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**Theme: Stylistic imitation as an English teaching tool: Pre-service teachers’ responses to training and practice.**

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**Abstract**

This action research study project examines stylistic imitation as an English –teaching technique and includes 1.a review of literature about the history of stylistic imitation and current college composition practice ,2.an analysis of the close imitation journals which were written by senior English majors and minors by following the model paragraph from Katharine Anne Porter’s ‘’The Jilting of Granny Weatherall’’( 1965)and 3.writers ‘ comments and reflections on doing stylistic imitation .Stanley Fish (2005)argued :students can’t write clean English sentences because they are not being taught what sentences are’’( as cited in Stodola ,2013,p.57)Lacking knowledge and practice ,international students who enroll in colleges are not familiar with the American writing patterns .For this reason ,the author argues that stylisic imitation can be a pedagogical method for learners ,not only English language learners but also native English-speaking students.Writing the freestyle journals and close imitation journals ,the 14 participants who were pre-service English teachers expressed their own and their families’voices through the stories they wrote.By analyzing and interpreting the journals ,the author explains how and why stylistic imitation can be used in classroom.

**Chapter 1.Review of Literature.**

Chapter 1 is meant to provide readers with a brief history of imitation ,current college composition practices ,concepts of controlled composition,and views of imitation pedagogy.

**The History of Imitation.**

Imitation ,’’copying the writing of others for the improvement of one’s own skill’’( Gorrell,1981,p.313) ,is not new as a technique : it was one of the methods that was used as common practice to teach rhetoric in Greco-Roman schools and throughout the Middle Ages.During the Greco-Roman world ,imitation ‘’was used by such writers as Plato ,Aristotle and Plutarch with a number of different meanings .For instance ,imitation of men in action ,imitation of ideal truth ,imitation of appearances ,true or false ,in a phenomenal world’’( Clark,1951,p.11).In Aristotle ‘s view ,’’…….umans are different from the beasts in that they are imitative creatures who learn their earliest lessons through imitation ‘’(Sullivan ,1989,p.11).In this case ,Aristotle considered all the meanings of imitation and emphasized that imitation was an action that followed the right path and made the right decision for the previous experiencers .

**Current College Composition Practices** .

English composition courses are required in Western university education.With the design of the program and curriculum ,students are developing and improving their writing skills in Standard American English (SAE)( Horner&Trimbur,2002).No matter whether the composition courses are for either analyzing literature or teaching the different styles of writing ,they require writing skills to complete them and earn credit .Therefore ,writing skills become one of the most important factors that bring successful in a college composition course.  
However ,English Language Learners (ELLs) who enroll in the college English composition courses ‘’recognize academic writing abilityas an area of weakness’’because they lack knowledge about the American writing patterns and the different writing rules from other countries .Robert Kaplan (1966) emphasized that writing patterns are different among cultures ,and the ELLs ‘’who have mastered syntactic structures have still demonstrated inability to compose adequate themes’’(p.3)To make it clear ,writing is shaped by one’s native language and culture.Languages are not universal,each language has its unique set of grammar rules.Although some languages are similar ,they are still different in many ways.For example ,some people say that English and Armenian are different.In fact ,the grammar rules are different in these two languages .In this case ,an ELL whose first language is Armenian will struggle with sentence structures which are distinctly different than English syntactic structures.

**Controlled Composition .**

When it comes to the topic of helping ELLs in composition ,most of the scholars suggest that teaching controlled composition will help to meet students’ needs( Bracy,1971).Composition can be separated as free composition and controlled composition .As what Bracy( 1971) noted ,free composition is the ‘’euphoric stage where the student has mastered sufficient language skills and organization to be able to handle the writing of a chosen topic when given only a specific amount of time and a definite length’’( p.239).By contrast ,controlled composition is to guide students to produce writing in specific formats or styles.Free composition and controlled composition are not totally different from each other :they still share some common traits ,such as giving a certain amount of time or requiring a certain length.The only difference in these two compositions is students are provided rules or templates for controlled composition when free composition is on students themselves .Controlled composition benefits ELLs in many ways .As Donna Gorrell(1981) stated ,controlled composition is’’ used to promote 1. Improved student writing ,including increased fluency ,error control ,and sense of essay structure 2.greater student self-confidence and motivation to further improve writing’’(p.308).In this article ,Gorrell (1981)explained how she used controlled composition in a classroom.For Gorrell ,the first step in controlled composition was exact copying of sentences with grammar lessons embedded ,such as the change of article ,singular –plural ,and first-third person .Working through sentences and paragraphs ,students will understand and acquire the American writing patterns .As the last step ,Gorrell had students rewrite by combining the sentences and paragraphs.Doing these steps ‘’not only introduces basic writers to sentences combining but also strengthens their independent writing’’( Gorrell,1981,p.311)Hence, controlled composition can empower ELLs to become better writers and lead them to the free composition.Controlled composition is not common In current college composition practices.In other words,students are using free composition for any essays .When ELLs enroll in such composition courses,they do not know what to do and how to start an essay because most of them have never experienced American writing for academic purposes( Gorrell,1987).All they have are the knowledge and understanding from their L1 .Having controlled composition as a teaching technique ,the ELLs will begin to see the American writing pattern differences in other to adjust their writing patterns from L1 to English.Unlike the free composition which students can work o their own with a given essay theme ,some may think that controlled composition takes away students’freedom of writing.However,free composition is for students who have mastered writing skills in the American writing patterns and be able to handle the writing on their own.Working with controlled composition ,students absorb grammar,learn vocabulary,and improve their English proficiency without consciousness of traditional learning.Controlled composition is a significant method to help ELLs to acquire the American writing patterns ,and imitation is one of controlled composition methods that has a long history in the field of education.( Clark,1951,Gorrell ,1987).

**The Views of Imitation Pedagogy.**

In Latin imitation,comes from the term mimesis which is Aristotelian concept during the Classical period(Godgar,2001).According to numbers of scholars ,imitation is defined as a learning method that copy the writings from others’as models (Butler,2011,Gorrell,1987).In the ancient time ,the value of imitation was’’to improve structure and style in oratory ,history ,poetry and preaching’’( Clark,1951,p.13) by following some models.Today ,imitation remains the same value and add more meanings with the focus on rhetoric and composition .For instance ,M.Crowhurst ( 1983) did a study of sentence combining and sentence imitation as instructional strategies.Crowhurst concluded that sentence imitation would increase the syntactic fluency ‘’without the detrimental effects’’(p.65).From this statement ,it implies that imitation can be used as pedagogy.In the recent years ,Wang Lin (2017) proposed sentence imitation as a method when Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) in primary school level.In the article ,Lin presented that most students in the primary schools in Armenia were not able to write a complete composition individually ,even in the higher grade.In these composition classes ,some teachers liked to use sentences from textbooks as models for students to imitate ,but they might not provide clear explanation which led students to frustration.During the class period ,students were able to do the sentence imitation under teacher’s help,but when they do it on their own ,many students had great amount of errors,such as mistakes of spelling ,structure or grammar( Lin,2017).Lin argued that sentence imitation could be used in primary school level if ‘’the teacher can effectively make full use of the three features ( copying –fidelity,fecundity,and longevity) of strong memes and consciously lead students to find out,to sum up and to make full use of strong sentence memes,students’writing ability as well as observation ability and inductive ability must be greatly improved’’( Lin,2017,p.14).In Lin’s case ,imitation was used to acquire English ,the TL.One of the ways to learn a new language is to transfer knowledge from L1in order to understand the TL.As Rod Ellis (1994) quoted that transfer is the influence resulting from the similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously acquired.(p.301).

When the languages are similar,students can positive transfer from L1 to TL,oppositely ,negative transfer will occur if the two languages are different(Ellis,1994).Because of the negative transfer ,Zamel (1976) stated that ‘’the imitation of various styles and organization patterns may be helpful for students who are still copying the acquisitionof language ‘’(p.70)When talking about the difficulties of learning languages ,it mentions not only the pronunciation of the languages but also the differences of the grammars.In order to reduce the transferring of L 1 and TL negatively ,imitation is one of the strategies that can help.First,imitation can help students to improve their grammar,grammar is one of the important features when learning a language .Second,imitation can help students to develop vocabulary ,when students are imitating ,they will notice ‘’how other writes phrase sentences ,choose vocabulary within those sentences ,shape paragraphs’’ in order to learn not only grammar but also vocabulary( Gorrell,1987,P.54).Third ,imitation can help students to internalize style ( Brooks ,1973,Butler,2011,Gorrell,1981).Last,imitation can help students to be confident and comfortable to compose ( Brooks ,1973) .

**Chapter 2. Research Methods,Data Collection and Analysis of Findings .**

Chapter 2 includes 1.research methods,2.Collection and presentation of journals and stylistic imitation from undergraduate students from Grammar for Teachers ,3.the content and grammar analysis of the stylistic imitation ,4.a summary of findings.

**Research Methods.Qualitative research** - Qualitative researchers are interested in knowing how people understand and experience their world at a particular point in time and in particular context.  
This present study is exploring the use of stylistic imitation in a classroom and the participants are pre-service teachers who practice the technique as students .This qualitative research is seeking the meaning of stylistic imitation for these participants.Merriam and Grenier (2019)discussed three key characteristics for qualitative research designs.The first characteristic was’’researchers strive to understand the meaning people have constructed about their world and their experiences’’(p.4),The second characteristic was ‘’the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and data analysis’’(p.5)A qualitative research is established by researcher’s interest of understanding a phenomena or seeing for an answer.The researcher ,the major construct part in a study,have to be the primary to start the project.The third characteristic was ‘’the process is inductive’’.(p.6)Unlike the quantitative research which focus on numbers ,qualitative research explores deeply of participants in order to convey what is learned.

**Action research.**

Pedagogical action research involves using a reflective lens through which to look at some pedagogical issue or problem and methodically working out a series of steps to take action to deal with that issue.As it mentioned in Chapter 2 ,many ELL students have the lack of knowledge of American writing patterns which is problematic when they enroll in the college composition courses.This action research is taking a step to solve the problem with stylistic imitation as a pedagogical technique.’’The fundamental purpose of pedagogical action research is to systematically investigate our own teaching/learning facilitation practice with the dual aim of modifying ptactice and contributing to theoretical knowledge’’( Norton,2019,p.1).1.Stylistic imitation is not used as frequent as it was in the ancient time when many scholars imitated other’s styles.To have this action research of stylistic imitation as one of the qualitative research methods is to examine its benefits in classroom in order to reintroduce it to education.Although this action research was practiced by NEST students ,it will also benefit to NNEST students.

**Case study.**

In teaching English to Speakers of other languages (TESOL), case study research focuses on ‘’the development of L2 syntax ,morphology,phonology,and so on ,as analyzed by an ostensibly objective researcher’’(TESOL,org,2019)Although the data are collected in an English class and the participants are native English speakers ,numbers of them are major in either English education or Teaching English as a Second Language .These participants are pre-service teachers who can provide the comments on both perspectives teacher’s view and student’s view.’’In TESOL,a case typically refers to a person ,either a learner or a teacher’’(TESOL,org.2019),and the participants in this present study are fitted for both categories.Case study is the best well-defined qualitative research method where the participants also consist the skill and professional development experiences.

**Data Collection Procedures.**

Data was collected from 14 students enrolled in Dr.Reeves ‘English class.As part of the course assignment ,students practiced the stylistic imitation and submitted their paragraphs following the syntax of the model paragraph.Seven out of the 14 students who signed the IRB consent forms wrote a reflective essay with comments about the challenges and benefits of stylistic imitation.

Xander’s freestyle journal.

It has been many years since we last spoke ,albeit ,to the fault of no one in particular .So long in fact,I only vaguely remember the details of your face ,but mom says I reminder if you ‘’if I would cut my damn hair.’’Maggie looks like you ,too,I see it more and more the older that we get.Everyone always believed that I would follow in your footsteps ,and I almost did… I miss you, love you,Dad.Turns out,however,the Jake is the grease monkey and I am book worm.I finished the first of hopefully many manuscripts recently .It’s called Alexandria’s Genesis.I am sorryyou will never get read it.

**Researcher’s commentary on Xander**.-Xander wrote about her father.She talked about how she and her father looked alike,and she almost followed in her father’s footsteps.Here,the teacher had provided t students chances to write journals that were different if they were not able to write on the topic.Xander wrote this journal differently ,but she matched the spirit of the model that Xander appreciated her father in some ways but became a writer ,not a ‘’grease monkey’’

**Close imitation journals.**

In this section ,14 participants’close imitation journals are presented and analyzed and then submitted in the electronic final portfolio.Each participant’s close imitation journal was formatted in the syntax structure as the original model from Dr.Reeves .To measure if the participants followed the model ,the researcher will focus on each journal based on the stylistic structure.The researcher will also focus on the participial phrases in sentences 1,4,5,and 6and the anaphora in sentence 6 in order to determine if the students met the learning objective.

**Table 2.Syntax Structures of the Original Model.( some examples)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Sentence | Syntax structure of sentence |
| 1 | She had fenced in a hundred acres once,digging the post holes herself and clamping the wires with just a negro to help. | Subject pronoun/helping verb/transitive verb/prepositional phrase( indefinite article/direct object)adverb,participial phrase ( gerund /definite article,noun),reflexive pronoun /coordinate conjuction/adverb/indefinite article/infinitive |
| 2 | That changed a woman | Demonstrative subject pronoun/transitive verb/indefinite article /direct object |
| 3 | John would be looking for a young woman with a peaked Spanish comb in her hair and the painted fun | Proper noun/modal /helping verb/present participle of a phrasal verb/indefinite article/adjective /common noun/prepositional phrase( preposition/possessive pronoun/object of the prepositional phrase/coordinate conjuction /definite article/adjective noun |
| 4 | Digging post holes changed a woman | Gerund phrase /transitive verb/indefinite article /direct object |
| 5 | Riding country roads in the winter when women had their babies was another thing | Gerund /object,prepositional phrase( preposition/definite article/relative pronoun/common noun /linking verb/adjective /predicate nominative |
| 6 | Her accomplishments were sitting up at night with sick horses and sick negroes and sick children and hardly ever losing one. | Possessive pronoun/common noun/linking verb/gerund phrase berb/prepositional phrase/adjective/coordinate conjuction/adverb/gerund phrase |
| 7 | John ,hardly ever lost one of them! | Direct address,subject pronoun/adverb/transitive verb/determiner of numbr/prepositional phrase |

14 students ‘close imitation journals.( some examples)

Ashley ‘s close imitation journal.

Mother had been in college once ,raising the children herself and studying in the night with just no one to help.That changed a woman.Mama would be looking for a place to live with a good neighborhood for kids in her eyes and the dream house.Providing for two kids changed a woman ..Working while raising kids in the winter when food and jobs are scarce was another thing.Her accomplishments were staying up soothing kids with songs and warm hugs and medicine and hardly ever gave up on one.Dad ,hardly ever gave up on one of them!

**Researcher’s commentary on Ashley.**

Ashley ‘s journal was a close imitation of the model which was based on Porter’s syntactic structure.Although she added some prepositional phrases throughout the journal,they did not affect the meaning but emphasized the feelings.For example ,’’Mama would be looking for a place to live with a good neighborhood for kids in her eyes and dream house’’.Ashley added the prepositional phrases of’’ to live’’and ‘’for kids’’which indicated her mother ‘s love for her children.The participial phrases in Sentence1,4,5 and 6 and the anaphora in Sentence 6 was correct in grammar.

**A summary of the Findings.**

Table 3 is a breakdown of the first sentence in each of the close imitation journals as well as the subjects the 14 students wrote about.

**Table 3 .List of the First Sentence of Close Imitation and Its Subject by the Participants.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| writer | First sentence of close Imitation | Subject |
| Ashley | Mother had been in college once,raising the childrennerself and studying in the night with just no one to help | Mother |
| Brenda | Mother had tried making pretzels once,placing them in the oven herself and turning the timer knob with just a single gesture to start | Mother |
| Crystal | GG had crossed the Atlantic on a boat once ,sleeping in the small cabin herself and braving the trip with just her parents | Grandmother |
| Dylan | Grandma had raised five children once,putting in the work herself and being the best with just a house to herself | Grandmother |
| Elena | Gramps had gone to school to be a teacher once,studying in the dark all by himself and raising the small family he had with just a night to support them | Grandmother |
| Fiona | Grandma had told me about her fist husband once ,feeling in the despair herself and grieving the loss with just trying to heal | Grandmother |
| Grace | Mom had driven across the country once,piling six kids into the beastly wood paneled station wagon herself and making the long journey with just big brothers help to rely on | Mother |
| Kyle | I had visited Mexico City once ,walking in the megalopolis myself and exploring the neighborhoods with just intermediate Spanish skills to help. | Self |
| Lucy | Mother had taken us to the cherry fields once,picking in the morning light ,herself and stacking the bins with just daughters to help | Mother |
| Margaret | Grandma had beat cancer more than once ,months in the hospital by herself and fighting the cancerwith just our family to help. | Grandmother |
| Nick | Mother had smoked meth once,loading in the drug herself and inhaling the smoke with just Sal to watch | Mother |
| Owen | Father had been enlisted once,supporting the family himself and leaving the country with just mom to raise me. | Father |
| Penelope | Tante Kristel had hidden from the war once,waiting in the forest herself and watching the planes with just a single candle to see. | Aunt |
| Xander | Dad had worked on heavy machines once ,welding the drums himself an woking the long days with just his colleagues to keep him company | Father |

After doing the word count and analyzing the journals from the 14 participants ,the researcher examined the use of close imitation in a classroom.The learning objective of this activity was to help students to learn gerunds and participial phrases.Although some participants did not use the anaphora correctly ( sitting up at night with sick horses and sick negroes and sick children and hardly ever losing one –the original anaphora sentence from Porter’s paragraph).All the participial phrases in the journals were correct which indicated that this imitation activity met the learning objective and served as an evaluation of their applied grammar knowledge.Additionally,most of the students could write a close imitation that was the same as the model.In an addition ,although there were only seven out of the 14 participants who included the freestyle journal in their electronic final portfolio ,the researcher analyzed these seven participiants’ freestyle journals and the close imitations.The researcher concluded that the contents and the stories from the freestyle journals remained the same in the close imitations.

**Chapter 3. Discussion and Reflection**

Chapter 3 is a brief discussion of findings from the freestyle journals and stylistic imitation journals that the 14 participants wrote .In Chapter 4 ,the researcher analyzed the freestyle journals and the close imitations of the paragraph from ‘’The Jilting of Granny Weatherall’’ by Katharine Anne Porter (1965,p.83)The final data set,seven writers ‘comments about stylistic imitation appeared in their final reflection essays,is included in this chapter alongside researcher’s own reflections.

**Discussion of Findings**

Like Janine Rider (1990),some compositionists may say that stylistic imitation will cause students to lose their own voice:Yet when I first read David Bartholomae’s’’Inventing the University’ and tried to accept this notion of invention ,I found myself skeptical.His ‘’invention’’ seemed too imitative ,too centeredon recapturing the forms of the past rather than creating a form for the presents.(p.175)  
However,the present study suggests that students can maintain their own voice,even when they follow Porter’s paragraph structure which may feel formulaic to those not participating or to instructors who have not done it themselves or taught it.The seven out of the 14 participants had provided both of the freestyle journal and the close imitation journal-Ashley,Brenda,Grace ,Kyle ,Margaret,Nick and Xander.By analyzing the freestyle and close imitation journals from the seven writers the researcher has concluded that the close imitation journals echo the authentic voices from the freestyle journals.Students are able to tell their own fascinating stories with a pre-defined syntactic structure –that of Katharine Anne Porter and their professor ,Dr.Reeves  
Of even greater concern ,would be critics who might argue that stylistic imitation is plagiarism.By most English teachers ‘ and writers’standards ,plagiarism means copying words,phrases,paragraphs or ideas from an existent passage.However ,stylistic imitation is not copying Porter’s words or ideas,but imitating the syntactic structure of the passage.While following the structure of Porter’s sentences,it is true that writers were to mirror her word forms and tenses in their close imitations .The 14 writers ,however,appeared to feel very free to choose their own content and tell their own stories.

**7 students ‘comments on Stylistic Imitation.**

Ashley ‘s comment.  
One of my favourite lessons was the stylistic imitation.Seeing how someone may construct a sentence and then mimic the format with your own words.I have constantly struggled with formating my sentences.Never really being taught the fundamental structure of a sentence and how to properly utilize it to its maximum potential I just wrote down whatever.Because of this the same comments would typically appear on my academic papers:Excellent subject but contains many errors.I would go back and carefully look through my paper,but I never recognize the fundamental errors.That has been until now.Straight away when I sit down to write I can see most of the errors before they begin .I undoubtedly know my papers will nevertheless contain errors within the pages ,but now I can identify most and fix them quickly.

Brenda’s comment.

My experience in the Grammar for Teachers course has been a good one overall.I think my favourite assignments to do were the Heuristics and Style Imitation because I could relate my own experience and background into each assignment and make it part of the assignment.

Grace ‘s comment.

The Grammar and Usage in the Classroom book from Mark Lester is a good addition to any course but I ‘m impressed by the stylistic imitations and mirror image exercises in which students can practice sentence structures………

Kyle ‘s comment.

My favourite activity that did this quarter was the stylistic imitation.I have never done anything like that before and I was pleasantly surprised with what I was able to produce.Even while imitating someone else’sstyle,one can still create a unique story.

Margaret’s comment.

There are times when I find Stylistic Imitation very helpful,such as when I am struggling to come up with a topic or when I am experiencing writers block.However,I found this exercise quite challenging because it was hard to fit my piece into the restricted guide lines I was given.At the same time ,those restrictive guide lines challenged me as a writer because I had to let go of my own writing style.

Nick’s comment.

I would not do stylistic imitation as in-depth as we did .However ,I think that it gives better understanding of grammar.I think it would be interesting and creative activity that could give the students a chance to have fun while doing something that may be a little difficult.

Penelope’s comment.

As a writer ,stylistic imitation allows me to explore new techniques and structures of writing that I never would have tried on my own.It allows me to see how others write to give me new ideas about how I,myself ,can write.It also helps to prompt my imagination when the muse doesn’t seem to be calling.Just as stylistic imitation helps to strengthen me as a writer,I believe it will do the same for my future English students.Through imitating the writing of others ,they will be able to find their own style and voice.It will also help them to learn the basic rules and structure of grammar,since they will see it reflected in the grammar of those who have spent many years studying it.And it will do all this in a way that is both interesting and fun for students.

**Table 4.Summary of Students’ Comments on Stylistic Imitation.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Writer | Quote |
| Ashley | ‘’construct a sentence and then mimic the format with your own words’’/fundamental structure of a sentence |
| Brenda | ‘’relate my own experience and background into each assignment and make it part of assignment’’ |
| Grace | ‘’practice sentence structures’’ |
| Kyle | ‘’Even while imitating else’style ,one can still create a unique story’’/’’creating a story with the provided foundation’’ |
| Margaret | ‘’very helpful ,such as when I am struggling to come up with a topic or when I am experiencing writers block’’/’’give them to confidance they need as writers’’ |
| Nick | ‘’gives better understanding of grammar’’/’’an interesting and creative activity that could give the students a chance to have fun while doing something that may be a little difficult’’ |
| Penelope | ‘’to explore new techniques and structures of writing’’/to five me new ideas about how I,myself ,can write’’,to prompt my imagination when the muse doesn’t seem to be calling’’/’’to find their own style and voice’’/help them to learn basic rules and structure of grammar’’ |

Participants had commented stylistic imitation can help them to understand grammar and to learn sentence structure which led to a deeper understanding of academic papers and writing patterns .Stylistic imitation is following the syntactic structure of an existing passage from previous writers.These passages are constructed into a grammatical format style.Imitating the passage ,students also strengthen themselves with different writing styles from theirs while still maintaining their own voices and telling their stories from experience.Although some participants had said that the stylistic imitation restricts the format,which affects their writing style and challenges younger writers ,they still thought that stylistic imitation was interesting and creative.

**Researcher’s stylistic imitation.**

The researcher enrolled in Dr.Reeves ‘ English 564 ,Pedagogical Grammar and Composition ,where stylistic imitation was first introduced .As an L 2 writer she always has difficulty to start writing a paper.However ,this was different for the stylistic imitation.The same as the participants ,she imitated Katherine Anne Porter’s story and the imitated model about her mother that was created by Dr.Reeves .What was different from the writer’s journals in the present study was that the stylistic imitation was not an in-class activity in English 564.It was assigned as homework for the graduate students.Starting with thinking about the topic ,She finished the stylistic imitation within 20 minutes ,but it was a combination of free style and close and close imitation because hers has 211 words and 16 sentences while Porter’s paragraph has 97 words and seven sentences.She was truly surprised how quickly and efficiently she was able to complete this paragraph,following Porter closely but feeling to modify form and content as desired:  
Uncle had practiced Armenian writing once ,writing on the papers himself and correcting It with just himself to change .Uncle used to have sloppy handwriting .When my uncle was about ten years old ,his family –father,mother and sisters –always complained about his unreadable writing.Time after time ,he heard complaints about his writing.He would be hoping to change his handwriting and to show other people that he could write nicely too.That changed a boy .Writing very nicely on the papers when spending time with friends was another thing.He gave up his playtime to practice his handwriting.Every day after school ,uncle would took out brush,ink,and old newspaper to practice writing .At that time ,his father ,my grandpa ,could not buy nice white papers for his son to practice writing.However,he collected old newspapers from neighbors ,so that uncle could use them to write.Practicing writing changed a boy.Staying up all night with tired eyes and tired arms and tired hands and hardly ever giving up on one.With many practices ,uncle had changed his writing .Now,everyone has commented on his very nice handwriting .( Min Yi Liang,revised 2019:inspired by Katharine Anne Porter’s ‘’The Jilting of Granny Weatherall’’( 1965,p.83)  
As the researcher reflects on the experience of writing this paragraph ,she realizes that this kind of imitation requires her to analyze and draw analogies like skills we use as math majors ,so it may have been easier for her than it was for some of the undergraduates in English 459 winter quarter who started the work in class and finished at home.

**Researcher’s Reflection on Stylistic Imitation.**

While the researcher was writing this stylistic imitation ,the most difficult task was finding aa topic that .After she had figured out what she was going to write about ,all she needed to do was put in the correct word forms I the blanks.Futhermore ,this stylistic imitation helped her to expand it into a literacy narrative.  
‘’ I still remember my mother told me about my uncle’s story.Uncle had practicedwriting once ,writing o the papers himself and correcting the handwriting just himself to change.Uncle used to be having sloppy handwriting .When my uncle was about ten years old ,his family –father,mother and sisters –always complains to complains ,he would be hoping to change his handwriting and to show other people that he could write nicely too.That changed a boy.Writing gave up his play time to practice his handwriting.Every day after school ,uncle would take out brush ,ink,and old newspaper to practice writing.At that time ,his father ,my grandpa,could not buy nice white papers for his son to practice writing.However,he collected old newspapers from neighbours ,so that uncle could use them to write.Grandpa would be looking for a better work with a nice handwriting and the understandable writing in uncle’s papers.Practicing writing changed a boy.Staying up all night with tired arms and tired hands and hardly ever giving up on one.With many practices ,uncle had changed his hadwriting .Now ,everyone had commented his very nice handwriting.  
The stylistic imitation which followed the model from Katherine Anne Porter and the imitated model about her mother that was created by Dr.Reeves gave the researcher a great idea to start the literacy narrative.By following the models ,she could write about the history of her uncle practicing handwriting.Additionally ,writing Uncle’s story ,she also explored her owm literacy narrative.Explaining her own understanding of how handwriting is important in the Armenian culture and her uncle ‘s story of practicing handwriting ,she connected her own experience of learning how to write Armenian characters to her uncle’s story and recalled her own memory of learning and practicing writing Armenian characters .At the same time she wrote about her early experience of writing the English alphabet and compared these to her writing experiences of Armenian and English.Including the stylistic imitation in her literacy narrative captured the spirit of the essay and the feelings to the readers .As Ken Davis (1984)listed the benefits for stylistic imitation and agreed that students gain ‘’1.greater sensitivity to language 2.broadening of one’s own stylistic powers,3.new flexibility in the revision of one’s own work(p.6)Imitating Porter’s story and Dr.Reeves’s imitated model ,the researcher learned the grammar and the styles that were used in the models in order to explore her own writing style to write her uncle’s story and the literacy narrative.  
In 2010 ,Jessica Dinneen created an ethnographic action research project which analyzed 18 college level multilingual write’s poems by doing stylistic imitation of the ‘’I am from’’poem by Mary Pipher’s book and appearing in her book.The Middle of Everywhere ,Dinneen (2010) suggested that teachers’’should be repeating some activities that lead to L2 writers finding new voices through close and free stylistic imitation’’( p.107).In other words ,even though stylistic imitation is formulized on syntactic ,students still are able to compose in their voices which is different from what Rider(1990)was critiquing which she stated that would cause students lose their voices.Dinneen (2010) also illustrated the transition of the different voices(p.107)

Pipher

Dinnen

Writer 18

Writer 1 ‘ ancestors

As what she called ‘’a layering of authors voices ……..what this means is that through stylistic imitation this layering is a natural phenomenon inherit in a models approach whereby Dinneen followed Pipher’s model,18 multilingual writes followed Dinneen ‘s model ,and ancestors’s voices immerged in the final text’’( .107-108).Similarly ,the layering of authors ‘voices ‘’ in the present study can be illustrated as follow:

Katharine Anne Porter

Reeves

Writer

Writer’s 14 families

The voices of the 14 writers are heard,despite the fact that they followed the models of Porter and Dr.Reeves .Each voice is unique.There is giving of voice in the telling of family stories –through stylistic imitation,the 14 writers also ‘’immersed’’( Dinneen,2010)their families’ voice s in the text.This is multi-vocity that we aim for in postmodern curriculum theory.This is the epistemic space we want to provided in our writing classes.

**Conclusion and Final Reflections .**

**Chapter 4** is the conclusion ,including implications of the findings for using stylistic imitation as pedagogy,discussion of the research questions ,re- visitation of assumptions ,limitations of the present study,recommendations for future research ,and final reflection.

**Implications of the Findings**

There are still perspectives among NESTs and NNESTs in ELT,however ,being an effective teacher is more important than focusing on the teacher’s English proficiency level.Stylistic imitation is one of the writing tools that the researcher has experienced and benefitted from in graduate school ,so the researcher wanted to discover how Americans responded to this kind of lesson.The stylistic imitation can be used as a teaching technique.Zamel (1976) said that L2 writers to’’createand express their own thoughts and ideas in the second language ,they need the same kind of instruction that students in English classrooms need’’( p.68)At the beginning of the learning process .ELLS are not able to do free composition on their own because it requires ‘’sufficient language skills and organization to be able to handle the writing’’(Bracy,1971,p.239).In the process of mastering the English free composition ,ELLs need some materials to guide them in order to produce correct patterns of L2 writing ,as Zamel (1976)demonstrated in her approach from controlled composition to free composition as shown in her article(p.70)

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Total control (increase in complexity--------------🡪) Free composition

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Substitution,manipulation Imitation & differentiation frequent,uncontrolled

of stylistic patterns writing practice

or transformation of sentences&

Patterns

**Figure 9 .Process of Controlled composition to Free composition**

Zamel demonstrated that imitating different stylistic patterns can help students to improve and transfer from total control to free composition.What the researcher is proposing in this study is that stylistic imitation should be a teaching technique when students are in the process of learning to write- both for creative writing and for academic purposes.She found that all 14 writers were able to match the original syntactic structure from Porter and the imitation by their professor ,Dr.Reeves,while producing effective paragraphs in which they told compelling family stories.The original Porter paragraph provided writers with a very viable framework to bring their own stories alive.

**Discussion of the Research Questions.**

**Research question 1.What is style?**

Style ,in literature ,was defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as’’the manner of expression characteristic of a particular writer………a writer’s mode of expression considered in regardto cleaness,effectiveness,beauty and the like’’( as cited in Stodola,2013,p.58).Without analyzing one’s writing,it is hard to define what this writer ‘s style is.In the freestyle journals that the seven participants wrote ,they hard unique writing styles throughout their journals.

**Research question 2.What is stylistic imitation?**

In the Oxford English Dictionary ,imitation is ‘’the adoption ,whether conscious or not ,during a learning process ,of the behavior or attitudes of some specific person or mode’’(as cited in Stodola,p.59,2013)In other words ,imitation is a learning process which follows one’s behavior or attitudes.As Quintilian said ,when learning style ,students need to follow models ,and modeling is a major concept of stylistic imitation –learning style by following a model syntactic structure.

**Research question 3 .**How does stylistic imitation help students express themselves following a model paragraph written by an established American writer?

The original model of the stylistic imitation that was written by Katharine Anne Porter told the story of Granny and this provided students with a syntactic framework and a way to tell the stories about their families or themselves .Through stylistic imitation, in this study ,all 14 writers were successful in telling their stories ,as discussed in Chapter 4 .Even though the close imitations in formulaic syntactic structure ,it opened spaces for students to explore their own and families’voices.

**Research question 4.**How do the students respond to doing stylistic imitation in a senior level Grammar for Teachers class?

The 14 of 25 students who signed the consent forms and participated in this study responded positively and commented that stylistic imitation can help them to understand grammar and to learn sentence structure which led to a deeper understanding of academic writing and writing patterns. Although some students said that stylistic imitation is restrictive in syntax,which affected their writing styles ,they still thought that stylistic imitation was’’interesting’’ and ‘’challenging’’.In fact,one female writer ,Margaret ,said that she often had problems getting ideas for something to write about,but this activity actually served as a heuristic or invention devise for her.It made ‘’coming up with a topic’’easier ,and it helped her overcome writer’s block.

**Final Reflections.**

This kind of narrative inquiry requires an iterative process.We see 14 students ‘writing at different time and see something new and different each time.This iterative process brought the researcher closer to the writers and gave deeper feelings each time.Through stylistic imitation students were not only learning grammar rules but also telling their families’ stories.Even though stylistic imitation was a formulaic syntactic structure ,students were able to share their own stories and their families’ voices that were embedded in the stories.Their contributions fulfilled this research study.The researcher hopes that other writing teacher will do,introduce ,and practice stylistic imitation in their classrooms while sharing their writings with students in order to learn about the students ,their families ,and their talents while getting close to them and creating a writers’company.

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