook and chalk. As you see, tables or graphs can provide effective ways to help students’ understanding.” Except for these two modes, he showed only a low use of gestural modes and very low use of spatial and auditory modes. He said, “I use hand gestures to make students quiet down or speak up.” He believed that overuse of gestures could distract the students, but one or two times during warm-up activities or as a transition between activities might be helpful to attract their eyes. Unlike other modes, he said that a
limited number of gestures could increase students’ instantaneous concentration, affecting their behavior and facilitating instruction.

**Case 4 – Teacher 4**

Teacher 4 uses a Business English textbook, which focuses on practical uses of English, considering his students’ needs. Content involves job-related themes and casual conversations they may encounter on a daily basis. He indicated that “my students have a clear goal, such as what kinds of jobs they would pursue after graduation. They work very hard to get certificates that are prerequisites in the business world. Ironically, they don’t know why they have to study English.” He commented that he did not do anything to discourage students’ motivation. He tried to motivate students by mentioning benefits of knowing English. “I let students know there are many advantages if they know English. There was a lesson about music. I showed them a music video, and a music festival and some photos of New Orleans, and said they may have a deeper understanding about different countries and their culture if they know languages.” For him, it was not an easy job to motivate English learning because the students’ English proficiency was quite low.

One way he used to improve students’ English was to “flip” his classroom. As he indicated from the survey, he depended more on audio mode than other modes. This is because he provided students with free online lecture classes. The observation checklist based on New London Group (1996) confirmed that linguistic, audio, and visual modes were incorporated into teaching multimodality. Before starting this type of class, he asked all students if they could access technology such as computer or mobile phone. Most students answered positively, that they could watch a 10 to 15 minute lecture with their mobile phones. For those without available technology, he opened a computer lab at a designated time. He uploaded online lectures about how to find subjects and verbs for the first half of semester and about reading strategies for the second half of semester. To maximize students’ participation, he often warned that, “Unless you log in and watch the lecture, it means you have skipped the class. Besides, you may waste your time for English class because you may not know what’s going on.”

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Figure 4.4. Teacher 4’s Use of Mode

He made the lecture videos on his own, using I-pod apps. He said,

I started teaching English in a different way this semester. I wonder if I can do it next year. In the middle of the semester, I made students complete a survey about their satisfaction about this flipped class. So far, students seem to more engaged in this class than traditional class. You know what? I compared their scores after taking the flipped class with scores of previous years. It is hard to predict students’ scores systematically. Some students were improving, while some are not. At least, their motivation seemed to increase, I can tell from their attitudes. As you see, I cannot say if my class is effective or not at this point. I know this type of class can reduce any stress students may have, but I don’t expect students’ grades will get better by themselves. Eventually, students should find their own way to improve their English.

While his online lecture is more likely to focus on teaching reading or grammar, his offline class is intended to reinforce what students already are learning outside the classroom. During class, he distributed worksheets designed to check if they watched the lecture and to give them an opportunity to rethink language focus. Worksheet activities included: write in English or draw a picture about what you read or watched; complete a table; and rearrange given words to make a sentence. Although all questions were written in English, students could write their responses either in English or in Korean. He said, “These students literally have a phobia about English. My short term goal was to get rid of their fear of English and, in the long run, to make them think of English as a tool to communicate, like Korean. Also, something they can do every day.” In order to facilitate students’ participation, he encouraged students to work in teams of four or five. He grouped and regrouped students in accordance with chronological order of birthdays, in random groupings, or by seating arrangement. By so doing, he felt “students may refine their understanding by talking and tackle more complex problems.”
Case 5 – Teacher 5

Teacher 5 thought there was no difference between English writing and Korean writing except which language the writer adopted to write his/her ideas. As students get older, they develop different sets of abilities and cognitive processes in relation to knowledge and comprehension of language. Therefore, he insisted that “learning content and ways of acquiring content should differ for different age groups according to the cognitive processes of that age group. For example, 10th graders should have more interesting activities while 11th and 12th grade students should have more opportunities to learn skills about academic writing. This year he is teaching 11th grade students, so his direction for teaching writing is more academic oriented. For example, using PowerPoint slides, he explained how to style paragraphs. As the figure indicates, he depended primarily on the linguistic mode along with visual aids. Linguistic and visual modes were mostly observed, as seen in the observation checklist, but although Teacher 5 indicated in the survey that he used audio mode, this mode was not observed.

Figure 4.5. Teacher 5’s Use of Mode

For a writing activity, he also linked a related video clip into the PPT. He gave an example of how he taught writing:

I was a copy writer before in an advertising company, so I think I know how to write effectively. I created a lesson plan for students to practice persuasive writing. To begin with, I explained every procedure on the PPT. Then, I divided students into seven groups. After grouping them, I threw out questions to elicit answers to build paragraphs. My ultimate plan is to make students do academic writing, but I actually provide my students with a variety of prewriting activities. I visited the Canon home page where students were able to see the advantages of a certain camera. On the next pages were detailed explanations for each
advantage. I showed them that each paragraph corresponds to an advantage. In other words, a paragraph is a way to separate content. Based on the concept of a paragraph, each group chose an item to sell. They were required to present the advantages of their item. They could discuss how to advertise the item of their choosing. I made them brainstorm for one or two hours. Next time, I brought a worksheet so that students could organize their ideas and write the first draft.

The worksheet he created included sections for brainstorming and space for writing the first draft. Students worked in groups not only to create headline/subtitles but also to write supporting ideas under the topic. However, he asked students to work alone at home and return an individual final product because “they may have to write alone. They may collect ideas together, but they all should know how to sort out necessary information from numerous ideas. Graphs, charts, and bullet points help students to generate ideas, examine relationships between ideas and facilitate logical thinking.” In other words, he used such visual aids to clarify the complex process of writing as well as to prevent digressions or logical inconsistencies.

**Case 6 – Teacher 6**

Teacher 6 used the linguistic mode most, like most teachers in Korea, followed by visual, audio, spatial and gestural modes. She indicated, “My students are top students in South Korea. They want to enter the prestigious universities. That’s why I use the linguistic mode mainly. I spend time helping students prepare for taking standardized tests.”

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*Figure 4.6. Teacher 6’s Use of Mode*
In spite of a heavy focus on test-preparation, she added two multimodal composition assignments during the semester. First was a video project conducted in and outside of the classroom. Groups of four students chose a scene from a movie and made a three-minute parody movie. Because of limited class time, students worked outside of class, including brainstorming, composing a script, acting, shooting a short film, and editing. They could present their films for about 10 minutes, including an explanation of the original movie. She noted, “Grouping is very important to make group projects successful. In my case, I set up groups based on students’ grades and their personality in the beginning of semester. There are several ways that I learned from my previous experience. For example, a boy who broke up with a girl should be sent to a different group, or a high performing student can help a poor student in a same group.” Once grouping was done, she gave students worksheets on each stage to guide them. Composing the script was the part that she most emphasized because this lesson involved a lot of writing in consideration of audiences, purposes, and genres. She said, “It was an interesting experience to see how they chose the most effective modes suitable for rhetorical contexts.” When it came to technical problems, students asked help either from the teacher or from group members.

She tried to design activities and assignments to be meaningful to students’ lives because she believed “these kinds of lessons maximize students’ engagement by allowing them to understand the relationship of school work to their life.” For the second multimodal composition project, she asked students to bring their valuable personal belongings and to write why these were meaningful to their life. Items included; a silver ring, a doll, a mobile phone, an umbrella, to name a few. One student brought a vest from a school uniform as his favorite belonging. He had had a hard time finding a vest since he was overweight, and finally found one and had to pay double for the vest. While reading his writing, he took off his oversized vest and showed it to classmates. Because of his frank presentation, his friends did not make his weight a subject for jokes. She thought, “He shared his problem with friends by speaking candidly. They came to see things that they did not know through this writing activity.”

**Research Question Two:** How do Korean English teachers articulate their understanding of assessment of multimodal composition?

Assessment is a complicated process by which teaching and learning take place. Currently, schools assess student performance in two ways. One is to assess students’ knowledge in a format of multiple choice questions, which accounts for 60-70 percent. Teachers do not have much discretion in
this case. The other is performance assessment, which gives them more freedom in choosing formats, contents, frequency, and methods of assessing students, if teachers include this as 30-40 percent of writing exams. In the other words, the trend to assess English proficiency has shifted from only multiple choice formats to formats combining multiple choice questions and essay style assessment. All examples below illustrate how teachers make use of performance assessment and, by doing so, how they try to or do not integrate instruction and learning. However, the observation checklist (Table 4.2) did not always confirm the teachers’ self-reporting about assessing multimodality in classroom language instruction because tests or exams were not necessarily conducted on the observation day.

![Figure 4.7. Teachers’ Position in the Continuum of Performance Assessment](image)

![Figure 4.8. Criteria for Assessing Multimodal Composition](image)
The middle school where teacher 1 is working is located in an affluent area where parents’ zeal for education is quite high. Besides, middle school grades are critical when students apply for special-purpose high schools that provide a more favorable curriculum for entering prestigious universities. As a result, parents as well as students cannot but be sensitive to school grades. Although the education ministry stipulated that teachers should include essay exams about 30-40 percent, it is actually hard for teachers to write essay questions. Teacher 1 explained,

I know, we all know, that assessing writing is much harder than assessing multiple choice exams. Most of all, I’m not confident at all to be objective in scoring students’ writing. I have bad memories about essay exams. We teachers used to ask students to write longer essays, but we failed to score them objectively. Yes, we had a rubric to help us consider consistent criteria, but even it was too vague. I got parents’ and students’ complaints because the students were not satisfied with their grade. After much trial and error, teachers decided not to make things complicated. Now, we give students five essay questions to practice in advance. Essay questions include subjects like: my dream, my best friends, my favorite place, and so on. Students write five sentences for one question for 20 minutes on examination day. . . . Most students finish the exams within 10 minutes because they already know the questions and have practiced writing. After grading papers, I give students their scores. I don’t need to provide feedback because their errors are obvious in most cases.

The teacher thought essay exams in the school did not differ from multiple choice exams in that both exams are administrated and scored according to objective criteria. Therefore, structure and convention domains are more emphasized than any other domains because logical flaws, grammar errors, and misspellings are identified with comparative ease. Content may be also an important factor in completing a task, but creativity is not necessarily a key requirement for good essay. She mentioned, “It is better to make five error-free sentences than to write their own thoughts. Most students memorize the sentences that parents or their private tutors made.” As for domains of multimodality, “We do not consider modes and the relation of modes as components of evaluation. How can I give a good grade to students who are apt at drawing? They may be good students in art class, not in my class.” She was skeptical about integrating multimodality when assessing students’ work, given that there was a lack of ways to measure it objectively.
Between Embedded Assessment and Summative Assessment – Teachers 2, 3, and 5

Three teachers stood between embedded and summative assessment on the continuum of assessment in Figure 4.8. Embedded assessment is defined as a learning opportunity to monitor students and to provide appropriate instructions. It can be either formative or summative, as long as it is a means to gather information about student learning (Kubiszyn & Borich, 2010). In the case of teacher 2, she related combining reading with a writing activity whenever she finished a unit. Using usage and important expressions in the textbook, students created three or four sentences. Situations also were provided to describe the context. This writing activity was short but consistent, taking place on a weekly basis. The teacher collected the students’ papers and graded them on content and structure. Conventions such as grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors were rarely considered as elements for assessment. For a book project conducted once during the semester, she included the domain of multimodality in assessing students’ final products. The criteria for this book project were content, structure, and interrelationship of multiple modes. Unless grammatical errors hindered the reader’s understanding, they were ignored. Instead, the teacher provided feedback with students to fix their grammar errors throughout the course.

Teacher 3 tried to implement a writing activity in relation to reading class for performance assessment. He indicated in the survey that the content domain was most important, followed by multimodality, lastly structure and conventions. According to the rubric used in school 3, contents should be clear enough to attract readers’ attention and have relevant details. Both structure and conventions have less importance, and some elements such as organization and grammar errors do not affect grades as long as content is appropriate to express the writer’s intention. One of the essay questions was to write an argument whose point was to consider both sides and to take a position. Students were to choose between the advantages of group tours and independent travel, and write three reasons why they prefer either type of travel. In addition, on the front page of the essay exam, students had to visually present graphic organizers to show how they plan and develop ideas. To make these types of essay questions familiar, “I prepare different topics for argument essays and make students practice writing two or three times. I help them brainstorm ideas, and correct grammatical mistakes in the classroom.” Likewise, teacher 5 included argument essay writing to assess students’ performance. However, his emphasis was on structure, followed by content, conventions and multimodality. He taught that to write the argument essay effectively, the essay should have a strong introduction, middle
and ending along with transition words. Following a five-paragraph essay format, he emphasized logical connections between paragraphs. His rubric contained concrete information that students could follow. For example, “I asked students to write five sentences for each paragraph. The first introductory paragraph includes the thesis statement…. In the final conclusion paragraph, the thesis statement should be restated, and body paragraphs should be summarized.” He provided a great deal of feedback regarding structure, content, and grammar during the writing activities, but asked students to submit a polished paper by the end of the semester and gave them a grade without any verbal or written feedback.

**Formative Assessment – Teachers 4 and 6**

Since the Ministry of Education requires all teachers to include up to 40 percent essay-type examinations, teachers 4 and 6 included writing exams. However, their perceptions about assessing writing differed from the rest of teachers. Teacher 4 used a writing portfolio that is a collection of student writing. As mentioned, he uploaded his lectures online for students to prepare for English classes. The next day, he distributed a worksheet including comprehension check-up questions as well as writing activities. Students saved the worksheets after the class (in their portfolio). Writing activities were conducted not to assess students’ use of English, but to reduce their fear of English. As a result, content and the domain of multimodality were emphasized more than structure and conventions. The teacher collected their work and worksheets once a month to monitor student progress and to identify their individual needs. His students do not have variation in terms of writing scores, as long as they complete the tasks. The teacher praised students’ efforts and accomplishments to encourage them to use more English. He said,

I never criticize their lack of English in the classroom. If students repeat the same mistakes, I just write down their mistakes and correct the expressions on the blackboard without mentioning students’ name. They have a high anxiety when it comes to English. If I try to correct their English in public, I know these girls would never speak or write. So if they have the right number of entries and completed tasks, they can have full credit for their work. Because they know they can have a perfect score based on effort, they work very hard. Most of all, the students seem to be satisfied with their progress, comparing the first worksheet with the last one. I think a writing portfolio is the best way to boost students’ confidence. The name “portfolio” looks fancy, but once you collect pieces of work over the long period, it becomes your portfolio.
Like teacher 4, teacher 6 made sure that students would have full credit on writing exams unless they broke their promise. Although teacher 6 indicated criteria for assessing writing (in figure 4.8.), these were rendered meaningless in that all students received full credit. All they had to do was to complete the tasks on time. She explained why she used absolute evaluation based on their objective performance on assignments. She said, “My students are top students. They are very competitive and work harder than anyone. Their scores can be ranked when they take multiple choice exams, which account for more than 60 percent. I think that will be enough. Why do I make them stressed with more exams?” She made performance assessment a part of instruction by increasing frequency up to four times per semester. Students’ involvement with essay exams averages once a week, after finishing a lesson. Writing topics were usually connected both to the previous lesson and to the students’ life. She thought, “Writing should be related to our own life. You know, we all have hidden instincts to express ourselves. So, copy and paste writing from the Internet is not possible. Students in my class actually do not think of writing as a boring subject for exams, but as a process to provide opportunities to reflect on their own life.” Her students were required to complete two projects and four essay papers throughout this semester. She also related writing projects with a speaking activity. “I make students present their writing in front of their peers. They do their best, and it helps to know their presentation skills do not affect their writing scores. They are self-motivated, and don’t want to be humiliated in public” The teacher hands out reflection sheets for the “audience” to evaluate the presentations. The reflection sheets serve two functions among students: establishing the importance of the presentation for presenters and of classroom management for listeners. Even if the presentation would not count for credit, students regarded this event as something special. By assigning the job of filling out reflection sheets to the listeners, these students were required to participate by concentrating on the speakers’ presentations.

**Research Question Three:** What are Korean secondary English teachers’ perceived challenges or barriers in teaching and assessing multimodal composition?

Challenges exist for all teachers in teaching and assessing multimodal composition. All the teachers shared similar challenges or barriers but also had distinctive problems caused by different contexts and perceptions about teaching writing. The Table 4.2. below summarizes external and internal barriers perceived by the teacher participants.
Table 4.3.  
*Barriers for Teaching Multimodal Composition*

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T=Teacher, √=have, X=do not have.

**Teachers’ Perceived External and Internal Barriers: Case 1 – Teacher 1**

Since the school, a middle school, was founded 27 years ago, school facilities were old-fashioned in many ways. The average age of teachers was over 40 years old, and all teachers were not equally receptive to new technology. Teacher 1 believed that these factors posed some challenges to the adoption of new technology. She said, “I belong to the younger generation of teachers in my school. We have many veteran teachers, but they don’t like any change. Often I want to teach English in nontraditional ways, but I don’t know how.” When asked about using technology, she explained,

Well, I will never use a computer lab for my English class because we lack enough computers, and they also are too old. I can’t even make a movie with the movie camera because it is so slow. It’s better to use my laptop computer in my classroom and show something to entertain them. I agree that schools should reflect changing literacy practice, but look at my school, its appearance seems stuck in the 19th century. Besides, I must be very cautious to give students assignments related to technology. Although this school is located in a rich area, some students may not have access to a computer at home. Just ordinary assignments can be a burden to some households.
She hinted that there was a high possibility to transfer to a new school equipped with new technology and brand new facilities. “Then,” she noted “I may teach multimodal composition, creating lesson plans so that students can experience reading and writing using different modes.” However, “it might be difficult to make students focus on the target tasks. There are so many interesting sources on the Internet. There would be no way to restrict their use of sites to educational sites.” She believed that middle school students were so young that they lacked self-control.

A major drawback was lack of training to learn new literacies and teach them. She became a teacher the same year she graduated from university. As a novice teacher, during the past four years she reported spending all her energy as well as time just “surviving.” She indicated that she taught English 21 hours per week, and when she was not teaching classes, she was either doing lesson planning or catching up with paperwork. “I don’t even have time to go to the restroom. Or time to drink a cup of coffee.” Having acknowledged the importance of new technology and skills reflecting social needs and student interests, she confessed that, “It is hard to find time for myself. I am flat tired when school is over.” She also believed that some private institutes students are attending offer lessons using multimodal composition. She said, “Frankly, public school cannot compete with private institutes. They invest a lot of money in buying hardware and software to attract students. Students learn online and offline, and the classrooms are systematically managed by tutors based on students’ performance. Students think they can learn more outside the classroom.”

The challenges she faces do not necessarily mean she only relies on traditional methods. She actually implemented writing activities using multimodality to engage students’ active participation and to spark interest in writing. However, she knew that parents’ and students’ needs were to improve students’ reading scores so that they had a better chance to apply for high schools with a reputation with academic excellence. The school culture emphasizing academic performance affected her attitudes on teaching multimodal composition in that she passively accepted the pedagogy of new literacies. That is, she minimized chances for students to present and produce multimodal texts during regular class hours, in spite of her being encouraged to generate dynamic texts (especially using technology) in afterschool programs or summer camps where both teachers and students were undeterred by assessment and its results.

She indicated she had somewhat cautious perceptions regarding teaching and assessing multimodal composition because of the academic oriented school culture. In the beginning of the semester, she made a variety of lessons to attract students’ attention, but she returned immediately to
traditional teaching methods such as translation, and lecturing. One big problem was the class size. Because this school is popular among parents, the number of students is increasing every year. She always used the first 3–5 minutes out of the total 45 minutes to make students be quiet, and said,

You cannot do anything with 40 students. They are so wild and noisy. I would yell at least for 5 minutes before the class. I use up all my energy to shut them up. What can I do next? I only have 40 minutes to teach. Usually, you know, school is full of schedules for every semester. If I do not teach lessons, I may not cover all the content for exams. Then, I will get calls complaining about my irresponsibility. I’d better become a strict teacher rather than a nice teacher. Sometimes, I would include writing lessons, but I couldn’t give them feedback. I teach five classes with a total of 200 students. I collect papers and grade them, that’s all. Even grading takes a whole week.

The school culture put a lot of pressure on teacher 1, especially because English is the one of the major subjects on the examination. Also, she prefers teaching materials which have similar formats to the actual English exam portions of the tests. She was also concerned about assessment if she taught multimodal composition. She explained that, “I have not updated my knowledge since I graduated from university. Now, I am used to teaching in this way. Students think I am a good teacher because I teach what they want to learn. Multimodal composition? I don’t know how I will do it. Although I am young at my school, I don’t know how to use technology except basic ones.”

Teachers’ Perceived External and Internal Barriers: Case 2 – Teacher 2

School 2 is surrounded by an industrial complex and is not equipped with up-to-date facilities. The area where the school is located also has older development and a serious issue of industrial pollution. Most parents are working at the complex, earning less than the average Korean workers’ salary. Some students come from multi-cultural families or a single-parent home. Therefore, both parents and students depend on the school to get information about universities and exams. The school functions as a child-care center as well, due to parents’ long working hours, resulting in more than half the students in this school attending after-school programs. Like any other high school, this school puts an emphasis on high-stake tests for universities, which affects the content of courses. Teacher 2 said, “My students’ English may not be good, but they want to enter universities. They may not go to great schools because they are not high performing students.” To help them get good grades in English, the teacher focuses on teaching reading with test materials made by EBS.” Since the Korea Institute of
Curriculum & Evaluation’s 2010 announcement that 70 percent of English texts on the Korean SAT would come from textbooks made by EBS (Educational Broadcasting System), she said, “EBS textbooks are a bible for anyone who takes the standardized test. If students are good at English, I will provide more challenging materials along with various activities, but for my students, EBS textbooks are just fine.” Students know that as long as they study with these books, they will be able to get high grades in English. However, the number of EBS texts is up to eleven books, which are hard to read in a month or two. “Students actually study with the books all the year round. What else they can do?”

According to her explanation, EBS textbooks include preparations for two types of questions: reading passages and related comprehension questions, and listening comprehension tests. Such pressure coming from outside makes it difficult for her to design her class. “I am merely a teacher who should follow this kind of trend, I mean, the national trend.”

In spite of the heavy focus on teaching reading, the school tried to take a new approach to improving reading and writing skills. The school, funded by Provincial Offices of Education, in 2014 ran a reading program called “Ask Aesop,” whose purpose was to encourage students to read English stories by Aesop. Her students chose an Aesop fable and just read one a week without any pressure of exams. By the end of semester, groups of students made small books with illustrations, referring to the Aesop stories they read throughout the semester.

Their books were displayed on the hallway for everyone to look at, and the best books were chosen by teachers as well as peers. The project was a small part of their learning, but she felt it was something positive for both the students and herself:

I hope students learn why they are studying. The reasons can be to get good grades, go to good schools and get white-collar jobs, or get out of this area, but this project makes them think examinations cannot be the sole reason to study. It lets them know EBS textbooks are not the only English books. Reading education is actually very good. Why not? Good reading habits will make your life richer. The problem was tests are spoiling our good intentions by narrowing the curriculum. My students really liked reading Aesop’s fables and liked writing books. I am glad students think English is not a boring subject. For myself, this project helped me open my mind. I have regular meetings every week with my colleagues to talk about how we run this program. We are thinking how can this program go nicely with the test-oriented school culture? I think this kind of meeting with teachers close to me is far more helpful than going to graduate school. We cannot go to higher education whenever we need to update our knowledge, right? I actually learn a lot when I meet my teacher colleagues. We talk about problems and try to find ways to fix them. I feel I learn a lot and get more confidence in teaching.
Teacher 2 felt that external barriers such as school culture and lack of resources helped her develop a sense of a crisis to be overcome. Although she acknowledged that she was not confident in using technology and was not inclined to integrate technology-rich projects in her lessons, she could develop more content and pedagogical knowledge by sharing ideas with other teachers. One specific example was about procedures regarding teaching materials. She typically followed the teaching sequence indicated in the EBS books, but now she tries to guide students by adapting materials or by presenting issues to be personally meaningful to students. Teaching multimodal composition can be a way that makes her lessons interesting and meaningful. “I think students seem to understand better by reorganizing and rewriting stories based on the original stories. I may not teach multimodal composition throughout the semester. But I am sure that it provides a new understanding of contents and specific concepts, which can be hard to obtain in such negative school cultures in Korea. You know, in Korea, we have high academic expectations toward students.”

**Teachers’ Perceived External and Internal Barriers: Case 3 – Teacher 3**

For teacher 3, the biggest challenge was to persuade other teachers to be more creative in teaching and learning. He mentioned about his school culture, “For me, our school is like the military. Maybe because my school is an all-boys school, we develop a kind of culture like a military.” Accordingly, diversity does not exist in curriculum, disciplines, teaching materials, and teaching methods. After establishing the yearly plan in the beginning of the semester, it was hard to change it in mid-semester. Although some lessons or assessment methods might need to be changed, teachers stuck to a longstanding custom. The reason, he said, is that

My colleagues think I make the situation complicated when I request some changes in teaching and assessment. They don’t care about any change because it makes them tired. If we changed the test materials, we also would have to choose different types of assessment. They maintain that students will graduate next year, so they may not want any change, either. Other teachers think project types of class are not appropriate for high school seniors because of difficulties in grading. Besides, the vice-principal does not like group projects because it can disrupt other classes. He always worries about the academic environment. For him, making noise equals playing, not studying.

Without the mutual consent of all teachers, he rarely had discretionary power over his classes. He admitted that he looked like a teaching robot due to the constraints of teaching in the test-oriented culture of Korea. He added, “We establish a mutual agreement on every trifle. For example, how often
will we give students prep time for essay exams? Or When? How many feedbacks will we provide
students? How many print materials will we give students? Obviously, we should give all students the
same amount of time for writing exams.” Teachers have no choice but to do this because students
respond sensitively to test results. Therefore, they try to narrow the gap between high and low scores;
otherwise, they may have to defend their grading to every student who is not satisfied with their results.
He believed such writing assessment policy as is conducted in his school negatively affects the quality
of students’ writing. Students chose to write the simplest sentences possible to reduce mistakes. In spite
of shared sets of standards, the rubric is less valid as a measure for assessing students’ essays in that its
language is too vague to illustrate criteria. In the case of teacher 3, his perception about teaching
multimodal composition has changed from very positive to a more neutral attitude because of the
external barriers he experienced. After experiencing several stages of hope, anger, and frustration, he is
taking more a conservative view on teaching and learning.

To enter universities, students must excel in both the Korean SAT and school grades. The
Korean SAT does not have essay sections, while school grades include writing grades. As described
above, writing did not make appreciable difference in overall scores because score gaps between
students are minimal. Rather, reading scores have the assessment function to discriminate between high
and low performing students. The biggest challenge he faced was to impress on students the
importance of writing, in spite of its having less emphasis on exams. He often has intimidated students
into writing English, believing, “It takes time and effort to reach a certain level of language proficiency.
At first, it can be boring, and painful. We cannot master language without going through a long period
of suffering. Now, reading seems to be more important, but I try to talk about the importance of writing
as well. When they recognize its importance, they may have a strong internal motivation to write well
someday.”

**Teachers’ Perceived External and Internal Barriers: Case 4 – Teacher 4**

Teacher 4 experienced repeated trial and error when he made short video clips for his flipped
class. The obstacle he has experienced so far is that he had to spend too much time preparing for
classes. Lessons took place online and offline at the same time. For online classes, he used an iPad to
make lecture videos. At first, it took him 1-2 hours to make each 10-minute video lecture, due to
technical problems. In the interview, he said, “There are tons of websites about recording lectures or
making video clips, but you can’t master these skills without doing this.” He found available sources
from his colleagues, friends, and even friends’ friends, but his most convenient and reliable source was the Internet, which provided a wealth of information within a short period of time. He is also a member of an online teacher community to exchange ideas about teaching and assessment. He stated, “I leave questions online, and someone responds to me immediately. That’s the way I learned skills from experienced teachers.” Most of all, he needed to minimize the use of the Internet in class due to the fact that he could not use Wi-fi, and, as a result, he tried not to depend on real-time streaming protocol during school hours.

For the offline class, he made a variety of worksheets that helped reinforce student learning. Making the worksheets was as time-consuming as making the lecture videos, because he adapted materials in accordance with the contents of the video-clips. Since these did not already exist, he had to do it for every lesson from the scratch. To prepare for his English class, he made worksheets for individuals and groups, for grammar, reading, writing, and review.

For the first few weeks, I don’t know how I made all these worksheets. I literally worked like a slave day and night. It may be a piece of paper for the students, but I put too much energy into making supplementary materials to make my class run smoothly. There were also documents to deal with on my desk. I regret starting this kind of project. It was too much work for a single teacher to do. I wish I had someone to share this work. I did it alone, anyway. I felt some responsibility to try the flipped class in my school for the first time and to make it successful. I am afraid to quit, and should keep going on. Now, it takes less time than before because I made templates for the worksheets. Now, I just fill the contents into these formats.

Another challenge was to motivate students who did not have any desire to study English. He saw the worksheets falling on the floor and being stepped on. His heart was broken to see the crumpled pieces of paper. He said, “I made this worksheet without taking any rest between classes, because it’s important to me, but not to them.” Indeed, it was not simple to promote their internal motivation in a situation where their English proficiency was too low to enjoy the English subject. His students may not have as much pressure regarding high-stake tests as much as peer students attending regular high school, but they have different pressures regarding getting a job.

**Teachers’ Perceived External and Internal Barriers: Case 5 – Teacher 5**

Like teachers 1, 2, 3, and 4, teacher 5 regarded school culture emphasizing examinations as the number one obstacle to spending more time teaching writing. He described this as “crisis of writing” in that people do not write any more. He believed, “In order to write well, we should read more.”
Nowadays, people do not read books any more. His assumption is based on the idea that, as people have more chances to see something, they are likely to do it. For example, he mentioned the population that enjoyed dancing increased dramatically due to an increase of people enjoying watching music videos. However, he stated that students do not read books with texts of any considerable length. At the most, they read texts consisting of 6-7 sentences whereby it is hard to have much relationship with these texts. Without having much experience with books, students may not develop writing proficiency, in that writing is an attempt to connect the inside with the outside world. For him, students seem to learn reading skills but do not actually read books.

He believed that meaningful learning did not occur because students were accustomed to reading short passages. Besides, they had a hard time writing a paragraph of much length due to lack of reading, writing and thinking. When students were asked to submit a finished paper by the end of semester, at least a third did copy and paste from someone else’s writing from Internet. He was shocked to hear students’ excuses, saying they did not know what to write. The assignment was to draw a cluster diagram to explore ideas about conditions of ideal partners. They were fine in making the diagram with several potential ideas, but failed to transform their lists into meaningful writing. He explained, “Actually, these students’ Korean writing was problematic, too. My colleague, a Korean teacher, also said that students’ writing is limited to exchanging text messages. Their writing looks like talking. We cannot have a higher expectation for their English writing, considering even their Korean writing is not great.” He felt that writing education cannot be successful without structural changes in assessment. Not until writing assessment is on a par with that of other subjects will writing education assume greater importance in the school curriculum. In the current situation where assessment often involves some mechanical or tricky questions, he maintained that meaningful learning either of reading or writing cannot occur.

**Teachers’ Perceived External and Internal Barriers: Case 6 – Teacher 6**

Teacher 6 agreed that there are both external and internal barriers to teaching multimodal composition in a Korean context. She did not think she could overcome external barriers in any way. Instead, she thought that she had better focus on internal barriers to guide writing education toward a better direction.

At first, I am afraid I can’t. But, I am quite realistic. I am a mere teacher, how can we fight against a nation with enormous power? I agree educational systems are problematic, but I know
it’s impossible to change it by myself. The middle ground for me is to acknowledge the current educational system whether it is wrong or not. Then, try to experiment within boundaries. Use all my power to work normally. One thing I did in my classroom was to give students perfect scores for their essay exams. I provide unconditional praise for their efforts. If students raise their hands, I give them extra credit. I write everything they did on their cumulative records. I even made titles such as “golden hands” and “best contributors” and selected students to be given these titles. In the case of “best contributor,” we vote for one who provides help, not for one who is smart.

For her, it is more important for students to write more without fear of grades, and to follow every step guided by the teacher. The teacher helps students generate ideas and write what they think by asking instigating questions. She believed that students would not be able to write if they did not contemplate their life seriously. In a sense, teachers should take a responsibility to make students ponder over life issues.

You know, it is my duty to stimulate students’ desire to write and to make them express their emotions. Another duty is to encourage them. They all are such diligent students. They have stress, too, but different type of stress. Although individual students are excellent, they think their friends are better than them. So, criticizing students may not work in this school. I sympathize with them, like telling them that I’m also an English language learner. I tell them we all are English language learners. We may not master the language like native English speakers, but making an effort is worth more than anything else. Here, they are great students not because I am a good teacher, but because they have internal engines. Unless they stop the engines, someone should emphasize to them that kids need to stop for a moment.

In fact, in the past she was reluctant to teach writing for several reasons. The biggest reason was that she herself was a second language learner, lacking confidence in teaching English. She said, “Frankly speaking, I am confused over when I should use “a” or “the” in writing. Reading? It’s fine. I only followed line-by-line and translate the sentences into Korean. But writing? Oh my! I was not confident in teaching writing.” However, she used her weakness as strength in that she could provide effective support with students.
CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The purpose of this dissertation was to explore how Korean English teachers perceive the teaching and assessment of multimodal composition, and what perceived challenges or barriers they face while teaching in Korea. This chapter includes a summary of my findings and relevant conclusions. I will then discuss how the findings from this study are related to previous literature, and how teachers can help students learn composition by taking advantage of a variety of semiotic resources in terms of meaning making. I also suggest a new direction for teaching and assessing multimodal composition in the Korean context, with the goal of improving curricula and instruction in the teaching of writing.

Research Questions and Answers

Research Question One: What attitudes and perceptions do Korean secondary-school English teachers articulate regarding teaching multimodal composition?

Teachers articulated both positive and neutral attitudes toward teaching multimodal composition. Specifically, Teachers 2, 4, and 6 answered that multimodal composition allowed students to engage in writing by providing different semiotic resources, which is the basis of effective classroom management contexts. They agreed that, although multimodal composition may not improve students’ academic performance directly, it may potentially motivate learners during stages of prewriting and writing and evoke a deeper understanding of content. In addition, multimodal composition is more effective for students who do not express themselves in traditional ways. For example, some students may understand certain meanings better than others according to their preference for a certain mode.

Teachers 1, 3, and 5 were cautious about teaching multimodal composition, even though they actually used multimodality. In the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) setting, the primary goal of language education is to help language learners improve linguistic competencies such as grammar, vocabulary, phonology, syntax, and usage. All six teachers acknowledged that school should provide multiple literacy practices that students could apply outside the classroom.
However, curricula could not be adapted to individual needs due to lack of time and resources. Examinations conducted at the school and national levels also involved testing linguistic competence, focusing on form or grammar. In the current study, teachers maintained that they were not given the opportunity to decide on course content, test frequency, or teaching materials. As a result, language skills (e.g., reading, listening, speaking, and writing) are not equally taught and assessed. Due to the impact of high-stakes tests, the focus of language classrooms is on teaching more receptive skills to help students gain better scores on reading and listening exams. The current educational system, therefore, is less likely to emphasize the teaching and learning of writing skills. In spite of growing attention on multimodality due to advanced technologies, multimodal composition has not been studied extensively because of the relative unimportance of writing in the classroom.

**Research Question Two: How do Korean English teachers articulate their understanding of assessment of multimodal composition?**

Teachers 1, 5, and 6 expressed moderately negative attitudes toward assessment of multimodal composition. Their somewhat negative attitudes were linked primarily to current assessment practices at various levels: large-scale educational emphasis on testing, student-level emphasis on making students happy, and school level emphasis on a high college entrance rate. Teachers assessing multimodal texts included no criteria geared toward writing, although the focus was exclusively on written texts. In addition, final products composed by groups posed a challenge for teachers as to whether to assess the group as a whole or the individual students in accordance with their contributions. As a result of these challenges, the teachers preferred not to include multimodal domains as assessment elements. Instead, they implemented multimodal composition as a prewriting activity to facilitate writing and to promote motivational aspects. Most of the teachers regarded the content domain as being important in response to language teaching methods emphasizing communication. Along with this focus on content, Teacher 1 emphasized conventional domains including grammar, spelling, and word choice because these elements were easy to assess objectively. Teachers 1, 2, and 5 also attended to the structural domain, which was appreciated in traditional writing.
Research Question Three: *What are Korean secondary-school English teachers’ challenges or barriers in teaching and assessing multimodal composition?*

Most of the teachers responded that both external and internal barriers exist which prevent the implementation of multimodal composition in schools. All teachers indicated that external barriers exist: specifically, high-stakes tests were significant obstacles in teaching and assessing multimodal composition. Despite their favorable attitudes toward nontraditional teaching methods, they were apprehensive about the mismatch between 21st century literacy demands and the requirements of high-stakes testing. They reported that school literacy still emphasized memorization and translation because these were effective methods to help large numbers of students meet exam requirements. Teachers also showed ambivalent attitudes towards implementing multimodal lessons. Some teachers cited multimodal approaches to lessons as crucial to their management efforts. By employing visual or auditory aids, they tried to avoid monotonous lessons, and to induce student participation. At the same time, other teachers found it was difficult to carry out effective classroom management in an over-crowded classroom if they adopted the student-centered approach supported by teaching practices in 21st century literacy. Internal barriers included lack of confidence and lack of knowledge about multimodal composition that could lead to adherence to a grammar translation method that has been widely used in Korean classrooms and could have negative effects on attempts to implement various methods fitted to learners’ needs.

**Findings of the Study**

**Finding One: Teaching of Multimodal Composition Is Linked to Affective Engagement, Increased Understanding, and Focus on Communication**

The findings of the current study indicated that teachers anticipated positive effects of multimodal writing on student motivation to write. All teachers incorporated multiple modes such as images, video, and music, as well as printed texts, to engage students on a daily basis. The teachers reported that they were interested in the use of technologies and various texts because traditional methods which depended mainly on linguistic modes had hardly any effect on affective engagement. They all knew that students were exposed to new texts and resources outside the classroom, whereas paper and pencil were the major tools to convey messages in the traditional classroom. These findings
are consistent with those of a number of researchers (Hughes, & Narayan, 2009; Thompson, 2008; Vasudevan, Schultz, & Bateman, 2010); specifically, teachers’ comments reveal their perception that students are more likely to participate actively in collaborative projects and reflective learning practices, demonstrating the essential features of willingness and enthusiasm. For instance, the students showed a high degree of attention and commitment on both Teacher 2’s book project and Teacher 4’s activity including the summary and painting. To present their work, students needed to reflect what they did or learned and how they might improve their work.

Newfield (2011) regarded participation as a necessary process by which learners acquired the power to think independently and to critically articulate their own ideas and feelings. In multimodal composition classrooms, students took part in the whole process, from prewriting activities to writing to presenting their writing. By so doing, they had ownership of their final products. Hence, intrinsic motivation is likely to increase in conjunction with ownership and participation. The teacher participants in this study noted that students seemed to be more engaged in lessons compared with students in traditional classrooms, as indicated by their willingness and drive to complete target tasks. However, all teachers in this study used multimodal composition as either prewriting activities or after-reading activities, rather than as the main method of writing instruction. Also, not all recognized the need to have students communicate across modes in school for a variety of authentic purposes and, therefore, did not provide specialized or advanced instruction using multimodality. That is, multimodal composition played the secondary role of assisting in traditional writing instruction. Despite this secondary role, teachers recognized student engagement as a reason for incorporating multimodality by facilitating connections to students’ interests (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000).

Multimodal composition reinforces formal education by providing various notions of literacies which help students participate in diverse ways of meaning-making (Jewitt, 2008). For example, multimodal composition helped students understand stories (Tarasiuk, 2010) when they revisited texts to make a book with illustrations. The students of Teacher 2 were given the assignment to re-create Aesop’s fables. Before doing so, they broke into groups to discuss the stories, characters, themes, plots, and settings. This process helped them clarify related information because they had to reread and/or discuss the stories. According to Teacher 2, it was a challenge for some students to read stories written in English, but they shaped and reshaped the content of the stories as they built connections via discussions and representations of knowledge. Based on their understanding of the texts, students also reinterpreted the author’s meaning by adding, deleting, and restructuring stories. She considered that
multimodal composition provided additional and instructive strategies with some students, allowing low-performing students to not merely copy stories from the text, but to interpret the stories from their own points of view. Similarly, Teacher 1 gave her students the assignment to create vocabulary video clips using a movie-maker program. Students made creative video clips to help classmates memorize vocabulary in more effective ways. Teacher 1 reported that students seemed to memorize and retain information for a longer period compared with students using conventional methods of studying vocabulary, because the student videos usually contained visual modes and example sentences with which students could connect.

For English language learners, incorporating multimodal composition can involve different learning strategies (Ajayi, 2009). Teacher 5 created lesson plans integrating hands-on activities because his students’ English proficiency and confidence were both quite low. He allowed students to respond using diverse modes other than language, instead of asking them to answer in linguistic mode. Many students depended on visual modes, such as drawings and photos, for alternative ways of presenting their understanding of texts. That is, teachers had more positive perceptions toward multimodal composition because it was believed to facilitate effective communication by allowing learners to use all available resources to convey messages. However, they did not recognize the importance of each semiotic mode, but considered the nonlinguistic modes as secondary methods to assist language learning. So, even though diverse modes could play an important role in fostering communication, the focus was still on developing language production.

**Finding Two: Accept or Reject Multimodal Composition as an Ongoing Learning Process**

As indicated in Chapter 4, two types of assessment were conducted in school: multiple-choice tests and essay examinations. Although teachers did not have much discretion in implementing the multiple-choice tests, which accounted for 60-70 percent, they could decide the content, frequency, and methods of the essay exams, which covered 30-40 percent. Some teachers, such as Teachers 4 and 6, took advantage of the essay exams in the language classroom and provided students time for both writing and evaluating their work. These two teachers did not grade students’ essays based on English proficiency, in spite of institutional pressures that teachers should evaluate and grade student writing (Inoue, 2004). For them, conducting essay exams provided opportunities to give feedback and discuss content and issues through teacher-student talks in the classroom. Leung and Mohan (2004) suggest that formative assessment is a pedagogically desirable approach to promote learning. It can be powerful
because assessment is integrated into teaching and learning activities on a daily basis. For Teachers 4 and 6, learning occurs via assessment or through interactions between teacher and students, and students and students (Black, 2001).

One of the writing lessons assigned by Teacher 6 asked students to create a dialog about resolving disputes. In groups, students exchanged ideas by discussing the best solutions to conflict situations. According to Teacher 6, students not only practiced using English expressions, but also learned to think from various perspectives by being involved in this language game. By contrast, Teacher 4 did not use much teacher-student discussion due to students’ lack of English proficiency, but used essay exams to reflect what students understood from reading texts. He did not provide individualized feedback, which might have overwhelmed his students, but used his feedback to praise their efforts. Regarding writing assessment criteria, Teacher 4 included multimodal domains because, in any text, various modes were interwoven, contributing to socially constructed meanings (Ryan, 2011). Students drew traditional Korean clothing, chefs, and cameras to refer to fashion, cooking, and film school, while providing descriptions of the curricula for each school. These various modes allowed the students to read words in multiple ways (Thompson, 2008). Although Teacher 4’s students could not describe what they read in complete sentences, drawing was an indirect method that allowed the teacher to infer students’ understanding of the text.

Teachers conducted essay exams more than once during the semester, which meant some teachers used the tests as an ongoing learning process. Although teachers did not usually give students individual feedback, they provided group comments to all students on how to organize their papers or how to reduce grammatical mistakes. The teachers also believed that essay exams better showed students’ strengths and weaknesses compared with multiple choice exams. This was because students were likely to guess answers from multiple choice options, whereas essay exams provided no clues for writing correct sentences. Although teachers assigned homework to complete essays at home, they asked students to initiate the first draft at school. By so doing, they could observe students’ current state of writing proficiency and provide guidance and instructions if necessary. In the case of Teacher 1, she created essay questions that were similar to multiple choice exams because she believed that the rubric for scoring writing was not objective. Also, she did not wish to hear complaints from parents and students about test results. As a result, she was more likely than other teachers to emphasize the domains of structure and conventions, in order to make the scoring process easier and faster. For such teachers, teaching writing could not be regarded as a learning process, but as a process for testing.
The teachers said they wished to increase the number of essay tests in order to improve productive skills. They reported that students did not develop receptive skills (e.g., reading and listening) and productive skills (e.g., speaking and writing) in a balanced way because of the emphasis on reading comprehension. Insufficient time was spent on teaching writing or speaking because productive skills were of little importance in high-stakes tests. In addition to the emphasis on reading, the teachers’ lack of confidence in their ability to teach writing was an obstacle to the integration of multimodal composition in English classes. As English language learners themselves, they lacked confidence in their English skills, specifically in writing. They expressed concern about making mistakes in front of students. In particular, Teacher 6 indicated she was apprehensive about providing writing instruction in the beginning of her career because of her identity as a second language learner. Her perceptions on multimodal composition as an ongoing learning process from negative to positive changed when she recognized the advantages to non-native language teachers. Medgyes (2001) indicated that non-native teachers set a better learner model, whereas native teachers can be a better language model. Therefore, Korean English teachers can be a better role model for learners since they exhibit varying degrees of teaching skills gained from their trial and error experiences. Because they understand language difficulties better than anyone else, they are “potentially more sensitive to students’ needs and aspirations including their linguistic, cultural, and personal background” (p. 438). Thus, teachers can make the learning process more transparent so that students are capable of gleaning information about studying English.

Along with a second language identity, most teachers reported that it was an overwhelming task to make writing lessons an ongoing process. Multimodal composition is continuous or ongoing in nature because the process of meaning-making using multiple modes is not a fixed process (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996). Meanings become concrete in relation to interwoven texts over time and reproduced in diverse linguistic and cultural contexts (Kress, 2010). Thus, teachers need to create more flexible lessons to reflect the nature of multimodality rather than lessons limited to one-time use. When multiple stages are used to teach writing, they may provide students the experience of particular modes and their social and cultural practices. One challenge that can interfere with employing multimodal lesson plans is insufficient time to teach a writing lesson in several units. As described in the previous paragraphs, more emphases have been placed on reading and listening, leaving the teaching of writing to a one-time event.
Some teachers’ attitudes toward the issue of multimodality as a management tool are complicated and inconsistent due to the different uses and perceptions of multimodal composition. Teacher 4 believed that multimodal lessons facilitated effective teaching by providing a variety of semiotic resources that could raise interest and curiosity. A number of positive changes were observed when he provided video lessons that students could study in advance. His multimodal lessons helped students gain familiarity with the material and also helped him monitor their work and behavior. He reported frequent uses of multiple modes also allowed students to present their ideas in multiple ways, building their confidence in using English. Teacher uses of multiple modes such as eye contact and nonverbal signals, on the other hand, could create conditions that prevent misbehavior in students. For Teachers 1 and 3, teaching multimodal composition did not ensure effective classroom management. Rather, group or pair assignments that were supported by multimodal projects could make it harder for teachers to organize and implement instruction unless there were effective group management methods to encourage student engagement and for fair ways to assess their academic or non-academic tasks. For both groups of teachers, multimodal composition lessons were likely to be accepted or avoided as an ongoing process because of classroom management issues.

Teachers mentioned lack of time and insufficient opportunities for professional development as obstacles to implementing multimodal composition over a semester period. All teachers indicated that daily chores such as dealing with official documents and counseling students interfered with their professional activities. As Teacher 1 complained, teachers did not even have time to handle all the tasks, so they tried to do all these administrative chores outside of regular school hours. In the current situation, where teachers are suffering from an excessive workload, it is hard for them to find time to make lesson plans conducive to meeting social and individual needs. Teachers’ inconsistent attitudes toward teaching and assessing multimodal composition, therefore, can be affected by such educational conditions.

Finding 3: Creating a Learning Community: Need for Professional Development

All teachers reported that they wished to update their knowledge in accordance with social changes and students’ needs. Four of the six teachers had completed master’s programs in English or English education. Their attitudes toward attending graduate school were moderately skeptical. Teacher 3 indicated that two years at graduate school had helped him to understand the issues and trends of academia, but that he could not pursue degrees whenever he wished to increase his knowledge or skills.
Teacher 6, who had a master’s degree in English education, stated that completing this degree did have a positive impact on getting a sustainable job, but did not help her build a practical knowledge of teaching pedagogy. Through trial and error in the classroom, she identified classroom-based experiences as a critical factor in prompting her to reflect on her teaching practices, find solutions, and modify her current teaching practices. These teachers’ attitudes toward professional development in graduate school were consistent with Swan, Holmes, and Vargas’ report (2002) that traditional in-service teacher education was less likely to affect teaching practice than onsite professional development. They suggested that professional development should be “situative”, taking the specific physical and social contexts into account. In the same vein, Putnam and Borko (1997) maintained that the essential feature of effective professional development programs was situated knowledge and practice in authentic classroom. All teacher participants in the current study agreed that creating a learning community within the school could be more efficient and effective in teacher training.

Teachers talked about participating in a learning community to help them cope with challenges or barriers in teaching writing. In Korea, teachers in the same grades typically agree to use the same criteria in order to make sure all students are treated fairly. In fact, it is impossible for teachers to create criteria without the consent of their colleagues, even if certain teaching/assessment methods work better to address students’ needs. All teachers in the current study indicated the importance of creating or participating in a learning community with other teachers who were supportive and could help them improve their content as well as their pedagogical knowledge. Teacher 2 regularly met with colleagues to monitor the reading/writing programs and to discuss ways, either formally or informally, to improve their direction. She stated that the learning community in her school allowed teachers to share their visions of change and to learn from each other. For her, onsite professional development meetings like these were more likely to provide sustainable learning to increase teaching expertise and confidence (Kennedy & Shiel, 2010). Based on what she learned in this community, she could make critical decisions suitable to particular contexts and to the development of her students.

Teachers acted upon their desire for professional development through self-directed collaborations. All of the teachers perceived that they worked better collaboratively than alone in learning additional teaching strategies, approaches to lessons, and values with respect to multimodal composition. By so doing, they recognized that the multimodal environment was essential in order to understand the new conditions for literacy inside and beyond the classroom. At the same time, different levels of skills and mindsets are required to carry out multimodal
composition lessons, so high levels of cooperation, whether formal or informal, are needed in pursuit of pedagogical innovation. Teachers 2 and 6 reported that teachers could develop both content and pedagogical knowledge by making connections with other teachers. For example, as members of consulting teams in provincial offices of education to provide help to regular teachers across schools, they collected information such as lesson plans and teaching materials, observed classrooms, and had professional dialogs with the requestors to see if instructional changes could be implemented to help enhance teacher expertise. Of critical importance was the building of collaborative relationships between the consultants and the teachers who received consulting. Teacher 6 indicated that she did not “teach” teaching techniques, but rather, through numerous conversations, helped teachers “realize” effective teachings methods that were relevant to their particular contexts. She introduced several good examples which teachers subsequently used as models. Although this consulting differed from an in-school learning community in that each consultant contacted only one teacher, it had a positive impact on other teachers. Those who received consulting returned to their colleagues to share practical solutions and to continue the conversation on better practices.

Teachers 4 and 5 exchanged teaching methods, skills, and ideas on an individual level. Both were interested in integrating technology into English classrooms. They did not have regular meetings like Teacher 2, but used Facebook to post questions and answers. This online space actually provided a useful, and practical place for professional development where they could deepen their knowledge of technology and teaching. Teacher 5 indicated that, although the conversation seemed casual, it was filled with insightful ideas that could be put into practice at the classroom level. The teachers also chose particular websites or reading material to share ideas that suggested reading and writing strategies or supported the use of technology. Kennedy and Shiel (2010) found that professional reading materials created a state of “cognitive dissonance” that allowed teachers to reflect on their current methods and beliefs about teaching. In their interviews for the current study, both Teachers 4 and 5 appeared open-minded about filling gaps in their knowledge and attempting to learn new skills, especially in relation to technology. In other words, taking time to share ideas and read new material allowed both teachers to observe their teaching practices and to transfer knowledge in ways that fit their teaching and personal styles.
A New Direction for Teaching and Assessing Multimodal Composition

21st Century Skills: Knowledge, Skills, and Mindsets in the Korean Context

In the current study, positive attitudes toward new literacies and multimodal composition were not directly related to integration of multimodal composition into writing classes, contrary to extant research (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Hassan et al., 2011; Timothy, 2009) suggesting that perceived attitudes were correlated with behaviors. One of the primary reasons for this difference was the disparity between what school curricula emphasized and what teachers perceived as most important. The effect of tests in school has a far greater effect on the attitudes and literacy practices of teachers and students, as the teacher participants in this study described. As described in chapter 4, contents of the exams are rather decontextualized, leading students to have less motivation for learning reading and writing or to study content beyond what is expected for the exam. As Guthrie and Davis (2003) have noted, however, intrinsic motivation can increase when teachers expand topics and provide new texts and elicit students’ active responses. They set six characteristics to boost students’ engagement in the classroom. The list includes: “knowledge goals, real-world interactions, an abundance of interesting texts, support for students choice and self-determination, direct strategy instruction, and collaboration support” (pp. 71-72). The six characteristics are aspects that enable students to interact with the real world. However, some teachers acknowledged in the interviews that they could not help choosing texts similar to the format of passages found in the high-stakes test. Conflicting views about literacies affected the teachers’ attitudes toward learning (for standardized tests) and teaching multimodal composition (for motivating students). Despite unresolved issues and conflicting attitudes, schools must be sites for transforming literacy practices by enacting multiple literacies (Cervetti, Damico, & Pearson, 2006).

Today, digital technologies and information development have altered the nature of communication from the traditional perspectives of literacy, which were limited to reading and writing, to multiliteracies focusing on local diversity and global connectedness (New London Group, 1996). Knowledge is constructed not only in printed texts, but also in dynamic texts supported by multiple modes. Johnson and Smagorinsky (2013) drew on the nature of multiliteracies that were participatory and more multimodal. Readers and writers serve as active meaning makers by understanding prior knowledge and processing new information through the selection and interaction of diverse modes. In addition, as the definition of literacy expands, today’s learning is not limited to the classroom. Students
have become more engaged in literacy activities outside the classroom in innovative and significant ways through the use of online contexts. Such social, cultural, and literacy practices may have a significant effect on both teachers and students in Korea, where digital technology is evolving rapidly.

Therefore, there is a need for educators in Korea to pay attention to social, cultural, and economic changes so that meaningful learning can occur. The Multiliteracies Pedagogy Framework (Cazden et al., 1996; Cope & Kalantzis, 2000) can provide a useful framework for understanding the teacher’s role in the learning environment, as follows:

- **Situated Practice:** Teachers consider students’ interests, needs, and knowledge and plan their teaching based on these factors. In Korea, teachers take into account the issue of motivational aspects in a culture where the final product is valued more highly than the process. Specifically, teachers emphasize and appreciate the process of writing so that students can enjoy learning itself.

- **Overt Instruction:** All interventions conducted by teachers include activities that scaffold students’ learning. For effective teaching, teachers provide explicit guides when helping learners connect prior knowledge to new information. Traditional teaching methods such as drills and rote memorization can be features of overt instruction, but should not be the primary instructional tools in the learning process.

- **Critical Framing:** This is important to understand the pedagogical process. In critical framing, teachers maintain a distance from the dominant social and cultural viewpoints associated with literacy practices. For example, teachers consider the purpose, importance, and advantages or disadvantages of high-stakes tests more critically, and realize that they need not always prefer outcome over process. This reflective process helps teachers constructively reframe contexts, leading to the creative application of innovative teaching methods to long-held teaching/learning practices.

- **Transformed Practice:** Knowledge acquired from situated practice, overt instruction, and critical framing provides an opportunity for teachers to transform teaching practice in their individual contexts. All teachers continue to formulate and reformulate teaching pedagogy based on observation of contexts and assessment of previous practices. Individual teachers can
rearticulate their understanding of aspects of learning in relation to changing local contexts, and can impart a new meaning to them.

Of greatest importance is communication among teachers, students, parents, and administrators in order to understand the relevance, importance, and learning outcomes of multimodal composition. Through this ongoing discussion of the teaching and assessment of multimodal composition, teachers may develop a wide range of good options in teaching and learning 21st century skills. In addition, teachers may find ways to balance social needs against a test-oriented school culture by considering the practical use of knowledge and learning goals in relation to students’ personal interests.

One specific example of a practice that teachers can incorporate into their classroom is to develop activities combining skills such as integrating reading and multimodal composition, or integrating speaking and multimodal composition. Reading may provide students with a variety of opportunities to talk about the world and topics beyond their own experience. At least, reading can give students something to discuss and to write about, which can be used to scaffold their thinking and writing skills. For those who argue in favor of reading instruction in the age of accountability, this approach combining reading and writing instruction can be a realistic solution to invigorate the classroom by inviting both teachers’ and students’ active participation. In a similar vein, class discussion not only improves students’ speaking proficiency but also helps them articulate their ideas, allowing them to write without feeling as much pressure. In other words, introducing these kinds of multimodal literacy practices may contribute to students becoming successful readers or speakers and writers.

As Teacher 1 did, teachers can make use of after-school programs or summer camps to involve students in multimodal literacy activities. Such informal educational settings benefit both teachers and students’ in that they can teach or learn what they think is valued without the pressure of grades and exams. After-school programs that are free of assessment offer more options for engaging students so that they may be more likely to stay connected. In these settings, more individualized instruction may be possible to support students’ emotional and intellectual development than in traditional school-based instruction.
Multimodal Composition Linked to Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

In Korea, CLT should be a goal of language teachers. The Korea Ministry of Education, Science and Technology announced in 2014 that, beginning in 2018, English assessment will be shifted from relative evaluation, for example, grading on a curve, to an absolute evaluation system, in order to normalize English education. This means students will not need to be so overly sensitive regarding their grade. When students receive over 90 percent on an English exam, they will receive an “A” grade. High-stakes accountability tests, which have had the effect of forcing a focus on low level skills, will be geared toward a new paradigm emphasizing instruction integrated with assessment, learning process, and classroom-based assessment. Several classroom-based assessments conducted by teachers will have more importance than the one-time accountability test. It is also expected to change the direction toward assessing more comprehensive and contextualized knowledge that, for example, looks at communication skills.

Communicative language teaching (CLT) methods will be the most appropriate to elicit student performance and to promote problem solving skills that are required in the new type of assessment. The central concept of CLT, which can be also a useful framework to teach multimodal composition, is that language is regarded as having “meaning potential” in the “context of the situation” (Savignon, 1983). In other words, the goal of language teaching is to teach “communicative competence,” which refers to the ability to interact with other speakers and to make meanings. In CLT, learners are encouraged to use both linguistic and nonlinguistic resources to negotiate meanings and to complete the communicative task at hand. Savignon distinguished communicative competence from the ability to memorize rules of grammar or recall dialogs. The ability to communicate depends on diverse elements including context, age, student level, and learning goals. Adapted from the “inverted pyramid” model proposed by Savignon (1983), Figure 5.1. below shows the four components of communicative competence: sociocultural competence, discourse competence, grammatical competence, and strategic competence. All elements are interrelated in specific contexts, interacting with each other and contributing to overall communicative competence. In the original model, strategic competence was one of four competences shown below context, the others being sociocultural, discourse, and grammatical. However, in the adapted model, strategic competence is shown below context and spans and supports the other three competences: sociocultural, discourse, and grammatical. In the
new model, strategic competence supports these three competences by providing linguistic and non-linguistic coping strategies.

Figure 5.1. The classroom model to improve communicative competence. Adapted from Savignon, S. J. (2001). Components of communicative competence. In M. Celce-Murcia (Ed.), *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language* (p. 17). Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle.

Grammatical competence is concerned with the forms of language including lexicography, morphology, syntax, phonology, and the ability to use distinctive grammatical structures effectively in communication. It does not refer to discrete grammatical rules, but to the ability to use rules of interpreting, expressing, and negotiating meanings. In composition classrooms, teachers teach grammar in usage or grammar in context, rather than focusing on drills or rote memorization of grammatical rules. Similarly, discourse competence refers to the ability to understand the overall meaning of texts, and to produce information appropriately and coherently for those who read or hear the texts. These texts include the range of spoken, written, and visual modes that should be closely interconnected to make a meaningful whole. Sociocultural competence is concerned with the understanding of the social context where language is used. Students are provided with proper contextual use of English in accordance with cultural references and social conventions. For example, the linguistic conventions of turn-taking, content, nonverbal language, and tone of voice are taken into consideration. Strategic competence refers to coping strategies to facilitate grammatical, discourse, and sociocultural competence. It is one of the features that distinguishes those with high communicative competence.
from those with less communicative competence. These four components of communicative competence are not fixed, but can change depending on context. In the language learning setting, these four components can be blended effectively to promote meaningful learning, develop learners’ interests, and meet learners’ needs.

CLT can be linked to multimodal composition in that, in both contexts, learning is viewed as a process where students engage in remaking information and messages (Jewitt et al., 2001). Multimodal representation is based on the concept that modal resources and the remaking of genres are constantly appropriated and personalized in changing social conditions. As Jewitt (2008) indicated, users transform modes and their meanings in response to the communicative needs of communities or societies. Flewitt’s (2006) study also showed the strong connections between modes and communicative needs. According to an ethnographic study, children intentionally used different modes to construct meanings. Multiple modes such as eye contact, facial expressions, and body movement were used to supplement or replace talking among young children. In the same way, multimodal composition consists of modes of communication which are represented in multiple ways as a result of shifting social contexts. Multimodal representation may help language learners achieve the goal of learning by offering a full range of expressive resources and interpersonal skills.

As evidenced by teachers’ use of multimodality to manage behavior, educate themselves, and interact outside the classroom, multimodal composition instruction provides diverse opportunities for language learners to practice the use of language and to open up communicational potentialities. Digital technology expands the range of options from which choices are made. That is, writers select signs and create texts by interacting with other signs. The texts become meaningful only when they are brought into communication (Bezemer & Kress, 2008). Therefore, CLT and multimodal composition share a commonality in that both are sensitive to the conditions of learning and learning environments.

**Making Change: Changing Instructional Practice**

In the 21st century, changes to learning environments caused by digital technology are inevitable. Therefore, the definition of literacy is expanding to include not only traditional literacy but also new literacies. The broad concept of literacies includes both linguistic and non-linguistic texts, and is concerned with how multiple signs and symbols create meanings in socially, culturally, and politically situated contexts. Other issues in dealing with new literacies include types and availability of
resources, expertise, and mindsets. In particular, teaching 21st century skills demands changes to teachers’ instructional practices. First, a student-centered approach is more likely to promote learning than traditional lectures or instructor-led teaching methods. For students who are expected to demonstrate real-world problem-solving or decision-making skills, student-centered learning can offer better opportunities for learners to pursue individual interests at their own pace and to construct meanings. In the Korean context, the teacher-centered approach is still dominant, situating teachers in the active roles in terms of choosing learning materials, methods, and assessment. However, students can be more motivated when they become responsible for their own learning.

As learners take more active roles in their learning, processes are emphasized over final results. Assessment for Learning (AFL) addresses the connection between teaching and learning, and assessment is used to provide information about learners’ progress (Lee, 2007). Although the teachers have little choice but to pay attention to testing and grading, they can place more emphasis on process. For example, in the ESL/EFL writing context, more opportunities can be provided for feedback through teacher-student conferences and peer feedback. As Lee’s (2007) study indicated, in the L2 writing classroom, creating a classroom culture where mistakes are not criticized is critical to fostering motivation. Therefore, creating a secure learning environment has a positive impact in that students feel that they are learning rather than just being evaluated. Based on information gathered from teachers’ observations, their students learn best when teachers can develop better strategies and adapt materials suited to their learners’ levels of English.

Observation or monitoring of students’ progress over an extended period is a prerequisite for implementing effective AFL because assessing students with one unit of testing can be incomplete. Effective language teachers reflect on classroom practices, constantly asking questions in order to gain a better understanding of their teaching, and seeking strategies to improve students’ learning. Therefore, teachers play the role of researchers, exploring small-scale problems in language teaching and assessment in their own teaching contexts. Through ongoing reflective practices, they reformulate their questions and select appropriate methods to enhance current teaching practices. Therefore, observation and ongoing assessment should be regarded as part of the process of collecting information about students, not as an additional burden for teachers.
Limitations of the Study

A number of limitations exist in conducting the qualitative study, as follows.

1. This study only focuses on English teachers in South Korea where English is taught as a foreign language (EFL). In an EFL setting, teachers are encouraged to focus on form and or content because the priority of language teaching is on helping students to improve accuracy and fluency. In a language classroom, linguistic aspects are more important than other modes. As a consequence, this study can bring different results than if applied in a non-EFL setting.

2. Although the Korean English teachers were selected from different public schools, they were following an official curriculum and worked in a similar atmosphere of a competitive, test-driven, and outcome-oriented culture. Therefore, the findings of this study cannot be generalized to other settings where competition and the scores of standardized tests are less important. Also, the participants selected for this study worked in metropolitan areas, where schools are well equipped with technology infrastructure compared to those in rural areas. The teachers in this study may have been more likely to be able to integrate multimodality into their writing classrooms than their rural counterparts.

3. I did not distinguish teachers’ use of multiple modes for multiple purposes: for example, some use multimodality in relation to student affective engagement, whereas others use it to enhance student understanding because verbal explanations used along with nonverbal modes can be more effective. For this reason, teachers’ perceptions about multimodal composition were not captured in a more subtle manner.

4. All interview sessions were preceded by classroom observations so that teachers could not change their lesson plans in a direction that the researcher might want to see. Even so, teachers were provided the definition of multimodal composition and informed of the purposes of study before the classroom visit, which was done on a day that they selected. Therefore, there is a high possibility that their usual classroom instruction differs from that on the day of the observation.

5. The case studies utilized in this study describe how teachers perceive teaching and assess multimodal composition. Therefore, no causal relationship were tested, even if teachers connected teaching multimodal composition to student engagement and motivation.
Recommendations for Future Research

In anticipation of empirical results on teaching and assessing multimodal composition, and on related challenges or barriers, six cases were selected from six public schools in a metropolitan area of South Korea. Since the purpose of the current study was to explore teachers’ use of multimodality in writing classrooms, this study described teachers’ perceptions and attitudes toward multimodal composition. Future research will investigate the correlations between teachers’ perceptions of teaching multimodal composition, such as positive or negative attitudes, and their actual teaching of multimodal composition. In addition, the results of the current study indicated that teachers experienced several obstacles in integrating multimodal composition. Based on these results, future research will use quantitative methods to examine the factors that facilitate or hinder the teaching of multimodal composition.

Contexts and student levels are critical for understanding teachers’ use of multimodal composition. In the current study, most teachers reported that they incorporated multimodal composition to help students understand content, particularly for low-performing students. Therefore, future research will be conducted to examine how multimodal composition facilitates students’ learning, and in what ways or contexts.

In spite of having positive attitudes regarding incorporating multimodal composition, some of the teachers expressed concern they may not explicitly know how they can increase their learning potential so as to have a positive impact on student learning. Developing situative professional development and local teacher communities that are designed to identify teachers’ strengths and weaknesses and to foster professional growth is an important concern. As knowledge is constructed by the interplay of meaning-making processes, there is a high possibility for teachers to achieve better results when they work together. My future study related to developing and sustaining professional development will look at how school context variables affect individual teachers and how teachers can develop positive learner and teacher communities.

Finally, this study raises a question about whether teachers’ perceptions of the affordance of multimodality were actually observable among students. In this study, teachers stated that a correlation existed between multimodal composition and motivation. However, this correlation should be reexamined using robust methods to investigate to see if teaching multimodal composition was related
to increase student engagement. In addition, more in-depth description of multimodality in the ESL/EFL setting should be provided to enrich the understanding of L2 learning.
APPENDIX A

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

December 2014

Dear English teacher,

I am conducting a study called “Korean English teachers’ perceptions about teaching and assessing multimodal composition,” and I am inviting you to participate. The purpose of my study is to explore how in-service teachers perceive teaching multimodal composition and assessment practices to support student learning in the 21st-century classroom.

Your participation will provide a valuable insight that may help Korean secondary English teachers improve the quality of writing instruction. I would like your permission to interview you, and to observe your classroom. Interviews will be also audio-taped. If you choose to participate, be assured that all data and results from the study will remain confidential and will be kept secure by me. Your name and other identifying information will be removed and replaced with an ID number. I also keep interview transcripts, notes, and related documents in a locked cabinet for three years. Any published research that results from this study will contain no names or other identifying information.

You are free to choose whether or not you are part of this study. Your decision will not affect your relationship with your school. In addition, if you are part of this study, you are free to withdraw your consent at any time without penalty.

The results will be confidential to the extent allowed by law. Your name will not be included in any published research that results from this study. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Jung Ryu at 850-345-****. I look forward to addressing any of your concerns. If you do agree to be part of this study, please indicate your consent by signing and dating this form and returning the bottom part to Jung Ryu. Please keep this letter for your records.

Sincerely,
Ms. Jung Ryu
If you have questions about your rights as a participant, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Committee, Institutional Review Board, through the Vice President for the Office of Research at (850) 644-8633.

If you do wish to participate in this study, please return this signed form.

Name _______________ Signature _______________ Date _______________
APPENDIX B

DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY

1. Name: ........................................................................................................................................

2. Gender: ....................................................................................................................................

3. Level of School (middle or high): ............................................................................................

4. Types of School (regular, vocational, or foreign language… Etc.): ........................................

5. Location of School: ....................................................................................................................

6. Students gender: ........................................................................................................................

7. Student level of English
   a) low                     b) intermediate                 c) advanced

8. Teaching experience (year): .....................................................................................................

9. The grade you are currently teaching: ..................................................................................

10. The subject you are currently teaching: ............................................................................... 

11. Age:
    a) 25-34                    b) 35-45                     c) 46 and above

12. Education:
    11.1 The highest level of education you have completed
         a) 4 year college degree  b) Master’s degree  c) Doctoral degree
    11.2 Major: .............................................................................................................................

13. Approximately, how much time do you spend teaching writing per week?
    a) less than 30 min  b) 30min–1hr  c) 1hr–2hrs  d) more than 2 hrs

14. Do you use multimodality (Yes or No)? ....................................................................................

15. Have you taken classes about writing at university? ..............................................................

    If yes, name the course: ...........................................................................................................
16. Have you attended professional development programs on writing instruction?
............................................................................................................................................

If yes, name the course. ........................................................................................................
APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Sample Interview Questions for English teachers

Date ______________
Time ______________
Place ______________

Directions: Please, answer each question.

[Warm-up]
1. How are you doing?
2. Tell me about your school and the environment around the school.
3. Tell me about your students. What do the students and parents expect from you?
4. Tell me about your writing class.
5. Do you use any technologies when you teach writing? If so, what types of technology do you use?

[Teaching Multimodality]
1. What do you think the difference is between print-based writing and multimodal composition?
2. What are your views, attitudes, and beliefs in teaching multimodal composition?
3. What modes (e.g., visual, gestural, spatial, auditory, and linguistic) do you prefer using, based on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being very low, and 5 being very high? Why?
4. Do students respond differently when you use a variety of modes in teaching writing? If so, how?

[Assessing Multimodal Composition]
1. List all types of assessment you use in a writing class (e.g., summative, formative, and so on)
2. List all types of assessment you use in a multimodal composition classroom.
3. What areas do you emphasize when you teach and assess writing (e.g., content, structure, convention, and multimodality), based on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being very low, and 5 being very high? Why?
4. Do you use same or different criteria when assessing multimodal composition compared to traditional writing?
   If different, what are the important factors when assessing multimodal composition?
5. How often do you assess students’ multimodal composition?
   What are the fair ways to assess multimodal composition?
   What sources do you use in the formative assessment of multimodal composition?
   What are the supports and constraints of those resources?
6. How can teachers use and modify existing pedagogical knowledge to stimulate and measure improvement in 21st century student communication?

[Barriers]
1. What are the challenges or barriers in teaching and assessing multimodal composition?
   What factors make you reluctant to teach multimodal composition?
   List all the factors you find challenging.
2. How can you cope with the challenges or barriers in teaching and assessing multimodal composition?

[Professional Development]
1. Tell me the ways in which you obtain ideas about learning and teaching writing skills.
2. Tell me the ways in which you cooperate with your colleagues in developing lessons, instructional resources, and assessment practices.

[Closing]
Do you have any questions regarding multimodal composition? Do you have any other comments?
Thank you for your time.
# APPENDIX D

## OBSERVATIONAL CHECKLIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classroom Observation Checklist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respond to each statement using the following scale:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 = Not observed  2= Rarely  3: Most of the time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Multimodality

#### Linguistic design
- Used verbal explanation to convey message
- Asked students to write on paper

#### Audio design
- Used music or sound effect
- Made voice louder to emphasize

#### Spatial design
- Used layout and font
- Include proximity, and direction

#### Visual design
- Used diagrams, tables, and mind maps
- Used drawings and photos
- Used visual aids

#### Gestural design
- Used body language
- Facial expression

### Rhetoric

- Emphasized organization (introduction, body, and conclusion)
- Explained the importance of purposes and audiences
- Explained grammar and punctuation

### Assessment

#### Summative assessment
- Conducted the end of unit or chapter tests
- Conducted midterms or final exams
- Asked students to submit a final product
- Asked students to submit a final essay
- Asked students to present a final oral product

#### Formative assessment
- Provided a short quiz or vocabulary quiz
- Did an interactive class discussion
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>asked questions</th>
<th>1 2 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>provided a warm-up activity</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gave students written or aural feedback</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Type of Work**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asked students to work alone</th>
<th>1 2 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asked students to work in pairs</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asked students to collaborate</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asked students to brainstorm with partners</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actively encouraged students to interact with each other</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX E

APPROVALS FOR RESEARCH

Office of the Vice President for Research
Human Subjects Committee
Tallahassee, Florida 32306-2742
(850) 644-8673 · FAX (850) 644-4392

APPROVAL MEMORANDUM

Date: 12/09/2014
To: Jung Ryu <***@my.fsu.edu>
Address:
Dept.: EDUCATION
From: Thomas L. Jacobson, Chair
Re: Use of Human Subjects in Research
      Korean teachers’ perceptions on teaching and assessing multimodal composition

The application that you submitted to this office in regard to the use of human subjects in the proposal referenced above have been reviewed by the Secretary, the Chair, and two members of the Human Subjects Committee. Your project is determined to be and has been approved by an expedited review process.

The Human Subjects Committee has not evaluated your proposal for scientific merit, except to weigh the risk to the human participants and the aspects of the proposal related to potential risk and benefit. This approval does not replace any departmental or other approvals, which may be required.

If you submitted a proposed consent form with your application, the approved stamped consent form is attached to this approval notice. Only the stamped version of the consent form may be used in recruiting research subjects.

If the project has not been completed by 12/08/2015 you must request a renewal of approval for continuation of the project. As a courtesy, a renewal notice will be sent to you prior to your expiration date; however, it is your responsibility as the Principal Investigator to timely request renewal of your approval from the Committee.

You are advised that any change in protocol for this project must be reviewed and approved by the Committee prior to implementation of the proposed change in the protocol. A protocol change/amendment form is required to be submitted for approval by the Committee. In addition, federal regulations require that the Principal Investigator promptly report, in writing any unanticipated problems or adverse events involving risks to research subjects or others.

By copy of this memorandum, the chairman of your department and/or your major professor is reminded that he/she is responsible for being informed concerning research projects involving
human subjects in the department, and should review protocols as often as needed to insure that the project is being conducted in compliance with our institution and with DHHS regulations. This institution has an Assurance on file with the Office for Human Research Protection. The Assurance Number is IRB00000446.

Cc:
HSC No. 2014.13703
REFERENCES


BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Jung Ryu earned her bachelor’s degree in English literature from Yonsei University in South Korea. She received master’s degrees in English literature and English education from the same university. She was an enthusiastic reader of young adult literature and literature theory. After becoming a classroom teacher in a public high school in Gyeonggido, she took more interest in pedagogy and effective methods for teaching English. In 2009 when her destiny led her to Dr. Sissi Carroll, she joined the doctoral program at the Florida State University.

As a doctoral student, she was the recipient of numerous awards and honors including a Mack and Effie Tyner fellowship. As part of this fellowship, she worked with a classroom teacher at a public middle school located in Tallahassee, Florida. Two years of observations, discussions, and reflections had a tremendous effect on shaping and reshaping her teaching philosophy. Through these experiences, she came to recognize that research enables teachers to better understand their own classroom and students. Since returning to South Korea to teach English in high school, she has been using her knowledge gained as a researcher and learner to experiment with newly learned pedagogy toward the goal of helping both her students and fellow teachers reach higher learning modes.