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# Presentational writing practice with texts

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# Outline

1. What role does writing play in FL development?
  2. How is writing defined from the multiliteracies perspective?
  3. How can multiliteracies pedagogy be used to teach written presentational communication through texts?
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**What were your experiences with writing in a FL? How was it approached by your FL instructor? What role did it play?**

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# Writing in the FL classroom

## What it tends to be:

- A secondary skill in lower-level courses.
- A support skill
- Considered a vehicle for FL practice, or as a modality that enables the learning of spelling, grammar, or vocabulary.
- Students write to learn as opposed to the other way round.

## What it should be:

- Give students time to compose, revise, and consider how their stylistic choices impact meaning.
  - Learning to write: allows students to practice meaning-making in the foreign language.
  - An essential modality for engaging in interpretive and presentational communication in advanced-level courses.
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**What does one need to know in order to be a successful writer in the FL? What types of knowledge (available designs) should one be familiar with?**

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# Available designs for FL writing

- Content knowledge of concepts and ideas
  - Context knowledge of reader expectations and cultural preferences
  - Genre knowledge of the text type and its value in a given context
  - Process knowledge of the writing task (knowledge of how to carry out the process of constructing a text)
  - System knowledge of lexis, syntax, and formal writing conventions (grammar and vocab are necessary but not sufficient to write a good composition)
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# What contributes to FL writing development?

## FL Instruction:

Approaches to FL writing instruction:

- **Product-based:** focus on grammatical and syntactic accuracy of FL texts. (dominated the FL classroom until CLT)
- **Process-based:** focus on expression of creativity (exploratory), the social nature of writing (collaborative), and composing strategies (recursive) (emerged with CLT)
- **Genre-based:** focus on how particular structures and conventions are used in certain FL text types. (not popular in the US)

## L1 Writing Skills

- L1 writing proficiency and the overall FL proficiency (L1 writing skills don't transfer automatically to FL writing; a level of FL knowledge is needed to tap successfully into their L1 writing skills)
  - The more advanced your FL the more you benefit from your L1 writing skills.
  - Composing in the L1 is very different from composing in the FL: In L1 we start with ideas and then select suitable language to express them. This is reversed in FL.
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**What is writing?**



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# What is writing?

- Information transfer - finding the right words to convey a message
  - In Multiliteracies: a communicative act of meaning design, both individual and collaborative
  - Entails the following dimensions:
    - linguistic,
    - cognitive (deliberate thinking about language use, as well as mental processes such as planning and organizing a text)
    - Sociocultural (when and how to use schematic available designs such as genre and style, and possessing the cultural knowledge of both the audience and the written text).
  - Writing is closely intertwined with reading.
  - The two are complimentary: Reading takes place in class so that students can both engage in joint negotiation of meaning about texts and receive direct help in reading... The same can also be said of writing: It is brought into the classroom as both an individual and social act that takes place in a context wherein students can profit from instructor assistance and peer feedback as they construct texts (p. 182)
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**Think of a text in the language  
you teach or find it online.  
Identify the linguistic, cognitive,  
and socio-cultural dimensions  
comprising this text.**

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# Why the multiliteracies approach?

“An integrative, student-centered approach, solidly grounded in an available designs core ... that also attends to the interdependencies among textual products, cognitive processes, and sociocultural factors ... an approach that focuses on meaning as it is constructed *through* form in a cultural context.”  
(Kern, 2000, p. 185)

- Targets cultural, linguistic, and socio-cultural dimensions of literacy.
  - Addresses the 5 types of knowledge needed to create a FL text.
  - Contains all 3 approaches to FL writing.
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# Teaching written presentational communication through texts in the multiliteracies framework

## The 4 pedagogical acts:

- Provide means for instructors to systematically guide learners through the complex and multilateral process of meaning design.
  - Facilitate learners' access to the language, conventions, cultural content, and other resources / available designs comprising the texts.
  - Engage the learners in the processes of interpretation, collaboration, problem solving, and reflection.
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**Go back to the text you've  
looked up a few minutes ago.  
Use it to develop a lesson plan  
facilitating the development of  
presentational writing skills.**

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# Conclusion

- The Multiliteracies Framework
    - Foundations of SLA
    - Intro to the pedagogy of multiliteracies
    - Multiliteracies in introductory and advanced language courses
    - Implementing multiliteracies at the program level
    - Instruction and assessment
    - Choosing texts to work with
    - The role of grammar and vocabulary
    - Oral skills development
    - Listening skills
    - Writing and Reading
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**Thank you!**

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